

1. Positive Points

- 1.1. We appreciate the very difficult circumstances that were faced and are generally supportive of the efforts made by the City Council to deal with the problems of snow and ice.
- 1.2. There was a general commitment to keeping bus routes clear, along with emergency vehicle routes, and we appreciate that commitment.
- 1.3. The daily emails received from the Brighton & Hove Winter Service (findlay@ednet.co.uk) were very useful.
- 1.4. Our ability to contact the gritting teams direct by mobile phone was much appreciated. There were regular staff on duty that our Controllers got to know and the liaison at this level enabled specific local problems to be addressed.
- 1.5. Our Operations Director, Mike Best, was in frequent contact with Mark Prior, including out of hours, and this ensured our input at a more strategic level.
- 1.6. A member of Bus Company staff was able to work in the City Council's CCTV room to enable much greater coverage in checking of bus routes. Training was provided and this facility was welcomed.
- 1.7. We have been involved in meetings with Christina Liassides and her team in the past concerning preparations for snow and ice and this involvement is appreciated.

2. Negative Points

- 2.1. Certain key roads became impassable at times making whole bus routes unsuitable, the major example being North Street. When this road was impassable buses coming from the Hove direction along Church Road and Western Road had nowhere to turn, thus could not operate along Church Road and Western Road even when these roads were passable.
- 2.2. The other major example was Terminus Road, which effectively cut off service 7 (George Street-Marina via Cromwell Road) and the possibility of operating buses along Dyke Road.
- 2.3. A similar situation in Elm Grove meant that we could not reach anywhere within walking distance for residents of Woodingdean.
- 2.4. Eastern Road was impassable for longer than would have been desirable, with buses having to use the sea front instead. Eastern Road is a major bus route and serves the County Hospital. The

walking routes for passengers between the sea front at the County Hospital were treacherous.

- 2.5. Several estates were inaccessible for several days, for example Woodingdean and Bevendean.
- 2.6. There was a particular problem with private vehicles abandoned in some roads away from the kerb, in particular Carden Avenue, Elm Grove and certain roads in the Queen's Park area. This meant that even when the snow started to thaw and roads would otherwise have been passable we were still unable to access these areas. In a similar situation to 2.1 above, a problem in one road meant that whole sections of route could not be operated as buses need places to turn round if operating to a point short of an official terminal point, and such places can be difficult to find.
- 2.7. On occasions all the gritters returned to the depot together to re-stock. This occurred towards the start of the snowfall period. The problem was that this occurred as snow was falling and without the gritters conditions along key roads quickly became treacherous.
- 2.8. In some estates snow plough fitted vehicles covered bus route roads but not in the actual order that buses travel, so banks of snow were created as the ploughs turned corners, blocking bus routes. A particular example of this was in Hangleton.
- 2.9. Many pavement bus stop waiting areas were treacherous causing difficulty for passengers.
- 2.10. Whilst we were happy with the ability to communicate with the gritting teams and tell them what problems we were facing, we tended not receive information from them about specific problem locations (other than by the emails referred to in point 1.3 above) which might have been useful in advance planning our operations and advising the public when certain routes might be resumed.

Mike Best
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4.3.10