

Member		Comment	Response
Cllr Roma Mills	1.	Why are the vehicles used to collect the recycling so unsuitable for cold weather?	The arrangements for refuse and recycling are covered in a specific report elsewhere on this agenda. The main considerations relate to the size of the vehicles and the need for a safe grip on the roads.
	2.	Why were council officials on the customer service number mis-informing residents about collections? On 11/1/10 I was told it would be in the next day or so, on 13/1/10 my partner was told it was definitely going to be collected in the next two days, on 15/1/10 I was told if it wasn't collected on the 16th then it wouldn't be collected until the 21/1/10?	It was not possible to predict the impact of the weather as there were conflicting forecasts coming in hour by hour. We did our best to give up to date information and to take into account the extent to which catch up was available. However lessons were learnt and the specific report on refuse and recycling provides some new proposals for the future
	3.	Why was there a lack of relevant information on the council website- especially relating to long overdue collections?	There was a specific page on the weather with links to the refuse and recycling website, covered in this report
	4.	Why did the answerphone message on the customer service number only mention collections missed in the last couple of days on 15/1/10? What about the missed collections from the previous year?	There was a need to balance the amount of information needed and the length of the message. In any future plans we will think about how this might be expanded.
	5.	What are the Service Level Agreements with the contractor in relation to bad weather? How have they performed in relation to these SLA's? If they have fallen short of them what action is the council going to take to seek financial redress and how will those funds be used?	It is not possible to predict all eventualities. The standard service level agreements are in place, with agreed procedures for bad weather. Changes to these are proposed in the specific report elsewhere on this agenda.
	6.	Why was a statement/interview given to the Herts Advertiser saying how well the department had done?!?!? This is clearly not true	Everyone in the council did their best and this was in recognition of that. However there were areas where improvements can be made, specifically in ensuring that there is a more even spread of service to residents.

Member		Comment	Response
Cllr Chris Oxley	7.	Pavements near shops. Need to be cleared/salted	This will be considered in the new strategy as set out in 14.8
	8.	Ditto Pavements near old folks residences private and council	As above
	9.	Pavements from sheltered housing to shops	As above
	10.	Salt bins Full? Can a particular resident be asked to keep an eye on the bins and possibly spread the salt	Will be considered in future planning
	11.	Formally tell all residents that they can clear footpaths outside their homes without fear of legal action if someone slips	Addressed in paragraph 14.8
	12.	Formally tell all residents of the contact details/how to register if they are vulnerable if gas or electric cuts	Addressed in paragraph 10.4
	13.	Maintain and advertise the names of organizations like Wheathampstead Community Group or St Albans Good Neighbours who can get food/milk/help if an old or disabled person cannot get out/get other help.	Will be considered in future planning
	14.	Assuming it is true tell (as in 13) the names and phone numbers of District Councillors who are able/prepared to help.	Will be considered in future planning
	15.	Ditto 13 and 14 re Churches/other religious bodies.	Will be considered in future planning
	16.	Ensure all vulnerable residents have both the contact numbers of County Social Services or an appropriate District council officer	Will be considered in future planning
	17.	Establish a web site with all the above information on it.	Addressed in paragraph 9.8
	18.	Ask all Parish Councils to encourage all residents to be "Good Neighbours"	Will be considered in future planning

Member		Comment	Response
	19.	Invite all vulnerable people to have “a friend” who can help if there are problems. If need be a friend can be as in 13 – 16	Will be considered in future planning
	20.	Set up a system where Meals on Wheels do deliver or report back that they cannot/have not	Already in place but will be discussed with Herts Community Meals
	21.	Ditto where residents with problems re food can contact Meals on wheels for temporary delivery so they do not starve.	Will be discussed with Herts Community Meals
	22.	Ditto where Members in any Ward are advised where there is a power cut of more than an hour or even at the start is expected to be more than 4 hours (or 3) so the Members can endeavour to visit private homes where they know the resident might have problems (see also 6 above)	Will be considered in future planning
	23.	Roads on hills snow ploughed or at least the bit close to a main road so cars can ingress/egress in relative safety and build up a little momentum where safe to do so	Will be discussed with Herts Highways
	24.	Maintain a record of farmers who can/are prepared at a fee to snow plough narrow country roads on receipt of an e mail/call from the council asking them to do so. And (see 5 above)	Will be discussed with Herts Highways
Cllr Martin Frearson	25.	As a local member, the most criticised decision made at county level was the failure to re-fill the salt bins after the first snowfall. We had a review of these last year in preparation for this winter season and some new ones were provided, so that as far as Verulam is concerned I believe we have them available in the right places where local people can use them to access the cleared routes. Having achieved this it is therefore vital that they are kept	Considered in section 14, will be discussed with Herts Highways

Member	Comment	Response
	<p>topped up. The amount of salt required is minimal compared to the overall usage on the main routes and it is very cost effective.</p> <p>It is true that a small minority misuse the salt bins to clear their own drives when they have no pressing reason to get out i.e. they are not key workers or have a genuine emergency, but this can be dealt with by local members keeping an eye on this and having a quiet word with them.</p>	
26.	<p>Secondly, on a district wide basis, I believe more should have been done to salt routes to schools and local shopping centres, including most importantly pavements and footpaths. This means more salt being stocked and set aside for this purpose at the county depots, and arrangements for distribution to the districts agreed in advance.</p>	<p>Considered in section 14, will be discussed with Herts Highways</p>
27.	<p>Thirdly, speaking as a member of the Refuse Working Party (by the way, this should be re-named the Waste Reduction and Recycling WP to reflect what its future role will be), we have to think how we are going to communicate a revised timetable to residents if there is an extended snow period and in effect a full week of collections is lost. The WP has given some thought to this but although the information on our website was largely up-to-date and correct from day to day there are still a large number of residents who do not have access to the internet and do not know when to expect a collection. Asking people with access to inform their neighbours had some effect, but we should not be relying solely on that.</p>	<p>Being considered in line with Para 9.8</p>

Member		Comment	Response
		We made about 80% of the collections either on the timetabled day or a working day late and most residents were satisfied with that, but in the steeper icy roads where the salt bins were empty it was a different story and we had significant complaints.	
	28.	At the county level Sunday collections should be considered in a snow emergency period. This means opening the waste transfer stations and the waste processing sites so that the onward disposal of the material continues to flow. Otherwise it all piles up on Monday morning and you have gained nothing. This will have cost implications to be shared among the 11 authorities, if the contingency arises. This year it would have been two Sundays, possibly three to clear the backlog. Not a large cost in the overall scheme of things.	Will be discussed with the Waste Partnership
Cllr Julian Daly	29.	<p><b>Complaints/suggestions from the public</b></p> <p>You should identify</p> <p>a) any complaints received about the service we provided during the severe weather;</p> <p>b) any suggestions for improvements to the service delivered during severe weather. If the complaint/suggestion is valid &amp; can be delivered, you should cover what's proposed in your report.</p>	These will be collated and used to inform future planning
	30.	<p><b>Staffing levels</b></p> <p>Did we have enough staff on site to handle the level of enquiries received during the severe weather? If not, how did we politely communicate this to visitors/callers? What will you do in this regard in the future?</p>	This is addressed in section 8.2 of the report. Contact centre staff managed a very fluid situation and where possible were given clear messages to give to the public. These are both under review.

Member	Comment	Response
	<p>31. <b>Refuse collection</b></p> <p>How did the service perform? How could we have done this better?</p> <p>We believe that SADC need to communicate in advance what residents should do in the event of severe weather, e.g. leave the bins out + black sacks if collections on the due days are not possible (or whatever the agreed message is to be). This message should probably be communicated a few times as we move into winter each year. Tell every one the instructions will be put up on the website. During a severe weather put the instructions up on the website.</p> <p>We thought that the website showing which streets had not been cleared was very good. However it left a bad taste with some members of the public that SADC appeared to be deliberately under playing the problem by only showing those streets uncollected after a certain date. Some residents who had not seen collections for weeks did not find their streets on the site, ie those streets the worst effected didn't even appear to be of concern to the Council.</p> <p>We heard quite a few comments contrasting the Council's inability to collect the rubbish but the postmen/ milkmen /delivery men were managing. Are we calling the collections off too lightly?</p> <p>Do our contractors receive payment even if they are not out collecting during period of severe weather? Should they be paid?</p> <p>Are they paid extra for the inevitable catch up? Should they be paid for this?</p>	<p>This is covered in more detail in a specific report on Refuse and Recycling which is elsewhere on the agenda.</p> <p>Advance communication pf plans relating to all services will take place next Autumn in the form of a feature in Community News and a website page.</p> <p>Any future communication will be able to start 'from scratch' and therefore should include all roads.</p> <p>The difference between our refuse and recycling service and the services mentioned is the weight and size of the vehicles and concerns about the risks if they were to get out of control.</p> <p>These questions will be reviewed in future plans to see what improvements can be made.</p>

Member	Comment	Response
	<p>32. <b>Recycling</b></p> <p>As for refuse collection.</p>	As above
	<p>33. <b>Adequate shelter for homeless</b></p> <p>I note the Administrations defence that there were spaces for the homeless to go into, but how good was the system in pointing the homeless to those places? My real worry is that there were homeless out there who did not reach the vacant spaces. Also how easy was it for the homeless to reach those spaces once the snow had come down?</p> <p>Specifically how were the homeless who were congregating in the Bricket Road car park treated and where were they directed to? With all the spare spaces, why did they find it necessary to congregate in the Bricket Road car park?</p>	These points are covered in paragraph 11.4 and will be considered in future plans. Centre 33 was suggested to the individuals, however they chose to congregate where they did. This was because this particular place is in relative shelter and also has warmth from heating duct exhausts.
	<p>34. <b>Snow clearance around accommodation for the elderly</b></p> <p>Do we have a policy about clearing snow around or properties, either commercial or residential?</p> <p>Do we clear snow to and from accommodation used by the elderly? If so, which specific properties are covered? Who does this work? How quickly are they expected to do it?</p> <p>Can you list the properties where this was actually done in the recent severe weather spell? Who did it?</p> <p>We were told that Council staff had been out clearing paths at certain properties but members of my group saw</p>	<p>This is covered in paragraph 13.1 - speed will of course depend on the extent and timing of snowfalls and forecasts of imminent weather. The precise arrangements will be reviewed.</p> <p>The paths at the following properties were gritted by Housing Services Officers: Wavell House, Caroline Sharpe House, Linley Court, Thomas Sparrow House and Breadcroft.</p> <p>Further details of those areas and properties that were cleared can be provided as a separate written answer.</p>

Member	Comment	Response
	<p>no evidence of it.</p> <p>Also given the power outage at Thomas Sparrow House do we have our own generators for such emergencies? If not, should we do so?</p>	<p>We will consider the question of backup generators in the development of future plans.</p>
35.	<p><b>Snow clearance in Council car parks</b></p> <p>What is the Council's formal policy about snow clearance in its car parks?</p> <p>Considerable effort had gone into clearing the staff parking at Bricket Road. I am not sure this 'selfish' looking after our own went down that well. How did this effort compare to that in each of the other council car parks?</p> <p>What is our order of priority for clearing our car parks?</p> <p>What does our contract with NCP say about the respective responsibilities for snow clearance in the car parks?</p> <p>Should we clear pedestrian walkways in the car parks?</p> <p>Do we have a mechanism to close car parks if they become dangerous? If so, how does that work?</p>	<p>This is covered in section 19. The Council car park is of course a key shopping car park on Saturdays.</p> <p>Closure will depend on the risk assessment carried out by the responsible body, namely the Council's parking service or NCP depending on the car park.</p>
36.	<p><b>Delivery of 'Meals on Wheels'</b></p> <p>Are there enough 4 wheel drives available to the John O'Connor team? If not, should we create a list of volunteers (+ reserve names) who are willing to help out with use of their own vehicles?</p>	<p>The number of four wheel drives available to all our contractors will be reviewed and considered for future contract arrangements.</p>

Member		Comment	Response
		Were there any parts of the district where we were unable to make deliveries? If so, how can we avoid that in the future?	The suggestion of a list of drivers to assist is very helpful and it is understood that there is an owners club in Hertfordshire who volunteer to assist, this will be actively considered.
	37.	<p><b>Interaction with Herts Highways</b></p> <p>Is there a pre-agreed list of pavement problem spots which the District team can hit in severe weather conditions eg, the hillier parts of Station Road in Harpenden or Holywell Hill? If so can we see it and the order of priority of attention? If there is no such list, can one be created?</p>	This is partly covered by section 14, but will also be considered in future planning.