

COUNTY COUNCIL MEETING – 14 DECEMBER 2017

**Question to Helen Fisher
Cabinet Support Member for Highways and Transport**

By Kyle Robinson

Question

Can the Cabinet Support Member for Highways and Transport please tell me why grit bins across my Division have not been replenished before the recent severe weather set in?

Reply

Staffordshire has in the region of 4,000 salt bins and piles distributed across its 6,000kms of highway network. These are grouped in to 168 refill schedules for the purposes of efficiency.

Generally speaking the restocking exercise begins at the start of the winter season in late October, as highway crews switch from the main road repair season to winter activities. Restocking then carries on throughout late October to early December in advance of the more severe winter weather generally experienced between December and February.

It's an onerous process and the time taken to complete this exercise can vary based on the availability of resource and the demand placed on the teams to deal with other highway related activities.

The Countywide restocking exercise was 95% complete prior to the recent snow event. Unfortunately the schedules covering Kidsgrove, Talke, Mow Cop and Newcastle had not been completed and are scheduled for completion during the week commencing 11 December. This work remains on track for completion by the end of the week.

More generally further refills are then carried out throughout the season as required, dependent on local usage. The salt should only be on adopted highway, but during periods of severe weather the stocks in these bins and piles can diminish very rapidly. The first refills of this winter season are taking place currently following the recent period of high demand.