

Sligo County Council Comhairle Chontae Shligigh

Winter Service Plan 2024/2025



October 2024

Contents Table

1.	Introduction	7
	General	7
	Performance Levels	8
	Weather Warning Systems	10
	Winter Service Definitions	11
	Winter Response Time	11
	Winter Treatment Time	12
	Winter Service Duties and Responsibilities	12
	Network	13
2.	Operations	15
	Introduction	
	General Arrangements and Decision Making	15
	Weather Forecasting and Road Weather Information System	17
	Liaison and Communication	18
3.	Resources	20
	Introduction	20
	Depots and Facilities	20

Appendix A Duty Engineer Roster

Appendix B Routes maps

Preface

Introduction and Purpose

This Winter Service Plan describes the policy, objectives, procedures, and operational arrangements for the delivery of winter service and details the alert procedures and actions in the event of winter weather on sections of the road network within the administrative area of Silgo County Council.

Policy Document

The Winter Service Plan outlines TII's key objectives and the Sligo County Council's responsibilities in managing and delivering winter service on the road network, including monitoring and reporting on salt stock levels.

Contingency Plan

The Winter Service Plan is linked with the Sligo County Council and TII's wider Network contingency objectives.

Environmental Policy

Sligo County Council will ensure the implementation of the government's policy for Ireland's transition to a Carbon-Neutral Future by 2050 with the adoption of the Sligo County Council Climate Action Plan 2024-2029.

Health and Safety Policy

It is the policy of Sligo County Council to protect, as far as reasonably practicable, the safety, health, and welfare of all its employees and of anybody who may be affected by its activities. The Council will conduct its activities in a way that complies with the Safety and Welfare at Work Act 2005, associated regulations, and any other legal or other requirements.

All reasonable measures will be taken to avoid risk, including the provision of a properly designed and maintained safe place of work, safe systems of work, and safe plant and equipment. The council is committed to the identification of hazards and to their elimination, or reduction where practicable. The council will provide training and information to employees and personal protective clothing and equipment as required.

The principles of prevention shall be applied in the design, construction and maintenance of all activities and places of work. The Council is committed to meaningful consultation, communication, participation, and the prevention of ill health.

Management, supervisory employees, safety representatives and all other employees are responsible for implementing this general policy. All employees are required to carry out their duties in accordance with the Council's safety Management system.

All employees, contractors and sub-contractors shall cooperate with and implement this health and safety policy. The Council will continuously improve its safety management system by setting work programmes with objectives, in addition, the safety management system will be regularly monitored.

Energy Management Policy

Sligo County Council is committed to efficiently using energy throughout all of its corporate resources and services to preserve natural resources and reduce carbon emissions in the context of climate change.

Reference Documents

- 1. TII Publication AM-PAV-06051, Winter Service Manual
- 2. A Framework for Major Emergency Management Guidance Document 14 A guide to Severe Weather Emergencies Department of the Environment, Heritage & Local Government.
- 3. NWSRG Practical Guides to Winter Service.

DOCUMENT CONTROL AND DISTRIBUTION

Document Owner

Document Owner Noel Haran	
---------------------------	--

The owner is responsible for maintenance, upkeep and amendment.

Document Control

Document Issue and Revision Record				
lssue	Revision	Date	Issue/Revision Description	Approved
	1	23/09/2024	Update Document for 2024/2025	
Draft	2	30/09/2024	Revision	
	3	14/10/2024	Revision	NH/POR

Distribution

Document Distribution				
Issued To	Organisation/Company	Name/Location		
Chief Executive Officer	Sligo County Council	M.Lydon, County Hall, Riverside, Sligo, Co. Sligo		
Cathaoirleach/SCC Members	Sligo County Council	County Hall, Riverside, Sligo, Co. Sligo		
A/Director of Services	Sligo County Council	E.Concannon, County Hall, Riverside, Sligo		
A/Senior Engineer	Sligo County Council	P.O'Rourke, County Hall, Riverside, Sligo		
Duty Engineer(s)	Sligo County Council	N. Haran, P. Hampson, T. Kerins, High Market House Old Market Street Sligo		
Chief Fire Officer	Sligo County Council	M. Coakley, Sligo Fire Station		
TSS Machinery Yard/Winter Service Supervisor	Sligo County Council	B.Cullen, Sligo County Council, Machinery Yard, Drumaskibbole, Sligo		
Health and Safety Officer	Sligo County Council	Aine Quinn-Hyland, County Hall, Riverside, Sligo, Co. Sligo		
Asst. Health & Safety Advisor	Sligo County Council	A. Gilboy, County Hall, Riverside, Sligo, Co. Sligo		
Principal Advisor	Department Of Transport	44 Kildare Street, Dublin 2		
Winter Maintenance Manager	ТІІ	Owen Smith, Parkgate Business Centre, Parkgate Street, Dublin 8,		
Director Of Services	Donegal County Council	County House, The Diamond, Lifford, Co. Donegal		
Director Of Services	Leitrim County Council	Áras An Chontae, St. Georges Terrace, Carrick on Shannon, Co. Leitrim		
Director Of Services	Mayo County Council	Áras An Chontae, The Mall, Castlebar, Co. Mayo		
Director Of Services	Roscommon County Council	Áras An Chontae Roscommon Co Roscommon		
Head of Forecasting	Met Éireann	Glasnevin Hill, Dublin 9		
An Garda Siochána	Chief Superintendent	Pearse Road, Sligo		
HSE Ambulance Services	HSE	Donegal Road, Ballyshannon, Co. Donegal		
HSE Ambulance Services	HSE	Ambulance Rest Room, Sligo University Hospital.		
Civil Defence Officer	Sligo County Council	D.McGough County Hall, Riverside, Sligo		
CAMP (West)	Western Regional Control Centre	Fire Station, Castlebar, Co. Mayo		

1. Introduction

General

This aims to identify the processes, procedures and key personnel employed by Sligo County Council, to deliver the winter service on Priority Routes for County Sligo and to ensure the safe movement of vehicular traffic and keep to a minimum delays caused by adverse weather. It is desirable that these routes be kept serviceable in the normal winter weather conditions, as far as reasonably practicable. Winter service is not an emergency service in the traditional sense in that low temperatures, ice and snow are regular, frequent and reasonably predictable occurrences.

This plan does not deal with other extreme winter weather events such as flooding and high winds. The Council's objective is to provide an effective and efficient winter service within the resources available to minimise the negative impacts of frost, ice or snow on the travelling public, i.e.

- Allow the safe passage of vehicles and pedestrians on Priority 1 (National Roads) and Priority 2 & 3 Roads
- Minimise delays due to winter weather conditions.
- Ensure operations are undertaken safely and efficiently.

The level of service will vary with the priority assigned to routes e.g. Priority 1 roads will be given a higher priority than priority 2 roads etc.

The aim is to treat the strategic locations on the public road network, including roads serving;

- Hospitals & Clinics
- Local Authority Salt Stores
- Emergency Services (Fire & Ambulance Stations)
- Roads serving Water and Sewage Treatment Works
- Major Industries
- Bus / Train Stations
- Sligo Airport

Most of the roads serving the above locations are listed as Priority 1 and Priority 2 routes. Given the scale of the resources involved in delivering the winter service, it is not possible to provide the service to all parts of the roads network. Sligo County Council salt approximately 16% of the road network. It is not possible to ensure that road surfaces on the treated parts of the network are kept free of ice or snow at all times.

Motorists should drive with due care and attention at all times, particularly during ice/snow periods, and not assume that if a road is on a salting route that it is free of ice and snow.

It takes a time to mobilise the plant and to complete salting a route. A road may have been salted and if rain falls shortly afterwards, some of the salt may be washed off the road surface and the road could get icy again soon after salting. Non-salted roads are even more hazardous during ice/snow spells.

Winter maintenance on national roads is carried out by Sligo County Council for the TII and is funded by the TII. Winter maintenance on non-national roads is funded by the Department of Transport, Tourism and Sport and the Sligo County Council.

The winter maintenance season is from **Monday**, **14th October 2024**, **to Wednesday**, **30th April 2025**. All of the above is subject to the availability of resources. Resources include finance, salt, plant and labour.

Policy

It is the policy of Sligo County Council to provide a winter service plan, which, as far as reasonably possible, allows the safe movement of vehicular traffic on the more important defined routes of the road network, while minimising delays & accidents directly attributed to adverse weather conditions in accordance with the priorities set out below as resources permit.

The desired level of service may not be achievable at all times. Even where the weather forecasting is predicted properly, the freezing point may be a number of hours earlier or later in arriving than predicted. It cannot be guaranteed that the network will remain in an ice or frost-free state. The primary responsibility for road safety remains with the driver of the vehicle. Road users cannot assume that all roads are free of ice at any stage and must be themselves responsible for ensuring that they drive or use the road with proper care and attention to their own actions.

Sligo County Council shall ensure that the total width of carriageways on the road network within its administrative area are kept free of frost, ice and snow as far as is reasonably practicable.

Performance Levels

With approximately 2,840 km of roadway in County Sligo, it would be unrealistic to expect that every road and pedestrian area in the county can be treated. Sligo County Council ordinarily treats 468km approx. of road which equates to 100% of the National Primary network, 100% of the National Secondary network, 100% of regional roads and 62 km. Approx. of the local/urban road network. The percentage of the roads network salted is approximately 16%.

Therefore, priority must be given to the National Route system (Priority 1), which carries the most intensive volumes of commuter traffic.

In extreme weather conditions i.e. a continuous spell of sub-zero temperatures, attention is also given to regional and local road networks based on need and the availability of resources.

The performance levels for precautionary salting and reactionary salting treatments are defined in the table below.

TII Criteria for Prioritising Routes				
Road Priority	Description	Level of Service		
Priority 1	Those routes which are essential to be kept serviceable in all weather conditions, as far as reasonably practicable	To be treated during all-weather events		
Priority 2	 Those routes which are desirable to be kept serviceable in the normal winter weather conditions, as far as reasonably practicable. Priority 2 routes could include those routes which are important regionally, such as (for example) principal public transport routes, or the main commuter routes. 	To be treated as part of the normal winter service but may have interruptions to treatment in certain severe weather events.		
Priority 3	If resources allow, these routes could be kept serviceable once Priority 1 and 2 routes have been treated,			

Treatment Route	Priority 1	Priority 2	Priority 3
Mobilisation Time	7 pm & 4 am	7 pm & 4 am	When possible
Treatment Time	2:5 hr	2:5 hrs	When Possible

Sligo County Council shall prevent frost, ice or snow forming on or bonding with the pavement surface using precautionary salting treatments. Ice shall be defined as frozen water from any source on the carriageway surface.

If Sligo County Council fails to prevent ice or snow forming on or bonding to the pavement surface, reactionary salting treatments shall be undertaken.

By achieving the performance levels for winter service, Sligo County Council shall, as far as is reasonably practicable, ensure the conditions to allow the safe movement of traffic, other users and the public on the road network and keep to a minimum incidents and delays caused by winter weather.

Weather Warning Systems

The decision-makers will use a combination of the following weather warning systems to aid in the delivery of the winter service.

Weather Warning Systems
Public Service Severe Weather Warning from Met Éireann
General Met Éireann Weather Forecast or Alert
Warning from other agencies
TII's Road Weather Information System (RWIS)
Tidal surge warnings from the Irish Marine Institute, OPW and Met Éireann

Winter Service Definitions

The following weather definitions are provided:

Weather	Definition		
Heavy Snow More than 4cm per hour of snow for at least 2 hours			
	a. Moderate or heavy snow combined with winds of 50kph or		
Blizzards/drifting snow	more with visibility reduced to 200 metres or less or: -		
	b. Drifting snow giving rise to similar conditions		
Very heavy snowfall,	Expected to give depths of 15cm or more potentially resulting in		
blizzards or drifting	widespread dislocation of communications. Blizzards are		
snow	severe when visibility is reduced to near zero.		
Freezing rain or fog /	Any atmospheric condition or state which gives rise to the		
widespread icy roads	accretion of ice on road surfaces		
Heavy rain	Expected to persist for at least 2 hours and to give more than		
	6mm of rain per hour		
Strong Gales	Repeated gusts of 110kph or more over inland areas, with a risk		
	to high-sided vehicles being blown over.		
	Repeated gusts of 130kph or more over inland areas, which		
Storms	could cause cars to be blown out of their lane on the		
	carriageway.		
	The official definition of fog is visibility of less than 1000		
Fog	metres. Whereas for a motorist; visibility of less than 200		
109	metres is more realistic. Severe disruption to transport occurs		
	when the visibility falls below 50 metres.		

Winter Response Time

The Winter Response Time is defined as the time taken from the decision to begin the winter service response or snow clearance until the winter service vehicles are loaded, manned and ready to leave the Depot.

- The Winter Response Time for Precautionary Treatment on priority 1&2 routes shall be a maximum of 1 hour.
- The Winter Response Time for Reactionary Treatment including snow and ice clearance on priority 1&2 routes shall be a maximum of 1 hour.

The Winter Response Time shall not apply when the decision to mobilise is taken in advance as part of a Precautionary Treatment but in any case, shall not exceed one hour.

Winter Treatment Time

The Winter Treatment Time is defined as the time taken from leaving the Depot through to returning to the Depot after completion of the Precautionary Treatment routes.

• The Winter Treatment Time for Precautionary Treatment shall be a maximum of 2.5 hours.

Winter Service Duties and Responsibilities

Winter service duties, including precautionary salting, reactive salting, snow clearance and the management and maintenance of sufficient salt stock levels, are the responsibility of Sligo County Council

Winter service duties, including operational considerations, alert procedures and actions are the responsibility of Sligo County Council

1.1.1 Role of TII

TII are responsible for the following:

- a) Setting the overall policy and objectives on the provision of winter services on the national road network and co-ordination of operations at a regional and national level at times of severe weather.
- b) Overseeing operations management and performance.
- c) Procurement of strategic salt supplies.
- d) Provision of some TII provided depots.
- e) Provision of some winter service vehicles and equipment to Local Authorities.
- f) Provision of a Road Weather Information System (RWIS) to assist Local Authorities in deciding when treatment for frost, ice or snow is required on the national road network.
- g) Liaison with the media.

1.1.2 Role of Sligo County Council

Sligo County Council are responsible for:

- a) Development of the Winter Service Plan.
- b) Implementation of the Winter Service Plan and delivery of the winter service as defined in the plan.
- c) Design of winter service treatment routes.
- d) Liaison with weather forecasting services.
- e) Day to day decision making and operational management.
- f) Provision of all necessary winter service vehicles and equipment, excluding those detailed as being supplied by TII, to undertake and deliver the winter service.
- g) Supply of plant, labour and materials.
- h) Maintenance and operation of vehicles, depots and equipment.
- i) Liaison with TII.
- j) Reporting to TII.

- k) Monitoring and reviewing performance.
- I) Monitoring salt stocks (and stocks of other appropriate materials).
- m) Liaison with neighbouring Managing Organisations to promote a coordinated service.
- n) advising the general public.
- o) reporting to the general public through the elected council.
- p) Liaison with the media.

Network

1.1.3 Description of Network

The winter servicing of the road network in Sligo is prioritised considering the strategic importance of the roads, the volume of traffic on the roads and roads that are important to the region.

1.1.4 Extent of Network

The extent of the road network covered by this Winter Service Plan is shown in the following tables:

County Sligo Roads - Priority Table			
Priority	Road		
1	N4, N15, N16, N17, N59.		
2	Regional Roads – R277, R278, R279 Cliffoney – Mullaghmore, R284, R286, R287, R290, R291, R292, R293, R294, R295, R296, R297, R298, *R361, Collooney – Coolaney – Rockfield road, R 869 (Western Distributor road ,Sligo City)."Old N4 Collooney to Castlebaldwin, The Regional and some Urban roads in Sligo City / Environs (shown on Treatment Routes "B", "E" and "F"). L-14019 – to HSE Centre at Cloonamahon, L-7428-0 (Loop road to St. Angela's College, Clogherevagh), L- 1404-0 - N4 Castlebaldwin to Cloghoge N.S.		
3	Roads not listed on Priority 1 or 2 but have steep gradients in housing estates, junctions with National roads.		

The key interfaces are defined in the Interface Drawings which are included within Appendix B.

Route	Principal Roads included in Route
A	N4 (and Slip Roads along Dual Carriageway), The old N4 Collooney- Castlebaldwin, L-14019 to HSE Centre at Cloonamahon,, L-14043 N4 Castlebaldwin to Cloghoge N.S.
В	N15, N16, R277 in Strandhill and road to the Promenade in Strandhill, R279 Cliffoney – Mullaghmore, R291, R292.
С	N17 (Toberbride – Tubbercurry – Bellaghy), R294 Gorteen – Tubbercurry - Border with Mayo, L-4501-0 (N17 – junction with R294 at Ballyara), Tubbercurry Town Centre Streets, Collooney – Coolaney – Rockfield Roads, R290 Collooney – Ballysadare Bridge, N59 Ballysadare Bridge - Old N4 – Carrowroe Roundabout.
D	N59 Ballysadare Bridge – Mayo Border, R297 Mayo Border – Enniscrone – Easkey – Dromore West, R298 from junction with N59 to junction with R297.
E	R278 Bellanode – Carrickoneileen/Leitrim Border, R286 Bellanode – County Boundary with Leitrim, R287 Gortlownan – Carrowroe, R284 Carrowroe – Border with Roscommon, L-7428 Loop Road to St. Angela's College Clogherevagh.
	* It is proposed to salt the sections of R286, R287 & R288 circuit around Lough Gill via Dromahair in Leitrim on this route also (as requested by Leitrim Co. Co.).
F	Sligo City and Environs including, Molloway Hill – Connaughton Road – Thomas Street – Castle Street – O'Connell Street – Markievicz Road – The Slip – Pearse Road to Carrowroe Roundabout, Mail Coach Road – Adelaide Street-Lord Edward Street – Sligo City Streets and roads in Sligo Environs. R 869 (The new Western Distributor road)
G	R293 / N17 Jn.(Clarkes Bridge) – Roscommon Border, R294 Roscommon Border – Gorteen, R295 Ballymote – Roscommon Border, R296 Junction with R294 – Bunnanadden – Ballymote. The streets of Ballymote, R290 Collooney – Ballintogher – Junction with R287.

Under certain situations, winter service treatments may be undertaken on other adjacent networks.

2. Operations

Introduction

This section of the Winter Service Plan contains detailed operational procedures for delivery of winter services on the road network and details the alert procedures and actions in the event of winter weather on the network.

General Arrangements and Decision Making

2.1.1 Process

The TII provide weather services to assist Sligo County Council and the other Local Authorities in predicting when frost, ice or snow that may occur on the road network. These services are currently provided by a combination of Met Éireann and TII.

The on-call duty engineer has access to the weather forecast information (supplied by Met Eireann) and the weather station measurements (from Vaisala).

There is one weather station in County Sligo. It is located at Lackagh (on the new N4 dual carriageway south of Collooney)

Duty Engineers have access to other weather station information in neighbouring counties e.g. in Leitrim -on N16 at Glencar, in Mayo -on N59 between Ballina and Crossmolina, In Mayo -on N5 near Charlestown, In Roscommon -on N61 near Elphin and in Leitrim-on N15 at Tullaghan.

Road Surface Temperature	Precipitation	Predicted Road Conditions			
remperature		Wet	Wet Patches	Dry	
May fall below 1°C	No rain No hoar frost No Fog	Salt before frost	Salt before frost	No action likely, monitor weather	
	No rain No hoar frost No Fog Expected hoar				
	frost	Salt after rain stops			
	Expected fog				
Expected to fall below 1°C	Expected rain before freezing	Salt before frost,	, as required during r stops	ain and after rain	
	Possible rain				
	Possible hoar frost	Salt before frost		Monitor weather conditions	
	Possible fog				
Expecte	Expected snow		Salt before snowfall		
If appropriate, the decision to undertake precautionary treatments will be adjusted to account for					

residual salt, surface moisture, or prevailing weather conditions (precipitation).

All decisions should be evidence-based and recorded and require careful monitoring and review.

Precautionary evening treatments will generally commence in the evening time. However, this time may change dependent on weather conditions.

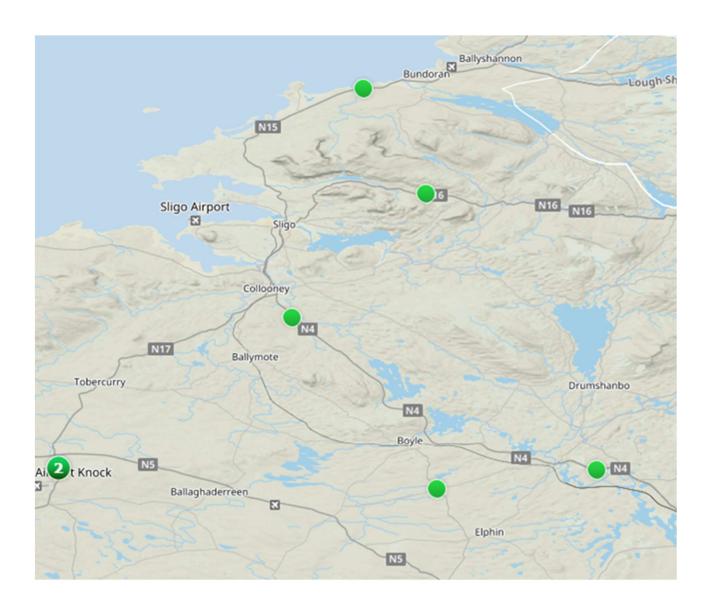
Weather Forecasting and Road Weather Information System

2.1.2 General Arrangements

Sligo County Council obtains weather forecasting service from TII's Road Weather Information System (RWIS) Visala & Met Eireann. The services provided are weather forecasting.

Sligo County Council shall notify TII of any faults or suspected faults on the RWIS by 9:00 a.m. each day at the latest.

2.1.3 Roadside Weather Stations Used by TII's RWIS on Network



Liaison and Communication

The communication of road conditions especially during severe cold/snow spells to the public is very important. Sligo County Council will use the broadcast and print media and its own website to inform the public about road conditions and the Council's Winter Service Plan.

2.1.4 Notification of Treatments

The salting route maps are posted on the Sligo County Council website for the duration of the winter season including summary information from the service plan.

During severe or prolonged cold weather, the Council website will contain frequently updated information on road conditions in the County.

Updates and progress reports about the road conditions may be issued regularly to the local radio stations and newspapers. Sligo County Council advertises emergency contact telephone numbers to deal with out of office time enquiries.

2.2 Health and Safety

It is the objective of Sligo County Council Operations & Maintenance Services Directorate to ensure the health safety and welfare of all employees and persons affected by its activities.

The objective will be achieved by using the Operations & Maintenance Ancillary Health & Safety Statement and the Policy and Procedure for the Management of Winter Maintenance.

This Plan should be read in conjunction with these documents.

Sligo County Council operates a pre-treatment system based on forecasted weather conditions. Sligo County Council will take guidance from the Met Eireann Weather Warning Alerting Service & deploy staff to treat roads on the basis that it is safe and practicable to do so.

2.3 Review

Review meetings will be held quarterly, and typical issues for the review may include:

- Response and treatment times,
- Decision making,
- Command and control,
- Escalation and Winter Service Desk,
- Liaison and communications,
- Weather forecasting and ice prediction,
- Actual weather conditions,
- Operational issues,
- Records,
- Health and safety,
- Human resources,
- Vehicles and plant, including any breakdowns or periods of non-availability,

- De-icing materials,
- Depots and facilities, other issues e.g. traffic flow, neighbouring Managing Organisation's roads,
- Areas for improvement.
- Identified problem areas on the road network.

3. Resources

Introduction

Sligo County Council has the competencies to deal with all situations, ranging from prevention to extreme weather/climatic events and their aftermath.

A roster will be prepared of all drivers, including all Priority 1 & 2 drivers, and an appropriately qualified standby for regular changeover and to provide adequate standby for intensive works during extreme weather conditions.

Adequate salt supplies are in place, and other stocks are on call as necessary. Lines of communication are open to all adjoining authorities to ensure that there is no conflict in terms of operations or omissions.

Depots and Facilities

3.1.1 Available Resources

- Sligo County Council operates 7 Salting Routes.
- 6 No. 6m³, 2 No. 9m³ salt spreaders are normally used.
- Six salt spreaders are Romaquip demountable type mounted on trucks and two Volvo trucks with salters.

3.1.2 Storage Locations

Route	Location	Type (barn)	Max Capacity (tonnes)
All	Drumaskibbole Machinery Yard	Roofed Salt	850
All	Union Quarry	Roofed Salt	1150

Winter Service Duty Engineers' Roster for the Period 14th October 2024 to 30th April 2025

Local Authority Name: _____Sligo County Council_____

Week starting Monday	Duty Engineer's Initials						
14/10/2024	PH	02/12/2024	NH	20/01/2025	ТК	10/03/2025	PH
21/10/2024	NH	09/12/2024	ТК	27/01/2025	PH	17/03/2025	NH
28/10/2024	ТК	16/12/2024	PH	03/02/2025	NH	24/03/2025	ТК
04/11/2024	PH	23/12/2024	NH	10/02/2025	ТК	31/03/2025	PH
11/11/2024	NH	30/12/2024	ТК	17/02/2025	PH	07/04/2025	NH
18/11/2024	тк	06/01/2025	PH	24/02/2025	NH	14/04/2025	ТК
25/11/2024	PH	13/01/2025	NH	03/03/2025	ТК	21/04/2025	PH

Duty Engineer's Name & Initials	Office Phone No	Office E-mail Address
Noel Haran - NH	071 9111486	nharan@sligococo.ie
Paul Hampson - PH	071 9111487	phampson@sligococo.ie
Thomas Kerins - TK	071 9111494	tkerins@sligococo.ie

Appendix B - Routes maps

Map 1 - Road Priorities Map

- Map 2 Route A
- Map 3 Route B
- Map 4 Route C
- Map 5 Route D
- Map 6 Route E
- Map 7 Route F (Sligo City and Environs)
- Map 8 Route G

