

Scrutiny Board	Economy, Skills, Transport and Environment Scrutiny Board
Report Title	Recommendations Arising from the Economy, Skills, Transport and Environment Scrutiny Board Spotlight Session on Winter Maintenance Plans
Date of Meeting	Wednesday, 18 March 2026
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Lead Officer	James McLaughlin Assistant Chief Executive
Identify exempt information and exemption category	Not applicable
Appendices (if any)	No appendices

1. Executive Summary

- 1.1 This report presents the recommendations arising from the Economy, Skills, Transport and Environment Scrutiny Board Spotlight Session held on 25 February 2026 regarding winter highway maintenance and preparedness with a particular focus on grit bins.

2. Recommendation

To consider and approve the recommendations arising from the Economy, Skills, Transport and Environment Scrutiny Board Spotlight Session which was held on 25 February 2026:-

- 2.1 That the Cabinet Member for Environment and Highways reviews the overall criteria for the installation of new grit bins including the proximity to other already well-established grit bin locations.
- 2.2 That the Cabinet Member for Environment and Highways arranges for the training and development of existing Council staff to support winter maintenance works during extreme winter events.
- 2.3 That the Cabinet Member for Environment and Highways creates an online map detailing the location of all grit bins in Sandwell.

- 2.4 That the Cabinet Member for Environment and Highways arranges for the implementation of “information sheets” to all grit bins to provide guidance on how to utilise grit bins correctly.

3. Background and Context

- 3.1 Following heavy snowfall and icy conditions in the recent winter months, members of the Economy, Skills, Transport and Environment Scrutiny Board arranged a spotlight session to review the winter maintenance plans in place with a particular focus on grit bins.
- 3.2 On 25 February 2026, the Board met with Highways officers and the Executive Director - Place to discuss the current arrangements for grit bins including refill schedules, repair schedules and how new locations for grit bins were identified.
- 3.3 Members raised several recommendations and also identified to officers the misuse of current grit bins and how this could be solved going forward.

4. Consultation

- 4.1 None required.

5. Financial Implications

- 5.1 No financial implications as a direct result of this report.

6. Legal and Governance Implications

- 6.1 Under Section 9FE of the Local Government Act 2000, if a Scrutiny committee makes recommendations to the Cabinet, the Cabinet must respond in writing.
- 6.2 The response must be provided within two months from the date the request is received.

7. Risks

- 7.1 No direct risks arise as a result of this report.

8. Equality and Diversity Implications (including the public sector equality duty)

- 8.1 No direct Equality and Diversity Implications arise as a result of this report.

9. Other Relevant Implications

- 9.1 No other relevant implications arise as a result of this report.

10. Background Documents

10.1 None.

11. How does this deliver the Outcomes in the Council Plan?

11.1 If accepted, the recommendations support the Council Plan by ensuring that residents have access to safe and well-maintained roads.