

NORTH YORKSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

16 MAY 2007

STATEMENT OF THE BUSINESS AND ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES PORTFOLIO HOLDER COUNTY COUNCILLOR PETER SOWRAY

HIGHWAYS

A19 Study in Selby

A wide ranging traffic study has commenced for the section of the A19 through Selby district excluding the section that passes through Selby town. The aim of the study is to identify safety, congestion and economic regeneration related improvements on the A19 for consideration for future LTP or development related funding. It will assess the current safety and congestion issues on the road as evidenced by accident records, traffic flows, speed surveys and site observations and will consider matters such as the difficulty of access onto the A19 from side road accesses to local communities. The study is programmed for completion in September 2007 and will include discussions with local members, parish councils, Selby District Council and the Selby Area Committee to identify any specific issues for investigation followed by feedback on the outcomes.

School Travel Plans and Walking Buses

The County Council continues to make excellent progress on the production of school travel plans and by the end of March this year all schools that were eligible for grant funding from government had completed a school travel plan. This has resulted in an additional £1,589,773 being made available to 306 North Yorkshire schools for on-site transport related capital improvement schemes. In June 2007 the final 87 schools are expected to receive approximately £400,000.

In December 2006 the government announced grants of £1,000/£500 available for schools to bid for to develop walking buses/other walking initiatives. The schools were responsible for making the bids, however, a proactive approach from Business & Environmental Services Travel Awareness officers has helped ensure that 180 schools in North Yorkshire were successful equating to additional funding of £112,000 for initiatives that will help encourage more children walk to school. North Yorkshire has received the largest grant funding allocation and has the highest total of successful bids. In comparison Birmingham received only £45,000.

Member Contact

In order to ensure that Members receive a swift response from Area Offices each has been issued with a special telephone number. If Members will please use the number they should be assured of a 24 hour response. Any Member who is still having issues in contacting area offices or not obtaining replies should inform the Director.

Members have also been circulated with a questionnaire asking their views on our highways and transportation service. If they have not already done so could they please reply as it will help direct priorities within the service.

Thirsk Area Highways Depot

North Yorkshire County Council has now formally moved its Area office and highway maintenance depot, including salting and gritting operations from a residential area of Thirsk to a new, multi-million pound purpose built office and yard with Salt Barn on the Thirsk Industrial Park.

As well as making winter maintenance operations in the Vale of York and on the western moors more efficient, the move means people living near the old highways depot can enjoy early morning peace and quiet. When the old depot was constructed it was away from residential properties, however over time people have come to live in close proximity and it is clear the operations are noisy during anti-social hours.

The new depot incorporates a 10,000 square foot salt barn and a 5,000 square foot office building for staff and partnering contractors. Sharing accommodation with Jacobs and Balfour Beatty means that we are more space efficient, can communicate easier and share resources such as admin staff, plotters and printers. With storage space for some 6,000 tonnes of salt, it will become the main service centre for salting around 1,800 miles of road between York and Teeside."

Keeping the salt under cover is much better environmentally, and because we are able to use less salt when it is dry, the service will be more cost-effective.

Skipton Bus Station

As part of the LTP programme for 2007/8 and 2008/9 the county council has committed £1.2m to refurbish Skipton Bus Station. This has been possible because our LTP and our LTP delivery reports were graded as excellent and we were rewarded with an extra £2m to spend on integrated transport. We have asked our partner consultants Jacobs to produce detailed design proposals which will be used as the basis for discussions with bus operators and Craven District Council who own the site.

County Councillor Peter Sowray
12 February 2007