

NORTH YORKSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

10 OCTOBER 2007

STATEMENT OF THE BUSINESS AND ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES PORTFOLIO HOLDER COUNTY COUNCILLOR JOHN FORT

HIGHWAYS

Summer Floods

Flooding during June/July incurred costs to the County Council of £600K. The highway service response was professional, efficient and effective earning widespread praise. A key area of damage was the Kex Gill landslip, this caused long diversions through Otley with associated congestion. The damage did not meet the Government criteria for additional funding and hence repairs have been funded from within the Business and Environmental Services Directorate budget.

Operation Helical

Operation Helical which was run by the police through July, August and September to target road traffic offences following the number of fatalities occurring in North Yorkshire earlier in the year, is part funded through the 95 Alive partnership using the Road Safety Grant. In July and August almost 2000 motorists were dealt with for speeding offences, over 1000 motorists were fined for failure to wear seat belts, 300 motorists for using a mobile phone whilst driving and 42 people for driving without a licence.

Shocking statistics but an indication of the effectiveness of the initiative. The 95 Alive partnership will discuss with the police the outcome of the operation and the way forward.

Sutton Bank

Sutton Bank on the A170 was closed for 5 days from the 17 September in order to carry out essential maintenance works. Given the nature of the Sutton Bank it is necessary to close the road annually to check the rock face over hanging the road and clear loose material and vegetation.

In order to make best use of the closure other works were carried out at the same time including, gully cleaning, grass cutting, crash barrier repairs, drainage works, sign repairs and cleaning, as well as repairs to the carriageway surface damaged by HGVs changing gear and struggling with traction.

During the closure we have introduced four vehicle activated signs that are triggered by HGVs to advise them of the need to stay in a low gear. Sutton Bank is regularly blocked by HGVs stuck on the hill purely because they did not stay in a low gear. This initiative is aimed at reducing the number of hold ups on the bank for which we have been criticised in the past for our perceived lack of action.

As a result of the reduced traffic on the A170 we also carried out repair work to Sutton Bridge in Sutton under Whitestone Cliff.

Depot Improvements

The depot improvement programme continues with the recent completion of the renovation work at Selby. The premises can now accommodate all the staff from Selby and Fulford offices including Balfour Beatty and Jacobs staff. The new depot at Kirkby Misperton will be completed later this month and will accommodate staff from Kirkbymoorside, Pickering and Malton. The new depot will also include a large salt barn to allow the use of dry salt for winter maintenance.

INTEGRATED PASSENGER TRANSPORT

SKIPTON BUS STATION

The council is about to publish its draft plans for the £1.2m redevelopment of Skipton bus station. The plans will be published in local newspapers and members of the public will have an opportunity to discuss them at an open day in Skipton Town Hall.

The plans show a completely new layout for the Waller Hill Site and combine an improved bus station with car parking and a taxi rank.

Key features of the new layout are:

- Seven bus stands, including provision for community transport vehicles and national express services.
- Each stand provides easy access to buses from raised bus boarder kerbs.
- Covered waiting facilities with seating.
- New toilet facilities.
- Improved CCTV
- Taxi rank for 13 vehicles
- Cycle stands
- Motor cycle parking

Comments from members of the public will be considered as part of the final detailed design work. It is expected that construction work will start in Spring 2008.

County Councillor John Fort
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