

**NORTH YORKSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL****14 DECEMBER 2011****STATEMENT OF THE HIGHWAYS AND PLANNING SERVICES PORTFOLIO  
HOLDER COUNTY COUNCILLOR GARETH DADD****HIGHWAYS AND TRANSPORTATION****HIGHWAYS MAINTENANCE CONTRACT (HMC 2012)**

Members will recall from my briefing in October 2011, the mobilisation process for HMC 2012 is well underway following the contract award to Ringway.

A detailed presentation was given on HMC 2012 at the Members Seminar on 19 October 2011, and since then a joint mobilisation team has been established with Council Officers and Ringway working closely together to develop and implement a joint Mobilisation Plan – the plan details over 1000 separate activities covering 'Workstreams' such as Operations, Personnel, Finance, ICT Systems etc.

This level of robust planning and governance proved effective through the procurement process and will continue until the contract is operational.

Staff are working closely with Balfour Beatty to 'de-mobilise' the current contract effectively to ensure essential services continue to be delivered on the ground to the end of March 2012.

Balfour Beatty have given a firm commitment to provide excellent service delivery right up until the end of the current contract, in particular emphasising their commitment to winter maintenance.

**A64 BRAMBLING FIELDS JUNCTION IMPROVEMENT**

Significant progress has been made with regard to the delivery of the A 64 Brambling Fields Junction Improvement scheme. The scheme was granted planning approval by the Planning and Regulatory and Functions Committee on 30 August and a contract has now been let by the Highways Agency to Birse Civils Contractors with the main works programmed to commence on site in January. The project will add an off-slip road to the existing Brambling Fields junction on the A64, close to Malton and Norton. This will mean that eastbound traffic heading for Norton and the East Riding can use the A64 and bypass Malton to reach its destination, instead of leaving the A64 earlier and making a stop-start journey through the centre of Malton to cross the River Derwent and the York-Scarborough railway line into Norton.

The project is joint funded by the County Council and Ryedale District Council and has been delivered as a result of close working with the District Council and the Highways Agency. It is expected that construction work will take around 9 months to complete.

## **WINTER DAMAGE REPAIRS 2011/12**

Members will recall that the last two winters have been particularly severe. This not only placed a heavy burden on our winter maintenance service, but it also left a legacy of significant damage to sections of the road network. As a result, over £10m was spent on repairing winter damaged roads in the financial year 2010/11, which included £2.6m of funding made available from central government.

The government made a further £6.6m of funding available for the current financial year, to which County Council funds have been added, to enable us to carry out a programme of just over £11m of works specifically targeted at repairing damage caused by the severe winters. This programme will not address all the damaged roads (which equates to approximately £36m of accelerated damage in total), but it will deliver a significant improvement in the condition of the network.

Much of this programme has either already been delivered or is currently on the ground to be completed this month. Works are being delivered across the county, including high-profile schemes on the A65 Skipton Bypass and A19 Thirsk to York roads and packages of schemes within the Harrogate and Scarborough conurbations. The need to co-ordinate our works with utility schemes, particularly a major gas infrastructure programme in Scarborough, has been a high priority although given the extent of works some disruption has been inevitable.

## **PLANNING SERVICES**

### **PUBLIC INQUIRY - INSPECTOR COMMENDS COMMUNITY**

A formal Public Inquiry was held recently in relation to a planning application for a proposed production well, pipelines and a gas processing facility on land both partly within the North York Moors National Park and partly within the County Council's administrative boundary. Both Authorities resolved to recommend refusal of the application.

In closing comments at the end of the Public Inquiry, the Planning Inspector, Mr Edward Simpson, chose to specifically address the Action Group (AGHAST!) and the members of the public attending the Inquiry and commended them and their fellow villagers on their conduct, patience and absolute consideration for others in allowing people to speak when it was their turn.

The formal proceedings closed on 8 November 2011 following a well attended inquiry where hundreds of people participated with many reading aloud their own personal statements.

The County Council received a letter on Thursday 24 November 2011, from the Planning Inspectorate, anticipating that the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government, the Right Honourable Mr Eric Pickles expects to make a decision in respect of this Appeal on or before the 8 May 2012.

GARETH DADD