

NORTH YORKSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

10 OCTOBER 2012

**STATEMENT OF THE HIGHWAYS AND PLANNING SERVICES PORTFOLIO HOLDER
COUNTY COUNCILLOR GARETH DADD**

Winter

I'd like to remind Members that we officially started this year's winter maintenance service on 1 October 2012. We have made the usual preparations which has included making sure we have all our salt barns full to maximise our salt stocks for the start of the winter. We hold 55,000T of salt and have access to further supplies throughout the winter season from Cleveland Potash. Members will also recall that the majority of our salt is now stored under cover which keeps it dry and means that less will need to be used during icy conditions.

Members will also recall that we launched our Community Engagement Scheme last winter and I am pleased to report that around 30 Parish Councils have taken up the scheme. This year we are also offering a scheme which groups of residents can use say if they wanted to come together to clear a particular street. We are also looking to introduce a scheme which business communities can use. Details of these schemes are being circulated to all Members and will appear on the website.

As is normal practice, the Corporate Director and BES Executive Members have considered any requests for gritting route amendments received during the course of the year. As a result some minor changes have been made but overall the gritting routes are as they have been in previous years. Unlike other services affected by the ongoing financial restrictions, I am pleased to confirm that the winter service has not been reduced and remains at the same level seen in previous years, reflecting the high priority we give to the service. In fact we cover over 50% of the network which is amongst the highest coverage in the country

A684 Bedale Aiskew Leeming Bar Bypass

Members will recall that at the meeting of the Executive on 17 January it was agreed to accept the DfT funding offer and take the A684 Bedale Aiskew Leeming Bar Bypass scheme forward. The DfT subsequently granted Programme Entry status for the scheme.

Good progress has been made on the scheme with Planning Approval being granted on 28 August. The next stage in the progression of the project will be the consultation on the Compulsory Purchase Order and the Side Road Order which, at the time of writing, was due to commence in September. The scheme is still on track and on budget for a start of construction in autumn 2014 and further updates will be reported to the Executive as the scheme progresses through the detailed design and procurement stages.

Surface Dressing

This year we have delivered a successful summer surface dressing programme. Each year we spend around £6 million on surface dressing which is the most important process used in the treatment of roads in North Yorkshire. It is ideal at restoring skid resistance and maintaining the condition of the road surface whilst costing a fraction of other treatments which is clearly vital in the current financial climate. The process needs to be carried out in good weather and unfortunately the wet summer has disrupted the progression. However I am pleased to confirm that by the end of the season the full programme of 2 million square metres was completed.

Street Lighting Energy Reduction Project Update

The street lighting energy reduction programme started in Harrogate during July and to date almost 4000 units have been converted to part night operation. There are an additional 2100 units to be completed in Harrogate and Knaresborough with Scarborough also programmed for completion by the end of January 2013.

The process will stop at the end of January 2013 and will recommence at the end of May following the local elections. It is then intended to implement the energy reduction process in Hambleton and Richmondshire throughout the remainder of the 2013/14 financial year. Members in those areas play an essential role in the consultation process within their divisions – we are heavily reliant on their local knowledge and leadership.

Allerton Waste Recovery Park

As this is a planning committee determination, I am sure Members will realise I will not be in a position to answer any questions on the detail of the application. My role has been to provide the resources and skills to enable this to be determined openly and fairly, with Members of the committee having all relevant information to make their decision and allowing comments from interested parties, for example, public and local Parish Councils, to be made and considered.

Flooding

As I write this statement, we are dealing with flooding across a large part of the county caused by some of the heaviest and prolonged rainfall we have seen, with some areas experiencing over a month's rainfall in one day. A number of bridges and roads have been closed with staff working round the clock as part of a co-ordinated multi-agency response to protect life and property and to minimise disruption. Once again I would like to pass on my thanks to all staff involved on behalf of the County Council.

GARETH DADD