

NORTH YORKSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

12 NOVEMBER 2014

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

Highways and Transportation

Winter Service

The County Council is ready for winter and all the necessary preparations are in place to deal with any frost, ice or snow. We have 55,000 tonnes of salt stockpiled which can be used by our fleet of 89 front-line gritters, which are supported in snow conditions by over 130 farmers and other local contractors. Members will recall that we routinely salt over half the County's roads in icy weather which is proportionally one of the highest by any County Council. Despite budget reductions across the highways service, the commitment to dealing with winter conditions remains the highest priority and the gritting route coverage remains at the level seen in previous years.

In preparation for the coming season, a new salt store has been built in Hawes. The County Council has worked with Hawes Auction Mart to build the store which will be used to aid routine operations and assist in our response to snow conditions. This improvement in our operations in one of the most remote parts of the county is an indication of our commitment to the service and will, I'm sure, be welcomed by those who use the roads in the Upper Dales.

The County Council is continuing its winter community partnership scheme, which gives parish councils, town councils and other community groups the opportunity to support an enhanced level of maintenance by bringing together volunteers who are willing to take part in clearing snow and treating roads and footways. Several partnerships already exist. The support offered includes health and safety operational training, advice and guidance and advance notification of severe weather using a specialist forecasting service.

Whitby Park and Ride

The Whitby Park and Ride site is now fully open following the completion of the building and only some planting and landscaping is left to complete, which is best done in Autumn. It started operating on Good Friday (18 April) and, during this first season, a number of surveys have been undertaken to monitor the impact of the Park and Ride scheme. Up to the end of August over 98,000 passengers used the park and ride 'town' bus service which is broadly in line with the forecast for the first year of operation.

Aligned to this scheme were a series of on-street parking management measures in Whitby and Sandsend. The parking data shows that the turn-over occupancy of spaces has increased and that visitors wishing to stay longer in Whitby may now be using the park and ride.

Obviously the data for the full season up to October is still being analysed and more detailed conclusions will be presented to the local Area Committee in due course, however, the indications so far are that the scheme is working well.

Grass Cutting

Since my last update you have all received information confirming details of where we shall continue to cut grass in urban areas and of the arrangements in place that will enable you to make representations on behalf of your parish councils to the Corporate Director in consultation with myself. The representations can only refer to the detail of the cuts or not, the principle already having been approved by this Council as part of previous budget setting approvals.

Highway Information

Our highway inventory mapping project continues, in the very near future, rather than having to refer to paper plans we will all be able to view highway information, such as areas of verge to be cut, over the internet on our web-site. Members will appreciate that there are significant benefits to all our stakeholders, contractors and partners alike as a consequence of making this sort of information easily available.

A684 Bedale Aiskew Leeming Bar Bypass

Members will be aware that the Department for Transport gave funding approval for the scheme in July 2014 and the contract was awarded to Wills Bros Ltd in August 2014.

The contractor now has a presence in Northallerton and has commenced detailed design of the scheme. Fencing of the scheme has started in preparation for commencing archaeological excavations shortly. The main works are planned to start in February 2015 with construction of the two roundabouts on the A684 at each end of the scheme in order to establish access to the site to construct the rest of the bypass. Officers are currently in discussions with the contractor about the details of an exhibition at which members of the public will have the opportunity to ask questions about the implementation of the scheme.

Planning Services

York Potash

Members will recall that I gave an update in July in relation to the revised proposals for the York Potash development. I can now confirm that a planning application for the mine and underground mineral transport system (by tunnel and conveyor belt) was re-submitted as anticipated on 30 September, although some application documents were subsequently amended and resubmitted. The application has been submitted in parallel to the North York Moors National Park Authority, and to Redcar and Cleveland Council. Negotiations are commencing between the applicant and County Council in relation to a package of developer contributions and mitigations. Initial views on the proposals are now being sought. Separate planning applications will be submitted by the applicant to Scarborough Borough Council for the required park-and-ride facilities and for temporary workers accommodation, and it is expected that this will happen during November. Meanwhile, proposals for the processing and harbour facilities on Teesside will be dealt with as a Nationally Significant Infrastructure Project and it is anticipated that this will be lodged later this year. I will ensure that the County Council makes its views in relation to the proposal known at appropriate stages in the planning process and keep you advised of the outcome in due course and any matters of significance arising.

GARETH DADD