

NORTH YORKSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

20 MAY 2015

STATEMENT OF THE HIGHWAYS AND PLANNING SERVICES PORTFOLIO HOLDER
COUNTY COUNCILLOR GARETH DADD**Highways and Transportation****Surface Dressing**

A key element of any local authority's road maintenance strategy is the use of preventative maintenance treatments, prevention being significantly cheaper than repair. In North Yorkshire we have retained a significant surface dressing programme which has allowed us to keep our roads in a safe and serviceable condition for longer by using this relatively low cost treatment. Surface dressing prevents a road surface from being brittle and cracking, which is the start of the potholing process and it stops water ingress damaging the road.

A lot of effort has gone in to realising good capital settlements for North Yorkshire in the last few years and this has meant that surface dressing budgets are now able to increase. This year around 3 million sqm of roads are in the programme and next year this should rise again to around 3.5 million sqm. This is good news for North Yorkshire's roads and represents an increase of over 50% compared with recent years and the dressing crews are already on the ground making inroads into this programme. The increase this year will enable us to surface dress over 500km of the road network.

A684 Bedale Aiskew Leeming Bar Bypass

The contract for the design and construction of the scheme was awarded to Wills Bros. in August 2014. The initial phase included detailed design of the scheme, discharge of planning conditions and preparation works including fencing, trial trenching and archaeological excavations. A "Sod Cutting" ceremony was held on 25 February 2015 to mark the commencement of the main works. A public exhibition was also held at Bedale Hall on 13 and 14 March 2015 which was well attended with much of the feedback from the public being positive.

Work has now commenced on the roundabouts at each end of the scheme and it is currently expected that these will be completed and open to traffic in July/August 2015. This will necessitate up to 4 weeks of traffic management on the A684 to complete the tie in works.

Realignment of the link road between J51 of the A1(M) and Leases Road will necessitate a closure of Leases Road from July 2015 for up to 6 months though the contractor will try to reduce this. During this period traffic to Leeming Bar Industrial Estate will be diverted along the local access road. The new Coneythorpe services will still be accessible from Junction 51 via a temporary access which will also be available for use by Procters coaches. The scheme is on target to be completed in Autumn 2016.

A174 Sandsend Road Coast Protection and Slope Stabilisation

The contract was awarded to Balfour Beatty and Royal Haskoning with a start date of 19 January 2015. The scheme costs approximately £9.3M and is being jointly funded by the County Council and the Environment Agency. The project involves the construction of approximately 800m of concrete stepped sea defences, and supporting infrastructure such as public access stairs, stabilisation of the coastal slopes above Sandsend Road and the infilling of Raithwaite Gill.

Detailed design is almost complete and it is expected that works on the slope stabilisation element will commence in June. To reduce the impact on the western end of the scheme

during the holiday season an innovative method of construction will be used for the revetment. A crane will be located permanently at the midpoint of the scheme which will lift all precast concrete units on to rails located on the pre prepared area for the revetment. The units will then be pushed along the rails to the appropriate location. This will avoid the need to continually resite the crane and reduce the impact of crane operations and deliveries on the village end of the scheme. The scheme is on target to be completed in April 2016.

Highways Grass Cutting

In February the Executive approved changes to the County Council's urban grass cutting standards (roads with a speed limit of 40mph or less) as part of the 2020 North Yorkshire savings programme. The changes mean that funding will only be provided for urban grass cutting that is required for visibility and safety purposes with no funding being provided for amenity urban grass cutting. There is no change to the rural grass cutting service (roads with a speed limit greater than 40 mph). A number of parish councils cut urban grass on behalf of the County Council and receive a payment in return. At the time of writing we are in the process of finalising the arrangements for 2015/16 as some parishes needed to hold a full parish council meeting before deciding whether to continue to cut grass. It is anticipated that the changes to the grass cutting service will achieve an annual saving of approximately £500k however, this year is a transitional year as an incentive payment has been offered to parishes to encourage as many as possible to continue to cut grass and indeed a number of parishes have indicated that they will start to cut grass in future when previously they did not. The County Council also has urban grass cutting agreements with Harrogate and Scarborough Borough Councils and at the time of writing these are still in operation and future arrangements are being finalised.

Selby Bypass

Major highway maintenance works began on A63 Selby Bypass on 20 April 2015. The works are required due to the severe premature failure of the road which was constructed by the Highways Agency (now known as Highways England). The works require a full closure of the road and we are working hard to complete the scheme as soon as possible. The scheme will address the worst section of the bypass between the A1041 roundabout and the A19 Greencore Roundabout, Barlby and involve deep repair and reinstatement of the carriageway and will also include the resurfacing of Selby Swing Bridge. Further works are required to the remaining parts of the bypass and it is currently planned that these will be carried out during the 2016/17 financial year with enhanced inspection and repair arrangements continuing in the interim period. The current scheme costs approximately £3m and we are still in discussions with Highways England with a view to the Selby Bypass works ultimately being carried out at nil net cost to the County Council.

Planning Services

York Potash

The North York Moors National Park Authority reports that it has now received most responses to its recent consultation in relation to further Environmental Information, and officers are finalising the assessment of the York Potash planning application including having further discussions with the applicant regarding the draft Section 106 planning agreement. The National Park Authority has Local Council elections on 7 May which will result in it having a number of new Members. It aims to determine the application as soon as possible after its new Members have been appointed and completed the induction process required for them to be able to participate fully in a planning meeting. The date for the meeting will be posted on the York Potash page of the Authority's website as soon as it is set.

GARETH DADD