

NORTH YORKSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

20 JULY 2016

**STATEMENT OF THE HIGHWAYS, ROAD SAFETY, ACCESS TO THE COUNTRYSIDE
(INCL BROADBAND, MOBILE PHONE COVERAGE) AND PASSENGER TRANSPORT
PORTFOLIO HOLDER COUNTY COUNCILLOR DON MACKENZIE****Major schemes**

I am very pleased to report excellent progress with three major schemes, which have featured in my statements to you in recent months, and to give details of a new one.

A684 Bedale Aiskew Leeming Bar Bypass

This 4.3km long bypass is on target for completion by the end of next month. Most of the major works relating to the scheme are almost complete and finishing touches are already under way. It is likely that this major highways improvement project will come in under budget. This authority's investment of £5.4m in the £34m scheme will be repaid many times over in benefits for large parts of the county and, in particular, for the Northern Dales.

A174 Sandsend Road Coast Protection and Slope Stabilisation

The concrete revetment is complete and final drainage and landscaping works adjacent to this are taking place now. Additional parking spaces have recently been completed. This major scheme is on budget.

Tadcaster Bridge

Work has started on piling in the river for the pier foundation and to provide future scour protection. Each stage of the rebuilding programme is being approved by the Environment Agency. The arches will be rebuilt in August. Matching stone is currently being quarried.

We have been allocated grant funding from the YNYER LEP of £1.4 million to widen the bridge, a measure which will increase flood protection and provide a better facility for pedestrians. These improvement works will need Listed Building and Planning Consent. The Executive will be asked at its meeting on 26 July to give formal approval to accept the grant.

Dalton Industrial Estate – Bridge and Highway Improvement

We have been awarded grant funding of £1.8m from the YNYER LEP towards the costs of a scheme to replace Dalton Bridge and to raise the adjacent highway. Both the bridge and the highway have regularly been affected by flooding to the great detriment of local businesses. This project will bring major, much-needed improvements to access and flood protection for the Dalton Industrial Estate. The programme is in partnership with local businesses and Hambleton District Council and targets economic growth. A report seeking formal approval to accept the grant is to be considered by the Executive on 26 July.

Confirmation of 2017/18 Capital Programme

The 2016/17 Capital Programme is well underway. In addition to the regular activities, we are undertaking additional works from new funding sources as follows:

The Flood Recovery Fund is being spent on 21 specific locations where flood damage occurred as a result of the winter storms.

The additional Local Growth Fund allocation for highways maintenance is being spent on over 100 roads leading to our growth towns whilst the additional Pothole Action Fund grant is being spent carrying out patch repairs across the County.

The Capital Programme for 2017/18 has now been approved. As in previous years, the focus is on road maintenance for which we have allocated £38m. There is an additional £2.1m set aside for bridges and other structures, with further substantial sums for signs and lines and for street lighting.

Full details of the 2017/18 programme will be sent to Members and the BES Director will be announcing a series of meetings to take place in September and October at which local matters can be discussed with officers.

Road Casualties 2015

We have recently published the confirmed road casualty statistics for 2015 and the number of people killed on North Yorkshire's roads is the lowest since modern records began. There were 31 fatalities, compared to 40 in 2014.

More people are cycling on our roads, and so we are investing in programmes to reduce and prevent casualties with specific focus on raising drivers' awareness of cyclists on popular routes. These include posters, information sources, advertisements and online advice to all road users.

North Yorkshire Flood Risk Strategy

The recent programme of visits to Area Committees provided a good opportunity for the Flood Risk Management team to set out how we are applying the North Yorkshire Flood Risk Strategy to our review of the December floods. Valuable local information was gained.

Broadband and Mobile Telephony

SFNY has commenced its procurement process for Phase 3 of the expansion of superfast broadband provision to homes and businesses. This latest phase has a contract value of £20.5m, of which £12.5m is provided by NYCC. By the end of Phase 2, we will have connected about 91% of premises in the county to superfast broadband, and expect the latest phase to take that figure up to about 96%.

It is understandable that communities which have not yet received high quality broadband feel even more isolated as their number diminishes. For that reason, every effort is being made to keep our residents informed and to make them aware of alternatives to wired connections. We are also meeting with mobile phone operators at the highest level to explore how NYCC can facilitate and encourage more rapid expansion of 4G coverage as a potential, additional means of improving connectivity in all parts of the county.

DON MACKENZIE