

NORTH YORKSHIRE
LOCAL ACCESS FORUM

21st AUGUST 2013

HIGHWAYS AND TRANSPORTATION - CONSULTATION WITH THE
LOCAL ACCESS FORUM

1.0 PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to set out a list of schemes and policies which it is recommended that the LAF be consulted on in the current financial year (2013/2014)

2.0 BACKGROUND

- 2.1 As you will recall at a meeting in May 2012 the LAF agreed a protocol with the Highways and Transportation Service Unit of the County Council for consultation on Highways and Transportation Improvement Schemes and Policies where they were judged to have a significant impact on the rights of way network. A copy of the agreed protocol is attached as Appendix 1 for your information.
- 2.2 The programme of highway improvement schemes and strategies and policies that will be reviewed in the current year has now been confirmed. The purpose of this report is therefore to inform the LAF of the details of this and to recommend which schemes and strategies they may wish to be consulted on.

3.0 2013/2014 TRANSPORT IMPROVEMENT SCHEMES

- 3.1 The Integrated Transport Capital Programme for 2013/2014 has a value of approximately £2.3m. Of this £720k is in the form of block allocations including Accident Investigation and Prevention (AIP) schemes and relatively small scale Signs, Lines and Traffic Regulation Order (TRO) schemes. The AIP allocations are generally used on schemes targeted at high risk accidents sites and where fatal accidents occur. As such schemes are identified and developed throughout the year. Should any schemes meet the criteria set out in the protocol the LAF will be included in the scheme consultation process. As with the AIP allocation schemes to be funded from the Signs Lines and TRO's allocation are identified throughout the year generally in response to traffic problems identified by the public and parish councils. It is highly unlikely that any of these types of schemes will have any significant impact on the rights of way network.

- 3.2 A further £600k of the programme is allocated as a local contribution towards the County Councils successful Local Sustainable Transport Fund bids. Further details of this are included in section 3.5 below.
- 3.3 There is also a further allocation of £250k for the refurbishment of traffic signals and signal controlled crossings. As these are purely for refurbishment there will be no impact on any rights of way.
- 3.4 None of the 16 specifically named schemes included in the current transport improvements programme meet the criteria for consultation with the LAF as set out in the protocol.
- 3.5 As stated in 3.2 above in 2013/2014 the programme includes a £600k allocation as match funding towards the County Councils Whitby and Harrogate – Local Sustainable Transport Fund (LSTF) packages. The Whitby package consists primarily of the provision of a new park and ride site and services on the A171 at Cross Butts Farm west of Whitby. This scheme was originally included in the transport improvements programme in 2010 but work was discontinued due to funding cuts. The successful 2012 LSTF bid has allowed us to deliver the scheme and construction of the site and associated access roundabout is due to commence in Sept / Oct this year. The construction of the park and ride site and access roundabout has no impact on any rights of way.
- 3.6 The Whitby package also includes an allocation to improve a number of rights of way for cycling and walking in the Esk Valley area of the North York Moors National Park. These schemes are being developed and implemented by the North York Moors National Park Authority and any engagement on these schemes will be carried out by them and with the North York Moors LAF.
- 3.7 The Harrogate LSTF package consists mainly of improvements for pedestrians and cyclists in Harrogate Town centre and on the A661 corridor, improvements at traffic signals to improve traffic flow and give greater priority to buses and travel awareness type projects primarily aimed and promoting sustainable transport for exhibition and conference visitors to the town.
- 3.8 A programme of specific schemes for the pedestrian and cycle improvements was approved by the Corporate Director of Business and Environmental Services at a meeting on 19 July 2013. The only scheme included in the programme which may have an impact on rights of way are the proposals for a 'Showground Greenway' which is intended to link the Great

Yorkshire Showground and A661 with the Hornbeam Park Railway Station. At this stage the details of the route have yet to be decided due to on-going negotiations with landowners. However, in accordance the protocol, when there are firm proposals for this route it is recommended that the LAF are included in all consultations that are undertaken.

- 3.8 Members of the LAF will be aware that it is normal practice to consult on all transport improvement schemes. This consultation normally includes rights of way user groups such as The Ramblers Association, The British Horse Society and the Cyclists Touring Club. Regardless of whether the County Council consult with the LAF on an improvement scheme this consultation with user groups will continue.

4.0 2013/2014 REVIEW OF TRANSPORT STRATEGIES AND POLICIES

- 4.1 The current programme for the review and renewal of transport policies include the development of a protocol on 'The Assessment of Formal Pedestrian Crossings'. It is possible that this may have some impact on rights of way and as such it is recommended that the LAF be included in the consultation process.

- 4.2 The current Local Transport Plan (LTP3) was adopted in 2010 and covers the period 2011-16. In line with the commitment in the LTP the County Council will be carrying out a mid-term review this year. However, given the current financial position there are very few changes envisaged and it is therefore intended that the review be very 'light touch'. The review is intended to start during the autumn and the LAF will be included in all relevant consultations carried as part of the review process.

5.0 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 There are no significant financial implications arising from this report.

6.0 EQUALITIES

- 6.1 There are no significant Equalities issues arising from this report.

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PROTOCOL FOR CONSULTATION WITH THE LOCAL ACCESS FORUM - HIGHWAY AND TRANSPORT IMPROVEMENT SCHEMES

The annual programme of highway and transport improvement schemes is approved by March prior to the start of the financial year. In order to ensure that the Local Access Forum (LAF) is adequately consulted on proposed highway and transport improvements **an officer from Highways and Transportation (H&T) will attend the meeting of the LAF (or appropriate sub group) following approval of the annual programme to discuss the details of schemes.** The officer will discuss brief details of the schemes and suggest those which the LAF might wish to be consulted on. The suggestion will be based on the scale the impact of each scheme on the Rights of Way network. In general terms for schemes which could potentially **remove, sever or result in a significant (over approx. 1km) diversion to one or more Rights of Way and where access or access improvements can be made for NMU's** consultation with the LAF will be appropriate. The LAF may however wish to take a view on whether they wish to be consulted on schemes with a less significant impact on a more important or heavily used Right of Way. It is estimated that this overall approach could result in the LAF being consulted on up to 5 schemes per year.

PROTOCOL FOR CONSULTATION WITH THE LOCAL ACCESS FORUM - HIGHWAYS AND TRANSPORTATION STRATEGIES AND POLICIES

The programme for the preparation of a renewed or new strategy or policy is identified in the annual H&T Service Plan which, like the annual programme, is approved by March prior to the start of the financial year. The County Council consults widely on all transport strategies and policies and will ensure that the LAF are included on the list of consultative bodies. However, in order to ensure that the Local Access Forum (LAF) is made aware of those which may have a significant impact on the work of the LAF or on the Rights of Way network **an officer from Highways and Transportation (H&T) will attend the meeting of the LAF (or appropriate sub group) following approval of the Service Plan to discuss the details of forthcoming strategy and policies changes and agree those which the LAF should to be included in the consultation process.** The officer will discuss brief details of each of the policies and suggest which the LAF may wish to give greatest priority to. It is estimated that this approach would result in the LAF wishing to comment on 2 or 3 policies per year.