

NORTH YORKSHIRE COUNCIL

19 JULY 2023

STATEMENT OF EXECUTIVE MEMBER FOR HIGHWAYS AND TRANSPORTATION

Surface Dressing

The first phase of this year's surface dressing programme is complete, with lining and re-studding work ongoing and to programme. The second phase commenced on 4 July. Performance by the contractor has been good throughout the works with a high-quality delivery of service and in a timely manner.

New speed limits approach

The Executive approved an ambitious new approach to setting speed limits on 4 July. This will see a programme of planned reviews undertaken across all parts of North Yorkshire and a pipeline of schemes developed. Being more proactive and strategic will move us away from the piecemeal and fragmented approach where we looked at requests relating to one location at one point of time.

As part of our approach, there will be the opportunity for further 20mph limits and zones. However, we will not roll out a default 20mph in every town and village. Local communities and their elected councillors will be involved in shaping proposals for their areas, with their support an essential component of our localism agenda.

A59 Kex Gill

We are almost ready to begin construction work to realign Kex Gill, which is amongst the council's biggest ever infrastructure projects. Our Full Business Case was approved by Department for Transport (DfT) in February, unlocking the £56.1m grant. The Council awarded preferred bidder status to John Sisk & Son (Holdings) Ltd, a family-owned international contractor. The full contract award was made on the 16 June when signed by both parties and sealed.

Transforming Cities Fund – Harrogate, Selby and Skipton

We continue to make progress on £42m work to improve access to three of North Yorkshire's rail stations as part of the government's Transforming Cities Fund:

- in Harrogate, we received key, cross-party support from local councillors via the Harrogate and Knaresborough Area Constituency Committee. With localism at the heart of the new council, the Executive was keen to consult local councillors on this key investment. The Executive met on 30 May to decide whether to submit a Full Business Case to West Yorkshire Combined Authority and approved unanimously to proceed;
- planning permission for the Selby scheme was granted in September, with minor amendments due to be discharged in July 23. We are currently developing a construction plan for the project, working closely with Network Rail and TransPennine Express given key parts of the scheme involve railway land, including new lifts as part of the NR Access for All scheme. We are preparing to commence demolition of the Selby Railway Sports & Social Club on Station Road and James William House on Cowie Drive, together with utility diversions related to the new Bawtry Road underpass. Detailed design for the highways element of the project is now complete, and focus is switching to the station building;
- in Skipton, a planning application for the railway car park has been submitted, however, further details are being submitted to the Environment Agency and Yorkshire Water

before their objections can be lifted and application determined. We continue to work with Network Rail, Northern and the Canal and River Trust on design finalisation. Subject to the West Yorkshire Combined Authority approving business cases for the three schemes in November, construction mobilisation is expected to start before the year ends.

Levelling Up Fund – Thirsk, Seamer, Scarborough and Malton stations

Levelling Up Fund (LUF) bids to improve Thirsk, Seamer, Scarborough and Malton rail stations were unfortunately unsuccessful. While this is disappointing news, we remain undeterred in our efforts to deliver these key transport improvements, which collectively have a value of almost £60m. Our plans are ready to go and we are seeking alternative funding, such as from the next LUF round or from devolution investment funds.

Electric Vehicle Charging

The Executive approved the Electric Vehicle (EV) Public Charging Infrastructure Rollout Strategy on 2 May. We will use this as our guide for network planning across North Yorkshire which will lead to mass rollout of Electric Vehicle Charge Points (EVCPs). It is forecast that 3,161 public charge points are required by 2030. It is anticipated that the public sector will need to fund 1,529 of the overall charge point requirements by 2030 at an approximate cost of £10.3m.

We have received £3.27m funding so far, through two Office for Zero Emissions Vehicles to deliver 150 EVCPs and renewable technology alongside 70 of those chargers. We have also bid for a further £4.88m from the LEVI Capital Fund, which was offered as an indicative allocation rather than a competition, which should enable delivery of around 1,000 EVCPs. NYC also received £88,920 from the LEVI Capability Fund to cover resource for this project. We have since also bid for a further £405,080. We await a decision on these key grants.

Local Transport Plan

Public engagement on the future Local Transport Plan (LTP) has started and many responses have been received. Meetings with all members via their Area Constituency Committees have also taken place and further meetings will be planned as the LTP develops. Over the Summer the responses from public and stakeholder engagement will be collated and analysed. A decision on the final LTP will be made by Full Council.

Buses

The YORbus pilot scheme ceased, as planned, on 30 June. The two-year pilot allowed us to gain valuable information about a digital demand responsive bus service. While YORbus proved popular with passengers, the service only operated in one part of the county and the cost per journey was significantly higher than the traditional, timetabled bus routes.

The Department for Transport announced additional support for buses. Firstly, the national £2 fare cap initiative has been extended to the end of October. After this the fare cap will be £2.50 until November 2024. This has proven very popular with passengers. Secondly, we were awarded a further £1.4m in funding to support delivery of our Bus Service Improvement Plan and to aid the retention of services.

COUNCILLOR KEANE DUNCAN