

NORTH YORKSHIRE COUNCIL

24 JULY 2024

STATEMENT OF EXECUTIVE MEMBER FOR HIGHWAYS AND TRANSPORTATION

A59 Kex Gill

I am pleased to report the A59 Kex Gill was re-opened on Friday 21 June, one week ahead of programme and well before the Great Yorkshire Show. This represents a significant engineering effort with the installation of 85m of sheet piling, 10m deep, together with new drainage, utility diversions and road reconstruction. Meanwhile, works to the new road are progressing, with opening planned for Spring 2026.

Transforming Cities Fund – Harrogate, Selby and Skipton

We continue to make progress on work on transformative Gateway schemes to improve access to three of North Yorkshire's rail stations. Full Business Cases have been submitted to West Yorkshire Combined Authority (WYCA) and Department for Transport (DfT). All three have now been approved. Work is expected to commence in Skipton and Harrogate in the Autumn, while Selby is to commence early in the New Year.

Surface Dressing 2024

North Yorkshire's annual surface dressing programme commenced at the beginning of April. When completed the programme of works this season will have covered some 142 miles of roads at a cost of around £5m. This cost-effective way of maintaining skid-resistant and waterproofing road surfaces helps prevent potholes and can extend the life of a road by up to ten years.

Progress was somewhat hampered by repeated spells of wet weather, particularly during April, and the programme had to be continually revised to reflect this. I am pleased to report that most of the programme, some 200 locations, was complete at the time of writing, with only 16 sites left to do. Remaining works should be complete by the first week in August.

Sutton Bank

Colleagues will be aware of our longstanding approach to maintaining Sutton Bank, by undertaking a range of activities on this section of the A170 via an annual closure. This year, we expect Sutton Bank to be closed for eight days from Sunday 8 September to Sunday 15 September inclusive. This will allow for an array of maintenance tasks to take place, not only to Sutton Bank but also to the highway in nearby Sutton-under-Whitstonecliffe. This coordinated approach will mean disruption to the public is kept to an absolute minimum.

Lane Rental

I am pleased to say we are taking tougher action to tackle congestion from roadworks, with efforts to introduce a Lane Rental Scheme in North Yorkshire continuing at pace. This would be the first scheme of its type in the North of England, with contractors facing fees of up to £2,500 per day for conducting works at peak times.

We are about to embark on a 12-week consultation exercise on the proposed scheme and we anticipate making a formal application to the Department for Transport in November 2024. We expect to introduce the scheme next year.

Parks and Grounds

It's the busiest time of the year for parks and grounds staff, with grass cutting and planting activities at their peak. I am pleased to report that a new management structure is now in place, with the single, unified team sharing expertise and resources. A recent example has been the strong collaboration across all front-line services to ensure our towns were looking their very best for key events such as Armed Forces Day in Scarborough and the Harrogate International Festival.

Buses

Transdev unveiled their new Zebra buses last week in Harrogate with a launch of the re-branded 36 bus. Working in partnership with Transdev, we received a £7m Department of Transport grant funding to put alongside £12m from Transdev to deliver a project that will see all their Harrogate fleet convert to zero emission vehicles by early September 2024. It will deliver 20 single and 19 double-deck electric zero emission vehicles in total.

COUNCILLOR KEANE DUNCAN