



Meeting	ENVIRONMENT & SUSTAINABILITY SELECT COMMITTEE	
Date	Monday, 30 January 2006	agenda item number
From:	Cabinet Member for Environment and Sustainability	

REPORT FOR THE PERIOD TO JANUARY 2006

I have reported the following items to Council on 19 January 2006:

- Building Better Communities Progress
- Local Transport Plan Settlement
- Comprehensive Performance Assessment
- A612 Gedling Transport Improvement Scheme
- Members' Road Safety Workshop
- Nottinghamshire Local Access Forum Annual Report

1. Local Transport Plan

A letter from the Government Office for the East Midlands containing the results of the 2006/07 local transport capital settlement was received on 14 December 2005. It sets out the funding for local transport measures for schemes of less than £5 million and for highway capital maintenance. Decisions on major local transport schemes will be taken by Ministers after regional advice has been obtained at the end of January 2006.

It has been another exceptional settlement for Nottinghamshire, and as a result of high performing Provisional Local Transport Plans and the "excellent" Annual Progress Reports for North Nottinghamshire and Greater Nottingham, the Council has received an additional reward of around £1.2 million.

2. Concessionary Fares

I am delighted to be able to report that the Authority has been able to arrange a countywide eligible scheme jointly with districts and operators from April this year. This is extremely good news and means that those eligible in Nottinghamshire will be able to travel anywhere in the county free of charge. This is a major enhancement of the national

scheme that restricts travel within district council boundaries. The scheme will be monitored and evaluated over the next two years before the introduction of the permanent scheme from April 2008.

3. **Nottingham Travelwise Centre**

The Nottingham Travelwise Centre was established in 1999 as a partnership between the City and County Councils, the Highways Agency and Radio Nottingham. It aims to provide up-to-date traffic and travel information to the public through radio broadcasting, a website and a telephone hotline. The travelwise staff are employed by Nottingham City Council and are currently co-located with the Nottingham Traffic Control Centre (TCC).

The Traffic Management Act (TMA) places a duty of Network Management on local traffic authorities and the Travelwise Centre has a role to play in this duty. The County Council's Traffic Manager will be making a full assessment of the role of both the Travelwise Centre and the Traffic Control Centre during 2006/07. In view of this I have approved the County Council's contribution to the funding of the Travelwise Centre for 2006/07.

4. **Winter Maintenance Policy**

The Highways Act 1980 was recently amended to include a duty to "ensure, so far as is reasonably practicable, that safe passage along a highway is not endangered by snow or ice". This change is important because it is deemed to include the treatment of pavements. The Authority is still under no obligation to treat all parts of the highway, but it must take reasonable measures to reduce the risks to the highway user and, therefore, there is a route hierarchy and well established procedures are in place. I have approved the Winter Maintenance Policy for the county's roads and agreed that pavements designated as Priority Footways will be treated. Priority Footways include those that serve:

1. Main shopping areas
2. Busy urban pavements to include those leading to main industrial establishments and hospitals
3. Promoted routes, such as Safe Routes to Schools
4. Pavements offering segregated or combined cycle track facilities
5. Bus stops on major bus routes.

5. **A60 Mansfield Woodhouse Bus Priority Scheme**

The A60 is an important Bus Quality Corridor and the provision of bus priority measures on Leeming Street South was the first phase of a package of proposals which includes improved facilities for pedestrians, cyclists and the disabled. My predecessor gave a

commitment to review the scheme 12 months after the introduction of the experimental Traffic Regulation Order.

During those 12 months there have been very few complaints in relation to the bus lane which suggests that it has been generally accepted. Bus operators fully support the scheme and would welcome any future proposals on the corridor. There has not been an increase in the number of accidents on this section of road which suggests that the bus lane has not made the road more 'unsafe'. Inbound bus journey times have been significantly reduced providing an excellent return on very low cost investment.

In view of these results I have agreed that the TRO be made permanent and work will continue to identify any potential future schemes along the A60 corridor.

6. Albert Road, West Bridgford: Proposed Parking Restrictions

Various highway improvements are required as part of the new Marks & Spencer food store development in West Bridgford and the developer has agreed to pay for these improvements as part of a Section 106 Agreement.

Albert Road is frequently restricted to the width of a car due to parking on both sides of the road causing difficulties for drivers and restricting visibility for those turning out of the side roads. There is an informal agreement in the Planning Consent that HGVs will access the store via the south end of Albert Road but this does not extend to smaller delivery vehicles. It is likely that the store will generate a small amount of extra traffic along a road that is already a conduit for traffic travelling to West Bridgford town centre.

In view of these facts, a scheme has been designed to formalise the parking along Albert Road which will allow the safe passage of two-way traffic, safe access to the new store's service yard and increase safety overall along the road.

Following public consultation a number of objections were received and a petition was presented at full Council. I have looked closely at all of the objections and the County Council's response to each of them. I have decided that the benefits of implementing the scheme outweigh the adverse affects on nearby residents.

A further Traffic Regulation Order for a Resident's Parking Scheme on Albert Road is also being consulted on, but this is unlikely to be implemented before May 2006. In view of the store's imminent opening and the existing safety problems on the road, the parking restrictions will be implemented as soon as possible.

7. **A617 Kelham Road, Newark: Proposed 50 mph Speed Limit**

Since 1994 there have been 47 accidents on the stretch of Kelham Road between Kelham Bridge and the Cattle Market Roundabout. Accident remedial schemes such as friction surfacing and improved signing, have addressed problems on four bends and the area outside the Newark Rugby Club. However, in a significant number of the accidents the Police reported speed as a contributory factor.

Kelham Road is currently derestricted and I have agreed to a reduction in the speed limit to 50 mph. This will reduce average vehicle speeds by 5 mph with a corresponding reduction in accidents levels of 25%.

8. **Gravelly Hollow, Calverton: Prohibition of Driving Order**

Part of the A614 was detrunked in July 2002 and it was recognised that the crossroads formed by the junctions of the A614/Burnstump Hill and Gravelly Hollow had a poor accident record and required improvement works. Negotiations are still ongoing with the Department for Transport to find a long term solution, but in the interim it is proposed to prohibit vehicles from turning into or out of Gravelly Hollow at its junction with the A614. This will reduce the number of accidents.

A number of objections were received from residents of Calverton and Calverton Parish Council. I have carefully considered the objections raised and the Council's response and I have decided that the safety benefits of the scheme outweigh the objections raised. An experimental TRO will be introduced for a period of 18 months.

9. **Albion Street and Castle Brewery Court, Newark: Prohibition of Waiting**

A condition of the planning consent for the conversion of the Castle Brewery site on Albion Street, Newark into residential units was that the developer would provide funding for the provision of a Traffic Regulation Order to address the parking problems. The development is close to the town centre and attracts parking from non-residents on a daily basis to the extent that the movement of refuse and emergency vehicles is severely restricted. There are currently no parking restrictions in place and it is proposed to introduce restrictions at junctions and accesses to alleviate the problems.

A number of residents have objected and requested a Residents' Parking Scheme. As part of the decriminalisation of parking enforcement an assessment is being carried out of those areas which may benefit from a Residents' Parking Scheme and this area of Newark will be included in this process. In the meantime, I have agreed that the TRO on Albion Street will be introduced.

10. **Coddington: Proposed Environmental Weight Limit**

The C208 runs through the village of Coddington and is used by HGVs as a link between the A1 and A17. I have approved the introduction of a 7.5T Environmental Weight Limit on all the roads in the village. Roads through Barnby in the Willows will be monitored to see whether HGVs begin to use this village as an alternative route.

11. **Minerals and Waste Development Framework – Annual Monitoring Report**

Under the new planning system introduced by the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004, all planning authorities must publish Annual Monitoring Reports as part of their Local Development Framework. Previous monitoring reports were prepared for the existing minerals and waste local plans as best practice but this is the first time there has been a formal requirement for annual monitoring. I have agreed that the Report be formally submitted to the Secretary of State and published on the County Council's website.

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Cabinet Member for Environment and Sustainability