

meeting COUNTY COUNCIL

date 30<sup>th</sup> June 2011

agenda item number **7a viii.**

## REPORT OF THE CABINET MEMBER FOR TRANSPORT AND HIGHWAYS

### REPORT FOR PERIOD MAY-JUNE 2011

#### Street Lighting Energy Saving Update

1. I am pleased to report further progress on this programme. Works to install part-night lighting in eight villages in the Bingham electoral division were carried out during May. Final proposals for street lighting changes in Bingham itself and in the village of Aslockton have been published and these works have been carried out during June.
2. The consultation period for draft proposals published for 19 parishes in the Misterton electoral division is due to end on 17<sup>th</sup> June (4<sup>th</sup> July for Walkeringham) following which the comments received will be evaluated before final proposals are published. Draft proposals for Blyth and Harworth, Tuxford, Radcliffe on Trent and Cotgrave electoral divisions are being prepared.
3. After implementing the changes the County Council will continue to monitor road traffic accidents and crime figures to identify any emerging trends that could be attributed to the street lighting changes. There will be a six-month review period during which local residents and community groups have the opportunity to give us feedback on the impact of the changes. Monitoring will continue beyond six months to ensure that any seasonal variations are taken into account.

#### Community Transport Fund

4. I am pleased to report that the Department for Transport has awarded Nottinghamshire £161,000 to kick start the development of Community Transport in 2011/12.
5. It is proposed to use the grant for a trial project in the south of the County, purchasing two small vehicles to work on both a public bus route and home to school services. Public consultation will be undertaken to establish the trial area and local travel priorities, and the services will be put out to tender. This should produce a saving of around £85,000 around half of

### **Concessionary Travel Scheme Update**

6. Members will recall that on 1<sup>st</sup> April this year the statutory duty for providing concessionary travel on local bus services transferred to the County Council from the District Councils. Although the County Council had previously managed the Nottinghamshire scheme on behalf of the Districts, the responsibility for application assessment and pass issue is a new commitment.
7. The transfer of this function has been completed successfully with the introduction of a postal based service linked to agreed timescales for pass production. Application forms are available from a wide range of outlets countywide and most enquiries can be resolved at first point of contact through the Customer Service Centre. I am pleased to report that customer feedback received to date has been positive.

### **Discretionary School Transport**

8. During the earlier consultation on budget strategy Members indicated that in order to make savings particular emphasis needs to be given to withdrawing discretionary school bus services where the journey does not exceed the statutory walking distance. These services are expensive to provide and are heavily subsidised or paid for by the County Council. The present policy has led to inequity in terms of entitlement to this concession as many other pupils travelling the same distances receive no such financial support. Withdrawing our funding support for these services saves about £500k per year.
9. In addition a review of free school transport that is provided beyond the statutory entitlement has been undertaken in order to ensure that the policies are consistently and fairly applied to all pupils across the County. Currently there are 49 walking routes where free transport is provided.
10. As a result of the review to date four home-to-school walking routes are to be changed with effect from the new academic year starting in September 2011. The schools include, Portland Academy, Worksop, Rushcliffe Comprehensive, West Bridgford, Ashfield Comprehensive, Kirkby, Meden Comprehensive, and Warsop.
11. An external review has been conducted in accordance with the national criteria and this has determined that there are available walking routes between home and school. This means that pupils living within the 3 mile qualifying walking distance will no longer receive free travel between home and school.
12. Parents/carers of pupils who will no longer qualify for free school transport have been contacted. Pupils receiving free school meals will still, however,

13. Applying the free schools transport policy to these four routes will save the Council approximately £60,000 a year. The remaining routes are also being reviewed but any further changes would not take place until September 2012.

**A6075 Peafield Lane, Mansfield Woodhouse - 30 mph Speed Limit:**

14. The A6075 Peafield Lane, Mansfield Woodhouse is a principal road leading from the A60 in Mansfield Woodhouse to Edwinstowe then on to Ollerton, Tuxford and the A57 at Darlton. Peafield Lane has a 30 mph speed limit for a distance of approximately 200 metres from its junction with the A60. The limit changes to 40 mph just before an uphill gradient with two bends and carries on to the extent of the built-up area where the road becomes subject to the national speed limit (60mph).
15. During the three year period from January 2007 to December 2009 three reported injury accidents occurred on the section of Peafield Lane, between the end of the existing 30mph area and the western arm of Litton Road. The three accidents all involved vehicles losing control while travelling at inappropriate speeds and included one which resulted in a fatality.
16. The first proposal was to extend the 30mph limit by 210 metres, and this was consulted on during July 2010 and publicly advertised during October 2010. Objections were received from three Mansfield District Councillors and a petition containing 124 signatures was also received. All of the objectors and petitioners were of the opinion that the proposed 30 mph limit should cover the whole of the existing 40mph area. Consideration was given to the petition and it was agreed that there was merit in extending the length of proposed 30 mph area. This second proposal was consulted on during December 2010 and January 2011 and publicly advertised in March and April 2011. Just one objection was received during this period. The objector considered that the proposal could cause accidents due to motorists slowing suddenly on entering the 30 mph limit from a national (60 mph) limit at the bottom of a long hill.
17. I have considered this objection and consider that visibility of the new 30 mph terminal signs will be good giving drivers plenty of opportunity to slow down before the limit starts. This will negate the possibility of accidents due to sudden slowing. I have therefore decided to make the order.

**Netherton Road and Lowtown Street, Worksop 7.5t Environmental Weight Limit**

18. Netherton Road and Lowtown Street connect the A57 Worksop bypass with Worksop town centre. It is a built-up road with significant on-street parking and runs through residential areas including sheltered housing with some commercial property and two schools. The road is subject to a 30mph speed limit and has traffic calming consisting of speed cushions throughout its length. In the Environmental Weight Limit Programme, this scheme has the highest priority.
19. A statutory consultation was carried out during December 2010 and the proposal was publicly advertised during March 2011. Three objections were received from businesses operating on the road but were subsequently withdrawn when it was explained that heavy goods vehicles (HGV) access to the businesses would be exempt from the Order. One objection has been received from a member of the public.
20. The objector was of the view that the weight limit would not address traffic problems on the road caused by private cars and buses, and that extra problems might be caused by HGV vehicles turning round to avoid the weight limit. The effects of cars and buses are outside of the scope of the programme, and misdirected HGVs can be prevented by effective traffic signing, and I have therefore decided to make the order.

#### **York Street Area, Sutton-In-Ashfield, Residents' Parking Scheme**

21. The proposed York Street Area Residents' Parking scheme is a new scheme consisting of Cavendish Avenue, Langford Street, York Street and part of Priestsic Road. The streets are close to the town centre and adjacent to a large ASDA supermarket and McDonalds' take-away. There have been numerous complaints from residents over the past fifteen years saying they have been unable to park because of vehicles belonging to people visiting the above stores. A Residents' Parking scheme is being proposed as a solution.
22. Consultation letters were sent out in August 2010 with the scheme being publicly advertised during November and December 2010. Eleven replies were received in response to the consultation and advertisement, nine of which were objections to the proposal. The Police supported the proposal along with two residents and a petition was also received in favour of the scheme but against the charge for permits.
23. The objections are based on the operating times of the proposed scheme and the requirement to pay for permits.
24. County policy is to charge for permits in Residents' Parking schemes and it is not therefore possible to introduce a scheme without charging for permits. The operating times (Mon–Sat, 8am–6pm) are considered to be appropriate as these are the times when most people are shopping or visiting the town

### **Cycle Safety Campaign**

25. As part of the Global Decade of Action for Road Safety 2011-2020, the Nottinghamshire Road Safety Partnership launched a cycle safety awareness initiative on the 10<sup>th</sup> May. Cyclists are being encouraged to wear helmets and high visibility clothing and to complete an on-line survey which will be used help to improve cycle safety schemes and enhance road safety features where necessary. I am pleased that the County Council is part of this partnership which is working to reduce the number of cyclists injured or killed on our roads.

### **Guided Cycle Rides**

26. I am pleased to report that the popular guided cycle ride programme called Rural Rides is able to continue in 2011 as the council has successfully transferred the running of the programme to "RideWise" from the County Council. RideWise is a community based enterprise that promotes cycling in Nottinghamshire. There are a variety of rides, some suitable for beginners and others for more experienced riders, all led by volunteers. The programme was previously put together by the County Council and the new arrangements will reduce the workload on staff while allowing the rides to continue.

### **A614 Speed Limit Reduction**

27. As an accident reduction measure and as part of the county wide 'A & B Road Speed Limit Review,' which aims to reduce average vehicle speeds and improve road safety, the speed limit on the A614 between Leapool Island and Ollerton Roundabout has been lowered to 50mph and the A60 between Redhill, Arnold and Leapool Island to 40mph, with effect from 17<sup>th</sup> June 2011.
28. The speed limit on the A6097 between the A614 and Oxtun Roundabout will be lowered to 50mph with effect from the 22<sup>nd</sup> August 2011.

**COUNCILLOR RICHARD JACKSON**  
Cabinet Member for Transport & Highways