

**REPORT OF THE CABINET MEMBER FOR TRANSPORT AND HIGHWAYS****KEY ISSUES AND ACTIVITIES****Purpose of the Report**

1. The report seeks to update Members on various issues relating to the Transport and Highways portfolio since the last report to Council.

**Mansfield Bus Station Progress**

2. I had the pleasure of visiting the construction site on the 8th March and am pleased to report that the project is progressing well. The junction of Station Road/ Belvedere Street was completed towards the end of last year and our contractor Kier has now begun work on the main bus station site. This is a large engineering project requiring the removal of thousands of tonnes of earth, the construction of retaining walls, the realignment of highways, landscaping works, and then the construction of a new bus station building and a 75m long footbridge connecting the new bus station to the railway station. The new bus station will be owned and operated by NCC with contributions to the running costs from Mansfield DC. We will begin recruiting staff later this year and have already begun seeking tenants for the retail units. The bus station will open in spring 2013.

**Nottingham Concessionary Travel Scheme**

3. The concessionary travel scheme provides free travel on local buses to all elderly and disabled people who hold an English National Concessionary Travel Pass, and the County Council has a statutory duty to reimburse the bus operators for providing the free travel. In conjunction with the Cabinet Member for Property and Finance, and the Service Directors for Financial Services and for Transport Property and Environment I have approved a new two year agreement with the operators which will run until April 2014. The annual cost of the concessionary travel scheme is just over ten million pounds per year, but could vary according to the amount of usage. The new agreement has fixed the payments over the next two years allowing for anticipated patronage and bus fare increases, so providing the council and operators with budget stability through to March 2014, and continuing to provide the residents of Nottinghamshire with a wide range of travel opportunities and choice.

## **Safety Posters on School Frontages**

4. The Junior Road Safety Officer (JRSO) scheme is currently being rolled out in schools across the county. This project enables more children to access road safety activities and to influence the areas to be targeted. Working with the nominated representatives from the school, activities are developed to address general road safety issues as well as specific areas of concern to their school.
5. To accompany the road safety materials available to each school, and to encourage schools to take up the JRSO scheme, it is proposed to offer the school a series of durable posters to erect on their frontage. Messages will be developed by each school to keep their school frontage as safe as possible. This process will require Head Teachers to address problems outside their schools as indicated by the Communities and Environment Standing Committees recommendations.
6. It is hoped that the durable posters will provide reassurance to the public that safety outside schools is taken seriously and reduce the number of requests for 20mph zones, which are relatively costly and have been shown to have minimal effects on speed and safety.

## **Public Rights of Way Update**

7. The Countryside Access Team has delivered a big programme of capital improvements to public rights of way in the County, funded by the Local Transport Plan. Five well used urban paths in Southwell have had new tarmac surfacing, including the path next to the Saracens Head public house, which is an important link between the town centre and Lowes Wong primary schools. Two heavily used paths in Harworth have also had new tarmac surfacing improving the link between housing and local services, and in Wellow the historic Dark Lane has had remedial work to prevent it collapsing in the Gorge Dyke. On top of this, over 200 signs and waymark posts and a large number of bridges and gates have been installed, all of which will encourage walking and help to deliver our health and sustainable transport objectives.

## **Bilsthorpe Depot Update**

8. I am pleased to report that all the depot buildings were handed over to Nottinghamshire County Council by Interserve by the first week in March. The Council now have control of the whole site, there are a few items being finished off but all teams have moved in and are running their services from the site. The site will be fully operational by the end of March, at which time the Newark Kelham Road and Rolleston Drive facilities will be vacated by highways staff. The site will be formally opened by the Chairman on Wednesday 11 April. This project has been delivered on time and on budget.

## **Environmental Weight Limit at Spalford**

9. I have approved the introduction of a 7.5 tonne weight limit on Rabbithill Lane/Spalford Lane, which is a narrow country lane leading from Spalford to North Scarle in

### **Sherwood Business Park Waiting Restrictions**

10. Sherwood Business Park houses a large number of businesses and the capacity of the car parks within the business park are limited which leads to vehicles parking on the roads and verges. This is causing severe difficulties for the passage of delivery vehicles, buses and emergency vehicles. To alleviate these problems, it was proposed to introduce double yellow lines along Osier Drive, Little Oak Drive and Willow Drive. The proposals have been fine tuned following public consultation and the amount of lining is being kept to a minimum to avoid displacing parking onto residential streets. I have approved the amended scheme which is the best balance between safe and unobstructed routes for buses and delivery vehicles, and the concerns of nearby residents.

### **Waterloo Road Area Beeston Residents Parking Scheme**

11. The Waterloo Road area of Beeston is a residential area close to Beeston Station which suffers from severe intrusion from parked vehicles, particularly those left all day by commuters using the station. The non residential parking is making it difficult for traffic to access the roads, and for residents to find parking spaces. The parking also extends to the residential area north of the station between Dovecote Lane and Meadow Road and consideration was given to including this area in the scheme, but the effect here is less severe and this was not well supported during the public consultation. I have decided to approve implementation of the scheme for the Waterloo Road area only. A scheme for the Dovecote Lane area can be considered in the future if circumstances change or if extra parking is displaced from Waterloo Road.

### **Street Lighting Energy Saving Project Update**

12. I am please to report further progress on this scheme. In Rushcliffe the consultation for West Bridgford is underway, and work has been completed in Kingston on Soar, Normanton on Soar and Rempstone. In Bassetlaw, the consultation periods for Worksop and Carlton in Lindrick have finished and the responses are being considered. Site works have now been completed in Askham, Bole and Markham Clinton.
13. The project is now moving into Newark and Sherwood and Gedling Districts, with the consultation for Farnsfield and Lowdham electoral division currently underway, and Newstead Electoral Division is next in line.

## Highways Traded Services Review Update

14. I am pleased to report that the new highways contract is now out to tender for the future delivery of some £160 million of highways works including resurfacing, road marking, surface dressing and patching, gully emptying, street light column replacement, fencing and land reclamation.
15. This includes out-sourcing several areas of highway works currently provided by the Council's in-house highways operations teams and it is expected some 25 employees will be affected by the proposals and will be transferred to the successful private sector bidder towards the end of 2012.
16. The new contract will be delivered by a single main contractor and will encourage use of local labour and supply chain. To encourage this and before even the contract went out to tender I invited potential bidders and local suppliers and contractors to come together at an Industry Day here at County Hall to hear about the new contract and more importantly to start that dialogue at the earliest opportunity.
17. The benefit to the Council of the new contract will be the year on year efficiencies that can be driven through a modern cost based construction contract with incentives for both innovation and cash savings in which the Council retains a share. This approach and the opportunity to benchmark with other Midland Highway Alliance councils will also ensure that the contract remains value for money over its full 10 years.
18. The delivery of most of the reactive highway services, minor highway repairs including pot holes, drainage repairs, faulty street lights and so on will be retained by in-house operations as well as the seasonal activities of winter service (gritting and snow clearing), grass cutting and tree maintenance. This will also mean the well respected and appreciated emergency response by Council highways teams is also retained. Most of the highway improvements (integrated transport schemes) will also be retained for in house delivery benefiting from multi-skilled highways operations teams.
19. I would also like to remind Councillors that from the end of this month local residents will be able to choose to use either their own contractor or the Council to construct a driveway drop crossing so that they can themselves ensure value for money.

## 2012/13 Highways Capital Programme

20. Following the approval of the budget by Council preparations for the delivery of £34M investment into highway improvements and maintenance over the next year is well underway. Although we have enjoyed a slightly milder winter this year the need to restore and improve our road surfaces remains critical and we shall be investing a further £1M to increase the capital road maintenance and repair programme to £13M this year and for future years. We shall also be increasing our preventative road maintenance – reducing the number of pot holes that form in our road surfaces – with an increased surface dressing programme. We continue to invest in improving the resilience of our road network with £500,000 for flood alleviation and drainage schemes and a further £345,000 towards construction of a new salt barn at Gamston. The integrated transport measures programme balances investment between road safety and speed

**COUNCILLOR RICHARD JACKSON  
CABINET MEMBER FOR TRANSPORT AND HIGHWAYS**