

meeting	COUNTY COUNCIL		
date	22 July 2010	agenda item number	<b>7a x.</b>

## REPORT OF THE CABINET MEMBER FOR TRANSPORT AND HIGHWAYS

### REPORT FOR PERIOD JUNE - JULY 2010

#### Transport Experts Visit Nottinghamshire

1. Transport experts from the USA and Canada visited Nottinghamshire in June to learn about local public transport networks and share best practice. The delegates from government and private organisations were on a fact-finding tour of Europe looking at the way public transport strategies are developed and how funding is allocated to key projects. In the UK they visited Nottinghamshire and London only giving international recognition to the positive work we have done across the city and county.
2. I was proud to join my counterpart at the City Council and senior representatives from public transport companies to welcome the visitors. Nottinghamshire has an excellent and diverse public transport system, used by many thousands of people on a daily basis and this was a great opportunity to share ideas on innovative and sustainable public transport plans.

#### Road Safety Campaign: Fatal 4

3. A road safety campaign costing £260,000 began across the East Midlands in June and it is expected that it could become the model for similar campaigns across the country.
4. The campaign will tackle mobile phone use, drink driving, speeding and failure to use a seat belt which are the four main causes of fatal and serious collisions. It involves questionnaires, face to face advice from the police, radio advertising and roadside posters. Motorists receiving face to face advice will be given a leaflet explaining the risks and shown a dvd to reinforced the message. Police will target roads with a poor safety record.

5. The campaign is being run by Nottinghamshire, Derbyshire and Lincolnshire County Councils, along with Leicester and Nottingham City Councils and the Highways Agency. The funding has come from central Government which will share the results with other councils across the country. Nottinghamshire has a good record of casualty reduction and the number of people killed or seriously injured on our roads has fallen by 46% since the mid 1990s. Campaigns such as this ensure that our roads continue to be safer for everyone.

### **Road Safety Grant**

6. I spoke at the last County Council meeting of concerns as to the effects of the loss of Road Safety Grant funding for this year and it has been concluded that, in the short term, the service implications of an immediate reduction in activity in this area would be unacceptable. This revenue grant, together with an associated capital grant, is used to fund a range of activities and projects aimed at reducing casualties injured or killed in road accidents.
7. Safety cameras form a major and vital part of this package and play an important role in an integrated road safety strategy. They encourage changes in driver behaviour and are proven to make a significant contribution to improving road safety for all road users. There are 18 fixed and 20 mobile safety camera sites in Nottinghamshire. We have seen, on average, a 77% reduction in KSI casualties at our fixed sites and a 53% reduction in KSI casualties at our mobile sites. Each year this equates to a reduction of 228 injury accidents and 385 fewer people being killed or injured on Nottinghamshire's roads. Using the latest DfT costs, the value of the accidents saved is around £17 million for an investment of approximately £2 million, ie. a cost benefit rate of return in the order of 800%.
8. Having reviewed the implications it was agreed at Cabinet on 14th July that the loss of revenue government grant amounting to £422,000 should be partially re-instated by a one-off allocation of £350,000 from the LAA Reward Grant receivable in 2010/11. This temporary solution will need to be revised as part of the budget preparation for 2011/12 and this activity will need to be considered against other budget pressures. Similarly substitute funding of £350,000 will be made available from the capital element of the LAA Reward Grant.
9. Ongoing commitment to this programme will need to be determined as part of the budget and Capital Programme appraisal process later in the year.

### **Local Transport Plan**

10. The Council is currently developing its third Local Transport Plan (LTP) which outlines a programme of transport-related measures to deliver over the short, medium and long term. A large-scale public consultation has just been completed asking local people for their views on such things as tackling congestion and making public transport more affordable and accessible. The results should identify local transport priorities and will inform the programmes developed in the LTP. I will bring further reports on the development of the new plan in the coming months.

### **Amendment to the Safety at Street Works and Road Works Code**

11. The Department for Transport is consulting on amendments to the Safety at Street Works and Road Works Code of Practice which has been in force since 2002. The existing Code of Practice is currently statutory for some works, but is only used as guidance for others. When the proposed Code comes into force it will provide statutory guidance for all road works carried out on behalf of local highway authorities in England and Wales. The proposed amendments to the Code reflect changes in other legislation such as the Disability Discrimination Act 2005.
12. There have been widespread discussions with relevant officers in the council and with our Manage and Operate partners about the proposed changes. The general view is that the Code is overly prescriptive and that site specific risk assessments are a more viable technique for ascertaining traffic management requirements. Furthermore, the financial implications arising from the introduction of the proposed Code have not been adequately assessed and compliance will require considerable investment in both training and products.
13. The Department's response expands on these concerns and I have agreed that the Leader should be asked to endorse this response on behalf of the County Council.

### **Road Safety Quiz Finals**

14. Almost 100 Nottinghamshire pupils took part in the finals of the 2010 Road Safety Quiz on 1 July and over 38,000 children from across the county took part in the preliminary rounds. This popular quiz has been held now for over 20 years and it aims to test young people's knowledge about road safety in a fun and inspiring way. It makes a valuable contribution to the ongoing education, training and publicity programmes delivered by the road safety team. Provisional statistics for 2009 show that the number of children injured on the County's roads fell by over 12% compared to 2008 figures and have more than halved since the 1994-98 average.

15. I would like to congratulate Normanton on Soar primary school who won this year's quiz and say well done to everyone who took part.

### **Government Funding for Green Buses**

16. The Government recently announced funding of £15m to help bus operators and councils purchase low carbon emission buses (LCEBs). The funding will stimulate the market for these types of vehicles by reducing some of the initial capital costs. Bus operators and councils will compete for funding towards 90% of the difference between purchasing an LCEB and a standard diesel equivalent. LCEBs, such as a hybrid electric-diesel buses, use at least 30% less fuel and meet the latest European air quality standards. I have commenced discussions with bus operators on the possibility of submitting a joint bid for operating some hybrid diesel-electric buses in the County as a pilot project.

### **COUNCILLOR RICHARD JACKSON**

Cabinet Member for Transport & Highways