

**NORTH YORKSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL**

19 JULY 2017

**STATEMENT OF THE ACCESS PORTFOLIO HOLDER COUNTY COUNCILLOR  
DON MACKENZIE (INCLUDING HIGHWAYS, ROAD AND RAIL TRANSPORT AND  
BROADBAND, MOBILE PHONE COVERAGE)****Tadcaster Flood Report**

The report on the flooding in Tadcaster, which began on Boxing Day 2015, has now been published by the Council, acting in its role as lead local flood authority. The 56-page document focuses on the cause of the flooding and on the response of the Risk Management Authorities (RMAs) involved.

The principal cause of the flooding was the persistent and heavy rainfall in the mid-catchments above the town, falling on to already saturated ground. This raised the levels of the river leading to over-topping by up to 700mm of the existing defences. The event resulted in internal flooding of 79 properties, including the town's medical centre. On the afternoon of 29 December Tadcaster Bridge, which our highways team had already closed to all users, suffered a partial collapse. There was widespread disruption in the surrounding area.

The report, which was eagerly anticipated by the local community, concludes that whilst action can and should be taken to reduce the risk of flooding in Tadcaster, the response of all RMAs to the events in December 2015 was appropriate. The extreme weather conditions, equivalent to an event likely to occur every 100-220 years, exceeded the capacity of the town's flood defences, which are designed to withstand occurrences likely to take place every 25-30 years.

In the light of recommendations contained in the report, the Flood Risk Management Team is cooperating with partners to bring about improvements in flood defences. The Environment Agency is currently drawing up a bid for funding of those upgrades.

Whilst not directly the subject of the report, the limitations of the town's surface water drainage systems are addressed, and a long-term solution is suggested.

**National Productivity Investment Fund Update**

Members are aware that we received an allocation from the National Productivity Investment Fund (NPIF) for the current year of £5.1m, which has now been allocated to specific schemes and is being spent. In April the Government announced that NPIF for the next two years would be awarded by means of a competitive bidding process.

I can confirm that the County Council submitted the maximum two bids by the deadline of 30 June. Following consultation with Directors of Development in the districts, the selected schemes are:

- A package of highway and transport improvements to support the redevelopment of the prison site in Northallerton (value: £3.5m)
- Measures to address congestion on Otley Road in Harrogate and to facilitate growth in the west of the town (value: £7.7m)

**A64 Growth Partnership**

The County Council has joined forces with various organisations and individuals, including other local authorities, businesses, MPs and the YNYER LEP, to ask central government for

major investment in the A64 between York and Scarborough. The partnership is calling initially for a dual carriageway between the Hopgrove Roundabout and Barton le Willows. Partners are seeking to improve the economy of the A64 corridor and to increase road safety.

In the last few weeks there have been two double fatalities involving pedestrians crossing the A64 near Crambeck and Welburn. Whilst Highways England are responsible for this highway, I have taken action in my role as your Champion of Road Safety. I arranged a meeting with the local Neighbourhood Watch coordinator and residents of the two villages to seek views on how road safety in that location can be enhanced. That meeting took place last Friday morning and was expected to involve the local member Caroline Goodrick, Kevin Hollinrake MP, and a representative of Highways England. *I can give a verbal update to members at the Council Meeting.*

### **Parish portal**

The Council has launched its parish portal, after a pilot involving six of our parishes over a number of months. The online portal is available to members of every parish, and aims to speed up the process of reporting highways issues. It allows parish members to view comments, track progress and avoid duplication when the council is already aware of a fault. The system is easy to use, and officers are currently providing support and assistance in the use of the portal. Data collected in both the parish and customer portals will be made available to councillors.

### **Broadband and mobile telephony**

Phase 2 of SFNY's expansion programme of superfast broadband throughout the county has been extended beyond its planned conclusion in June. Additional communities have been added and this current phase will now come to an end in October, by which time some 90% of all properties in the county will have access to the service.

The complex procurement for Phase 3 is continuing and is now expected to conclude in October, at which time we expect to be able to announce details about the winning bidder, the estimated number of connections and the type of technology to be used. This latest phase is expected to take superfast coverage up to 95% of all premises by 2020.

Latest figures reveal that the average cost per property connected by SFNY so far is as follows:

Phase 1 (149,944 properties) - £177

Phase 2 (15,300 by October 2017) - £465

The aggregate average of £204 per premise is the best value achieved by any rural county in the country.

### **Tour de Yorkshire**

The 2017 Tour de Yorkshire cycle race was a great success. Over half of the route was in North Yorkshire. Scarborough hosted the finish on Day One. Tadcaster hosted the start of Day Two, which ended in Harrogate. Large crowds watched the race from the roadside and there was extensive TV and media coverage. Our officers worked closely with partners to deliver another safe and successful event, and have started planning for next year already.

DON MACKENZIE