

## **Variable Message Signs Briefing Note for Parish Liaison 19 June 2013.**

### **Strategic Objectives of the Bath Transportation Package (BTP)scheme.**

The £27m Bath Transportation Package (BTP) brings together a series of complementary measures aimed at providing a step change in the quality of, and accessibility to, the public transport network in Bath. Key to the project is the introduction of VM S for active traffic management aimed at improving the efficiency of junctions, managing the use of the road network, including car parking and providing better information for drivers entering the city. This is coupled with a range of upgrades to the waiting facilities at bus stops. This major project is supported through significant funding from the Department for Transport.

The VMS signs form a part of the wider BTP details of which were available on the Council's web site from autumn 2011 to late summer 2012. The document titled "*Scheme Description and Location Plans Appendix B Variable Message Sign Plans (X2) – Outer Cordon and Inner Cordon Plan*" Showed the location of the signs.

The Best and Final Bid for funding was made to the Department for Transport on the 9<sup>th</sup> September 2011 following the Full Council approval on July 14<sup>th</sup> 2011. The scheme was given full approval status by the DfT on the 11<sup>th</sup> July 2012.

Parish Council and Ward Councillor were written to in respect of the VMS signs in their ward or Parish together with all relevant plans. This engagement was undertaken although there is no statutory requirement to do so, a 21 day period was given for comments to be made.

Over the coming months, 8 VMS will be installed at key locations outside the city and 6 more centrally located direction signs which will show car parking availability.

Drivers need up to date information as they approach Bath allowing them to make informed journey choices. Being pre-warned of works will assist them in advance planning their journey to avoid congestion or perhaps by travelling at a different time.

### **The locations of the outer VMS are:**

- Lansdown near the Racecourse;
- A46 south of Dyrham;
- A420 near Cold Ashton;
- A39 near Corston;
- A4 between Saltford and Globe roundabout;
- A36 to Warminster near Hinton Charterhouse;
- A367 near Dunkerton;
- Batheaston Bypass;

**Inner directional signs giving information on car parking space will be located on,**

- Upper Bristol Road;
- Lower Bristol Road;
- Pulteney Road;
- Beckford Road;
- London Road;
- Walcot Street.

The first VMS are due to be operational in late summer 2013 and the full network of signs is anticipated to be up and working later in the year. Where we can we will be integrating the existing road signage with the VMS to rationalise for clarity and to reduce clutter.

**VMS Sign 4 Hinton Charterhouse.**

VMS Sign 4 is to be sited on the A36 which is a road under the jurisdiction of the Highways Agency (HA). The HA require a safety audit to be carried out for works on one of their roads and this has been completed. No significant issues were raised but the recommendations will be taken on board. Issues raised by the Parish Council were brought to the attention of the audit team prior to their visit which was observed by a representative from the HA.

Final details of the VMS on the HA network are being worked through with the HA.

The issue of rat running has been raised previously however the Council have no intentions to declare "Branch Road or the B3110 as a Southern Ring Road for traffic making its way to Bath"

Traffic travelling longer distances to Bath from further afield in the South would continue to follow the A36 until reaching Limpley Stoke where existing signage directs people to the Odd Down Park and Ride.

Additionally there is no intention to sign or reroute HGV's in contravention of the weight and height restrictions which are currently in operation.

In the event of an emergency incident occurring beyond Branch Road on the A36 the Network Manager will take any necessary steps required to deal with the circumstances of the situation.

**Summary.**

In summary this state of the art electronic traffic messaging system will provide better more up to date information for the travelling public.