

Transport: Cabinet Member Update – January 2018

Public Transport

- I would like to make you aware of the consultation that is currently underway on bus services. We fund a number of supported bus services under contracts that are due to end during 2018. The management of these contracts is jointly undertaken with the West of England Combined Authority, although all funding is currently provided by B&NES.

Whereas bus operators are under no obligation to consult users before making changes to their commercial route network, the Council is keen to hear the views of users on the services it supports financially, to help inform its decisions.

To help us make decisions on the future of these services we are seeking the views of residents and users of the services as to the best and most appropriate way to proceed. The responses will help us develop the detail of specifications for any contracts that are re-tendered.

The consultation closes Wednesday 31st January 2018.

- Work is also continuing with WECA to develop clear plans in regard to the shared areas of responsibility for supported bus services and how these should be funded in the long term.

Parking Services

- Work is continuing on the Parking Strategy and Coach Parking Strategy which we are proposing to adopt at Cabinet shortly. Feedback from the public was on the whole positive and we are pleased to consider the comments to be included in the final versions.
- The strategies place residents and air quality at the front of the decision making processes and ensures that those who could use alternative transport modes do so whilst protecting the ability for those who have no alternative to park in the most appropriate location.
- We also continue to install the new ANPR cameras to replace the obsolete technology previously in place over the next quarter. This allows us to improve the evidence provided for enforcement and increase system security. We will also be able to gather further data on the emissions of the vehicles using the London Road as part of this upgrade which will feed into the air quality action plan.

Passenger Transport

- Work is continuing on the "Getting from A to B" strategic review with trials involving shared resources commencing with partner organisations shortly. We are hopeful that these will result in long term agreements being developed for the benefit of the wider public and reduce the number of vehicles on the road duplicating roles.

- Work is also continuing on the use of new software systems to ensure that we are moving all school children in the most efficient way. This work will allow us to develop new routing plans ensuring we fulfil our statutory duties whilst working with individuals where possible to make them independent travellers.

Highways and traffic.

- As part of the West of England work officers across the Councils have continued with the drafting of a new Joint Local Transport Plan this should be put to public consultation this summer, prior to adoption by our Councils
- The Department for Transport has launched a national consultation on the creation of a Major Road Network. This would recognise the most important local roads that do not have motorway or trunk road status. The consultation runs until the end of March and if introduced as suggested Council's such as our would be able to bid for new funding for schemes on the MRN
- Great Western Rail Franchise –DfT is running a number of public consultation events across the South West and is asking for views on proposals for improving train services on the Great Western rail network from April 2020. The consultation covers a range of issues for both the medium and longer term. The consultation ends in February.
- In recent weeks some parts of the country have experienced snowfall. Within our own Council area (up to 19 January) we have completed 38 gritting runs this winter, treating nearly 10,000 miles of road. We continue to maintain a good salt stock level, currently around 900 tonnes to respond to bad weather.
- Somerdale development, Keynsham. The Developer, Taylor Wimpey, has been granted technical approval for the new traffic signal junction access required by their planning consent. These works will impact on the travelling public from the end of January and delays are likely. A local community engagement event took place before Christmas to inform the community of this work. I have asked officers to take all reasonable measures to mitigate the impact on the travelling public.
- The current term Contract for Highways Maintenance with Skanska is due to expire in March 2019. Due to the lead in periods for procurements I will be reviewing the options for our next contract in the near future and will report progress to a future Panel meeting
- The current energy supply contract also expires in September this year and during the summer officers will re-procure a new contract/supplier through a competitive tender procedure.