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<b>PART A:</b>	<b>MATTERS DEALT WITH UNDER DELEGATED POWERS</b>
<b>REPORT TO:</b>	<b>POLICY AND RESOURCES COMMITTEE</b>
<b>DATE:</b>	<b>11 NOVEMBER 2021</b>
<b>REPORT OF THE:</b>	<b>PROGRAMME DIRECTOR – PLACE AND RESOURCES PHILLIP SPURR</b>
<b>TITLE OF REPORT:</b>	<b>MALTON AND NORTON INFRASTRUCTURE AND CONNECTIVITY: UPDATE AND PROPOSED FUNDING ALLOCATIONS</b>
<b>WARDS AFFECTED:</b>	<b>AMOTHERBY, DERWENT, MALTON, NORTON EAST &amp; WEST (DIRECTLY); OTHER WARDS (INDIRECTLY)</b>

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## **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

### **1.0 PURPOSE OF REPORT**

- 1.1 To update Members on progress relating to key elements of the Malton and Norton Infrastructure and Connectivity work stream and to make proposals for the allocation of funding previously approved by Council.

### **2.0 RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 2.1 It is recommended that Members:

- (i) note the contents of this update report;
- (ii) in relation to the allocation of funding previously approved by Council:
  - a. approve funding of up to £166,000 towards upgrading signals at Butcher Corner;
  - b. grant delegated approval to the Programme Director for Place and Resources, in consultation with the S.151 Officer and the Chair of Policy and Resources Committee to authorise allocation and expenditure of the remainder of the funding approved by Council (including any change to the split of Capital and Revenue expenditure).

### **3.0 REASON FOR RECOMMENDATION(S)**

- 3.1 To enable the implementation of projects which aim to reduce congestion and improve air quality and safety within Malton and Norton with minimal delay.

## 4.0 SIGNIFICANT RISKS

- 4.1 There are not considered to be any significant risks associated with the recommendations of this report. Should the recommendations not be approved, however, it is likely that progress on individual proposals would be delayed.

## 5.0 POLICY CONTEXT AND CONSULTATION

### 5.1 Council Plan priorities:

- Our Economy
  - Improving our road and rail connectivity to unlock economic growth
  - Working with partners to improve the A64, integrated public transport connections and station facilities
  - Supporting measures to cut congestion and improve traffic flow in our market towns
- Our Communities
  - Working with partners to ensure a fair share of infrastructure investment
  - Championing sustainable public services that continue to meet the specific needs of Ryedale's communities
- Our Environment
  - Improving air quality in our market towns by working with partners to tackle congestion and promote sustainable transport and commerce
  - Promoting sustainable transport by opening cycle routes and identifying new ways to link our communities in sustainable ways

- 5.2 The Council has obligations, under Local Air Quality Management processes to regularly review and assess air quality in the district and to take action where appropriate. Following a detailed air quality assessment in 2009, the Council declared an Air Quality Management Area (AQMA) in parts of Malton because annual mean concentrations of nitrogen dioxide (NO<sub>2</sub>) exceeded the relevant air quality objective at various locations. Whilst no exceedances of the annual mean NO<sub>2</sub> objective have occurred in the Malton AQMA since 2016, Ryedale continues to keep the AQMA under review until it can be demonstrated that compliant concentrations are stable over a sustained period.

- 5.3 Recent developments (see Background Papers further details) are considered likely to lead to the introduction of stricter national limits of air quality at some point in the future, including:

- the Coroner's report (April 2021), following the tragic death of a young child, which recognised air pollution exposure as a cause of death for the first time in the UK and called for stricter national air quality limits (specifically relating to Particulate Matter – or PM) based on World Health Organisation guidelines;
- New World Health Organisation (WHO) Global Air Quality Guidelines (Sept 2021), which:
  - reduces the guideline limit for PM<sub>2.5</sub> from 10 µg/m<sup>3</sup> to 5 µg/m<sup>3</sup>
  - reduces the guideline limit for NO<sub>2</sub> from 40 µg/m<sup>3</sup> to 10 µg/m<sup>3</sup>

- 5.4 The Council declared a Climate Emergency on 10<sup>th</sup> October 2019 and has made a commitment to building Climate Change considerations into the Council Plan and decision making processes.

- 5.5 Various stakeholder and public consultations have taken place throughout development of the initial Malton and Norton Infrastructure and Connectivity Study as well as throughout development of work under the Local Cycling and Walking

Infrastructure Plan and the Junction Signalisation and Improvement proposals. The most recent consultation was carried out by NYCC on junction signalisation and improvement proposals (set out later in this report) and closed on 30<sup>th</sup> April this year.

## REPORT

### 6.0 REPORT DETAILS

#### Background

6.1 In June 2018 NYCC and RDC published the jointly-funded 'Malton and Norton Infrastructure and Connectivity Study' ('the Study') which identified a "preferred package" of interventions that could potentially be developed and implemented to reduce levels of congestion within the two towns. The Study was reported to Members at Policy and Resources Committee on 26 July 2018 and endorsed by Council on 06 September 2018. The same meeting of Council also deferred making decisions, pending further information from NYCC, regarding:

- the Council's role in project development for, and allocation of funding towards, "Walkway & Bridge" over the railway;
- allocation of funding towards developing proposals for "Internal Junctions and Traffic Signal Strategy".

6.2 Further details of the background to the Study and detailed updates on progress to date were reported to Policy and Resources Committee on 24 Sept 2020 and Council, on 03 December 2020, made an allocation of £450k (£350k capital and £100k revenue) towards development and delivery of identified schemes.

#### Rail Service Update

6.3 Plans to introduce an additional hourly rail service between York and Scarborough were originally announced in December 2019. This has been postponed a number of times - partly due to the impacts of COVID-19. Currently Officers understand that there may be some increase in rail services from May 2022 but this is yet to be confirmed.

#### Update on Key Interventions

6.4 Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan (LCWIP): A Phase 1 report has been completed and is currently awaiting formal adoption by NYCC. This presents a long-list of evidence-based interventions to improve cycling and walking provision in the towns. Further work (Phase 2) is due to start shortly (subject to NYCC confirming budget availability) and will involve route audits, developing scheme concepts, stakeholder engagement and prioritisation resulting in a shortlist of prioritised schemes which can be used as the basis for funding bids for scheme implementation.

6.5 In parallel with this work, Ryedale Cycle Forum have continued to be very active in supporting local residents with the development of proposals for a Malton – Hovingham Cycle Path, via Broughton, Slingsby and Amotherby. Officers continue to work with colleagues at NYCC to identify funding opportunities as appropriate.

6.6 Internal Junction Improvements & Traffic Signal Strategy: Following development of a new traffic model for the towns, NYCC's consultants undertook traffic modelling on a range of options and NYCC Steering Group (made up of Local NYCC Members, Town Council representatives and an RDC representative for air quality) confirmed that the following proposal as the preferred option:

- Introducing traffic signals at the Castlegate/Church Street/Welham Rd/Norton Road junction at the level crossing, incorporating improved pedestrian crossing facilities,
- Making the eastern end of Norton Road one-way westbound,
- Improvements to traffic signals at Butcher corner - including introduction of MOVA system (Micro-processor Optimised Vehicle Actuation – to maximise the efficiency of the junction) and indicative right arrow,
- Improved pedestrian crossing facilities.

6.7 Traffic modelling of this option predicts an adverse impact upon the Malton AQMA as a result of an increase in traffic flows, queuing and lower average speeds – particularly in Castlegate in the PM peak. Air quality modelling of this option forecasts exceedances of the annual mean NO<sub>2</sub> objective adjacent to Castlegate, within the AQMA, but with some minor improvements across the wider network. The traffic modelling found that:

*“delivery of a major scheme – elsewhere on the local network such as a new junction on the A64 - would be required in order to attract vehicles away from the town centre by providing an alternative route.*

6.8 An update on A64 junctions is provided later in this report, however, any such major schemes would take several years to develop, secure Highways England support, secure funding, and implement.

6.9 In the mean-time, following consultation with their Steering Group, NYCC undertook public consultation on the above option earlier this year and the results demonstrated a broad level of support for the proposals. As a first step NYCC propose to introduce the one-way system on Norton Road as a temporary trial in order to allow detailed air quality monitoring to be undertaken to assess any impacts within the AQMA. It is expected that the trial will commence early in the New Year and last for 12 months: with 6 months of detailed baseline air quality monitoring (under existing traffic arrangements) followed introduction of the trial one-way proposal (with on-going detailed air quality monitoring). At the end of the period the results and any impacts on the AQMA will be assessed prior to making a decision on permanent changes. The cost of designing and running this trial will be significant but NYCC have committed to undertake the scheme.

6.10 NYCC have also confirmed that the proposed upgrade to Butcher Corner traffic lights could be introduced relatively quickly (within approximately four months) subject to funding being identified. NYCC Officers have provided the following information on the proposals:

*“Microprocessor Optimised Vehicle Actuation (MOVA) is an operation method developed to overcome some of the problems associated with traditional Vehicle Actuation (VA) control. MOVA is more responsive to traffic conditions and often leads to a significant increase in capacity at a junction. Unlike other traffic control strategies it continually adjusts the green time required for each approach by assessing the number of vehicles approaching the signals, whilst at the same time determining the impact that queuing vehicles would have on the overall operation of the junction. It seeks to determine a set of signal timings which will maximise the throughput of the junction under the current conditions. Consequently MOVA sites have less queuing and incur less delay to all users.*

*It is particularly well suited to sites with high traffic flows that can vary according to time of day or season and sites experiencing known capacity issues. Trials across the UK have demonstrated an average 13% delay reduction is possible.*

*The introduction of the right turn filter arrow will release vehicles currently held by oncoming vehicles.”*

- 6.11 NYCC have asked RDC for a fixed sum of £166k (based on a detailed fee proposal from NYCC’s framework consultants WSP and detailed cost estimates for implementation) to cover the costs of scheme design, project management and implementation. This report recommends that Members approve an RDC funding contribution of this amount to enable the scheme to progress, and the resulting benefits to be achieved, as soon as possible.
- 6.12 Given the uncertainties and concerns regarding potential impacts upon air quality within the towns (particularly given the Context set out in 5.3 – and pending successful implementation of new/upgraded junctions on the A64), it is possible that changes to physical infrastructure alone will not be sufficient and that greater consideration needs to be given to measures that encourage behaviour change to minimise reliance on car use, alongside appropriate infrastructure improvements.
- 6.13 *Provision of second rail platform, pedestrian/cycle bridge and link path to Norton:*  
Proposals are being progressed to include this scheme in a wider bid, under a second round of the Levelling Up Fund (LUF), for station improvements at Thirsk, Malton and Seamer. NYCC are leading on preparatory work for the bid and have set up an overall Project Board to oversee development of the bid and individual Working Groups to progress proposals for individual stations. RDC has officer representation on both groups, together with representation from the rail industry.
- 6.14 A second platform, together with a bridge linking the platforms, will offer a wide range of benefits, including: improved accessibility, improved safety, reduced community severance, encourage greater uptake of public transport, encouraging greater uptake of more active modes of transport (with resulting benefits to public health), improved air quality and contributing to climate change mitigation.
- 6.15 Government have not indicated when a second round of LUF will be announced, or when bids will need to be submitted, but there is a strong likelihood that bids will need to be made at short notice and so preparatory work is progressing at pace. At this stage there are no specific proposals for an RDC contribution but it is likely that match funding from local partners will significantly enhance any bid’s chances of success. It may therefore be prudent to have the flexibility to commit match funding (from the existing allocation) at short notice in order to give any bid the best chance of success. Officers therefore propose delegated authority, as set out under the Recommendations.
- 6.16 *New / upgraded junctions on the A64 at Broughton Road and Musley Bank:*  
Provision of all-movement junctions with the A64 at the above locations would provide alternative routes for traffic (including HGVs) to/from the A64, reducing traffic through sensitive areas such as Highfield Road and the Town Centre AQMA. This would have significant benefits including for air quality, safety as well as providing opportunities for more significant measures to encourage walking and cycling within the towns.
- 6.17 As reported previously, NYCC had committed to initial project development on these projects and initial work has considered a number of options for each location. This work has confirmed that there is significant merit in pursuing new junctions on the A64,

at Musley Bank and / or at Broughton Road. However, it should be noted that the scale and cost of works relating to a completely new junction at Broughton Road (approx. £19m) are significantly higher than for an upgraded junction at Musley Bank (approx. £9m).

- 6.18 NYCC's 2021/22 capital programme for highways development schemes is currently fully committed, however, Officers have secured a commitment from NYCC to start the next stage of project development **for the Musley Bank junction upgrade** in January 2022. This is expected to take 6 to 9 month to complete and will be aligned with Highways England's Project Control Framework.
- 6.19 NYCC colleagues will nominate further development of **Broughton Road junction proposals** for inclusion in their 2022/23 project development budget. At this stage, however, there is no formal commitment from NYCC and so no guarantee that they will cover all, or any, of the costs for this next stage of work. Officers have asked colleagues at NYCC whether a contribution from RDC would help to accelerate project development (and enable work on these proposals to progress in parallel with work for Musley Bank).
- 6.20 At this stage, it is not clear whether NYCC's consultants will have capacity to undertake project development work on Broughton Road junction in parallel with the Musley Bank junction work. If capacity is an issue then, given the timescales for implementation, NYCC may prioritise other work for now. However, should Members be minded to offer a contribution towards project development costs for the project, it is proposed that this could be finalised following further discussions with NYCC, with formal approval via the delegated authority mechanism set out below (in 6.26).
- 6.21 Due to the high costs, these projects are likely to require a partnership approach to their funding and implementation. The lengthy process of project development, assessment, approvals and securing funding for projects on the Strategic Road Network, means that implementation is expected to be beyond RDC's tenure. The projects' ultimate implementation is therefore likely to be largely dependent upon the priority afforded to them by the new North Yorkshire Council.
- 6.22 Potential longer-term intervention: Malton – Norton Link Road and Bridge: This project could significantly reduce the numbers of vehicles passing through the two main bottlenecks in the towns: the level crossing and Butcher Corner. This could provide opportunities for more significant measures to encourage walking and cycling within the towns. Alongside the above A64 junctions work NYCC have also identified some options for a link road and bridge that require further development. Further work is likely to be held until NYCC better understand the position on the above junctions work.
- 6.23 RDC Investment: Whilst NYCC are the Local Highways Authority and would normally be responsible for developing and implementing highways-related schemes, it should be recognised that, like any local authority, their budgets are limited and so their investment needs to be prioritised across the whole of the County. Without strong partnership working between RDC and NYCC, including joint funding of the initial Infrastructure and Connectivity Study, it is unlikely that the County Council would have invested, and would continue to invest, significant sums in project development and implementation in the towns.
- 6.24 To date, NYCC have invested almost £400k in schemes within Malton and Norton schemes including: the initial Study; development of new traffic model; identification of options, shortlisting and traffic modelling of options; air quality modelling of the preferred option; Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan; A64 junctions initial options; and Major Schemes work (link road and bridge). Approximately another

£300k has been committed to undertake the 12 month one-way trial and further project development on the A64 Musley Bank junction.

- 6.25 To date RDC have invested approximately £36k, with contributions to the initial Study and the air quality modelling (NB these contributions do not form part of the overall £450k allocation). Investment as outlined in this report will enable further investment from NYCC to go further and the benefits of the upgraded signals to be achieved now, rather than waiting until discretionary grants can be secured for their implementation.
- 6.26 Should the recommendations of this report be approved, there will be £184k capital and £100k revenue remaining from the previous funding allocation. In order to enable Officers to be as responsive to events and opportunities as possible, and to avoid the lengthy lead-in times involved in reporting to Committee for individual project approvals, Officers are recommending delegated approval for the Programme Director for Place and Resources, in consultation with the S.151 Officer and Chair of Policy and Resources Committee, to authorise expenditure on individual proposals from the existing allocation. Any such projects for which delegated authority is sought must contribute towards at least one (preferable more) of the Strategic Level Objectives of the Study (attached at **Appendix 1**)
- 6.27 Examples of potential projects that the remaining funding allocation could contribute towards include:
- Malton – Amotherby Cycle Route (one of the priority corridors identified in the LCWIP Phase 1 work and for which initial designs and cost estimates have already been undertaken by the community and Ryedale Cycle Forum;
  - possible minor scheme to adjust kerb build-out on Horsemarket Road to avoid pushing cyclists into on-coming traffic (subject to on-going consultation);
  - development of a strategy to support and encourage behaviour change and minimise reliance on car use within the towns;
  - electric bus ‘hopper service’ (subject to discretionary funding opportunities);
  - Malton Station 2<sup>nd</sup> platform and bridge (subject to initial project development work);
  - Implementation of shortlisted LCWIP schemes;
  - implementation of permanent scheme for one-way system on Norton Road; signalisation of the level crossing junction; and improved crossing facilities (subject to outcome of initial one-way trial).

*NB: this list is not exhaustive and other potential schemes may arise (for example in response to opportunities to bid for discretionary funding).*

- 6.28 It is difficult to predict in advance the precise split between capital and revenue because project development costs that directly relate to a capital scheme can be classed as capital, however, should the capital scheme (to which project development works directly relate) not proceed then the expenditure should be written off as revenue. It is therefore recommended that delegated authority is approved (as set out in the Recommendations) to alter the split between Capital and Revenue if necessary. This would also assist Officers to be as responsive as possible to project proposals as they arise and speed up timescales for implementation of proposals.

## **7.0 IMPLICATIONS**

- 7.1 The following implications have been identified:
- a) Financial

The recommended approvals are from within the existing budget allocation which remains the same, however, the split between Capital (£350,000) and Revenue (£100,000) is likely to shift depending on specific proposals for project

development (and whether these proceed to implementation).

As project development work progresses, there may be a requirement for Members to consider further capital contributions towards the implementation of individual schemes: reports will be brought to Committee as appropriate.

For longer term projects, implementation is likely to fall within the remit of the new North Yorkshire Council. [A summary of indicative costs of potential interventions was included in 7.1a of the previous report to Committee on 24 Sept 2020.]

b) Legal

The Council has a duty to fulfil its obligations under Part IV of the Environment Act 1995 Local Air Quality Management and continues to meet these obligations through joint work with NYCC.

There are not considered to be any other significant legal implications of the recommendations set out in this report – although legal agreements may be required on specific projects as project development progresses.

c) Other (Equalities, Staffing, Planning, Health & Safety, Environmental and Climate Change, Crime & Disorder)

*Environmental & Climate Change:*

Major road schemes are often considered to be environmentally damaging and incompatible with targets to achieve carbon reduction targets. However, in the case of the proposals for Malton / Norton, the situation is not clear-cut. The main aim of the proposals is to provide alternative routes onto and off the A64 in order to remove traffic from a congested and constrained town centre highway network – this will lead to air quality and safety improvements, and encourage greater adoption of more sustainable and active forms of transport. The LCWIP Phase 1 study has identified that implementation of many of the more significant proposals to improve provision for pedestrians and cyclists are dependant on delivering some of the major highways interventions to remove traffic from the town centre.

There is therefore a need to balance projects' potential environmental impacts (including on carbon emissions) with improvements in air quality, safety and encouraging more active forms of travel (which in themselves have positive benefits for carbon reduction and wider public health benefits) within the towns.

All discretionary Government funding sources are likely to place a stronger emphasis on climate change impacts during the assessment process than has previously been the case. At this stage the likely carbon emission impacts of the proposed schemes are not known and will need to be established via detailed project development work in order to provide sufficient information to be able to inform a decision that seeks to balance these competing aims.

Major highways schemes are also likely to require Environmental Impact Assessments - particularly the Malton – Norton Link and Bridge – as this impacts upon the River Derwent Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) and Special Area of Conservation (SAC). The requirements for this will be established during any detailed project development work.

*Equalities:* All projects are expected to have positive benefits in terms of equalities as they will be designed to improve accessibility for all.



No other implications have been identified.

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## **Appendix 1 – Strategic Level Objectives**

**Background Papers are available for inspection at:**

- [Coroner's Report to Prevent Future Deaths \(following the death of Ella Addo Kissi-Debrah\) \(20 April 2021\)](#)
- [New WHO Global Air Quality Guidelines aim to save millions of lives from air pollution \(22 Sept 2021\)](#)
- [Malton and Norton Infrastructure and Connectivity Report](#)
- [Malton Air Quality Management Area - Annual Status Report](#)