

DERBYSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

**MEETING OF CABINET MEMBER – HIGHWAYS, TRANSPORT AND
INFRASTRUCTURE**

13 February 2020

Report of the Strategic Director – Economy, Transport and Environment

**ADDITION OF FUNDING CONTRIBUTION TO THE HIGHWAYS AND
TRANSPORT CAPITAL PROGRAMME 2019-20 – DARLEY BRIDGE**

(1) **Purpose of Report** To inform the Cabinet Member about a financial contribution to be paid to the County Council by HJ Enthoven and Sons to facilitate a highway improvement scheme and to add the funds to the Highways and Transport Capital Programme 2019-20.

(2) **Information and Analysis** The issues of large vehicles being unable to pass each other due to the constrained road widths at Darley Bridge is well known to the County Council and is something that would benefit from better management of traffic movements. Within the village there is a long standing desire to see a new road built by-passing the village, including the construction of a new bridge. However, there is little prospect of this ever being built, mainly due to financial constraints and other priorities for highways budgets, unless alternative funding sources are found. This is a sensitive location on the flood plain, so there may also be environmental impacts of any new road.

With this in mind, a proposal to address the issues with a system of vehicle activated signs (VAS) was explored in 2013-14. However, this did not progress further than the feasibility stage following local consultations. South Darley Parish Council approached the County Council again in 2018 to ask if this could be reconsidered. As a result, a public meeting was held in South Darley Village Hall on 21 November 2018, specifically to ascertain whether there was sufficient public support to justify carrying out further work on a mitigation scheme. At the end of this meeting, a vote was taken with 25 in favour and 1 against. This was taken as a mandate to commit Officer time and resources on designing a suitable VAS scheme and to explore funding streams to enable the implementation of such a scheme.

Since that time, work has progressed and a scheme has been drawn up and costs estimated based upon current manufacturers' pricing for the required equipment. South Darley Parish Council collated a list of issues put forward by the residents which have all been considered as part of the design process.

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Following this, a further meeting was held with HJ Enthoven and Sons, the Parish Council and the local Councillor, Jason Atkin, on 25 September 2019, to discuss funding options. Based upon the cost estimate that had been obtained from a VAS manufacturer, HJ Enthoven and Sons committed to covering the cost of the supply of the relevant equipment up to a maximum of £25,000. HJ Enthoven and Sons also committed to donating an area of land to enable the construction of a passing place for lorries on Oldfield Lane. The County Council would be responsible for the cost of all associated civil engineering works and the on-going maintenance of all additional assets.

A further meeting was held on 22 January 2020 between the Cabinet Member for Highways, Transport and Infrastructure, officers and local representatives to explain the proposals and underline the County Council's commitment to this scheme.

The County Council now needs to add this contribution to its capital works programme in order that the appropriate works can be programmed.

Monitoring of the scheme will take place and a review will be carried out after the scheme has been operational for a year. The County Council will liaise with the local Councillor and the locally elected representatives on the Parish Council with regard to this. HJ Enthoven and Sons has agreed to inform all its hauliers about the system that is being deployed and what is expected of the drivers. Similar information will be disseminated to local businesses BJ Waters Transport Ltd and Forticrete to ensure awareness of the scheme and how it works.

Officer Comment

A warning system of this nature will provide all motorists with the information that a large vehicle is approaching through the narrow section of road. This will enable them to take appropriate action. Whilst this type of warning system is not guaranteed to completely eradicate all vehicle conflict, it is considered that it will help to address the majority of issues that arise here and reduce the amount of times that HGVs meet within the narrow section of road. As is the case on all parts of the network, there are instances of inappropriate driver behaviour and little can be done to legislate for this minority. However, it is considered that, in the main, this warning system will result in improved traffic flow on this part of the highway network. In addition, the new signs will be able to warn motorists and other users of the closure of the bridge in the event of flooding.

If the funding is approved, the work will be commenced as soon as possible.

Local Member Comment

Councillor Jason Atkin, for Derwent Valley, has stated *"I have been working on this issue since the residents voted to take it forward and I am pleased to*

see a scheme coming to fruition, which I consider will help to mitigate the traffic problems that can occur here.”

(3) **Financial Considerations** HJ Enthoven and Sons wishes to pay the County Council the sum of £25,000 as a contribution towards highway improvement works as described above. This is to cover the costs of the required equipment. Any unused funds are to be repaid to HJ Enthoven and Sons. The cost of the civil engineering works associated with the implementation of the scheme will be met from the Structures Protection budget.

(4) **Legal Considerations** The dedication of land by HJ Enthoven and Sons will be adopted as publicly maintainable highway.

(5) **Social Value Considerations** Use of the HJ Enthoven and Sons financial contribution, as well as the dedication of land, will enable the County Council to carry out improvement works which otherwise may not have been possible. It is anticipated that the proposed works will result in a safer and more efficient use of the public highway. The works will be carried out by the Council's in-house operations helping to sustain its services.

Other Considerations

In preparing this report the relevance of the following factors has been considered: prevention of crime and disorder, equality and diversity, human resources, environmental, health, property and transport considerations.

(6) **Key Decision** No.

(7) **Call-In** Is it required that call-in be waived in respect of the decisions proposed in the report? No.

(8) **Background Papers** Held on file within the Economy, Transport and Environment Department.

(9) **OFFICER'S RECOMMENDATIONS** That the Cabinet Member:

9.1 Notes the commitment of a financial contribution of £25,000 and land dedication from HJ Enthoven and Sons to facilitate highway improvement works needed to mitigate the effects of long standing vehicle conflict situations at Darley Bridge.

9.2 Approves the inclusion of the scheme in the Highways and Transport Capital Programme 2019-20.

Mike Ashworth
Executive Director - Economy, Transport and Environment