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Dear Mr McNaney

QUESTIONS ASKED BY COUNCILLORS, FOLLOWING PRESENTATION OF ROADS SERVICE PROGRESS REPORT

When I presented the Roads Service Report to Council on 29th October 2012, I agreed to give consideration to a number of matters. My response to these is as follows:

- 1. Councillor Kingston - Shankill Road at Woodvale shops has no pedestrian crossing at this location and the area is busy with pedestrians. Requesting that this be investigated.**

Roads Service receives many requests for crossing facilities. We are aware of the needs of pedestrians, particularly the young, elderly and those with disabilities and try to provide facilities for them where a need has been identified. In order to ensure all decisions are taken on the basis of need, the provision of a pedestrian crossing is governed by criteria that take into account the volumes of vehicles and pedestrians using the road, as well as other factors including:-

- speed of Traffic;
- width of road and the number of lanes to be crossed
- proximity to public amenities such as schools, libraries, health centres etc;
- number of vulnerable and less mobile road users; and
- pedestrian collision history of the site.

I will arrange for the above location it to be fully assessed for a pedestrian crossing. Any potential crossing here will compete for available funding with similar schemes on a priority basis and value for money when deciding on future programme of work.

2. Councillor Kingston - Cupar Way – investigation into utilising this stretch of road to the benefit of the community, ie: make more use of it for general traffic.

Roads Service has provided traffic calming measures in Cupar Way, along with cycle lanes on both sides of the road and some sheltered parking outside the residential properties near the junction of Lanark Way. With our current budget constraints, there is very little else Roads Service could provide.

If Councillor Kingston would wish to arrange a site visit to discuss further, please contact my Traffic Engineer, Roy Gordon, on 90 253007 to arrange a suitable time.

3. Councillor Kingston - Ainsworth Ave/ March Street area - has it been surveyed for traffic calming and what was the outcome?

Traffic calming measures, in the form of road humps, have already been provided along Ainsworth Avenue.

Following your request we have now assessed March Street for the provision of traffic calming measures. That assessment has indicated that this area does not achieve a high enough priority when compared against many of the other sites competing for inclusion on our traffic calming programme.

Given the number of requests which we have assessed which achieve a higher priority, we therefore do not intend to provide traffic calming measures along March Street for the foreseeable future.

4. Councillor Rodgers - Donegall Square West – concerned about the high number of buses.

The number of Translink service buses in Donegall Square West has reduced considerably since the new bus routes came into operation in September 2011. This resulted in the Metro 1, 2, 13, 14 and 96 services being relocated to Upper Queen Street. These services were replaced with dedicated coach bays to allow visiting coaches to set down/pick up, but not wait within Donegall Square West.

5. Councillor Haire - Belfast on the Move - drivers exiting the City Hall on to Donegall Square South are not aware of the status of the lights (red or green) both on the normal lanes and on the bus lane. This has a safety implication and potential for collision.

The current arrangement for access to the rear of City Hall from Donegall Square South is through a narrow single archway. This shared access, which operates with single vehicle use in and out of the car park, can only be brought under the control of the traffic signals if

the second archway is opened to provide separate in and out traffic flows. We were advised that the Council do not wish to open the second archway and Roads Service then wrote to Belfast City Council on 5 April 2012 advising of the intention to retain the current configuration of the shared access to the rear of City Hall under give way control. If Belfast City Council wishes to revise their decision we can consider the inclusion of the access in the signal configuration. In the meantime, egress from the rear of City Hall should be carried out with due care and attention.

6. Councillor Patterson - Malone Road – short length, approx 200m, of bus lane approaching junction that impedes through traffic – does not appear logical.

The bus lane, from Adelaide Park to Windsor Avenue North, was introduced in May 1997, so has been in operation for some considerable time.

We are aware of delays on the Malone Road and have regularly monitored the effectiveness of this particular bus lane. We are also mindful of the fact that when the bus lane was first introduced it catered for 11 buses / hour and since the introduction of Metro this has been reduced to an average of 7 buses / hour.

Our observations have however shown that whilst the start of the bus lane at Adelaide Park creates a constriction to general traffic, and results in a queue upstream, a similar constriction occurs at the traffic lights at Chlorine Gardens. This would result in a similar queue, only displaced slightly, if the bus lane were removed.

It would be our view that both bus passengers and cyclists are still receiving a measure of benefit from the bus lane and unless the constriction created by Chlorine Gardens can be removed there would be very limited benefit to traffic by the abandonment of this particular bus lane.

7. Councillor Patterson - Malone Avenue/Eglantine Avenue – concerns regarding proposed controlled parking zone. Please reconsider.

The Lower Malone area has suffered from parking problems for a number of years and as a result of representations from elected representatives and local residents we are proposing to introduce a residents' parking scheme in the area which will include, amongst other streets, Malone Avenue and Eglantine Avenue. Our proposed scheme layout has been agreed with the Lower Malone Residents' Association and we are currently in the process of consulting with the wider community to assess the level of support for it. During the consultation process there will be an opportunity to comment on our proposals and the scheme layout. We will take these comments into consideration when developing our final scheme layout, which will again be consulted upon.

More information can be found on our proposals at the following web address:

<http://belfastresidentsparking.wordpress.com/>

8. Councillor Patterson - Olympia Area – request for traffic calming measures in this area.

We have previously assessed this area for traffic calming measures and it did not achieve a sufficient priority to be included on our programme of work.

We have recently reviewed that assessment and I can advise that this area still does not achieve a high enough priority for inclusion on our traffic calming programme. Given the number of requests which we have assessed which achieve a higher priority we therefore do not intend to provide traffic calming measures in this area for the foreseeable future.

9. Councillor Patterson - Eglantine Avenue – the right turn timing for traffic onto the Lisburn Road is short and traffic is impeded from exiting due to the build up of main road traffic at the Tates Avenue lights. No apparent co-ordination.

Whilst Eglantine Avenue is only one of a number of possible junctions on to the Lisburn Road, prior to it being signalised in 2007, this junction was difficult to negotiate due to the volume of uncontrolled right turning movements.

It was considered beneficial to signalise the junction to bring these right turning movements under control and to link to the adjacent junction at Tate's Avenue. This also has the benefit of allowing scheduled buses to be detected approaching the signals so that signal timings can be adjusted to reduce delays to bus passengers.

The signal timings have been set to allow as many cars through the junction as possible – to fill the reservoir between the Eglantine Avenue and the Tate's Avenue junction signals. Any additional green time given at Eglantine Avenue would only overfill the reservoir between junctions and cause delays to other users.

10. Councillor Patterson - Ravenhill Avenue/Ravenhill Road – concerns regarding positioning of traffic signals. Could signals not have been positioned at the junction.

The pedestrian crossing has been positioned to meet the desire line that was identified during the survey undertaken to establish the need for such a facility. To relocate it to the junction of Ravenhill Road/Ravenhill Avenue could mean pedestrians crossing in the shadow of the crossing which would be undesirable in terms of road safety. It could also present Ravenhill Avenue as a more attractive through route between the Woodstock Road and Ravenhill Road which would be undesirable in terms of roads safety.

In these circumstances, we have no plans at present to relocate the exiting pedestrian crossing.

11. Councillor Patterson – Malone Avenue - request for yellow lines as there is severe parking in the street.

I refer to my response to question 7 above. During the development of our proposed

residents' parking scheme in the Lower Malone area we reviewed all of the current parking arrangements. If we are successful in implementing a scheme, we will be regularising all of the on-street parking in the area and would hope that the current parking difficulties will be resolved.

12. Councillor Mullan - River Terrace – traffic enforcement required however Traffic Assessments state that this is not on the system.

River Terrace has been confirmed as being adopted by Roads Service and has been added to the parking enforcement database. Traffic Attendants will now patrol this location along with Balfour Avenue.

13. Councillor Mullan - Deramore Park/Deramore Park South – Salt bin had been removed and not returned. Also requested consideration of carriageway resurfacing. Issue of moss and weeds in the Deramore area.

In relation to a salt bin in Deramore Park, I am advised that the Section office has no information relating to a salt bin being placed previously in Deramore Park. The footways and carriageway in Deramore Park and Deramore Park South have been assessed for resurfacing. However it has not been possible to include these roads within our current resurfacing programme due to other schemes competing on a priority basis for a limited financial resource.

In relation to the extent of weeds in the Deramore area, I am advised by my staff that weed spraying is currently complete for the 2012 growing season and that a blanket treatment was applied to this area on 27 July 2012.

However, in response to a meeting with the Deramore Residents Association, manual scuffling of weeds in the area was carried out on 7 November 2012, 30 November 2012 and 3 December 2012.

14. Councillor Mullan - Ormeau Bakery Planning Application – Roads Service has been using an old traffic survey and has not been updated to reflect current traffic flow in the area.

The application is to combine two unoccupied shop units into one. The assessment of this application did not require any consideration of the traffic flows in the area as the size and use class of the development was not changing.

15. Councillor Garrett - Ladybrook Ward – no salt bins in the area – please examine area for installation of salt bins.

In relation to the provision of salt bins, Roads Service carries out an objective evaluation which takes account of various factors including traffic volume, road gradient and geometry, alternative routes and any other community related factors. Where the criteria are met a salt bin is provided; subject to the agreement of the adjacent property owner. There are currently 10 salt bins located within the Ladybrook Ward area. In addition Ladybrook Park, Parade, Avenue, Crescent, Cross, Drive, Gardens and Grove have all

been assessed for the provision of a salt bin However taking account the above factors I regret to inform you that they did not meet the criteria to have a salt bin installed.

16. Councillor Garrett - Riverdale Park East / Andersonstown Road Junction – concerns over parking issues.

There were waiting restrictions at the junction of Andersonstown Road/Riverdale Park East that extended into Riverdale Park East prior to the left hand bend. A recent site inspection indicated that with the recent environmental works being carried out by DSD, these have not been replaced. I will, therefore, arrange for these to be replaced and the remaining restrictions refurbished.

17. Councillor Garrett - Brooke Park – Traffic Calming measures were to be introduced – is there a date when these are to be installed?

I can advise that we had no previous plans to introduce traffic calming measures in Brooke Park.

However, we have assessed Brooke Park for traffic calming measures and that assessment indicated that this area does not achieve a high enough priority when compared against many of the other sites competing for inclusion on our traffic calming programme.

Given the number of requests which we have assessed which achieve a higher priority, we therefore do not intend to provide traffic calming measures on Brooke Park for the foreseeable future.

18. Councillor Garrett- Ladybrook Park – road surface in poor condition.

The footways and carriageway in Ladybrook Park are inspected by Roads Service on an 8-week cyclical basis and anything which is considered to be hazardous to the public is identified and programmed for repair. I am advised that during the most recent inspection on 5 November 2012 the need for some remedial work was identified and it is expected that this work will be completed in early December 2012.

In addition to our cyclical maintenance procedures, Roads Service also undertakes an annual resurfacing programme which is implemented on a scheme priority basis, subject to the availability of the necessary financial resource.

The footways and carriageway in Ladybrook Park have been assessed but it has not been possible to include the street within our current resurfacing programme due to other schemes competing on a priority basis for a limited financial resource.

We will however continue to routinely inspect the surfaces in Ladybrook Park and carry out any necessary repairs.

19. Councillor Garrett - Appleton Park - road surface in poor condition.

The footways and carriageway in Appleton Park are inspected by Roads Service on a

16-week cyclical basis and anything which is considered to be hazardous to the public is identified and programmed for repair. I am advised that during the most recent inspection on 16 August 2012 the need for some remedial work was identified and that this work has been completed.

In addition to our cyclical maintenance procedures, Roads Service also undertakes an annual resurfacing programme which is implemented on a scheme priority basis, subject to the availability of the necessary financial resource.

The carriageway in Appleton Park has been assessed for resurfacing but it has not been possible to include the street within our 3 year resurfacing programme due to other schemes competing on a priority basis for a limited financial resource.

We will however continue to routinely inspect the surfaces in Appleton Park and carry out any necessary repairs.

20. Councillor McCarthy - Cricklewood Pk - road and footway surface in poor condition –Street Lighting columns need replaced.

The footways and carriageway in Cricklewood Park are inspected by Roads Service on an 8-week cyclical basis and anything which is considered to be hazardous to the public is identified and programmed for repair. I am advised that during the most recent inspection on 22 October 2012 the need for some remedial work was identified and that this work has been completed.

In addition to our cyclical maintenance procedures, Roads Service also undertakes an annual resurfacing programme which is implemented on a scheme priority basis, subject to the availability of the necessary financial resource.

The footways and carriageway in this street have been assessed for resurfacing and they are included within our current resurfacing programme; subject to the provision of the necessary financial resource.

21. Councillor McCarthy - Balfour Avenue – severe parking on the footway with no-one taking responsibility to remove obstruction. Yellow lines required.

The majority of Balfour Avenue is unrestricted apart from double yellow lines at Shaftesbury Recreation Centre. Traffic Attendants patrol this location several times each week, our records show that in excess of 50 Penalty Charge Notices have been issued at this location from the beginning of January 2012 to date.

22. Councillor McCarthy - Balfour Avenue at Recreation Centre – approx 40m of grass area between two stretches of footway. Why is there no complete footway?

We have established that Roads Service owns the stretch of land adjacent to Shaftesbury Recreation Centre. In order to reduce the need for regular maintenance and to provide improved facilities for pedestrians, arrangements are being made to convert the existing

grassed area into a footway. This work should be completed during the current financial year.

I hope this satisfactorily answers the various questions, raised by Aldermen and Councillors.

Yours sincerely



RS ELLISON
Divisional Roads Manager

