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Date: 13 August 2013

Dear Mr McNaney

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

When I presented the Roads Service Report to Council on 30th May 2013, I agreed to give consideration to a number of matters. My response to these is as follows:

1. Councillor Mullan - River Terrace and Holylands Area. Severe parking issues in the general area. Can enforcement be carried out?

NSL Traffic Attendants (TAs) routinely patrol River Terrace and the Holylands area on random days and at random times each week and take enforcement action if they detect vehicles parked in contravention of restrictions. Roads Service records show that from 1 January 2013 to 11 August 2013 in excess of 230 Penalty Charge Notices (PCNs) have been issued at these locations. Please note that TAs can only take enforcement action if there are restrictions (yellow lines) in the street.

2. Councillor Mullan - issues for vehicles exiting City Hall at Donegall Square South. To be examined in safety audit.

As detailed in our response to the Council on 15 January 2013, in response to the issue raised by Councillor Haire at the Autumn 2012 Council meeting, 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.

The current arrangement was considered in a Stage 3 Safety Audit, carried out on completion of the works in September 2012, and was found to operate satisfactorily with egress from the rear of City Hall being carried out with due care and attention. No alteration to the current arrangement is considered necessary at this time.

3. Councillor Rodgers - poor communications between Belfast City Council and Roads Service, particularly in relation to the latest phase of Belfast on the Move.

The DRD Press Office sends all of its press releases to the broadcast and print media and also has a separate list for stakeholders and other organisations which have an interest in our work and have asked to be included on the contact list to receive our releases. For those organisations and individuals who have not asked to be included on the press release list, the Press Office make every effort to ensure that any DRD releases on subjects which are relevant to other government or public sector organisations are sent to them for information.

4. Councillor Rodgers - Cromac Street/Franklin Street/Hamilton Street. Vehicles are unable to access junction at peak times. Asked that the feasibility of introducing two right turning lanes be investigated.

At its junction with Cromac Street, East Bridge Street currently has one traffic lane and a cycle lane available for right turners from Cromac Street. As there is no spare footway or traffic island width available to provide two right turn lanes at this location, to do so would mean reducing the capacity of the East Bridge Street into-town approach. We feel that the disadvantages to traffic flow on the busy arterial route of East Bridge Street would outweigh any perceived advantage to traffic exiting Hamilton Street onto Cromac Street.

I would also point out that Hamilton Street is largely residential in nature. Whilst at peak times traffic queues on the approach to Cromac Street, this is mainly through traffic that perhaps should have used adjacent local distributor roads such as Bedford Street, Ormeau Avenue and Cromac Street. We would not therefore consider it appropriate to carry out works specifically designed to make Hamilton Street a more attractive route for through traffic.

5. Councillor Rodgers - Dee Street Bridge - When will work to the steps be completed?

Work was completed on the Dee Street bridge steps on 10 June 2013.

6. Councillor Rodgers – A site visit by Councillors to TICC to be arranged.

A site visit by Councillors has been arranged for Tuesday 3 September 2013 at 4.30 pm.

7. Councillor McCabe - Oldpark Road/Ardoyne Avenue junction. The position of the existing parking bay and bus stop obscure the sight visibility line. When a bus is at the stop cars exiting Ardoyne Avenue are unable to see cars overtaking the bus.

The bus stop on the Oldpark Road at the junction of Ardoyne Avenue has been located so the zig-zag lines at the pedestrian crossing keep the bus stop clear. In addition cars

should not overtake a bus at the stop within the zig-zag lines. Whilst a car exiting Ardoyne Avenue may be temporarily unsighted due to a stopped bus this will be for a very short period of time until the bus moves off.

The situation for traffic emerging from Ardoyne Avenue onto Oldpark Road is similar to many other junctions along Oldpark Road and other similar routes where adjacent lay-by parking provides an off-street parking facility for residents who would otherwise have to park on the main road. Recent site inspections indicated that drivers could exit from Ardoyne Avenue whilst exercising reasonable care and attention.

An inspection of the recorded road traffic collisions did not suggest this was an unsafe location for road users.

8. Councillor McCabe - Oldpark Road/Rosapenna Street junction. The layout of the junction requires investigation as vehicles have difficulty in exiting and entering the street.

This junction is subject to a proposed environmental scheme to be carried out by DSD in the near future. Any difficulties for vehicles exiting and entering this junction can be addressed at this stage.

9. Councillor R Patterson - My Lady's Road and London Road. The speed ramps are too high and also require refurbishment.

The footways and carriageways in both My Lady's Road and London Road 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 an inspection of the traffic calming ramps in both streets has recently been undertaken and that no maintenance defects were noted. In relation to the height of the traffic calming measures I have asked my staff to investigate and write directly to Councillor Patterson with their findings. They hope to have this completed before the end of August.

10. Councillor R 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.

As with most junctions the Lisburn Road/Eglantine Avenue/Tates Avenue junction is monitored on an on-going basis. The reservoir for traffic between Tates Avenue and Eglantine Avenue is however very short and the signal timings are set to suit this. We shall continue to monitor the situation on-site, paying particular attention to the issues you have highlighted and if warranted, shall amend the signal timings as appropriate in order to minimise delays as far as possible.

11. Councillor Spence - Fairhill Estate – parking issues within the estate. Requesting a meeting to discuss.

Perhaps Councillor Spence would contact Norman Chambers by telephone on 028 9025 3006 or by email at norman.chambers@drdni.gov.uk to make the necessary

arrangements.

12. Councillor M Garrett – Brook Park – Traffic calming measures were to be introduced – what assessment is used and is there a date when these are to be installed?

I can advise that we had no previous plans to provide traffic calming measures in Brooke Park. However, we have recently reviewed our assessment of this area which took account of various factors including: the speed and volume of traffic; the latest personal injury collision statistics; and environmental factors such as the presence of schools, playgrounds, hospitals, clinics, shops, public buildings and if the road is used as a through route.

That review indicated that there are a number of other areas competing for inclusion within their traffic calming programme that are deemed to be of greater priority. Taking account of the funding currently available for such works we therefore do not envisage being able to provide traffic calming measures in this area for the foreseeable future.

13. Councillor M Garrett - Ladybrook Park – Request for resurfacing.

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. The most recent inspection of the street was undertaken on 9 July 2013 and the need for some remedial work was identified. I am advised that this remedial work has been completed.

In addition to our cyclical maintenance procedures Roads Service also undertakes an annual programme of reconstruction and resurfacing works which is implemented on a scheme priority basis, subject to the availability of the necessary financial resource. Although there are no current plans to undertake such works in Ladybrook Park, my staff have assessed the street with a view to considering it for inclusion in a future resurfacing programme. In the meantime Roads Service will continue to inspect the surfaces in Ladybrook Park on a regular basis and carry out any necessary repairs.

14. Councillor M Garrett - Finaghy Road North – Street lighting not sufficient, possibly contributing to a number of accidents.

I can advise that the street lighting on the adopted roads and footways on Finaghy Road North has been checked on site by our Area Engineer on 8 August 2013. All areas were found to be compliant with the British Standards for lighting of main roads and footways to which they were designed, and all lights were fully operational at the time of inspection. Consequently, Roads Service has no plans to enhance the lighting on this road at present.

15. Councillor M Garrett - Brenda Park - Problem with parking at the church and school. Request for Double Yellow Lines and 'No Parking' signs at this location.

Roads Service had received a previous request to mark the corners of Finaghy Road North/Brenda Park with double yellow lines but due to strong objections received from

local residents and the fact that the majority of the congestion occurs for a short duration during the school afternoon peak period, it was decided not to mark these corners.

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

Yours sincerely



ROY SPIERS
Deputy Divisional Roads Manager