

# COUNTY COUNCIL

19 JULY 2017

## QUESTIONS FROM AREA ACTION PARTNERSHIPS

### Questions from Durham AAP

#### Question 1

The Durham County Council's considerable investment in the Durham City Centre SCOOT system is welcomed and it is now fully operational and traffic is moving better through the centre of Durham. The SCOOT system was based on extensive research and assurances were made that the system would be reviewed. Is there a timetable for this review, which will enable the Council to demonstrate "before and after" to evidence the changes the SCOOT has made?

#### Response

Thank you for your question. It will be clear to all of those who travel through the City that a significant improvement has been delivered, especially in the peak hour traffic queues. We have also noticed significant use being made of the additional pedestrian facilities.

In order to provide a robust analysis of the impact of the investment we need to consider traffic flows which are free from other external factors, especially other roadworks. As people will be aware we have been undertaking other works around the City and are currently renewing the traffic signals at Neville's Cross. This work will have significant effects on traffic flows and distribution across the City centre. We are therefore planning to undertake surveys to look at the before and after situation in October this year when the City Centre should be free from any major roadworks and the seasonal traffic flows have returned to normal.

#### Question 2

Since the relocation of the Passport Office, more eastward bound drivers are taking the chance of cutting across traffic on the Milburngate Bridge to drive down to the Sands rather than taking the longer, safer route. Are steps being taken to address this issue?

#### Response

Thank you for your question. A right turn is prohibited at this location because it is not safe due to the high volumes of two lane traffic in both directions. We have arranged for all the signs and lining to be checked and we will work with the Police to encourage all drivers to comply.

## **Question from Stanley AAP**

Regeneration of the Town Centre is still the main concern of Stanley residents, can the Council outline progress in achieving the ambitions of the masterplan, including an update on progress with development sites in the town.

### **Response**

Thank you for this question which I'm sure you'll appreciate is a topic of keen personal interest.

The Stanley masterplan approved by council identified five key areas for improvement across the town with a particular focus on Clifford Road and Front Street.

Earlier this year, after overwhelming public support for the plans, consent was granted for a new Aldi Store which will bring back into use the former bus station and Co-op store sites. I understand that a start date for works on this site should be announced soon.

Elsewhere the fortunes of the Clifford road area seem to have improved. Tesco decided against building a new store and have now sold their site. Permission has recently been granted for works to reconfigure units and we will continue to work with the new owners to take forward a proposal that will significantly support the regeneration of the town and bring new retailers.

Since the masterplan was agreed, over £1.2million of improvements have been made in the town centre through funding committed by the County Council and Stanley Town Council. This is in addition to the £2 million investment made in relocating the library into the town centre as part of a package of improvements at the Louisa Centre.

Existing retailers across the town also continue to receive support as part of our attempts to improve and diversify the retail offer, with 16 properties improved through our programmes, resulting in 24 new jobs and six new businesses supported. Initiatives to encourage new market traders and provide an online focus for town centre businesses and visitors have also been launched.

I would also like to thank Stanley AAP for the considerable work that it has undertaken to try and improve the vitality of the high street. The AAP has worked with local traders to offer a small grant scheme to improve the façade of the local shops. The AAP are also embarking on a 'Smart Stanley' IT project that aims to support online trading potential within the Town.

Much progress has been made against the masterplan priorities and going forward I hope to see this momentum maintained in addressing the remaining priority actions.