

Report for the Derby and Derbyshire Local Access Forum

1 December 2023

Derby City Council Rights of Way Improvement Plan

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Rights of Way Service

The Rights of Way Service sits within the Planning Division, which in turn sits within the City Growth and Vibrancy department.

The Highways Maintenance service continues to carry out the rights of way maintenance and enforcement function. The Highways Maintenance Service sits within the Sustainability department.

Definitive map and path orders

As stated in previous reports, work continues to be carried out towards the production of the legal event modification orders that are required to bring the definitive map areas covering Derby up to date. The Council is also currently processing public path orders and definitive map modification orders.

Rights of Way Improvement Plan (RoWIP 2)

Officers have been gathering information on how best to carry out the network and stakeholder assessments required for the next ROWIPs. The research carried out so far has shown that those authorities who've published recent improvement plans have approached matters very differently. Some authorities updated their original ROWIPs to only take into account the effect of more recent policies and strategies, whereas others have carried out full reassessments of their path networks and stakeholder requirements. A meeting with the ROWIP sub group to discuss how to take the City and County improvement plans forward will be set up for early in the New Year.

Path Schemes

Derby Riverside Path (National Cycle Network (NCN) 6) repairs

Work continues on the surface repair scheme for the cross boundary section of the Derby Riverside Path running between Raynesway and Borrowash. There have been concerns expressed by some members of the local community about the nature of the scheme works but the Council is satisfied that they are suitable for the location. The works are expected to be completed by March 2024.

Derwent Valley Bridleway

Derwent Valley Bridleway scheme is dependent on the approval of the A38 Derby Junctions scheme. The Secretary of State for Transport approved the A38 Derby Junctions Development Consent Order (DCO) on 17th August 2023. The Secretary of State still has to give the final approval for the funding of the road junctions scheme. The Stop the A38 Expansion Group has confirmed recently that it will challenge the DCO in the High Court.

Sinfin Moor Park Local Nature Reserve (LNR) Permissive Bridleway

A public consultation was carried out by Derby Parks proposed Sinfin Moor Park bridleway scheme during the summer to autumn period this year. The consultation closed in September. The Parks team is considering the comments before it takes any further actions.

Allestree Park and Allestree Hall

There have been no significant updates on the rewilding scheme. There hasn't been any further news on the sale of Allestree Hall. The Council has received four applications for Definitive Map Modification Orders (DMMO) for historical public footpaths around the Hall from the Ramblers' Association.

Defra News

On Thursday 26 October a statutory instrument to extend the cut-off date for historical rights of way claims (DMMO applications) to 1 January 2031 was laid in Parliament and became law on 17 November. The remainder of the outstanding legislation, such as the 'right to apply' for public path orders, and other rights of way reforms, isn't expected until next year at the earliest.

There has been no news at the time of writing about the proposed Defra/Natural England support officer for Local Access Forums.

From the Council's Newsroom

The Council taking action as demand pushes forecast overspend higher

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High inflation and increasing demand is putting pressure on Council budgets

Derby City Council is now forecasting an overspend of £6.5million at the end of this financial year without further mitigation. This is an increase of £0.5million on the position at the end of June.

Rising demand on services, especially in adult and children's social care and housing demands for temporary accommodation, is placing continued pressure on Council budgets. High inflation continues to impact on all services, but especially on energy costs and the annual pay award, which is set nationally.

The current financial position is outlined in the Quarter 2 Financial Monitoring report, which records the first six months to October and will be considered by Cabinet Members at their next meeting on 21 November.

It does not include the costs incurred as the result of recent flooding due to Storm Babet. These are still being calculated and the Council will be looking to claim through the Government's Bellwin Scheme.

Without further mitigation the Council could consider using its reserves to meet the overspend, however these would have to be replenished over the medium term.

The Council is already taking action to drive down costs having mitigated £2.6m of the costs of the annual pay award through controls on job vacancies. To avoid drawing so much on its reserves, it will need to cut its in-year spending, and limit recruitment, even more than it is already doing.

Like councils across the country, Derby is facing unprecedented financial challenges. Some councils including Birmingham, Thurrock and Slough have declared a Section 114 notice, meaning they can no longer deliver a balanced budget. In these cases they have faced specific, local issues but this has happened against a backdrop of deep cuts to local government funding since 2010.

Paul Simpson, Chief Executive of Derby City Council, said:

Taking our usable reserves down to the levels outlined in this report is our absolute last resort and we will be doing everything we can to mitigate against this, in the face of continued economic uncertainty and rising demand.

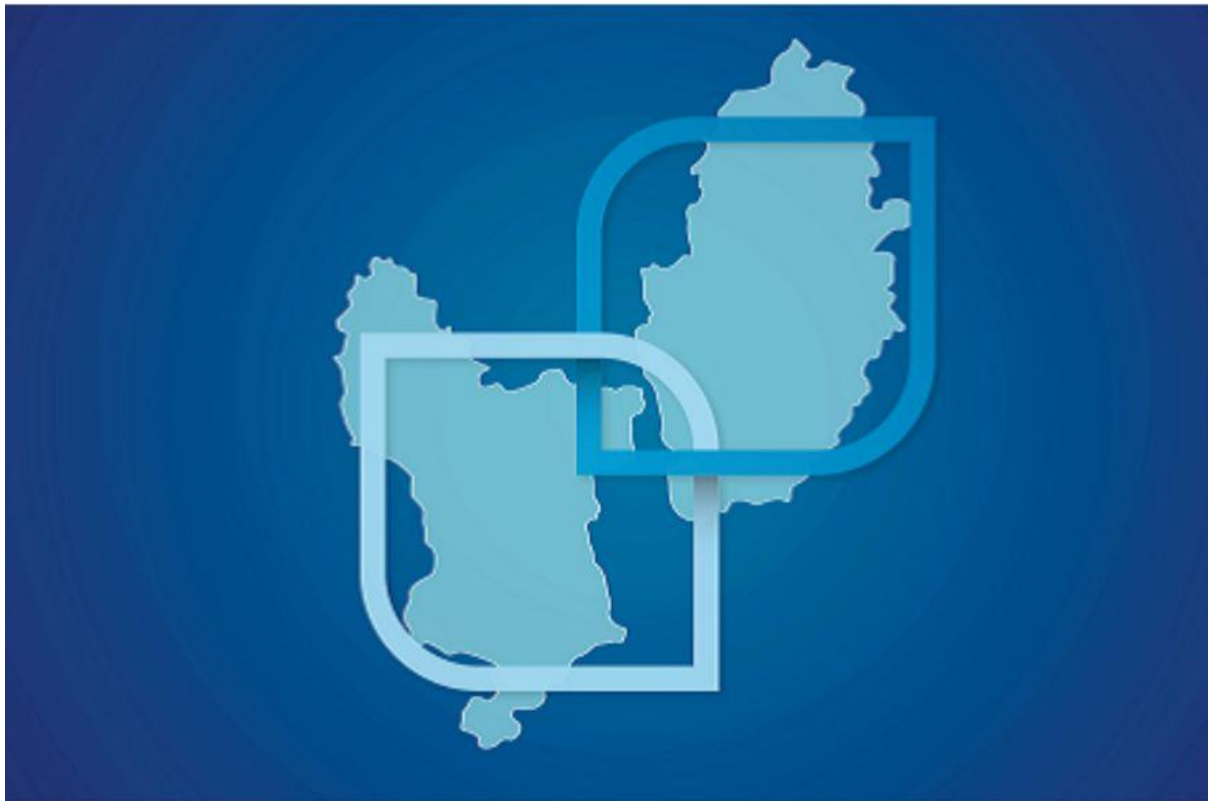
The long-awaited reforms of local government funding need to be bought forward to ensure that local authorities can be financially sustainable. Councils have to be there to provide and care for the most vulnerable people in our society.

We won't have confirmation of how much Government funding we'll get for 2024/25 until late December, by which time we will be presenting our budget proposals, which look set to be very challenging indeed.

Above all, we're a strong Council and remain ambitious for our city. We will do everything we can to keep us on a stable financial footing.

A Cabinet meeting will take place on Tuesday 21 November where the finances will be discussed further.

East Midlands devolution moves closer to reality



Key legislation has now been approved for the proposed combined authority

The proposed East Midlands Combined County Authority (EMCCA) has moved one step closer to reality after key legislation was approved in Westminster.

The Levelling Up and Regeneration Bill has been granted Royal Assent after completing its passage through Parliament, paving the way for the creation of the EMCCA and the region's very-first Mayoral elections next May.

Derbyshire County Council, Nottinghamshire County Council, Derby City Council and Nottingham City Council will now decide whether to move forward with devolution plans, with decisions expected before the end of the year.

The East Midlands devolution deal, agreed with Government ministers last summer, would see Derbyshire, Nottinghamshire, Derby and Nottingham benefit from £1.14 billion of funding to invest in local projects related to transport, education and skills, housing, the environment and economic development.

Defending Derby from its river



The flood walls by Riverside Chambers kept the river at bay during Storm Babet, 21 October 2023.

Derby has always experienced flooding. As the city grew the river was its strength, as its power was used to drive silk production. But the Derwent has also been Derby's threat. Official measuring of river levels began in 1935 and reached the highest on record on Saturday 21 October.

Topping out at 3.58m, the previous record from 8 November 2019 was broken. In all, half of the top ten highest river levels recorded in Derby have happened in the past five years. With major flood events becoming more frequent, the city is upping its game to cope with the effects of climate change.

Storm Babet made its mark on Derby with persistent heavy rain causing problems with surface water as well as the river. The result was major disruption on roads around the city centre and flooding to businesses and some homes. However, the latest stage of the Our City, Our River flood defence programme performed well and limited the damage.

The newest addition to the flood defence arsenal, the [award winning Mill Fleam Pumping Station](#), was given its first real-world test. With all three of its pumps in action at the height of the flooding, it performed exactly as

designed. Given the amount of water that was pumped out over the weekend, it's believed the station prevented a huge area of the city centre from flooding.

The story was very different in 1932, the year of the Great Flood. Photographs taken by the Borough Surveyor show people standing up to their knees in floodwater on Sadler Gate. The front page of the Derby Evening Telegraph the following day, 23 May 1932, describes the flooding as the worst since 1842.

The newspaper describes the water as reaching depths of eight feet in some places and puts early costs to the city at £400,000. The Mayor's Flood Fund was launched, with souvenir pamphlets on sale at 6d each – equivalent to 2.5p today.

Fast forward to October 2023, we have a very different city with a state-of-the-art pumping station. Had it not been constructed, and water had been allowed to flow back up the Markeaton Brook culvert, we could have seen flood waters in the heart of the city once again.



Sadler Gate during the Great Flood of 1932. (Derby Local Studies and Family History Library)

Our flood walls and gates, from Darley Abbey down to the River Gardens, were also called into action to keep water out of the hundreds of riverside

properties behind them. The defences contained flood water in an engineered corridor as it flowed through the city, with around 2,000 properties benefiting last weekend.



Flood walls at the River Gardens on 21 October 2023

But flood defences can't protect places where they're not built, and the OCOR scheme is not a finished product. Some areas of the city, such as Exeter House and Meadow Road, are still reliant on defences built in the 1960s, which are reaching the end of their useful life and cannot always cope with the flood events we are seeing today.

The [planned new defences at Derby Riverside](#) would include higher, more resilient walls running from Causey Bridge down to Derwent Bridge, increasing protection for businesses, homes and infrastructure. A new riverside park opposite the Museum of Making would also provide a wider flood conveyance corridor, providing a space for floodwater to go and get round bridges more quickly. This could potentially reduce the river level around the Museum during a flood event. A planning application for this work has been submitted and is due to be considered soon.

New sustainable travel hub will offer students a range of transport choices



The first of its kind in the city, the hub will offer students a range of transport options

Derby City Council and the University of Derby have joined forces to create a sustainable travel hub at the University's Kedleston Road site.

Approximately 15,000 students and 3,000 staff are based at the University's largest and busiest site on Kedleston Road, which is two miles from the city centre. The hub will be the first of its kind in the city, offering multiple transport choices in one place and allowing students, staff and visitors to the University to take full advantage of Derby's growing active and sustainable transport offer.

The hub will offer a range of sustainable transport choices, such as Lime's Gen4 e-bikes and electric vehicle charging points, to make travel to and from the University easier. The hub will also help reduce congestion and give students greater transport options. Designed with the capacity to grow as the city's sustainable travel offer continues to expand, the hub will also become a location for the new Enterprise Car Club, which is launching in Derby later this year.

This pilot will provide the Council and University with essential information about user behaviour, which can be used to develop future mobility hubs within the city.

In 2020, Derby City Council, alongside Nottingham City Council were awarded £161m for transport improvements from the [Department for Transport's \(DfT\) Transforming Cities fund](#), aimed at improving connections between major employment sites and promoting active travel and public transport. The two councils were also awarded a £16.7m grant from the Government's Future Transport Zones fund which is being invested in joint projects which aim to improve connectivity and further encourage use of public transport.

Funded by £800,000 from the Future Transport Zones fund, the hub will complement the city's growing active travel offer which gives citizens a range of transport options.

St Peter's Street completion paves the way for more travel improvements in Derby



Representatives from Derby City Council's Traffic and Transport Team and Equalities Hub, Eurovia, and Councillor Carmel Swan

The first in a series of public realm and active travel improvements for Derby has been completed.

St Peter's Street, Babbington Lane, and Gower Street have undergone a major upgrade to enhance their appearance, allow for more sustainable transport options, and reduce congestion and pollution in the city centre.

These works are part of Nottingham and Derby's [Transforming Cities programme](#) and delivered by Eurovia Infrastructure Ltd on behalf of Derby City Council.

The works are funded by the Department for Transport's Transforming Cities Fund. Working in partnership, Nottingham City and Derby City Councils secured £161 million to invest in local transport infrastructure that will improve sustainable transport, support growth, and encourage more low carbon journeys.

With the works around St Peter's Street complete, attention can turn to the schemes that are either currently underway or in the works. This scheme is the first of many Transforming Cities-funded projects to be completed in Derby, including:

- Station Road
- The Morledge
- Victoria and Albert Street

The sustainable transport improvements are clear to see, with a new high contrast, off-the-road cycle lane an obvious change. The bus stops in the area have also been set back from the road to allow traffic to continue moving, reducing congestion and pollution in this central area.

The Council's Access, Equality and Inclusion Hub have played an active role in developing this scheme and particular attention has been paid to access for wheelchair and mobility scooter users. A series of [new and improved blue badge bays](#) were installed on Gower Street, along with improved crossing points being installed and unnecessary street furniture being removed.

The works have also seen the installation of the latest '[Living Roof](#)' [bus stops](#) in Derby. These stops offer more than just a place for passengers to wait as they are topped with wildflower and Sedum plants: all favourites for bees and other insects. These are coupled with a number of new planters and trees that have been added around the area.

Normanton Park Sports Courts redevelopment begins



Artist impression of Normanton Park Sports Courts

This month marks the start of a significant transformation as work gets underway on the redevelopment of the Normanton Park Sports Courts.

The Cruyff Court and Playzone will provide state-of-the-art facilities that are designed to become a central hub for sports, play, and recreation within the local community. Activities will include football, cricket, basketball and other sporting recreational activities.

The project is managed by Sporting Communities and funded by Cruyff Foundation, the Football Foundation, Derby Homes, and Derby City Council via an external grant from the UK Government's Levelling Up Parks Fund. These partners, with Friends of Normanton Park, have played a vital role in turning this vision into reality.

This collaborative partnership anticipates these cutting-edge facilities will empower the community to pursue their passion for sports and encourage an active lifestyle.

Construction work on the facilities is due to start this week, with the goal of having the courts ready for use by January 2024. Opportunities will be

available for community groups and individuals to hire the courts. Sporting Communities invite interested parties to find out more by emailing hire@sportingcommunitiescic.org.

Free trees on the way to over 100 Derby households



The trees will be a mix of fruit and ornamental species.

160 free trees are ready to be given out to households and schools thanks to the Our City, Our River (OCOR) Garden Trees Scheme.

102 households took up the [offer of a free tree](#) earlier this year, as part of the flood defence project's replanting programme.

Those who applied to the scheme will start to receive their trees in at the end of November in time for the key planting season.

As well as the households, three schools will also receive a number of trees to provide shade, habitats for wildlife and improved Forest School areas.

Almost half of the trees are fruit trees, including apple, pear cherry and plum. The rest are a selection of ornamental trees such as Silver Birch and Hawthorn.

This tree replacement initiative is just one of a range of environmental enrichments that are being implemented, including new habitats for birds, bats and otters, and a new fish refuge lagoon constructed near the Mill Fleam pumping station.

So far, OCOR has planted 433 trees, more than replacing those that have already been removed to make way for new flood defences. The project is aiming to plant a further 1422 over the coming years.

Recommendation

To note this report.