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**OVERVIEW OF HIGHWAYS AND TRANSPORT PORTFOLIO**

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1. Since the last meeting of Council, the following are the main areas of work that have been undertaken under the Highways and Transport Portfolio :-
  - (a) **West Park Travel Plan** – The travel plan for the new hospital at West Park was implemented in time for the opening of the hospital in December 2004. The plan developed as part of the commissioning process for the hospital, was approved by the County Durham and Darlington Priority Services NHS Trust Board, and developed with support from Darlington Borough Council. The plan has included a lit cycle route from the recently completed Barnard Castle Track Bed cycle route to the hospital; covered cycle parking at the main entrance to the hospital; a new bus stop within the site; and a new half hourly bus service linking the hospital to the town centre. A leaflet has been produced by Transport Policy, which provides travel information to the site. This will be used by the Trust to inform patients and visitors of the alternative travel choices.
  - (b) **Second Local Transport Plan** – Steer Davies Gleave, transport consultants, have undertaken the consultation with key stakeholders, councillors, officers and 4 focus groups and produced an interim report. This will now be taken to Cabinet before public consultation in March 2005. New guidance issued by Department for Transport has now revised the timescales for the Plan, as well as providing additional information on the assessment process and monitoring the mandatory indicators. A provisional second Local Transport Plan will now be submitted in July 2005 with the final version being submitted in March 2006.
  - (c) **Congestion Study** - As part of preparation for the Second Local Transport Plan, a study has been commissioned to identify current and potential network congestion issues for road traffic within the Borough, to proposed solutions to identified problems, and to consider the implications of changes at one point in the network to other parts of the network.
  - (d) **Bus Information** – The Darlington bus map was distributed with the December Town Crier.
  - (e) **Cycling** –
    - (i) Orders have now been placed with Community Services to implement the cycle routes on Cemetery Lane, Red Hall, and Desmond Way. The Cemetery Lane and Red Hall schemes are part funded by Sustrans as part of the Safe Links to Schools initiatives.

- (ii) Signs have been ordered for the cycle route from Barnard Castle Track Bed to North Park. These will be installed this financial year.

**(f) Town on the Move Update –**

- (i) Work on the travel behaviour research is now complete. Sustrans and their partner the market research company Social Data were appointed to undertake this work. Full results of this study, which has involved over 4500 residents, will be available at the end of February 2005.
- (ii) Findings from the research will be presented on day one of a ‘Town on the Move – Local Travel Summit’ to take place at the Dolphin Centre, Central Hall on the 15 and 16 March. Participants on day one will also have the opportunity to input into a number of workshops discussing issues relating to the journey to work/to education/for leisure and shopping and to access health services. Day one of the summit will involve 150 participants, including representatives of the community partnerships, community and interest groups. All Council Members have been invited to attend. Day two of the summit will involve a smaller number of participants who will be invited to look in detail at the travel issues highlighted during day one of the summit and to make recommendations as to the most effective means of delivering a high quality travel network, accessible to all citizens of the borough. Members of the Town on the Move Reference Group have been invited.
- (iii) On the 17 March Darlington is to host a national Sustainable Travel Town conference, organised by the Department for Transport. Findings from the Local Travel Summit will be reported to the conference.
- (iv) Work has commenced on the development of local area travel guides, a website and the production of stop specific timetables. The website will be operational by March 2005 and the first set of local travel guides published by April 2005.
- (v) Through the Town on the Move project cycle training is now available free to all year six pupils. 252 schoolchildren have received on-road cycle training during the autumn term; this is a 10% increase on the same period last year.
- (vi) From 1 November the concessionary fares scheme was extended to all children in the borough aged 16 or under. The bus operators are to monitor the uptake of this scheme, providing before and after data for sample months.

**(g) School Travel Plans –**

- (i) Pupils at Hummersknott School have completed a parent and pupils survey looking at issues around the journey to/from school. Key findings included the need for improvements to Cemetery Lane and a safe crossing facility on Carmel Road. This work is scheduled for completion by April 2005, jointly funded through the LTP and Sustrans links to schools initiative. That just over 50% of

pupils walk to school, whilst 58% expressed the wish to walk and that of those parents driving pupils to school, 20% return straight home, 50% carry on to work and 14% go on to another school. Taking evidence from the survey pupils and teachers are now working to develop a travel plan, with a number of targets to increase levels of walking and cycling to school.

- (ii) On 19 January all of Darlington's schools took part in a national 'hands up' travel survey. Pupils were asked, how they travelled to school on that day and how they usually travel to school.
  - (iii) All pupils at Alderman Leach Primary School are to receive a local area travel map showing walking, cycling and bus routes to the new school site. These leaflets will be distributed prior to the February half term holidays.
- (h) **Hurworth to Neasham Footway/Cycleway - Compulsory Purchase Order** - the Compulsory Purchase Order has been advertised.
- (i) **North Road Corridor of Certainty** -
- (i) Fitzwilliam Drive Traffic Calming - works substantially complete.
  - (ii) Traffic order process for North Road Bus Lanes ongoing.
  - (iii) Northgate Bus Bay Scheme - work order placed with Community Services Department.
- (j) **Other Schemes**
- (i) Carmel Road North Toucan - Design complete and works order placed with Community Services.
  - (ii) Cleveland Street (Bridge) - Design complete and works order placed with Community Services.
  - (iii) New Puffin crossing now in operation on Neasham Road near Netto.
- (k) **Highway Maintenance Works** - various schemes are due to commence/have commenced/have been carried out since the last report:
- (i) The following schemes have been commenced/are due to commence:
    - A167 North Road - Ruby Street to Peabody Street - footpath works ongoing.
    - A1150 Salters Lane North Phase 1 - kerbing/carriageway strengthening and resurfacing - on site 10 January 2005.

- B6280 Yarm Road - McMullen Road towards Morton Palms - carriageway surfacing ongoing.
- C182 Thompson Street West - North Road towards Cemetery - footpath works (south side).
- C182 Thompson Street East - The Leas to Davison Road - footpath works (north side).
- Unc The Fairway - footpath works (west side)
- C182 Thompson Street East - carriageway resurfacing.

(ii) The following schemes have been completed:

- Unc Leith Road/Hill Close Avenue - carriageway strengthening.
- Pierremont Road - carriageway reconstruction and resurfacing.
- A67 Piercebridge Junction - carriageway resurfacing.

(l) **Traffic Management & Road Safety Scheme**

- (i) Ongoing works to provide dropped crossings for disabled persons at various locations in the town centre.
- (ii) The Darlington Football Club Section 106 highway works at Neasham Road have been completed.
- (iii) Firthmoor traffic calming Phase 2 has been completed.
- (iv) Eggleston View additional traffic calming works have commenced.
- (v) Redworth Village 30 mph speed limit signing works have been completed.
- (vi) Alderman Leach Safer Routes to School - West Auckland Road footpath widening scheme has been completed.
- (vii) A68 West Park cycleway/footway scheme has been completed.
- (viii) Cemetery Lane cycle route works have commenced.
- (ix) River Skerne/Red Hall cycle route works have commenced.

(m) **Road Safety Education, Training and Publicity Initiatives** - a number of initiatives have been instigated included the following:

- (i) The monthly child car seat testing programme has finished for 2004. The response has been positive and the programme will be continued in 2005.
- (ii) In November APE Theatre Company performed the play 'Too Much Punch for Judy' for five schools in the Borough as well as the Queen Elizabeth Sixth Form College. This is the fifth year the play has been performed in Darlington and has again been well received with the schools considering hosting it again in 2005.
- (iii) During December the annual drink drive campaign took place with:
  - Department for Transport (DfT) leaflets being distributed to employees at both the Council and Cummins.
  - In partnership with Durham Constabulary's drink drive campaign posters were also distributed to local shops, garages and post offices.
  - Four major supermarkets in the town were host to a 'Mocktail' campaign at which customers and staff were given samples of non-alcoholic cocktails, recipe sheets, leaflets and other freebies to promote a positive approach to drinking and driving during the festive season.

(n) **Bridgework Schemes**

- (i) A167 Oxneyfield Bridge - out to tender, work on site due to commence 31 January 2005.
- (ii) Polam Lane Bridge - width restriction in place. Temporary strengthening underway.

**Councillor Nick Wallis**  
**Cabinet Member with Highways and Transport Portfolio**