
OVERVIEW OF HIGHWAYS AND TRANSPORT PORTFOLIO

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) **Darlington's Second Local Transport Budget 2006/07** – Following approval of Darlington's Second Local Plan at the meeting of Council held on 23rd March, 2006, Cabinet at its meeting held on 9th May, 2006, formally released £2.769m for the schemes to be undertaken during 2006/07. The award is split into two categories, namely maintenance and integrated transport aimed at tackling traffic congestion, improving access to facilities and encouraging sustainable travel. It was pleasing to note that £78,000 of this was extra funding due to the good performance of the Council in relation to its delivery of the first Local Transport Plan.
 - (b) **Darlington Eastern Transport Corridor** – Provisional approval for the scheme has been announced by Government with the final seal of approval following satisfactory completion of the tender process. Detailed design is being finalised and the tender documents under preparation.
 - (c) **Darlington's Second Local Transport Plan**
 - (i) The Second Local Transport Plan has been submitted to the Department for Transport. This will be assessed and an announcement of the assessment and associated funding settlement for 2007/08 will be given in December 2006. Planning guideline figures will also be issued for the remaining years of the Plan.
 - (ii) Initial work has started on the production of the Delivery report. This replaces the Annual Progress Report. It covers the 5 year period of the First Local Transport Plan and in particular will cover the wider impact of the Plan, progress against targets and spending profiles. The Report will be submitted by 31 July 2006 and assessed in line with the timescales for the Second Local Transport Plan. The assessment will directly affect the level of funding allocated to Darlington for transport.
 - (d) **Cycle Demonstration Town Project**
 - (i) An online cycle journey planner has been developed to a pilot stage by consultants 'Where From Here Now.' A final product is expected soon.
 - (ii) A provisional design study has been carried out on a bridge over the Tees at Low Coniscliffe as part of National Route 14. It is hoped a solution can be found this

financial year.

- (iii) Cycle parking has been completed at a local business on Victoria Road, Abbey School, North Road Primary and Holy Family.

(e) Travel Plans

- (i) A meeting was held with Mowden Hall to discuss overspill and residents parking issues involving Local Councillors, Police, Highway Engineers and Mowden management, to be followed up with a site visit and review of their existing Travel Plan.
- (ii) A meeting has taken place with Consultants Heritage North, acting for the Primary Care Trust (PCT) with regard to producing a travel plan for Hundens Lane rehabilitation unit which is now open.
- (iii) A review of the Council's Travel Plan has commenced.
- (iv) Travel Plan Training for Planners to be organized in May/June to increase awareness of issues.

(f) Public Transport Issues

- (i) Free concessionary travel on all local bus services in the Borough (and to/from Bishop Auckland Hospital) was introduced for the over 60's and eligible disabled persons from 1 April 2006. Advertisement of the scheme in the Town Crier resulted in an additional 358 applications being received. This equates to an additional 2.6% take up of passes.
- (ii) Following the withdrawal of the hourly daytime bus service 98 to Sadberge by Arriva, the Council stepped in to secure a two-hourly replacement service. This is being provided by Compass Royston, who were awarded a contract following a tendering process.
- (iii) The Service Level Agreement with Darlington & District Youth and Community Association to provide the Ring a Ride service has been extended for another year until 31 March 2007, whilst a review of community transport is completed.
- (iv) The Service Level Agreement with Darlington Association on Disability has been extended for a further year for the provision of the Shopmobility Service. A tendering process will be undertaken to appoint a provider of the service until March 2011.

- (g) **Local Motion Launch Event** – School children, businesses and residents from Darlington gathered in the Market Square recently to celebrate the launch of the Local Motion campaign:

- (i) The launch event was kicked off with a performance of the hit song Locomotion from pop superstar look-alike Kylie Minogue. Hundreds of local school children walked, cycled or took the bus into the town to take part in the event. Schools participating were St Augustine's RC VA Primary, Abbey Infants (12 children), Heathfield Primary, Whinfield Primary, Skerne Park Primary, Abbey Juniors and Hummersknott.
 - (ii) Alpha FM provided music and information, broadcasting live from the Market Square. Key partners taking part in the event included Arriva, Stagecoach, Sustrans, local bike shops, Shopmobility, DAD, GOLD and the Police.
 - (iii) The Local Motion campaign aims to take the Town on the Move project to a new level of community participation, inviting residents to sign up as supporters of the campaign. In return, they will be eligible to receive a range of incentives including discounts at local shops, free travel information and invitations to Local Motion events. Over 250 residents signed up as Local Motion supporters on the day of the event.
- (h) **Individualised Travel Marketing 2006** – The 2006 programme of individualised travel marketing (ITM) started on the 24 April 2006 with staff from Team Local Motion contacting households in the Whinfield area. This year households in the Haughton Wards, Central and College Wards will have the opportunity to receive free local travel information, including bespoke information relevant to their needs. Residents will also be invited to participate in the Local Motion campaign. This year the ITM staff will be readily identifiable in their new Team Local Motion uniforms.

(i) Schools

- (i) A further seven schools have completed Travel Plans in time for the 31 March deadline. These are:
 - (a) Branksome Comprehensive
 - (b) Harrowgate Hill Primary
 - (c) North Road Primary
 - (d) Red Hall Primary
 - (e) St Augustine's RC VA Primary
 - (f) St Georges Primary
 - (g) Whinfield Primary
- (ii) Schools that had previously completed their travel plans are:

2004

- (a) Abbey Infants
- (b) Abbey Juniors
- (c) Alderman Leach Primary
- (d) Heighington Primary
- (e) Mount Pleasant Primary

2005

- (f) Bishopton/Redmarshall Primary
- (g) Dodmire Infant and Nursery
- (h) Dodmire Juniors
- (i) Heathfield Primary
- (j) Hummersknott School & Language College
- (k) St Teresa's RC VA Primary

(iii) Other recent schools' activities include an event coordinated by the Sustrans 'Bike - IT' officer promoting cycling at Abbey Juniors, Heathfield and Hummersknott Schools during a Darlington bike to school week campaign (3-7 April 2006).

(iv) Medal Motion – All of Darlington's primary schools have been invited to take part in the 'medal motion' campaign starting on the 22 May 2006. This promotes walking, cycling and public transport over a three-week period, including the half term holiday. Pupils and parents are being encouraged to take part with bronze, silver and gold medals being awarded depending upon the level of involvement from pupils. There will also be prizes for schools and a prize draw for pupils that take part.

- (j) **Tourist Information Centre** – The Centre has been extended to include a Local Motion Travel Centre. Residents and visitors will be able to ask advice on local travel information and access a range of free travel information.
- (k) **Travel Information** – A range of new and updated travel information has been published, both for use by the individualised marketing team and for distribution through the Local Motion Travel Centre and other public buildings. Recent publications include updated public transport and cycle maps, and the first of a series of area-based bus timetables.

- (l) **Car Parking** – Arrangements have been made for the recently opened Cornmill Car Park to be added to the existing VMS system to assist car drivers in finding a parking space in the town centre. A new direction sign has been ordered for installation on Stonebridge to provide information on space availability in the Cornmill car park and directing drivers to alternative car parks when it is full. Works can be completed once structural repairs to the Library building are finished.
- (m) **North Road Corridor of Certainty** – Thompson Street junction improvement and signal upgrade nearing completion.
- (n) **Central Park Northern Access** – Works now nearing completion.
- (o) **A66/A67 Morton Palms Roundabout Improvement** – Discussions taking place with the Highways Agency to finalise the implementation of the works.
- (p) **Highway Maintenance Works** – Five highway maintenance schemes have just commenced or are about to commence; two schemes are ongoing and five have recently been completed.
- (q) **‘Let’s Get Cracking’** – Following a competitive tender process, Alfred McAlpine Government Services Limited have been appointed as a construction partner alongside Community Services for the delivery of the various schemes. The works, which are about to commence, will be carried out in a number of tranches over the coming 15 months. A list of the streets included in the first tranche has already been published and further details of the programme of works will be made available to members and published in the press and on the website in due course.
- (r) **Traffic Management & Road Safety Schemes:**
- (i) Taxis in Bus Lane Experiment – commenced on the 10 April 2006 and will be monitored over a six month period.
- (ii) Coombe Drive main traffic calming scheme now complete with reductions in speed recorded. Construction of pedestrian refuge to commence May 2006.
- (iii) Brinkburn Road Phase 3A (Major Street to Darrowby Drive (Hopetown House Access) now complete. Brinkburn Road Phase 3B under design.
- (iv) Sadberge Village safety and traffic concerns feasibility work – Phase I now complete. Phase II awaiting Traffic Regulation Orders.
- (v) Middleton St George – First consultation on the School 20 mph zone, speed limit alterations, village gateways and waiting restrictions complete with further consultation ongoing. Traffic Regulation Orders awaited.
- (vi) Royal Oak Junction – kerbing and island realignments now complete.

- (vii) Fulthorpe Avenue – signing and lining. Road markings and traffic sign scheme to commence in shortly.
 - (viii) Ricknall/Lodge/Lime Lane kerbing and lining adjustments now complete.
 - (ix) Low Middleton – signing and lining scheme in preparation
 - (x) Firthmoor Phase 5 – design ongoing.
 - (xi) McMullen Road Cycleway – the scheme is substantially complete. Contract period was extended to incorporate the first part of the next phase of the Cycle Way Scheme as this was operationally beneficial, and to carry out repairs to a defect in a storm sewer that was identified during the construction of the works.
 - (xii) Decriminalised Parking Enforcement – feasibility and preparatory work underway.
 - (xiii) Stanhope Road Area Residents’ Parking Scheme – Traffic Order advertised and a report for Cabinet being prepared.
 - (xiv) 20 mph speed limit zones – preliminary design work being carried out for school zones, the town centre and urban zones. The Traffic Regulation Orders for the Darrowby Drive Estate and Harrowgate Hill Estate are being prepared for formal publication.
- (s) **Road Safety Education, Training and Publicity Initiatives** – A number of initiatives have been instigated including the following:
- (i) **Cycle Training Programme**

Five schools are taking part with their year five children.
 - (ii) **Nursery Education**

The ‘People Who Help Us’ programme is progressing as normal with Nursery Schools.
 - (iii) **Pedestrian Training**

Pedestrian training has been carried out in ten schools since the last report.
 - (iv) **Work Related Road Safety**

The ‘Spring Into Safety’ campaign organised by managers of Arriva for their bus drivers with assistance from the road safety team took place during week beginning 12 March 2006. The campaign helped raise road safety awareness and included a brake reaction test. It has also helped forge a good working relationship with Arriva regarding road safety and their appreciation has been

publicly recorded at the Transport Forum.

(t) Bridgework Schemes:

- (i) Little Stainton Bridge – construction to commence as soon as land entry is confirmed.
- (ii) Bishopton Bridge – works completed on time and to budget.
- (iii) Barmpton Bridge – detailed design nearing completion.
- (iv) Leadyard Bridge – works in progress.
- (v) Great Burdon Bridge – initial investigation carried out for maintenance scheme.
- (vi) Central House Retaining Wall – Capita Symonds engaged to carry out the detailed design.

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