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**DARLINGTON: A TOWN ON THE MOVE**

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**Responsible Cabinet Member(s) - Councillor Nick Wallis,  
Highways and Transport Portfolio**

**Responsible Director(s) - John Buxton, Director of Development and Environment**

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**Purpose of Report**

1. To update Members on the Darlington – A Town on the Move project, funded by the Department for Transport through the Sustainable Travel Demonstration Town initiative, and to seek release of funding for proposals for the delivery of the project in 2006. A proposal for Darlington Borough Council to work in partnership with the private bus operating companies on the development and promotion of a range of multi-operator bus tickets is set out in a separate report in Part III of the agenda.

**Information and Analysis**

2. In April 2004 the Council was allocated £3.24 million for revenue expenditure by the Department for Transport to support the delivery of a range of initiatives promoting the greater use of sustainable forms of transport (walking, cycling, public transport and car sharing). The funding, which is released quarterly in arrears, is allocated as follows: -
  - (a) 2004/05 - £400,000 (Full amount claimed).
  - (b) 2005/06 - £810,000 (£300,000 claimed to date).
  - (c) 2006/07 - £782,000.
  - (d) 2007/08 - £794,000.
  - (e) 2008/09 - £454,000.

***Progress Update***

3. Cabinet received and approved proposals for the delivery of the ‘A Town on the Move’ project on 13 July and 19 October 2004. Please refer to **Appendix 1** for details on progress since that time. At the 19 October 2004 meeting Cabinet agreed to set up a cross-sector Reference Group to advise on the selection of schemes and actions. The Reference Group is specifically asked to ensure that each scheme or action has an exit strategy that does not assume future funding.

## *Travel Research and Monitoring*

4. A key part of the Council's project planning for 'A Town on the Move' is that specific sustainable travel initiatives should be evidence based, that they will be carefully monitored and reviewed and that an exit strategy should have been identified prior to their introduction.
5. Between September and December 2004 over 4,250 Darlington residents took part in perhaps the most detailed travel survey ever completed in the UK. A random selection of residents from across the twenty urban wards were asked to complete a travel diary for a particular day of the week. (A 59% response rate gave a net sample of 4,269 individuals, with a minimum of 200 people per ward). A sub sample of 406 residents then also took part in an in-depth interview exploring attitudes to transport planning, risks of traffic accidents and the potential for changing their travel behaviour.
6. The survey, which is based upon travel diaries recording actual travel behaviour on a particular day by the participating residents, was undertaken by internationally recognised experts in measuring travel behaviour, Socialdata.
7. This research has provided a robust set of baseline data on which to set a number of indicators and targets for the Town on the Move project and for the Local Transport Plan. **Appendix 2** has a summary of the research findings, which also provide the evidence base for the proposed actions. Key indicators and targets for Town on the Move are:
  - (a) An increase in the percentage of trips by walking from 25% to 27% by 2008/9.
  - (b) An increase in the percentage of trips by cycling from 1% to 2.5% by 2008/9.
  - (c) A decrease in the percentage of trips by car as a driver from 41.4% to 38% by 2008/9.
  - (d) Bus patronage levels in 2010/11 to be higher or equal to patronage levels in 2004/5.
8. Further research into travel behaviour will form a major element of the monitoring programme. Sustrans/Socialdata were contracted to undertake a further survey of residents' travel behaviour in November 2005. This survey involved a minimum of 1,000 residents within areas targeted during 2005 for individualised travel marketing and a 'control' group of 500 residents outside of this area. Results from this survey will be available in March 2006. Further interim surveys are planned for 2006 and 2007 with a repeat of the full baseline survey planned for the autumn of 2008.
9. Although still relatively early in the project we have been able to gather some specific evidence of travel behaviour change. This includes a three to four fold increase in cycling levels at a number of schools with completed travel plans. Also a sharp increase in the number of pedestrians and cyclists using the cycle/pedestrian path linking West Cockerton to West Auckland Road.
10. We have also gathered evidence from a recently completed customer survey of 550 residents (5% of the target group) involved in the first phase of the Individualised Travel Marketing initiative (see table 1 below).

<b>Indicator</b>	<b>Achieved</b>	<b>Target</b>	<b>Progress</b>
% of participating households who rate customer service as good/ very good	98%	95%	Exceeded target
% of non-participating households who rate customer service as good/ very good	100%	95%	Exceeded target
% of participating households who rated the quality of travel information as good/ very good	84%	No target set.	
% of participating households who rated the accuracy of travel information as good/ very good	99.5%	90%	Exceeded target
% of information despatched within five working days of conversation <sup>1</sup> (Please refer to <b>Appendix 3</b> for a full list of information sent)	100%	95%	Exceeded target

11. The customer service survey also elicited feedback about the impact of the programme. 66% (363) of participants reported the conversation to be useful, 14% (77) reported a change in travel behaviour as a result of participating in the project and 9% (50) of those receiving a community guide also stated that they have used the local shops/services more often since receiving the guide. It is important to note that this survey was primarily designed to assess customer satisfaction rather than a change in travel behaviour. The forthcoming Sustrans/Socialdata survey will analyse changes in travel behaviours.

### ***Progress on Key Initiatives***

12. As evidenced in **Appendix 1** considerable progress has been made in the last year to implement measures to encourage walking, cycling and use of public transport. Key initiatives taking place during 2005 include:
- (a) Programme of individualised travel marketing providing information on local services and travel to 7,800 households.
  - (b) Provision of stop specific bus timetables at more than 90% of stops.
  - (c) Introduction of pedestrian training for Year 1, 2 and 3 school pupils.
  - (d) 40% increase in number of school pupils completing on road cycle training.
  - (e) Programme of public and schools' events promoting walking and cycling involving over 4,000 participants.

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<sup>1</sup> Some information had not been finalised before the contact phase began. Where these were requested in advance of print copies being available, these were not included in our 5 day despatch figures.

### ***Areas for improvement***

13. The ongoing review of activities informed by the travel behaviour research and experience of delivering the programme to date has identified a number of areas for improvement in the programme, in particular:
  - (a) The need for a public relations and marketing strategy aimed at generating community 'buy-in' and developing a 'call to action' to Darlington residents.
  - (b) Greater community awareness of the individualised marketing team.
  - (c) Clearer branding across all local travel literature, the Town on the Move website, advertising and, where appropriate, on directional signing on-street.
  - (d) Greater co-operation with the private bus operators on improving and marketing the bus product.
  - (e) Use of the substantial database of travel information collected in 2004 and evidence from the individualised travel marketing to better target measures to improve the transport system (predominantly LTP investment) and improve the perception and awareness of travel options (predominantly Town on the Move investment).
  - (f) Generating more coverage in the national media and transport press of the sustainable travel towns' initiative.

### ***Forward planning for 2006/7***

14. In recognition of the key areas for improvement (Item 13), proposals for the delivery of the Town on the Move programme in 2006 include:
  - (a) Launch of a major marketing campaign in April 2006.
  - (b) Steps to generate community interest in the individualised travel marketing through community events and activities taking place immediately prior to the delivery phase within a particular area.
  - (c) Improved public recognition of the individualised marketing staff, through use of uniforms.
  - (d) Work with an external marketing agency (Karol Marketing) over the winter months to develop readily identifiable branding on all Town on the Move materials.
  - (e) Work with the bus operators to jointly promote a multi-operator-ticketing scheme, further details given in a separate report on this agenda.
  - (f) Work with the bus operators to improve and promote one or two key bus services operating in areas identified through the travel research as having the most potential for increasing bus patronage.

- (g) Further improvements to the quality and availability of public transport information including printed literature, an interactive web portal and real time bus information.
- (h) Work with an external marketing agency (Karol Marketing) and the Council's communication team to develop media packs and a working relationship with journalists in the national media.

### **Costs**

- 15. Previously Cabinet has approved the release of £1,735,000 from the Department for Transport £3.24 Million Sustainable Travel Demonstration Town grant. To date £700,000 has been spent with a further £1,000,000 allocated to fund core staff costs and specific initiatives programmed to take place over the project period.
- 16. In order to build upon many of the initiatives detailed under Item 3 and progress plans for the implementation of initiatives under Items 9 and 10, it is necessary to release a further £575,000. This equates to a total spend of £2,310,000, well within the allocated budget and all funded by the Department for Transport grant, as set out in Appendix 4.

### **Outcome of Consultations**

- 17. The outcome of consultations is set out in the report. In addition, the specific projects undertaken are considered and endorsed by the cross-sector Town on the Move Reference Group.

### **Legal Implications**

- 18. This report has been considered by the Borough Solicitor for legal implications in accordance with the Council's approved procedures. There are no issues which the Borough Solicitor considers need to be brought to the specific attention of Members, other than those highlighted in the report.

### **Section 17 of the Crime and Disorder Act 1998**

- 19. The contents of this report have been considered in the context of the requirements placed on the Council by Section 17 of the Crime and Disorder Act 1998, namely, the duty on the Council to exercise its functions with due regard to the likely effect of the exercise of those functions on, and the need to do all that it reasonably can to prevent, crime and disorder in its area. It is not considered that the contents of this report have any such effect.

### **Council Policy Framework**

- 20. The issues contained within this report do not represent change to Council policy or the Council's policy framework

### **Decision Deadline**

- 21. For the purpose of the 'call-in' procedure this does not represent an urgent matter. It is proposed that Environment Scrutiny Committee consider the programme of actions once the

monitoring research has been completed.

### **Key Decisions**

22. This is a Key Decision as this will have an impact on residents and businesses throughout Darlington.

### **Recommendation**

23. It is recommended that Cabinet agrees to the expenditure of a further £575,000 in 2006/07 and subsequent years of the Department for Transport Sustainable Travel Town funding, on measures set out in this and previous reports, subject to the evaluation of the individual initiatives by the Reference Group including an exit strategy for each initiative.

### **Reasons**

24. The recommendation is supported by the following reasons:
- (a) To enable Officers to proceed with a range of current initiatives to promote sustainable travel, detailed in **Appendix 1** and introduce new initiatives, paragraph 11 (a-h).
  - (b) To enable the Council to maximise the amount of external funding available to help residents of the Borough.

**John Buxton**  
**Director of Development and Environment**

### **Background Papers**

- (i) Darlington A Town On the Move Report of the Director of Development & Environment to Cabinet dated 19 October 2004.
- (ii) Individualised Travel Marketing Year One Report.

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cc

**Progress Update – Darlington A Town on the Move**

1. An advisory body, the ‘Town on the Move – Reference group’ with representatives from Darlington Partnership, the Primary Care Trust, Chamber of Commerce, community organisations, Government Office North East, Council Members and the Department for Transport has met every 3 months since the autumn of 2004.
2. Consultants Sustrans and Socialdata have completed a detailed programme of travel behaviour research, collecting travel information from 4,269 Darlington residents.
3. In February 2005 Consultants Steer Davies Gleave were appointed to deliver a three-year programme of individualised travel marketing. Working out of a town centre office base and using a team of locally recruited staff the individualised marketing team made contact with over 7,800 households in the Harrowgate Hill, Cockerton East, Cockerton West, Faverdale and Pierremont wards during the period May – September 2005. Households participating in the marketing programme have been offered a wide range of materials detailing local travel options and local leisure and retail services.
4. In March 2005 a 2-day Town on the Move travel summit provided an opportunity for Darlington residents, community leaders, businesses and other stakeholders to take part in a series of workshops with international experts identifying key transport and accessibility issues. Following directly on from the summit Darlington hosted a national sustainable travel town conference with national transport experts, senior government officers and local authority staff from throughout the UK attending.
5. The Town on the Move School Travel Plan Officer, in post since September 2004, has worked with most schools in the borough, encouraging them to develop a travel plan and implement measures to encourage sustainable travel, in particular walking and cycling. Eleven Darlington Schools now have a travel plan with a further 7 schools working to complete their travel plan by March 2006.
6. Bike It – a national initiative coordinated by Sustrans (the national charity promoting sustainable transport) has proved extremely successful in Darlington. With the three Schools taking part, Heathfield, Dodmire and St Teresa’s generating a step change in levels of cycling to school. In September the Bike It programme was extended to include Abbey Junior and Hummersknott Secondary School.
7. Colleagues working in the Council’s Road Safety section have teamed up with Town on the Move to generate a significant increase (42%) in the number of school pupils completing the on road cycle training scheme. Town on the Move has also financed the work required for Darlington Borough Council to gain the national cycle training accreditation.
8. Town on the Move is funding a two-year pilot programme delivering pedestrian training to year 3 school pupils. Pupils from three schools will take part in the first wave of training sessions after the October half term week.

9. Work to improve the quality and availability of public transport information has been jointly funded through the Local Transport Plan and Town the Move. With Town on the Move supporting the development and erection of new stop specific bus timetables. Also the publication of bus maps showing daytime and evening and Sunday services separately.
10. The Town on the Move website [www.darlingtononthemove.org.uk](http://www.darlingtononthemove.org.uk) which came into operation in February 2005, contains information on all aspects of travel in Darlington, plus news on the Town on the Move project and links to national journey planning websites.
11. Colleagues in Darlington Primary Care Trust, Leisure Services and Countryside have worked with the Town on the Move team to deliver and promote a series of events including a walking festival, company of cyclists try out sessions in the town centre and 'Pedal Power' guided cycle rides.
12. With the support of the Council's Communications team an awareness raising marketing campaign took place over the period February to April 2005, followed by a specific campaign focusing on a walk to school promotion. Town on the Move has a monthly page in the Town Crier Magazine.



## Executive Summary of Travel Behaviour Research

This travel behaviour research was conducted in 2004 to obtain information on how people in Darlington travel and on the reasons for their mode choice. The analysis determines the potential for reduction of car use and for an increase of sustainable travel modes (public transport, cycling and walking). Paragraphs 5 and 6 of the main report explain how this data was collected.

The behavioural data gives a representative picture of day-to-day travel patterns of residents of the Darlington urban area. On an average day people make 3.0 trips with 5.3 legs, performing 1.7 out-of-home activities. Per day they spend almost one hour (57 minutes) travelling per person covering an average distance of 22 kilometres.

The travel behaviour of most people is quite simple: 40 % of all people have just one journey per day with only one out-of-home activity. More than three quarters (77 %) of all journeys are just for one activity. In total 84 % of all trips start from home or lead back to home. Only 16 % of all trips are between two out-of-home destinations.

Leisure accounts for nearly one third of all trips made by Darlington residents (31 %), shopping nearly for one quarter (24 %) and travel to work for one fifth (20 %). Travel to school or college accounts for 10 % of all trips.

On an average day a quarter of trips made by Darlington residents is on foot (ie a genuine walking trip), while just 1 % is made by bicycle. Motorised private modes (car as driver or passenger, motorbike) account for almost two thirds of all trips; the majority of these trips is made by car as driver (41 %). Travel by car as passenger accounts for about one fifth of all trips (21 %) and less than 0.5 % are trips with a motor-bike. Public transport is used for 12 % of all trips.

A more detailed analysis of the use of different travel modes shows that:

- Walking trips are more common on week days than on the weekend, for education trips and among younger and not employed people. By contrast the share of walking trips is low on the journey to work and among employed men.
- The mode share of car driver trips is highest on work, work-related business and escort trips, and among employed men. (68 % of all their trips). Employed women also frequently use the car as driver (50 % of all their trips).
- Public transport in Darlington is used mostly for education and shopping trips (the latter especially to the town centre). Not employed, retired and younger people use public transport more than average.

The research also reveals the importance of short, local trips:

- Around one fifth of all trips (21 %) by Darlington residents are no further than one kilometre and nearly half (47 %) of all trips are no longer than three kilometres. Almost three quarters of trips (74 %) are in the range of five kilometres and another 10 % are between 5.1 and 10.0 kilometres. Only one sixth of all trips are longer than ten kilometres.

- On more than three quarters (77 %) of all their trips Darlington residents remain within the Darlington urban area, (ie the trips begin and end in the town). The average distance of these trips is about 3 kilometres.
- Despite this, the town centre is the destination or starting point for only 14 % of all trips made by Darlington residents. The share of public transport for trips to or from the town centre is much higher than for all trips (32 % compared to 12 %). This public transport share is even higher for shopping trips to or from the inner city (39 %).

The analysis also shows how much, why and where cars are used by Darlington residents for their daily travel needs:

- Three out of four privately owned cars in Darlington (77 %) are used at least once a day.
- Each car is used for an average of 2.5 trips with a total duration of 42 minutes per day. The average distance covered for everyday car trips (excluding commercial and long-distance trips) is 25 kilometres per day, and each car is occupied by an average of 1.5 people per trip (including the driver).
- Nearly a third of all car trips by Darlington residents (29 %) are less than 3km and two thirds were within the town.
- Of those car trips within the town, over half (56 %) were for shopping and leisure purposes and a quarter for work.

The in-depth study shows that nearly all residents recognised an increase in car traffic in Darlington in the last few years, and the majority perceived this negatively. In the case of traffic planning conflicts between the car and sustainable travel modes a large majority of residents would support measures for public transport use, three out of four would support measures for cycling and more than four out of five would support measures for pedestrians.

Public transport in Darlington is considered to be important for the town's residents, and a majority agreed that more improvements should be carried out. The promotion of sustainable travel modes was considered by six out of seven to be a priority in transport policy/planning.

The research was also conducted by "reality checking" the alternative travel options for every trip recorded in the travel diary surveys. This analysis was supported by follow-up interviews identifying the awareness, perception and choice barriers currently preventing individuals from using real alternatives.

The analysis reveals that in principle significant shifts in travel behaviour are possible, for example:

- Seven out of ten of all trips could be undertaken by sustainable travel modes; or
- Around four out of five trips could be made by motorised private modes.

The current travel patterns in Darlington show that 62 % of all trips are made by car (as driver or passenger) and 38 % by the alternatives (walking, cycling and public transport).

The in-depth research also showed that more than half of current car trips within Darlington are in principle replaceable by sustainable travel modes as follows:

- a quarter by public transport;
- a third by cycling; and
- a fifth by walking.

Lack of information and poor perceptions of service quality were among the most important barriers against greater public transport use. Likewise there were no constraints or subjective barriers preventing a significant proportion on car trips from being switched to walking or cycling.

This demonstrates that Darlington's Town on the Move programme, by focusing on soft measures (ie information, motivation etc), has the potential to unlock significant shifts towards use of sustainable travel modes.

**Individualised Travel Marketing Year One Information provided  
Year One Resources**

Type of resource	Resource name	Produced by	
		SDG ❶	DBC
Bespoke	Personal Journey Plans	✓	
	Walkwise	✓	
	Travel Blending	✓	
	Personalised letter – ideas, pledge, congratulations	✓	
Generic	Harrowgate Hill and North Road Community Guide	✓	
	Cockerton, Faverdale & Pierremont Community Guide	✓	
	Kids pages	✓	
	Town Centre leaflet	✓	
	Keeping on the move	✓	
	Getting the most out of your car	✓	
	Bus information – including route map, timetables and bus travel voucher		✓
	Local area cycling and walking route map		✓
	Cycle resources – including map, training leaflet and Pedal Power		✓
Car sharing scheme leaflet		✓	

❶ SDG – Steer Davies Gleave, the Consultants responsible for Individualised Travel Marketing

**Town on the Move expenditure (current and proposed)**

<b>Item</b>	<b>Period</b>	<b>Estimated expenditure</b>
Core staff	2004/5 – 2008/9	£560,000
Individualised travel marketing	2005/6 – 2007/8	£850,000
Travel Behaviour Research	2004/5 – 2006/7	£180,000
Information, marketing, events and incentives	2004/5 – 2006/7	£370,000
Cycle training and pedestrian training	2004/5 – 2006/7	£115,000
Public transport	2005/6 – 2006/7	£180,000
Town on the Move Summit (March 2005)	2004/5	£12,000
Cycle and pedestrian route audits (completed)	2004/5	£20,000
Green Courier Service (completed)	2005/6	£8,000
Work place travel Plans	2005/6 – 2006/7	£15,000
<b>Total</b>		<b>£2,310,000</b>