
OVERVIEW OF TRANSPORT PORTFOLIO

1. Since the last meeting of Council, the following are the main areas of work that have been undertaken under the Transport Portfolio:
 - (a) **Residents' Parking Zone Review** – At the meeting of Cabinet held on 12th February, 2008, the findings of the review undertaken on the Residents' Parking Zones were considered. It was agreed at the meeting that any changes to the operation of the Residents' Parking Zone, await the outcome of the work currently being undertaken on Civil Parking Enforcement. Once the work was complete on Civil Parking Enforcement, further work was required on the Residents' Parking Zones including the issue of fees and how the operation of the zones could contribute to climate change and other policy issues.
 - (b) **Cycling in the Town Centre** – Following consideration of the monitoring results from the six month trial period to allow cycling in the town centre, it was agreed to extend the trial period to November 2008, to allow the observation of a full summer of cycling. In addition, it was also agreed that a Disability Impact Assessment on cycling be undertaken in order to assess the impact of cycling in the Town Centre for disabled people.
 - (c) **Tees Valley Bus Network Improvement** – Members received an update on the Tees Valley Network Improvement major scheme bid at the meeting of Cabinet held on 12th February, 2008, and approved a list of infrastructure schemes, in priority order of time and saving benefits, for inclusion in the bid submission to the Department of Transport.
 - (d) **Concessionary Fares** – During February and March the new Concessionary Fares scheme was advertised to residents. The new scheme will be available to anyone who is aged 60 or over, or eligible disabled, who will be entitled to free off-peak travel on local buses anywhere in England. This will be from 9.30am until 11.00pm Monday to Friday, all day on weekends and Bank Holidays. Darlington residents will also be entitled to free travel within the Borough after 11.00pm on weekdays. The new scheme begins on the 1 April 2008.
 - (e) **Cycle Demonstration Town** – A number of Cycle Demonstration Town projects were underway during February and March and these will be completed by the end of March 2008. Schemes underway include Cocker Beck Safer Routes to School, which will link to Branksome Comprehensive and Cockerton Primary School, and providing improvements to the Abbey Road/Duke Street area of town for cyclists. This will involve upgrades to lighting and some surface improvements. In late February the bridge linking Darlington to the National Cycle Network over the A66 was put into

place. The route will be open in Summer 2008 when the rest of the route is completed in conjunction with the Eastern Transport Corridor.

(f) **School Travel Plans** –

- (i) School Travel Plan review forms are being returned with a deadline for return of 29 February 2008.
- (ii) The School Travel Plan Officer will review responses and consider potential for starting an accreditation scheme with award of certificates recognising those schools making particular efforts to deliver measures within their travel plans.

(g) **Cycle Storage** - Work is due to start soon on the installation of cycle storage at Whinfield, Skerne Park, and Aldermann Leach Schools and at the Education Village. Planning applications have been submitted for the installation of cycle shelters at Longfield, Branksome and Corporation Road Schools.

(h) **Health Schools Partnership** - Local Motion has developed a six-week '5 Million Step' pedometer challenge for Darlington Schools. 15 primary Schools are currently taking part in the challenge.

(i) **Bike It Schools** -

- (i) Cycle maintenance classes have been launched at Mowden Juniors, Aldermann Leach and Heathfield primary schools.
- (ii) The National Bike It 'Tour D'Afrique' initiative was launched in Darlington on the 5 March. This is a 'virtual' bike challenge with school pupils competing against each other and against other schools in the UK to be the first to cycle the distance to Cape Town.
- (iii) Unfortunately Darlington's Bike It Officer Jo Smith has left on 29 February. Sustrans have advertised for a new Darlington Officer.

Monitoring School Travel Behaviour - We have recently received information on pupil travel behaviour collected as part of the Annual School Census, coordinated by the Council's MIS Officer on behalf of the Department for Children Schools and Families. Travel data was collected by 35 schools. We have been able to compare this dataset with our own hands up travel surveys completed in September 2007 and it shows growing numbers not travelling by car.

(j) **Workplace Travel Plans** - In the last overview report it was reported that an introductory 'Local Motion' travel plan pack has been sent to Capita, Department for Children Schools and Families, Argos, Orange, Darlington College, Infoserve, Cummins and the Independent Safeguarding Authority (ISA). The travel plan officer is now following up this initial contact with meetings to develop specific initiatives with individual employers. For example The ISA are particularly keen to introduce travel

plan measures as part of their move from Mowden Hall to a new base at Lingfield Point

- (k) **Marketing and Communications** - The 2008 Local Motion marketing plan focuses on marketing 'active' travel modes through the period April – May, supporting the launch of the new bus network in the early summer and work on promoting car sharing and public transport in the autumn and winter months. The plan also includes measures to promote Darlington's work to other local authorities, due to our demonstration town status.
- (l) **Local Motion Conference – April 2008** - Plans for the Local Motion Conference on 2 April are now well underway, the conference will be advertised in the national publication 'Local Transport Today' on 7 and 21 March. Invitations will also be sent to every highway authority.
- (m) **Darlington Eastern Transport Corridor** - Overall the project remains on target for completion in summer this year although works at Little Burdon roundabout have extended beyond their forecast finish date. This has been due to the need to re-design drainage and road levels because of conflict with uncharted electricity cables. The A66 footbridge has been delivered to site on time and is in place.

Road surfacing (apart from the final course) is in place on large areas of the works and kerbing and drainage is nearing completion.

The major elements of work still to be carried out are the junctions with Haughton Road and McMullen Road. Haughton Road junction started on 11 February 2008. Work required in the critical week end period of 23/24 was successfully completed and work at this junction remains on programme. The public information exercise carried out in advance of the work appears to have been successful and information specific to particular phases of the job will be distributed during the course of the works. McMullen Road junction is scheduled to begin in mid April but, because of the lack of side roads, is a much simpler operation than at Haughton Road. Traffic signal control will be required but only slight delays are expected.

- (n) **Borough Road Area Residents' Parking Scheme** – The scheme is being prepared for implementation in late March/April 2008.
- (o) **Eastmount Road and Hundens Lane Area Residents' Parking Schemes** – The two schemes were implemented on the 18 February 2008.
- (p) **Southend Avenue Residents' Parking Scheme** – A meeting has been held with residents to discuss the objections they had raised to the scheme, which has now been adjusted to take account of these. A report is to be presented to Cabinet on the 18 March 2008 with a recommendation to progress the amended scheme.
- (q) **20mph Zones** – The traffic calming aspects of the 20mph zone at Lascelles has been completed with Corporation Road traffic calming still scheduled for early March. The 20mph signage for all completed schemes will be implemented in due course.

(r) Bridgework Schemes -

- (i) Little Stainton Bridge** – Significant completion achieved.
- (ii) Haughton Road Cycle/Footbridge** – Work on site due to commence March 2008.

(s) Highway Maintenance Schemes -

(i) Recently Completed Schemes -

- A1150 Salters Lane North – Harrowgate Hill Club to 103 Kingsway – footway refurbishment.
- C182 Thompson Street East – No 37 to Davison Road – carriageway/footway refurbishment.

(ii) Ongoing Schemes -

- A68 West Auckland Road Phase 2 – Bates Avenue to Brinkburn Avenue – carriageway and footway resurfacing.
- Chesnut Street Car Park – complete refurbishment including improvements to lighting, surfacing and the introduction of CCTV to the area. In mid February information was delivered to the residents of Lodge Street so that they were fully aware of the timescales involved and the works that would be undertaken.

(iii) Schemes Due to Commence

- B6280 Yarm Road – Teal Road to Geneva Road, both sides – footway refurbishment.
- School Aycliffe Lane – widening of vehicle access to NHS Trust properties, kerbing and resurfacing.
- Oban Court – resurfacing of footway to Whinbush Way.
- Blackwell Close (all) – refurbishment of footway.
- Whitby Way – Rosedale Crescent to No 33 – hardening of existing grass verges.
- Finchale Crescent (all) – hardening or protection of existing grass verges.
- Yarm Road (both sides) – Teal Road to Lynton Gardens – refurbishment of footway and hardening or protection of existing verges.

(t) **Traffic Management Schemes**

- (i) **A68 Route Action Plan** – Accident remedial measures signing.

(u) **Road Safety Education, Training and Publicity Initiatives** – A number of initiatives have been instigated, including the following:

(i) **Valentine’s Day Campaign**

- Young people within the age range 17-25 are more likely to be killed or injured by their friends in cars than by any other means.
- Free wallets, lip balms and badge mirrors were handed out in both of Darlington’s further Education Colleges as part of this campaign. Each free item was accompanied by leaflet alerting the youngsters to the dangers they face.
- There was a variety of leaflets, four male orientated and four female orientated. A competition was organised which required the entrant to collect their relevant four different types of leaflet in order to be eligible to enter the draw for a prize.
- Both colleges were extremely supportive of the campaign, which received a good response from the students.

(ii) **Radio Campaign**

- The sixth phase of a radio campaign broadcast on the topic of Drug Driving commences on the 3 March 2008 as part of ongoing work with the north eastern branch of the Local Authorities Road Safety Officers’ Association (LARSOA).

(iii) **Theatre in Education**

- In February our annual tour of “Why Did the Chicken Cross the Road?” was staged in five of our secondary schools.
- Pupils from year 7 who attended the performance and workshop were presented with a three-colour highlighter pen bearing the play’s title to reinforce the message.

(iv) **Cyclist Instructor Training Courses**

- Two Cyclist Instructor Training courses have been held since the New Year. Both courses were well attended. Darlington is becoming well known for delivering quality training, many delegates are recommended by previous students.

(v) **School Activities**

- Following pedestrian training in years 1, 2 & 3 in Reid Street a request was made for a general road safety leaflet which could be taken home to parents of ALL children attending the school. A special leaflet was designed and given to the school for distribution during the second half of the term.

(vi) **Bikeability Cycle Training**

- As part of the rolling programme to introduce level 3 to all secondary schools within the next four years, Bikeability Level 3 cycle training was offered, for the first time, to pupils from year 7 at Carmel RC Technology College. Details of the course were explained in an assembly in January.
- On completion of training requirements to Year 7 the programme will be offered to other year groups

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