
IMPLEMENTING THE THIRD LOCAL TRANSPORT PLAN

Responsible Cabinet Member – Councillor David Lyonette, Transport Portfolio

Responsible Director – Richard Alty, Director of Place

SUMMARY REPORT

Purpose of the Report

1. This report concerns
 - (a) agree the implementation plan for the delivery of capital investment through the Third Local Transport Plan in 2012/13,
 - (b) to release year 3 funding for the Tees Valley Bus Network Improvement major scheme
 - (c) to release funding for Bikeability cycle training in primary schools.
 - (d) to release additional funding in 2011/12 received from the Department for Transport.

Summary

2. Darlington's Third Local Transport Plan (3LTP), sets out a transport strategy for the next 15 years (2011-2026) to support the delivery of "One Darlington: Perfectly Placed", Darlington's Community Strategy¹. The 3LTP will be delivered through a series of rolling implementation plans based on the planning horizons of Government funding. These plans will be live documents and will be constantly monitored through the Council's programme control system, to ensure the best possible fit with the outcomes of the 3LTP and value for money.
3. In delivering these outcomes, it is recommended that the existing evidence based priorities for spending are continued namely maintaining, managing and improving in sequential importance. These priorities are in response to a much reduced level of Government funding, when compared to that received in the Second Local Transport Plan (2LTP). The scope of the 3LTP covers all transport provision within the Borough; including revenue funded Council functions and services provided by other organisations. The proposed implementation plan therefore focuses 77% of the 2012/13 LTP allocation on maintenance of the network.
4. Members of Cabinet agreed in March 2011 to continue the Council's participation in the Tees Valley Bus Network Improvement (TVBNI) project. Since the grant funding from the Department for Transport is confirmed annually, members now need to release year 3 funding for this project.

¹ Darlington's Third Local Transport Plan; Cabinet 8 February 2011

5. The Council has participated in the European Union project “Boosting Advanced Public Transport Systems” (BAPTS) since 2008 and members agreed to bid for further funding in July 2011. However, the bid application has not been successful and more work is required to review the need for the proposed actions and understand how best to take these forward.
6. Historically, the Council has delivered cycle training in all primary schools across Darlington to national levels 1 & 2. This was funded from Council revenue accounts amongst other sources. In 2011/12 following the withdrawal of Council funding due to budget pressures, it has proved possible to fund the training from the one year Schools Sport Fund project. Subsequently a bid for funding has been made to the Department for Transport following a change in the eligibility criteria for such grants. However, the timescale between the publication of the revised guidance and the bid deadline meant that delegated power covering bid applications was used. Members are now asked to endorse the bid application covering all primary schools in the Borough and release the funding, subject to acceptable grant conditions. The work is instrumental in continuing to support Darlington’s good record in road safety education.
7. Government also announced further funding worth £114,000 for the integrated block during 2011/12 over and above the LTP allocation and this report sets out a recommendation for its use.

Recommendation

8. It is recommended that :-
 - (a) Members agree to release the 2012/13 funding for the Third Local Transport Plan for expenditure as shown in **Appendix 1** to this report.
 - (b) Members agree to the Council’s continued participation in the Tees Valley Bus Network Improvement project and release the associated Department for Transport (DfT) capital and revenue grant funding for year 3 of the project, as shown in **Appendix 1**.
 - (c) Members endorse the bid for Bikeability cycle training funding and agree the release of the grant, subject to acceptable grant conditions.
 - (d) Members agree to release further Local Transport Plan funding worth £114,000 for expenditure in 2011/12 as set out in this report.

Reasons

9. The recommendations are supported by the following reasons :-
 - (a) To deliver schemes in year 2 of the Third Local Transport Plan.
 - (b) To continue to deliver improvements for bus travel, using grant funding from the Department for Transport.
 - (c) To expand the delivery of level 1 & 2 cycle training to all year 5/6 pupils in the Borough.

- (d) To use additional Local Transport Plan funding to benefit the local transport network.

Richard Alty
Director of Place

Background Papers

- (i) Third Local Transport Plan
- (ii) DfT grant letter
- (iii) BAPTS+ decision (email)

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S17 Crime and Disorder	Crime and disorder implications have been taken into account in the preparation of the Third Local Transport Plan
Health and Well Being	Health and well being implications have been taken into account in the preparation of the Third Local Transport Plan.
Carbon Impact	The Third Local Transport Plan has been developed in accordance with statutory duties to promote sustainability and has been subjected to Strategic Environmental Assessment and Habitats Regulation Assessment. One of the 5 objectives of the Plan is to reduce carbon emissions from transport.
Diversity	The Third Local Transport Plan seeks to enable everyone to be able to travel to access employment, healthcare and other services, and particularly notes the needs of older people and people with disabilities. Multi-strand Equalities Impact Assessments and Disability Impact Assessments have been undertaken.
Wards Affected	All
Groups Affected	All
Budget and Policy Framework	The Third Local Transport Plan forms part of the Council's Policy Framework, replacing the Second Local Transport Plan, and is in line with the MTFP.
Key Decision	Yes.
Urgent Decision	No.
One Darlington: Perfectly Placed	One Darlington: Perfectly Placed has set the wider context for the development of the Plan.
Efficiency	The Implementation Plan includes efficiency savings as part of the delivery processes.

MAIN REPORT

Information and Analysis

The Third Local Transport Plan

10. Darlington's Third Local Transport Plan (3LTP), sets out a transport strategy for the next 15 years (2011-2026) to support the delivery of "One Darlington: Perfectly Placed", Darlington's Community Strategy. The Plan integrates with the Local Development Framework Core Strategy, providing the spatial expression of the Sustainable Community Strategy.
11. The 3LTP is delivered through a series of annual implementation plans. These plans are live documents and will be constantly monitored through the Council's programme control system, to ensure the best possible fit with the outcomes of the 3LTP and value for money.
12. The key outcomes of the 3LTP are that:
 - (a) Everybody is able to enjoy the Borough's prosperity by providing and maintaining a reliable, predictable, efficient and affordable transport network,
 - (b) Everyone can play their part in reducing the impact of transport on the environment and its contribution to climate change,
 - (c) People live long, healthy and active lives, travelling safely and making active travel choices,
 - (d) Everyone in Darlington can maximise their life chances by being able to access services, activities and facilities; and
 - (e) People in Darlington enjoy a positive journey experience on an attractive, clean, green and sustainable transport system.
13. In delivering these outcomes through the implementation plan, it is recommended that the priorities for spending are based on principles derived from feedback from local people; namely maintaining, managing and improving in sequential importance. These priorities are in response to a much reduced level of Government funding, when compared to that received in the Second Local Transport Plan (2LTP). The scope of the 3LTP covers all transport provision within the Borough; including revenue funded Council functions and services provided by other organisations.
14. The first priority MAINTAIN involves the use of LTP funding for structural maintenance, including roads, footways, bridges and street lighting, thus contributing towards improving travel safety, supporting economic activity, tackling congestion and carbon emissions. This ensures that the existing transport asset is maintained to ensure that it is fit for purpose. The second priority MANAGE, concerns using all the transport system (footways, cycle ways, roads & rail) more effectively and efficiently to support the economy, reduce carbon emissions and improve individual health outcomes. The third priority, should there be any funding, is IMPROVE which covers investment in new facilities for all transport users. In the financial year 2012/13 77% of Darlington's total LTP allocation of £2.387m will be used on maintenance work in accordance with the agreed priorities. It is proposed that the remaining amount of £0.558m is spent on managing and improving the existing network.

2012/13 Local Transport Plan & TVBNI schemes

15. **Appendix 1** to this report sets out the detail of the proposed capital expenditure on the local transport network. The programme focus in on maintaining the local transport network in line with the strategic priorities. Thus, headline expenditure includes replacement of time expired streetlights (total budget £385k), carriageway and footway maintenance (£1,158k) and a new pedestrian & cycle link between the University Campus in Central Park and the main railway station (£150k match funded).
16. The programme for year 3 of the Tees Valley Bus Network Improvement (TVBNI) continues the investment in upgrading facilities and roads to benefit bus passengers. Proposed schemes include the continuation of work at North & Whessoe Road junction, a package of improvements along Clifton Road and improvement of the roundabout at McMullen & Yarm Roads. These schemes will be supported by measures to promote bus travel, for example by making real time bus information more widely available. Work will also include the provision of monitoring information to support the grant claims and general marketing of bus travel to raise the profile of bus services.
17. The Implementation Plan is a live document, constantly under review through the Council's Programme Control process to ensure that work carried out best meets with the outcomes of the 3LTP and demonstrates value for money. Day to day governance of this process is vested with the Assistant Director – Policy & Regeneration, with decisions about schemes being made either through the delegated power to the Director of Place, or by subsequent decisions of Cabinet depending on the implications.
18. It is expected that the funding shown in the Implementation Plan will continue to be used to lever in additional resources, both financial and in kind, from other funding sources.

BAPTS+

19. The Council has participated in the European Union project “Boosting Advanced Public Transport Systems” (BAPTS) since 2008. The Council has worked with 9 other towns and cities across northern Europe delivering schemes that improve public transport and provide a test bed for other towns. Following the conclusion of the original programme in December 2011, members agreed to bid for further funding in July 2011. Subsequent to that decision, it proved possible to bid for a project extension (named BAPTS+) rather than bidding for a completely new project. However, the bid application has not been successful and more work is required to review the need for the proposed actions and understand how best to take these forward. Officers have not yet been told why the application was turned down, although it seems that the several other applications to extend a BAPTS project were similarly turned down.
20. One of the actions proposed in the project extension, was to improve the connectivity of the Town Centre Fringe to support the regeneration proposals set out in the emerging masterplan. One example of how the Council could do this is through a proposal to improve the link between the railway station and the town centre. Another proposed action was to provide a mobile ‘phone application for real time bus information. This would make bus times easily accessible and reduce the Council’s maintenance spend at bus stops.

Bikeability

21. The Council has delivered cycle training for children for several years to national levels 1 & 2 in primary schools within the town. In 2011/12 following the withdrawal of Council funding due to budget pressures, it has proved possible to fund the training from the one year Schools Sport Fund project. Subsequently a bid for funding has been made to the Department for Transport following a change in the eligibility criteria for such grants. However, the timescale between the publication of the revised guidance and the bid deadline meant that delegated power covering bid applications was used. Members are now asked to endorse the bid application covering all primary schools in the Borough and release the funding, subject to acceptable grant conditions. The work is instrumental in continuing to support Darlington's good record in road safety education. In a recent national survey, the Council ranked 3rd highest nationally in terms of the quality of its provision.
22. The funding bid to the Department for Transport was for £78,000 over 3 years covering level 1 & 2 training at all primary schools for years 5 & 6 (an expansion of the previous programme). This means the programme can continue until April 2015 if the funding is granted.

Additional funding

23. In a letter dated 14 December 2011, the Department for Transport allocated an additional £114,000 to Darlington Borough Council for expenditure on the local transport network in 2011/12. It is proposed that this additional resource is spent on the following items
 - (a) guard rail replacement at two locations along the ring road; the first being between Bondgate and Freeman's Place; the second at Grange Road roundabout (£94,192).
 - (b) Street light column replacement to replace life expired street lights, (approximately 16 columns).

Outcome of consultation

24. A series of consultation activities were held between November 2009 and December 2010 on the outcomes of the 3LTP. It included workshops arranged for specific groups, namely Darlington Partnership theme groups, young people, transport stakeholders, older people, businesses, disabled people and people living in rural areas. The draft Plan was also sent to Statutory stakeholders including the Highways Agency, rail operators, bus companies as well as other interested stakeholders such as neighbouring local authorities, Police, JobCentre Plus, NHS County Durham, and groups representing disabled people, cyclists, freight, coaches and older people. The Economy and Environment Scrutiny Committee were involved in the development of the Plan.
25. The Implementation Plan takes into account the emphasis placed by consultees on how best to achieve the desired outcomes. The MAINTAIN, MANAGE & IMPROVE priority trio was widely accepted as a logical response to current funding levels.