

APPENDIX A

Darlington Borough Council

Draft Network Management Plan

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1 Introduction

1.1. Local Setting

Darlington is a market town situated to the west of the Tees Valley bounded by Stockton on Tees to the east, Durham to north and North Yorkshire to the south. It has a population of 99,400. Though most of the population lives in the urban centre there are a number of small villages in the countryside surrounding the town.

The Borough forms part of the “Tees Valley city region”, home to 657,700 people living mainly around the lower reaches of the River Tees. It includes Darlington, Hartlepool, Middlesbrough, Redcar and Cleveland and Stockton on Tees local authorities.

The local highway network links to two major trunk roads, the A1 (M) running north-south in the western fringes of the Borough and the A66 (T) running east-west in the southern fringes of the Borough. These two trunk roads meet at junction 57 of the A1 (M) to the south west of the Borough boundary. These roads are linked to the town centre by a number of A and B class roads, the A167, the A68, the B6279 and the B6280. The A167 also forms the inner ring road on the fringes of the town centre.

Bus passenger numbers in the Tees Valley reflect the national trend and are falling. Bus use is still high compared to other areas of the country, though declining due to increased car ownership. To address this, a Quality Bus Partnership has been set up. Following the takeover of Stagecoach by Arriva, there is now a single bus operator in Darlington. Major changes to the network and investment by Arriva in new vehicles, plus changes to concessionary fares and improved provision of information are expected to reduce the rate of decline. A network of Super-Core and Core bus routes has been established as part of the development of a major bus bid submitted to DfT in early 2008 (A funding decision is still awaited).

Darlington Bank Top railway station is on the East Coast main line providing excellent rail links to cities served by both the East Coast Main Line and Transpennine franchises. There is also a local service running from Saltburn to Bishop Auckland that stops at Dinsdale, Bank Top and North Road stations within the Borough, providing services to stations in the Tees Valley and South Durham. North Road

station is the home of the Railway Centre and Museum. A Tees Valley Metro scheme is being prepared with a view to improving the rail link between Darlington Bank Top station and Saltburn Station, via Middlesbrough centre.

In 2004 Darlington was one of three UK locations chosen as a Sustainable Travel Demonstration Town. In Darlington we have called our sustainable travel project ‘Local Motion’.

Measures implemented through the Local Motion programme focus on directly influencing trip distribution (by providing information on local goods and services), mode choice (by encouraging use of sustainable travel in place of the car), and, to some degree, route choice (by giving people information about walking, cycling and public transport routes). Our message is that ‘even taking part in Local Motion means making just one journey a week by bike, or bus, or walking short journeys, instead of jumping in the car, it can and will make a difference – to both you and the town.’

In the autumn of 2005 Darlington became one of six Cycling Demonstration Towns, and the only town to have the dual status of a Sustainable Travel and Cycling Demonstration Town. The additional funding for cycling is being invested in accelerating the development of a Borough wide network of cycle routes. A comprehensive network of urban routes has been created providing access to the town centre, schools and employment sites with plans to develop improved routes into rural areas and to connect surrounding villages. The cycle route network is included at appendix 14

Evidence of the impact of the Local Motion and Cycling Town programme is showing that around 9% of car driver trips into the centre of the Town have been replaced by higher levels of cycling and walking.

The Sustrans National Cycle Network Route (14) passes through the Borough along the line of the historic Darlington to Stockton rail line and westwards to County Durham.

Pedestrian facilities are being improved in major developments around the Borough. A major scheme to make the town centre more pedestrian friendly and create a pedestrian heart was completed in June 2007.

The Borough has a strong regeneration agenda and the flagship Central Park scheme, which provides offices, housing and educational facilities at a site to the east of the town centre, has commenced. Also the Darlington Eastern Transport Corridor road scheme, opened in August 2008, linking the A66(T) with the town centre. This will facilitate the development of large areas of land at Lingfield Point, Morton Palms, Morton Park and adjacent sites in line with the Authority's economic development strategy, the Darlington Gateway Strategy.

The Durham Tees Valley Airport, in the east of the Borough, has plans for expansion with approvals being obtained for business parks to the north and south of the site and for expansion of the terminal to cater for an annual throughput of up to 3 million passengers.

1.2. Background to the Traffic Management Act 2004

The provisions in the Traffic Management Act (TMA) aim to provide Local Traffic Authorities (LTAs) with a stronger focus on tackling congestion, and greater powers to pursue that aim.

The Act provides LTAs with much greater powers to minimise unnecessary disruption caused by poorly planned works. In addition, there are many different strands of work within local authorities, which need to be co-ordinated properly if their collective impact is to be one that delivers visible benefits to the public.

These strands of work include not only co-ordination of utility companies' street works and the authority's own road works, but also activities such as managing parking provision, managing provision of public transport, development control policy, activities on the network, for example refuse collection, and planned and unplanned events, all of which can contribute to unnecessary disruption and congestion. It is the planning for and dealing with the effects of all such aspects that the network management duty is aimed.

However, the Act is specific in stating that traffic is not only vehicular, but includes pedestrians and cyclists. So the duty must consider the movement of all road users. It is for the Council to develop the duty alongside our existing strategies and policies and not for it to supersede them. Indeed the network

management duty is to be applied to the Council's duties not only as LTA (s121A, Road Traffic Regulation Act) but also as

- local highway authority (s1(b), Highways Act 1980) and as
- street authority (s49(1), New Roads and Street Works Act 1991).

This plan outlines how Darlington Borough Council will do that.

1.3. Network Management Policy

The Council's Transport Strategy seeks to:

- Support the economic regeneration of, and quality of life in, Darlington
- Improve accessibility to services and opportunities by providing travel options, so that all may participate in the life of their community;
- tackle traffic congestion and its associated effects on local communities through a focus on sustainable travel choices, and where appropriate enhancing capacity or managing demand, thus contributing to residents' quality of life;
- continue to tackle road safety and improve perceptions of safety; and
- deliver solutions to travel needs in partnership with local people, businesses and other providers.

1.4. Objective/Purpose of this plan

The Traffic Management Act 2004 (TMA) introduces the Network Management Duty on Local Traffic Authorities (LTAs). Section 16 of the TMA sets out the requirement of the new duty as being;

"It is the duty of a local traffic authority to manage their road network with a view to achieving, so far as is reasonably practicable having regard to their other obligations, policies and objectives, the following objectives –

- (a) securing the expeditious movement of traffic on the authority's road network; and
- (b) facilitating the expeditious movement of traffic on road networks for which another authority is the traffic authority."

The Department for Transport has issued guidance on the duty. Whilst this guidance implies that there is no requirement on LTAs to

develop a specific Network Management Plan, Darlington Borough Council believes that, in developing such a plan, it can show our commitment to the new duty in terms of managing our road network in line with the Council's vision and the aims of the Sustainable Community Strategy.

Darlington Partnership, Darlington's Local Strategic Partnership, published the new Sustainable Community Strategy in 2008. Entitled 'One Darlington: Perfectly Placed' it sets out the vision and priorities for Darlington up to 2021. The Plan provides a framework for action by the whole community including the Council. Two of the most significant issues to address are tackling congestion whilst enhancing accessibility to jobs, facilities and services for all residents and businesses across all parts of the borough, and in so doing reduce our contribution to global CO2 emission, and to have a beneficial effect on climate change.

The vision is summarised in the statement 'One Darlington: Perfectly Placed' and these two components encapsulate the two priorities.

One Darlington - embracing our approach to people, and specifically the need to make sure that people are not disadvantaged, causing them to miss out on the opportunities that will be created by realising our vision.

Perfectly Placed – describing Darlington as a place and helping us shape our investment decisions, spatial planning and care for the environment.

There are five themes for organising and delivering improvement actions, as follows:

Prosperous Darlington – focussed on creating a vibrant economy and prosperity for all, recognising the quality of life that makes Darlington perfectly placed.

Aspiring Darlington – enabling people to develop and achieve their aspiration, and to maximise their potential.

Healthy Darlington – improving health and well-being for everybody, irrespective of social, economic and environmental constraints.

Greener Darlington – ensuring an attractive and 'liveable' local environment, and contributing to tackling global environmental challenges.

Safer Darlington – creating a safer and more cohesive Darlington.

Transport has a key role to play across the themes and can contribute to achieving all of them. However for the most part they will be managed under the Greener Darlington theme.

As one of the main service providers, the Council has a leading role in delivering these priorities. This is managed through the Leading Edge Corporate Plan (2008-2012), which provides a framework for identifying the Council's priorities in contributing to the delivery of the sustainable community strategy and improving service delivery.

The Corporate Plan is arranged into two separate parts, one dealing with the sustainable community strategy priorities with actions organised into the five themes and the other dealing with organisational improvement and development arranged around five corporate objectives. These objectives focus on the changes required, as part of our on-going development as an organisation, to achieve the best possible alignment between our structures, policies and procedures and our new "place making" role. These corporate objectives are:-

- Shaping a better Darlington
- Providing excellent services
- Putting the customer first
- Ensuring access for all
- Enhancing our capacity to improve

The Council's aim in terms of transport is stated in our Second Local Transport Plan. Our aim is to create a partnership in which public, private voluntary sectors and local communities come together and respond to the challenge of dealing effectively with current transport problems and creating new transport opportunities. Our vision is to achieve "a sustainable transport system which will not only meet the social and economic needs of local communities but also safeguard the environment".

The specific Network Management Duty in delivering the six strategic objectives of the Second Local Transport Plan has been identified. The six objectives are:

- A. To provide the framework for sustainable development of new and existing businesses, housing and services in Darlington.

- B. To improve access to employment and education, particularly for those without access to a private car, those with a disability and those that have greatest need.
- C. To tackle traffic congestion on key corridors and its potential impact on the economy and environment by making the most effective use of the transport network.
- D. To improve travel safety and security for all by addressing the real and perceived risks.
- E. To provide and promote travel choices to all, in particular to reduce the proportion of car driver trips.
- F. To improve the health of the community through increasing levels of sustainable travel and improving access to health, leisure and fresh food.

The TMA requires the Council to appoint a Traffic Manager, who will be responsible for delivering a co-ordinated, planned and effective response to the network management duty across all the Council's departments and functions that may have an influence on the successful operation of the network, and to ensure that agreed actions are implemented. The role of the Traffic Manager is defined in greater detail in Section 3 of this plan.

The TMA also provides for the Secretary of State to intervene in a LTA where that authority can be shown to be failing in the discharge of the duty and appoint a Traffic Director. Guidance on the criteria for intervention has been published by the DfT. In developing this plan Darlington Borough Council will demonstrate how it will monitor the effectiveness of its network management in line with the criteria and this is covered in detail in Section 4 of this plan.

The Network Management Plan has been created in collaboration with the LTAs in the north of England (a cd is attached at Appendix 17 of this plan which contains a copy of all the individual Network Management Plans of the neighbouring LTAs who were partners in the development of the original template). The purpose of the plan is to demonstrate the arrangements for delivering the Network Management Duty by setting out the Council's approach to managing the network to the benefit of our customers. It will also provide evidence of the policies that the Council is actively pursuing to ensure the more

expeditious movement of traffic on its network. The following objectives have been adopted across the region and were derived from the TMA Intervention Criteria:

- objective 1 – to consider the needs of all road users
- objective 2 – to co-ordinate and plan works and known events affecting the highway network
- objective 3 – to gather information and provide information needs
- objective 4 – to develop contingency plans for managing incidents
- objective 5 – to effectively monitor and manage traffic growth
- objective 6 – to consult and involve stakeholders and other interested parties
- objective 7 – to ensure parity between the local highway authority and others

The plan will facilitate the integration of the Traffic Manager into the existing administrative structure and assist the Council to discharge the duty through the expeditious use of existing systems.

In working in partnership with the other LTAs in the north of England it demonstrates that, through collaborative working, an open and frank exchange of information on best practice is key in ensuring regional consistency in the approach to network management. The North of England Traffic Managers Group (NETMG) has been established to keep the regional aspect of network management under continual review, complementing the local review that individual LTAs undertake. Further information on this group is given in Section 2 of this plan.

The plan recognises that network management should form only one element of the Council's transport strategy and that, whilst it is the Council's aim to see an improvement in the efficient use of the network, it should not be at the expense of those with a need to use or work on roads and footways. It is important that our approach to network management recognises these needs and the fact that they can and will have an effect on the network capacity. A pro-active approach to co-ordination will be adopted that will allow the gathering of accurate information on planned works or events, consideration on how best to

minimise their impact and agreement (or stipulation if necessary) on optimum timing.

Part 3 of The Act relates to “Permit Schemes”. These are introduced to improve Local Traffic Authorities’ ability to minimise disruption from street and highway works. The fundamental objective of a permit scheme is to create a common procedure that will allow authorities to better manage activities on the network that may cause disruption. Permit schemes require authorities to treat all activity promoters equally and encourage all promoters to amend any current practices that create avoidable disruption. The Network Management Plan comments on the need for a Permit Scheme in Darlington.

Notwithstanding the Permit Scheme proposals penalties for street works offences can already issued under provisions of the New Road and Street Works Act 1991. The TMA introduces Fixed Penalty Notices for certain offences such as working in a highway without giving requisite notice, or outside the period stated in the notice.

2 Context

2.1. Introduction

Tackling congestion is a key objective for the Government. Transport 2010: The 10 Year Plan sets out policy aims for transport. The TMA will make a vital contribution to progress against important 10 Year Plan targets:

- reducing congestion on inter-urban trunk road network, and in large urban areas
- to improve air quality
- to reduce the number of people killed or seriously injured in Great Britain in road accidents

2.2. National Context

2.2.1 TMA

The primary aim of the TMA is to reduce congestion and disruption on the highway network. The TMA sets out certain responsibilities to assist local traffic authorities to achieve this aim by: -

- Promoting better co-ordination, by the highway authority, of the various works carried out, whether these are authority roadworks, utility streetworks or miscellaneous activities such as placing skips, scaffolds or deposits on the highway
- Coordination of other activities that may affect the highway network, for example refuse collections, deliveries, school transport and events such as carnivals, concerts, sporting events and fairs
- Introducing a range of powers to allow utility works to be better controlled
- Allowing certain contraventions of the law, such as parking offences, to be dealt with through civil enforcement, rather than through the criminal process

The TMA is in seven sections, namely: - Traffic Officers; Network Management by Local Traffic Authorities; Permit Schemes; Streetworks; Highways and Roads; Civil Enforcement of Traffic Contraventions; and Miscellaneous and General.

Part 2 of the Act, “Network Management by Local Authorities”, imposes a network management duty on local traffic authorities and this is covered in detail in the following

section. The Council recognises the importance of all sections of the Act and where there are actions required they will be put in place. This document addresses the Network Management Duty responsibility.

2.2.2 Network Management Duty

Part 2 of the TMA, and in particular section 16, places a duty on every local traffic authority to manage its road network to “secure the expeditious movement of traffic on their road network and to facilitate traffic movement on other traffic authorities’ road networks. The duty reflects the importance placed nationally on making the best use of the existing highway network with the overriding aim that the network should operate efficiently, without unnecessary delays to all highway users, including pedestrians and cyclists, as well as motorists.

The duty is not limited to actions as a local traffic authority and there is a need to consider the duty when exercising any power that can affect the highway network. It therefore extends to the exercise of powers as a highway authority, a street authority and any other power used to regulate or coordinate the uses made of any highway.

However, it is recognised that the duty is placed alongside all other obligations, objectives and policies and does not take precedence over them.

2.2.3 Intervention Criteria

Through its 2008 Local Transport Plan Progress Report Darlington Borough Council will need to demonstrate and provide evidence to the Secretary for State for Transport that it has taken appropriate actions to comply with the requirements of the network management duty. Intervention criteria have been issued by the DfT setting out the minimum criteria it expects to be met, which come under the following headings: -

- Considering the needs of all users
- Coordinating and planning works and known events
- Gathering information and providing information needs
- Incident management and contingency planning

- Dealing with traffic growth
- Working with all stakeholders
- Ensuring parity with others

Section 4 of this plan considers these issues in detail and proposes actions and performance measures to assist in demonstrating compliance with the duty.

New Roads and Street Works Act (NRSWA)

An existing piece of legislation under which highway authorities attempt to control the disruption caused by utility companies' street works, the New Roads and Street Works Act (NRSWA), dates back to 1991, at which time only a handful of utilities were permitted to dig up the road. There are now however over 150 utilities able to conduct street works. The need for those utilities to build and maintain networks of apparatus beneath the street has led to a significant growth in the levels of disruption caused by street works over the last decade. The CBI has stated that delays on the country's road and rail network were costing the economy around £20 billion a year, whilst the Halcrow report¹ on street works, for the Department for Transport, estimated the cost of delay caused by utility street works to be £4.3 billion

2.2.4 Draft Local Transport Bill

The stated purpose of the draft Local Transport Bill is to tackle congestion and improve public transport through empowering local authorities to develop local solutions to local transport challenges.

The draft Bill proposes a new performance regime which extends traffic commissioners' responsibilities to hold local authorities as well as operators to account for the performance (punctuality and reliability) of local bus services. For local authorities this relates to functions which impact on services such as the provision and enforcement of bus priority measures and coordination of roadworks, streetworks and other activities on the highway network.

2.3. Regional Context

2.3.1 North East Regional Traffic Managers Group

To facilitate cross regional collaboration, the North of England Traffic Managers Group (NETMG) was established in 2005. The purpose of this group is to compare and benchmark performance and disseminate best practice amongst its members, and further afield, within an environment of continual improvement.

The North of England LTAs will endeavour, as far as is reasonably practicable, to manage the regional highway network effectively to keep traffic moving.

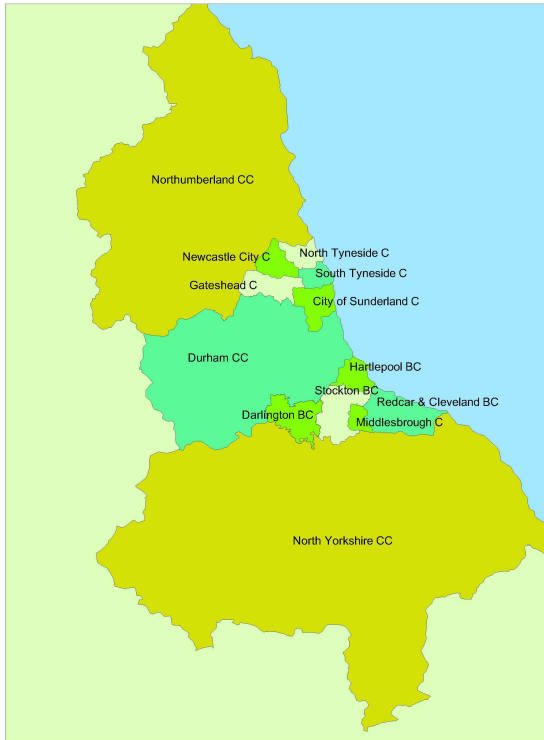
The NETMG will consist of the Traffic Manager (or representative) from each of the authorities and will monitor the effects of the duty on a regional basis. The group will cooperate in the interests of disseminating best practice with a view to establishing a culture of continual improvement.

A direct link between the Traffic Managers and the North of England Highways Authorities and Utilities Committee (NEHAUC) has been established. Each forum will have representatives of the other in attendance to ensure a consistency in decision making.

This group will work together in developing the management of the region's network. Whilst all councils have their own priorities, the culture of collaboration that exists between the north of England highway authorities means that the sharing of best practice will enable the councils to learn from each others' experience, benchmark their performances and ensure, as far as is reasonably practicable, that continual improvement occurs across the region.

Through representation at the national Traffic Managers Forum the group will also make efforts to disseminate their experience outside the region in order that best practice can be shared across the country and lessons learned from other regions can be embraced within the continual improvement culture developed in the north of England.

¹ Halcrow/DfT – Assessing the Extent of Street Works and Monitoring the Effectiveness of Section 74 on Reducing Disruption: Volume 3 – Estimation of the Cost of the Delay from Utilities Street Works – July 2004



2.3.2 Arrangements with the Highways Agency

Darlington Borough Council recognises the important role that the Highways Agency has in the success of network management. Whilst the Highways Agency (HA) network of motorways and trunk roads represents only 3% of the road network in England it carries a third of all traffic and two thirds of all heavy freight traffic. The network is of strategic importance and its efficient operation is fundamental to the economic wellbeing of the country.

The HA network passes through our network. Activities affecting the local road network can have a detrimental affect on the motorways and trunk roads, and the reverse is also true. Whilst the network management duty does not strictly apply to the HA, the Network Management Guidance states that it has been given a similar remit to manage better its network and to reduce the impact of congestion and congestion related delays. This includes the HA facilitating the movement of traffic on local road networks.

Given the role of the HA, liaison between the Traffic Manager and a nominated HA representative is essential due to the number of interfaces in responsibility and consequential impact one authority can have on the other. The Highways Agency has designated their Area Performance Managers the point of

contact for network management and has provided contact details for the service providers for contact in respect to operational and co-ordination issues. The HA have been consulted during the development of this document.

The National Guidance Framework (NGF) is a tri-partite agreement made between the Executive of the Traffic Operations Co-ordinating Committee (TOCC), the HA and Traffic Information Services (TiS) Limited ("TCC Company") relating to the operation of the Agency's National Traffic Control Centre (TCC). It sets out the guiding principles for the preparation of Detailed Local Operating Agreements (DLOAs) with each LHA, where a mutual interest exists for strategic traffic management purposes. The TOCC Executive comprises representatives of the County Surveyors Society (CSS), the Core Cities Surveyors Society and the Technical Advisers Group (TAG), representing Local Highway Authorities.

The HA have developed a number of Route Management Strategies (RMS) for their trunk road network that consider how roads planning can be integrated with other transport and planning decisions. This is done by taking a strategic approach to maintenance, operation and its network, and involving regional stakeholders and the public in the decision making process. Each RMS leads to the adoption of a 10 year strategy and 3 year investment plan for each of the routes considered.

The A66/A174/A1053 (Darlington to Teesport) Route Management Strategy was completed in December 2005. The issues raised in the Strategy, in relation to the sections of the route through Darlington, may be summarised as follows:

- Congestion at the Blands Corner and Morton Palms roundabouts.
- Event related parking and pedestrian safety issues adjacent to the Darlington Arena.
- Driver lane discipline when carrying out overtaking manoeuvres.
- Inadequate and inaccurate signage and white lining.
- At grade footpath and bridleway crossings.

- Issues surrounding parking and bus lay-bys.

2.3.3 Arrangements with Neighbouring Authorities

The Borough of Darlington sits at the western end of the Tees Valley Region. It shares borders with the Counties of Durham and North Yorkshire and the Borough of Stockton on Tees, as shown in Figure 2.1 below.

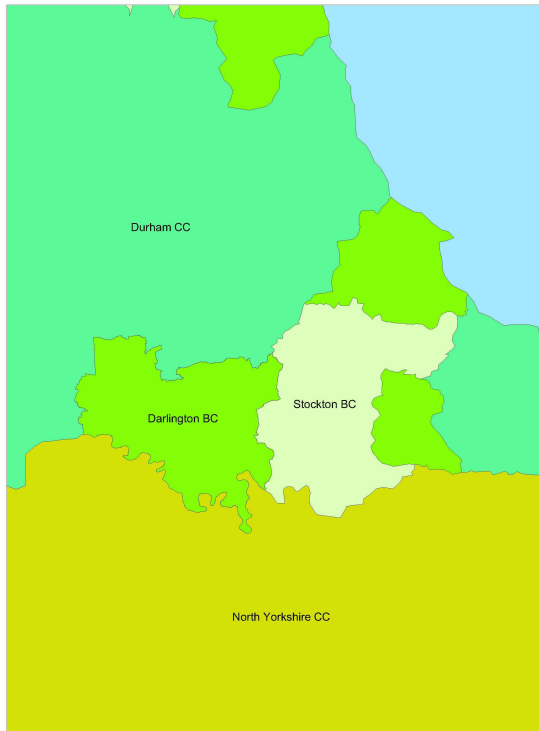


Figure 2.1: Location of the Borough of Darlington

The Council's transport network is shown in Figure 2.2. As can be seen the Borough is bounded by the A1(M) and the A66(T) trunk roads both of which form a key part of the local as well as the strategic road network. For this reason, the efficient operation of the Trunk Road network is crucial in ensuring that the Council is able to discharge its Network Management Duty effectively.

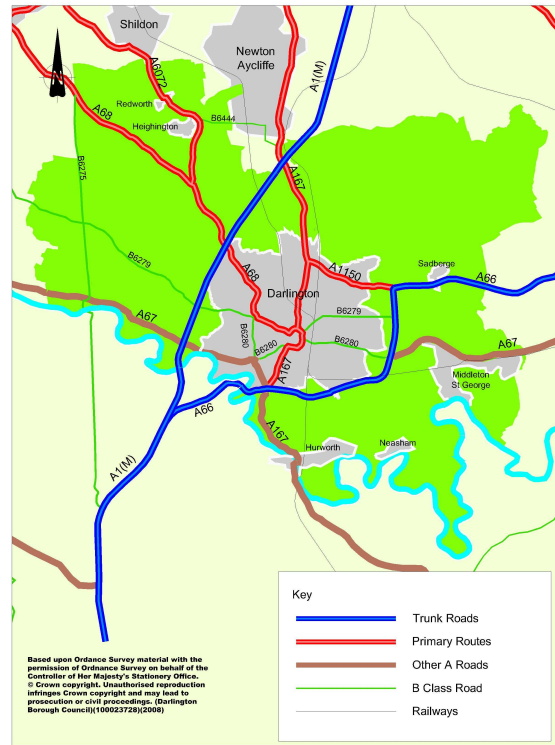


Figure 2.2: Borough of Darlington – Transport Network

The Council has also developed a number of cross-border arrangements with its Local Authority neighbours, Durham, Stockton on Tees and North Yorkshire as follows:

- Consistency of road hierarchies
- Route Management Strategies
- Traffic management arrangements at boundaries
- Operational arrangements for highway maintenance treatments
- Winter maintenance
- Speed limits, weight limits and other Traffic Regulation Orders

Cross border arrangements are listed in Appendix 3.

2.3.4 NEHAUC

The North of England Highway Authorities and Utilities Committee, NEHAUC, is one of ten regional Highway Authorities & Utilities Committees (HAUCs). It should however be noted that any reference to NEHAUC in this plan refers only to the highways side.

These regional HAUCs were created after the introduction of the New Roads and Street Works Act 1991 (NRSWA) to provide a forum for Highway Authorities and Utility Companies (Gas, Electricity, Water, sewerage and Telecommunications) to discuss and review topics of mutual concern and interest.

The NRSWA placed a new emphasis on minimising disruption to road users by providing a framework of procedures that ensures all works, are 'coordinated' to minimise the effects on the travelling public.

NEHAUC use the dictum

“Working together to the benefit of Highway users”

this describes the positive and constructive attitude that has been developed between the members.

Communications between the members of NEHAUC is essential. Representatives meet three times a year to discuss issues and formulate agreed working practices. The committee is supported by a number of working groups which are tasked with looking at specific issues.

Whilst it recognised that the Network Management duty is not necessarily a function of NEHAUC, the collaborative approach taken in developing a regional Network Management Plan template demonstrates the regional approach to network management.

With the advent of the TMA and the introduction of the Network Management Duty, the north of England highway authorities have recognised the importance that a collaborative regional approach will make to the successful implementation of the duty across the north of England.

Consequently, they have worked together to develop a Network Management Plan template that, whilst being used specifically by individual authorities to detail the policies and procedures they will use to aid the discharge of the duty, also demonstrates that they are committed to

the working together and disseminating best practice.

Not all of the factors that may have an influence on network management will fall under the remit of the highways side of NEHAUC. However it is a fact that the principle causes of unnecessary disruption and congestion, and which the network management duty is aimed at improving, do. Street works and roadwork's can and should be carefully co-ordinated and other activities, for example skips and scaffolding licensed under the Highways Act 1980, road closures effected under the Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984, will become registerable as the provisions of Parts 4 and 5 of the TMA are commenced. Co-ordination of these activities will then fall under the remit of the highways side of NEHAUC.

Other causes of congestion, for example planning/development control, school start/finish times, road traffic accidents and weather events will be dealt with through council policies and contingency plans. Monitoring of the effects of such activities and the influencing changes that may improve the use of the network will form part of the new duty. However it is considered that the direct link between the Traffic Manager and NEHAUC is important as it will provide for a focus in terms of the monitoring of the duty and its success.

2.4. Local Context

2.4.1 Corporate Plans

The North of England LTAs have agreed to work together in the discharge of the new duty. It is recognised that the network management duty is only one element of our transport activities and should compliment other policies and actions. This plan has been developed in such a way that it will compliment the Council's Transport Asset Management Plan. Together, the Network Management and Transport Asset Management Plans will assist the Council in meeting our Local Transport Plan targets.

The development of this plan has recognised regional and national policies as well as our own local requirements. Whilst individual authorities may have different aspirations the joint aim of the north of England authorities is to secure the more efficient use of the road network. To this end a joint regional policy,

procedures and performance monitoring regime have been agreed.

2.4.2 Second Local Transport Plan (LTP)

The Council’s Second Local Transport Plan (LTP) sets out the five year transport strategy (2006 – 2011) and requires the diligent management of the network in pursuit of its primary policies such that the infrastructure is reliable, available, maintained and safe for use by the general public. The policies and proposals contained within the LTP are based on six strategic objectives;

- To provide the framework for sustainable development of new and existing businesses, housing and services in Darlington
- To improve access to employment and education, particularly for those without access to a private car, those with a disability and those that have greatest need.
- To tackle traffic congestion on key corridors and its potential impact on the economy and environment by making the most effective use of the transport network
- To improve travel safety and security for all by addressing the real and perceived risks
- To provide and promote travel choices to all, in particular to reduce the proportion of car driver trips
- To improve the health of the community through increasing levels of sustainable travel and improving access to health, leisure and fresh food

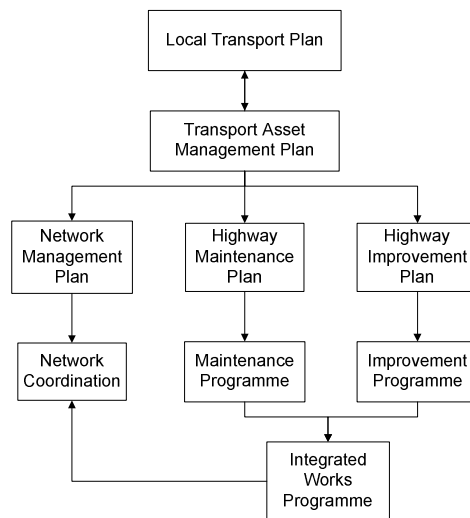
This network management plan builds upon these objectives with a view to ensuring the expeditious movement of traffic on the network. Performance measures used to monitor the

Councils progress with the LTP will contribute to the development of measurement of the implementation of network management.

As part of the ongoing monitoring process it is proposed to prepare an Improvement Plan (Appendix 7) to identify tasks required to ensure the network management duty continues to be performed.

2.4.3 Transport Asset Management Plan (TAMP)

In the Second Local Transport Plan Annex 11 details of how the TAMP is to be developed is provided. In the same way that the role of the Network Management Duty was mapped against the six strategic objectives, the TAMP was also mapped against these objectives. The specific link between network management and the TAMP is identified as identifying possible accelerator affects of congestion and travel behaviour on the condition of assets.



3 Arrangements for Network Management

3.1. Introduction

Section 17 of the TMA sets out the arrangements that an authority must make to perform the network management duty. These arrangements include the appointment by the authority of the Traffic Manager (Section 17(2)), a statutory post under the Act. The role of the Traffic Manager is to perform such tasks as the authority consider will assist them to perform the network management duty. This Network Management Plan, as well as setting out how Darlington Borough Council manages its road network for the benefit of all road users, also encapsulates what the council requires of its Traffic Manager.

3.2. Responsibilities

The responsibility under the Act to perform the network management duty lies with the authority. In accordance with Section 17(2) of the Act, Darlington Borough Council has appointed a Traffic Manager. The post is situated within the Traffic Management and Road Safety area of the Highways and Engineering service area. The Traffic Manager has no responsibility for promoting works on the highway. This structure ensures that there is no conflict of interest for the Traffic Manager, whose role stands separate from those who are responsible for promoting works. This gives the Council the ability to ensure probity and parity between Highway Authority road works and Utility street works and other works or activity promoters.

By approving and agreeing this Network Management Plan, the Council is placing the responsibility on and empowering its Traffic Manager to ensure that the authority complies with its duties under the TMA. Where issues are identified by the Traffic Manager, and matters are outside the Traffic Manager's sphere of direct responsibility, these will be brought to the Director of Community Services with ultimate recourse to the Corporate Management Team and Cabinet.

An annual report setting out the performance of the network management duty by the authority will be produced by the Traffic Manager.

3.3. Organisational Structure

The authority's organisational structure showing the context of the Traffic Manager post is set out in Appendix 2.

3.4. Key Personnel Details

The details of key personnel are included at Appendix 1. These are vital to the successful operation of this plan. The persons named are those with responsibility for the overall network management duty conferred on Darlington Borough Council. They will deal with high level policy development and review to ensure that the Council shows continual improvement in its network management.

In addition to internal contacts a list of external contacts is included at Appendix 1. All of those listed will be involved in operational issues relating to the management and co-ordination of works and other activities affecting the network.

3.5. Establishing Processes

3.5.1 Network Hierarchy

The hierarchy that has been developed for network management is based upon how serious the detrimental impact might be of works, an incident or an event taking place on the network if not co-ordinated. The network is divided into three categories – high, medium or low and each category colour coded red, amber or green, where:

Red – roads where works, incidents or events would have a serious detrimental impact on the efficiency of the road network if not co-ordinated;

Amber – roads where works, incidents or events would have a detrimental impact on the efficiency of the road network if not co-ordinated, but are considered to be of lower priority;

Green - roads where works, incidents or events would have little detrimental impact on the efficiency of the road network if not co-ordinated.

The categorisation of the network has been based on the NRSWA Traffic Sensitivity

criteria, with each criterion being weighted as being of *primary* importance or of *secondary* importance to the efficiency of the road network.

The criteria of primary importance are:

- congestion charging
- traffic flows containing more than 25% HGVs
- more than eight buses per hour
- a critical signalised junction within 100 metres
- tourist traffic, or where there are international or national events taking place.

The criteria of secondary importance are:

- more than 500 vehicles per hour per lane
- single carriageway <6.5 metres wide and more than 600 vehicles per hour
- winter maintenance precautionary salting routes
- a 2-way pedestrian flow of at least 1300 persons per hour
- a traffic sensitive street within 100 metres on a side street
- other relevant criteria

However the 'importance' criteria may be further weighted by a 'user value' (public transport, pedestrians, freight, cars, cyclists etc) so, for example, a busy pedestrianised shopping area with pedestrian flows greater than 1300 persons per hour would probably be designated "red", because of its high pedestrian user value.

A small scale map of the authority's road network showing its designated road network hierarchy is included in Appendix 5. It is intended that this will be shown in more detail as a layer on Intramap, the council's in-house GIS system.

3.5.2 Congestion

In this plan, congestion is deemed to be caused when the normal capacity of a particular part of the road network is insufficient for the volume of traffic wishing to use it.

The Transport Policy Manager is responsible for maintaining a register of existing congestion

problem locations within the District. The locations are ranked according to their place within the overall network hierarchy, and the extent of the congestion problem. Each location is monitored, and within the context of current flows and possible future growth, in priority order is being assessed:

- to identify the causes of the congestion problems
- to identify possible measures to alleviate that congestion; and
- to generate specific proposals for implementation.

Whilst road users in Darlington do not experience the levels of traffic congestion seen elsewhere; the issue of how to tackle traffic congestion is important, not least due to the need to protect the local economy, and environment, from the detrimental effects of congested roads.

In response to this need, the Council is currently implementing its Transport Strategy with an emphasis on tackling traffic congestion through:

- increasing road capacity at pinch points,
- further improving the management of the road network to increase traffic flow, and
- encouraging more sustainable travel behaviour to reduce the pressure on the road network.

The plan include at Appendix 8 summarises the physical schemes that are currently proposed through this three pronged approach. The figure explicitly shows the key junctions that will be improved with the current scheduled delivery dates, as well as road improvements that the Council is considering. Funding for these schemes will need to be secured, either from the Second Local Transport Plan (2LTP) or through bids to national or regional Government (the Council's Cabinet are to consider the acceleration of the use of 2LTP funds for some of these schemes before March 2009).

It is planned to implement Civil Parking Enforcement in 2009/10. This will enable the Council to further improve the management of the road network by tackling inappropriate parking (further details are contained in a

Section 3 – Arrangements for Network Management

report to Cabinet, 6 January 2009). Further design work will also start in 2009/10 to enable the most effective course of action to improve each junction to be taken. This work will include the development of a micro-simulation computer transport model, initially for the ring road.

A review of the Council's strategy is currently being undertaken. This work, to be carried out by external specialist transport consultants, will focus on;

- a critical review of the current transport strategy, its objectives and delivery,
- the inter-relationships between the emerging Local Development Framework and transport, especially concerning the proposed Cross Town Route,
- the travel options for travel between the Town Centre, Darlington Station and development sites in the Borough.

The study is scheduled for completion in Summer 2009.

Disruption

In this plan, disruption is deemed to be caused when a temporary activity takes place on the road network which disrupts normal traffic flow conditions. Disruption may be caused by planned activity (e.g. planned road works) or by unplanned activity (e.g. incidents).

3.5.2.1 Disruption due to planned activity

Normally, planned activity is carried out in the highway using statutory powers or by licence from or agreement with the Highway Authority. Planned activity might include:

- street works (Statutory Undertakers)
- highway works (Council/developers)
- NRSWA licensed activities (installation of private apparatus)
- Highways Act 1980 licensed activities (skips/scaffolding, etc)
- Traffic Regulation Orders (Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984)
- road closures
- abnormal load movements
- refuse collection

- parking
- development
- markets

The Borough Council will develop its NRSWA Street Works Register to include a maintained register of all planned activity taking place on the road network or off the road network where it might have an effect on traffic, and will make the information available to stakeholders, both through the NRSWA ETon noticing system and on its website. Furthermore the information will be used as a network management tool, to ensure that all planned activity is properly co-ordinated to minimise disruption to traffic.

3.5.2.2 Disruption due to Planned Events

A portion of congestion on the network is caused by the effects of planned events. Typically these can include, but are not necessarily exclusive to:

- sporting events
- carnivals
- parades
- demonstrations
- circuses

In particular, sporting events and concerts take place at the Football Ground, and many events take place in the Town Centre and in the parks. The Traffic Manager will develop and maintain a register of planned events and disseminate the information to nominated stakeholders (Bus operators, Emergency Services, Freight Transport Association etc.) such that the network management decisions will be informed, in particular with respect to potential temporary changes in the Network Management Hierarchy.

All major events will be required to be presented to the Darlington Football Club Safety Advisory Group (DFCSAG) or the Public Events Safety Advisory Group (PESAG). The following Organisations are represented at these Groups:

- DFCSAG – Football Club, Police, Fire and Rescue, Ambulance, the Football League and the Council (including Traffic Manager)

- PESAG – Police, Fire and Rescue, Ambulance and the Council (including Traffic Manager)

These activities will be planned to ensure that there is minimal disruption and no conflict with other activities within the highway.

3.5.2.3 Disruption due to unplanned activity

Unplanned activity might include:

- road traffic accidents
- broken down vehicles
- motorway and trunk road off network diversions
- debris or diesel spillages on the road
- failure of the carriageway
- failure of apparatus in the highway
- weather events (including snow, ice, flooding, high winds)
- major incidents
- security alerts
- unauthorised activity

The unexpected nature of such incidents often means that the immediate effects on the network are difficult to deal with. Contingency plans will be developed for the whole district, in particular within the urban area, and on a route basis for traffic diverted off the strategic road network onto the local road network.

3.6. Monitoring and Review

The Borough Council will monitor the effectiveness of its actions in the performance of the network management duty and review the effectiveness of its arrangements for network management and take action as follows.

3.6.1 Monitoring

The Traffic Manager will continuously monitor the effectiveness of the organisation and its decision-making processes and in the implementation of its decisions in delivering the requirements and objectives of the network management duty. Where issues arise, the Traffic Manager will make an assessment to determine how the organisation or its decision-making processes could be more effective. The Traffic Manager will compile a report and make recommendations for change to the Departmental Management Team, and implement these as required.

The Traffic Manager will keep a record of progress on all such issues, identifying what issues have arisen, where recommendations for change have been made and what actions have been taken and what progress has been made in implementing the changes required.

3.6.2 Review

In his Annual Report the Traffic Manager will review the overall effectiveness of the arrangements in place for the delivery of the network management duty. The report will include a summary of issues that have arisen during the course of the year, reviewing the actions that have been taken and how the delivery of the network management duty has been improved as a result.

3.7. Areas for Improvement

Areas for improvement will be identified as part of this monitoring and review process and the necessary action taken to address these.

4 Performing the Network Management Duty

4.1. Introduction

It is the duty of a local traffic authority to manage their road network with a view to achieving the following objectives, as set out in the TMA:

- securing the expeditious movement of traffic on the authorities road network; and
- facilitating the expeditious movement of traffic on road networks for which another authority is the traffic authority

The action which the authority may take in performing that duty includes any action they consider will contribute to securing;

- the more efficient use of their road network; or
- the avoidance, elimination or reduction of road congestion or other disruption to the movement of traffic on their road network for which another authority is the traffic authority.

The road network in Darlington is not seriously congested, though the LTP has forecast increasing congestion on parts of the principal road network by 2010. The locations identified include the following;

- 1 West Auckland Road/Cockerton Green
- 2 North Road/Whessoe Road
- 3 North Road/Salters Lane
- 4 Haughton Road/McMullen Road

The A66(T) is also forecast to be congested within the Borough, however the Highways Agency is the Traffic Authority for those roads. In response to this issue, the Agency and the Tees Valley Authorities jointly commissioned the A19/A66/A174 study to assess current and

future demands on the Strategic Road Network with an aim of ultimately developing an Area Action Plan of strategic interventions coupled with development triggers.

The Joint Strategy Unit has now updated and validated the Tees Valley Traffic (TRIPS) Model and this has been used in developing proposals for the major bus network improvement scheme and Metro proposals. Investment in AIMSUM, a micro-simulation model, is proposed to enable detailed analysis of individual junctions using a common approach across the Tees Valley.

This section of the document will set out the arrangements that the Council has in place or proposes to put in place to deliver the Network Management Duty. The subsections have been formatted to address the Governments' Assessment Framework. The subsections are entitled:-

- To consider the needs of all road users.
- To co-ordinate and plan works and known events affecting the highway network
- To gather information and provide information needs
- To develop contingency plans for managing incidents
- To effectively monitor and manage traffic growth
- To consult and involve stakeholders and other interested parties
- To ensure parity between the local highway authority and others

4.2. Road user needs

Objective 1: To consider the needs of all road users.

Summary Table of Intervention Criteria

Criterion	Evidence	Section
a) How does Authority manage road space for everyone?	Darlington's arrangements for managing road space for everyone are set out within the Second Local Transport Plan and daughter documents.	4.2.1
b) Has the Authority set out a clear understanding of the problems facing the different parts of their network?	Darlington has evidenced a clear understanding of the problems facing the different parts of our network through the daughter documents of the Second Local Transport Plan, with separate strategies for cycling, public transport, sustainable travel to school, parking and accessibility. These strategies demonstrate a clear awareness of the needs of different road users and the balanced policies in place for addressing these needs.	4.2.1 4.2.3
c) Is the Authority aware of the needs of different road users?		
d) Are there balanced policies for addressing of the problems and needs?		
e) Has the local Authority identified and grouped roads according to their location and activities on them?	Darlington has established a network hierarchy related to traffic sensitivity and congestion, with high risk roads identified and grouped. Sites where there is particular concern in regard to congestion are identified in Appendix 8.	3.5.1 3.5.2
f) How has the Authority shown it has balanced competing demands while continuing to manage its network effectively?	The authority has taken effective action to aid pedestrians, cyclists, public transport passengers and motorists. Discussion takes place with all stakeholders at the Transport Forum.	4.2.2
g) In reaching decisions on competing demands, has the Authority taken account of their policies and the particular circumstances of the part of the network being considered?	Capital schemes emerge from the LTP, which has a balanced approach to management of the highway network. Maintenance schemes are co-ordinated by Streetworks Co-ordination to minimise disruption to the highway	4.2.1 4.3.2 4.3.3 3.5.3.1
h) Is the Authority working together with local businesses, retailers and representatives of the freight and road transport industry?	Darlington Partnership Board is a partnership of representatives from Darlington's business, community, voluntary sector and public sector agencies. Darlington works with local businesses, retailers and representatives of the freight and road transport industry at the Transport Forum, Town Centre Board, Local Motion Reference Group, Darlington Hackney/Private Hire Group, Darlington Cycle Forum and Bus Quality Partnership. The Council also has a close relationship with Darlington Association on Disability.	2.4.1 4.2.1

Section 4 – Performing the Network Management Duty

i) Is the Authority developing means for ensuring economic and efficient servicing of premises and deliveries, whilst mitigating adverse problems?	See h) above	4.2.1
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4.2.1 Existing Situation

Darlington Borough Council already manages the highway network well, through effective traffic signal co-ordination, careful planning of events on the highway, co-ordination of road works, the effective use of traffic regulation orders and the implementation of highway improvement schemes.

The Traffic Management Act 2004 placed a duty on the local authority to manage their network to secure the *expeditious* movement of all traffic. Traditionally traffic has implied vehicular traffic, however, we need to consider pedestrian, cyclist and other non-motorised traffic using the network, particular attention needs be given to the requirements of disabled people.

The NETMG has already agreed a protocol for preparing a Network Management Hierarchy that will be used to establish the uses of different sections of the network and then to apply relevant policies.

The second Darlington Local Transport Plan (LTP), published in March 2006, sets out a clear analysis of the factors influencing the Borough's transport network, pinpoints the issues that will need to be addressed over the coming years and identifies the desired outcomes. It is supported by a series of 'Daughter Strategies' all of which are complementary to the Plan. These strategies are as follows:

- The Accessibility Strategy
- The Bus Strategy
- The Travel Safety Strategy
- The Cycling Strategy
- The Parking Strategy
- The School Travel Plan Strategy
- The Rights of Way Improvement Plan

A further supporting document to the LTP is the Transport Asset Management Plan (TAMP). The County Surveyors Society defines asset management as "a strategic approach that defines the optimal allocation of resources for the management, operation, preservation and enhancement of the highway

infrastructure to meet the needs of current and future customers". The TAMP is at a draft stage at present. However, the Council is working closely with its neighbouring unitary authorities in the Tees Valley to ensure consistent approach to the principles of asset management. Driving both the LTP and its suite of supporting documents is the Long-Term Transport Strategy, which considers the key influences on the local network and uses a combination of existing evidence and predicted trends to develop the Council's vision for transport within the Borough over the next fifteen to twenty years. This vision is based on a set of key Aims and Objectives under each of the five themes of the Central/Local Government Shared Priority for Transport.

4.2.2 Issues

Competing demands for network usage require that we adopt a balanced approach to ensure highway related activities are accommodated with the minimum disturbance and disruption to the general public.

It is accepted that the key pedestrianised areas and the main pedestrian routes, particularly in the town centre and local centres, must be given specific priority in the context of the network hierarchy. Darlington Council has established a highway network hierarchy based upon the "Code of Good Practice for Network Management". The hierarchy relates to carriageway/footways and cycleways.

The Council has also been active in developing the Borough's strategic cycle network. National Cycle Route Network (NCN) Route 14 links Darlington with NCN Route 1, the 'Millennium Route'. The Council is also a Cycle Demonstration Town and as well as extending the strategic network there is a focus on increasing levels of cycling through the implementation of seven radial routes into the town centre connected by a radial route, with links to schools and employment sites.

The sustainable principles are further supported by the Council's success as a Sustainable Travel Town in 2004. The sustainable agenda is being carried forward as part of our Local Motion initiative.

In regard to public transport the Tees Valley Joint Strategy Unit (TVJSU) provides a strategic overview across the sub-region as a

Section 4 – Performing the Network Management Duty

whole. They are driving forward key initiatives such as the Tees Valley Bus Network Improvements Scheme - for which a Major Scheme Business Case was submitted to the Department for Transport in February 2008 . Similarly, a bid for a Tees Valley Metro system is currently being developed.

In addition following the acquisition of Stagecoach by Arriva, there has been significant investment in new bus services, vehicles and public transport information, by Arriva and the Council

Tees Valley Intelligent Transport Systems strategy has identified a range of measures to make more efficient use of the existing network, including use of Urban Traffic Management and Control systems (UTMC) and Variable Message Signs VMS. This has been identified as a Tees Valley transport priority and will be taken forward by all Tees Valley Authorities.

The strong regeneration agenda for the Borough has given rise to improvements to the highway network. Recent examples include:

- The Darlington Eastern Transport Corridor – this provides a link from the A66(T) into central Darlington and opens up a significant area of land for development. Included with the scheme were improvements to junctions on the A66(T) between Little Burdon Roundabout and Morton Palms roundabout and provision of a footpath/cycle bridge over the A(66)T (forming part of NCN Route14).
- Haughton Road/Central Park – junction improvements to provide access to regeneration area at Central Park, including the new Darlington College

A congestion ‘Stress Map’ was produced for the Second LTP. This confirmed that there are some congestion ‘hot spots’ on the local road network – such as North Road/Whessoe Road and Woodland Road/Cockerton Green. The Council is currently working to produce a package of interventions designed to ensure that the highway network is capable of facilitating the planned regeneration over the next twenty years.

The Tees Valley has been given Housing Growth Point status which could result an additional 1,930 dwellings over and above the new housing allocation set out in the Regional

Spatial Strategy. The sites are located around the Borough with the highest concentrations being around the Town Centre and Lingfield Point.

The Council’s Traffic Manager is well placed to ensure that the various divisions of the Council work closely with partners and stakeholders to minimise disruption and to manage demands around the highway network.

4.2.3 Opportunities

The advent of the TMA and the introduction of the specific Network Management Duty have given the opportunity for development of a ‘user’ network hierarchy, identifying specific roads and routes, types of traffic affected, and the development of policies and procedures to minimise the affect of activities in these specific areas. There is also the opportunity to agree the network hierarchy with stakeholders.

A Darlington Network Management Strategy Team is to be established to oversee, regulate and develop mechanisms for the effective management of the network.

The TMA gives greater powers of enforcement to the Council it is important that the enforcement activities are controlled within the same group as the Network Management Duty. The Parking Manager will work closely with the Traffic Manager to direct enforcement effort to reduce traffic disruption.

It is intended to continue to raise awareness, at Corporate level, of the impact on the network of future developments in the Borough. The current establishment permits the Traffic Manager to analyse the impact, develop strategies and ensure network considerations are included in planning stages of all development proposal.

Also it is proposed to review the current structure of external stakeholders group’s involvement, assimilate related parties into cohesive groups and develop an evidence led mechanism for structured communications channels.

Section 4 – Performing the Network Management Duty

4.2.4 Risks

With regard to highways related activities the Network Management Duty will place a substantial human and financial resource pressure on the Council, and efficiencies must be sought to ensure the duty is fulfilled. Continuous monitoring of the NMP will assist in prioritisation of resources.

At this stage it is considered that the demands and opportunities can be accommodated within the current established resources, however this will be subject to continuous review.

The implementation of Civil Parking Enforcement will have a significant effect on controlling activities on the highway and any delay in implementation is a risk to the performance of the network management duty.

4.2.5 Network Hierarchy

It is important that Darlington Borough Council defines its network carefully in terms of network management. It is not appropriate, or practical, to apply the same level of network management to the whole of the network and therefore a hierarchical approach has been taken.

Currently the Council's network has a number of different hierarchy classifications. These hierarchies are listed in Appendix 4 of this plan.

Whilst these hierarchies' reflect different, but equally important criteria Darlington Borough Council believes that, in order to best discharge the network management duty, the network needs to be considered in the context of the location and use. In this way, and accounting for the Council's major transport policies a network management hierarchy has been established that reflects a usage hierarchy in terms of all traffic, including pedestrians and cyclists.

The hierarchy that has been developed for network management (as identified at paragraph 3.5.1) divides the network into three categories – high/medium/low. The different designations are colour coded; high = red; medium = amber; low = green, where;

Red: roads where works/incidents/events would have a serious detrimental impact on the efficiency of the network if not coordinated

Amber: roads where works/incidents/events would have a reduced detrimental impact on the efficiency of the network if not coordinated, but are considered to be of lower priority

Green: roads where works/incidents/events would have little detrimental impact on the efficiency of the network if not coordinated.

This hierarchy is shown as Appendix 5 to this Network Management Plan.

It is the Council's intention, in order to develop a sensible and practical approach to managing the network, to actively pursue the duty on that part of the network with a 'high' designation during the first year, with the intention of reviewing the hierarchy annually and refining the designations to meet changing aspirations and to reflect any best practice derived from the regional cooperation with the other North of England LTAs

In developing the hierarchy consideration has been given to the Council's wider objectives and policies. It also recognises the needs of our partners and stakeholders, for example the Police and public transport operators. Liaison has also taken place with our neighbouring authorities to ensure actions taken by ourselves do not have a detrimental effect on the network of others, and vice versa. This has also ensured that, as far as is reasonably practicable, cross boundary consistency exists with the networks of adjacent authorities and users have the certainty that the standards of network management roll out across the region.

Section 4 – Performing the Network Management Duty

Key Activity/Initiatives	Deliverables	Timescale	Lead Officer
Develop a network hierarchy by level of use and function and keep it regularly under review	Highway Hierarchy circulated to all service groups	February 2009	Traffic Manager
Establish the 'Darlington Network Management Strategy Group' to manage and coordinate the network functions	Regular meetings(quarterly)	February/March 2009	Traffic Manager
Review the existing operation and involvement of existing stakeholders sub-groups e.g. Bus Quality Partnership, Police, Public Events Safety Advisory Group, Darlington Football Club Safety Advisory Group	Routine, regular meetings to co-ordinate activities	Ongoing	Traffic Manager, Transport Policy Manager, Public Protection
Raise awareness of future developments in respect of impact of the network at meetings with the public, Council Members and Officers, and in Council publications.	Departmental Management Team, Corporate Management Team, Cabinet, Scrutiny, Lead Members and Council publications	February 2009	Assistant Director: Highways and Engineering, Communications Unit

Performance Tasks		Current Performance	Target Performance	Target date
Measure	Purpose			
Congestion hotspots identified by bus operators	To minimise /eliminate congestion on bus routes	Bus Quality Partnership meetings - quarterly	Meet quarterly	Established March 2006
Highways Co-ordination and performance group	Quarterly meetings to oversee all activities	Meet Quarterly	Meet quarterly	Established
Darlington Partnership	Quarterly Meetings to update members on NMD issues	Meet Quarterly	Meet quarterly	Established
Transport Forum	Regular meetings with stakeholders	Meet quarterly	Meet quarterly	Established
Public Events Safety Advisory Group	Regular meetings (minimum quarterly) to co-ordinate events affecting the highway	Meet quarterly(minimum)	Meet quarterly (minimum)	Established March 2006

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Darlington Football Club Safety Advisory Group	Quarterly meetings to co-ordinate events at the stadium	Meet quarterly	Meet quarterly	May 2002
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4.3. Co-ordination and planning

Objective 2 : To co-ordinate and plan works and known events affecting the highway network

Summary Table of Intervention Criteria

Criterion	Evidence	Section
a) To what extent has the Authority promoted pro-active co-ordination of activities on the network?	<p>Appointment of Streetworks Manager.</p> <p>A series of regular co-ordination meetings to plan and manage incidents on the highway.</p> <p>Symology Insight software used to monitor notices</p>	<p>4.3.1</p> <p>4.3.3</p>
b) To what degree has the Authority adopted a planned, evidence led approach to known events?	<p>Electronic Noticing of streetworks using EToN 4 system. EToN 5 system to be in place on 1st October 2008</p> <p>Transport Asset Management Plan being published for Tees Valley Authorities.</p> <p>Annual Maintenance Programme and Capital Works Programme produced.</p> <p>Public Events Safety Advisory Group and Darlington Football Club Safety Advisory Group set up to deal with events that will affect the highway.</p> <p>Winter Maintenance Plan</p>	<p>4.3.1</p> <p>4.3.2</p> <p>4.3.4</p>
c) Has the Authority developed or is it developing contingency plans for unforeseen events?	<p>Emergency Plan and Major Incident Plan.</p> <p>Formal procedures for “red” traffic sensitive routes to be developed.</p>	<p>4.3.3</p> <p>4.5.2, 4.5.3, Key Initiative for section 4.5</p>

4.3.1 Existing Situation

The planning and co-ordination of planned events is essential in minimising the disruption to traffic on the network. Works need to be undertaken by many groups for specific purposes, local authorities need to maintain, repair and renew roads; utility organisations need access into the highway to place and maintain their apparatus to ensure they meet the statutory requirements placed on them to provide domestic and business customers with their services.

Major events impact on the use of the highway. There are many events that impact on the highway including Darlington Fireworks and Christmas celebrations, football matches and events at Darlington Arena and the annual 10km road race. These events are all included in co-ordination of highway works.

Other service providers may be required to place objects on the highway; skips, scaffolding, hoardings etc. at the request of a customer. All these highways related activities need to be co-ordinated and managed to minimise impact and disruption to the general public.

Pre-programmed meetings are held between Darlington Council and all statutory undertakers at prescribed periods, programmes of works are exchanged, potential conflict in works or projects identified and co-ordinated accordingly. Works and projects identified on strategic roads and route require detailed planning and timing, these works have the potential to cause most disruption and delay by virtue of the volumes of traffic using these locations.

The Traffic Management Act 2004 gives the local authorities additional powers, in addition to the existing legislations, to manage all activities undertaken on the highway, especially in the timing of works on specific roads and routes, these powers are to be introduced and used equally to ensure an unbiased approach between internal (local authority) and external parties.

It is important that all authorities work in partnership with their neighbouring Councils to ensure cross-boundary arrangements are introduced to ensure the effective co-ordination of works and activities is consistent.

The positive and constructive relationships built up in NEHAUC will go a long way to ensuring close collaboration between the Highway Authorities and the Utilities Groups to achieve this objective.

4.3.2 Issues

There is extensive co-ordination and planning of events affecting the highway network. This ranges from the strategic level with NEHAUC, to local level with through quarterly co-ordination with utilities, meetings of the Public Events Safety Advisory Group and Darlington Football Club Safety Advisory Group, and preparation of a weekly roadworks report. All known events are included on a Gazetteer with links to the national Gazetteer. The software package used to manage notices is Symology Insight. This has been updated to meet the requirements of the Traffic Management Act 2004.

The Council's Emergency Plan and Major Incident Plan can be used to manage unforeseen incidents on the highway. There are also procedures in place for dealing with minor unplanned works and the Council have a 24 hour callout cover with access available to the Police and the Council's own workforce.

The improvements arising from the Traffic Management Act 2004 build on the existing operation of NRSWA 1991 arrangements. It is possible to extend the Council's powers further by introducing a 'Permit' scheme for streetworks. The Council is not considering introduction of a Permit scheme at the present time.

There is a communication problem entering the events into the Gazetteer. This does need some additional work.

4.3.3 Opportunities

The requirements of the Traffic Management Act 2004 have led to the Symology Insight software being upgraded. The upgrade will allow better co-ordination of works by the Council's direct services and improve co-ordination of noticed works

The Council will review the existing structure and frequency of all network related meetings in relation to planned and known works and activities.

To ensure that cross boundary arrangements operate efficiently meetings with Tees Valley,

Durham and North Yorkshire authorities have been established. Arrangements are also in place for managing cross boundary arrangements for the A1(M) and A66(T) trunk roads.

Arrangements for placing of skips in the highway could be better managed. Although this does not usually cause network management problems there can be difficulties where skips are placed on main routes and affect the free flow of traffic. In addition they can also result in damage to kerbs and verges. To a lesser extent the same applies to hoardings and scaffolding and management of all of these is a key issue for the Council to address.

4.3.2. Risks

An incremental approach to the introduction of new processes and procedures brings with it pressure on resources. However, the management of street works is considered to be satisfactory at present and with the smooth transition to the EtoN 4 it is not considered necessary to immediately to a 'Permit' scheme.

Section 4 – Performing the Network Management Duty

Key Activity/Initiatives	Deliverables	Timescale	Lead Partner
Review and formalise the co-ordination of all planned works and known events.	Performed on a quarterly basis (works co-ordination; public events safety advisory group; Darlington FC Safety Advisory Group)	PESAG Established January 2008 DFCSAG Established January 2006	Assistant Director: Highways and Engineering Assistant Director: Environmental Health
Establish a Tees Valley/North Yorkshire/Durham Street Works Co-ordination Group to discuss cross-boundary arrangements and co-ordination of works.	Performed on a quarterly basis	Ongoing	Traffic Manager Street Works Co-ordinator
Ensure programmes of works are noticed in the prescribed manner.	Existing arrangements reviewed	Established March 2008	Traffic Manager
Adopt a pro-active approach to work on strategic roads and routes.	Continual review of streetworks programme	Established March 2008	Traffic Manager
Produce generic highway/network related activity schedules for distribution internal and external.	Schedule circulated after co-ordination meetings	Established January 2008	Assistant Director: Highways and Engineering Traffic Manager
Ensure all NEHAUC Coordination meeting are carried out in the prescribed manner and time-scales	Report to the Co-ordination Group	Established	Highways Maintenance Manager
Establish processes for distribution of information regarding network and streetworks activities, internal and external	Schedule of key contacts	Established March 2008	Traffic Manager
Ensure contingency plans and processes are in place to address emergency and unforeseen events/activities (Covered in Objective 4)	Strategic Response Routes identified with Emergency Services	Established March 2008	Traffic Manager
Review and list all activities that can affect the network.	Skips, Scaffolding, Hoardings etc. procedures reviewed	February/ March 2009	Traffic Manager

Performance Tasks		Current Performance	Target Performance	Target date
Measure	Purpose			
Prepare Investment Programmes prior to start of new financial year	To ensure that proposed programmes are cross-checked to eliminate conflicts	Prepared for new start of new financial year	Prepared for start of new financial year	March 2008
Prepare schedule of planned works and events for NEHAUC	To ensure that proposed activities are cross-checked to eliminate conflicts	Quarterly	Quarterly	Established
Prepare agreement for dealing with cross boundary arrangements with Stockton/Durham/North Yorkshire LTAs	To ensure consistency across LA boundaries	Meeting as required	As required	March 2009

4.4. Information

Objective 3 – To gather information and provide information needs

Summary Table of Intervention Criteria

Criterion	Evidence	Section
a) How effective are the arrangements the authority has in place to gather accurate information about planned works and events?	Darlington has a robust system for gathering roadworks information. The Council receives and shares information every day with partners.	4.4.2 4.4.3
b) How does the authority organise planned works and events to minimise their impact and agree or stipulate their timing to best effect?	Use of Symology Insight software Process plan of consultative meetings	4.3.2 4.3.3 4.3.4 4.3.5
c) Does the authority provide access on demand to information, from the authority's systems for recording and co-ordinating utilities works and road works, to utility companies, contractors and adjoining authorities?	The spreadsheet of highway activities is available to utilities, neighbouring authorities and contractors.	4.4.2
d) Does the authority have, or aim to have, a good and timely source of information for road users?	The Council's website has a weekly Roadworks Report and links to public transport providers.	4.4.2
e) Does this allow road users to choose a different route or mode of travel or to delay or defer their proposed journey?	There is information readily available to allow travellers to make informed choices. Journey Planner on Local Motion website There is little real time information to advise of delays on the network.	4.4.2
f) Does the authority work with a range of travel information providers and does it communicate through a wide range of channels?	See d) and e) above. Channels include internet, press and published timetables. Provide information to Traveline to ensure public transport information is up to date	4.4.2
g) What evidence has been provided to show how well the authority is meeting existing statutory obligations such as its contribution to the national street gazetteer?	Level 3 Local Street Gazetteer is submitted to the NSG hub on a monthly basis. DBC was one of only 21 HAs to submit gazetteers in Nov/Jan/Apr/May/June during the transition to EToN 4	4.3.2 4.3.3

4.4.2 Existing Situation

Darlington Borough Council has developed a robust system for gathering roadworks information and co-ordinating works on the highway. This has been established to reflect existing legislation requiring utilities to give notice of any planned roadworks to the Highway Authority. All planned roadworks events are entered onto a spreadsheet. The Council's planned works are also entered onto the spreadsheet. Meetings of all interested parties are held quarterly to co-ordinate the works and reduce the traffic impact of the roadworks.

The spreadsheet is distributed to utilities, the Council's direct services section, neighbouring authorities, contractors and other internal contacts via e-mail. The roadworks spreadsheet is discussed regularly and a weekly Roadworks Report is published. This advises road users of potential disruption on the highway network and, if appropriate, advises on alternative routes. This is available on the Council website and is passed to the media for publication.

Darlington has a local journey planner for trips in Darlington by bus, walking and cycling by bus, walking or cycling. In addition, Traveline provides information on local bus services in the North East. The Council's website provides a portal to rail travel information.

There is information readily available to allow travellers to make informed choices about the route and mode of any journey they wish to make. Anticipated delays are published on the Council's website in addition to links to public transport providers. However, there is little 'real time' information to advise on changes to the network and consequent delays. Real time bus timetable information is available on a small number of on-street displays and this system will be progressively rolled out across the Borough over the coming years. Real time can also be a source of information for delay and congestion on bus routes.

To meet national reporting requirements, particularly those relating to the new national indicator relating to traffic congestion, there is a need to gather more robust and timely data on travel time on the Borough's highway network. Data is currently being obtained through the ITIS system from a small number of vehicles fitted with tracker devices, with this

data becoming more useful as the number of vehicles contributing to the ITIS system increases.

4.4.3 Issues

Gathering and disseminating accurate information is a key element of Network Management. Effective decisions about planning and co-ordinating works/activities cannot be achieved without having the right information and systems in place.

The Council is working to share this information with the right people and organisations in order to influence the right sort of approach to network management and to enable our partners to help us to achieve the network performances that we are aiming for. Without the right sort of information neither our transport service providers nor our travelling public will be able to make informed choices about their travel operations or travel journeys.

The Council collects an extensive range of data for its own monitoring purposes. This needs to be presented well enough to be useful information for the travelling public.

The Council already receives and shares information every day with partners, both internally and externally, in an attempt to ensure that streetworks are well planned and co-ordinated. There are co-ordination groups meeting on a regular basis to share information about planned events but limited energy is focussed on preparing and agreeing actions for the unplanned events.

All of our actions and decisions can either be termed 'proactive' or 'reactive' depending upon the activity or the incident. We now have to demonstrate that we are issuing this information effectively.

The management of the information, its dissemination and its accessibility or 'fit-for-purpose' formatting are fundamental tasks in discharging our Network Management Duty.

4.4.4 Opportunities

The implementation of parts 3 and 4 of the Traffic Management Act 2004 in April 2008 has required an upgrading of the Symology Insight highway management software. New systems are required to operate the new software and this will lead to improved procedures.

Existing working groups and information management will be reviewed to ensure that they are now fit-for-purpose.

Key contacts list has been reviewed and additional new contacts identified.

The Traffic Manager is to establish a Highways Activities Planning & Co-ordination Group to provide, steer and act as an information 'hub' for all Council and utilities' operations.

Key points of accountability are to be identified for providing and sharing essential information across all stakeholder working teams and contacts to facilitate this joined-up working.

Existing schedules and website are to be reviewed and adapted to ensure that streetworks activities and information is accessible to all and fit-for-purpose.

New technology is to be appraised in with partners across the Tees Valley to develop appropriate intelligent transport systems. This could provide real time information to travellers and indicate alternative routes or modes when congestion occurs. A "Congestion Busting" scheme, using live pictures from cameras on the Strategic Road Network is being considered. The cameras will feed into the Council's website. Travellers could check congestion levels prior to starting a journey and change route or mode as appropriate.

4.4.5 Risks

Without the right information and the appropriate systems to manage and disseminate this information, the Council is at risk of failing in its Network Management Duty. The Symology Insight software has been upgraded to cater for EToN 4 notices to address this;

Without the right provisions and channels for accessing the streetwork schedules, the streetwork website and key contacts across the area, service providers and travellers

cannot make informed choices about their journeys and operations;

Without the establishment of contingency plans based on accurate information, traffic congestion will not be minimised.

Cross boundary agreements must be set up to deliver the Network Management Plan and appropriate intelligent transport information. A cross boundary forum is being set up to discuss such arrangements as Winter Maintenance Plans.

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Key Activity/Initiatives	Deliverables	Timescale	Lead Partner
Logging public concerns, exchange of planned programmes across all service areas	Composite database Composite plan	Established	Streetworks Co-ordinator Traffic Manager
Regularly review website to ensure travellers receive up to date information	Streetworks web page	Established	Streetworks Co-ordinator
Develop more intelligent information systems to inform choice	Enhanced web pages	Established September 2008	Transport Policy Manager
Share cross-boundary information about planned streetworks.	Meeting with Tees Valley/North Yorkshire/Durham LTAs	Established	Street Works Co-ordinator
Review current procedures for gathering and storing information	Accurate database	Established	Street Works Co-ordinator
Review the existing methods of disseminating information and establish media strategy	Media Strategy and Links	Established	Street Works Co-ordinator/Traffic Manager
Review/update Street Works register in accordance with the new legislative requirements	Accurate database	Established	Street Works Co-ordinator
Ensure points of contact are reviewed for the collection and dissemination of information	Contacts List reviewed regularly	Established	Traffic Manager/Street Works Co-ordinator.

Performance Tasks		Current Performance	Target Performance	Target date
Measure	Purpose			
Accurate storage of information on databases	To inform decisions and planning	Databases in place	Report quarterly	December 2007
Establish cross boundary meetings Tees Valley/North Yorkshire/Durham	To co-ordinate cross-boundary planning and dissemination	Established	Report quarterly	December 2007

4.5. Incident Management and Contingency Planning

Objective 4 – To develop contingency plans for managing incidents**Summary Table of Intervention Criteria**

Criterion	Evidence	Section
a) Has the authority established contingency plans for dealing with situations outside the authority's control promptly and effectively, as far as reasonable practical?	<p>Emergency Plan, Major Incident Plan and Winter maintenance Plan.</p> <p>Procedures for A1(M) and A66(T) trunk roads have been prepared A-One</p> <p>The Council is in a position to act quickly to unplanned incidents.</p> <p>Contingency Plans are being developed in association with work being undertaken under Civil Contingencies Act 2004. At sub regional level multi-agency arrangements are built around Local Resilience Forum.</p> <p>A Diversion Route/Paired Roads schedule has been prepared for the primary/red routes.</p>	<p>4.5.1</p> <p>4.5.2</p> <p>4.5.3</p>
b) Has the authority provided evidence to demonstrate that all parties involved in making these contingency arrangements work have been, or are, fully consulted during their development?	Full consultation on Emergency Plan, Major Incident Plan and Winter Maintenance Plan.	4.5.1
c) Have these parties the information they need to put the plans in to practise quickly?	Emergency Plan, Major Incident Plan and Winter Maintenance Plan are published as public documents.	4.5.1

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4.5.1. Existing Situation

Darlington Borough Council deals with many unplanned incidents on the highway network each year. Such incidents include:

- Emergency utility works e.g. major gas leak
- Road traffic accidents
- Flooding incidents, or other weather related incidents
- Accelerated damage to the highway network assets
- Fallen trees
- Diesel or chemical spillage
- Traffic signals failure
- Dangerous Structures adjacent to the highway
- Fires to properties adjacent to the highway
- Vehicle breakdown
- Abandoned vehicles

Although diverse in nature, the common feature is that incidents such as these affect traffic conditions, and invariably lead to road restrictions or closures and so need to be dealt with quickly to minimise disruption and inconvenience to highway users.

Although the Council are in a position to respond to unplanned incidents, we do not have a formal contingency plan documenting procedures that need to be followed in dealing with unplanned incidents on the highway network (other than the Major Incident Plan)

Notification of unplanned incidents may come from a number of sources, for example through the emergency services, through utility companies, from the public etc and the timing of the notification is variable – for example the Police do not always let us know immediately if they have had to close a road due to an accident. However, when notification is received the Council is in a position to respond quickly to unplanned

incidents. In normal working hours resources can be re-directed to deal with incidents. However, for “out-of-hours” incidents staff and operatives need to be called out for which the Council has formal standby arrangements in place with operatives on paid stand-by.

As unplanned incidents vary in nature, location and severity and the nature of the response depends on site specific circumstances. The response options will generally fall into one of the following categories: -

- Erection of warning signs
- First time repair
- Road closure
- Setting up diversion routes

The response may also be a combination of the above and is likely to be progressive, depending upon the nature and timescales of the incident.

The Council has a Winter Maintenance Plan and work on formal contingency planning is being developed in line with duty under the Civil Contingencies Act 2004. This has led to incidents being dealt with in an ad-hoc way, utilising the local knowledge and experience of the highways staff and workforce. While this usually works well, there is the potential for this reactive approach to cause road safety issues for network users and delays to businesses, emergency services and the community at large.

The Winter Maintenance Plan has been published that sets out the Council’s response to winter conditions. Roads within the network hierarchy have different response priorities depending on the strategic importance of the road. This plan is co-ordinated with plans of neighbouring authorities. The Winter Maintenance Routes are included at Appendix 10.

Procedures on the Strategic Road Network have been prepared by A-One. These include for agreed diversionary routes on the local road network during closures of sections of the Strategic Road Network.

Also, the Council has prepared a schedule ‘pairing’ the primary route network and red routes with other routes. Where works are

being carried out on the major route network works that will interrupt the flow of traffic will not normally be allowed on the 'paired' routes. The schedule is included at Appendix 18. The schedule would also include the diversion route for the primary/red routes.

4.5.2 Issues

The Council's highways, 'day in and day out' are part of a dynamic framework that involves people making many thousands of journeys and service providers undertaking hundreds of activities to enhance and maintain the infrastructure.

Having such a complex and diverse network of activities and events it is inevitable that occasionally, things do not go to plan! How the Council respond to these incidents, especially, when they occur on the red and amber routes, will be critical to effective network management.

Incidents might be an emergency gas leak, traffic signals fault, road collision, footway/carrage way collapse, oil spillage on the road, etc.

It is important that the Council can obtain details, quickly, of the likely impact on traffic from any unplanned incidents from those people who actually report the incident.

Having effective contingency plans are critical to the successful management of the network function. The provision of such plans will be more important on our cross-boundary, strategic corridors.

4.5.3 Opportunities

The formulation of a comprehensive set of contingency plans, which are agreed by both internal and external partners, will ensure that key officers will be able to respond quickly to incidents so as to minimise delays and congestion for all users of the network.

Review of existing contingency plans, in the light of previous experiences will facilitate the provision of accurate and accessible documented procedures that are known and available to all key stakeholders to use.

Agreed, effective and comprehensive procedures will improve resource efficiencies within the Council.

Agreed diversion routes (for the trunk roads, the primary route network and the red routes) will allow such routes to be properly signed and put into use, with minimum delay, in the event of an unplanned incident/closure. Cross boundary diversion routes will be agreed with neighbouring authorities

4.5.4 Risks

Without having formalised, effective contingency plans in place, the Council and its partners will find it difficult to fulfil its Network Management Duty.

Reactive approaches to unplanned events could cause delays to businesses, emergency services and residential people.

The Council's reputation may be damaged if there are delays, increased congestion and disruption due to our reactive approach.

To address this contingency plans should be prepared to reduce the risk. Such plans would be route specific with an initial emphasis on the primary routes and 'red' traffic sensitive routes.

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Key Activity/Initiatives	Deliverables	Timescale	Lead Partner
Develop and agree with all parties/ stakeholders a “Highways Incident Contingency Plan”	Contingency Plan for ‘red’ traffic sensitive routes	February 2009	Traffic Manager
Consider the production of contingency plans for traffic signal control failure, structures/bridges failure etc	Contingency Plan for key sites	February 2009	Traffic Manager
Agree designated diversion routes for the trunk road and primary route network	Agreement Document - Highways Agency/Local Authority	February 2009	Traffic Manager
Agree designated diversion routes/pairing of roads for other major parts of the network	Diversion Route Plan/Pairing of Routes Plan	February 2009	Traffic Manager

Performance Tasks		Current Performance	Target Performance	Target date
Measure	Purpose			
Prepare contingency plans for red routes and key site	Clarify procedures and tasks for key officers	Informal	Formalise procedures	February 2009
Agreed designated diversion routes for trunk road, primary route network and other major (red) routes	Clarify procedures and tasks for key officers	Informal	Formalise procedures	February 2009

4.6. Dealing with Traffic Growth

Objective 5 – To effectively monitor and manage traffic growth.

Summary Table of Intervention Criteria

Criterion	Evidence	Section
a) What evidence has been given to show an authority has identified trends in traffic growth on specific routes?	Congestion does occur at certain hotspots, at particular times and days of the week. Output of Tees Valley Strategic Model and Area Action Plan for A19/A66/A174	4.6.1,
b) What policies have been put into place for managing incremental change?	<p>Traffic growth across the Tees Valley Region is being tackled at a strategic level by Tees Valley JSU, including major bus improvement bid and Metro proposal.</p> <p>Despite the success in restricting traffic growth, it is accepted that traffic will continue to grow. Emerging preferred options for the LDF recognises the issues of sustainable development and need to minimise traffic growth</p>	4.6.1, 4.6.4

4.6.1. Existing Situation

Measures to deal with congestion are at the heart of the Government's transport strategy. The Council recognises that it will need to work closely with its partners in the Tees Valley to manage the impacts of congestion at both sub-regional and local level. Strong cross-boundary working relations have been established over the first LTP period and these relationships will be further developed.

In Darlington congestion is not as a big an issue as in other major conurbations, with the exception of certain 'hotspots' on the A66(T) trunk road corridor, on the A167 and the A68 approaches to the Town Centre and the A167 Inner Ring Road. There is nevertheless a perception amongst the public that congestion is a problem and is getting worse.

It is likely that the increase in background traffic levels due to rising car ownership and the growth of the local economy will result in more widespread congestion in the Borough unless effective action is taken. This situation is likely to be further exacerbated by increases in traffic flow from new developments.

In addition the A66(T) is forecast to be operating close to its practical capacity, over part of its route, in the near future. This is likely to result in the diversion of traffic onto the local road network, with corresponding adverse effects in terms of accessibility, road safety and air quality, as well as congestion.

4.6.2. Issues

It should be the aim of every Local Authority to reduce the impact of road congestion, to improve accessibility and manage demands and transport networks to support the economy. This can only be done if there is a strategic approach to monitoring and managing traffic growth.

The number of trips that individuals make remains constant at an average of 1,000 trips per year. What can change over time is the mode of travel and distance travelled (change in origin or destination). As car ownership increases, people choose to travel further leading to an increase in inter-urban journeys and a consequent increase in traffic volumes on key strategic routes. Cars are also then used for shorter journeys creating local congestion.

There are many other influences that will affect traffic growth, some of these being demographic and social economic influences, travel to work patterns, land use planning (through the Local Development Framework), bus patronage, cycle and walking initiatives and demand management measures such as car parking strategies. Each Authority must have the framework in place that will enable them to identify, measure and control these, and, ultimately, control traffic growth.

Traffic growth across the Tees Valley region is being tackled at a strategic level by the Tees Valley Joint Strategy Unit, in partnership with the Highways Agency and the five Local Authorities. The Council is actively engaged in this work assisting in the collation of and updating of development quantum, provision of traffic data for the Tees Valley strategic (Trips) model and working towards the development of a Tees Valley Area Action (TVAAP).

4.6.3. Opportunities

The Council has recognised that the increase in congestion and the demand for travel will need to be addressed by a range of interventions, as set out in the second LTP. The modelling work already completed will, together with the traffic data being collected on an ongoing basis, provide detailed and reliable data for monitoring the level of congestion within the Borough, thereby assisting the Traffic Manager in performing the Network Management Duty.

The Council, together with its partner Local Authorities in the Tees Valley and the principal bus operators, is working to improve the local bus network, both within the Borough and across the wider sub-region. The extension and sustainability of the bus network is a key element of the long term Transport Strategy for the Borough.

There are opportunities to measure and to deal with the anticipated traffic growth on the network and there are a number of initiatives that can be put in place to counter traffic growth:-

- Ensuring regeneration takes place in sustainable and accessible locations.
- Put in place initiatives to increase bus and rail patronage.

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- Invest in walking and cycling measures, in particular for short journeys.
- Implement Demand Management measures, such as reallocation of existing roadspace in favour of buses and cycles.
- Put in place measures to keep traffic flowing on the main routes and to discourage rat-running in residential areas.

In particular in Darlington the Council works with numerous partner organisations to improve and develop the Borough's bus, rail, pedestrian and cycle networks. In particular there are specific initiatives that will assist in widening travel choices and offering attractive alternatives to journeys currently made by car:-

- Sustainable Travel Demonstration Town to implement smarter travel choices via the Local Motion initiative.
- Cycling Demonstration Town: To invest in cycling in Darlington.
- Pedestrian Heart: To make the Town Centre a pedestrian friendly area that encourages people to walk and cycle in a safe environment and use public transport.
- Bus Quality Partnerships: To work in partnership with the bus operators to improve bus services and bus patronage. Investment by Arriva in new services and vehicles.
- Strong record in school travel plans and new emphasis on workplace travel plans
- Car parking strategy
- Preferred options in the Local Development Framework

The ambitious programme of public transport improvements depends on partnership working with the bus and rail operators. This can only happen if these operators can see the 'business case' for the proposals. A Major Transport Bid for projects to aid bus punctuality on Core and SuperCore routes has been passed to the DfT for consideration.

4.6.4. Risks

Despite the Council's success in restricting traffic growth within the Town, it is accepted that traffic levels across the Borough will continue to grow as a result of development. The Traffic Manager is well placed to influence the design of developments and to mitigate the effects of increasing traffic.

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Key Activity/Initiatives	Deliverables	Timescale	Lead Partner
Establish monitoring procedures for			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> bus patronage 	Monthly Operator data	On-going	Transport Policy Manager
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> cycling trips 	17 automatic count sites	On-going	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> walking trips 	Quarterly counts	On-going	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> traffic volumes 	Automatic Count sites	On-going	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> journey times 	Monitoring methodology to be determined	On-going	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> impact of Employer and School Travel Plans 	Annual surveys in all schools	On-going	
Establish Demand Management Framework for Parking	Produce a parking strategy	2009	Transport Policy Manager
Feedback from specific initiatives	Quarterly report to DfT	Until March 2009	Transport Policy Manager
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Sustainable Travel Demonstration Town Cycling Demonstration Towns 	Quarterly report to Cycle England	Until March 2009	

Performance Tasks		Current Performance	Target Performance	Target date
Measure	Purpose			
To be decided				

4.7. Working with stakeholders

Objective 6 – To Consult and Involve Stakeholders and Other Interested Parties

To ensure that all relevant stakeholders, both internal and external, and other interested parties are consulted and involved in decision making processes where required to ensure the efficient operation of the road network as a whole.

Summary Table of Intervention Criteria

Criterion	Evidence	Section
a) What evidence is there to show that those responsible within the authority for exercising any power to regulate or co-ordinate the uses made of any road or part of a road in the road network are aware of, and act upon, the authorities responsibilities arising in relation to the Network Management Duty?	Processes to monitor work by Direct Services are being agreed. Monitoring of highway disruption caused by roadworks. Considering comments from stakeholders and local residents.	4.7.1, 4.7.2; 4.7.3
b) Do authorities that are in two-tier areas liaise with all relevant departments in the second-tier organisations whose work affects the road network?	Not applicable	
c) Do authorities ensure that other types of authorities (eg. Planning Authorities) are aware of the duty and their impact on the movement of traffic?	Darlington, as a Unitary Authority is both Highway and Planning Authority. Representatives of the Traffic Manager are present throughout the planning process.	4.7.1
d) What evidence is there to show that the authority takes actions that include consultation on initiatives, the sharing of information needed to meet the duty, processes for ensuring that policies are consistent and agreeing joint working arrangements, including the Highways Agency?	Attendance at NEHAUC meetings Quarterly meeting with stakeholders Procedure for co-ordinating roadworks	4.7.1
e) Has the authority involved the police, bus operators, the Traffic Commissioners, residents, local businesses and different road users where appropriate in decision-making processes?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● See a) and d) above ● Talking Together ● Transport Forum ● Cycling Forum ● Access Interest Group ● Bus Quality Partnership ● Public Events Safety Advisory Group ● Darlington Football Club Safety Advisory Group ● Town Centre Board ● Darlington Partnership Board ● Local Motion Reference Group ● Communications Working Group 	4.7.1 4.7.1

4.7.1. Existing Situation

Darlington Borough Council has developed a number of systems to manage and monitor activity on the highway by stakeholders. These systems have been developed to meet needs as they have arisen. They do allow all stakeholders in the highway network the opportunity to become involved in the decision taking processes.

Roadworks cause the most common disruption to the highway network. There is a statutory requirement on utilities and contractors to prepare notices of the intention to open a highway. These proposed works are set out in a spreadsheet along with other planned incidents on the highway such as sports, entertainment or civic events. These are discussed at a quarterly meeting of all stakeholders. The spreadsheet is open for inspection by all stakeholders.

Planned events that are expected to have an impact on the highway are discussed at the Public Events Safety Advisory Group and the Darlington Football Club Safety Advisory Group. These Groups meet at a minimum quarterly and comprises relevant officers of the Council, emergency services and other stakeholders appropriate to the proposed events. At the latter the Football Club and the Football League are represented.

Members of the public are informed of activity on the highway to allow them to comment on proposed works or adjust their travel arrangements. For major schemes, all frontage properties are informed directly of the scheme by letter drop... Prior to commencement of major works advanced signage is erected to warn of possible disruption. A weekly roadworks report is published and included on the Council's website. Local residents are also given the opportunity to make comment after the completion of the works.

The Council is the Planning Authority for the Borough. Officers in the Traffic Manager's Group make expert highway comment on planning applications where appropriate, to ensure that there is no material harm to the traffic network. The Traffic Manager is also represented on a 'One Stop Shop' group that considers applications at pre-planning stage. In this way potential highway problems can be identified at an early stage and appropriate supporting documentation can be requested

(e.g. Transport Assessments, Transport Statements, Travel Plans etc.).

Project Groups are set up for any major development proposal or event in the Borough and the traffic Manager is always represented in these groups to ensure that suitable means of transport are promoted and there is no material harm to the highway.

The Council has a series of meetings set up where stakeholders have the opportunity to comment on transport and highway initiatives, and to raise issues specific to the highway function. The Transport Forum, the Cycling Forum and the Access Group meet quarterly and the latter two groups give the opportunity for user groups to raise issues specific to their own needs.

There is also a Council initiative, 'Talking Together', which gives the opportunity for members of the public to interact with Council Members and Officers at a series of meetings throughout the whole Borough.

The Council has set up a Communications Working Group to monitor the Council's approach to Engagement and Communication. Though the Council undertakes many surveys the Place Survey and the Community Survey respond specifically to the new set of national performance indicators (2008). Both surveys include questions that provide service user and residents' comment on network management issues (congestion, public transport, highway maintenance, car parking etc.). The Traffic Manager is represented on the Group and is able to influence the content of the survey to ensure appropriate questions can be included that will assist in assessment of the network management duty.

The Council operated a Bus Quality Partnership with the local bus operators for a number of years until August 2007. At that time Arriva purchased the other local operators business within Darlington to become a single operator. A Memorandum of Understanding was signed with Arriva to provide a framework by the provision of services could be influenced by local residents whilst acknowledging the operators need to be cost effective, by maintaining a stable and efficient network.

4.7.2. Issues

The scope of the network management duty extends far beyond the traditional organisational boundaries of local authority highways departments. The efficient operation of the road network is therefore not necessarily under the direct control of the LTA or the Traffic Manager. It is incumbent upon the LTA to:

- establish control over the many stakeholders who undertake activities on the road network or which affect the road network;
- collaborate with adjacent traffic authorities to ensure that the efficient operation of the network is seamless across organisational boundaries;
- work with stakeholders using the road network to ensure their needs are understood and taken into account;
- work with other local authority departments – internal and external – to raise awareness of the network management duty and to secure their co-operation in delivering the required outcomes.
- monitor the highway disruption caused by works and events on the highway. Consider comments from stakeholders and local residents, and to make improvement, where possible, to procedures.

4.7.3. Opportunities

The implementation of the Traffic Management Act 2004 has led to the improvement of systems for co-ordinating works within highway. Upgrading of the software has been required to meet the Network Management Duty and enhanced processes to monitor work carried out by the Direct Services section are in place.

It has been recognised that more needs to be done to improve the road user interface by providing better services that clearly demonstrate co-ordination and planning of streetworks. This should be not only at local level but also across the Tees Valley region. Improved arrangements for cross-boundary working and liaison with A-One would also be of benefit.

Whilst good connections do exist, it is accepted that these can be improved to ensure that there is a clear focus and strong culture of performance monitoring on the operations of the highway network. Every service provider involved in works on the highway can contribute to the aim of the Network Management Plan.

Good communication and collaboration between relevant stakeholders and other interested parties will result in the best use being made of the existing road network for the benefit of all road users.

- To raise awareness of the Network Management Duty objectives with those responsible for the exercising of any powers to regulate activities on the road, and to ensure that this is acted upon in delivering the Network Management Duty objectives
- To ensure that all opportunities for co-ordinating activities on the highway are taken – utility works, road works, events and activities licensed under the Highways Act 1980
- To develop good working relationships with planning authorities to ensure that the Network Management Duty objectives are considered in the planning process
- To work with adjacent highway authorities to ensure consistency across organisational boundaries, and specifically with the Highways Agency to develop and agree off network diversion routes
- To involve relevant stakeholders in decision making processes

4.7.4. Risks

Much of the network management duty objectives rely on the co-operation of others not within the direct control of the LTA. Whilst all means may be used to encourage co-operation, there is a risk that it may not be forthcoming.

The Traffic Manager should be well placed to direct resources, both internally and externally to promote the Network Management Duty.

Section 4 – Performing the Network Management Duty

Key Activity/Initiatives	Deliverables	Timescale	Lead Partner
Identify all personnel whose work may have an effect on the efficient management of the network and ensure they are aware of the network management duty	Stakeholder briefing meetings	Completed March 2008	Traffic Manager/Highways Maintenance Manager Traffic Manager
Develop good working relationship with planning authority to ensure network management duty objectives are considered during development of District Plans and throughout the planning process	Liaison with Planning Officers	Established	Traffic
Work with adjacent highway authorities to ensure consistency of network hierarchies and relevant policies across organisational structure	Cross-boundary meetings	February/March 2009	Manager/Highways Maintenance Manager
Agree diversion routes with the Highways Agency for traffic diverted off the A1(M) and A66(T) trunk roads	Liaison with A-One	Established	Traffic Manager
Ensure the NMD (and the TAMP) are considered in future LTP 'focus group' meetings, so that stakeholders are involved in decision making process, where appropriate	Liaison of Transport Policy Officers		Traffic Manager

Performance Tasks		Current Performance	Target Performance	Target date
Measure	Purpose			
Traffic Manager representation at all relevant meetings/focus groups/forums	To ensure responsibilities arising in relation to the network management duty are highlighted and addressed	Established	Continued representation	March 2008
Place Survey	General Survey from random selection of 1,100 households (postal)	New for 2008	Every two years	September-December 2008
Community Survey	Face to face survey of 1,000 adults	Established	Annually	July- August 2008

4.8. Ensuring parity

Objective 7 : To ensure parity between the local highway authority and others.

Summary Table of Intervention Criteria

Criterion	Evidence	Section
a) Does the authority apply the same standards and approaches to their own activities as they do to those of others and do they provide evidence of this, particularly in relation to utilities street works and developer's works?	Utility Companies provide advance notice of all work (except emergencies). Forward Planning Information and Schemeworks notices are entered by the engineers responsible for the works. Minor works and emergencies are also recorded in the Street Works Register.	4.8.1
b) Do they use locally determined indicators and where relevant any centrally developed key performance indicators?	DfT have established a Working Group to develop a suite of KPIs for the noticing regime.	4.8.1

Section 4 – Performing the Network Management Duty

4.8.1 Existing Situation

The Traffic Management Act 2004 gives the local authorities additional powers, over and above existing legislation, to manage all activities undertaken on the highway, especially in the timing of works on specific roads and routes, these powers are to be introduced and used equally to ensure an unbiased approach between internal (local authority) and external parties.

Local street authorities have, for a long time, criticised utility companies on their performance when undertaking street works, both in terms of the accuracy of and compliance with information supplied on notifications. However, to date it has not been possible to undertake a comparison of the performance of highway authorities when undertaking road works as the level of information available on the street works registers, in respect to those road works, is significantly less.

The Department for Transport (DfT) have established a working group, chaired by Halcrow, and consisting of street authority and utility representatives to develop a suite of KPIs for the noticing regime. The North East region is represented on this group by Northumberland County Council and they provide feedback to the NETMG

The KPIs should encourage equality in managing all works that are undertaken on the network and foster a culture of continual improvement for all works promoters. In addition, the KPIs will benefit local traffic authorities internally in respect to demonstrating how successfully they are dealing with part of the network management duty.

4.8.2 Issues

In order for the KPIs to be meaningful in creating a level playing field authorities must register the same level of information in respect to the local authority's road works as utility companies include on notices for street works.

The current level of information supplied by local authorities varies substantially and is often very sparse. Utility companies have been well used to providing notices for their planned work. It is the aim of Darlington to achieve parity with the Utilities in this regard

4.8.3 Opportunities

There is an opportunity for local authorities to continue to influence national debate through representation on the DfT working group. They will also be given the opportunity to participate in the national trial of the KPIs in 2008/9

Local authorities should also develop improved local systems for noticing in house works put in place external reviews to assess compliance with the network management duty.

4.8.4 Risks

If it is not mandatory for local authorities to notice their works in the same way as utility companies it will be difficult to enforce notification and therefore it will be very difficult to demonstrate parity of treatment. The works however must be registered and in so doing this has the same affect as noticing. In Darlington all local authorities' schemes have been registered since April 2008.

If sufficient resources are not provided there could be difficulties experienced by some local authorities in being able to comply fully with noticing requirements for all works.

Section 4 – Performing the Network Management Duty

Key Activity/Initiatives	Deliverables	Timescale	Lead Partner
Ensure that the region continues to be represented on the Dft working group	NETMG represented by Northumberland County Council on working group	In place	Northumberland County Council's Traffic Manager on behalf of NETMG
Take part in the national trial for the proposed KPIs	Contribute to development of national level	In place	NETMG
Implement processes to ensure that our own schemes are noticed in the same way as those of utilities and other providers	Have in place systems and procedures to demonstrate parity	In place	Highways Maintenance Manager
Consider carrying out external review of procedures to assess compliance with the requirements of the Network Management Duty	Arrange for external review	February/March 2009	Highways Maintenance Manager

Performance Indicators		Current Performance	Target Performance	Target date
Measure	Purpose			
% of works with agreed extensions– by works category	To ensure street authorities give the same consideration to all works promoters in respect to extension request	tbd	tbd	tbd
% of works with unauthorised overruns - reinstatement category and works category	To identify unauthorised overruns where notified by a works promoter	tbd	tbd	tbd
% of works with an early start request agreed, by works category	To ensure street authorities give the same consideration to all works promoters in respect to respect for early start	tbd	tbd	tbd
Number of remedial works by category	To identify where works promoters correctly notify remedial works	tbd	tbd	tbd
% of notices for which an FPN could be given	To identify the frequency of potential FPNs as generated by a system report	tbd	tbd	tbd

5. Performance and Review

5.1. Introduction

It is essential that the initiatives developed and set out in Section 4 of this plan are monitored and reviewed to ensure that the actions taken are effective in helping the authority to meet its obligations under the network management duty. This section sets out the arrangements for monitoring our performance against set performance targets and for reviewing the plan over its life.

5.2. Performance measures

The identification of key activities and initiatives has led to the development of performance indicators. These are set out in Appendix 5.

Darlington Borough Council has established its priority themes in respect to the Local Transport Plan. Section 3 of this plan identified three groups of activities that will have a significant impact on network management. Whilst this network management plan will be reviewed on annual basis, the Council has identified those measures that it believes contribute directly to network management within the scope of the Council's overall strategic goals.

Darlington Borough Council has already recognised that, with the anticipated growth of traffic over the next 10 years expected to be in the region of 30%, there will be an inevitable rise in congestion. However with a proactive network management regime and the policies and processes in place the Council believes it can mitigate this rise in congestion.

The indicators that have been identified in Appendix 5 will be used to contribute to a 'congestion matrix'. The Council believes that improvement against these targets will demonstrate that the policies and procedures the Council has adopted are improving the movement of traffic on the network and, in turn, towards mitigating the effects of traffic growth and slowing a growth in congestion.

Baseline data relating to the Network Management hierarchy, and in particular the high priority routes, will be gathered during the first year of this plan that will allow the Council to set itself challenging targets and, where

necessary, the development of new local indicators that are relevant to our aims.

The NI 167 "Congestion" indicator supersedes the existing LTP7 indicator. It is reliant on journey time data that is not currently available to the Council. The data should be provided by the DfT from information collected by tracking information of vehicles fitted with suitable equipment. There are fears that there will be little information available for Darlington and the results will be influenced by the type of vehicle monitored (no buses will be tracked). The use of this indicator must be treated with a degree of caution until sufficient reliable data is available.

The North of England Traffic Managers group will monitor the effects of the duty on a regional basis and will cooperate in the interests of disseminating best practice with a view to establishing a culture of continual improvement.

The group will work together in developing the management of the regions network. Whilst all council's have their own priorities, the culture of collaboration that exists between the North of England highway authorities means that the sharing of best practice will enable the councils to learn from others experience, benchmark their performances and ensure, as far as is reasonably practicable, that continual improvement occurs across the region.

It will also make efforts to disseminate their experience outside the region in order that best practice can be shared across the country and lessons learned from other regions can be embraced within the continual improvement culture developed in the North of England.

5.2 Performance Review

The Council will monitor the effectiveness of its actions in the performance of the network management duty and review the effectiveness of its arrangements for network management and take action as follows.

5.2.1 Monitoring

The Traffic Manager will continuously monitor the effectiveness of the organisation and its decision-making processes and in the implementation of its decisions in delivering the requirements and objectives of the network management duty. Where issues arise, the Traffic Manager will make an assessment to determine how the organisation or its decision-making processes could be more effective. The Traffic Manager will compile a report and make recommendations for change to the Environment Management Team, and implement these as required.

The Traffic Manager will keep a record of progress on all such issues, identifying what issues have arisen, where recommendations for change have been made and what actions have been taken and what progress has been made in implementing the changes required.

5.2.2 Review

In his Annual Report the Traffic Manager will review the overall effectiveness of the arrangements in place for the delivery of the network management duty. The report will include a summary of issues that have arisen during the course of the year, reviewing the actions that have been taken and how the delivery of the network management duty has been improved as a result.

5.3 Plan Review

The Local Transport Plan, or any system that may subsequently replace it, will be used to monitor the performance of LTAs in respect of network management. Accordingly, an interim review of the plan will be carried out bi-annually, as part of the LTP delivery report, to enable the authority to demonstrate the effectiveness of its arrangements and compliance with the duty.

Notwithstanding this it is proposed that the Network Management Plan will be reviewed on an annual basis. This will be in the form of an annual report published in December. The report will provide an update on performance tasks outlined in section 4 of the Plan. It will also provide data for the performance indicators and comments on the results. Cabinet will approve the report before being made public.

