
IMPLEMENTING THE THIRD LOCAL TRANSPORT PLAN

Responsible Cabinet Member – Councillor David Lyonette, Transport Portfolio

Responsible Director – Richard Alty, Director of Place

SUMMARY REPORT

Purpose of the Report

1. To agree the Implementation Plan for the delivery of capital investment through the Third Local Transport Plan, to agree the Council’s continued participation in the Tees Valley Bus Network Initiative and to agree that a bid is made to the Local Sustainable Transport Fund.

Summary

2. Darlington’s Third Local Transport Plan (3LTP), sets out a transport strategy for the next 15 years (2011-2026) to support the delivery of “One Darlington: Perfectly Placed”, Darlington’s Community Strategy¹. The 3LTP will be delivered through a series of rolling implementation plans; the first one being for the period 2011/12 to 2014/15, being based on the planning horizons of Government funding. These plans will be live documents and will be constantly monitored through the Council’s programme control system, to ensure the best possible fit with the outcomes of the 3LTP and value for money.
3. In delivering these outcomes through the first implementation plan, it is recommended that the priorities for spending are based on principles derived from feedback from local people; namely maintaining, managing and improving in sequential importance. These priorities are in response to a much reduced level of Government funding, when compared to that received in the Second Local Transport Plan (2LTP). The scope of the 3LTP covers all transport provision within the Borough; including revenue funded Council functions and services provided by other organisations. The proposed implementation plan therefore focuses over 70% of the LTP allocation on maintenance of the network and the remainder on network management and improvement schemes.
4. It is proposed that this Council submits a bid to the new Local Sustainable Transport Fund (LSTF) focusing on achieving the outcomes of supporting the development of a sustainable economy, reducing carbon emissions and improving personal health through the continuation of the pioneering “Local Motion” project, but this time across the whole Borough rather than just the town. It is also proposed to focus on trips into and out of the Borough to County Durham in partnership with Durham County Council. The bid would be largely revenue based, so allowing the Council to maximise the potential of its existing and

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

planned capital investment in the transport system of the Borough.

5. Members of Cabinet agreed in November 2010 to consider the Council's continued participation in the Tees Valley Bus Network Initiative (TVBNI) project at this meeting, following the finalisation of the detail supporting the governance and finance of the project. These details have now largely been resolved, but a level of risk remains as set out in this report; not least since the grant funding from the Department for Transport will be confirmed annually. It is thus recommended that Members approve the Council's participation in year 2 of the project at this point in time, and that the risk of having to fund up to £1.3m from the Local Transport Plan is taken, given the unlikely event that grant funding is not made available in year 3.
6. The Government has also announced further funding for winter maintenance over and above the LTP allocation and this is estimated to be in the region of £148,000 for road repairs.

Recommendation

7. It is recommended that :-
 - (a) Members agree to release the funding for the Implementation Plan as shown in Annex 1 of **Appendix 1** to this report.
 - (b) Members agree to the Council's continued participation in the Tees Valley Bus Network Improvement project and release the associated Department for Transport (DfT) grant funding of £2,380k for year 2 of the project, subject to revised grant conditions being accepted.
 - (c) Members agree to make a bid for funding to the Local Sustainable Transport Fund as set out in this report.
 - (d) Members agree to accept the additional winter maintenance funds on the terms of conditions set out in paragraph 17 of the main report.

Reasons

8. The recommendations are supported by the following reasons :-
 - (a) To deliver schemes in the first four years of the Third Local Transport Plan.
 - (b) To deliver improvements for bus travel, using grant funding from the Department for Transport, subject to confirmation of its availability and the acceptance of revised grant conditions.
 - (c) To seek additional funding to maximise the benefits of transport investment across the Borough, through Local Motion style activity. The bid will use existing committed funding from the MTFP and additional funding from third parties.
 - (d) To facilitate the necessary repair of the highway network following the severe winter.

Richard Alty
Director of Place

Background Papers

Draft Third Local Transport Plan

Simon Houldsworth & Sue Dobson: Extension 2701 & 2277

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

MAIN REPORT

Information and Analysis

The Third Local Transport Plan

9. Darlington's Third Local Transport Plan (3LTP), sets out a transport strategy for the next 15 years (2011-2026) to support the delivery of "One Darlington: Perfectly Placed", Darlington's Community Strategy. The Plan integrates with the Local Development Framework Core Strategy, providing the spatial expression of the Sustainable Community Strategy.
10. The 3LTP will be delivered through a series of implementation plans; the first one being for the period 2011/12 to 2014/15, being based on the planning horizons of Government funding. These plans will be live documents and will be constantly monitored through the Council's programme control system, to ensure the best possible fit with the outcomes of the 3LTP and value for money.
11. The key outcomes of the 3LTP are that:
 - (a) Everybody is able to enjoy the Borough's prosperity by providing and maintaining a reliable, predictable, efficient and affordable transport network,
 - (b) Everyone can play their part in reducing the impact of transport on the environment and its contribution to climate change,
 - (c) People live long, healthy and active lives, travelling safely and making active travel choices,
 - (d) Everyone in Darlington can maximise their life chances by being able to access services, activities and facilities; and
 - (e) People in Darlington enjoy a positive journey experience on an attractive, clean, green and sustainable transport system.
12. In delivering these outcomes through the first Implementation Plan, it is recommended that the priorities for spending are based on principles derived from feedback from local people; namely maintaining, managing and improving in sequential importance. These priorities are in response to a much reduced level of Government funding, when compared to that received in the Second Local Transport Plan (2LTP). The scope of the 3LTP covers all transport provision within the Borough; including revenue funded Council functions and services provided by other organisations.
13. The first priority MAINTAIN involves the use of LTP funding for structural maintenance, including roads, footways, bridges and street lighting, thus contributing towards improving travel safety, supporting economic activity, tackling congestion and carbon emissions. This ensures that the existing transport asset is maintained to ensure that it is fit for purpose. The second priority MANAGE, concerns using all the transport system (footways, cycle ways, roads & rail) more effectively and efficiently to support the economy, reduce carbon emissions and improve individual health outcomes. The third priority, should there be any funding, is IMPROVE which covers investment in new facilities for all transport users. In the financial year 2011/12 it is proposed to spend £1.640m on footway maintenance, carriageway maintenance, cycle route maintenance, bridge maintenance and street lighting column replacement. This means 70.6% of Darlington's total LTP allocation of £2.323m will be used on maintenance work in accordance with the agreed priorities. The remaining

amount of £0.683m is proposed to be spent on managing and improving the existing network.

Government Funding over the next four years

14. In the Comprehensive Spending Review (CSR) of December 2010, the Government announced a reduction in the number of funding grant streams for transport from 26 to 4, with most funding to the Council being provided through the grant settlement. This included the grants for concessionary fares, rural bus subsidy and road safety. The four remaining transport grant streams allocated by the Department for Transport (DfT) direct to transport authorities are:
 - (a) The Local Sustainable Transport Fund (LSTF). This is a £560m fund over 4 years to support packages of interventions that support economic growth and reduce carbon emissions. Packages can also deliver other benefits such as cleaner environments, improved air quality, enhanced safety and reduced traffic congestion. There will be a competitive bidding process with money available for capital and revenue schemes. Bids of £5m or less need to be submitted by 18 April 2011, with funding awarded in June 2011. The DfT will evaluate how the bid proposals enhance investment already being carried out or planned and, as detailed in this report, members are asked to support a bid for “Local Motion” style actions to support the delivery of the 3LTP and the Tees Valley Bus Network Initiative (TVBNI) in Darlington. The fund also includes funding for Bikeability cycle training and Darlington is in discussions with DfT to secure funding to enable this service to continue in Darlington.
 - (b) Major schemes. A new national process will apply, replacing the previous Regional Funding Allocation which had a regional decision making component. The separate Regional Growth Fund will provide an additional avenue for major transport schemes that unlock sustainable economic growth. In Darlington, the TVBNI will continue to be funded by the Government, subject to a higher local contribution being found by the promoters of the scheme, i.e. participating local highway authorities. A decision to participate in years 2 to 5 of TVBNI is set out later in this report.
 - (c) The 3LTP Maintenance Block covering costs associated with the inspection and replacement or repair of the physical transport network, including roads, footpaths, bridges, cycle paths and street lights. This is a formula based grant.
 - (d) The 3LTP Integrated Transport Block covering costs associated with managing the effectiveness and efficiency of the existing transport infrastructure and improving the network by improving the quality of journeys as well as adding new infrastructure to extend the transport system.
15. **Table 1** sets out the confirmed and indicative funding levels by Government towards the costs of Darlington’s 3LTP over the next four years.

Table 1 Confirmed & indicative Local Transport Plan funding

Year	Highways Maintenance	Integrated Transport Block	Integrated Transport Block allocated to TVBNI	Balance of Integrated Transport Block
2011/12	£1.640m	£0.683m	£0.166m	£0.517m
2012/13	£1.658m	£0.729m	£0.175m	£0.554m
2013/14*	£1.590m	£0.729m	£0.139m	£0.590m
2014/15*	£1.404m	£1.025m	£0.130m	£0.895m

*Funding levels for 2013/14 and 2014/15 are indicative and are subject to change.

16. **Figures 1 to 3** set out the funding levels for the first four years of the 3LTP in the context of previously received funding for the 2LTP. The allocation for maintenance slightly increases in the period up to April 2014 (Figure 1), reflecting Government’s desire to prioritise maintenance, but then declines since Government expect local authorities to seek cost efficiencies to lower spend, such as this Council’s current participation in a framework contract for the supply of specialist materials. However this funding also needs to support a large scale replacement programme of street lights over 40 years old and an ongoing programme of structural maintenance on bridges and other assets. The figures show that funding levels for the integrated transport block have been reduced most (55.5%) by the CSR process (Figure 2). This means that there will be significant budget pressures in the first three years of the 3LTP, especially as the Council’s future contributions towards the cost of TVBNI schemes need to be taken from this funding source (Figure 3) reducing the amount of discretionary spend.

Figure 1

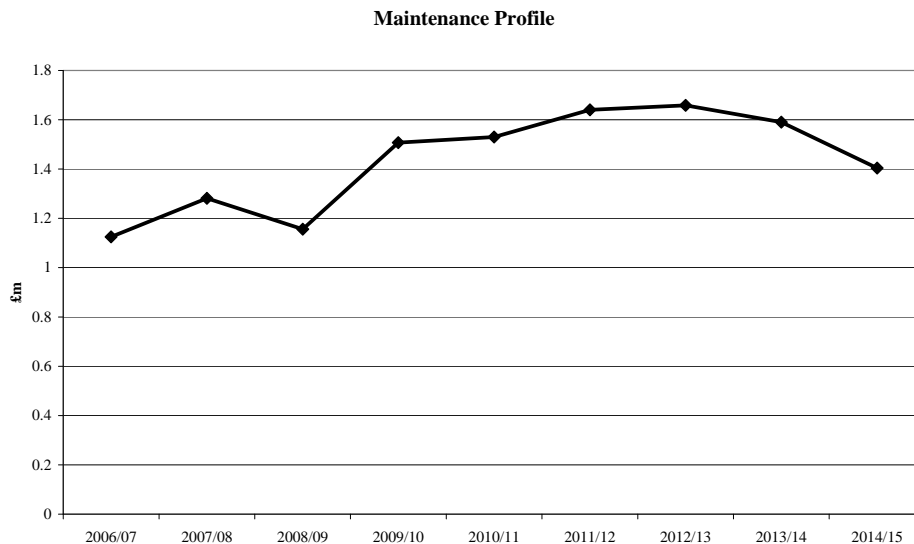


Figure 2

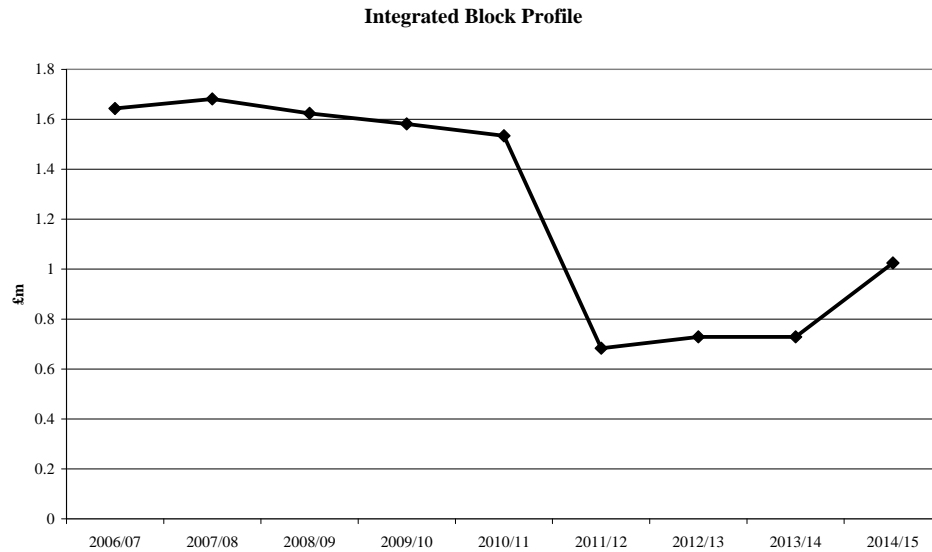
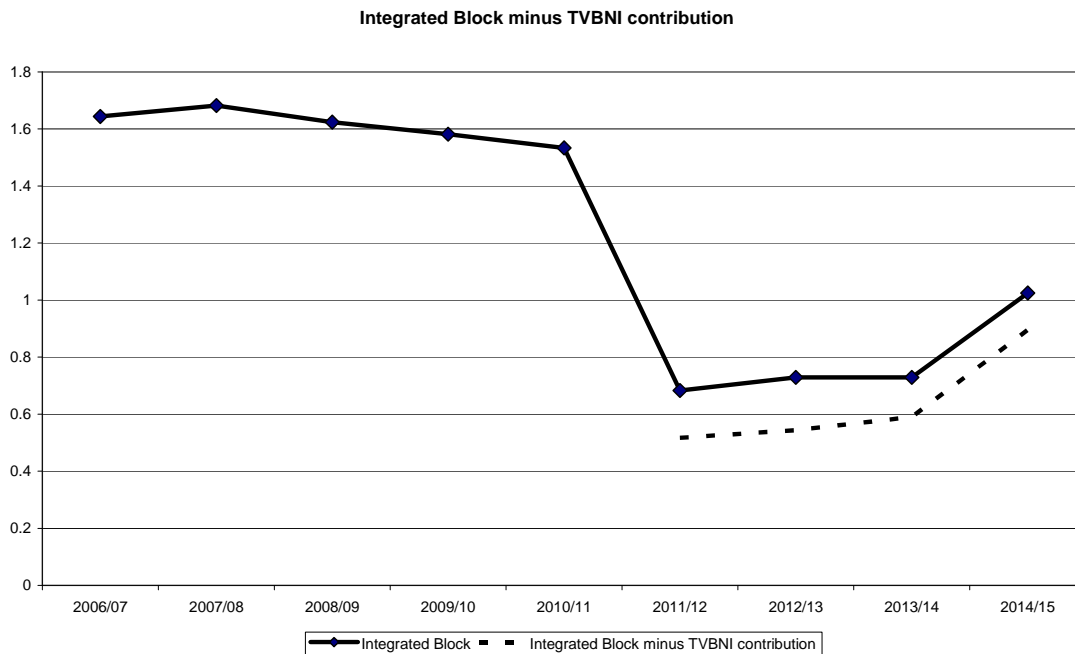


Figure 3



Winter Maintenance

17. The Government has written to all Highway Authorities on the 23rd February 2011 announcing a further allocation of £100m nationally for winter maintenance as a result of the abnormal damage caused to highways by the severe weather this winter. The Met Office has stated that December 2010 was the coldest winter for 100 years. The government propose to distribute the funds based on existing capital highways maintenance formula that takes into account road length and condition. It is therefore anticipated that this will be in the region of £148,000 for Darlington. The government has requested confirmation from S151 Officers by the 16th March 2011 that Highway Authorities confirm that they would accept such funds on conditions that the funds will only be used for additional road

maintenance and that there is a commitment to publishing a note on the Council's website by the 30th September 2011, copied to the DfT setting out how the extra funding had been spent.

18. This additional allocation does not affect the overall budget as this funding is specifically ring fenced for winter maintenance and it is recommended to accept the additional funds on the conditions stated above.

The Implementation Plan for 2011/12 to 2014/15

19. **Appendix 1** to this report sets out the proposed Implementation Plan for the first four years of the 3LTP, which is the current period of the Government's planned and indicative funding for Transport. A multi criteria appraisal has been applied to ensure that the programme delivers against the priorities, is affordable and deliverable, offers value for money and contributes to reducing carbon emissions.
20. The programme includes an extensive maintenance programme, including carriageway and footway schemes identified through condition data surveys and structural maintenance of a number of road bridges. In addition a long term programme to replace street lights that are over 40 years old will start, following further analysis to identify priority locations and routes.
21. A number of schemes to improve bus travel in the Borough, and which form part of the local contribution to the TVBNI scheme, are also identified in the programme. In 2011/12 this includes the start of work on a major junction improvement at North Road/Whessoe Road and new traffic signals at Yarm Road/Geneva Road junction that will improve the management of traffic flow at this busy junction. The Traffic Manager will also identify other minor schemes to improve the efficiency of the highway network.
22. A number of improvement schemes have been identified, including Safer Routes to School and 20mph zones; improvements to town centre car parks; dropped kerbs to improve pedestrian routes for disabled people; and the installation of electric charging points as part of a North East project. Currently no funding is allocated to casualty reduction schemes as following analysis of accident data from the Police, no schemes are required. However data will be regularly analysed and if a local safety scheme is required to maintain the good road safety record in Darlington, it is proposed that programme budgets will be altered using the delegated power to the Director of Place in consultation with the Cabinet Portfolio Holder.
23. The year 1 programme also includes the completion of the North Road Cycle Route between John Street and Albert Road through the £5 note bridge. Negotiations are ongoing with the respective landowners seeking a pedestrian and cycle route along the western bank of the River Skerne at this point. Planning permission has been secured (3 December 2010), and the necessary Scheduled Monument Consent obtained (2 September 2010). The proposed budget figure is £220k, which includes the legal process, acquisition and construction costs. The scheme has been designed taking into account the results of the environmental assessments, in particular the potential impact on wildlife. A Compulsory Purchase Order was submitted in draft to Government Office North East on 24 November 2010 and comments from them are awaited.
24. The Implementation Plan would be a live document, constantly under review through the Council's Programme Control process to ensure that work carried out best meets with the

outcomes of the 3LTP and demonstrates value for money. Day to day governance of this process is vested with the Assistant Director – Policy & Regeneration, with decisions about schemes being made either through the delegated power to the Director of Place, or by subsequent decisions of Cabinet depending on the implications. It is proposed that Cabinet will agree the current Implementation Plan annually, as part of the process of setting the Medium Term Financial Plan (MTFP).

25. It is expected that the funding shown in the Implementation Plan will be used to lever in additional resources, both financial and in kind, from other funding sources. One existing example of this is the use of Integrated Block funding of approximately £610,000 to secure £9.631m of major scheme grant towards schemes in TVBNI. Another existing example is the use of 3LTP funds to claim up to 44% of eligible scheme costs back from the European Commission until December 2011 under the BAPTS². Programme. In the immediate future, it is recommended that members approve the submission of a bid to the LSTF programme, using funding from the 3LTP and other sources as co-funding.

The Local Sustainable Transport Fund

26. The Government announced in September 2010 that it would set up a sustainable transport fund to promote strong local economies and tackle climate change. In this, Government are looking for highway authorities to submit bids on behalf of their local community, which build on the pioneering work carried out by this Council and others in influencing travel behaviour. The fund has a headline value of £560m over four years, with £350m of this being for revenue funded actions. Councils can only make one bid for funding, with larger bids of over £5m receiving more scrutiny than smaller ones, although additional joint bids may be accepted. There will be two funding rounds, with the first round dealing with bids, or parts of bids, of up to £5m over four years.
27. Funding will be top sliced from the Fund to allow the continuation of Bikeability cycle training. Darlington has been allocated funding worth £40,000 in 2011/12, but is unable to draw down the grant due to the grant condition about more training places being provided. This is because the Council already offers training to all eligible pupils. Discussions with the DfT about the detailed grant conditions are currently ongoing.
28. Guidance for the application process was issued in January 2011. The bid deadline for round 1 is 18 April 2011. It is proposed that Darlington submit a bid focusing on achieving the outcomes of supporting the development of a sustainable economy, reducing carbon emissions and improving personal health through the continuation of “Local Motion” style activities, but this time across the whole Borough rather than just the town. The bid would further be made in conjunction with a separate bid by Durham County Council that covers the south west of their area that is most connected to Darlington by reason of employment, shopping and other facilities. Making the transport patterns between the two adjacent areas more sustainable is considered beneficial for both areas, since it covers travel in both directions. In Darlington’s case it should help mitigate traffic congestion on local roads, help Darlington’s economy grow sustainably and give local people access to employment opportunities in County Durham without having to use a car.
29. The bid draft document will be prepared by early April. Following the consultation and Disability Impact Assessment work undertaken as part of the preparation of the 3LTP, the

² Boosting Advanced Public Transport Systems; Interreg IVB; 2008-December 2011.

bid will seek to improve travel options for disabled people.

Tees Valley Bus Network Improvement

30. At their meeting on 2 November 2010, Members agreed to make the decision about accepting the Government grant for the TVBNI project in years 2 to 5 at this Cabinet meeting. This decision was made so that more clarity could be obtained about the wider financial context, the grant conditions and supporting legal documents. It is now possible to be more certain about these issues as follows:
 - (a) The Comprehensive Spending Review has been published and the next four years settlement for the Local Transport Plan is known, either as confirmed or indicative funding. Thus, as **Appendix 1** sets out, members can see how the local contribution to TVBNI can be made.
 - (b) The grant conditions as amended by the partner Councils are based around an annual release by Government of the grant previously allocated. It is understood that the DfT will accept the revised grant conditions at the same time as the Council's formal acceptance of the grant offer. The annual release of the grant by the DfT, means that there is a degree of uncertainty that the grant is either altered or withdrawn, leaving the partner Councils with the risk of having to complete any unfinished work. Thus, it is recommended that members agree to accept the grant for year 2 only at this point in time, subject to the revised grant conditions being met. However, this recommendation to manage the risk to the whole programme from the DfT grant process, does create uncertainty in the delivery of the year 2 scheme at North & Whessoe Roads. This is because this scheme takes 2 years to deliver, being scheduled for implementation over years 2 & 3. Thus, the scheme would require funding of up to £1.3m from the LTP in the unlikely event that the DfT do not offer the year 3 funding as allocated. The consequential impact on the LTP programme would be catastrophic in that year and severe in subsequent years. The Council's programme management system will be used to ensure that funding is available from the 3LTP to complete the North Road scheme should the need arise.
 - (c) Negotiations concerning the supporting legal documents defining the relationships between the partners in the project are ongoing under delegated powers by the (now) Directors of Place and Resources.
31. The decision to proceed would mean that substantive work can start on year 2 schemes as shown in **Appendix 1, Annex 1**, including a start on the new junction at North Road & Whessoe Road, upgraded traffic signals at Geneva Road & Yarm Road and new bus stops and bus friendly cushions along Clifton Road.
32. Papers on the proposed complementary measures (including bus stop improvements), Smarter Choices programme and Communications Strategy are to be taken to the next TVBNI Project Board meeting for discussion and agreement. The funding for these measures is within the DfT major scheme funding and requires no local contribution over and above that already spent or identified in this report (**Appendix 1 – Annexes 1-4**).

BAPTS programme

33. The BAPTS programme continues until December 2011 and will fund a further Medal Motion campaign in schools in May, entitled 'Max and Sam's Gold Rush'. This has been a highly successful programme to increase sustainable travel to schools. In addition an Individualised Travel Marketing (ITM) programme will be implemented in the Haughton wards to advise residents of their travel choices and 'nudge' them in the direction of choosing to use sustainable travel modes for some of their journeys. The Haughton wards were chosen for the trial, based on the area having a good transport network for all modes – walk, cycle, bus (and train) – and also for having had a high participation rate in the first ITM project with consequent changes in travel behaviour.

HIEC North East funding

34. Health Innovation Education Cluster North East issued a funding call for Public Health and Social Care in January 2011. A bid has been submitted for £35k of revenue funding to extend the sustainable travel work in schools set out above through the period October 2011 – June 2012. This will extend the programme to cover 6 weeks each time, and will focus on encouraging pupils and their families to participate in '60 active minutes' per day, including the journey to school. If successful, the programme could be continued beyond summer 2012 through the LSTF bid.

Outcome of Consultation

35. A series of consultation activities were held between November 2009 and December 2010 on the outcomes of the 3LTP. It included workshops arranged for specific groups, namely Darlington Partnership theme groups, young people, transport stakeholders, older people, businesses, disabled people and people living in rural areas. The draft Plan was sent to Statutory stakeholders including the Highways Agency, rail operators, bus companies as well as other interested stakeholders such as neighbouring local authorities, Police, JobCentre Plus, NHS County Durham, and groups representing disabled people, cyclists, freight, coaches and older people. The Economy and Environment Scrutiny Committee were involved in the development of the Plan.
36. The Implementation Plan takes into account the emphasis placed by consultees on how best to achieve the desired outcomes. The MAINTAIN, MANAGE & IMPROVE priority trio was widely accepted as a logical response to current funding levels.
37. An Equalities Impact Assessment process has been carried out in the development of the 3LTP. The Impact Assessment Steering Group felt that 3LTP did not commit strongly enough to improving transport and travel for disabled people. As agreed this Implementation Plan has been discussed with the Group. The following points were highlighted to the Group:
 - (a) A number of schemes starting in 2011/12 have direct benefits to disabled people:
 - (i) The replacement of Hutton Avenue footbridge by a much wider bridge suitable for wheelchairs and mobility scooters;
 - (ii) Improvements to car parks, including the provision of accessible parking bays;
 - (iii) A programme of dropped kerbs on routes to be agreed in consultation with Darlington Association on Disability (DAD);

- (iv) Bus boarders with raised kerbs and bus friendly cushions on Clifton Road;
 - (v) Conversion of hail and ride bus services to bus stops, with raised kerbs, in Branksome;
 - (vi) John Street Cycle route providing a lit, accessible route for cyclists and pedestrians from John Street to Albert Road, and beyond to North Road and Haughton Road.
- (b) All Integrated Transport schemes will continue to be discussed with DAD as part of the consultation process;
- (c) A design and implementation code for highway maintenance schemes will also be discussed with DAD as part of the consultation process;
- (d) An EQIA/DEIA will be carried out on the Network Management Plan as part of the annual review process by the Traffic Manager;
- (e) An EQIA/DEIA will be carried out on the Transport Asset Management Plan before it is considered by Cabinet;
- (f) Voluntary and Community organisations, through Evolution, will be encouraged to be involved in the LSTF bid and the implementation of any successful proposals.