
OVERVIEW OF TRANSPORT PORTFOLIO

Purpose of Report

1. Since the last meeting of Council, the following are the main areas of work that have been undertaken under the Transport Portfolio.

Devolution of Local Major Transport Funding

2. We have given approval for Tees Valley Unlimited (TVU) to assume the role of Tees Valley Local Transport Body with the responsibility for decision-making for Major Transport Scheme funding coming from the Department for Transport.
3. In early 2012, the Department for Transport (DfT) issued a consultation on proposals to devolve Local Major Transport Funding to LEPs. This principle was welcomed in the Tees Valley with their consultation response expressing a desire for funding to be devolved directly to TVU.
4. We have also agreed that Stockton Borough Council continue their role as accountable body for Tees Valley Local Transport Board and that only the local authority Leaders and Mayors will be eligible to take funding decisions at the Local Transport Board.
5. Schemes have been identified by the five local authorities and these have been ranked and endorsed by the Leadership Board for prioritisation and will be developed into full approved business cases before a final decision is made upon which schemes to fund in 2015. The detail of the Local Majors Devolution funding was reported to Cabinet on 1 July 2013. The Government has recently reduced the indicative amount to be devolved.

Draft Car Parking Strategy

6. Cabinet Members have approved the draft Car Parking Strategy for 2013-2026 as a basis for public consultation.
7. An updated parking strategy is needed to replace the strategy produced in 2009 and to reflect the local, national and global changes affecting parking since the 2009 strategy was published.
8. The draft parking strategy will highlight the issues and challenges we face and sets out our ambitions and objectives for parking to 2026 and the strategy is supported by an Action Plan which explains how the actions will be delivered and progress measured.

A67 Carlbury Landslip

9. The A67 was reopened under two way lights on 16 July in light of the initial findings of a geotechnical consultant. Bus services recommenced on 28 July and the temporary taxi bus service has now been suspended.
10. The Council have worked with Northumbrian Water Limited (NWL) to better understand the extent of the landslip and the risk it poses to both the road and the NWL water mains. A report from the geotechnical consultant will outline design options for the solution to the landslip including outline costs.
11. Two roads that were used as an informal diversion route are programmed to be repaired. Durham Lane was repaired at the start of August. Sections of Ulnaby Lane were reconstructed between 12 August and 23 August and a section of this road. The works have been arranged for this time of the year to minimise disruption to the school in High Coniscliffe.

Network Management

12. The replacement of the railway bridge at Dinsdale Station in Middleton St George by Network Rail is underway. This work is part of a Network Rail project to enable larger freight containers to be transported by rail from Teesport to the rest of the UK. In order to accommodate the work the road will be closed to traffic for 4 months (27 September 2013 – 25 January 2014). Network Rail has worked with the Council, Parish Council, primary school and local residents to plan the work and to minimise disruption as much as possible. A signed temporary diversion route for traffic has been agreed and a temporary footbridge will be installed so that pedestrians can get from one side of the village to the other. The Council has made alternative arrangements for travel to school and has worked with Arriva and Network Rail to arrange a minibus service to connect with a re-timetabled Bus Service 12/12a. Rail services will operate as normal apart from 25-29 October when a bus replacement service will operate.

Local Transport Plan schemes

13. The following schemes are being delivered:
 - (a) **Car Park Maintenance Programme** – A number of town centre car parks are being resurfaced in September/October 2013. The first car park to be resurfaced will be Archer Street as the surfacing is in poor condition. The busier Commercial Street East, Kendrew Street East and Kendrew Street West car parks will then follow. The works will be carried out in a staged approach so only one car park is closed at any one time. Motorists will be directed to Archer Street when these car parks are closed for resurfacing. Advance notices of the exact dates of closures will be placed in the car parks when finalised.

The markings within the car parks will be redesigned to improve the quality of the car park design and the works are being funded from the Local Transport Plan. The work does coincide with the closure of the Town Hall car park to

facilitate the construction of the Department for Education buildings but these closures are being coordinated to ensure there are alternative spaces available in adjacent car parks to those being closed. Once completed the works will improve the quality of parking available to visitors to Darlington. This is the start of a programme of parking improvements in Darlington to improve the quality and availability of parking for visitors. Further updates will be provided in future reports.

- (b) **West Park Academy Safe Route to School** – Work has commenced to provide a new access into the rear of the school to enable children from West Park and Cockerton to walk to school. The works incorporate the upgrade of an existing bridleway and the creation of a new path up to the back of the school playing field with associated gate to link to an existing internal path.
- (c) **St. Aiden's Cycle Stand** – This was granted planning permission in August 2013 and the school are arranging for a specialist supplier to install a large shelter on a concrete base. The Council contributed £5,000 towards the costs from the Local Transport Plan with the school funding the remaining £13,000.
- (d) **Dropped kerbs** – A number of dropped kerbs are being installed on North Road, Bates Avenue, Brinkburn Road and Brinkburn Avenue to enable passengers to access bus services on those roads. This is funded through the Tees Valley Bus Network Improvement (TVBNI) project.

Highway Maintenance Schemes

14. Recently Completed Schemes:

- (a) 2013 Annual Carriageway Micro Asphaltting Programme
- (b) A67 Low Goosepool – carriageway resurfacing
- (c) C34a Lime Lane – carriageway deep patching

15. Ongoing Schemes:

- (a) Nunnery Lane – footway refurbishment
- (b) 2013 Annual Surfacing Dressing Programme
- (c) B6279 Staindrop Road – carriageway resurfacing
- (d) A167 North Road – carriageway resurfacing
- (e) A68 Woodlands Road – carriageway deep patching and resurfacing
- (f) A1150 Whinfield Road – carriageway resurfacing
- (g) A1150 Salters Lane North – carriageway patching

16. Schemes Due to Commence:

- (a) C55 John Street – carriageway resurfacing
- (b) A67 Carmel Road South – carriageway retexturing
- (c) B6280 Carmel Road North – carriageway patching
- (d) Hewitson Road South – carriageway reconstruction and surfacing
- (e) A68 Burtree – carriageway resurfacing

Local Motion (Local Sustainable Transport Fund)

Central Park Cycleway/Footway Link

17. The scheme to provide a footway/cycleway linking Haughton Road via Teesside University and Darlington College to Yarm Road and Darlington Station is now complete and has been formally opened. A signing scheme linking Central Park to Bank Top station and the town centre has been implemented.

MEGA Motion

18. The 2012/13 MEGA Motion campaign came to an end at the end of the summer term with Rydal Academy coming out on top as the best performing school of the year. Across Darlington over 400 pupils travelled sustainably for 30 consecutive Fridays. For this achievement pupils were given a MEGA Motion board game and a voucher for sport session at the Dolphin Centre. A teaser campaign for the 2013/14 programme was launched at the start of the school term and the new programme will be launched on 1st October.

MEGA Summer Festival

19. A two day summer festival was held on 12 August and 13 August in Darlington Town Centre. The Festival focussed on physical activity and young people and provided the opportunity to try out a number of different activities for free whilst also finding out about transport options in Darlington. There was also an eco-driving simulator for drivers to assess how they could save money by driving in a different way

Public Transport

20. The service 20 or 'Our Bus', as it will be known, commenced on 2 September. Operated by Scarlet Band, this rural service will serve Darlington Town Centre - Sadberge/Neasham and will provide a much needed service for rurally isolated areas. The service will travel via Whinfield to Sadberge and via Hurworth to Neasham and operate three times a day on a Monday, Wednesday and Friday. The service is the result of a joint venture between Scarlet Band, eVOLution and Darlington Council and has been funded by the Department for Transport's Local Sustainable Transport Fund and Community Transport Grant.

Individualised Travel Marketing

21. In August, a team of eight Travel Advisors began visiting almost 11,000 households across the Borough. The travel advisors provide residents with a range of free information, advice and tips to help save money, get healthier and reduce their impact when making every day journeys. Residents will also have the opportunity to share any comments or concerns they have about travel and transport in their local area and these will be fed back to the relevant organisations.

22. The travel advice project was launched in Darlington in 2012 through funding from the Department for Transport via the Local Sustainable Transport Fund. In the first year over 13,500 households were visited across the Northgate, Pierremont, Mowden, Cockerton East and West, Faverdale, Heighington and Coniscliffe Wards.

The following wards will be visited this year:

Lingfield	3-17 August
Central	20 August-5 September
Sadberge and Whessoe	6-13 September
North Road	14 September-9 October
Harrowgate Hill	10-31 October

The project will continue throughout 2014 and almost 16,000 households will be visited across the Hummersknott, College, Park West and East, Bank Top, Lascelles, Eastbourne and Hurworth Wards.

Walking Audit Sessions

23. Groundwork North East will continue to work on behalf of Local Motion to carry out Community Audits across the Borough. The audits involve reviewing the physical environment, establishing barriers to walking, investigating residents' behaviours and attitudes to walking, and looking for ways to encourage people to walk more often. Groundwork will carry out feedback sessions in the local community and lead walk arounds, taster activities and focus groups in order to capture the views of as many residents as possible. Audits began in August and will continue to October in Lingfield, Central, Sadberge and Whessoe, North Road and Harrowgate Hill Wards.

Public Transport (TVBNI)

24. The TVBNI funded direct marketing campaign has started, the first pilot phase is currently underway in the Roseworth area of Stockton; if it is deemed to be a success, the campaign will be rolled out to Darlington and the rest of the Tees Valley. The campaign will target households in Darlington who do not currently use the bus, but whose demography suggests they may be persuaded to try the bus for some journeys. The project is being jointly funded by TVBNI and the region's three major bus operators; Arriva, Stagecoach and Go North East. Households will be sent a free day ticket to try on local services. Households who redeem the day ticket will receive a follow up phone call asking them if they would like a free weekly ticket. The aim of the campaign is to attract new users onto the bus network.
25. The TVBNI funded Great Days Out campaign was run throughout the school summer holiday period. This campaign was run jointly with Real Radio and offered discounts to people who travelled to attractions on public transport. The campaign signed up a range of regional attractions including large organisations like Lightwater Valley and also smaller local attractions such as the Head of Steam, Billingham Forum and Splash!.

26. The campaign also provided information on free activities that were easily accessible by public transport; including Darlington by the Sea and the Darlington Spectacular. In addition to offering discounts, the website also promotes the range of discounted family tickets that were available for use on public transport. The aim of the campaign was to encourage families to use public transport for days out.
27. A campaign is also being targeted at 16-18 year old. The campaign is encouraging this age group to use the bus for travel to/from further education establishments. The campaign ran before and during the Summer holidays and will continue afterwards. Extensive research was carried out with this age group before the campaign was launched. Feedback from the user group suggested they did not like to feel 'patronised' by campaigns and that messages that pitched the bus as a cheaper alternative to the car were not likely to impact on their travel behaviour. Instead they preferred messages that told them where to find information about services and discounted fare products. This campaign and research has been carried out working with local colleges, including Carmel RC College, Darlington College and QE College. The aim of the campaign is to encourage this age group to continue using public transport and delay the point at which they stop using public transport regularly.

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Transport Portfolio