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## OVERVIEW OF TRANSPORT PORTFOLIO

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### 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.

### Highway & Bridge Design Schemes

2. **Middleton One Row Retaining Wall** – the site investigation is now complete with works programmed to commence during the summer.
3. **Haughton Road Corridor Works** – works are progressing with the Salters Lane mini roundabout and the Stockton Road Toucan now in operation. The remaining works are ongoing.

### Highway Maintenance Schemes

4. Recently Completed Schemes:
  - (a) C52 Yarm Road – Bridge House to Oak Tree – carriageway patching.
  - (b) A6072 Coatsay Moor Lane – Heighington Junction to Swan House Roundabout – reconstruction and resurfacing.
  - (c) Unc Barnes Road Phase 2 – 22 - Mowden Hall Entrance and 33-65 – footway refurbishment.
  - (d) Unc Auckland Avenue Phase 3 – odd side 25-71 – footway refurbishment.
  - (e) Kielder Drive Phase 5 – footway refurbishment.
5. Ongoing Schemes:
  - (a) A67 Elm Ridge Roundabout – carriageway resurfacing.
  - (b) A67 Piercebridge to High Coniscliffe Phase 1 – carriageway resurfacing.
  - (c) Albatross Way Phase 2 – Teal Road to Heron Drive (evens side) – footway refurbishment.
6. Schemes Due to Commence:
  - (a) Prior Street – resurfacing of Stooperdale junction and Newton Lane mini roundabout.
  - (b) The Headlands Phase 3 – resurfacing of road from 35 to Hummersknott Avenue and refurbishment of both footways from Chiltern Close and Treelands to Hummersknott

Avenue.

- (c) A67 Yarm Road – Farmhouse Public House to A66 Roundabout – carriageway deep patching.
- (d) C38 Whessoe Road – Burtree Lane Junction towards town – carriageway resurfacing.

### **Traffic Management Schemes**

7. Work on the Civil Parking Enforcement (CPE) project continues. This will transfer powers to the Council to enforce a range of on-street parking and loading restrictions. The review of traffic regulation orders is nearing completion and the new orders are likely to be advertised in July 2009. Work has also commenced on the business case for the project, including looking at the IT systems needed to carry out the enforcement duties. Cabinet considered the outcome of a comprehensive consultation exercise on 2 June 2009 and resolved to progress with the application to the Department for Transport (DfT). They have, however, changed the length of time they require to consider the application effectively introducing an additional “vetting” period for applications. This unfortunately means that the implementation date may slip into the early part of 2010. A firmer date cannot be provided at this early date due to the open ended requirements for DfT to consider the application.
8. The Network Management Plan continues to be developed and publicised. A Member training event was held on 29 April 2009 and was well attended. The event afforded officers the opportunity to present how we actively manage our transport network, some of the challenges we face and the benefits that can be expected. Officers would like to thank Members for the time that they gave to this event.
9. The 2008 Casualty Review is due to be published by the end of June and will include analysis of all reported road traffic casualties within Darlington. The initial findings are very good with the Council on track to meet our 2010 road casualty targets of a 40% reduction in fatal and seriously injured casualties and a 50% reduction in children killed or seriously injured. In addition, the overall number of casualties in 2008 fell to an all time low of 346 casualties; a 23% reduction compared to the 1994-98 baseline.
10. The review of the hackney carriage ranks within the Town Centre is reaching a conclusion. A consultation exercise is to be carried out to gain the views of important groups such as the Town Centre Board, disability groups and the Police. The taxi trade have had an opportunity to express views on the initial draft of the report and their formal views will be requested prior to the matter being considered further.
11. A review of traffic and highway issues in Middleton St George was completed by the end of March 2009. The review produced a number of recommendations which will be considered through the normal processes for prioritising service requests. Consideration will be given to the role that developer contributions may have in delivering these improvements. A consultation exercise, including a Talking Together event, will be carried out in July to ask for residents’ views on the report findings.
12. Works to introduce a 20mph zone in the Harris Street area were due to commence towards the end of June 2009. The scheme will extend the existing Firthmoor 20mph zone up to Yarm Road and involves the construction of a number of speed cushions and two table top raised junctions. The scheme proposals were well received by residents at the consultation stage with widespread support for the proposals. The scheme will provide safer access to

St. Teresa's R.C. Primary School.

13. A similar scheme to improve safety around Dodmire School has recently been the subject of public consultation exercise. There was a consensus in favour of the proposed 20mph zone, controlled crossing point and enhanced waiting restrictions in front of the school, though a proposal to implement a closure of the highway was omitted due to lack of public support. It is anticipated that this scheme will be progressed during July and August to coincide with the school holidays.
14. Consultation is due to commence on the findings of the C180 Geneva Road Feasibility study, which considered the accident history and speed profile of the road. Ward Members have been briefed on the report and are supportive. The report recommends improvements to the Harris Street/Geneva Road junction.

### **Road Safety Education, Training and Publicity Initiatives**

15. A number of initiatives have been instigated, including the following:

#### **(a) Cyclist Training Activities**

- (i) Two new instructors were recruited in May. One of the instructors needed training to National Standards and this was completed prior to undergoing formal shadowing with our existing programme.
- (ii) Road safety supported the Cycling Festival which was held in South Park. Competitions, free leaflets and resources were given out to publicise the good work the cyclist training team is doing in schools with the BIKEABILITY programme and the free sessions which are available to Darlington's residents who need to brush up or learn some new cyclist safety skills.

#### **(b) Pedestrian Training Activities**

- (i) All schools have participated in our Pedestrian Training Scheme during this academic year. Approximately 94% of all year 1, 2 & 3 children have received valuable life skills to enable them to be safer pedestrians.

#### **(c) School Activities**

- (i) The cycle helmet assembly programme has been ongoing for the summer term. By the end of the school year twelve primary schools had taken up the offer.
- (ii) All children present in the assembly were given a free cycle helmet and puzzle book and school were given supplementary resources to enable them to link in normal curriculum work if required.
- (iii) The annual Safety Carousel was held in the fire station and repeated previous years' programmes highlighting the importance of wearing seat belts during every car journey

#### **(d) Community Activities**

- (i) In partnership with The Highways Agency and A-one, Darlington Borough Council organised a series of child car seat restraint checks to support national

## Child Safety Week

- (ii) The week long campaign was scheduled to begin on the 22 June with the practical checks held on Monday Tuesday and Wednesday in three local supermarket car parks.
- (iii) Information and an ongoing competition was available for children for the whole week

## School Travel Planning and Bike It

- 16. Twenty eight schools took part in the May Medal Motion campaign, promoting sustainable travel to school. Completed travel diaries have now been collected from the schools and the results of the campaign will be available by the end of June.
- 17. Additional cycle parking has been installed at Firthmoor and Whinfield Primary School.
- 18. The Bike It Officer is working intensively with 12 schools and maintaining a watching brief with a further 6 schools. Activities taking place in the summer term include after school cycle maintenance classes, cycle skills sessions, bike to school breakfasts and a number of other events promoting cycling. Most of these activities are funded directly through the Bike It programme, with grant funding from Bike Hub (a fund supported through a voluntary cycle industry levy on the sale of new bikes).

## Teen Card

- 19. Transport Policy staff have trained officers from Youth Services on use of the technology required to sell Teen Cards enabling them to make the cards available for sale at young peoples events.

## Workplace Travel Plans

- 20. CTC Challenge for Change has employed a part time officer to promote and coordinate a workplace cycle challenge in Darlington. The challenge will run between 22 June and 12 July. Organisations already signed up to take part include Cummins, Whessoe, Memorial Hospital, the Council and several schools.
- 21. The County Durham and Darlington NHS Foundation Trust have provided an updated Travel Plan. Data collected in 2008 on staff travel collected across the Trust sites have shown a 9.5% decline in reported car use for travel to/from work since the survey was last carried out in 2006. Car sharing, bus use, cycling and walking have all increased slightly.
- 22. Darlington College has updated the actions in their travel plan, these include promotion of sustainable travel modes through information at the College site, information sent to staff and to students and via signing on site. Other measures include installation of cycle lockers and CCTV security, promotion of car sharing and potentially the introduction of more flexible working patterns for staff.

## Bank Top Station Travel Plan

- 23. Further work has taken place on collecting the views of business representatives on improvements they would like to see at Darlington's Bank Top Station. 180 Darlington employees from 89 businesses have completed an online survey.

Findings from the survey have been included in the Station Travel Plan.

24. Work has been completed on upgrading the tourist and travel information centre located at Bank Top Station. The room, which is located next to the Station Travel centre, is stocked with free local travel information, information promoting Darlington and attractions in the region.

### Local Motion Seminar

25. On 3 June around 90 delegates attended a seminar on the outcomes of the Local Motion sustainable travel town programme. In addition to members and staff from the Council, delegates included representatives from Government Office North East, Highways Agency, Scottish Government, Local Authorities throughout the region and from transport consultancies.
26. The Local Motion work has proven to be successful, with four out of the five targets originally set for improving sustainable travel choice being met Table 1. This is because local people have been given the information that they need to make informed choices about their travel. They have been able to do this without affecting the number of activities that they undertake – they have just changed how they travel when it is suitable. This means that Darlington residents have made relatively small changes in their choice of travel, but as a whole this equates to a significant saving of 7,000 tonnes of CO<sub>2</sub> per year arising from a reduction of 34 million car kilometres per year. This is also helping the Council tackle traffic congestion; for example average traffic flows passing through the inner cordon at peak hours has reduced by 6.1% (1,319 vehicles) per weekday since 2004/05.

**Table 1 – Performance indicators, targets and current status**

<b>Performance Indicators</b>	<b>Current Position (2008/09 Data)</b>	<b>Local Transport Plan Targets 2010/11</b>	<b>Status</b>
% of trips that are cycle trips	3.2%	3.0%	Ahead of target
% of trips that are walk trips	29%	27%	Ahead of target
% of trips as a car driver	36.8%	37%	Ahead of target
Bus patronage	8,312,000	8,480,000	Below target
School Travel - % of trips by car (excluding car sharing)	23.5%	23.5%	On target

27. Presentations from the seminar are now available on the Local Motion website.

### Travel Information

28. A new bus map for all services in the Borough and timetable leaflets for the supported bus services have been published and are being distributed through key public outlets in the Borough.
29. New information was placed at bus stops on the 27 May, updating timetables to reflect changes to commercial bus services 77 - addition of Saturday service, Durham 21/21A -

timing changes, North Yorkshire 34/X34/X28 - timing changes.

### **Local Development Framework Core Strategy and the Transport Network**

30. Urban Initiatives have been appointed by Planning and Transport Policy to examine the interrelationship between the draft policies and proposals of the emerging Local Development Framework Core Strategy and the transport network. It will review the transport strategy, in particular the transport policies in relation to relieving congestion and improving accessibility in the network. The links between Central Park and the town centre will also be audited and options considered as part of the Town Centre Fringe project, ongoing Central Park development and feasibility study of the Inner Ring Road.

### **Cycle Demonstration Town**

31. Cycling England has commissioned an evaluation of the first three years of the Cycling Demonstration Town project. Officers and stakeholders have taken part in a series of meetings and group discussions to summarise what has been implemented, what have been the results and what lessons have we learnt. A report will be produced later this year for submission to the Department for Transport and to enable Cycling England to promote best practice. The Cycling Officer has met with Transport for London to advise them on the strategy for radial cycle routes in London, which replicates many of the ideas that we have implemented in Darlington.
32. Cycle Touring Club (CTC) are to fund an officer to work in Darlington and York to establish Bike Club, a project to develop new cycling clubs and cycling opportunities in after-school and youth club settings. CTC will be working with UK Youth, a national youth charity, and ContinYou, experts in extended services provision, on a national level. At a local level the new Bike Club Officer will work with the Bike It Officer and colleagues in Children's Services and Sports Development. The Officer should be in post in July.
33. Following the successful Stage of the Tour of Britain in Darlington last year, the Tour will be back in Darlington on Sunday 13 September. Plans are underway to maximise the impact of the day for the Borough for both tourism and retail opportunities, as well as involving as many local people as possible.

### **Supported Bus Services**

34. The new supported bus services started on 3 May 2009. Leaflets for services 16, 17, 18, 19 and 20 which are fully funded by the Council have been produced. Procurement is under way for replacement long term contracts for the six temporary contracts and two new services. Discussions are ongoing with Arriva and Scarlett Band to introduce a multi operator ticket.

**Councillor David Lyonette**  
**Cabinet Member with Transport Portfolio**