
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.

Highway & Bridge Design Schemes

2. **North Road Cycle Route Mayfair Road to Bensham Road** – Design refined and plan prepared for consultation.
3. **Great Burdon to Sadberge Cycle Route** – Design refined and plan prepared for consultation.
4. **Safer Routes to School, Prior Street** - Design refined and plan prepared for consultation.
5. **Harewood Terrace to Blackwell Lane Cycle Route** – Scheme ready to commence following confirmation of Traffic Regulation Order for Civil Parking Enforcement.
6. **Neasham Road Toucan** – Scheme consultation complete. Awaiting Traffic Regulation Orders to be processed for one-way junction at Aysgarth Road/Neasham Road, 20mph Zone and junction waiting restrictions.
7. **North Road Bus Priority** – Consultation drawing being prepared.
8. **John Street to Albert Road Cycle Route (beside River Skerne)** – Preparation for site clearance/site contamination survey underway.
9. **Middleton One Row Retaining Wall** – Piling method being refined prior to procurement.
10. **Polam Lane Footbridge** – Structural design ongoing. Submission for Listed Building Consent being prepared.
11. **Hutton Lane Footbridge** – Discussion with Environment Agency regarding flood risk ongoing. Site investigation to assist foundation design organised.
12. **Town Centre Underpasses** – Detailed estimates for the handrail and surfacing elements at each underpass are being collated to allow a programme of work to be compiled.
13. **Principal Bridge Inspections** – Ongoing.

Highway Maintenance Schemes

14. Recently Completed Schemes:

- (a) A167 North Road - Aldam Street to Katherine Street – new footway scheme.
- (b) C180 Geneva Road – Cemetery Gates to Darwin Grove – footway/verge and carriageway works.

15. Ongoing Schemes:

- (a) B6279 Houghton Road – Freemans Place to Railway Bridge – carriageway resurfacing.
- (b) C34A Lime Lane – kerbing, draining and deep patching works.
- (c) Princess Road – remainder of street – footway refurbishment.

16. Schemes Due to Commence:

- (a) B6280 Yarm Road – Lynton Gardens to Geneva Road – footway scheme.
- (b) B6280 Yarm Road – Cummins Pedestrian Crossing to Morton Palms roundabout – carriageway resurfacing.

Traffic Management Schemes

17. Work on the Civil Parking Enforcement (CPE) project continues. This will confer powers on 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 will be advertised in the coming weeks. The refreshing of lining and signing has commenced with the Town Centre and is substantially complete. In addition all of the School Keep Clear marking were refreshed in the half term break. Work is also proceeding on the business case for the project, including looking at the IT systems needed to carry out the enforcement duties. The Department for Transport (DfT) have recently changed the CPE application form and we have therefore submitted a revised application based on the original submission. They have also changed the length of time they require to consider the application effectively introducing an additional “vetting” period for applications. A commencement date is still not fixed due to the requirements for DfT to consider the application.
18. A consultation exercise on The Hackney Carriage rank review is underway. It is anticipated that the conclusions and recommendations will be reported by the end of the year with any changes implemented early in 2010.
19. The Harris Street traffic calming scheme is now complete. The Dodmire School traffic calming scheme was complete by the end of October with the works on Rydal Road timed for the half term break to avoid conflict with children and parents. Cabinet considered an objection to the road hump notification on 8 September 2009.

20. Residents of Geneva Road were consulted on proposals to make the road safer. A scheme has been produced to place a mini roundabout at the junction of Harris Street and Geneva Road. Residents were in favour of the scheme with 79% of those responding supporting the scheme. The work has been programmed for the coming weeks.

Road Safety Education, Training and Publicity Initiatives

21. A number of initiatives have been instigated, including the following:
 - (a) **Cyclist Training Activities** - Cycle training is currently being offered to all primary schools within the Borough. The training is offered to Year 5 or 6 children.
 - (b) **Pedestrian Training Activities** – The successful pedestrian training programme which is offered to Year 1 or 2 children has commenced. Schools are now beginning to regularly have 100% take up of places and it is unusual if numbers fall below the 90% level in any particular school.
 - (c) **Theatre in Education** – A programme of Theatre in Education plays was completed in October. The play entitled Pills Thrills and Automobiles was performed by a professional theatre company. It carried a though provoking and powerful message on drug awareness in relation to road safety and in particular driving, which was seen by a number of college and sixth form students. This forms part of our strategy to reduce the incidence of young driver casualties as the 17 to 25 year old age group has by far the highest incidence of road traffic casualties. The play was well received by students and staff alike.

School Travel Planning

22. All of the remaining local authority schools that are yet to complete a School Travel Plan are now engaged in developing one. March 2010 is the final opportunity for schools to secure grant funding (approximately £5,000 primary/£10,000 secondary) from the Department for Children, Schools and Families on completion of an approved School Travel Plan.
23. Contact has been made with the Borough's four Independent Schools with regards to their School Travel Plans. Polam Hall School and Yarm at Raventhorpe School have already expressed an interest in developing their plans.
24. On the 12 and 15 October 2009, Darlington schools were presented with their Sustainable Travel Accredited and Recognised (STAR) awards. STAR is the new national accreditation scheme for School Travel Plans. Eleven schools were accredited at the Sustainable level including: Longfield Schools Sports College, Abbey Infant School, Abbey Junior School, Hurworth Primary, Skerne Park Primary, St George's CE Aided Primary, Harrowgate Hill Primary, Firthmoor Primary, Holy Family RC VA Primary, High Coniscliffe CE Primary and Cockerton CE VA Primary.
25. The annual school census shows that Darlington is meeting the NI198 mode of travel to school target. Car use for the journey to school fell from 22.8% to 21.3% between 2007/08 and 2008/09. The interim target for 2008/09 was 21.8%. Nationally the car use figure stands at 27.2% and regionally 23.4%.

26. Sustainable Travel Zone maps have been published for all of the Borough's schools and will be delivered to schools on the 9 November 2009. The maps show 15-minute walking and cycling zones around schools in an effort to highlight that travelling sustainably need not take a much time.
27. The Medal Motion 'Race to the South Pole' campaign took place in October, returns from each participating school are currently being analysed. The initiative was launched with a 'trek to the South Pole' carried out by two walking trains at Dodmire School.
28. The Walk once a Week (WoW) scheme resources have been delivered to all Primary schools in clusters A, B, C and D. Work has begun on implementing the scheme in all of the schools.

Workplace Travel Plans

29. Queen Elizabeth Sixth Form College is working on developing a travel plan and have agreed to install secure, covered cycle parking for staff and students. This is to be funded through the work place travel plan budget.
30. County Durham and Darlington Primary Care Trust are producing a travel plan. A staff travel survey has been completed, showing very high levels of car use. The work place travel plan officer is advising the Trust on the Travel Plan including targets for reducing car use and increasing use of sustainable travel modes.
31. The CTC Challenge for Change ran a Cycle for employees of Darlington businesses in October; this was a two week campaign following up the campaign in July. This second campaign was fully funded by CTC Challenge for Change.
32. The work place travel plan officer has been working with Infoserve, based at Morton Palms, on producing a travel plan and encouraging a shift towards more sustainable travel behaviour. Infoserve have completed a staff survey and are promoting car sharing through a small financial incentive.

Supported Bus Services

33. Four tenders for which alternative timetables were received were considered by Cabinet on 8 September 2009 and subsequently contracts for the alternative timetables were awarded.
34. The supported services which included a new bus service to Glebe/Laburnum/Mayfair Road came into effect on 1 November 2009. Temporary bus stops have been erected for the new service ahead of permanent stops.

Tees Valley Metro

35. The Council has agreed to move to the next stage of the project together with the other Tees Valley Authorities. The next stage, known as GRIP 4, is a detailed feasibility study across the Tees Valley network and involves for Darlington a new Metro platform at Bank Top Station and a new station at Durham Tees Valley Airport. This work will be managed by the Joint Strategy Unit and funded through the Department of Transport. It is anticipated that this work will be complete in the summer of 2010. At that time the Council together with other Tees Valley Authorities will need to decide whether the Tees Valley Project can

proceed to be implemented.

Tees Valley Bus Network Improvement

36. The Council has supported the submission of a full business case to the Department of Transport for the Tees Valley Bus Network Improvement. The DfT has already accepted the project onto their programme but the approval of the business case, anticipated to be announced in December, will release the necessary funds for project implementation in 2010. The project will involve major highway improvements on important bus corridors that will improve the reliability of the highway network for all road users. It will be a substantial contribution to the Council's strategy to tackle congestion. Highway and other infrastructure work such as improvements to bus stops and real time information will be implemented over the next three years. The Council will be carrying out a consultation exercise with the public and other interested organisations in respect of the details of the schemes to be implemented in year 1 following DfT business case approval.

Bike Club Officer

37. A CTC Bike Club Officer, Patrick Carr has been employed to work in Darlington and York to support the development of local 'Bike Clubs' running activities for young people. Patrick is based with the Transport Policy team but is also working in partnership with the Sports Development and Young Peoples participation teams. Bike Club is initially funded over a two-year period by the Department for Transport (DfT), through Cycling England's School Champions and Active Recreation initiative.

Bike It Officer

38. The Sustrans Bike It Officer has launched the School Bike Mark award at Darlington Bike It Schools. The award scheme consists of three progressive levels starting with bronze, which will be awarded when a school has successfully worked with their Bike It officer to get more children cycling.
39. Schools can then work towards a silver award by demonstrating how it shares the ideals of Bike It beyond the initial year. Gold will be awarded to a school with an on-going commitment to the project over several years, with little or no input from the Bike It Officer.

Cycle Demonstration Town

40. I attended the Parliamentary Reception held for the six original Cycling Demonstration Towns and the eleven new Cycling Towns and City on the 29 October 2009. The event was attended by Chief Executives and Cabinet Members representing the towns and were addressed by Sadiq Khan, the Minister for Transport, and Ada Burns. The event was an opportunity for staff from all of the towns to share best practice and discuss the progress already made.
41. A Cabinet report was submitted on the 6 October 2009 regarding revisions to the Cycling Demonstration Town programme. The changes to the programme were agreed and the additional schemes are now moving forward. Cycling England has also agreed the revised programme and schemes included within the programme must all be completed by the end

of 2009/10 financial year to be eligible to be used as match funding or claimed back from the Department for Transport.

Cycle to Work Guarantee

42. The Government chose Darlington for the North East launch of its new Cycle to Work Guarantee on 28 October. All major employers are being encouraged to sign up to the Guarantee. I was invited to speak to the media at the Launch.

Multi Operator Ticket

43. A weekly and four weekly Multi Operator Ticket was introduced on 1 November 2009. The tickets can be used on any service in Darlington Borough. The weekly ticket can be purchased from drivers for £16, and the four weekly ticket can be purchased from the Tourist Information Centre for £55. Child tickets can be purchased for half the adult price. This ticket offers a substantial discount for anyone travelling regularly on both Scarlet Band and Arriva services within the Borough. Promotion of the ticket includes an advertisement in the Town Crier, posters on board buses and large posters at town centre stops.

Scarlet Band Discount Ticket

44. A new discounted ticket is available from Scarlet Band with effect from 1 November 2009. The ticket offers a 15% discount on the price of 10 single journeys which are to be prepaid and must be undertaken within a calendar month. Tickets can be purchased on board the bus.

Teencard Extension

45. An extension to Arriva's Teencard to include daytime travel has been agreed, Borough travel will be partially subsidised by Youth Services. Currently cardholders can travel anytime after 18:00 Monday to Friday, all day on weekends and Bank Holidays, and after 9am during school holidays for a maximum single fare of 60p anywhere within County Durham. The extension will enable cardholders to travel throughout the daytime (before 18:00) in Darlington Borough for the flat fare of £1 within the town and £1.50 within the Borough. Joint publicity will be undertaken by Youth Services, Transport Policy and Arriva. The offer is being advertised through posters and in the December Town Crier.

Councillor David Lyonette
Transport Portfolio