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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.

**Tees Valley Bus Network Improvement schemes**

2. Construction of the North Road Bus Priority scheme has been underway since the start of the year and is currently on programme to be complete by the end of November 2012. The majority of the works to date have not affected traffic flow but works on the carriageway will commence in earnest in September 2012. These will require lane closures though two way flow will be maintained.
3. Cabinet will consider objections to the proposed waiting restrictions associated with this scheme on 12 July 2012. The scheme incorporates a south bound bus lane with associated no waiting and no loading restrictions on North Road as well as a number of banned turning manoeuvres at the reconfigured junction. There also some restrictions in the side roads to assist with loading and customer parking.

**Network Management Schemes**

4. **Reid Street and Heathfield School 20 mph schemes** – These schemes are complete.
5. **East Row Taxi Rank** - The legal order for a proposed taxi feeder rank on East Row, adjacent to the Market Square, was advertised in April 2012 and there were no objections. The changes are being implemented as the result of a request from the taxi trade for more rank spaces in the area. The works will include narrowing the existing rank, providing a feeder rank, additional loading facilities and a new level access route across East Row. It is anticipated that the changes will be implemented in July/August 2012 and will be timed to avoid events in the Market Place.

**Bridge Maintenance Schemes**

6. **Chesnut Street Bridge** – Works started as planned on 8 May 2012 and are due to be complete by mid-July 2012.
7. **Hutton Avenue Footbridge** – Design work ongoing. Due on site July 2012.

## Highway Maintenance Schemes

### 8. Recently Completed Schemes:

- (a) Houghton Road/Salters Lane South Roundabout – Resurfacing.
- (b) Cleveland Street Bridge/Allan Street – Carriageway resurfacing.

### 9. Ongoing Schemes:

- (a) Glebe Road – Carriageway reconstruction and resurfacing.
- (b) A68 Duals Phase 1 – A1M to Swanhouse (A7072) – Resurfacing to opposite Burtree Lane.

### 10. Schemes Due to Commence:

- (a) North Road – Fitzwilliam Drive to Albert Road – Surface retexturing for increased skid resistance.
- (b) Woodland Road/Staindrop Road Roundabout to Bondgate Roundabout – Surface retexturing for increased skid resistance.
- (c) B6275 – A67 to Royal Oak to A68 Phase 4 – Carriageway reconstruction.
- (d) Coombe Drive/Goodison Way Junction – Resurfacing.
- (e) Alnwick Place – Morpeth Avenue to Hutton Avenue – Carriageway resurfacing.
- (f) Langdale Road – Footpath refurbishment.
- (g) Longfield Road – Crosby Street to Thompson Street West – Carriageway and footway refurbishment.
- (h) A176 Burtree Lane to Coatham Mundeville Phase 6 – Ketton Farm to 12 Durham Road – Carriageway and footway refurbishment.
- (i) A167 Croft Road Phase 1 – ‘S’ Bends between Croft Meadows and Oxney Cottage – Carriageway resurfacing.
- (j) A1150 Stockton Road – Dual Carriageway – Resurfacing.

## School Travel Plans

- 11. Modeshift STARS – all work with schools in Darlington will now be recorded and monitored through the Modeshift STARS (School Travel Accreditation and Recognition for School) website. Darlington is the first local authority in the country to trial the new national website. This new system will be rolled out across the county in the Autumn. Schools need to register on the site which will then help them to conduct surveys and meet the requirements of School Travel Planning. Schools that meet all of the requirements will

automatically receive national accreditation for their efforts with those achieving the highest standards considered for regional and national school of the year.

12. A Walk to School event was held on 1 June 2012 to encourage children at West Park Academy to walk to school. The walk was requested by children on the school council who were enthused by a similar event last year. The walk was held as part of the school's Jubilee celebrations, with children, staff and parents dressing up to reflect all of the decades of the Queen's reign. It was very well attended with around 200 people taking part along four different routes. To add further value to the event, emphasising how enjoyable walking can be and adding to the educational value, the children were joined on the walk by 'Mad Jack the Jubilee Jester' from historical education company 'Histrionics'. Mad Jack also provided a history-themed interactive assembly in the school afterwards. Walk to school events contribute towards schools achieving sustainable travel accreditation and help schools to reduce the numbers of cars at the school gates.

### **Workplace Travel Plans**

13. Darlington Borough Council employees are currently taking part in SAFED training (Safe and Fuel Efficient Driver) delivered by Durham County Council. The training courses ensure that those travelling for work purposes have the necessary skills to drive in a safe and fuel efficient manner, thus reducing fuel consumption and carbon emissions. We are currently undertaking this training as a pilot project to see if it should be offered to businesses in the town as part of the LSTF programme. We will specifically looking at cost savings that are achieved through increased fuel efficiency and reduced accidental damage to Council vehicles. Early indications of the results are extremely positive with just over 9% fuel efficiency improvements and 81% reductions in risk scores.
14. During bike week 18-24 June, Team Local Motion worked with Lingfield Point to provide employees with details of various cycling activities around the town. Information was provided by the Local Motion Travel Advisors, a Dr Bike service was on offer, the Sports Development Team promoted the Get Active Get Cycling in Darlington programme and a bike amnesty was held for employees that have bike that they no longer need. The bikes that have been donated will be used to form the foundations of a new bike recycling service and those that are not road worthy will be used to create new art installations at Lingfield Point.

### **Public Transport**

15. Bus stops in the town centre, and Parkgate for the Rail Station, have been fitted with real time displays. This is in addition to those already installed along North Road. Bus users will know exactly when their bus will arrive at the stop, as the displays count down in minutes, the arrival times of buses. The real time displays have been funded as part of Tees Valley Bus Network Improvements (TVBNI). There are plans to install further real time displays in bus stops along West Auckland and Woodland Road by the end of the year, funded by the Department for Transport, through the Local Sustainable Transport Fund (LSTF).
16. Workshops with stakeholders and members of the public took place on 23 May at the Dolphin Centre. These were to discuss 6 options for Accessible Community Transport, identified by JMP through their feasibility study. Input on accessible transport needs was

received, which will help to develop a service specification. The outputs from the sessions will be distributed to all attendees. The next stage is for the identified communities to start to develop plans and business cases in order to apply for the funding. Specialist expertise from the Community Transport association will be offered during three further sessions, which will be held to discuss options and how to move forward.

### **Local Sustainable Transport Fund**

17. Local Motion Primary to Secondary Transition Programme was launched on 29 and 31 May with over 100 current year 6 pupils being trained as Junior Travel Rangers. Pupils participated in activities focussing on walking, cycling, buses, trains and road safety which included catching a train from Bank Top Station to the Head of Steam Museum and taking part in a session on an Arriva bus. This training forms part of a three tiered approach to the transition programme which includes providing pupils and families with information, training pupils and providing practical opportunities for pupils to ‘practice’ their journeys to secondary school. Every year 6 pupil in the town has now received the ‘Get in the Zone’ magazine which will help them to plan their journeys to their new secondary school.
18. Secondary School Travel Zone Maps – the Transition programme is complemented by ‘Get in the Zone’ maps which have been produced for every secondary school in the town. The maps include information on each of the travel options that are available for that school including 15-minute walking and cycling zones around schools that highlight how much distance can be covered in a short period of time. Every year 6 pupil in the town will receive a ‘Get in the Zone’ map for their new secondary school to help them plan their journey.
19. Get Active Get Cycling in Darlington, a new programme of free family cycle rides for people of all ages launched in June. The rides are being delivered by Darlington Borough Council’s Sports Development Team in partnership with the NHS Foundation Trust Health Improvement Service. Hire bicycles and helmets can be provided free of charge or residents are able to bring along their own bike that will be checked before setting off. Rides take place every week on Thursdays at 10.00am from the South Park Clock Tower or on Sundays at 10.00am from the Play Park in West Park.
20. Mid-summer ride – as part of the Get Active Get Cycling in Darlington programme – the popular mid-summer bike ride returned to the calendar of events. The ride set off from the Dolphin Centre at 6.30pm and went out to Archers Ice Cream Parlour before returning to the town.
21. Local Motion was launched in Durham on Saturday 19 and 26 June. The first event took place in Newton Aycliffe and the second in Bishop Auckland. The events were a success with over 900 people receiving information about Local Motion at the Newton Aycliffe event and over 600 at the Bishop Auckland event. Team Local Motion now have just one set of contact details for both the Durham and Darlington offices. Any residents of Darlington or Durham can email [info@dothelocalmotion.co.uk](mailto:info@dothelocalmotion.co.uk) or phone 0800 45 89 810 and all contacts will be directed to the appropriate teams.
22. Local Motion Roadshows – the Local Motion Travel Rangers have been providing travel advice for two of the town’s further education establishments. From 28 May to 1 June the Rangers were at Darlington College as part of their Economic Well-Being Week; and from

the 2-4 July, the Rangers were at the QE Sixth Form College as part of their Bridging Week.

23. The team of Local Motion Travel Advisors began working in the Faverdale area of Darlington in mid June. The team will be working in the North West area of Darlington before moving to Heighington later in the summer. The Travel Advisors will be engaging with residents in conversations about their travel habits and where applicable giving information on alternative modes of transport. The team will then hand-deliver any requested resources to the householders.
24. The Local Motion MEGA Festival took place on Sunday 24 June in South Park. The event had information on all forms of sustainable transport as well as information on how to stay fit, active and healthy. There were a number of activities that residents could get involved with including trying out different types of bikes and bike skills, archery, zumba and eco driving simulators.
25. A new shared cycle/pedestrian route has been created between Harrowgate Hill and the Borough Boundary alongside the A167. The route connects the edge of Darlington to the cycle network within County Durham and provides a useful link for people that would like to commute between the two areas by bike. The Highways Agency have also secured funding to carry out additional works to the bridge across the A1. This route will eventually form part of the Great North Cycleway which will run from Darlington to Blyth and will form part of the Sustrans National Cycle Network.

### **Parking Strategy**

26. Work is in hand to prepare a new parking strategy for the Borough that sets out how parking provision:
  - (a) will support economic activity;
  - (b) can be improved;
  - (c) will encourage sustainable travel activity to make best use of Darlington's local transport network; and
  - (d) will manage the various demands for parking from shoppers, workers, residents and others.
27. Current work includes an evidence collection process that has included a survey of car park users, consultation workshops, consideration by Place Scrutiny and analysis of usage data. Findings and recommendations are scheduled to be available in draft in the Autumn. It is important that this work reflects future options for Town Centre land uses that are referred to in Councillor McEwan's Portfolio report for Economy and Regeneration.

### **Bank Top Station**

28. We considered proposals to reconfigure the rail network/track layout within and adjacent to Bank Top Station as part of a wider scheme to increase the frequency and decrease the journey time of trains to and from London.

29. We have also endorsed the Council's participation in delivering a whole industry solution for Bank Top Station, including ensuring links are made with key Council regeneration schemes including Central Park and Town Centre Fringe and that wider social, economic and environmental impacts are taken into consideration. This will enhance the environmental, social and economic well-being of the Borough and support actions arising from Darlington's Economic Strategy.

**Councillor David Lyonette**  
**Transport Portfolio**