
OVERVIEW OF TRANSPORT PORTFOLIO

1. Since the last meeting of Council, the following are the main areas of work that have been undertaken under the Transport Portfolio:
 - (a) **Revision to the Darlington Concessionary Fare Travel Scheme 2008/09** – A further discretionary amendment was made to the Concessionary Fare Travel Scheme for Darlington in 2008/09 from 20 July 2008, permitting Darlington resident passholders (and a companion if appropriate) to travel free within the Borough before 9.30 am Monday to Friday. This change will provide all day, every day travel on local bus services within the Borough for resident passholders to enable them to participate fully in the life of the Borough, without being restricted by the ability to pay for travel. The costs associated with the change to the scheme, have been met by savings made in the procurement of the Council's insurance contract.
 - (b) **Darlington Park and Ride Feasibility Study** – Following the production of a Park and Ride Feasibility Study for Darlington, it was agreed by Cabinet that no further work be undertaken on Park and Ride in the short term, as the feasibility study showed that there was currently insufficient demand to develop a business case. However, it was agreed to review the situation again when funding decisions are taken on whether to support the Tees Valley Bus Network Improvement bid and Metro proposals. At that time, the provision of high quality public transport (bus, rail or Metro) for inter urban trips may provide alternatives to the development of Park and Ride sites.
 - (c) **Revisions to the Second Local Transport Plan Expenditure 2008/11** – At the meeting of Cabinet held on 9 September 2008, a number of changes were agreed to the programme for the Second Local Transport Plan in order to address emerging priorities that have arisen since the original programme was approved.
 - (d) **Variation to Hackney Carriage Fares** – The application to increase the current hackney carriage tariff was refused by Cabinet at its meeting held on 9 September 2008. In taking this decision, Cabinet took into account the objections received from a large proportion of the licensed trade to the proposed increase.
 - (e) **National Station Travel Plan Pilot Programme** – Officers have been authorised to work with the Association of Train Operating Companies on developing a travel plan for Darlington's Bank Top Station as part of a national station travel plan pilot programme. The participation in the programme will raise the national profile of Darlington's Bank Top Station, bring in additional funding and expertise to complete a study of how passengers currently access the station and help identify areas where the Council, train operators and key stakeholders could work together on improving access to/from the station. The development and implementation of the travel plan will contribute towards three of the objectives contained within Darlington's Sustainable Community Strategy.

(f) Darlington Eastern Transport Corridor (DETC) -

- (i) The DETC has now been open for five weeks. Traffic movements at the through about junction on Haughton Road are being monitored closely as patterns of use by drivers develop to minimise delays.
- (ii) The landscaping works have commenced and will be completed over the autumn period.

(g) Highway Design Schemes -

- (i) Work has commenced on the Southend Avenue Park to West Street cycle route. This forms the larger part of the Blackwell Radial Route 5.
- (ii) The consultation process has begun for proposed alterations to Haughton Road/Stockton Road between Barton Street and Whinfield Road. Ideas have been put forward for comment to discourage the use of this road as a through route after the opening of the DETC. Following a leaflet drop (approximately 7,000 leaflets) to the adjacent residential areas, a well attended public meeting was held at St Andrew's Church Hall. Comments received at the meeting, along with others received via Email, Royal Mail and the website are now being compiled into an engagement report to assess the views on the proposals.

(h) Bridgework Schemes -

- (i) **Haughton Road Cycle/Footbridge** – Bridge in fabrication, awaiting confirmation of delivery and start dates.
- (ii) **Middleton-One-Row Slope Stability** – Outline design commenced.

(i) Highway Maintenance Schemes -

(i) Recently Completed Schemes -

- Millbank Road outside Nos 12-14 – footway and kerbing refurbishment.
- Albatross Way front and rear of Nos 39-79 – footway refurbishment.
- Grange Road/Victoria Road roundabout – carriageway patching/resurfacing.
- North Road - Aldam Street to Shildon Street – footway refurbishment.

(ii) Ongoing Schemes -

- South View, Brafferton – carriageway and footway refurbishment.
- A67 – Morton Palms A66 Roundabout – Middleton St George C52 Junction – eastbound carriageway deep patching.

- (iii) **Schemes Due to Commence -**
- Valley Street – carriageway resurfacing.
 - C38 Sadberge to Middleton St George – carriageway deep patching.
 - Westfield Drive, Hurworth Phase 5 – footway refurbishment.
 - A167 Burtree Lane to Coatham Mundeville Phase 4 – carriageway resurfacing.
- (j) **Traffic Management Schemes**
- (i) **Southend Avenue Residents' Parking Scheme** – Implementation of the scheme will commence on the 22 September 2008.
- (ii) **20 mph Zones** – Now complete apart from minor signing and lining. Orders became effective on the 1 September 2008.
- (k) **Road Safety Education, Training and Publicity Initiatives** – A number of initiatives have been instigated, including the following:
- (i) **Cyclist Training Activities -**
- Two four day instructor training courses were organised as part of Road Safety's ongoing programme. Fifteen Instructors from six different Authorities successfully completed the course and gained provisional passes.
 - The new term for Darlington's Bikeability training has begun with ten schools participating this autumn.
- (ii) **Pedestrian Training Activities -**
- At the end of the academic year in July nearly all children in years 1 2 and 3 in Darlington were offered our comprehensive pedestrian training programme.
 - In the three years of the scheme's operation the numbers taking up the training have risen from 54% to 74% to 85% of all eligible children in the Borough.
 - 16 Schools achieved a 100% take up rate, 28 schools had 60% or more children participating and only one school had less than a 50% take up rate.
- (iii) **Road Safety Poetry Days -**
- Following a request from a head teacher a number of Road Safety Poetry Days were organised with the poet Bernard Young for the primary school sector.

- The tour was organised on the successful formula of previous years and was enjoyed by teachers, and children alike. Children listened to poems written by Bernard, then wrote and performed their own poems after listening to a general road safety presentation by the Road Safety Officer.

(iv) **Wise Drive -**

- A select number of Year 11 secondary students from each school throughout the Durham Constabulary Police force area are invited to this pre-driver one day training event held at Police Headquarters.
- The 2008 multi-agency Wise Drive event was planned, as normal, during the last weeks of September. Road Safety Officers offered to support the event with a brake reaction testing unit. This activity is designed to complement other multi agency sessions and concentrates on young, pre- driver training skills and safety.

- (l) **Tour of Britain** - On 12 September Stage six of the 2008 Tour of Britain started in Darlington. Around 500 school pupils attended the start of the race on West Row in the Town Centre with flags and banners representing the teams. Other events on the day included information stalls giving out information on cycling and other modes of sustainable transport to members of the public, a bike try out road show and Darlington's Storysack and Toy Resources team were on hand with a range of bikes and trikes for the under 5's to try out.
- (m) **Cycling England Visit** - On 20 August Philip Darnton and John Grimshaw, Cycling England Board Members, visited Darlington to discuss progress and opportunities for future funding for cycling. After a cycle ride around the town the Board members met with Ada Burns, Councillor Robson, Councilor A Scott, Councillor Wallis, myself and Officers. Colin Morris, Chief Executive of the PCT, also met with the group. The board members will be revisiting Darlington in November to review the actions discussed in August.
- (n) **Guided Cycle Rides** - A series of Guided Cycle Rides have been designed and will be distributed to libraries and the Tourist Information Centre. The pack consists of four short cycle rides suitable for novices and they are located within the urban area. The pack will be added to and longer rides will be included in the future.
- (o) **Interreg Funding (North West European Funding) -**
- Officers have been working in partnership with representatives from nine other towns and cities throughout North West Europe to develop and bid for funding for a trans- national transport project. A report on the proposed bid was considered by Cabinet report on the 18 March this year.
 - On the 21 July 2008 the NWE Programme Steering Committee wrote to Bielefeld, conditionally approving funding for the trans-national transport project.

- (iii) Darlington's programme had included five work packages, four of which have received the support of the Steering Committee, these are:
- Work on an 'enhanced development framework' - with additional funding to develop a better understanding of the implications of spatial planning policies on planning for transport.
 - The development and implementation of measures promoting sustainable travel options to/from Bank Top Station.
 - Support for the delivery of an integrated package of travel marketing and information.
 - Work on developing a Smart Card for use on public transport, as an access control for secure cycle parking and employer parking (eg car sharing spaces).
- (iv) The Steering committee declined to fund Darlington's proposal to install real time travel information displays at key employment and retail sites.
- (v) This means that Darlington's programme now consists of four work packages with a total budget of €1.704m, (a 14% reduction on our proposed programme). The match funding rate has also changed slightly to 55.6%, with 5.6% of each partner's budget allocated to cover costs of meetings, travel by representatives from each partner and core administrative duties, for example auditing of the programme accounts.
- (p) **Local Motion Travel Advisors** - A team of four Local Motion travel advisors (local people recruited to work through the summer months) have been manning a stall on the Market since July. Their role has been to give out free travel information, assist with travel enquiries and to sign up new members to the Local Motion club. The team were particularly busy during the run up to and the few days after the changes to the bus network on 20 July 2008.
- (q) **School Travel Plans** -
- (i) The annual survey of school travel behaviour took place on 24 September 2008, results will be available within the next few weeks.
 - (ii) The October theme for the bi-annual Medal Motion campaign promoting walking, cycling and bus use will be the 'Tour of Britain', with pupils taking part in a 'virtual' race to complete the tour. This promotion links into the involvement many of Darlington schools had in supporting Stage 6 of the Tour of Britain cycle race in September.
- (r) **Work Place Travel Plans** -
- (i) A number of travel advice sessions have taken place at Darlington College, Cummins Engine Company and the Student Loans Commission in support of work to encourage car sharing, greater use of public transport, cycling and

walking to work.

- (ii) The work place travel plan officer has been working closely with Darlington Primary Care Trust on the development and launch of the Investors in Health scheme. Employers involved in the scheme are Sherwood's, Cummins, Orange, Barclays Bank, Darlington Building Society, Student Loans Commission and the Fire Brigade. Work place travel planning is an important element of this new accreditation scheme.

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