
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.

Civil Parking Enforcement

2. Civil Parking Enforcement was introduced on the 31 December 2010 and has been operational for three months. We continue to monitor and review how and when staff are deployed and any issues that arise.
3. Officers are still working on a series of requests to review some sections of waiting restrictions.

Highway and Bridge Design Schemes

4. **Middleton One Row Retaining Wall Reinstatement** – Tenders have been returned and assessed. The contractor has now been appointed and it is planned for the works to commence on 28 March 2011. ‘The Front’ will be closed from 11 April for approximately two weeks. Works are expected to be complete by the beginning of June 2011.
5. **Polam Lane Footbridge** –The delivery of the bridge has been delayed due to a problem with the cast iron metal work retaining moisture. This prevented painting work being carried out at the time but the bridge was returned to site on 11 April.
6. **Chesnut Street Bridge**– An application for Listed Building Consent has been submitted. Design of the bridge is presently ongoing together with the Bill of Quantities and Specification in order to advertise for a contractor. Tenders for the work are expected to be advertised by May 2011.
7. **North Road Bus Priority** – The pre-qualification exercise is presently being evaluated and a short list of contractors has been compiled.

Highway Maintenance Schemes

8. Recently Completed Schemes:

- (a) Judith Close, Heighington – footway refurbishment.

(b) Claremont Road - footway refurbishment.

9. Ongoing Schemes:

(a) Whinfield Road (Salters Lane North playing field to Whinbush Way) - footway Refurbishment.

(b) Morpeth Avenue – Tees Valley Bus Network Improvement Scheme – verge hardening.

(c) Hutton Avenue – Tees Valley Bus Network Improvement Scheme – verge hardening.

(d) McMullen Road/Allington Way junction improvement (for cyclists) and resurfacing works.

10. Scheme Due to Commence:

Whinbush Way Phase 2 – Kilmarnock Road to Shetland Road - footway enhancement.

Winter/Adverse Weather Repairs – Permanent Resurfacing Works

11. Recently Completed Schemes:

(a) Nunnery Lane.

(b) Emley Moor Road.

(c) Abbey Road and Dale Road, Sadberge.

(d) Church Lane, Middleton St George.

(e) Riverside Way, Great Burdon.

(f) A6072 Shildon Road, Redworth.

(g) Avon Road, Hurworth.

(h) Littlebeck Drive.

(i) Winchester Way.

Highway Network Management Schemes

12. Whinfield Road Pedestrian and Cycleway Improvement – The nature of the works required extensive reconstruction of the junction that has caused restrictions on traffic flow. The temporary signals were required to provide safe working areas during construction. The works at this junction were completed in March 2011. The remainder

of the scheme is expected to be completed by the end of April 2011.

13. **The Square, Middleton St George** – Complete.
14. **Gurney Pease Footway Improvements** – Complete.
15. **Skerne Park, Cockerton and Corporation Road School Access Improvements** – SkernePark and Cockerton complete with Corporation Road to commence soon.

Road Safety Education, Training and Publicity Initiatives

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

(a) Cyclist Activities

- (i) Bikeability level two was delivered in Abbey, Polam and Reid Street primary schools during February and March.

(b) Pedestrian Training

- (i) By the end of this school term 63% of years 1, 2 and 3 primary school children will have taken part in pedestrian training.
- (ii) Planning for the summer term is now taking place and again it is estimated approximately 96% of years 1, 2 and 3 of the primary school population will take part this school year.

(c) School Activities

- (i) The Ghost Street Programme was delivered to Hurworth and Longfield schools for their year 8 pupils.
- (ii) The Road Safety Officer sent an e-mail inviting any school which had not participated in a Darlington Road Safety Poetry Day in the last decade the opportunity to do so. SkernePark responded and a lovely day was held for all the children who wrote, performed or just listened to road safety messages wrapped up in poems.
- (iii) A compilation cartoon was made for distribution in all the primary schools in Darlington which allows important road safety messages to be aired in a fun and child friendly manner.

(d) Out of School Activities

- (i) The Road Safety Team provided all brownie, guides and cub scouts with a copy of the latest road safety activity books which will help them with their badges. Also included in the delivery were copies of leaders' guidance notes on how to use the packs to the best advantage.

(e) Road Safety Officer

- (i) The Road Safety Officer offered all schools help or advice to promote important road safety messages before the services are reduced.

School Travel Plans

- 17. Eleven primary and secondary schools took part in the Sustrans' Big Pedal from 7-25 March. (The Big Pedal is a virtual stage race and works a bit like the Tour de France. Each day is a new stage cycling from one town to the next in a route that goes all round the UK starting and finishing in London.) The more people who cycled into school each day, the faster the school's time was for that stage. By the end of the race, each school had a cumulative race time for the whole race and was ranked accordingly.

7,415 journeys were made by cycle (6,626 by children and 789 by supporters). The winning school in Darlington was Firthmoor Primary and it was placed 135th out of over 1000 schools nationally.

- 18. We are working with St Bede's RC VA Primary school in planning a St George's Walk to School. The official St George's Day takes place during the school Easter holidays so this event was held earlier on 14 April.

Public Transport

- 19. Concessionary bus passes have been reissued to all existing pass holders. These are the first concessionary 'smart cards' in the region. Arriva will be installing smart readers on board buses over the next 6-12 months which will speed up boarding times.
- 20. The brief to develop the brand for the Tees Valley Bus Network Improvement major scheme, which will be the brand under which bus services across the Tees Valley will be promoted, has been sent to agencies. This is the first stage in the implementation of the marketing strategy.

Third Local Transport Plan (LTP)

- 21. We agreed funding for the Implementation Plan for the Third Local Transport Plan and to the Council's continued participation in the Tees Valley Bus Network Improvement project and the associated Department for Transport grant funding of £2,380k for year 2 of the project, subject to revised grant conditions being accepted be released. We also agreed a bid for funding to the Local Sustainable Transport Fund and that additional winter maintenance funds be agreed.

Local Sustainable Transport Fund

- 22. A bid has been submitted to the Department for Transport to secure funding for the continuation and expansion of Local Motion. It meets the main criteria for the bid, ie reducing carbon emissions from transport and supporting the economy, as well as the local issue of addressing poor health through promoting active travel (walking and

cycling) to increase physical activity and improving mental well being. The bid will focus on reducing the use of cars for short trips in the Borough (including rural areas); improving travel for disabled people; and focusing on improving public transport including accessible taxis, bus and rail services. The bid is linked to a Durham County Council bid to jointly address travel between the neighbouring areas, improving access to training and employment opportunities, including the Hitachi development.

Cycling Demonstration Town

23. As the project comes to an end, the Transport Minister has allocated an additional £30k to Darlington, which has been used to complete the major cycle improvement in Whinfield. The scheme has included new crossing facilities for pedestrians and cyclists and new traffic signals to improve the flow of all traffic.

Community Rail Partnership

24. Since the Transport Minister has designated the Bishop Line as a Community Rail Service, a new brand has been developed. New signs are being installed at the six stations with the new logo. A website has been developed which provides information on the line, including details of the stations and services, and promoting the speed and convenience of the services. The website address is www.bishopline.org.

Winter Maintenance

25. From the commencement of the winter maintenance season on 4 October 2010 until the end of February 2011, the service has used 5,138 tonnes of rock salt, treating the identified highway network of 320 kilometres on 143 occasions. Due to additional salt deliveries being received, unless a severe spell of winter weather returns, it is envisaged that current salt stock levels are sufficient to ensure service provision for the rest of the winter.

**Councillor David Lyonette
Transport Portfolio**