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**DARLINGTON'S THIRD LOCAL TRANSPORT PLAN**

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**Responsible Cabinet Member - Councillor David Lyonette, Transport Portfolio**

**Responsible Director - Richard Alty, Director of Place**

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**SUMMARY REPORT**

**Purpose of the Report**

1. To approve the final version of Darlington's Third Local Transport Plan, containing transport policies for the period 2011-2026.

**Summary**

2. The Local Transport Act 2008 retained the statutory requirement for local transport authorities to produce and review Local Transport Plans (LTPs) and policies. Guidance issued by the Department for Transport<sup>1</sup> (DfT) set out the national policy framework for the development of the LTP and advised authorities to follow the process recommended by Eddington<sup>2</sup> to develop an effective strategy and decide priorities for implementation.
3. Darlington Borough Council has followed this process, as follows:
  - (a) Agree the scope of the Plan
  - (b) Clarify goals
  - (c) Specify the problems or challenges the authority wants to solve
  - (d) Generate options to resolve these challenges
  - (e) Appraise the options and predict their effects
  - (f) Select preferred options and decide priorities
  - (g) Deliver the agreed strategy (Implementation Plan)
4. The development and content of the Plan has been amended from the results of extensive consultation with local people and stakeholders, and examination by the Economy and Environment Scrutiny Committee. In developing and monitoring the Plan, a number of statutory assessments have been undertaken, forming an integral part of the decision-making process and final content of the Plan.
5. The national context for developing the Local Transport Plan has changed both in terms of policy and funding since the change in Government in May 2010 and this has had to be taken into account. The White Paper on Local Transport was published as recently as 19 January 2011.

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<sup>1</sup> Guidance on Local Transport Plans, Department for Transport, July 2009

<sup>2</sup> The Eddington Transport Study: The case for action; December 2006

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6. Five goals have been developed which strategically fit with the new national priorities of growing the economy and tackling carbon emissions, the priorities in One Darlington: Perfectly Placed and the policies in the Local Development Framework Core Strategy. Key challenges that face the Borough and their implications for transport have been assessed.
7. A number of strategic choices have been considered and 21 key policies have been developed in consultation with key stakeholders and local people in response to the identified goals and challenges, setting the priorities for the strategy. A broad range of potential options have been developed that could deliver these policies.
8. A copy of the draft Third Local Transport Plan is in **Appendix 1** and the associated impact assessments, consultation and related strategies and plans are in annexes detailed in **Appendix 2**. The Plan will set the new policy framework.
9. The final stage of the process has included an appraisal of options using a multi-criteria matrix to develop an LTP3 Implementation Plan. This comprises a detailed delivery programme for 2011/2012 and 2012/13 and an indicative programme for a further 2 years. This is based on the funding allocations from the DfT, priorities identified through consultation and recommendations by Cabinet on the Medium Term Financial Plan (MTFP) at its meeting on 22 February 2011. The LTP3 Implementation Plan is being considered by Cabinet as a separate report on 8 March 2011, following Council's decisions on the MTFP on 3 March 2011.

### **Recommendation**

10. It is recommended that Council approves the Third Local Transport Plan.

### **Reason**

11. The recommendation is supported by the need to comply with the Local Transport Act 2008, setting the policy framework for the Council's intentions for transport spending and actions between 2011 and 2026.

**Richard Alty**  
**Director of Place**

### **Background Papers**

- (i) Local Transport Plan guidance; published by Department for Transport, 16 July 2009.
- (ii) Delivering a Sustainable Transport system; published by Department for Transport, November 2008.
- (iii) Low Carbon Transport: A Greener Future; published by Department for Transport, July 2009.
- (iv) Development of the Third Local Transport Plan, Cabinet 6 October 2009.
- (v) The Third Local Transport Plan, Cabinet 30 March 2010.
- (vi) Draft Third Local Transport Plan, Cabinet 2 November 2010
- (vii) Draft Third Local Transport Plan, Economy and Environment Scrutiny Committee, 16 December 2010
- (viii) Draft Third Local Transport Plan, Cabinet, 8 February 2011
- (ix) Documents listed in footnotes in this report.

S17 Crime and Disorder	Crime and disorder implications have been taken into account in the preparation of the Plan
Health and Well Being	Health and well being implications have been taken into account in the preparation of the Plan. One of the key outcomes is to achieve better health and longer life expectancy for everyone by reducing the risk of death, injury or illness from transport and by providing travel options to keep people active and independent
Carbon Impact	The Plan has been developed in accordance with statutory duties to promote sustainability and has been subjected to Strategic Environmental Assessment and Habitats Regulation Assessment. One of the 5 objectives of the Plan is to reduce carbon emissions from transport.
Diversity	The Plan seeks to enable everyone to be able to travel to access employment, healthcare and other services, and particularly notes the needs of older people and people with disabilities. Multi strand Equalities Impact Assessments and Disability Impact Assessments have been undertaken as part of the development of the Plan.
Wards Affected	All
Groups Affected	All
Budget and Policy Framework	The Third Local Transport Plan will form part of the Council's Policy Framework, replacing the Second Local Transport Plan.
Key Decision	This is classed as a Key Decision and has been included within the Forward Plan.
Urgent Decision	No
One Darlington: Perfectly Placed	One Darlington: Perfectly Placed has set the wider context for the development of the Plan.
Efficiency	Development of the Plan has considered the issues of efficiency savings in light of significant reductions in funding.

## MAIN REPORT

### Information and Analysis

12. The Local Transport Act 2008 retained the statutory requirement for local transport authorities to produce and review Local Transport Plans (LTPs) and policies and the Department for Transport (DfT) issued statutory guidance on 16 July 2009. LTPs must now include a strategy and an implementation plan and this report presents the transport strategy.

### Key steps in developing the Local Transport Plan

13. The process that has been followed to develop the Local Transport Plan as recommended by Eddington<sup>3</sup> is as follows:
  - (a) Agree the scope of the Plan
  - (b) Clarify goals
  - (c) Specify the problems or challenges the authority wants to solve
  - (d) Generate options to resolve these challenges
  - (e) Appraise the options and predict their effects
  - (f) Select preferred options and decide priorities
  - (g) Deliver the agreed strategy (Implementation Plan)
14. Since the initial phases of development of the Third Local Transport Plan (LTP3) which started in 2009, the national context for the development of the Plan has changed significantly. The election in May 2010 saw a change of Government and therefore the previous national transport strategy<sup>4</sup> has been put to one side. The Transport Minister has highlighted that the key overarching policies are to grow the economy and tackle carbon emissions, whilst not neglecting other important priorities such as road safety, affordability, accessibility and people's health and wellbeing. There is an emerging theme around sustainability – that transport solutions should not just be sustainable in terms of their environmental benefits in reducing carbon emissions, but should also be fiscally and economically sustainable (affordable to the taxpayer and compatible with the economic growth agenda).
15. The White Paper on Local Transport<sup>5</sup> was published in January 2011. Whilst this was too late to be used in the preparation of this Plan, themes of supporting the local economy and reducing carbon emissions are integral to Darlington's Plan. The White Paper will be used in the preparation of a bid to the Local Sustainable Transport Fund, details of which were announced at the same time.
16. The Comprehensive Spending Review (CSR) in October 2010 and subsequent Business Plan for the Department for Transport in November 2010 gave a clearer indication of national priorities and where funding will be allocated.

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<sup>3</sup> Eddington Transport Study, December 2006

<sup>4</sup> Delivering a Sustainable Transport Strategy, DfT, November 2008

<sup>5</sup> Creating Growth, Cutting Carbon – Making Sustainable Local Transport Happen, DfT, 19 January 2011

17. In terms of funding, top line national figures were announced in the CSR for the 4 year period 2011/12 – 2014/15, as well as a number of changes to the grant streams. These can be summarised as follows:

- (a) Total number of transport grant streams reduced from 26 to 4. These will be:-
  - (i) A Sustainable Transport Fund (revenue and capital) - £350million revenue and £210 million capital
  - (ii) Major schemes (capital) - £1.544 billion
  - (iii) Block funding for highways maintenance (capital) - £3.042 billion. Maintenance is still seen as a priority. DfT believes there is significant scope for efficiencies in delivering maintenance, for example through combining purchasing power of local authorities to drive down prices.
  - (iv) Block funding for small transport improvement schemes (capital) - £1.390 billion.

18. On 13 December 2010 Darlington’s funding allocations were announced as follows:

Year	Highways Maintenance	Integrated Transport Block
2011/12	£1.640m	£0.683m
2012/13	£1.658m	£0.729m
2013/14*	£1.590m	£0.729m
2014/15*	£1.404m	£1.025m

\*Funding levels for 2013/14 and 2014/15 are indicative and are subject to change.

19. In addition the funding for the Tees Valley Bus Network Improvement scheme was confirmed for the remaining 4 years. All other specific grants are being ended and will be transferred in to the main Local Government Formula Grant, administered by the Department for Communities and Local Government (DCLG). This includes funding for concessionary fares, rural bus subsidy and road safety and will be allocated via the formula for CLG. Highways maintenance will still form an element of the CLG grant, but is not funded from DfT.

20. The main priorities set out in the Department for Transport’s Business Plan are:

- (a) investment in High Speed Rail network;
- (b) secure the sustainability of the railways;
- (c) encourage sustainable local transport and economic growth by making public transport (including light rail) and cycling and walking more attractive and effective, promoting lower carbon transport and tackling local road congestion;
- (d) tackle carbon and congestion on our roads- support the early market for electric and other ultra-low emission vehicles, promote the more effective use of strategic roads by addressing causes of congestion and continue to improve road safety; and
- (e) promote sustainable aviation.

21. The development of the Tees Valley Transport Strategy, which provides the sub regional context for Darlington’s LTP, has also been subject to delays due to these uncertainties. The Tees Valley Economic and Regeneration Statement of Ambition is the most recent vision for the Tees Valley economy over the next 15 years and the Tees Valley Economic and Regeneration Investment Plan, provides the detailed delivery plan for priority transport, economic regeneration and housing investments. Connecting the Tees Valley Statement of

Transport Ambition<sup>6</sup> brings together the transport context, objectives and priorities for transport. A large number of projects, including transport schemes, have been submitted by the Tees Valley Local Enterprise Partnership to the Regional Growth Fund to support regeneration and create jobs. This includes Phase 1A of the Tees Valley Metro<sup>7</sup> and new access junction into Central Park.

22. Cabinet has already agreed that Darlington's Third Local Transport Plan should cover the period from 2011 – 2026, in line with the Local Development Framework. The transport strategy has a long term time horizon and the outcomes will be achieved through the delivery of the Implementation Plan, which will be a rolling programme of schemes and interventions.
23. Although there has been a great deal of uncertainty at a national level, Darlington's Plan has been developed with extensive consultation to ensure that it identifies appropriate goals, challenges and options. Economy and Environment Scrutiny Committee also considered the draft Plan in June and December 2010. Transport has been considered within the context of both the Local Development Framework and One Darlington: Perfectly Placed. In developing and monitoring the Plan, a number of statutory assessments have been undertaken, forming an integral part of the decision- making process and final content of the Plan.
24. The following goals for the Plan were supported by Cabinet in March 2010:
  - (a) Everybody is able to enjoy the Borough's prosperity by providing and maintaining a reliable, predictable, efficient and affordable transport network;
  - (b) Everyone can play their part in reducing the impact of transport on the environment and its contribution to climate change;
  - (c) People live long, healthy and active lives, travelling safely and making active travel choices;
  - (d) Everyone in Darlington can maximise their life chances by being able to access services, activities and facilities; and
  - (e) People in Darlington enjoy a positive journey experience on an attractive, clean, green and sustainable transport system
25. The next stage was to identify challenges that Darlington faces. These were generated from evidence, consultation, the Connections Study<sup>8</sup> and the Connectivity and Accessibility Study<sup>9</sup>. The main challenges can be summarised as follows:
  - (a) Support economic growth in Darlington without creating adverse traffic conditions
  - (b) Exploit Darlington's economic advantage as the 'gateway' to the wider national road, rail and air transport network for passengers and freight
  - (c) Improve access to employment opportunities within the Borough and in neighbouring areas, in particular for those without access to a private car.

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<sup>6</sup> Connecting the Tees Valley Statement of Transport Ambition, Draft No 3; TVU; 9 December 2010

<sup>7</sup> The bid includes improvements at Bank Top Station to improve accessibility from the Station to Central park, including a new footbridge at the station and over Yarm Road, public realm enhancements and improved bus passenger waiting facilities.

<sup>8</sup> Darlington Connections Study Issues and Opportunities, Urban Initiatives, August 2009; The Strategy and Proposals, Urban Initiatives, October 2009

<sup>9</sup> Tees Valley City Region: Connectivity and Accessibility Study, Phase 1 Report, JMP and Genecon, May 2010.

- (d) Maintain the highway network and transport assets, including bridges, streetlights and facilities for sustainable transport.
- (e) Reduce CO2 emissions from travel in Darlington
- (f) Continue the successful implementation of Smarter Choices and travel behaviour programmes
- (g) Reduce health inequalities in Darlington and integrate transport into the public health agenda
- (h) Meet the transport needs of local people, with a wide range of travel requirements, in particular for disabled people and those living in rural locations
- (i) Target funding at schemes and initiatives that are low cost, deliver value for money and/or deliver the greatest outcomes at a local level
- (j) Provide a high quality journey experience for everyone

26. In order to develop a policy framework for the Plan, a number of strategic questions have been raised, which will determine Darlington’s approach to address the challenges and achieve the goals. These Strategic Choices have resulted in 21 policies and are summarised in the following table:

<b>Objectives</b>	<b>Challenges</b>	<b>Policies</b>
<p>To support employment, economic activity and sustainable development by providing and maintaining a reliable, predictable and efficient transport network</p>	<p>Support economic growth in Darlington without creating adverse traffic conditions, particularly at major regeneration and housing growth locations.</p> <p>Maintain and manage the highway network (including the strategic road network) so it operates efficiently, even when car ownership is increasing</p> <p>Integrate transport and land use planning to ensure that sustainable locations are developed, minimising the need or distance to travel</p> <p>Improve access to employment opportunities both in the Borough and in neighbouring areas, in particular for those with access to a private car</p> <p>Exploit Darlington’s economic advantage as the ‘Gateway’ to the wider national road, rail and air transport network for both passengers and freight.</p>	<p>Policy 1 – Traffic levels generated by new development will be minimised through the provision and promotion of sustainable travel options, supported by traffic management as required and with the provision of transport infrastructure subject to assessments, to ensure that the developments are economically, socially and environmentally sustainable.</p> <p>Policy 2 – To carry out the Network Management Duty in accordance with the priorities identified by the Council’s Network Management Plan in order to maximise the operation of the highway network for all users; improving the reliability and punctuality of travel including public transport, walking and cycling</p> <p>Policy 3 – To work in partnership with the Highways Agency to ensure that the Strategic Road Network operates effectively and efficiently for all users, supporting the HA in any bid for funds to address issues of congestion around Darlington;</p> <p>Policy 4 – To actively promote sustainable transport options and implement a travel behaviour programme to bring about attitude change to reduce dependence on the private car;</p> <p>Policy 5 – To improve sustainable transport options, in particular through effective management of the highway network, including bus priority measures, road space reallocation and enforcement of traffic orders.</p> <p>Policy 6 – The Council will continue with to work with schools, businesses and other organisations on the implementation of their Travel Plans, and will seek to secure further travel plans through the Planning process.</p> <p>Policy 7 – to support local people into</p>

		<p>training and employment opportunities through sustainable travel options within Darlington and by rail, bus and car sharing for longer trips. Work with neighbouring local authorities and transport operators to sustain and improve transport links across borough boundaries, particularly to employment sites.</p> <p>Policy 8 – to attract inward investment and create new jobs in Darlington as a place through its good transport connections, quality of place and sustainable development sites, by utilising the Planning process and implementing the policies set out in the relevant economic and housing strategies.</p> <p>Policy 9 – Work with neighbouring authorities, transport operators and the business sector to exploit the economic benefit of Darlington’s strategic location in relation to national and international networks.</p>
To tackle climate change through quantified reductions in greenhouse gas emissions from transport	<p>Reduce CO2 emissions from travel in Darlington, in particular longer distance, inter urban trips.</p> <p>To continue the successful implementation of Smarter Choices measures to tackle carbon reduction</p> <p>To increase the use of technology across all modes to reduce emissions – including the provision of better travel information, intelligent traffic management systems, electric vehicles and low emission public transport</p> <p>Mitigate the impacts of climate change on the transport network through design, materials and policies.</p>	Policy 10 – Provide or promote the lowest carbon options for all journeys, depending on trip purpose, destination or individual circumstance.
To achieve better health and longer life expectancy for everyone by reducing the risk of death, injury or illness from transport and by providing travel options to keep people active and independent	<p>Reduce health inequalities in Darlington</p> <p>Integrate transport into the public health agenda and increase levels of active travel to improve health outcomes</p> <p>Continue to improve Darlington’s road safety record</p>	<p>Policy 11 – to develop and implement a model similar to that used in schools to increase levels of ‘active travel’, particularly in deprived wards, in an integrated approach to improve health outcomes.</p> <p>Policy 12 – to implement casualty reduction schemes to address known risks at particular locations</p> <p>Policy 13 – to reduce actual and perceived risks to travel through the implementation of area based improvements, supported by enforcement, education and training.</p>
To achieve a fairer society by enabling people to access jobs, education, training, health, food and green spaces	<p>Meet the needs of an increasing and aging population, with a wide range of travel requirements, including those that do not have access to a car.</p> <p>Identify solutions that address transport issues for those in rural areas (12% of the population) and disabled people (including those with a life limiting illness – 20%+ of the population)</p>	<p>Policy 14 – Promote independent travel and access to activities, services and facilities, in particular for those who are disabled or have a life limiting health condition</p> <p>Policy 15 – Prioritise the reliability, accessibility and availability of commercial public transport services through highway measures, land use planning, contracts/licensing and working with transport operators.</p> <p>Policy 16 - Facilitate the development of a strong community transport sector incorporating volunteer car driver schemes through partnership working with the</p>



		voluntary and community sector.
To achieve a better quality of life for all by improving the journey experience and minimising the negative impacts of transport such as noise, air pollution and accidents on the natural environment, heritage, landscape and people	<p>Provide a high quality journey experience for everyone, particularly on bus, coach and rail travel, including interchange.</p> <p>Provide the appropriate quantity and quality of parking for all modes and users including freight, coaches, taxis, motorcycles and bikes.</p> <p>Address the behaviour of all transport users</p> <p>Implementation of the Rights Of Way Improvement Plan and Green Infrastructure Strategy to protect and enhance the natural environment whilst providing sustainable transport networks.</p>	<p>Policy 17 – Maintain the highway network for the safe and convenient movement of people (including pedestrians and cyclists) and freight in accordance with the Transport Asset Management Plan, including strengthening and maintenance of structures.</p> <p>Policy 18 – Provide information on transport and travel options before and during journeys to help plan and improve the journey experience. This should include training, the use of technology, education and visible enforcement to address individual behaviours.</p> <p>Policy 19 – Improve waiting environments for passengers using rail, coach, local bus and taxi services, particularly for disabled people. Improve the quality of parking for all modes of transport.</p> <p>Policy 20 – New transport infrastructure and maintenance schemes will take into account the need to preserve landscape character, wildlife habitats and species, air, water and soil resources and special characteristics of the historic environment as far as possible, and take opportunities to enhance them where appropriate.</p>
<i>Implement schemes<sup>10</sup> that demonstrate value for money and/or deliver the greatest outcomes at a local level</i>	<p><i>Reduced levels of funding and changes in the types of funding available from Government</i></p> <p><i>Greater focus on local decision making to meet local needs</i></p>	<i>Policy 21 – The funding allocation for structural maintenance should be set at an appropriate amount to maintain the highway network at a reasonable condition level and the integrated block funding should be focussed on managing the network more efficiently and effectively. As funding increases there can be further opportunity for enhancing the network. Funding decisions should reflect the outcomes set out in this Plan.</i>

27. A number of targets have been set and indicators selected, in line with the recently announced consultation on a Single Data Set<sup>11</sup>.
28. A broad range of possible options has been developed from evidence and consultation to deliver against these policies. The final stage of the process was to appraise the potential options using a multi criteria appraisal matrix. This was used to develop the Implementation Plan, subject to the funding that is available. This comprises a detailed delivery programme for 2011/2012 and 2012/13 and an indicative programme for a further 2 years (based on the indicative funding allocations). The LTP3 Implementation Plan was considered by Cabinet as a separate report on 8 March 2011, following Council’s decisions on the MTFP on 3 March 2011.
29. The draft Plan can be found in **Appendix 1** and the associated impact assessments, consultation and related strategies and plans are in annexes detailed in **Appendix 2**.

<sup>10</sup> This is not one of the 5 outcomes for the Plan but is a key consideration in light of budget pressures, increased local decision making and the national theme of policies being sustainable in terms of their environmental benefits in reducing carbon emissions, but should also be fiscally and economically sustainable.

<sup>11</sup> Single Data Set; DCLG, December 2010 – consultation to close 4 February 2011.

## Outcome of Consultation

30. A series of consultation activities were held between November 2009 and December 2010. It included workshops arranged for specific groups, namely Darlington Partnership theme groups, young people, transport stakeholders, older people, businesses, disabled people and people living in rural areas.
31. Talking Together events were arranged for local people at different stages in the process in November 2009 and July 2010. In addition an on-line forum was set up, promoted in the local press, in November 2009, July 2010 and December 2010 as well as opportunities for people to register comments/ideas by phone, email or post.
32. The Draft Plan was sent to Statutory stakeholders including the Highways Agency, rail operators, bus companies as well as other interested stakeholders such as neighbouring local authorities, Police, JobCentre Plus, NHS County Durham, and groups representing disabled people, cyclists, freight, coaches and older people. The consultation was for a 4-week period ending 13 December 2010.
33. Economy and Environment Scrutiny Committee were involved in the development of the Plan at 3 stages in November 2009, 17 June 2010 and 16 December 2010.
34. This consultation has resulted in amendments to the goals, the identification of new challenges and further ideas for possible options. As the issue of reduced funding became apparent, part of the consultation in July included gathering peoples' views as to how funding should be allocated between maintaining, managing and improving the transport network.
35. A summary of the consultation is included in **Annex 1** of the LTP3.
36. Statutory impact assessments have also been undertaken and the outcomes have been used to amend the Plan. The Disability Equalities Impact Assessment highlighted the need to clearly state that the outcomes which refer to 'everyone' or 'all' specifically include disabled people. There was also a consensus that the how the strategy is delivered through the Implementation Plan is critical to whether policies have a negative or positive impact for disabled people. This is being addressed through further work on the Implementation Plan and how it is carried out on an ongoing basis.
37. The EQIA and DEIA are included in **Annex 3** of the LTP3.
38. The Sustainability Appraisal and Strategic Environmental Assessment of the 3LTP have been completed. An Appropriate Assessment Screening Report has been produced under the Habitats Regulations to ensure that the 3LTP does not have a detrimental impact on natural habitats, flora and fauna. All these documents have been reviewed by the statutory consultees (Natural England, English Heritage and the Environment Agency) and have received positive feedback. Ongoing monitoring at the local and Tees Valley level will identify any future issues, in particular relating to cumulative impacts of transport schemes.
39. A summary of the environmental impacts are included in **Annex 2** of the LTP3.