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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.

**Delivery of the Local Transport Plan 2011-2026**

2. Cabinet members considered an update on the delivery of Darlington's Local Transport Plan (LTP) set within the context of Darlington's Strategy for delivering economic growth, new housing and an increase in jobs. Approval was granted for the release of capital funding for the LTP delivery plan in 2015/16 with provisional indicative spend plans to 2017/18.
3. Cabinet also acknowledged the receipt of additional Local Sustainable Transport Fund (LSTF) funding. In March 2014 the Council's sustainable transport team led a Tees Valley bid to LSTF for funding in 2015/16, securing a total of £1.267M to be shared between the five Tees valley Local Authorities. Stockton Council is acting as the accountable body for this money, with Darlington managing £510K, for projects in Darlington as well as Tees Valley-wide Personalised Travel Planning and marketing programmes.

**Department for Transport Maintenance Challenge Fund**

4. The Council has been successful in a bid to the Department of Transport and has been allocated £5.792m to carry out significant works to street lighting which includes the replacement of a large number of lighting columns and converting the lanterns to LED technology. The bid also includes structural repairs to Stonebridge. This has been matched by the Council with £1.950m of LTP funding.
5. The street lighting programme will deliver a step change in the age, quality and energy efficiency of the Council's street lighting stock. The funding will enable the replacement of approximately 4,000 street lighting columns that are over 40 years of age and the replacement of approximately 12,000 lanterns with LED technology.
6. This will significantly reduce energy costs and will lead to savings in terms of routine maintenance and reduced carbon consumption. It is anticipated that the changes will result in a £13.27m saving in energy and maintenance costs and 37,511T of carbon savings over the next 20 years.
7. Stonebridge was built in 1894 and is a key piece of infrastructure into the town centre that requires some structural maintenance. The Council receives a nominal annual allocation from the LTP of £0.234m for repairs to all highway structures. The

successful bid for the scheme, with an estimated cost of £800k, will allow the works to be undertaken without reducing maintenance spend on other elements of the highway.

### **Central Park Infrastructure Works**

8. Tees Valley Unlimited has released £2.2m of funding for the construction of a new signal controlled junction on Yarm Road, near Green Street and creation of a spine road into the site to enable the full development of 26,000m<sup>2</sup> of commercial floor space in the Central Park southern commercial area. This will serve recent developments in the area including Business Central and National Biological Centre premises, future committed development such as the National Horizons Centre and Factories for the Future, as well as opening up further land for development, further enhancing the reputation of this area as a place to live, learn and work.
9. Design work is at an advanced stage with work programmed to start on the junction in late May/early June 2015 and be complete by the end of March 2016.

### **Rail**

10. The last couple of years have seen a significant amount of activity in the Rail industry with a number of franchises being re-let.
11. The Department for Transport (DfT) issued consultation on rail devolution in 2012. Since then the 30 local transport authorities in the North of England, under the 'brand name' of Rail North, have been working to steer and influence the development of the new Northern and TransPennine Express franchises, commencing from their renewal in February 2016.
12. The Leader and Chief Executive have been involved, as nominees of the Tees Valley in the development of these proposals and this formed Rail North Limited. The Leader has become a Director of the Rail North Limited (RNL), to represent the interests of the Tees Valley Local Authorities.
13. The Northern and Trans Pennine Franchises are due for renewal in 2016 and the invitation to Tenders has been published to shortlisted bidders. These have included a number of achievements that Rail North has sought to achieve:
  - (a) The invitation to tenders included a significant step change for rail in terms of the requirement for new rolling stock and the need to replace the Pacer fleet.
  - (b) The requirement for the Northern Franchise to include a North East Business Unit (NEBU) whereby the interests of the North East can influence the levels of service and standards across the region.
14. Officers from across the Tees Valley are meeting the bidders to ensure the needs and desires of the Tees Valley are understood and built into their bids.

15. The Electrification Task Force report was also published with the Northallerton to Middlesbrough line in the top tier of lines to be considered for funding. The Bishop Auckland/Darlington to Saltburn and Sunderland lines were included in the second tier. Ensuring these lines were established as high priorities was also a key priority for the Tees Valley, which has been secured.
16. The work undertaken to date in securing these achievements will ensure transformational change in rail infrastructure and services in the future for the Tees Valley and North East region.

### **Bank Top Station**

17. Tees Valley Unlimited has released £300k of funding for the development of feasibility work and a master planning process for rail infrastructure improvements and connectivity at the Station and in the surrounding area. This is being undertaken in partnership with Network Rail and Virgin East Coast Trains.
18. Bank Top station is a critical piece of infrastructure that serves the region and its importance in stimulating Economic Growth has sub-regional significance. The project is aimed to ensure the station is able to cope with projected growth that Strategic Economic Plans set out to achieve, it aims to improve connectivity across the region by acting as a more efficient interchange between interconnecting services and in the longer term is ready for HS2. It is anticipated that this work be a key influence on Network Rail's future funding programmes.

### **Other Station Works**

19. Following substantial delays by Network Rail, Northern Rail took over the project to install real-time customer information displays. The display at North Road Station is now in place and working. Northern Rail has also agreed to provide planters on the station platform to enable the station adopters, Bishop Trains, to maintain floral displays for passengers. The undergrowth on the approach to the platform has been removed to tidy up the station environment.

### **Transport for the North**

20. The Transport for the North report, The Northern Powerhouse: One Agenda, One Economy, One North was published in March 2015. This is a high level document setting out proposals for a transport strategy for the North with investment in improved road, rail, air and freight transport delivering a faster, more reliable and efficient transport system, supporting economic growth across the North of England.
21. A Tees Valley delegation of Members, Senior Officers and Business Leaders was coordinated by Darlington and Tees Valley Unlimited to meet Senior Officials of the Department for Transport to ensure the views of the Tees Valley were registered.
22. The generic headlines and broad thrust of the strategy is very much in accord with Darlington and the Tees Valley's ambitions for delivering a modern transport system that works well for people and for business. However, over the next few

months Transport for the North will develop plans for governance, management of partnerships with Highways England (formerly called Highway's agency) and Network Rail. The Local Enterprise Partnership, Tees Valley Unlimited have a vital role in influencing these plans, ensuring that Darlington and Tees Valley priorities are given equal consideration as plans for transport investment are developed and included within the governance arrangements.

### **Strategic Highway Infrastructure**

23. A study has been commissioned jointly with Highways England (formerly called Highway's agency) and the Tees Valley Authorities looking at Infrastructure needs for the Strategic highway network. Highways England has funded 90 per cent of the study.
24. The purpose of the study is to examine the issues and constraints associated with the A66 from Port of Tees to the A1(M) and from the A689 from the A19 to the A1(M), to identify opportunities and options for resolving them to improve links between the Tees Valley and the wider road network and increase the economic competitiveness of the Tees Valley.
25. The work is being programmed to ensure it enters Highway England's funding programmes

### **Carlbury Bank Landslip**

26. The original works were completed in April 2015. The project is within budget and this has provided an opportunity to consider resurfacing more of the road than originally planned.
27. Undertaking more resurfacing now will mean the condition of the road is improved and will reduce the need to close it in the future. The resurfacing work in this location is the last element of the project and can only take place when all the pipe diversions and soil nailing had been completed. The impact of doing more work at the end of the project does mean extending the length of the closure slightly.
28. Resurfacing has already been undertaken on the A67 West of the Elm Ridge Roundabout and between Merrybent and High Coniscliffe on the A67 where it has been possible to take advantage of the existing closure of the A67. This will also minimise the potential for any closures of this road once it is re-opened.
29. It is anticipated the road will re-open towards the end of May 2015 with more details around the precise opening date to be published when confirmed.
30. The Council has worked hard to deliver the project to the original programme and get the road re-opened as soon as possible, but this small extension of the closure will be beneficial in the long term.
31. Following the re-opening of the A67 a programme of works is planned for the diversion route which has deteriorated due to the significant increase in traffic using the route since the landslip was identified.

32. The works will be undertaken in a series of phases commencing in June 2015 once the A67 is re-opened. The works will be undertaken under traffic light control and road closures the details of which will be published in advance of the works.
33. Due to the nature of the road there is no option other than to close the road in some locations to undertake the works.
34. We anticipate the improvements to the diversion route will extend into Summer 2015.

### **Highway Maintenance Schemes**

35. Recently completed schemes:

- (a) Belgrave Terrace, Hurworth – Footway Refurbishment
- (b) Farrer Street and Anns Terrace Back Lane - Back Lane Refurbishment
- (c) Cleveland Terrace/Cleveland Avenue Roundabout - Carriageway Resurfacing

36. Ongoing schemes:

- (a) Coleridge Gardens – Carriageway Patching and Resurfacing
- (b) Tyne Crescent – Carriageway Patching
- (c) A1150, Whinfield Road, Springfield to Whinbush Way - Footway Refurbishment

37. Schemes due to commence:

- (a) Coombe Drive – Carriageway Refurbishment
- (b) Faverdale / Faverdale North Junction - Carriageway Resurfacing
- (c) A68 West Auckland Rd - Burtree Ln to A1m - Carriageway Resurfacing
- (d) B6275 Station Road, A67 to B6275 - Carriageway Resurfacing (As item 5 above)
- (e) B6279 Staindrop Rd, B6275 to 500m East of A1m bridge - Carriageway Resurfacing (As item 5 above)
- (f) A167 Croft Rd Ph4 - Carriageway Resurfacing

### **School Travel Plans**

38. The Watt Bikes competition between secondary schools in Darlington has now entered its fifth year. Four schools participated in the competition, which this year was held at Hurworth School for the first time. The competition was very fierce with several longstanding competition records broken on the night. The finishing order was 1st Longfield, 2nd Carmel, 3rd Hurworth and 4<sup>th</sup> Darlington School of Mathematics and Science. The planned area finals where Darlington's top three schools will face three Durham schools had to be postponed from 25 March and a provisional date for the competition is now 22 April.
39. The Local Motion team are piloting a new approach to working with secondary schools. Longfield Academy and Darlington School of Mathematics and Science are participating in the School Travel Ambassadors programme following on from a lively and interactive roadshow that was held in the schools in the autumn term.

The pupils have been looking at issues relating to sustainable transport and thinking about what they can do to address them and put together project proposals during the spring term.

40. On 18 March 2015 the schools attended an expert panel event in the Dolphin Centre at which their ideas were assessed and they were given feedback and advice. At the panel event the groups had a chance to pitch for a small pot of funding to assist them in carrying out their projects. Both groups were successful in gaining support for their projects which they will be delivering through the summer term.
41. Longfield pupils identified that personal security fears while travelling were an issue for lots of students so they are working on a video project and e-mail advice service to start to tackle this. Darlington School of Mathematics and Science pupils felt that there were issues around low cycling levels and lack of interest in cycling among pupils so they are looking at different ways of encouraging pupils to give cycling a go.

### **Workplace Travel Plans**

42. Darlington and three other Tees Valley local authorities have teamed up with Love to Ride, a national organisation promoting cycling, who are running the first ever National Workplace Cycle Challenge which will take place between 8 – 28 June. A Challenge Manager started working in Darlington on 23 March and is engaging with local businesses and their employees. It is hoped that by June a large number of businesses from across the Tees Valley will have signed up to the challenge. To encourage as many individuals to take part as possible, cyclists only have to cycle for 10 minutes. This means the focus is on participation rather than distance. A follow up survey will reveal how many people have continued to cycle after the challenge.

### **Cycling in Darlington Pedestrian Heart**

43. Cabinet received a report from the Place Scrutiny Committee to outline the background of the work undertaken by the Scrutiny together with their findings and approved the recommendations of Place Scrutiny Committee on cycling in the Pedestrian Heart.
44. A comprehensive set of recommendations were approved to encourage the Council and the Police to work together to inform cyclists of the concerns of pedestrians, particularly the elderly.

### **Public Transport**

45. **Feethams Bus Stops** - Work in March focused around construction of the bus layby and associated service diversions and footway works. The steps were constructed towards the end of April 2015 with the final work being to relay the concrete slab that forms part of the forecourt. The works are due for completion mid May 2015 and include two new bus stop shelters with timetables cases and real time displays. Arriva will commence using the new bus stops (stops M and T) from

17 May 2015 in line with changes being made to their network from this date. The current stop M on Tubwell Row will be removed.

46. This project is part of a wider programme of works to improve the Feethams area, which includes the construction of the Department for Education building, cinema development, multi storey car park and associated public realm and traffic management improvements.
47. **Feethams Coach Stop** - The footpath at Feethams coach stop has been widened as part of the works to improve the Feethams area. Further improvements to the coach stop area have been submitted for planning permission including improved lighting and toughened glass screens. Designs for the screens have been created with the aim of making the coach stop area more welcoming to those travelling by coach to and from Darlington. The work will take place in the summer.
48. **Town Centre Bus Stops** - New graphic panels were installed at town centre bus stops, funded through the Local Sustainable Transport Fund. The design includes the stop letter (e.g. Stop A) and helps passengers to more easily identify the town centre stop they require. The changes have been developed with RNIB to assist those who are partially sighted, following feedback from some residents that town centre stops are not easy to find.
49. **Bus Services** - Arriva launched new larger double deck buses on its Sapphire service 7 in April due to the increase in patronage on this service, which launched in December 2013. The new buses have additional next stop announcement displays. This is particularly of benefit to people with visual impairments and those who may not be familiar with the local area. Arriva has also introduced new buses on their X1 service in April, which are micro-hybrid Euro 6 rated vehicles, the newest and highest rated emission friendly vehicles. The X1 will also be fitted with the next stop announcement system.
50. Arriva are to introduce changes to network with effect from 17 May 2015 following consultation with local people through an online survey in March 2015. The changes will be introduced on 17 May 2015 and are to improve cross-town connections and further improve punctuality and reliability. At stop timetable information will be updated the night of the change at all effected bus stops. The A-Z destination posters and real time displays in the town centre will also be updated. Traveline will be updated with the changes two weeks before the change.
51. **Community Transport** - The contracts for the operation of grant funding for community bus services 16/16A and 20 comes to an end in June 2015 and as such the services were reviewed during March 2015. The review took place in light of a small amount of grant funding received from Government from the devolved Bus Service Operators Grant (BSOG) until 2017. Surveys took place with passengers using the services and this was considered together with patronage data and concessionary fares information. The current operator of the service 16/16A, has indicated a large proportion of the service 16 will operate commercially from July 2015. Work is ongoing investigating what additional support may be made available for these services beyond the commercial element of the service 16 and considering patronage levels on the service 20.

52. **Customer Satisfaction with Bus Services** - Every year Passenger Focus carry out a survey of local bus passengers in Darlington and the Tees Valley. These surveys are part funded through the Tees Valley Bus Network Improvements (TVBNI) project in order to monitor the project's success. The results of the 2014 surveys are very encouraging and suggest that passengers are noticing the significant investment that is going into bus services from the both the local authority and Arriva. Across a whole range of indicators satisfaction is increasing, including those elements of bus travel that the local authority has directly influenced through TVBNI and LSTF investment, e.g. investment in bus priority is reflected in higher satisfaction with punctuality and journey time, investment in customer waiting facilities is reflected in higher satisfaction with bus stops and investment in driver training is reflected in improved satisfaction with driver attitude.
53. In relation to the 32 aspects of bus travel that were covered by the survey, 27 areas showed an improvement in passenger satisfaction, four showed no change and only one (temperature on the bus) showed a slight decline. Below are a selection of the key indicators and the level of satisfaction recorded in the last three years:

	2012	2013	2014
Overall Satisfaction	85%	86%	89%
Value for money	59%	58%	62%
Punctuality	73%	75%	76%
Journey time	88%	86%	89%
Bus stop overall	74%	75%	78%
Bus stop condition	62%	72%	75%
Attitude of driver	69%	73%	75%

### Local Sustainable Transport Fund 2012-2015

54. **Personalised Travel Planning** - A team of eleven Travel Advisors began work on 7 April. The advisors are divided into two teams, one of which will cover the Tees Valley authorities and the other will work in South Durham. (Darlington is leading this work on behalf of other authorities). The team will be contacting residents in each of the areas to give out travel information and also collect any comments that residents have regarding sustainable transport. A similar project has run in Darlington over the last three years, during which time all households within the Borough have been contacted. The team operate between April to October and previous Travel Advisors have gained valuable experience and have all gone on to further employment.
55. As part of Local Motion, Groundwork will be delivering an extensive programme of walking activities across the Borough, starting in April. The aim is to encourage people of all ages to walk more, exploring their local area and getting involved in other community based activities including environmental projects and play schemes.
56. A new Local Motion website has been launched – [www.dothelocalmotion.co.uk](http://www.dothelocalmotion.co.uk). This provides a journey planner, case studies and lots of information about sustainable



transport. The website sits alongside the Facebook and twitter feeds, which have become the main communication tools due to their low costs and wide reach.

57. **‘Try something new’** - A Local Motion campaign was initiated in early January to capitalise on people's desire to make positive changes in their lives in the New Year. It was aimed at car drivers commuting to Darlington for work and we partnered with local radio station TFM Radio to reach our target audience. The campaign consisted of the TFM Street Team promotion; online video competition; commercial air time; digital advertising; petrol pump advertising; and social media posts.
58. The results were:
- (a) A total of 1,050 competition entries were received, over 300 of which opted in to receive further information from Local Motion.
  - (b) 2,720 click-throughs from digital adverts to the competition page and to Aycliffe-Darlington bus ticket page of Arriva's website.
  - (c) 117 email addresses added to the Local Motion mailing list as a direct result of the TFM street team's promotional activity.
  - (d) 60 weekly bus tickets and 170 Bishop Line one-day train tickets issued to commuters interested in trying a new way to travel to work.
59. **Big Summer Days Out 2015** - Following the success of last year's 'Big Summer' (walking and cycling campaign) and 'Great Days Out' (public transport campaign), May 2015 will see the launch of 'Big Summer Days Out' which brings together the best aspects of two previous initiatives into one summer campaign, aimed at promoting walking, cycling and public transport.
60. The campaign is built around a revamped website that promotes discounts at various attractions around the region for people arriving on public transport, and a range of 'free' destinations that can be visited on foot or by cycle. The site will also highlight activities that are taking place over the summer months in South Durham, Darlington and the Tees Valley and other local authorities will be invited to upload their events to the website.
61. The campaign will be promoted using a range of media including TFM radio and digital platforms and will provide more reasons for local residents to explore the area by bus, train, bike and on foot over the summer. The website will go live from May 2015

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