

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.

Harrowgate Hill School One Way System Objections of Traffic Regulation Order

2. Cabinet considered an objection that had been received in response to proposed changes to traffic regulation orders in the back lane to the south of Thompson Street West. After consideration it was agreed to proceed with scheme.
3. The basis of the objection was that parental parking creates significant issues for extended periods around the school start and finish times.
4. The Police, emergency services and the School were also consulted and were supportive of the scheme which will improve safety at the school entrance and facilitate the expeditious movement of traffic in accordance with the Council's statutory network management duty.
5. Following implementation the scheme will be monitored.

Additional Highway Maintenance Funding

6. Cabinet agreed the release of Capital grant funding of £178k for the severe weather 2013/14 to supplement the delivery of a programme of maintenance throughout the Borough's road network.
7. Cabinet also approved submission of a bid to the Department of Transport for additional maintenance funding. The bid was successful and a provisional allocation has been made of £225,927, which is subject to grant conditions being issued and accepted. The priority for the funding will be on reactive and preventative treatments on all roads with specific targeted treatment on 'C' class and unclassified roads to address the declining trend in condition.

Feethams Programme – Bus and Coach Improvements

8. Cabinet approved the release £0.477 million Tees Valley Bus Network Improvement funding to enable the detailed design and delivery of the Bus and Coach Waiting Facility Improvements Project. The Project forms part of a wider Feethams development and will provide improved public transport and coach facilities, reduce bus congestion on Tubwell Row and improve the public realm

around the Town Hall and Dolphin Centre to match the cinema development frontage.

Inner Ring Road/Stonebridge Junction Project

9. The scheme to remodel the Stonebridge Inner Ring Road commenced in February. The scheme, which is funded by Tees Valley Bus Network Improvement Project, involves removing the existing roundabout and replacing with a traffic signal controlled junction.
10. The proposals form part of the longer term vision for delivery of the Town Centre Fringe Regeneration including improving pedestrian connections across the Ring Road and the aspiration to create a pleasant riverside walk along the banks of the River Skerne as it passes through the Town and help create opportunities for improved flood defences. The scheme will be particularly beneficial in accommodating additional traffic associated with developments such as the cinema and the Department for Education building.
11. The scheme is being constructed on a phased approach with a total of nine phases having been identified. This approach has been taken to minimise traffic disruption and to maintain alternative pedestrian and cycle routes through the construction period. Traffic management will be in place throughout the project and will be regularly reviewed to ensure that it is both safe and serviceable.
12. The works around Freemans Place roundabout are now substantially complete. Statutory Undertakers (gas, water, electric etc.) have been carrying out work to protect their equipment prior to the road being widened. This will continue into the Summer months with BT and Northern Gas Networks being the main services involved.

A67 Carlbury Banks Landslip

13. Phase 2 commenced on 2 June 2014 and will last approximately four months. There are two large Northumbrian Water Limited (NWL) mains located underneath the road. Each carries water supplies into Darlington and beyond. These pipes need to be diverted out of the road so that the unstable road can be repaired without risking water supply. One kilometre of new pipeline and major works within the road at the points the pipes are diverted. There are major works required in the road to connect and divert these pipes, which means there will be very little road left whilst these excavations and diversions are undertaken. Unfortunately, this means the road has to be closed and the works will take approximately four months.
14. Phase 3 is currently programmed to commence in October 2014 and will last approximately six months. DBC have appointed a contractor to undertake stabilisation works to the embankment, which will need to be undertaken from the top of the embankment. The technique is likely to be soil nailing. The road will be used as the point where the drilling equipment is lowered down the embankment to do the works. There will be little road space left making it impossible to work safely and allow traffic along the A67.

15. A Shuttle Bus, Service 67, operated by Taxicall, is providing a service between High Coniscliffe and Darlington Town Centre seven days per week. Additional journeys are being operated following feedback from local people following the temporary closure last year. This ensures that residents who are no longer able to use Arriva's Service 75/76, which has had to divert to use Staindrop Road due to the road closure, are still able to travel. Additional bus stops have been provided on Carmel Road for customers to use Service 75/76.

Town Centre Car Parks

16. A programme of car park resurfacing improvements is being undertaken as part of the Council's parking strategy. The works have been timed to so that the improved car parks are in place prior to the cinema development and associated multi-storey car park.
17. Commercial Street West car park has recently been resurfaced and extended. It is intended to resurface Park Place West car park by the end of August.

Tees Valley Bus Network Improvements

18. The Tees Valley Bus Network Improvements (TVBNI) programme of bus stop improvements continues to be rolled out across the town on core bus routes. New bus shelters have been installed in Branksome and along the A167 North Road. The next area to benefit from improvements will be the Springfield, Brinkburn and Denes areas.

Highway Maintenance Schemes

19. Recently completed schemes:
- (a) B6275 Station Road – Patching/reconstruction (prior to A67 Carlbury slip Road closure)
 - (b) B6279 Staindrop Road – Patching/reconstruction (prior to A67 Carlbury slip Road closure)
20. Ongoing schemes:
- (a) Nelson Terrace - Microsurfacing (Slurry Sealing)
 - (b) Geneva Terrace - Microsurfacing (Slurry Sealing)
 - (c) George Street - Microsurfacing (Slurry Sealing)
 - (d) Stonedale Crescent - Microsurfacing (Slurry Sealing)
 - (e) Hardwick Close - Microsurfacing (Slurry Sealing)
 - (f) Nightingale Avenue - Microsurfacing (Slurry Sealing)
 - (g) Norton Crescent Sadberge - Microsurfacing (Slurry Sealing)
 - (h) Cliffe Way, Gilling Crescent, Rear Eppleby Way and other areas of Estate - Microsurfacing (Slurry Sealing)
 - (i) Louisa Street, Eastbourne Road to Yarm Road - Microsurfacing (Slurry Sealing)
 - (j) Lodge Street - Microsurfacing (Slurry Sealing)
 - (k) North Cottages, School Aycliffe - Microsurfacing (Slurry Sealing)

- (l) Garthlands, Heighington cul-de-sac area - Microsurfacing (Slurry Sealing)
- (m) Kirstall Crescent - Microsurfacing (Slurry Sealing)
- (n) Pierremont Drive - Microsurfacing (Slurry Sealing)
- (o) Newlands Road - Microsurfacing (Slurry Sealing)
- (p) Brinkburn Drive, Brinkburn Road to Rye Hill - Microsurfacing (Slurry Sealing)
- (q) Mowden Street - Microsurfacing (Slurry Sealing)
- (r) Pendleton Road - end to Wadham Grove- Microsurfacing (Slurry Sealing)
- (s) Girton Walk, to Emmanuel Close - Microsurfacing (Slurry Sealing)
- (t) Woodburn Drive - Microsurfacing (Slurry Sealing)
- (u) Stonehurst Drive - Microsurfacing (Slurry Sealing)
- (v) Stonecliffe Drive - Microsurfacing (Slurry Sealing)
- (w) Bushel Hill Court - Microsurfacing (Slurry Sealing)
- (x) Pine Grove - Microsurfacing (Slurry Sealing)
- (y) Lingfield Green - Microsurfacing (Slurry Sealing)
- (z) East Close Sadberge - Microsurfacing (Slurry Sealing)
- (aa) Malim Road - Microsurfacing (Slurry Sealing)
- (bb) Rye Hill - Microsurfacing (Slurry Sealing)
- (cc) Branksome Terrace - Microsurfacing (Slurry Sealing)
- (dd) Kingsway Estate - Microsurfacing (Slurry Sealing)
- (ee) Low Coniscliffe - Microsurfacing (Slurry Sealing)
- (ff) Neasham Road - Microsurfacing (Slurry Sealing)
- (gg) Middleton St. George – Neasham - Microsurfacing (Slurry Sealing)

21. Schemes due to commence:

- (a) Stillington Road – Surfacing Dressing
- (b) C37 through Bishopton Village and (C49) Redmarshall Road – Surfacing Dressing
- (c) Neasham Hill – Surfacing Dressing
- (d) Faverdale/Faverdale North – Junction resurfacing

22. These techniques are not traditional methods and can raise concerns from residents. Ward Councillors were advised in advance that the appearance of these solutions can take time to wear-in. The areas are monitored for a period of time after initial treatment.

Public Transport

23. The Public Transport Punctuality Improvement Partnership has been re-established and is meeting quarterly. Representatives from the Police, bus operators and the Council attend. Arriva has introduced some minor service changes in May to improve punctuality and is promoting the real time app which enables passengers to view the location of their bus and see whether it is operating on time. Whilst some issues such as parking enforcement and bus stop design can be managed locally, more strategic issues will be taken to the Public Transport Board, which has replaced the TVBNI Board in terms of governance.

24. The next marketing campaign for ‘travel by bus’ is now underway. Great Days Out, (www.greatdaysout.org.uk) funded from TVBNI and LSTF, promotes leisure and tourism destinations in the Tees Valley and Durham and beyond, with over 60

attractions taking part. The campaign will be promoted via TFM and Magic radio stations, outdoor and digital marketing. As the campaign progresses it will be promoted through social media. The aim of the campaign is to encourage people to get out and about over the summer using public transport. Attractions are offering discounts and special offers to those arriving by public transport. A linked campaign 'Snap Up the Good Stuff' is targeting young people with promotion through secondary schools.

Local Motion (Local Sustainable Transport Fund)

25. The Local Motion Individualised Travel Marketing has been completed in eight wards in Darlington. All wards have now been covered over the last three years. This year the Team of Travel Advisors has used ipads and an app to manage the process of contacting households and recording information, improving the efficiency of the Team. This has helped the Team achieve their targets – to contact over 60 per cent of households and to achieve a participation rate of over 40 per cent. The Team has now moved to deliver the Local Motion ITM programme in Bishop Auckland and Coundon.
26. This year's MegaMotion campaign has come to an end with the presentation of 3,137 bronze awards, 2450 silver awards and 1401 gold awards to pupils across Darlington Borough. Impressively 169 children have become MEGA Heroes, travelling sustainably every Friday for a whole school year. The nine MEGA Friday walks held throughout the year have been well received and well attended by the schools involved.
27. Transition events were held with Year 6 pupils from nine schools. The events are designed to teach young people about travelling safely and independently when they move from primary to secondary school. All the attendees become Travel Rangers and were given a DVD to help their classmates back at school to choose how to travel to their new schools. The Transition event included five sessions – map work to identify a safe route to walk to school; road safety activity to learn how texting and listening to music can be a distraction when walking to school; mending a puncture on a bike; a visit to Bank Top Station to learn about the station and then a journey by train to North Road Station for further work on train timetables; and finally finding out about bus travel including safety features, behaviour and buying a ticket, before travelling by bus back to the Dolphin Centre. All Year 6 pupils in Darlington schools have received a Local Motion 'Go Your Own Way' workbook and a travel zone map for their secondary school to help them make their own travel choices for the new school term in September.
28. The Local Motion Cycling Officer has worked with the Carmel School Cycling Club, assisting in the preparation and planning of its ride from Edinburgh to Darlington in June. The group of young people aged between ten and 17 years old tackled the 200 mile trip to raise money for St Teresa's Hospice.
29. Bike Week was promoted in June with special events to promote travel to work by bike, including the formal opening of the cycle parking on the Town Hall Forecourt by the Mayor of Darlington. This facility, providing secure covered cycle parking in

the town centre, is available to the public and access cards are available from the Town Hall and Dolphin Centre.

30. Local Motion has launched its Big Summer campaign to promote walking and cycling. The campaign was launched at Darlington's Food Festival with a very popular smoothie bike. The automatic cycle counters and quarterly cycle counts continue to show increasing levels of cycling. The campaign will run all summer targeting different groups using social media, radio and advertising.

Tees Valley Rail

31. The Station Improvement project at Dinsdale Station, Middleton St George, funded from Tees Valley Rail, has been completed. The final work to install handrails alongside each ramp down to the platforms was completed in June. The Station has seen a huge increase in use over the last two years, from 28,408 in 2011/12 to 43,899 in 2013/14, a 55 per cent increase. Passengers are not only benefitting from the improvements at the Station itself but an increase in train service frequency to a half hourly service and discount tickets offers from the train operator.
32. James Cook University Hospital Rail Station opened on 18 May 2014. The Station is immediately adjacent to the hospital and there is a five/ten minute walk to the Hospital entrance. Passengers from Darlington Bank Top, North Road or Dinsdale Stations would need to change at Thornaby or Middlesbrough and the journey will take approximately 60 minutes.

Contractors Parking Waiver

33. The Council has introduced a new 'longer term' parking waiver for contractors working in the Town Centre and within Residents Parking Zones (RPZs).
34. The new parking waiver is in addition to the daily parking waiver, which will still be available to contractors for a fee of £5 per day.
35. Charges for the 'longer term' parking waiver have been set at a level intended to avoid misuse of the scheme, and to cover administration and enforcement costs. Charges will be as follows:
 - (a) 13 week waiver - £50
 - (b) 26 week waiver- £90
 - (c) 52 week waiver - £150
36. Contractors displaying a valid waiver in their vehicle will be able to park on residents' bays / pay and display bays/double yellow lines. To park on no waiting/loading bays they still need to call to get permission on each occasion, by contacting the Customer Services Centre.
37. The need for a revised scheme for issuing parking waivers to contractors frequently working in the Town Centre and within RPZs was highlighted during consultation on the Parking Strategy and identified as an action in the Strategy approved by Cabinet in March.

East Coast Mainline – Franchise

38. The three shortlisted bidders for East Coast Mainline (ECML) franchise are:
- (a) East Coast Trains Ltd (FirstGroup plc);
 - (b) Keolis/Eurostar East Coast Limited (Keolis (UK) Limited and Eurostar International Limited); and
 - (c) Inter City Railways Limited (Stagecoach Transport Holdings Limited and Virgin Holdings Limited).
39. Final bids for the franchise had to be submitted to the Department for Transport by 19 June, a decision on the award of the franchise is expected in November 2014.
40. The successful bidder is due to take over the franchise on 1 March 2015, which will run for eight years four weeks with a possible extension of two years.
41. Council Officers have been in contact with representatives from all three of the bidding teams.
42. In stressing the importance of rail connectivity Officers have:
- (a) drawn upon evidence on the value of the ECML to the national Economy from the 'Prospectus for Investment in the ECML', commissioned by the consortium of East Coast mainline authorities (ECMA);
 - (b) emphasised the role rail connectivity has locally as an 'Engine for Growth', as one of the main drivers influencing inward investment, a prime example being the CPI National Biologics centre development at Central park; and
 - (c) stressed that improved rail connectivity is a key objective for the Local Enterprise Partnership, and that the Council and LEP are ready to work with the franchise holder on developing improvement plans, particularly at Bank Top Station.

Councillor David Lyonette
Transport Portfolio