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**OVERVIEW OF HIGHWAYS AND TRANSPORT PORTFOLIO**

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1. Since the last meeting of Council, the following are the main areas of work that have been undertaken under the Highways and Transport Portfolio :-
  - (a) **Highway Winter Service Operational Plan 2004/05** – We approved the Highway Winter Service Operational Plan for 2004/05, which sets out the Council’s policies and actions in respect of winter services. The plan was first introduced last winter with this year’s plan remaining the same apart from minor alterations to gritting routes to accommodate changes in bus routes.
  - (b) **Durham and Darlington Transport for Health Partnership – Joint Working Arrangements** – The establishment of the Strategic Transport for Health Management Group was supported by Cabinet at its meeting held on 21st September, 2004. The Council would be represented on the Group by myself, the Cabinet Member with the Social Services Portfolio, the Director of Development and Environment and the Director of Social Services.
  - (c) **Darlington: A Town on the Move** – A ‘Town on the Move’ Reference Group was established by Cabinet to advise and support the Project Team on the delivery of this important project and to help in spreading the sustainable travel message to a wide audience of stakeholders. Cabinet also approved the expenditure on individualised travel marketing and, subject to evaluation of the individual initiatives by the Reference Group, the expenditure for this, and subsequent years, on other initiatives to progress the project. Work on the detailed travel behaviour research is now nearing completion, headline figures will be available in January, with full report expected at the end of February. The first meeting of the 'Town on the Move' reference group took place on 8 October, the group includes three Darlington Borough Council members plus representation from Darlington Partnership, the Acute Health Trust, Primary Care Trust, bus operators, community groups, Government Office, the Department for Transport, and others.
  - (d) **Hurworth to Neasham Footway/Cycleway – Compulsory Purchase Order** – Following the approval by Cabinet to construct a footway/cycleway from Hurworth to Neasham it has become necessary for the Council to use its formal compulsory purchase powers to acquire the freehold interest in the land needed for the footway.
  - (e) **Links to School Programme Release of Capital Funds** - £105,000 of external funding was released in order to fund three links of the cycle network at Cemetery Lane/Carmel Road cycle route, Red Hall/Skerne cycle route and Hurworth/Neasham cycle route.

- (f) **Second Local Transport Plan** - Consultants, Steer Davies Gleave, have been appointed to undertake initial stakeholder consultation for the preparation of Darlington's Second Local Transport Plan. This process will include briefing sessions for members on the Local Transport Plan and its relevance to local people. The second Local Transport Plan covers the period, 2006 to 2011 and has to be submitted to Government by 31 July 2005.
- (g) **Bus Information** - The Darlington Bus Map 2005 is currently being printed and will be distributed with the January edition of Town Crier.
- (h) **Concessionary Fares and Multi-operator ticket review** - Consultants, JMP Consulting Ltd., have been appointed to undertake a review of the Council's concessionary fare schemes to determine if the Council can better achieve its corporate goals by changing the detail of the schemes, or by introducing a new improved schemes. They are also examining the feasibility of introducing an operator/Council provided multi-operator ticket under the "Darlington; A Town on the Move" initiative - something which is increasingly viewed as desirable by local bus users. They are scheduled to report back by the end of the year.
- (i) **Safe Routes to School** - Heathfield and Dodmire Juniors have been working with School Travel Plan Officer Louise Neale and the Sustrans 'Bike It' Officer on encouraging cycling as part of their School Travel Plans. Recently Gary Evans from 'Bike Sport' has given his time free to the schools to provide basic cycle maintenance training to pupils. Louise is working with a further eight schools on the development of their Travel Plans.
- (j) **Cycle network** - Work is nearing completion on surfacing and lighting the bridlepath linking the West park development to Nickstream Lane. This has been part funded through a £20,000 Sustrans grant.
- (k) **North Road Corridor of Certainty** -
  - (i) Traffic Orders completed for Fitzwilliam Drive Traffic Calming and construction work order placed with Community Services.
  - (ii) Traffic order process for North Road Bus Lanes in progress.
  - (iii) Planning approval granted for Northgate bus bay scheme which involves the removal of the redundant toilet block to facilitate footpath and carriageway works.
- (l) **Darlington Eastern Transport Corridor**
  - (i) Statutory Procedures - Land acquisition is progressing and detailed design is ongoing. New Compulsory Purchase Order and Side Roads Order are about to be published.

(ii) A66 Bridleway Bridge - Design ongoing.

(m) **Other Schemes**

(i) West Park junction traffic signals - civil engineering works completed.

(ii) Whinbush Way Toucan installed.

(n) **Highway Maintenance Works** - Various schemes are due to commence/have commenced/been carried out since the last report:

(i) The following schemes have been commenced/are due to commence:

- A167 North Road - Raby Street to Peabody Street - footpath works ongoing.
- A68 West Auckland Road/Spring Court South - kerbing/footpaths/carriageway resurfacing.
- A1150 Salters Lane North Phase 1 - kerbing/carriageway strengthening and resurfacing.
- Unc Leith Road/Hill Close Avenue - carriageway strengthening.
- B6280 Yarm Road - McMullen Road towards Morton Palms - carriageway surfacing.
- Pierremont Road - carriageway reconstruction and resurfacing.
- Junction Roundhill Road and West End, Hurworth - carriageway resurfacing.
- A67 Piercebridge Junction - carriageway resurfacing.
- C182 Thompson Street East - carriageway resurfacing.

(ii) **The following schemes have been completed:**

- C180 Geneva Road Phase 1 - carriageway surfacing.
- C46 Great Burdon to Great Stainton - drainage works.
- Unc Spring Court - footpath works.
- Unc Victoria Road - footpath.
- A167 Grange Road Phase 3 - kerbing/footpaths/carriageway strengthening.
- Unc Kielder Drive/Meldon Close - footpath works.

- Swan House roundabout - carriageway resurfacing.

(o) **Traffic Management & Road Safety Schemes:**

- Ongoing works to provide dropped crossings for disabled persons at various locations in the town centre.
- West Park Cycleway/footway link has been completed.
- The Darlington Football Club Section 106 highway works at Neasham Road have recommenced following the completion of Network Rail's bridge works.
- Road safety improvements at C38a Neasham Road/Unc 53.3 Roundhill Road have been completed.
- Firthmoor traffic calming Phase 2 is substantially complete.
- Eggleston View additional traffic calming works are due to commence.
- Redworth Village 30 mph speed limit signing works about to commence.
- Alderman Leach Safer Routes to School - West Auckland Road footpath widening scheme is ongoing.
- A68 West Park cycleway/footway scheme is ongoing.

(p) **Road Safety Education, Training and Publicity Initiatives** - a number of initiatives have been instigated including the following:

- (i) The monthly child seat testing programme going well. Last session was Asda Supermarket on the 21 October, 2004.
- (ii) The new Darlington Drivers Guide has been produced and is currently being distributed. The Motor Risk Management Group distributed this to all Darlington Borough Council Drivers as part of a driver education programme.
- (iii) Child Safety Education Resources have been distributed to students at Darlington College of Art and Technology to assist with coursework.
- (iv) The major Walk to School Week annual event was held between 4-8 October 2004 which involved:
  - All primary schools.
  - Walk to School Week assemblies were offered to all primary schools, fourteen schools took up the invitation.

- This year the Department for Transport's National Football Club deal provided associate matchday sponsorship with Darlington's Football Club to reward the Walk to School Week prize winners at the home game on the 16 October 2004.
- (v) Stopwatch Theatre Company performed and held workshops of the play 'Drive Time' at Eastbourne school and Branksome Comprehensive.
- (q) **Bridgework Schemes:**
- (i) A167 Oxneyfield Bridge - design in progress with works programmed to commence in January.
  - (ii) Bishopton Bridge - design in progress with works programmed to commence in February 2005.
  - (iii) Polam Lane Bridge - width restriction in place. Temporary strengthening underway.

**Councillor Nick Wallis**  
**Cabinet Member with Highways and Transport Portfolio**