
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.

Tees Valley Bus Network Improvement

2. As the funding for this scheme was announced after 1 January 2010 it has been reviewed by the Department for Transport as part of the proposed spending cuts. It seems that the funding offer is still available, subject to agreement over the terms and conditions, including a revised funding profile over five years. A report will be taken to Cabinet once the position becomes clear.

Civil Parking Enforcement

3. All traffic regulation orders within the Borough were advertised in June/July in order to comply with the current target of implementing CPE in October. Works to refresh regulatory lining and signing are nearing completion. Surveys of the condition of the off street car parks have been carried out and a programme of works is being developed to improve the surfacing and parking bay dimensions in car parks where this is an issue. The car parking service has moved into new accommodation in block D of the Town Hall and training has been organised for staff to ensure that the change to Civil Parking Enforcement is done as seamlessly as possible.

Highway & Bridge Design Schemes

4. **Yarm Road and Woodland Road** – Feasibility studies are underway to investigate the possibility of on-road cycle lanes on Woodland Road and Yarm Road.
5. **North Road Bus Improvement Scheme** – Variations to the previously proposed scheme have been drawn up and computer modelled to allow congestion and delay effects to be assessed for each layout.
6. **Great Burdon to Sadberge Cycle Route** – Following completion of the route from the village green to Sadberge (DBC sections only) the remaining section to Stockton Road roundabout is currently under construction.
7. **Middleton-One-Row Retaining Wall Reinstatement** – The reinstatement drawings are now complete and the preparation of a planning application and contract documents can now begin.
8. **Hutton Avenue Footbridge Replacement** – The possible constraint on the scheme from the presence of water voles has now been lifted and vegetation management methods have been instigated to prevent their return. Funding considerations mean that this scheme may

be delayed into the next financial year depending on the outturn costs of competing structures schemes.

9. **Polam Lane Footbridge** – Meetings have been held with Public Utilities to finalise apparatus diversions and coordinate their works with the bridge repair contract. Expressions of interest have been requested from outside contractors with tenders to be invited in July.
10. **Chesnut Street Bridge** – A repair options report has been undertaken and is currently being considered. A temporary weight limit is now in operation

Highway Maintenance Schemes

11. Recently Completed Schemes:

- (a) Carriageway Slurry Sealing resurfacing at various sites throughout the Borough: Galloway/Annandale/Tayside; Shetland Drive Estate; Princess Road; Havelock Street; Southend Place; Melsonby Crescent; Baydale Road; Florence Street, Rosedale Crescent; Cotherstone Moor Drive; Teal Road; Wilton Drive and Westfield Drive/Osborne Close.
- (b) Eastbourne Cycleway – Rydal Road, rear of Dodmire School – renewal of tactile paving and centreline.
- (c) B6275 to Borough Boundary – carriageway edge reconstruction.
- (d) Sadberge, Church Row – provision of kerbed channel across junction.
- (e) Westmoreland Street/Whessoe Road junction – footway refurbishment.

12. Ongoing Schemes:

- (a) Auckland Avenue Phase 4 – footway refurbishment.
- (b) Barnes Road Phase 3 – footway refurbishment.
- (c) Polam Lane – carriageway resurfacing.

13. Schemes Due to Commence -

- (a) Allen Street Phase 1, Railway Bridge to Bowes Court – carriageway resurfacing.
- (b) Barton Street, Nestfield Street to DETC – carriageway resurfacing.
- (c) Laburnum Road – verge hardening.
- (d) Victoria Road, Railway Station to St Cuthbert's Way – footway crossing point refurbishment.

Winter/Adverse Weather Repairs

14. Permanent patching works are now ongoing and some selective surfacing schemes have been earmarked for the school holidays.

Traffic Management Schemes

15. **Fitzwilliam Drive/Leyburn Road Junction Improvement** – These works were completed in early July. We will continue to monitor traffic flows in the area to assess the impact of the scheme.
16. **Glebe Road Bus Stop Improvements** – Works to provide disability compliant raised bus platforms on Glebe Road, Laburnum Road and Mayfair Road were programmed to be completed in July.
17. **Denton Crossroads** - Works to improve the conspicuity of advisory and warning signs were completed in May.
18. **Safer Routes to School** – Consultation packs are being prepared for safer routes proposals at Northwood, Heathfield, Gurney Pease and Reid Street Schools. The schemes are intended to provide 20mph zones in the vicinity of the school entrances. A planning application has been submitted to provide one new path and improve another path within the grounds of Carmel School.
19. **Longfield School 20mph Zone** – A consultation event was held at Longfield School on 29 June 2010 to afford residents and parents a further opportunity to discuss and comment on proposals to improve road safety outside the school. All comments are currently being analysed after which a decision will be made as to whether the scheme goes ahead and if so in what form.

Road Safety Education, Training and Publicity Initiatives

20. A number of initiatives have been instigated, including the following:
 - (a) **Pedestrian Training** – Pedestrian training is continuing its success story and is now a respected event in most schools' activities. Most schools are now achieving a 90% plus take-up for this voluntary activity. Many schools are returning 100% consent forms.
 - (b) **Cyclist Training Activities** – Level two Bikeability training continued with cyclist training in the summer term.
 - (c) **School Activities** – Year 8 secondary school pupils in Carmel were introduced to 'Ghost Street as part of their Personal Safety Health Education day. All schools in the Borough were invited to take their year six pupils to attend the multi agency annual Safety Carousel. The agencies involved this year included police, electricity board and fire service. This year the road safety team changed their scenario from a seat belt demonstration to a road safety quiz. The change was a success and the majority of teachers and children liked the new format so much that we will be repeating the QUIZDOM interactive challenge next year. St John's was the final school to take part

in this year's Poetry Day tour which was held at the end of June.

- (d) **Drink Drive Campaign** – To remind the public about drink driving and the consequences of the morning after, the Road Safety Team held a football crossbar challenge for young footballers in the six-a-side Capita League. Eastbourne Sports Centre were helpful in allowing us the facilities and promoting the challenge for a few weeks prior to the event which was held at the beginning of the world cup. The idea behind the challenge was to ask the teams to aim for the crossbar normally and then once more wearing beer goggles which simulate the effects of imbibing a few units of alcohol. Everyone who took the challenge was given a boot bag with the reminder printed on that the body needs one hour to eliminate one unit of alcohol. Calculator wheels and other freebies were distributed in the bags to help spread the anti drinking and driving message. It was a pleasant fun evening and all who entered left with a serious message.
- (e) **Public Satisfaction Survey** – The Road Safety Team received good news at the beginning of this reporting period informing us of the results of a national IPSOS Mori poll of local authority residents. In the category for child road safety education Darlington achieved first place out of 76 authorities polled. This excellent news, combined with the latest released set of low casualty figures for children in the Durham Constabulary area, suggests that Darlington's road safety team is doing the right thing at the right time.

Concessionary Fare Passes

- 21. New concessionary fares application forms have been produced and the process streamlined in conjunction with Adult Social Services to simplify the process for applicants and staff dealing with applications. Initial planning has started for the re-issue of concessionary passes by March 2011.

Bus Driver Training

- 22. A mystery shopping exercise undertaken by young people and members of GOLD last year identified bus driver behaviour as an issue amongst some bus drivers. This has been discussed with Arriva and the company offered to allow a number of observers to attend a customer service and Disability Discrimination Act training course to see what training bus drivers receive. Representatives from Darlington Association on Disability, including a young person from their Young Leaders Group, GOLD, two young people and the Council's Public Transport Officer are to attend the course on 22 July. The aim is for these people to provide feedback to their own organisations and networks to explain what training is undertaken and also to provide Arriva with feedback and ideas if they feel the training can be improved.

Arriva Bus Workplace Challenge

- 23. The purpose was to challenge employees of Darlington organisations to travel to work by Arriva bus at least once during the challenge period, 14 to 25 June, with the aim of getting people to try the bus. Three large organisations were actively encouraged to participate - DBC, Cummins and Darlington College. However any Darlington organisation could participate. Bus trips made in challenge period were registered on the challenge website (<http://www.arrivabus.co.uk/buschallenge/>). All who registered were

entered into prize draw to win £250 high street shopping vouchers. In addition two prizes of £25 of high street vouchers for each of the three main organisations. Also, there will be a prize for the business that registers the most trips per number of staff and trees for all three organisations. Bus breakfasts are being provided for the three key organisations - staff who travel by bus that day will be given a free breakfast. Prizes and marketing were funded by Arriva.

Real Time Information

24. Real time information displays, which will show the actual time the bus will arrive at a given stop, will be erected at town centre stops, and various locations throughout the urban area in the coming months. An order for the equipment has been placed.

Cycling

25. The Cycling Festival will take place in South Park on Sunday 25 July. Sports Development has also arranged for other activities such as archery, bowls and climbing to take place to encourage as many people as possible to become active as part of a healthier lifestyle.
26. The Darlington Cycle Challenge runs from 5 - 25 July encouraging people to cycle for at least 10 minutes within this period. The aim is to get non-cyclists cycling and those that cycle occasionally to cycle more often. Local businesses have signed up to encourage their employees to take part.
27. New cycle parking was officially opened at St Bedes RC School on 29 April. The Sustrans Bike It Officer held three days of events at the school together with the Road Safety Team, Transport Policy team and PCSOs. All 240 children had an opportunity to take part in a variety of activities. A similar two day event was held to launch the cycle parking at St Theresa's RC Primary School on 27 May with 270 children taking part.
28. Medal Motion was launched on 24 May at Heathfield Primary School with a themed walk to school. The campaign ran in all primary schools across the Borough for a two week period, encouraging children to walk, cycle, travel by bus, car share or park and stride to school. Data from each school will be analysed and medals handed out to individual children for their achievements.

Rail

29. Feasibility work is continuing to explore the technical and economic issues in securing new platforms and associated facilities at Bank Top Station for the Tees Valley Metro. Funding is already secured for this feasibility work through the Regional Funding Allocation. However, all projects less than £5 million have been suspended and this impacts on the proposed new station at Durham Tees Valley airport. The review of government spending also casts considerable doubt on the chances of a Major Scheme Funding application for works at Bank Top Station. The Metro Project Board is actively reviewing options in the context of likely funding reductions.
30. The Community Rail Partnership Officer has completed a piece of research on the use of the Darlington to Bishop Auckland 'Heritage Line'. The research will enable the Partnership to adjust their Action Plan. The Partnership has used the evidence to agree that the name of the Line needs to be changed from the 'Heritage Line' as this has connotations

of steam trains and leisure trips rather than as a commuting line and passenger service for those wishing to access work, shopping, leisure and visit friends. The Partnership is considering using 'The Bishop Line' but this will need to be market tested before the name is adopted.

Third Local Transport Plan

31. Workshops have been carried out in May and June to develop a long list of potential options for the transport strategy and implementation plan. A Talking Together event held on 16 and 17 July has enabled local people to take part and add their ideas, comments and opinions. Work on the Health Impact assessment as part of the Strategic Environmental Assessment has also started in partnership with NHS County Durham.

Councillor David Lyonette
Transport Portfolio