

**LEADER'S OVERVIEW**

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**Cabinet**

1. Cabinet at its meeting on 3 November 2015, considered the Tees Valley Devolution Deal. The deal requires approval by each of the five Tees Valley Authorities. If approved, the next step will be the development of detailed implementation plans, including a Constitution for the Combined Authority and Mayoral governance arrangements. A further report on the deal can be seen elsewhere on this agenda.

**Regional and Tees Valley Updates**

2. The Tees Valley have secured a place on the Board of Transport for the North and I represent the Tees Valley alongside the Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP) Chair, Paul Booth. Transport for the North (TfN) brings together local authorities and combined authorities across the North of England to allow the North to speak with a single voice to Government. TfN will evolve into a Statutory Body working with the Local Enterprise Partnerships, Government, Highways England, HS2 Ltd and Network Rail through the TfN Partnership Board to develop a Northern Transport Strategy. It is through this programme that Darlington and the Tees Valley will drive our key infrastructure investment requirements to deliver our Strategic Economic Plan.
3. I continue to represent the Tees Valley on the Board of Rail North Limited. This brings together Local Transport Authorities (LTAs) across the North of England into one cohesive and proactive body, which represents the regional and local economic, transport and strategic objectives the rail industry. It has enabled Local Authorities to develop their understanding of rail industry processes and to provide their local experience and expertise to influence franchising outcomes as they never have before. This has influenced the development of the new franchises for Northern and Trans Pennine Express. The new franchises are expected to be announced in December 2015, which will see improvement to rail services across the North and within the franchise period the replacement of rolling stock and the removal of the redundant Pacer fleet.
4. The creation of North East Rail Management Unit (NERMU) was supported by Cabinet at its meeting on 3 November 2015 and I was nominated to sit on the Board to represent the five Tees Valley Council's. The establishment of the unit for the North East will allow for greater local involvement in the supervision of how local passenger train services are operated with the forthcoming Northern franchise.

## **Darlington Partnership**

5. Darlington Partnership held a conference entitled 'Darlington, A Culture of Ingenuity' in October which attracted 150 delegates. The objectives of the event were to:
  - (a) reach a shared understanding of how culture can play a role in the economic development of Darlington;
  - (b) recognise, celebrate and support the existing cultural activity in Darlington;
  - (c) agree a vision for Darlington's cultural offer of the future as part of the Tees Valley Culture; and
  - (d) a call to action for Capital of Culture bid 2025
6. The renowned designer, Wayne Hemingway was one of the speakers which also included Sharon Paterson, Assistant Dean (Business Engagement and Partnerships) Teesside University and Chair of Creative Darlington.

## **General Updates**

7. I was delighted to speak at the opening of the National Biologics Manufacturing Centre on 30 September 2015 on the impact that the Centre for Process Innovation Limited (CPI) has had on Darlington. The event was well attended with approximately 100 delegates from business, government and academia. The Centre aims to significantly increase the UK's manufacturing capability in biologics and strengthen the UK's position as the location of choice for life science companies.
8. The Festival of Thrift, which is one of the biggest events in the North East's social calendar, took place again at Lingfield Point on 26 and 27 September 2015. The event, which was free to attend, again saw an increase in attendance (45,000) and has been shortlisted for North East Tourism Event of the Year awards.
9. Darlington welcomed the New Zealand All Blacks to the Town at the beginning of October as part of the Rugby World Cup. The squad trained at the Darlington Arena, home of Darlington Mowden Park, for six days from 3 to 8 October 2015. Many rugby themed events were held during September and October to complement their stay and promote rugby.

## **Policing and Community Safety**

10. I was pleased to support the Hate Crime awareness week beginning 12 October 2015. The event entitled "Hate Crime and the Criminal Justice System" was launched at Darlington Town Hall by the Police and Crime Commissioners for County Durham and Darlington, Northumberland and Cleveland along with representation from the Crown Prosecution Service and Durham Constabulary. There was also a week of events across Darlington and the region, which

highlighted a different protected characteristic each day and showed the support available to victims who report hate crime.

11. The work with offenders in the Social Action Hub established between the Fire Service and the Community Rehabilitation Company (CRC) continues to make progress. A Community Justice/Social Action Co-ordinator has been appointed on a part-time basis to take the project forward. The Hub now operates every Thursday and compliance among service users is increasing, as they find the environment preferable to attending the Probation Office.
12. As part of this, a lunch club takes place one day each month with involvement of six service users. One of these has obtained employment as a direct result of their involvement in the initiative. Take up by offenders is still slow although growing. This is expected though as the Hub represents a new way of working with offenders, which will take time to embed. The success and increase in confidence of those who are taking part is however very apparent.

### **Drug and Alcohol Action Team (DAAT)**

13. The Drug and Alcohol Action Team and Board - DAAT- have both been renamed to Drug, Alcohol and Tobacco (DAT), to reflect the streamlining of substance use agendas and funding.
14. The Substance Use Strategy 2015-18 will cover the three elements of Prevention, Control and Recovery Treatment, setting indicators for adults and young people and across drugs, alcohol and tobacco under each strand. Consultation on the draft Needs Assessment Summary, opened up for partners and stakeholders via Survey Monkey over the summer, has now closed. Analysis is being carried out on the findings, which will be incorporated into the draft strategy. This will then also go out for wider consultation.
15. The North East Council on Addiction (NECA) Recovery and Wellbeing Service continues to progress well, with a formal launch held at The Gate on 12 November 2015. The event, which I opened, included a presentation ceremony where the Mayor, Councillor Nutt, presented service users with recently attained Diplomas.
16. The Novel Psychoactive Substances (NPS/Legal Highs) Stakeholder Group continues to develop and progress a local action plan to tackle associated harms. This includes rolling out the educational setting briefings to further education centres and colleges and expanding awareness training, provided by Durham Constabulary, to other partner organisations.
17. *Stoptober*, the national stop smoking campaign, was supported locally with prominent displays in the Local Authority, Healthy Hub and partner premises, including GP surgeries and Pharmacies. The DAT is now working with partners to plan for the 2016 Dry January campaign.

**Bill Dixon**  
**Leader**