



DARLINGTON
Borough Council

Cabinet Agenda

5.00 pm

Tuesday, 5 March 2024

Council Chamber, Town Hall, Darlington DL1 5QT

Members and Members of the Public are welcome to attend this Meeting.

1. Introductions/Attendance at Meeting.
2. Declarations of Interest.
3. To hear relevant representation (from Members and the General Public) on items on this Cabinet agenda.
4. To approve the Minutes of the meeting of this Cabinet held Tuesday, 6 February 2024.
(Pages 5 - 12)
5. Matters Referred to Cabinet –
There are no matters referred back for reconsideration to this meeting
6. Issues Arising from Scrutiny Committee –
There are no issues referred back from the Scrutiny Committees to this Meeting, other than where they have been specifically consulted on an issue and their comments are included in the contents of the relevant report on this agenda.
7. Key Decisions:-
 - (a) Council Plan – Report of the Chief Officers Executive.
(Pages 13 - 28)
 - (b) Darlington Transport Plan - Delivery Report – Report of the Group Director of Services.
(Pages 29 - 62)

- (c) Local Development Scheme (LDS) – Report of the Chief Executive.
(Pages 63 - 76)
8. Release of Capital Funds - Hurworth Schools Section 106 Funding and Beaumont Hill Capital – Report of the Group Director of People.
(Pages 77 - 80)
9. Changing Places Toilet (Darlington Hippodrome) - Release of Funding – Report of the Group Director of Services.
(Pages 81 - 84)
10. Regulation of Investigatory Powers Act (RIPA) – Report of the Group Director of Operations.
(Pages 85 - 88)
11. Membership Changes - To consider any Membership Changes to Other Bodies to which Cabinet appoints.
12. SUPPLEMENTARY ITEM(S) (if any) which in the opinion of the Chair of this Committee are of an urgent nature and can be discussed at this meeting.
13. Questions.



Luke Swinhoe
Assistant Director Law and Governance

Monday, 26 February 2024

Town Hall
Darlington.

Membership

Councillors Curry, Harker, McCollom, McEwan, Porter, Dr. Riley, Roche and Wallis

If you need this information in a different language or format or you have any other queries on this agenda please contact Lynne Wood, Elections Manager, Operations Group, during normal office hours 8.30 a.m. to 4.45 p.m. Mondays to Thursdays and 8.30 a.m. to 4.15 p.m. Fridays (e-mail Lynne.Wood@darlington.gov.uk or telephone 01325 405803).

**DECISIONS SHOULD NOT BE IMPLEMENTED BEFORE
MONDAY 20 FEBRUARY 2023**

CABINET

Tuesday, 6 February 2024

PRESENT – Councillors Harker (Chair), Curry, McCollom, McEwan, Porter, Dr. Riley, Roche and Wallis

INVITEES – Councillors Dulston, K Nicholson and Snedker

C95 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST.

There were no declarations of interest reported at the meeting.

**C96 TO HEAR RELEVANT REPRESENTATION (FROM MEMBERS AND THE GENERAL PUBLIC) ON
ITEMS ON THIS CABINET AGENDA.**

No representations were made by Members or members of the public in attendance at the meeting.

C97 TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THIS CABINET HELD ON 9 JANUARY 2024

Submitted - The Minutes (previously circulated) of the meeting of this Cabinet held on 9 January 2024.

RESOLVED – That the Minutes be confirmed as a correct record.

REASON – They represent an accurate record of the meeting.

C98 MATTERS REFERRED TO CABINET

There were no matters referred back for re-consideration to this meeting.

C99 ISSUES ARISING FROM SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

There were no issues arising from Scrutiny considered at this meeting.

C100 KEY DECISION - SCHOOLS ADMISSIONS 2025/26

The Cabinet Member with the Children and Young People Portfolio introduced the report of the Group Director of Services (previously circulated) requesting that consideration be given to the Local Authority's Admissions Policy (also previously circulated) for the 2025/26 academic year for maintained schools in the Borough.

The submitted report stated that, in line with the School Admissions Code 2021, an Admission Authority was required to annually determine the admission arrangements used to allocate places for schools for which it was the admission authority by 28 February in the

determination year; outlined the process for allocating places; the legal implications; and the consultation process.

Particular reference was made at the meeting to whether consideration had been given to including a further admission criteria, for oversubscribed schools, relating to whether a child had received free school meals in the previous six years. The Cabinet Member with the Children and Young People Portfolio responded thereon.

RESOLVED - That the admission arrangements for the two maintained primary schools in Darlington for entry in 2025/26 and for the administration of in-year applications thereafter, as detailed in the submitted report, be approved.

REASON - All admission authorities are under a statutory duty to determine admission arrangements for schools for which it is the admission authority every academic year.

C101 MEDIUM TERM FINANCIAL PLAN (MTFP)

Pursuant to Minute C76/Dec/23, the Leader introduced the report of the Chief Officers Executive (previously circulated) proposing a Medium Term Financial Plan (MTFP) for 2024/25 to 2027/28 (also previously circulated) including setting a budget and council tax increase for 2024/25, to Council on Thursday 15 February 2024, for approval.

The submitted report stated that the Council was facing unparalleled financial challenges stemming from reductions in public spending between 2010 and 2019 where the Council's budget was reduced by £46m in real terms; the aftermath of Covid; the current economic climate; increased cost of living; income deprivation and rising poverty; increased demand for children's social care; high inflation; and rising interest rates.

It was reported that all budgets had been reviewed and challenged; savings of £4.019m had been achieved; reserves would be utilised to meet the 2024/25 funding gap; the Council could deliver a balanced position until 2025/26 utilising those reserves; there was a significant annual budget deficit which was not sustainable and would need to be addressed; and that unless further government funding was forthcoming, the Council would need to undertake a fundamental review of its services over the course of 2024 to decide what and how services would be delivered in the coming years.

Details of the detailed revenue estimates 2024/25, budget pressures and savings, fees and charges proposals 2024/25, assumptions used to prepare estimates, projected Revenue Outturn 2023/24, Capital MTFP 2024/25 to 2027/28, proposals for children's social care and the minutes from the meeting of the Economy and Resources Scrutiny held on 18 January 2024, were appended to the submitted report.

In presenting the report the Leader stated that the Council would receive approximately £1m of additional funding from the government, which was welcomed but would not address the shortfall, and that the capital programme would be increased by £10k as a result of quotes for the fully accessible toilet at the Hippodrome, which was partially funded from a Changing Places grant, coming in higher than anticipated.

Particular references were made at the meeting to the carry forward of balances and

reserves compared to the previous MTFP; the proposed Council Tax increase; the additional funding from the government; the amount of savings Council's had been expected to make; and the effectiveness of Scrutiny. The Cabinet Member with the Children and Young People Portfolio, the Cabinet Member with the Resources Portfolio and the Leader of the Council responded thereon.

RESOLVED – (a) That the comments and responses received to the consultation, as detailed in the submitted report, be noted.

(b) That it be recommended to the special meeting of Council scheduled to be held on Thursday 15 February 2024, that the Revenue Medium Term Financial Plan (MTFP) and the Capital Programme, as set out in Appendices 6 and 7 respectively of the submitted report, subject to a minor change in the capital programme to increase the funding for the Changing Places accessible toilet at the Hippodrome, as noted in paragraph 85(b) of the submitted report, by £10k due to the quotes for the works being higher than initially anticipated, be approved, including:-

- (i) a Council Tax increase of 2.99 per cent plus a two per cent Adult Social Care Precept to fund social care for 2024/25;
- (ii) the Schedule of Charges, as set out in Appendix 3, of the submitted report; and
- (iii) funding for Children's Services to address the dependency on expensive external provision and improve placement sufficiency for children and young people in Darlington, as noted in paragraphs 43 to 49 and detailed in Appendix 1 of the submitted report.

REASONS - (a) The Council must set a budget for the next financial year.

(b) To enable the Council to continue to plan services and finances over the medium term.

(c) To ensure decisions can be made in a timely manner.

(d) To reduce the pressures on the MTFP in the medium term.

(e) To ensure investment in the Council's assets is maintained.

C102 HOUSING REVENUE ACCOUNT - MEDIUM TERM FINANCIAL PLAN 2024/25 TO 2027/28

Pursuant to minute C75/Dec/23, the Cabinet Member with the Health and Housing Portfolio introduced the report of the Group Director of Operations (previously circulated) requesting that consideration be given to the proposals for the revenue budget, capital programme, rent levels and service charges for the Council's Housing Revenue Account (HRA) for the financial year 2024/25, in the context of the HRA Medium Term Financial Plan (MTFP) to 2027/28 and the 30-year Business Plan.

The submitted report stated that the Council was the largest provider of social housing in the Borough, providing 5,278 homes to local residents; the homes were of a high standard of accommodation that met the Decent Homes Standard; as a result of the high quality of the

homes and the services provided they were in high demand; and to meet that demand the Council had an ambitious programme to build new homes in Darlington, funded through capital receipts from the right to buy sales, grant funding and estimated borrowing of £13.5m. The proposed revenue budget expenditure of £31.783m included £6.179m to fund responsive repairs and maintenance and £13.455m contribution to the capital programme. The proposed capital programme of £27.270m included funding for work to current properties and £15.815m to deliver the new build Council housing programme.

It was reported that the key decision to be made regarding the HRA each year was the balance between setting rent and service charge levels that were affordable to the Council's tenants whilst ensuring there was sufficient resources to invest in housing stock, tackle climate change, meet Decent Home Standards and Fire Safety Regulations and maintain services. Local Authorities had the discretion to increase rents by the Consumer Prices Index (CPI) plus one per cent and as the CPI for September 2023 was 6.7 per cent Members could decide to increase rents by up to 7.7 per cent.

Particular reference was made at the meeting to the increased rents and to what support was being given to the to assist residents of the Borough with the cost of living crisis. The Cabinet Member with the Health and Housing Portfolio responded thereon.

RESOLVED - That it be recommended to the special meeting of Council scheduled to be held on Thursday 15 February 2024 that :-

- (a) an average weekly rent increase of 6.7 per cent for 2024/25 be implemented giving an average social rent of £83.98 and affordable rent of £94.17;
- (b) garage rents and service charges be increased, as shown in Table 6 of the submitted report;
- (c) the revenue budget, as attached at Appendix 1 of the submitted report, be approved;
- (d) the Housing Business Plan, as attached at Appendix 2 of the submitted report, be agreed; and
- (e) the capital programme, as attached at Appendix 3 of the submitted report, be agreed, and the funding be released, should the programme be subsequently approved by Council.

REASON – To enable the Council to deliver an appropriate level of services to tenants to meet housing need and to support the economic growth of the Borough through housing development.

C103 PRUDENTIAL INDICATORS AND TREASURY MANAGEMENT STRATEGY REPORT 2024/25

The Cabinet Member with the Resources Portfolio introduced the report of the Group Director of Operations (previously circulated) requesting consideration be given to reviewing the Prudential Indicators and Limits for 2024/25 to 2026/27 relating to capital expenditure and Treasury Management activity; a policy statement relating to the Minimum Revenue Provision; and the Treasury Management Strategy 2024/25, which includes the Annual

Investment Strategy for 2024/25.

The submitted report outlined the Council's Prudential Indicators for 2024/25 to 2026/27; set out the expected treasury operations for that period; and reported that the expenditure plans, Treasury Management and Prudential Borrowing activities indicated that they were within the statutory framework and consistent with the relevant codes of practice, were prudent, affordable and sustainable and were an integral part of the Council's Revenue and Capital Medium Term Financial Plans.

RESOLVED - That it be recommended to the special meeting of Council scheduled to be held on Thursday 15 February 2024 that:-

(a) the Prudential Indicators and limits for 2024/25 to 2026/27, as summarised in Tables 1 and 2 of the submitted report, be approved;

(b) the Minimum Revenue Provision (MRP) statement, as detailed in paragraphs 36 to 43 of the submitted report, be approved;

(c) the Treasury Management Strategy 2024/25 to 2026/27, as summarised in paragraphs 47 to 80 of the submitted report, be approved; and

(d) the Annual Investment Strategy 2024/25, as contained in paragraphs 89 to 113 of the submitted report, be approved.

REASONS - (a) In order to comply with the Prudential Code for Capital Finance in Local Authorities and the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities (DLUHC) guidance on investments.

(b) To comply with the requirements of the Local Government Act 2003.

(c) To approve a framework for officers to work within when making investment decisions.

C104 REVENUE BUDGET MONITORING 2023/24 - QUARTER THREE

The Cabinet Member with the Resources Portfolio introduced the report of the Group Director of Operations (previously circulated) providing a forecast of the 2023/24 revenue budget outturn as part of the Council's continuous financial management process.

The submitted report stated that it was the third revenue budget management report to Cabinet for 2023/24 and that the latest projections showed an overall decline of £0.738m on the 2023/27 Medium Term Financial Plan, however, this was an improvement of £0.381m compared with Quarter Two (Minute C64/Nov/23 refers) which was due to £0.509m of additional balances following the 2022/23 outturn, £1.2m of resources returned to reserves and a £0.225m improvement in corporate reserves, offset by £2.672 of projected departmental overspends in 2023/24.

RESOLVED - (a) That the forecast revenue outturn for 2023/24, as detailed in the submitted report, be noted.

(b) That the carry forward of resources, as detailed in paragraphs 18 to 20, be noted and approved.

(b) That further regular reports be made to monitor progress and take prompt action if necessary.

REASONS - (a) To continue effective management of resources.

(b) To continue to deliver services to agreed levels.

C105 PROJECT POSITION STATEMENT AND CAPITAL PROGRAMME MONITORING - QUARTER THREE 2023/24

The Cabinet Member with the Resources Portfolio introduced the report of the Group Director of Services and the Group Director of Operations (previously circulated) providing a summary of the latest Capital resource and commitment position, to inform monitoring of the affordability and funding of the Council's capital programme; an update on the current status of all construction projects currently being undertaken by the Council; and requesting that consideration be given to a number of changes to that programme.

The submitted report stated that the projected outturn of the current Capital Programme was £324.747m against an approved programme of £324.414m; the investment was delivering a wide range of improvements to the Council's assets and services; the current project position statement showed that there were 41 live projects currently being managed by the Council, with an overall projected outturn value of £160.324m, the majority of which were running to time, cost and quality expectations, but were being monitored given the current pressures on resources in the construction sector nationally; and that the projects were managed either by the Council's in-house management team, a Framework Partner or by Consultants sourced via an open/OJEU tender process.

RESOLVED - (a) That the status position on construction projects, as detailed in the submitted report, be noted.

(b) That the projected capital expenditure and resources, as detailed in the submitted report, be noted.

(c) That the adjustments to resources, as detailed in paragraph 21 of the submitted report, be approved.

REASONS - (a) To inform Cabinet of the current status of construction projects.

(b) To make Cabinet aware of the latest financial position of the Council.

(c) To maintain effective management of resources.

C106 CALENDAR OF COUNCIL AND COMMITTEE MEETINGS 2024/25

The Leader introduced the report of the Group Director of Operations (previously circulated) requesting that consideration be given to the Calendar of Council and Committee

Meetings for the 2024/25 Municipal Year (also previously circulated).

Particular reference was made at the meeting to the role of Cabinet in agreeing the dates of future meetings of other Committees of the Council. The Assistant Director Law and Governance responded thereon.

RESOLVED – (a) That the Calendar of Council and Committee Meetings 2023/24, as appended to the submitted report, be approved.

(b) That the proposed dates for the meetings of Council be referred to the Annual Council meeting scheduled to be held on Thursday 23 May 2024, for approval.

REASON – (a) To ensure that the calendar of meetings is approved to assist with forward planning.

(b) To enable the meetings of Council to be approved.

C107 MEMBERSHIP CHANGES - TO CONSIDER ANY MEMBERSHIP CHANGES TO OTHER BODIES TO WHICH CABINET APPOINTS.

There were no membership changes reported at the meeting.

**DECISIONS DATED –
FRIDAY 9 FEBRUARY 2024**

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**CABINET
5 MARCH 2024**

COUNCIL PLAN

**Responsible Cabinet Member -
Councillor Stephen Harker, Leader and all Cabinet Members**

**Responsible Director -
Chief Officers Executive**

SUMMARY REPORT

Purpose of the Report

1. To approve the Council Plan 2024-2027 for public consultation.

Summary

2. The draft Council Plan sets out a proposed long term vision and ambitions for Darlington, and priorities for delivery over the life of the plan. It discusses three core values that feed into the plan: addressing inequalities, tackling climate change and efficient and effective use of resources.
3. The plan is underpinned by 6 priorities, each of which identify a number of key deliverables. The deliverables will be progressed through supporting plans and strategies. The priorities are;
 - (a) Economy: A strong, sustainable economy and highly skilled workforce with opportunities for all.
 - (b) Homes: Affordable and secure homes that meet current and future resident need.
 - (c) Living well: A healthier and better quality of life for longer supporting those who need it.
 - (d) Children and young people: best start in life, realising potential and raising aspirations.
 - (e) Communities: Healthier, safer and more engaged communities.
 - (f) Environment: A well connected, clean and sustainable Borough.
4. Development of the draft plan has involved discussions with numerous key stakeholders. It takes into account the current financial pressures faced by the Council, and it will be reviewed annually to consider new or changing opportunities and challenges.

5. The Council is seeking feedback from key stakeholders, including residents so a final version of the plan can be presented to Full Council in May.

Recommendation

6. It is recommended that Cabinet:-
 - (a) Approve the draft Council Plan for consultation.
 - (b) Receive feedback and a revised plan for consideration at its meeting in May 2024 with the final draft going forward to council for approval in May.

Reasons

7. The recommendations are supported by the following reasons :-
 - (a) The recommendations are supported in order to approve the plan for consultation.
 - (b) To enable the council to have strategic framework for delivering priorities.

Chief Officers Executive

Background Papers

Key strategies and plans were used to develop the plan including the Climate Change Strategy and Action Plan; Economic Strategy; Children and Young People's Plan; Housing Strategy; Health and Wellbeing Strategy; Annual Reports of the Director of Public Health and the Darlington Profiles.

Lynne Davies Extension 5070

S17 Crime and Disorder	The Council Plan prioritises the safety of our residents and communities. The Communities Priority identifies key actions that we will deliver in partnership. The performance monitoring framework will include measures to demonstrate progress against this outcome.
Health and Wellbeing	The Council Plan prioritises the health and wellbeing of our residents and communities. The Health and Wellbeing Priority identifies many actions and good health will be an important outcome across the plan. The performance monitoring framework will include measures to demonstrate progress against this outcome improving health and reducing health inequalities.
Carbon Impact and Climate Change	The Council Plan prioritises addressing carbon impact and climate change. Addressing climate change is a core value and will be considered in everything the council does. The

	performance monitoring framework will include measures to demonstrate progress against this outcome.
Diversity	Addressing inequalities is a core value within the plan. A desktop Equality Impact Assessment has not identified any significant negative impacts on protected characteristics. The key deliverables referenced in the plan will be progressed through other strategies and plans and will involve separate equality impact assessments where appropriate.
Wards Affected	All
Groups Affected	Whole population
Budget and Policy Framework	The Council plan will be part of the policy framework and will be the primary strategy that strategies and plans demonstrate their contribution to the vision, ambition and priorities of the Council Plan.
Key Decision	This is a key decision because following consultation, agreement to the recommendations will result in the Local Authority adopting a plan which will have an effect on the communities living or working in an area comprising two or more wards within the area of the local authority.
Urgent Decision	This is not an urgent decision as it will require adoption by full Council after consultation.
Council Plan	This is the draft Council Plan for 2024-2027 for consultation.
Efficiency	The draft Council Plan prioritises efficient and effective resources as a key value and will be considered in all council business.
Impact on Looked After Children and Care Leavers	The Council remains committed to ensuring the best outcomes for Looked After Children, and contains a number of priorities and actions that will have a positive impact on this group.

MAIN REPORT

Information and Analysis

8. It is good practice for a council to have a Council Plan setting out its vision and priorities. This Plan is deliberately strategic setting out the long term vision and ambitions to maintain focus on the challenges and opportunities that will take more than one political term to address; and on the short term actions the Council can take to move towards these outcomes.
9. The administration established in May 2023 has prioritised the financial stability of the council to enable the council to deliver the best services for residents and recently approved the new term Medium Term Financial Plan. Cabinet has also taken the time to understand the evidence base and their portfolios to make considered decisions on long term strategy and short term deliverables.

10. Post consultation and when the final plan is adopted it is proposed that it is reviewed annually with six monthly reports be taken to Cabinet on progress against the key deliverables. There will also be opportunities for scrutiny committees to review progress.
11. The council has been talking to key stakeholders about the draft plan as it was developed including the Public Sector Executive Group, Voluntary and Community Sector Executive Group and Children and Young People's Plan multi-agency steering group.
12. The draft Council Plan is attached as **Appendix A**.

Consultation

13. Subject to Cabinet approval there will be a public consultation on the proposed plan starting 6 March and ending on 25 April. The plan will be an agenda item on all scrutiny committees as part of their core business throughout April.
14. A survey will be published alongside the plan allowing for feedback on the plan and will be on the consultations page of the Darlington Borough Council website. Printed copies will be available upon request alongside paper copies being made available in Darlington Library and Cockerton Library.
15. The March edition of One Darlington which is distributed across the Borough will contain an article on the Council Plan with information on how to complete the survey and share feedback. In addition to this awareness raising will primarily take place through social media, ward surgeries of local councillors and other suitable opportunities that arise.
16. The outcome of the consultation will be reported to Cabinet in May 2024.

Equalities Considerations

17. Addressing inequalities is a core value within the plan. A desktop Equality Impact Assessment has not identified any significant negative impacts on protected characteristics. The key deliverables referenced in the plan will be progressed through other strategies and plans and will involve separate equality impact assessments where appropriate.

Consultation

18. The purpose of this paper is to seek approval for the draft Council Plan to be released for public consultation on 6 March 2024.

Outcome of Consultation

19. The consultation closes on 25 April 2024 and a revised Council Plan will be brought to Cabinet for consideration in May with the final version going forward to Council for approval in May. This plan will be the strategic framework for Council priorities between 2024 and 2027.

Council Plan 2024-27

Draft For Consultation

6 March 2024



DARLINGTON
Borough Council

Foreword

It is an honour to be Leader of Darlington Borough Council and to have the opportunity to share with you our draft Council Plan for 2024-2027. This plan sets out our long term ambitions for Darlington and priorities for the next few years. We want to hear your views.

Darlington is a great place to live and work. We are committed to making Darlington fairer and greener for everyone, building on opportunities and successes and facing up to the difficult challenges.

However, over the previous decade inequalities across our communities have worsened. The North East has seen the highest increase in child poverty over much of the previous decade. Child poverty restricts the chances for children to flourish. This is just a one example of inequalities that results in not everyone having the same life opportunities.

At the heart of the plan is our vision to be one of the best places in the UK to live, learn, work and invest - with a strong economy, healthy thriving communities and opportunities for all.

This means Darlington will have an inclusive and sustainable economy; people living well and staying healthy; thriving places and connected communities. This is a long term vision and the beginning of our journey that we want to make together.

Three core values feed into this plan:

- **Addressing inequalities** - Darlington is a wonderful place to live and work and we want these opportunities to be accessible to everyone. We will develop a long term focus on understanding and addressing the causes of inequality ensuring our communities are safe and can thrive.
- **Tackling climate change** - the changing climate will impact all our lives. We will play our part by making the council carbon neutral by 2040 and working with others to deliver a more resilient Darlington.
- **Efficient and effective resources** - we will remain focussed on the financial sustainability of the council, ensuring good governance and delivering the best services possible with the resources we have for our residents, communities, and business.

The Council faces unparalleled financial challenges. Reductions in public spending between 2010 and 2019 meant the Council's budget was reduced by £46m in real terms, a 36% reduction in budget. After covid, we have seen the cost of living increasing, income deprivation and poverty rising, high inflation and interest rates along with a significant increase in demand for adult and children's services consuming over two thirds of our budget.

You will see the plan sets out six priorities for the Council for the next three years: economy, homes, living well, children and young people, communities and the environment.

This is ambitious and requires collaborative effort to deliver with existing partnerships such as the Health and Wellbeing Board, Public Sector Executive Group and Voluntary and Community Sector Executive Steering Group to new partnerships focussed on the economy.

The health, wealth and wellbeing of our residents is really important to us. At the heart of our Council Plan is a determination to have a focus on addressing inequalities. This can only be achieved by the Council working in partnership with our communities.

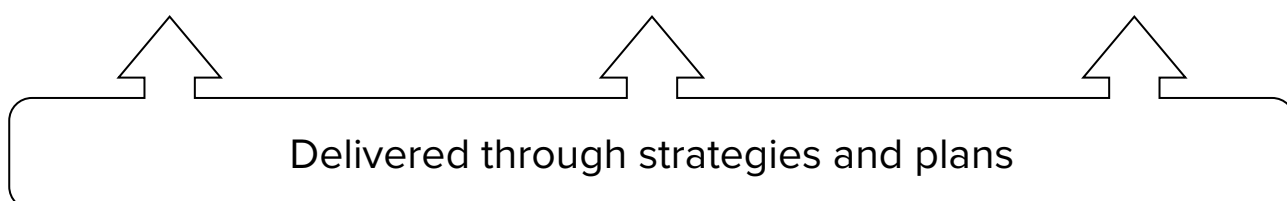
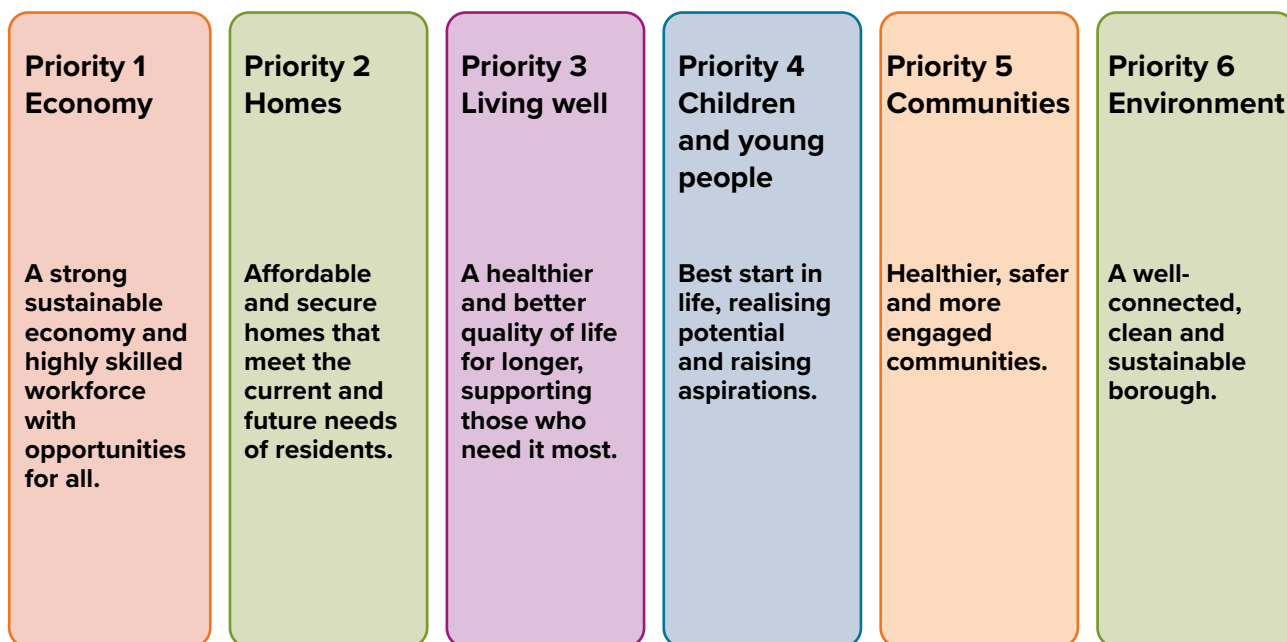
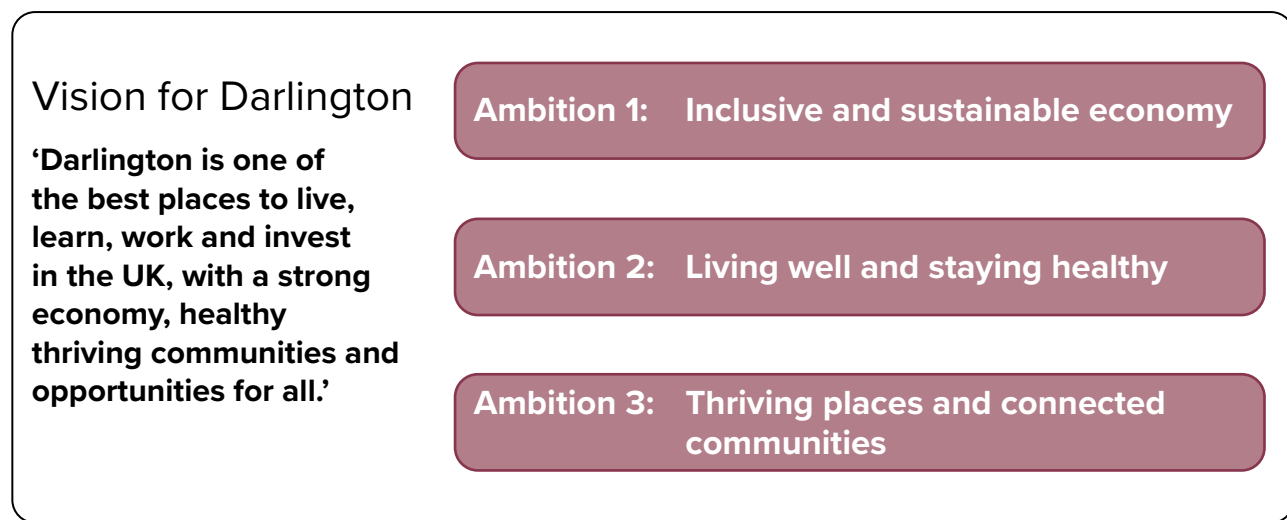
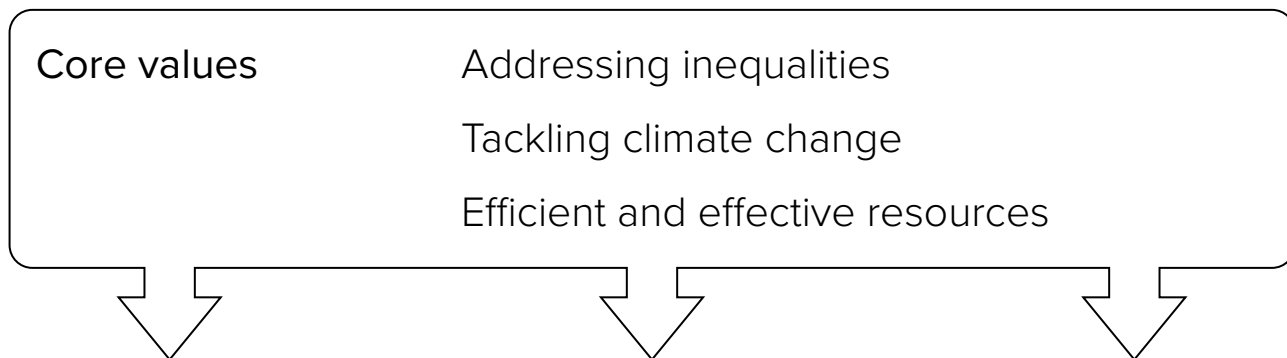
These are both exciting and challenging times for Darlington, and we want your views on our proposals in this plan to help shape our priorities and how we deliver.



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Our Plan For Darlington



What long term success looks like

An inclusive and sustainable economy will have:

- More people of all ages in good work
- Key sectors and sites innovating and growing by creating jobs, attracting more business and investment
- A healthy, productive and vibrant business community
- A business friendly public sector supporting businesses to locate and grow
- Increased skills levels in the resident labour market
- Vibrant town and neighbourhood centres providing services, retail and work for all generations
- A growing economy that supports our environment and heritage.

Living well and staying healthy will mean:

- Health outcomes are improved and inequalities reduced
- Children and young people have the best start in life
- People are supported to be independent
- Homes are affordable, healthy, secure and meet needs
- Households are more financially secure
- Residents live longer, healthier, more productive lives
- People are active and involved.

Thriving places and connected communities will have:

- Climate resilience where places are prepared for change and can adapt, with reduced CO₂ emissions
- Access to good services
- Happy, safe and secure communities with improved safety in public spaces
- Cultural, heritage and community assets
- Well-connected people and communities, with links to places within and outside the borough
- Digitally connected residents who are benefitting from opportunities offered online
- Attractive, relevant and welcoming places
- Sustainable and integrated transport across the borough and beyond.

Core values

We are committed to making Darlington a fairer and greener place for everyone. We are focussed on ensuring everyone has the opportunity for a good job, home and social connections. Our three core values are important principles we will consider in everything we do.

Addressing inequalities

Darlington is a wonderful place to live and work. We have a high quality of life and our economy is resilient and growing, but this is not felt by everybody. There are widening inequalities, and the gap between the people and places with the best and worst outcomes is unacceptably high. There are unacceptably high levels of child poverty and disadvantage, demonstrated by 25% of Darlington's children living in low income families, with the highest ward reaching nearly 47%. We want opportunities to be accessible to everyone. To achieve this will require a collaborative approach with our partners. We will:

- Develop a cross-council approach based on an in-depth understanding of inequalities and their causes, with a focus on local communities experiencing disadvantage
- Ensure all new strategies and plans consider inequalities, starting with the development of an inclusive growth strategy and a review of the health and wellbeing strategy
- Strengthen partnership working with key stakeholders and the voluntary and community sector with a long term focus on opportunity and addressing the causes of inequality; and short term focus on reducing the burden of the cost of living.

Tackling climate change

The climate is changing, which has an impact on our lives from the risk of flooding and more extreme weather to health impacts for our most vulnerable residents. We are also all facing increasing energy costs and potential threats to energy security. We cannot address these challenges alone, but we know we have an important role to play. One of the first things we did when we came to office was bring forward by 10 years the Council's commitment to being carbon neutral. We will:

- Deliver the climate change action plan to make Darlington Borough Council carbon neutral by 2040
- Involve all parts of the council in a cross-council approach to sustainability and climate change
- Work alongside our business community collaborating with groups such as the Darlington Employers Environmental Partnership to transition to net zero
- Work with partners, government, public and private sectors and residents for a resilient Darlington so we are able to respond and adapt to change.

Efficient and effective resources

The council is facing unparalleled financial challenges with rising costs and a significant increase in demand for services. We have a responsibility to ensure residents get value for money for their council tax and that every pound is spent efficiently and effectively. We will remain focussed on the financial sustainability of the council, ensuring good governance and delivering the best services possible with the resources we have for our residents, communities, and businesses. Our people are our best asset and will lead a culture of collaboration, innovation and creativity, and compassion, whilst maintaining focus on continuous improvement. We will:

- Deliver a balanced Medium Term Financial Plan and positive Value For Money outcome
- Deliver high quality governance and decision making
- Review and refresh the Asset Management Plan and Procurement Strategy
- Build on the Capital Project Management process by introducing an enhanced ICT system to improve efficiency and effectiveness
- Review and deliver the workforce strategy
- Maximise income through new joint venture companies, increase levels of business rates by growing the local economy; and maximising grant opportunities
- Explore opportunities to exploit digital assets to create efficiencies and increase productivity, including online delivery
- Continue to build strong relationships with partners, residents and communities.

Key deliverables

Priority 1 - Economy

- Develop and deliver an inclusive economic growth strategy to create the conditions for businesses and the economy to thrive and provide good work opportunities for residents
- Establish a place-based partnership to support the continued renewal of the town centre delivering more jobs and more homes
- Complete the refurbishment of the historic indoor market
- Accelerate bringing key sites to the market to attract private sector investment including Central Park, Ingenium Parc and Symmetry Park
- Deliver the Towns Fund projects, including the refurbishment of the Northern Echo building to secure new business occupiers
- Provide more education and skills opportunities for residents by delivering the Adult Skills Centre and collaborating with providers and Tees Valley Combined Authority (TVCA)
- Ensure that the borough is safe, clean and maintained to levels that support the economy and encourage inward investment
- Work with employers, national and local employability providers, and TVCA to promote good jobs and career opportunities for all, particularly young people and those with barriers to work, to access good employment outcomes.

Priority 2 - Homes

- Develop and deliver a new homes strategy to deliver current and future housing needs including social and affordable homes across the borough, in accordance with the Local Plan
- Review and refresh the preventing homelessness and rough sleeping strategy, working with partners to ensure the provision of the right support and services to help people avoid homelessness and support those who are
- Review our approach to empty homes across the town so more quality homes are available
- Support the delivery of more social houses and supported accommodation by building more council homes and working with other social landlords and charities
- Continue to improve the quality of housing through healthy home design principles, ensuring developers meet the new Building Regulations requirements to create greater energy efficiency in new homes. Continue investment in the Council's existing and new housing stock to ensure greater energy efficiency
- Introduce additional licencing for homes of multiple occupation, a voluntary landlords charter and work towards the introduction of selective licencing in areas with a high number of private rented sector homes
- Ensure effective use of the Disabled Facilities Grant to enable people to remain independent in their own homes for as long as possible.

Priority 3 - Living well

- Health and Wellbeing Board to agree and deliver a new strategy to improve health outcomes and reduce inequalities, and lead the creation of a health and wellbeing network
- Develop and implement a new public health strategy, focussed on tackling health inequalities. Including developing strategies on domestic abuse, drugs, alcohol and physical activity
- Continue to develop joint working with the NHS and key partners to support people to lead healthier lives, stay in their homes for longer and reduce hospital stays
- Widen participation in recreation and leisure facilities including the Dolphin Centre and Eastbourne Sports Complex
- Shape a sustainable and accountable care market which delivers support focussed on promoting, regaining and maintaining people's independence and wellbeing
- Develop an Adult Social Care engagement strategy to ensure people requiring care and support, and their carers are involved in service development and commissioning activity
- Deliver the key aims of the adult social care transformation plan to prevent, reduce and/or delay the need for care by supporting people to manage their own independence and wellbeing.

Priority 4 - Children and young people

- Refresh and deliver the Children and Young People's Plan working with services across the council, key stakeholders in Darlington, and children and young people
- Develop more meaningful services by ensuring children and young people are involved in service development and commissioning activity
- Work with the Department for Education and the successful academy trust sponsor to ensure the free school for children with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) is developed on schedule providing vital additional specialist capacity in Darlington
- Continue the successful management of the Safety Valve plan to improve outcomes for young people with SEND, eliminate the historic deficit on funding and deliver a financially sustainable system
- Work with multi-academy trusts and schools to develop a high quality and inclusive education sector in Darlington
- Widen access for children in receipt of benefits related school meals to the Holiday Activities and Food Programme with a focus on health, wellbeing and raising aspirations
- Work in partnership with the early years sector and health services to promote school readiness and the delivery of the expansion of funded childcare entitlement
- Increase the number of local in-house placements for looked after children who are cared for by the council.

Priority 5 - Communities

- Support and strengthen partnership working with voluntary and community groups with a focus on addressing the causes of inequality, financial inclusion, social exclusion, and vulnerable families with children and young people
- Work with partners to reduce the burden of the cost of living with a focus on food and fuel insecurity
- Work with the voluntary and community sector to develop a strategy for informal volunteering which empowers people to volunteer and directs volunteering to areas of greatest need, including working with Darlington Cares to deliver an enhanced volunteering programme
- Support communities to remain safe and resilient by working with key agencies and communities to address anti social behaviour and crime issues in the community
- Support a strong Community Safety Partnership to ensure the issues affecting the safety and security of our communities are addressed collectively, including addressing hate crime
- Ensuring business activity is regulated, licensed and enforced effectively to protect the health and wellbeing of residents, visitors and businesses.

Priority 6 - Environment

- Celebrate the opening of Hopetown and deliver a successful 2025 festival programme that helps to promote Darlington as a destination for visitors and investment
- Work with local stakeholders and businesses to promote a diverse and accessible programme of events that maximises footfall in the town centre and has a positive impact on the local economy
- Deliver revised supplementary planning documents that guide better design in new developments and contribute to a sense of pride in place
- Enable improvements in transport systems by working in partnership with TVCA and public transport operators to deliver the City Region Sustainable Transport Settlement programme, including the improvement of bus facilities and the reliability of services
- Introduce food waste collections and encourage residents to increase overall recycling rates to move towards the national average
- Work with statutory bodies to progress studies of flood risk in Darlington and enable funding to be sought to mitigate the impact of climate change.

Monitoring the plan

Progress in delivering the plan will be regularly reported to Cabinet. It is anticipated this will include a combination of qualitative and quantitative indicators that demonstrate progress against the long-term ambitions, priorities and deliverables. Some long-term indicators, which we know will take time to move, are likely to be included.

The Council Plan performance report will be supplemented annually by the Darlington Profile report that analyses the most up to date published data and intelligence, and feedback from surveys.

Have your say

We want to support the Borough to be the best it can be and have set out our long term ambitions and short term actions for you to review and have your say. This consultation is the beginning of a conversation with you on the future of Darlington and our priorities.

We want to know what you think of the plan and what is most important to you. Follow the link below or scan the QR code to complete the short survey:



<https://www.darlington.gov.uk/consultations/>

The survey is open from 6 March 2024 and closes on 25 April 2024.

Printed copies of the plan are available to view and comment on at Darlington Library, Cockerton Library and the Dolphin Centre. Please email **strategy@darlington.gov.uk** if you would like a copy of the draft Council Plan in an alternative format.



DARLINGTON
Borough Council

CABINET
5 MARCH 2024

DARLINGTON TRANSPORT PLAN – DELIVERY REPORT

Responsible Cabinet Member – Councillor Libby McCollom, Local Services Portfolio

Responsible Director – Dave Winstanley, Group Director of Services

SUMMARY REPORT

Purpose of the Report

1. This report provides Members with an annual update on delivery of the Darlington Transport Plan. It outlines delivery, performance and public satisfaction in 2023/24 and seeks approval for the 2024/25 programme, including the release of funding.

Summary

2. The Tees Valley region has secured significant funding from Government, including the £310M City Region Sustainable Transport Settlement (CRSTS) programme, which will be delivered by the end of March 2027, and £6.851M Bus Service Improvement Plan (BSIP) funding to deliver improvements to bus services by the end of March 2025. There has been good progress on the development and delivery of the transport capital programme including working in partnership with Tees Valley Combined Authority (TVCA) to deliver elements of the strategic transport plan.
3. In 2022/23 a new Transport Strategy for the borough, a Town Centre Transport Plan and Parking Strategy were adopted by Council, and work continues in implementing the associated action plans. A progress report on the schemes delivered in 2023/24 and the proposed programme of schemes for 2024/25 is detailed in **Appendix A**.
4. There is a focus by the Department for Transport (DfT) on decarbonising transport and levelling up, both in terms of funding made available to the north, and in ensuring that there is a balance between sustainable transport measures and options that support motorists. The Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan (LCWIP) is progressing with the completion of Phase 1 of the Faverdale/West Park to town centre cycle route. The Tees Valley Enhanced Bus Partnership continues to deliver benefits to residents, with BSIP+ funding having secured several supported bus service contracts, to ensure service provision in areas left without a bus service following commercial reductions.
5. The Tees Valley region has notionally been allocated funding of £978M for the second round of the CRSTS which covers the period 2027/28 to 2031/32.
6. In addition to CRSTS2, government have recently announced an additional minimum £100.1M of highways maintenance funding for Tees Valley between 2023/24 – 2033/34.

7. Transport patterns are changing due to several socioeconomic factors, and a period of re-basing is still taking place following the pandemic. The Council continues to monitor transport patterns, highway condition, road safety and public satisfaction to inform investment decisions. Details of the Performance Indicators are included at **Appendix D**. These reflect the challenges being faced by public transport and a continuing requirement to invest in the maintenance of the highway asset.

Recommendations

8. It is recommended that:

- (a) Members note the progress in delivery of the Darlington Transport Plan and agree to release £0.893M Integrated Transport Block and £2.729M Highway Maintenance Funding to deliver the 2024/25 transport programme as identified in **Appendix A**.
- (b) Members delegate authority to the Group Director of Services, in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Local Services, to explore opportunities to reprofile highway maintenance funding from future years to make most efficient use of resources.
- (c) Members delegate authority to the Group Director of Services, in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Local Services, to agree bidding on external funding opportunities, and if successful, release the funding. This includes:
 - (i) The Bus Service Improvement Plan (BSIP).
 - (ii) Schemes as detailed in the City Region Sustainable Transport Settlement (CRSTS) Delivery Plan.
 - (iii) Capability and Ambition Fund (CAF) – active travel revenue.
 - (iv) Active Travel Fund (ATF) – active travel capital.
 - (v) Tees Valley Combined Authority Levelling up Fund (LUF).
 - (vi) Local Electric Vehicle Infrastructure (LEVI) funding.
 - (vii) Traffic Signs Obsolescence Grant (TSOG).
 - (viii) Intelligent Traffic Management Fund (ITMF).
 - (ix) Any other relevant funding which is made available in 24/25.
- (d) Members note the performance data relating to transport services, detailed in **Appendix D**.

Reasons

9. The recommendations are supported by the following reasons:

- (a) To continue to deliver Darlington's Transport Strategy as set out in the Darlington Transport Plan, Town Centre Transport Plan and Parking Strategy 2022 - 2030, which support the Tees Valley Strategic Transport Plan (STP).
- (b) To maximise the opportunities to maintain highways assets for the benefit of all road users.
- (c) To assist TVCA in the delivery of the CRSTS, LCWIP, BSIP, Network North and Plan for Drivers programmes and associated action plans, in line with Government guidance.

Dave Winstanley
Group Director of Services

Background Papers

No background papers were used in the preparation of this report.

Gill Hutchinson: Extension 6492

S17 Crime and Disorder	Crime and disorder implications were considered in the preparation of the Darlington Transport Plan and will be considered in the development and delivery of specific transport schemes or measures.
Health and Wellbeing	<p>Health and wellbeing implications have been considered in the preparation of the Darlington Transport Plan and its implementation.</p> <p>The transport strategy seeks to achieve better health and longer life expectancy for everyone by reducing the risk of death, injury or illness from transport and by providing travel options to keep people active and independent. The development and delivery of specific transport schemes will support these outcomes.</p>
Carbon Impact and Climate Change	<p>Carbon emissions and their impact have been considered in the preparation of the Darlington Transport Plan and its implementation.</p> <p>The transport programme seeks to reduce carbon emissions from transport through a shift towards electric and hydrogen vehicles from petrol and diesel. The programme also seeks to encourage the use of sustainable modes of transport and mass public transport, as well as seeking ways to reduce the need to travel or travel shorter distances.</p> <p>Specific consideration of Carbon impact and Climate change are reflected in highway design, construction and asset</p>

	management all seek to minimise the impact of transport through flood risk management, Sustainable Urban Drainage, recycling highway materials, low energy lighting (LED), low energy processes and electric fleet vehicles.
Diversity	<p>An Equalities and Disability Impact Assessment was undertaken in the preparation of the Darlington Transport Plan.</p> <p>The Plan seeks to achieve a fairer society by enabling people to access jobs, education, training, health, food and green spaces; and to achieve a better quality of life for all by improving the journey experience and minimising the negative impacts of transport such as noise, air pollution and accidents on the natural environment, heritage, landscape and people.</p> <p>As highway schemes have an impact on the built environment, disability groups are consulted to ensure the needs of disabled people are considered.</p>
Wards Affected	All
Groups Affected	There are no proposals that impact on specific groups.
Budget and Policy Framework	<p>This decision does not represent a change to the budget and policy framework. The Tees Valley Strategic Transport Plan was adopted by TVCA Cabinet on 31/01/2020 as the Local Transport Plan for the Tees Valley including the constituent local authorities.</p> <p>The Darlington Transport Plan sets out local priorities and provides an overarching policy framework for other subsidiary documents such as the Asset Management Plan and Rights of Way Improvement Plan.</p>
Key Decision	This is a Key Decision
Urgent Decision	This is not an Urgent Decision
Council Plan	The Transport programme supports delivery of the outcomes identified in the Council Plan.
Efficiency	<p>The Darlington Transport Plan seeks to implement schemes that demonstrate value for money and/or deliver the greatest outcomes at a local level.</p> <p>Schemes are identified and prioritised to meet the objectives in the Transport Strategy. Maintaining the highway network will reduce traffic disruption in the longer term and improve network management. Vehicle delay has a negative impact on the economy, including logistics and freight.</p>
Impact on Looked After Children and Care Leavers	This report has no direct impact on Looked After Children or Care Leavers.

MAIN REPORT

Information and Analysis

National Context

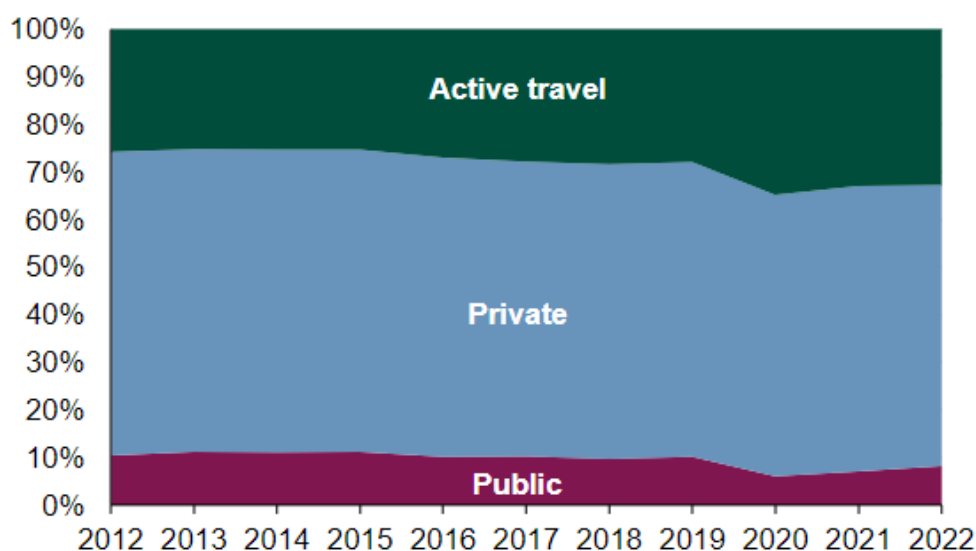
10. With domestic transport providing the largest share of the UK's carbon emissions (28%), there is a focus by the DfT on the switch to zero emission cars/vans, which will be the single biggest carbon saving measure in the UK's journey to Net Zero. In December 2023, Government announced the Zero Emission Vehicle (ZEV) mandate, which requires 80% of new cars and 70% of new vans sold in the UK to be zero emission by 2035, with a delay on the ban of new petrol and diesel cars/vans from 2030 to 2035 announced earlier in the year.
11. Charging options for drivers continue to grow at pace, with the most recent statistics showing over 50,000 public charge points have been installed across the country¹, an increase of 44% compared to last year, with Government's aim being 300,000 by 2030.
12. In addition to the Local Electric Vehicle Infrastructure (LEVI) Fund, which supports local authorities to plan and deliver charging infrastructure for residents without off-street parking, at COP28, the Transport Secretary laid out plans for trial ultra-rapid sites in England with boosted electrical network capacity.
13. Darlington has a crucial role to play at a local level in enabling the transition to EVs, in proactively supporting the delivery of the rollout of electric vehicle charging infrastructure (EVCI) and helping to ensure that the transition is integrated into wider local transport and community needs. A project for the roll out of charging points in Council owned car parks is complete, with 58 charge points having been installed, and the Tees Valley wide strategy for on street charging led by TVCA will be finalised in early 2024, which will be followed by a localised Darlington strategy.
14. Nationally, people's travel behaviour and choices are changing, having been impacted as a result of the pandemic, a period of rising cost of living, and by attitudes to climate change and sustainable travel. DfT commissioned research into public attitudes, travel needs and behaviours², which was published in April 2023. Respondents were asked what would encourage them to use public transport more, with financial incentives commonly mentioned, along with more frequent and punctual services. A third of people found it difficult to choose the most suitable ticket when travelling by public transport, although the introduction of the £2 single fare cap in January 2023, will have gone some way in alleviating this issue.

¹ [Boost for electric vehicle drivers as 50,000 public chargepoints installed across the UK - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/news/boost-for-electric-vehicle-drivers-as-50000-public-chargepoints-installed-across-the-uk)

² [Our changing travel – how people's travel choices are changing \(publishing.service.gov.uk\)](https://publishing.service.gov.uk/government/publications/our-changing-travel-how-people-s-travel-choices-are-changing)

15. With cost saving an important motivation due to rising cost of living, one in five people (21%) were found to use informal car-pooling, which has increased from 15% pre-pandemic. In November 2022, just over a third of people in England (35%) said they were finding it difficult to cope financially, with those most significantly impacted being younger adults, people from ethnic minority backgrounds, parents, those in lower income households and those with a mental or physical health condition. People's most reported way of saving money on transport and travel was by walking more, reported by 57% of people, and reducing the number of trips made (46%).
16. **Chart 1** shows the proportion of all trips made by private, public and active travel modes of transport, between 2012 and 2022. This chart shows that the majority of trips were completed using private transport, although this proportion has slowly been declining over this period, from 65% in 2012 to 60% in 2022. On average, a person in England completed 862 trips in 2022, of which 8% were made using public transport modes. The proportion of active travel trips has declined slightly since 2020 (35%) but has remained above 2019's levels (33% in 2022)³.

Chart 1 – Proportion of all trips by mode

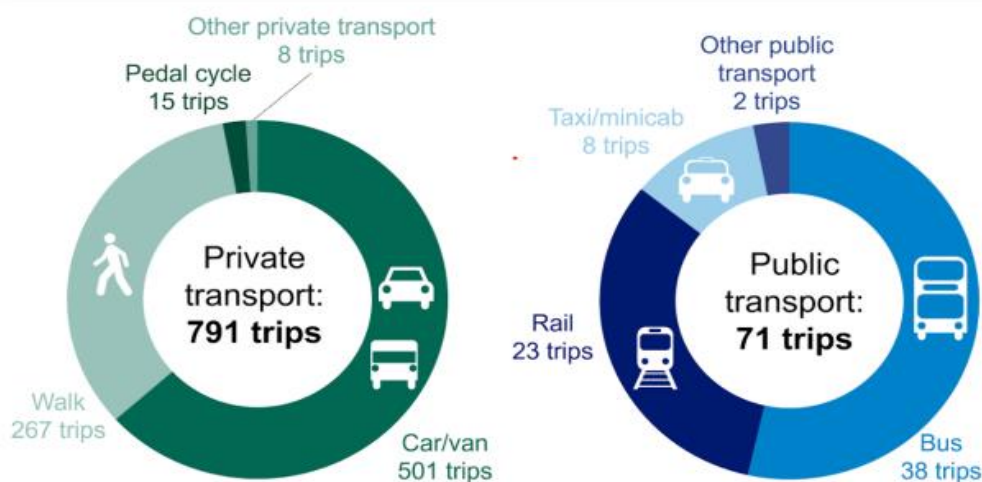


17. Most passenger journeys are by road, with 86% of passenger kilometres travelled being by car, van or taxi, and four in five households having access to a car³. The majority of public transport journeys are by bus, with 3.7bn passenger journeys completed using local buses in year ending March 2023 in the UK. Also, the vast majority of journeys are local, with nearly three-quarters being less than five miles⁴. **Chart 2** sets out the average number of trips made per person in 2022.

³ [Transport Statistics Great Britain: 2022 Domestic Travel - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/transport-statistics-great-britain-2022-domestic-travel)

⁴ [National Travel Survey - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/national-travel-survey)

Chart 2 – Average number of trips made per person, England, 2022



18. In October 2023, Government launched Network North, a £36bn plan to improve the country's transport, with £19.8bn of funds redirected to the North from the northern leg of HS2.
19. Network North saw the extension of the £2 capped single bus fare until the end of 2024, instead of rising to £2.50 from October 2023 as planned. Additionally for bus, TVCA were awarded £3.851M of Bus Service Improvement Plan (BSIP) funding for 2024/25, to deliver actions structured around the five-point BSIP delivery plan.
20. The second round of the City Regional Sustainable Transport Settlements (CRSTS2) was announced at Spring Budget in 2023, for 2027/28 to 2031/32. Through Network North, Government announced an additional £8.55bn of funding available for CRSTS2, with TVCA's total indicative allocation for CRSTS2 now £978M.
21. Funding as part of Network North also provided £3.3bn to the North of England for local road resurfacing, with the aim of improving the condition of our highways for the 88% of passenger journeys undertaken by road.
22. In October 2023, The Plan for Drivers⁵ was announced by DfT, which sets out how Government intends to work to improve the experience of driving and services provided to motorists, setting out key actions around several themes. The long-term plan sets out to seek a balance between public transport and active travel investment, alongside the needs of motorists. This includes a £70M fund to make traffic signals more efficient.
23. The Plan for Drivers may go some way in addressing increasing delays across the national network, with the Strategic Road Network (SRN) for the year ending September 2023, having an average estimated delay of 10.3 seconds per vehicle per mile, compared to free flow, a 15.7% increase on year ending September 2022.

⁵ <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/plan-for-drivers>

24. On local 'A' roads for the year ending September 2023, the average delay is estimated to be 47.4 seconds per vehicle per mile compared to free flow. This is up 4.6% on year ending September 2022⁶.

Regional and Local Context

25. TVCA is the Local Transport Authority (LTA) for the Tees Valley. TVCA set the Strategic Transport Plan for the region for the period 2019 - 2029 with the vision to "provide a high quality, quick, affordable, reliable, low carbon and safe transport network for people and freight to move within, to and from Tees Valley".
26. In November 2022, Council adopted the Darlington Transport Plan, Darlington Town Centre Transport Plan and Parking Strategy 2022 - 2030, following a consultation process. The Darlington Transport Plan sets out how the priorities set out in the Tees Valley Strategic Transport Plan (STP) will be delivered in Darlington and provides the strategic framework to support growth in Darlington, through improved transport infrastructure and the promotion of sustainable and active transport initiatives.
27. New government guidance on Local Transport Plans (LTPs) is expected to be published by Spring 2024 and is anticipated to have an emphasis on decarbonisation. It is expected that the guidance will include a requirement for an EV charging strategy to be published as a detailed supporting document to the LTP itself and for the incorporation of decarbonisation into the planning process.
28. TVCA currently provide the Tees Flex on-demand bus service. The pilot was extended until August 2024. TVCA will be evaluating the pilot before deciding on next steps.
29. With the increase in highway maintenance funding coming to the Tees Valley, work will be needed to assess the resources needed both internally and within the supply chain to deliver the increasing volume of work.

Performance and Public Satisfaction

30. During the year, monitoring information is collected and used to measure performance as to how the transport system is operating and being used by the public. In addition to this, each year Darlington takes part in the National Highways and Transport Network Public Satisfaction Survey. This survey collects public perspectives on, and satisfaction with, highway and transport services in Local Authority areas.
31. Overall, Darlington performs well when compared to other participating local authorities. We perform above average on 81% of the indicators (total 157), however, performance has reduced in 59% of the indicators. This reflects the national trend, although we have ranked highest performing authority in the Tees Valley for 50% of the overall themes, including the walking and cycling theme.

⁶ [Travel time measures for the Strategic Road Network and local 'A' roads: October 2022 to September 2023 - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/travel-time-measures-for-the-strategic-road-network-and-local-a-roads-october-2022-to-september-2023)

32. Satisfaction with the provision of bus stops is high at 85%, and with personal safety on the bus (65%). In contrast, satisfaction with public transport information is very low at 25% and is likely linked to bus operators having ceased to provide printed timetable information booklets. In terms of satisfaction with local bus services, the vast majority of which are provided by bus operators on a commercial basis, there has been a decline in satisfaction from 48% in 2022, to 44% in 2023. This is below the national average of 50% and may reflect dissatisfaction with a number of Arriva services having been withdrawn in 2023 (most of which have since been replaced by TVCA contracts) and the reliability of services impacting public confidence.
33. In terms of lowest scoring areas, the condition of the highway, specifically in terms of the number of potholes and the speed of repair to damaged roads, is reported as an area of dissatisfaction. We have prioritised maintaining the highway for a number of years and will continue to do so. The additional highway maintenance funding announced by government acknowledges that it is a national issue and will enable us to start to improve public satisfaction in this area of concern.
34. Darlington's results for 2023 are set out in **Appendix D**, which provides a means of measuring the impact of various service improvements and highlights areas for improvement, such as the need for TVCA as LTA to address dissatisfaction with local bus services and highway maintenance.

Progress on Delivery in 2023/24

35. Investment in transport in Darlington is closely aligned to the objectives of the Darlington Transport Plan (as set out in **Appendix C**), which are to:
 - (a) Reduce transport's impact on the environment and support health and wellbeing;
 - (b) Improve safety for all road users;
 - (c) Connect people to job and training opportunities and link communities;
 - (d) Support a revitalised and transformed Darlington town centre and;
 - (e) Maintain and effectively manage a resilient transport system.
36. Over the last 12 months there has been significant capital and revenue investment in transport in Darlington. Details of what has been delivered can be found in **Appendix A**.

Proposed Delivery in 2024/25

37. The Council receives a specific Local Highway Authority Funding allocation from TVCA each year through CRSTS to deliver local improvement schemes and highway maintenance priorities. The Integrated Transport Block programme (Darlington Transport Plan delivery) will be delivered to manage and improve the highway network. **Appendix A** outlines the schemes proposed to be developed during 2024/25.

Partnership Delivery

38. In addition to Local Highway Authority Funding, the Council receives additional specific funding allocations to deliver specific schemes within the Borough that contribute toward our transport strategies and the Tees Valley Strategic Transport Plan. This involves working in partnership with TVCA on developing transport initiatives that benefit Darlington residents. We will continue to work in partnership on TVCA funded projects and programmes for which grant funding agreements are in place between DBC and TVCA where required. Details of these projects and programmes can be found in **Appendix B**.

Financial Implications

39. TVCA, as LTA, are responsible for allocating regional funding for transport programmes and projects to Tees Valley Authorities. Grant Funding Agreements between TVCA and DBC will be agreed through Asset Management Group with sign off by our S151 Officer.
40. In April 2022, the Secretary of State for Transport confirmed that TVCA was to receive the full allocation of £310M of City Region Sustainable Transport Settlement (CRSTS) funding to invest in local transport networks.
41. CRSTS consolidates funding from previous allocations of the Highways Maintenance Block, Potholes Fund, and Integrated Transport Block, to ensure that Local Highway Authorities can carry out their responsibilities under section 41 of the Highways Act 1980 to maintain the highways network. This can be reprofiled within the CRSTS period to suit maintenance needs of the individual Highway Authorities.
42. TVCA has allocated £2.729M to Darlington Borough Council in 2024/25, including Additional Maintenance Funding as part of a long-term settlement until March 2027. This includes £0.277m additional maintenance funding from 2023/24 which has been carried forward.

Legal Implications

43. The statutory duty for the Local Transport Plan moved to TVCA in 2016, as part of the devolution deal. TVCA produced a Tees Valley Strategic Transport Plan to fulfil this duty, which was approved by TVCA Cabinet on 31 January 2020.
44. The five constituent local authorities were asked to produce a Local Implementation Plan (Darlington Transport Plan). This demonstrates how Darlington Council, as the highway authority, will support the delivery of the Strategic Transport Plan at a local level and sets out local priorities, policies and actions. Adopted as part of the Council's policy framework in November 2022, the Transport Plan draws together other local policies on parking, asset management, traffic management, Rights of Way Improvement Plan, and links to other corporate plans, including the Council Plan.
45. The Equality Act 2010 legally protects people from discrimination in the workplace and in wider society pursuant to which the Council is subject to the 'Public Sector Equality Duty'. This requires public bodies to have due regard to the need to eliminate discrimination, advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations between different people when

carrying out their activities. This is relevant in the context of transport policy making, where for example the change or cessation of services may disproportionately impact protected characteristic groups. The Council will observe its Public Sector Equality Duty in policy and schemes relating to transport.

Estates and Property Advice

46. The highway maintenance programme will be works within the adopted highway and does not require corporate landlord advice. Any modifications to the adopted highway will be notified to the Highway Asset Management Team.
47. Any individual scheme that involves a land requirement outside of the adopted highway, whether that be Council owned land or land in third party ownership, will involve the Estates Team to negotiate land acquisition or other legal agreement. If a scheme cannot be implemented within the adopted highway or permitted rights the required planning permission will be sought at an early stage in the process.

Procurement Advice

48. All procurement activity will be in line with the Council's Contract Procedure Rules and the Public Contracts Regulations 2015. Where a suitable framework is available for a procurement this will be used in the first instance. Applications to TVCA for funding will be subject to a robust due diligence process which includes procurement, legal and value for money. All procurements will be in line with the requirements of any subsequent grant funding agreements from TVCA or any other funder.
49. TVCA has undertaken a number of procurements some of which require call off contracts by Darlington Borough Council to deliver programmes at a local level. Procurement and legal advice will be provided to ensure that Darlington Council procurement procedure rules are adhered to.

Equalities Considerations

50. The equalities impact of individual schemes and policies is considered as they are developed. As most of the work programme involves changes to the physical environment, the main impacts that are considered relate to disabilities including mobility, visual and hearing impairments and learning disabilities. Regular meetings are held with Darlington Association on Disability and other advisory groups such as RNIB and Guide Dogs are involved for specific issues.

Consultation

51. No consultation has been undertaken for this report. However, the programmes proposed in the report are aligned with the new transport strategies that were subject to public consultation.
52. Consultation continues on individual schemes including the 20mph schemes at school sites, changes to individual bus stops, the Woodland Road walking and cycling route and the major schemes at Woodland Road roundabout and Cockerton roundabout.

Outcome of Consultation

53. Responses to individual consultations are used to propose final scheme designs and are agreed under delegated authority.
54. The Darlington Transport Plan Delivery Plan was presented at the Communities and Local Services Scrutiny Committee on 22 February 2024.

Delivery of Darlington Transport Capital Programme schemes in 2023/24 and proposed delivery in 2024/25

Scheme Type	Manage/ Improve	Progress on delivery in 2023/24	Proposed delivery 2024/25																		
Highways Maintenance - funding to maintain the highway network including structures and street lighting (CRSTS Local Highway Authority Funding)																					
Schemes	Manage	A programme of highway maintenance schemes were delivered, as below:	The following maintenance schemes have been identified as the current priority based on the condition data surveys. This is a rolling programme and subject to tender returns:																		
		<table><tr><td rowspan="3">A Roads</td><td>A68</td><td>West Auckland Road Phase 2 (Woodland Rd to A1m)</td></tr><tr><td>A67</td><td>Merrybent (Phase 3)</td></tr><tr><td>Various</td><td>Retexturing</td></tr></table>	A Roads	A68	West Auckland Road Phase 2 (Woodland Rd to A1m)	A67	Merrybent (Phase 3)	Various	Retexturing	<table><tr><td rowspan="4">A Roads</td><td>A1150</td><td>Salters Lane North (Glebe Rd - Thompson St West)</td></tr><tr><td>A68</td><td></td></tr><tr><td>A67</td><td>West Auckland Road (Willow Road - Laing Street)</td></tr><tr><td></td><td>Piercebridge (Carlbury B6275 - West loop B6275)</td></tr><tr><td>Various</td><td>Retexturing</td></tr></table>	A Roads	A1150	Salters Lane North (Glebe Rd - Thompson St West)	A68		A67	West Auckland Road (Willow Road - Laing Street)		Piercebridge (Carlbury B6275 - West loop B6275)	Various	Retexturing
		A Roads		A68	West Auckland Road Phase 2 (Woodland Rd to A1m)																
				A67	Merrybent (Phase 3)																
			Various	Retexturing																	
A Roads	A1150	Salters Lane North (Glebe Rd - Thompson St West)																			
	A68																				
	A67	West Auckland Road (Willow Road - Laing Street)																			
		Piercebridge (Carlbury B6275 - West loop B6275)																			
Various	Retexturing																				
<table><tr><td rowspan="2">B Roads</td><td>B6280</td><td>Coniscliffe Rd (Phase2)</td></tr></table>	B Roads	B6280	Coniscliffe Rd (Phase2)																		
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			Unclassified Roads	Unc	Firth Moor Estate (Phase 9) Burnside Road Barnes Road Ph 2 Summerhouse Back Lane / Blind Lane Clifton Road Back Lane	C Roads	C38a	Neasham Road (Phase 3) - Geneva Rd - Brankin Road				
				Footways			Shearwater Avenue Avon Road Estate, Hurworth Place (Phase 1)	Unclassified Roads	Unc	Swaledale Avenue (Birkdale Rd - Staindrop Road) Barmpton Lane Roundhill Road Back Lane (tbc)		
									Heighington Footways (Phase 3) Avon Road Estate Footway	Footways		
				In addition, micro asphalt and patching programmes were carried out across the borough, which continues the investment in unclassified roads, which are predominantly residential streets. Street Lighting, Bridges, Structures and other highway assets were also maintained.								

Integrated Transport Block - funding to manage and improve the highway network (CRSTS Local Highway Authority Funding)			
Network Management			
Traffic monitoring	Improve	Traffic and active travel related monitoring surveys and cordon counts are carried out across Darlington.	
Traffic counter replacement Programme		Traffic counter sites across Darlington are maintained, converted to solar power, and replaced where necessary.	
Active and sustainable transport			
Improvements to bus passenger and cycling facilities (town centre)	Improve	<p><u>Bus Stop Infrastructure</u></p> <p>Several temporary bus stops were installed in Hurworth and Middleton St. George at the request of Stagecoach, who successfully tendered for the TVCA procured service 6/6A, operating from Darlington town centre to Hurworth/Middleton St. George/Stockton. This service replaced the previous commercially operated service 12 that was withdrawn by Arriva in July 2023.</p> <p>Feasibility work commenced on a number of S106 funded bus stop improvements, which will require consultation where a new stop is proposed in the vicinity of directly affected frontages.</p> <p>Non-advertising shelter requests have been considered for a number of locations, including Martindale Road and Wylam Avenue. Requests are considered in the context of location, stop specific patronage information and cost to install.</p>	<p><u>Bus Stop Infrastructure</u></p> <p>Subject to agreement, we will consult on making temporary bus stops on the service 6 route permanent. Permanent bus stops benefit from raised kerbs which enable low floor easy access for those with mobility issues and people with pushchairs.</p> <p>Non-advertising shelters will be installed, where feasible, through DBC's contract with Commutaports Ltd. DBC will also work with Clear Channel UK (CCUK) to assess the feasibility of a number of possible new sites to include advertising, in the vicinity of new developments, through the Tees Valley advertising bus shelter contract.</p> <p>Work will continue on the bus stop audit across all bus stops in the borough, with a programme of works in place for repair and replacement where necessary.</p>

	<p>A review of all bus stops in the borough commenced, seeking to address any maintenance issues. The audit aimed to identify and then rectify issues at bus stops such as replacing broken/damaged timetable cases, repairing bus stop shelters and renewing lining/signage where required.</p> <p><u>Town Centre Cycle Parking</u> An audit of town centre cycle parking in late 2020 identified that certain locations were likely no longer fit for purpose, due to damage, location, lack of signage and non DDA compliancy. A survey of residents was carried out in February 2023 with the assistance of Sustrans and Durham Police, to ascertain perceived and/or actual barriers to parking in the town centre. The survey highlighted the following key issues:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Perceived issue with theft of bikes when parked at the stands.• Lack of knowledge of current cycle parking options.• Lack of knowledge of bike locks available to address perceived risk of theft issue.• Some town centre locations didn't have enough capacity. <p>Following the audit and survey, a series of site visits were undertaken in May 2023 which aimed to identify the specific sites that needed improvement, the type of stands required and to identify any constraints (such as being in a conservation area). A series of actions and recommendations were subsequently identified and costed to address the issues. This includes the removal and replacement of existing stands for Sheffield stands with the incorporation of DDA compliant features,</p>	<p><u>Town Centre Cycle Parking</u> Following on from feasibility and costing, the town centre cycle parking improvements will be installed in 2024/25.</p> <p>Actions to improve the maintenance of certain cycle parking (e.g. outside town hall) will be carried out, and promotion of the improved facilities will be carried out by DBC/Sustrans.</p>
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		improved maintenance, and the incorporation of cycle parking signage.																	
Dropped kerbs		<div>A programme of dropped kerbs has been carried out throughout the year, as below:</div> <table><tr><th>Location</th><th>Description of Work</th></tr><tr><td>Glebe Road / Whinfield Road</td><td>3 no. drop crossings</td></tr><tr><td>Stockton Road</td><td>1 no. drop kerb</td></tr><tr><td>Sutton Close</td><td>1 no. dropped crossing</td></tr><tr><td>West Auckland Rd / Smithy Lane</td><td>3 no. dropped crossings</td></tr><tr><td>Morpeth Avenue</td><td>2 no. dropped crossing and a bitmac footpath installation</td></tr><tr><td>Fryers Crescent, Lindisfarne Court</td><td>5 no. dropped crossing</td></tr><tr><td>Woodland Terrace</td><td>3 no. dropped kerbs</td></tr></table>	Location	Description of Work	Glebe Road / Whinfield Road	3 no. drop crossings	Stockton Road	1 no. drop kerb	Sutton Close	1 no. dropped crossing	West Auckland Rd / Smithy Lane	3 no. dropped crossings	Morpeth Avenue	2 no. dropped crossing and a bitmac footpath installation	Fryers Crescent, Lindisfarne Court	5 no. dropped crossing	Woodland Terrace	3 no. dropped kerbs	Requests for dropped kerbs will be assessed against the available budget.
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Public Rights of Way (PROW)		The PROW network has been improved and maintained, including the demolition of a bridge in Carlbury, three footbridge upgrades, and various signs/posts/stiles/duck boards maintained/replaced.	The PROW network will be improved and maintained, including a new footbridge installation in Summerhouses and the ongoing maintenance/replacement of signs/posts/stiles/duck boards.																
Walking and cycling routes		<div>Stockton & Darlington Railway – Walking & Cycling Route</div> <div>As part of the Heritage Action Zone and the culture strategy for rail heritage there is an ambition to develop a 26-mile walking and cycling route as near to the original alignment of the Stockton & Darlington Railway (S&DR) as possible. Whilst it is recognised that this is a challenge in terms of deliverability, the aim is to get as much of it in place as possible by September 2025, to celebrate the bicentenary of the railway. The following two sections</div>	<div>Delivery - ID21 – S&DR Mill Lane roundabout to Airport Roundabout A67</div> <div>The scheme will be costed and constructed if within budget.</div> <div>Delivery - ID2 – S&DR Connection to Durham boundary at Coatham Mundeville</div> <div>Following feasibility work, the scheme will be designed and</div>																

		<p>(ID21 & ID2) have been identified as a priority for implementation:</p> <p><u>Feasibility - ID21 – S&DR Mill Lane roundabout to Airport roundabout A67</u></p> <p>In 2020 the existing section of route between the A67 and Mill Lane in Middleton St George was improved, funded by Rural Payments Agency. The next section to formally create is the route from Mill Lane in the west to Yarm Road in the east, in between the live railway line and the A67. This includes diverting a footpath so that Network Rail (NR) can close a level crossing.</p> <p>A design is complete and has been for pre-planning consultation.</p> <p><u>Feasibility - ID2 – S&DR Connection to Durham boundary at Coatham Mundeville</u></p> <p>The preferred route between the boundary with Durham County Council (DCC) has been identified as a continuation of the existing PROW (from the point it turns west to cross the railway line) south to Coatham Lane to the east of the railway line. By March 2024 Durham will have a complete cycle/walking route to the DCC/DBC boundary (field edge). On crossing the administrative boundary route currently meets an existing, non-surfaced, footpath which is not suitable for cyclists.</p> <p>Funding has been released to assess the feasibility of replacing the existing PROW to the West of the rail line, which currently involves an uncontrolled rail crossing point and negotiating gated farmland, with a linear route to the west, directly joining onto to Durham's planned</p>	<p>costed, and constructed if within budget.</p> <p><u>Delivery - Redmire Close Cycle Path</u></p> <p>Following completion of design work, the scheme will be costed, and if within budget will move to construction.</p>
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		<p>route.</p> <p><u>Feasibility - Redmire Close Cycle Path</u></p> <p>The Harrowgate Hill Cycle Route and the Circular Cycle route both link into Redmire Close from the riverside cycle route along a narrow section of path. The path splits before it reaches Redmire Close to the two different cycle routes. A scheme to upgrade the existing path is underway, with design work progressing.</p>	
Car Club		<p>The need for a car club in the Town Centre was identified as part of the Parking Strategy and the Town Centre Transport Plan. It is envisaged that it will support the Town Centre Strategy particularly in terms of encouraging more people to live in the Town Centre.</p> <p>Feasibility work is underway to explore operating and delivery models for a Car Club. Research on schemes operating across the country has also been undertaken, and the Energy Savings Club are assisting with best practice guidance.</p>	<p>We will continue to explore the feasibility of a Car Club for Darlington Town Centre, which will include detailed analysis of delivery models. We are also awaiting results of TVCA's feasibility study into Mobility Hubs, which include the option for Car Clubs.</p>
A68 Corridor Improvements (Cockerton Roundabouts)		<p>Consultation on Cockerton Roundabout improvements commenced in January 2022. As a result of consultation, a number of changes were made to the scheme, including provision of a new crossing pedestrian crossing point outside Cockerton Library, verge parking on West Auckland Road and the size of the roundabout islands to maintain as much green space as possible and working with local residents and businesses to inform how this will look in the future.</p> <p>Scheme designs are nearing completion, further to consultation with Active Travel England (ATE) on the active</p>	<p>Scheme designs will be completed and submitted for planning in the Summer of 2024.</p> <p>We will work with TVCA to establish a Grant Funding Agreement in respect of the CRSTS funded element of the roundabout improvements.</p>

		<p>travel elements.</p> <p>The scheme was subject to an unsuccessful LUF bid in 2023. It is now intended to fund the scheme through a combination of CRSTS, Darlington Transport Plan Delivery funding and developer contributions. The level of developer contributions have been determined using the Coniscliffe Transport Model, which has allocated contributions based on the volume of traffic from individual development sites, going through the roundabouts.</p> <p>The residents of 267 Carmel Road North have relocated to a new Council property. The house is programmed for demolition and planning permission will be sought in early 2024.</p>	
Speed Management and Road Safety programmes			
School speed management and safety schemes	Manage	<p><u>Safer Routes to Schools (SRTS)</u></p> <p>20mph schemes were designed for St. Augustine's RC Primary School and Hurworth School (secondary) and consultation took place with the schools and local residents in March/April 2023.</p> <p>Following consultation, changes have been made to the scheme design for St. Augustine's, which will require further consultation.</p> <p>There was broad support for the Hurworth School scheme, and we will be making some minor changes to the scheme as highlighted through the consultation.</p> <p>A scheme has also been designed for the Federation of Abbey Schools (schemes on Abbey Road and Cleveland</p>	<p><u>Safer Routes to Schools (SRTS)</u></p> <p>The schemes which were consulted on in 2023/24 will be programmed for implementation.</p> <p>A scheme design will be progressed for St. Bede's RC Primary School (Thompson Street East) and consultation will take place with the school and local residents.</p> <p>We will complete feasibility work for a SRTS scheme for Longfield School (Longfield Road).</p> <p>The feasibility will be carried out for a scheme for Mowden Junior/Infants (Fulthorpe/Barnes Road/Conyers Ave).</p>


		<p>Terrace) and consultation took place in January 2024.</p> <p><u>Vehicle Activated Signs (VAS)</u></p> <p>A Vehicle Activated Signs (VAS) policy was developed to set out the rationale and mechanism for prioritising sites where VAS may be installed.</p> <p>Tranche 1 of the VAS programme has been completed, and we have installed equipment in eight locations. As part of Tranche 2 we have identified a number of locations, several of which are to be located within the vicinity of Safer Routes to School (SRTS) schemes.</p>	<p><u>Vehicle Activated Signs (VAS)</u></p> <p>Signs will be installed as part of Tranche 2, with sites as part of SRTS Schemes installed during scheme delivery. It is proposed to fund those VAS through the scheme budget.</p> <p>A further six to eight sites will be identified as part of Tranche 3, applying the VAS policy, funded within existing budget allocation.</p>
Area wide 20mph zones		<p>Surveys have been undertaken to establish existing traffic calming features in Eastbourne/Firthmoor, to confirm which streets meets the criteria for establishing a 20mph zone in accordance with The Highways (Traffic Calming) Regulations (1999).</p>	<p>We will liaise with the police to identify whether any additional traffic calming features are required and implement the zones, subject to legal orders (TROs).</p>
Low Traffic Neighbourhoods (Active Neighbourhoods) and other solutions		-	<p>The Darlington Transport Plan 2022-2030 identified Low Traffic Neighbourhoods (LTNs) as a potential intervention as part of our Safer Roads objective. They were not identified as a specific action in the associated action plan, but we are minded to consider a trial area within the plan period.</p> <p>We will look at the feasibility for an LTN in a trial area in Darlington. In deciding the trial location, issues such as public support, impact on emergency response times and displacement of traffic onto other roads will be important factors to consider. We will also need to consider the impact of the LTN on parking as some on street spaces will be lost to accommodate the features and allow vehicles to turn around at the point closure.</p>

			We will look at this in further detail in 2025/26, considering the outcome of Government’s expected review of LTNs, as part of the Plan for Drivers.
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Projects and Programmes Delivered in Partnership with TVCA (TVCA funded)


Mode	Funding	Progress Update
CRSTS – City Regional Sustainable Transport Settlements BSIP – Bus Service Improvement Plan ZEBRA - Zero Emission Bus Regional Area CaF – Capability and Ambition Fund ATF – Active Travel Fund TCF – Transforming Cities Fund LEVI – Local Electric Vehicle Infrastructure Fund LUF2 – Levelling Up Funding (Tranche 2)		
All 	CRSTS	<u>Tees Valley Digital Delivery Plan</u> Funding through the CRSTS programme will deliver the Tees Valley Digital Delivery Plan from 2022 to 2026. The plan identifies a number of digital and transport needs of the residents, businesses and key stakeholders in the region. This user-centric approach ensures that digital solutions will be developed that meet these needs and solve real issues and challenges. This plan supports the wider Tees Valley Digital Strategy, which sets an ambitious target of becoming the UK's first Smart Region by 2032, covering the three foundations of digital infrastructure, innovation and inclusions and skills. This digital programme of investment will benefit all road users.
	CRSTS	<u>Transforming Town Centre Accessibility</u> As part of the overall CRSTS programme, the delivery plan includes a project focussed on transforming town centre accessibility. This is to ensure that transformational transport interventions can be implemented to meet the ambition and support the delivery of town centre major regeneration projects. Masterplanning will commence in 2024/25 and an initial list of possible projects within Darlington has been put forward to TVCA for consideration.
Bus 	BSIP+	<u>Bus Service Improvements – supported bus services</u> TVCA have received confirmation of £1.5m of BSIP+ funding for 2023/24 and a further £1.5m for 2024/25, to support bus service improvements. In early June 2023, Arriva North East announced that they would be making cuts to their bus network in Tees Valley from July 2023 and subsequently TVCA and the Local Authorities carried out an extensive review of all the Arriva changes and it was collectively agreed that 2023/24 BSIP+ funding would be used to mitigate the impact of the these cuts. This funding has been used to secure the following services until March 2024: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Service 6/6A, Darlington & Stockton (Stagecoach) previously service 12 (Darlington), and part of service 17 (Stockton).

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Services 17 & 18, Darlington (Arriva) previously part of services 3 & 3A. • Evening and Sunday services 3 & 4, Darlington (Arriva). <p>TVCA are currently retendering for the above services, with a view to their continuation until end March 2025.</p> <p>In addition, in October 2023, TVCA also tendered for service provision to West Park and Lingfield Point, to fill gaps in the network due to de-registered commercial provision. However, on assessment it was found that neither submission represented good value for money and TVCA decided not to progress either option. Subsequently alternative provision through Tees Flex is being investigated.</p> <p>In addition, the current DBC contract for the operation of service 16 is due to end in August 2024, and it is hoped that TVCA will also fund the extension of this service to end March 2025 in line with other supported bus service contracts funded through BSIP+.</p>
BSIP	<p><u>Improving Bus Services</u></p> <p>In addition to BSIP+ allocations, and following the publication of Network North, in October 2023 it was announced that TVCA will receive an allocation of £3.851M of BSIP funding in 2024/25.</p> <p>Whilst further detail is currently awaited from Government, initial information is that this funding needs to be used to deliver on the BSIP priorities. TVCA have therefore proposed that the £3.851M of BSIP funding and any remaining BSIP+ funding is used to fund a young person's fare offer, improvements to bus shelters and timetable information and service marketing and promotional campaigns.</p>
CRSTS	<p><u>Advertising bus shelter contract</u></p> <p>TVCA tendered for the replacement of the existing individually led Local Authority contracts with Clear Channel UK (CCUK), for a Tees Valley wide contract. CCUK were awarded the contract to provide and maintain advertising shelters in Tees Valley and offered the choice of two options for renewing the current stock of shelters and advertising revenue share. TVCA have opted to adopt their refurbishment option, which will involve CCUK installing several new digital advertising screens, and replacing shelters when they reach end of life. There is also a commitment to replace all shelters in major hubs such as the town centre.</p> <p>Work is expected to commence in Spring 2024.</p>
CRSTS	<p>The CRSTS business case identified a high-level list of bus priority schemes to be delivered across the Tees Valley. Since confirmation of funding, work has been progressing on finalising the list of schemes.</p> <p>Most recently, TVCA with the assistance of WSP have completed "health checks" in order to establish which schemes should be progressed. Below is the latest scheme list as agreed by TVCA:</p>

		<p><u>Darlington Town Centre Connectivity</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review potential to improve town centre bus service routing. <p><u>Darlington Western Connectivity – Town Centre to Faverdale</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bondgate roundabout • Cockerton roundabouts <p><u>Darlington Eastern Connectivity – Town Centre to Morton Park onward to Teesside Airport</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • McMullen Road bus lane (Yarm Road to B6279) bus priority • St Cuthbert's Way/Stonebridge junction • Yarm Road <p><u>Darlington Northern Connectivity – Town Centre to Harrowgate Hill</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Burtree Lane Junction • A1150/Thompson Street East roundabout. <p>We have submitted pro-formas for grant funding to TVCA, to allow DBC to carry out concept design work. It is possible that some schemes will drop out of the programme during concept and feasibility stages.</p>
	ZEBRA2	<p><u>Tees Valley Zero Emission Bus Regional Area 2 (ZEBRA 2)</u></p> <p>In September 2023 DfT announced funding of £129M to support the introduction of low emission buses across the English regions, prioritising rural areas and those areas that did not secure funding under round 1.</p> <p>TVCA worked with local operators Arriva and Stagecoach and submitted a Tees Valley application in December 2023, whereby Arriva has agreed to fund both the diesel capital cost equivalent, and the 25% match funding requirement for 22 electric vehicles. These vehicles, and any relevant infrastructure, will be split between their Redcar, and Darlington depots, prioritising service 2 (seven vehicles, covering Redhall to Cockerton), and service 63 (15 vehicles, covering Middlesbrough to Redcar). The Stagecoach application is for 40 vehicles operating out of their Stockton depot; however, these vehicles are not expected to be deployed on service 6/6A.</p>
<p>Active Travel</p> 	CaF	<p>The Active Travel Hub programme continues to operate in Darlington and across the Tees Valley, with further emphasis on local community engagement and public consultation, to support the delivery of Darlington's and TVCA's ambitious vision for the LCWIP, with capital funding from Active Travel England (ATE).</p> <p>TVCA await an ATE announcement on further funding in order to continue the contract with Sustrans beyond Summer 2024.</p>

<p><u>Walking and Cycling Route Investment</u></p> <p>The active travel elements of the ATF, CRSTS, LUF2, ATF funded corridors detailed below are part of the Local Cycling & Walking Infrastructure Plan (LCWIP), which is a long-term strategy to deliver a connected network of walking and cycling routes across the Tees Valley.</p>	
<p>ATF</p>	<p><u>Woodland Road - Phase 1 (ATF2)</u></p> <p>Duke Street – Outram Street – Woodland Road to Hollyhurst Road junction.</p> <p>This section of the overall route from West Park to the town centre is now complete and open to the public. The Feasibility of cycle parking on Duke Street is being investigated for added value. TVCA await information from ATE as to when the route will be inspected by ATE, who seek to identify any ‘critical issues’ which do not meet their requirements.</p> <p><u>Woodland Road - Phase 2 (ATF3)</u></p> <p>Woodland Road (Hollyhurst Road junction) – Denes (Tennis Court) – Deneside Road.</p> <p>Consultation on a proposed design has been carried out, and following feedback from ATE, DBC are currently finalising the design.</p> <p><u>Darlington Station Western Gateway (ATF4E)</u></p> <p>In November 2023, TVCA submitted a bid to ATE, for active travel improvements to the Victoria Road entrance to Bank Top rail station, which form part of wider improvements to the public realm.</p> <p>This scheme will complement but is currently out of scope of the Darlington Station Gateway East project, led by TVCA, which includes a new station entrance and concourse to the east side of the railway tracks incorporating ticketing waiting and retail areas.</p>
<p>CRSTS</p>	<p><u>West Auckland Road - Phase 3 (CRSTS)</u></p> <p>A68 Deneside Road - Brinkburn Road.</p> <p>A design for walking/cycling route has been separated from the overall DBC roundabout improvement works, for consideration by TVCA. The scheme design has been reviewed by ATE who provided feedback on various elements.</p> <p><u>Yarm Road</u></p> <p>Yarm Road to Teesside Airport</p> <p>WSP are carrying out feasibility work on various route options for a walking and cycling route linking Yarm Road to Teesside Airport.</p>
<p>LUF2</p>	<p><u>Connecting Northgate to the Town Centre</u></p> <p>TVCA were successful in their LUF2 bid, which includes improvements to walking and cycling in locations across the Tees Valley. The section identified in Darlington is proposed to link</p>

		<p>Linear Park in front of Bishopsgate House to the Towns Fund regeneration areas around Northgate. This will ultimately connect the town centre to the RHQ.</p> <p>A requirement of LUF2 funded schemes is that delivery must be achieved by March 2025 and the scheme is currently being reviewed by ATE.</p>
<p>Motorists</p> 	LEVI	<p><u>Tees Valley EV Infrastructure Delivery Plan</u></p> <p>TVCA, in collaboration with the five Local Authorities, is developing an EV Charging Infrastructure Delivery Plan, to achieve the EV related outcomes and actions set out in the STP. The Delivery Plan will set out the anticipated public EV Charging Infrastructure requirements across the Tees Valley and how local charging needs will be met over time to service the forecasted growth in EVs in the region.</p> <p>The Delivery Plan is being developed with input from the local authorities and the process is being supported by the Energy Savings Trust as part of their support package offered to LTAs under the Local Government Support Programme.</p> <p><u>Local Electric Vehicle Infrastructure (LEVI) fund</u></p> <p>The government's Local Electric Vehicle Infrastructure (LEVI) fund aims to deliver a step-change in the scale of deployment of local, primarily low power, on-street EV charging infrastructure across England, and accelerate the commercialisation of, and investment in, the local charging infrastructure sector. Residents without off street parking are the primary focus of the LEVI fund.</p>
	TSOG	<p><u>Traffic Signals Efficiency</u></p> <p>As part of DfT's Plan for Drivers, funding has been earmarked to make traffic signals more efficient. TVCA will submit bids for the following funding.</p> <p><u>Traffic Obsolescence Grant (TSOG)</u></p> <p>In December 2023, TVCA submitted a bid to DfT to replace unreliable and obsolete equipment in the traffic signals system. DBC have identified a priority list for signals that require replacement.</p>
	ITMF	<p><u>Intelligent Traffic Management Fund (ITMF)</u></p> <p>TVCA will be submitting a bid by April 2024, for funding to delay advanced technology for traffic signals.</p>
	TCF	<p>Improvements to the Urban Traffic Management Control System (UTMC) which will enable better management of the highway network and improve the efficient movement of buses will continue to be delivered by TVCA in 2024/25. The first phase of the delivery programme includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (a) The upgrade of the UTMC system; (b) Expansion of traffic signal connectivity to enable further development of a Smart Region approach to traffic management;

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> (c) The repair, service and reinstatement of traffic counters to enable strategies for traffic management to be implemented; (d) Additional CCTV cameras linked back to control rooms; (e) Dynamic journey time routes, providing real-time and accurate travel time information of transit vehicles to assist passengers in planning their trips to minimise waiting times; (f) ANPR (Automatic Number Plate Recognition) cameras to provide journey time data; (g) Diversion routes for unplanned events and; (h) VMS signs to support major events, roadworks, incidents, and road safety campaigns around the Tees Valley.
Rail 	CRSTS	<u>Station Enhancements</u> TVCA commissioned Mott McDonald to carry out feasibility into improving Dinsdale and North Road stations, with the aim of integrating the station more effectively with local transport and ultimately improving the passenger experience.

Local Highway Authority Funding – Darlington Transport Capital Programme 2024/25

In April 2022, the Secretary of State for Transport confirmed that Tees Valley Combined Authority (TVCA) was to receive the full allocation of £310M of City Region Sustainable Transport Settlement (CRSTS) funding to invest in local transport networks.

CRSTS consolidates funding from previous allocations of the Highways Maintenance Block, Potholes Fund and Integrated Transport Block, to ensure that Local Highways Authorities can carry out their responsibilities under Section 41 of the Highways Act 1980 to maintain, A, B, C and U classified roads, bridges and lighting columns.

TVCA has allocated £3,067,984 to Darlington Borough Council for 2024/25, as part of a long-term settlement until March 2027.

On 4 October 2023, Government additionally announced £8.3 billion of highways maintenance funding over the period 2023/24 and the next ten years for local road resurfacing and wider maintenance activity on the local highway network (redirected HS2 funding). This represents an increase of around two-thirds in Department for Transport (DfT) support for local roads. 15% of the funds will be allocated at a later date, for which details are awaited.

Of this funding, TVCA have been allocated £1.499M for financial years 23/24 and 24/25, which equates to an additional £554,820 for highways maintenance in Darlington over the two-year period. The year-by-year profile beyond this has not been finalised. DfT may also look to introduce an enhanced incentive element from 2025/26 onwards to ensure that best practice in sustainable highways asset management is adhered to.

The annual allocation is based on the following breakdown, received in 2021/22 (although there's no requirement to maintain the same spending profile):

Pothole Funding	Highways Maintenance Formula and Incentive	Integrated Transport Block (Darlington Transport Plan delivery)	TOTAL
£969,246	£1,205,752	£892,986	£3,067,984

Highways Maintenance – funding to maintain the highway network including structures and street lighting.

Allocation 24/25	£
Pothole Funding	969,246
Highways Maintenance Formula & Incentive	1,205,752
Additional Maintenance Funding (23/24) <i>Allocation carried forward</i>	277,410
Additional Maintenance Funding	277,410
Subtotal	2,729,818
Less Fees (10%)	-272,981
Total	2,456,837

Integrated Transport Block - funding to manage and improve the highway network⁷

Darlington Transport Plan Objectives	Scheme	2023/24 (£k)	2024/25 (£k)
Network Management			
Maintain and effectively manage a resilient transport system.	Traffic monitoring	20	20
	Traffic counter replacement programme	10	10
Active and sustainable transport			
Reduce transport's impact on the environment and support health and wellbeing.	Improvements to bus passenger and cycling facilities (town centre)	80 – bus 20 - cycling	50 - bus 20 - cycling
	Dropped kerbs	50	50
Connect people to job and training opportunities and link communities.	Public Rights of Way	15	15
		25 S&DR legal orders	0 No funding required in 2024/25.
Support a revitalised and transformed Darlington town centre.	Walking and cycling routes	80	225
Maintain and effectively manage a resilient transport system.	Car Club	60	0 No funding required in 2024/25.
	A68 Corridor Improvements	250	200
Speed Management and Road Safety programmes			
Improve safety for all road users	School speed management and safety schemes	120	140
	Low Traffic Neighbourhoods and other solutions	0	30
	Area wide 20mph zones	30	0 No funding required in 2024/25
	Subtotal	760	760
	Fees (15%)	133	133
	Total	893	893

⁷ The integrated transport block represents a programme of transport improvements. Funding may be moved between elements as detailed design is completed.

Performance and monitoring information – 2023/24

1A – Monitoring Data









































Public Transport	Financial Year										Data Source	Comments
	2014/15	2015/16	2016/17	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24		
Bus Punctuality % on time	64%	63%	87%	89%	86%	86%	-	93%			DFT National Data. 2022/23 onwards data now only available for TVCA as a whole.	In 2021/22 covid restrictions continued to have an impact on punctuality, e.g. reduced roadworks, school closures, working from home still in place etc.
Bus Punctuality % on time									76%	80%	Supplied by bus operators	
Bus Patronage (all operators)	6,505,849	6,422,947	6,240,594	5,972,163	5,741,507	5,457,204	1,826,616	3,286,557	3,737,044	4,011,475	Supplied by bus operators	2023/24 Estimated
Concessionary fares patronage	2,673,485	2,627,062	2,607,611	2,450,526	2,347,694	2,167,240	628,055	1,094,852	1,262,825	1,373,451	Supplied by bus operators	2023/24 Estimated
Rail Patronage (all 4 Darlington stations)	2,337,246	2,331,514	2,362,464	2,412,076	2,494,228	2,507,812	575,088	2,147,338	2,336,372	Available late 2024	https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/rail-statistics	Stations: North Road, Darlington, Dinsdale & Teesside Airport Teesside Airport service suspended from May 2022 onwards
Road User Counts	Financial Year										Data Source	Comments
	2014/15	2015/16	2016/17	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24		
Peak period traffic count	20,287	20,419	19,417	19,090	19,524	19,023	14,753	18,460	19,417	19,276*	DBC traffic counters	2023/24 Estimated
24 Hour traffic count (average)	123,847	124,764	126,801	125,519	127,938	125,017	94,007	117,811	120,815	122,350*	DBC traffic counters	2023/24 Estimated
Number of cycling trips	1,556.50	1,315.75	1,618	1,585	1,650	1,614	1,637	1,581	1,494	1,686*	DBC traffic counters	2023/24 Estimated
No. of walking trips in the town centre	133,983	126,687	124,608	120,359	104,825	111,042	48,958	83,124	97	92,102*	DBC traffic counters	2023/24 Estimated




1B – Monitoring Data

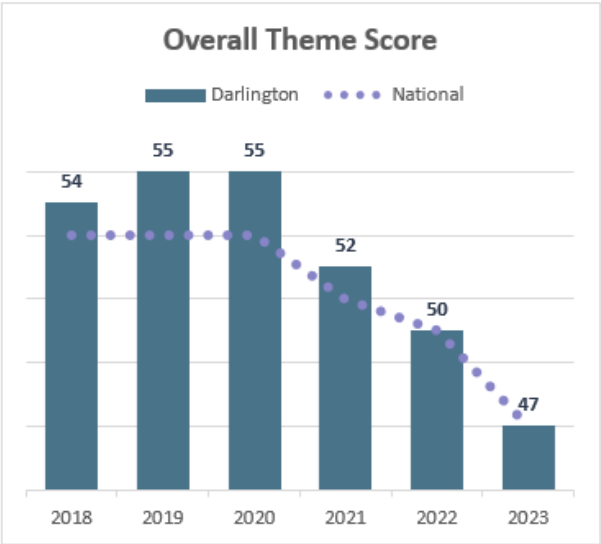
		Calendar Year										Data Source	Comments
Road Safety - Casualties		2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023		
Number of Fatal or Seriously injured road user casualties (KSI)	Adult	24	30	35	40	47	44	27	36	43	35	North East England Road User Casualty Dashboard	Note there were 0 children killed or seriously injured as a result of road traffic collisions in 2023, and further to this, 0 since 2013. There was a 25% reduction in the number of people killed or seriously injured in 2023 compared to 2022.
	Child	2	2	4	5	5	5	2	5	4	0		
	Total	26	32	39	45	52	49	29	41	47	35		
Number of slightly injured road user casualties	Adult	269	210	226	203	179	151	97	105	72	79		There was a 2.2% increase in the number of people slightly injured in 2023 compared to 2022. Overall this is the 2nd lowest number of casualties (KSI & slight) on record.
	Child	27	32	27	24	28	15	14	8	17	12		
	Total	296	242	253	227	207	166	111	113	89	91		
		Academic Year										Data Source	Comments
Road Safety - School Training		2014/15	2015/16	2016/17	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24		
% of children taking part in pedestrian training from participating schools		89%	86%	89%	87%	80%	52%	10%	47%	62%	Available August 2024	DBC data collection	Inevitably, the level of participation in pedestrian training reduced hugely during the pandemic, as can be seen from 2020/21. Participation is increasing year on year, however, some schools have not taken up the offer of training, as they continue to catch up on academic lost time.
% of children taking part in cycle training (Year 5) from participating schools		46%	44%	52%	53%	57%	25%	13%	29%	32%	Available August 2024	DBC data collection	Previous years have been reported as financial year

2 – National Highways and Transport - Public Satisfaction Survey – 2023.
























Overall Summary

Theme		Actual Scores		Average Scores			Rank	
		2023	2022	TVCA	NE Region	National Average	TVCA Rank	NE Rank
	Overall	47	50 	48 	49 	47 	3	10
	Accessibility	72	68 	69 	68 	66 	1	1
	Public Transport	44	48 	49 	50 	50 	5	13
	Walking/Cycling	52	52 	49 	50 	50 	1	2
	Tackling Congestion	44	45 	44 	45 	42 	2	5
	Road Safety	54	56 	52 	52 	50 	1	2
	Highway Maintenance	45	47 	44 	45 	43 	2	6
	Communications	48	50 	45 	45 	45 	1	2

Key  2023 score greater than  2023 score less than  2023 score equal to



Highlights / Lowlights

	PTQI08 - Provision of bus Stops	85		HMQUI11 - Number of potholes	17
	WCQI30 - Provision of footpaths & pedestrian areas	82		KBI 08 - Public transport information	25
	HMQUI13 - Provision of street-lights	77		HMBI 01 - Condition of road surfaces	26
	12 out of 13 Accesibility indicators in the top 15	Average 74		HMBI 30 - Speed of repair to damaged roads	26
	PTBI 05 - How easy buses are to get on/off	68		CMQI07 - Informed about local air quality	26
	PTBI 10 - Personal safety on the bus	65		KBI 23 - Condition of highways	28
	HMBI 28 - Undertakes cold weather gritting (salting)	65		HMBI 13 - Deals with Potholes and damaged roads	29
	PTBI 09 - Helpfulness of drivers	64		CMQI20 - Informed about council actions on climate change	29
	RSQI09 - Provision of speed controls	64		ACQI25 - Electric Vehicle charging points	30
	PTBI 12 - Raised kerbs at bus stops	63		CMQI06 - Informed about action to repair local roads	30
	RSBI 01 - Speed limits	63		HMBI 31 - Quality of repair to damaged roads	31
				HMQUI12 - Action to repair local roads	33

Indicator Performance

Total Indicators: 157			
Above Average		Getting Better	
127	81%	65	41%
Below Average		Getting Worse	
30	19%	92	59%

Overall Key Indicators											
	Actual Scores		Average Scores				Actual Scores		Average Scores		
	2023	2022	TVCA	NE Region	National Average		2023	2022	TVCA	NE Region	National Average
Accessibility 						Public Transport 					
Overall Accessibility	72	68 	69 	68 	66 	Overall Public Transport	44	48 	49 	50 	50 
KBI 03 - Ease of Access (all)	75	74 	73 	73 	71 	KBI 06 - Local bus services (overall)	45	52 	53 	54 	54 
KBI 04 - Ease of Access (disabilities)	69	64 	64 	63 	61 	KBI 07 - Local bus services (aspects)	36	44 	47 	49 	47 
KBI 05 - Ease of Access (no car)	72	67 	71 	69 	66 	KBI 08 - Public transport information	25	31 	29 	33 	33 
ACQI25 - EV charging points	30	33 	33 	33 	32 	KBI 09 - Taxi/mini cab services	51	52 	57 	60 	60 
Walking/Cycling 						Tackling Congestion 					
Overall Walking/Cycling	52	52 	49 	50 	50 	Overall Tackling Congestion	44	45 	44 	45 	42 
KBI 11 - Pavements & Footpaths (overall)	51	52 	47 	48 	50 	KBI 17 - Traffic levels & congestion	43	44 	46 	45 	41 
KBI 12 - Pavements & Footpaths (aspects)	52	51 	48 	49 	49 	KBI 18 - Management of roadworks	44	47 	45 	45 	43 
KBI 13 - Cycle routes and facilities (overall)	52	50 	49 	50 	50 	KBI 19 - Traffic management	39	39 	36 	40 	39 
KBI 14 - Cycle routes and facilities (aspects)	53	52 	47 	49 	49 	KQI 04 - Traffic pollution	48	48 	48 	48 	45 
KBI 15 - Rights of way (overall)	54	53 	53 	54 	54 	Highway Maintenance 					
KBI 16 - Rights of way (aspects)	50	51 	48 	50 	49 	Overall Highways Maintenance	45	47 	44 	45 	43 
Road Safety 						KBI 23 - Condition of highways	28	33 	29 	30 	27 
Overall Road Safety	54	56 	52 	52 	50 	KBI 24 - Highway maintenance	46	48 	44 	44 	43 
KBI 20 - Road safety locally	53	56 	53 	54 	52 	KBI 25 - Street lighting	62	62 	61 	63 	61 
KBI 21 - Road safety environment	56	56 	53 	53 	52 	KBI 26 - Highway enforcement/obstructions	43	43 	41 	42 	40 
KBI 22 - Road safety education	54	55 	49 	49 	47 						
Communications 											
Overall Communications	48	50 	45 	45 	45 						
KQI 02 - Communication (aspects)	48	50 	45 	45 	45 						

CABINET
5 MARCH 2024

LOCAL DEVELOPMENT SCHEME (LDS)

Responsible Cabinet Member -
Councillor Chris McEwan, Economy Portfolio

Responsible Director -
Ian Williams, Chief Executive

SUMMARY REPORT

Purpose of the Report

1. To seek Members' approval for the revised timetable for producing development plan documents to support the adopted local plan.

Summary

2. An up-to-date Local Plan is essential to meet the development needs of the Borough and to enable the Council to shape and maintain control of development.
3. The Local Plan is a framework for growth and aims to ensure that Darlington becomes an even more sustainable location in which people increasingly choose to live, work and visit. Not only does it help to deliver the economic strategy it also makes provision for new housing to meet local needs supporting the needs of our current and future workforce, and other new developments with the provision of key new infrastructure.
4. The success of the Borough is predicated on growth and underpins the future vibrancy of our town centre and our local communities. The Local Plan sets out how Darlington will grow, adapt and change and importantly how this will be achieved and managed. It provides the Council with the required spatial guidance and direction to contribute to and enable the structured development of the Borough – in support of both the Council's drive for a growing economy, building stronger communities and creating opportunities for all.
5. The Darlington Local Plan was adopted in February 2022 covering the period 2016 to 2036. The Local Plan is up to date and not due for review until it is five years old (before February 2027). Whilst the plan remains up to date there are supplementary documents that would help support and supplement the plan and its policies. It is therefore proposed the next few years of work should be primarily focused on development of a new Climate Change Development Plan Document (DPD) and an updated Design of New Development Supplementary (SPD) which was last reviewed in 2011

Recommendation

6. It is recommended that Cabinet agree that the attached Local Development Scheme (2024-2027) is approved to take immediate effect.

Reasons

7. The recommendation is supported as the Council is required to have an up-to-date Local Development Scheme (Planning & Compulsory Act 2004, as amended by Section 111, Localism Act 2011).

Ian Williams
Chief Executive

Background Papers

- (i) National Planning Policy Framework, December 2023
- (ii) Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004
- (iii) Town and Country Planning Act (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012
- (iv) Localism Act 2011

David Hand: Extension 6294

S17 Crime and Disorder	The Local Plan has a role in reducing crime through the promotion of good design and location of development.
Health and Wellbeing	A key objective of Local Plan and supporting documents is to improve people's health and wellbeing by protecting and improving the economic, social and environmental conditions in the Borough.
Carbon Impact and Climate Change	Achieving sustainable development is a fundamental objective of the Local Plan. The development of a new Climate Change DPD will enable the council to develop additional policy to tackle climate change matters.
Diversity	An Equalities Impact Assessment will be part of the DPD/SPD preparation process.
Wards Affected	All
Groups Affected	All
Budget and Policy Framework	The Development Plan Documents will be prepared using existing budgets and will ultimately form part of the Council's Planning Policy Framework.
Key Decision	Yes
Urgent Decision	No
Council Plan	The Local Plan represents the spatial implications of the overarching aims of the Council Plan.
Efficiency	Not applicable
Impact on Looked After Children and Care Leavers	This report has no impact on Looked After Children or Care Leavers

MAIN REPORT

Information and Analysis

8. As part of the governments planning reforms a Written Ministerial Statement (WMS) was issued in December 2023 which expects all Local Authorities to revise their Local Development Scheme (LDS) and to provide the Department of Levelling Up, Housing and Communities (DLUHC) with a copy within 12 weeks.
9. The Updated LDS, attached at **Appendix 1**, is a statutory requirement. It sets out the planning policy documents that the Council will prepare over the next three years, when the key stages of preparation will be, the scope of each document, the resources available for, and risks to, their preparation. It will replace the existing LDS 2020 to 2023 which was approved by Cabinet and Council in September 2020.
10. The focus over the next three years will be on producing a Climate Emergency Development Plan Document (DPD) which will enable the council to develop further policy to help meet its climate change ambitions. Whilst its content is yet to be determined it could incorporate a range of new or updated policies on Biodiversity Net Gain, Nutrient Neutrality, Local Nature Recovery, Flood Risk, Sustainable Transport, Sustainable Energy and Construction etc.
11. All DPDs need to go through the same adoption process as a Local Plan including public consultation and an examination in public by a government appointed inspector. If the DPD is found sound the Council will then be able to make the decision to adopt.
12. Work is also planned to revise the current Design of New Development Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) which was last updated in 2011. SPDs are adopted by the Council.
13. This report proposes that the LDS should take effect the day after the next meeting of Full Council.

Legal Implications

14. There are no direct legal implications arising from this report.

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DARLINGTON
Borough Council

DARLINGTON LOCAL DEVELOPMENT SCHEME 2024-2027

**Preparation Programme for the Darlington
Local Plan Documents**

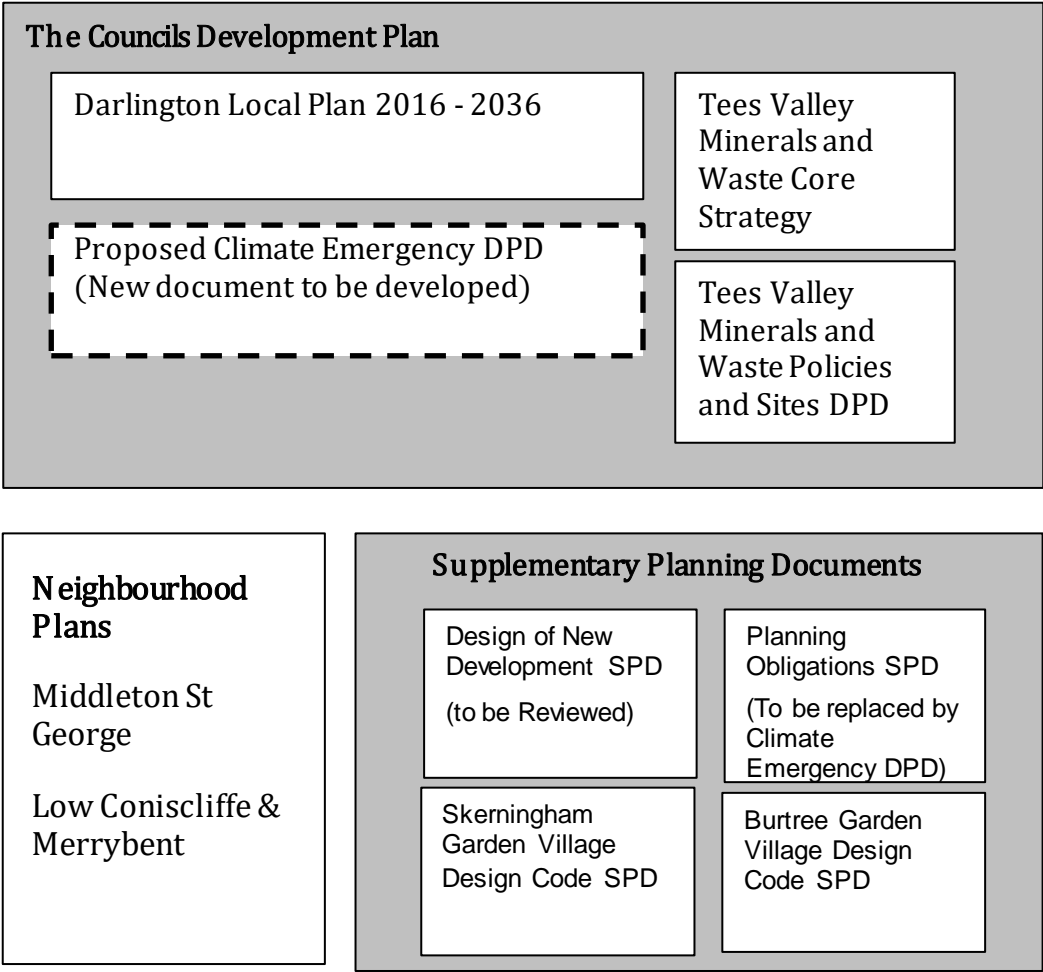
March 2024

**Planning Policy
Economic Growth**

1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 A Local Development Scheme (LDS) is required under Section 15 of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 (as amended by the Localism Act 2011). The LDS sets out the timetable for the Councils plan-making activities for the Local Planning documents which make up the Council's Development Plan. The LDS must be made available publicly and kept up to date. This LDS replaces the 2020-2023 LDS.
- 1.2 Figure 1.1 below shows the Council’s current planning policy documents, which are part of, or support the Council’s Development Plan. It also shows the relationship of documents to one another. All statutory development plan documents and supplementary planning documents can be viewed on the Council’s website, www.darlington.gov.uk/planningpolicy.

Figure 1.1: Planning Policy Documents for Darlington Borough



3. THE DARLINGTON LOCAL DEVELOPMENT SCHEME 2024-2027

- 3.1 This Local Development Scheme (LDS) sets out the content, timing and resourcing of planning policy document preparation for the next three years, 2024-27. It plans for effective development plan coverage of the whole Borough and is published to provide up to date information direct to the public about the Council's plan making activities. It will be updated as necessary to ensure it remains realistic and definitive. This will replace the earlier version of the LDS 2020-23. The LDS will be monitored and if necessary revised prior to the end of 2027.

The Local Plan

- 3.2 The Darlington Local Plan 2016-2036 (the Plan) provides a an up to date policy context against which all planning applications and development proposals will be assessed and determined. Following an Examination in Public, the appointed planning inspector found that, subject to a number of modifications, the Plan was sound. The Plan was therefore adopted by the Council on 17th February 2022.
- 3.3 A successful Local Plan helps create the conditions to deliver the following outcomes for Darlington:
- Well planned, high quality, sustainable places
 - Inclusive and accessible places, to serve all needs and communities
 - An attractive place to live, visit and invest
 - Economic growth, new jobs and prosperity
 - A vibrant town centre with strong retail, leisure and commercial sectors
 - Celebrate and protect Darlington's heritage assets and key open spaces
 - Integrated strategic social and physical infrastructure, phased to meet the needs of new development
 - Increased resilience to climate change
 - Greater certainty for residents, investors and stakeholders

Other Local Planning Documents

- 3.4 The Joint Tees Valley Minerals and Waste Core Strategy and Policies and Sites DPD remains the plans that minerals and waste proposals are assessed against.
- 3.5 The Design of New Development SPD sets out general and detailed design guidelines for new development to provide a framework to secure high quality, safe, distinctive, sustainable design in new developments. It needs to be revised to reflect changes to Building Regulations, Code for Sustainable Homes, and Development Management amenity issues. Further, there are matters that have arisen from the Healthy New Town Project that maybe usefully incorporated into this guidance.
- 3.6 The two Garden Community areas have their own Design Code SPDs. The Greater Faverdale/Burtree Garden Village Design Code SPD was adopted on 14 July 2022 and more recently the Skerningham Garden Village Design Code SPD was adopted on 28 September 2023. The Design Codes aim to ensure development at both Garden Communities are distinctive, attractive and create a successful place in which to live and work.
- 3.7 **Table 1 (page 5)** gives an overview of the Local Development Scheme. More detail on the documents that will be prepared over the next three years is given in **Section 5** of this report.

Neighbourhood Planning

- 3.8 Introduced by the Localism Act 2011, the Council has a duty to support Parish Councils and neighbourhood forums that wish to prepare Neighbourhood Plans. When adopted Neighbourhood Plans form part of the statutory development plan alongside the Local Plan. The 5 areas, formally designated as Neighbourhood Plan Areas:
- Sadberge Parish Council, (decision subsequently taken not to proceed),
 - Low Coniscliffe Parish Council (Approved at referendum on 23 May 2019),
 - Middleton St George/Low Dinsdale Parish Councils (Approved at referendum on 11 August 2022),
 - Blackwell Neighbourhood Forum (On 29 May 2014 Blackwell Neighbourhood Forum and the associated area were formally designated), and
 - Hurworth Parish Council (On 26 May 2017 Hurworth parish council was formally designated as a Neighbourhood Area).
- 3.9 Other local communities may start work on Neighbourhood Plans during the period covered by this LDS.
- 3.10 No contingency has been built into the Planning Policy team's work programme to respond to requests for advice and support on Neighbourhood Planning, and the situation will be continually monitored.

TABLE 1 – LOCAL DEVELOPMENT SCHEME 2024-2027

Document Title	Status	Role and Subject	Chain of Conformity	Commence	Draft Plan	Publication	Submission	Adoption
Darlington Climate Emergency	DPD	Sets out development policies to help meet the Councils climate change ambitions. This may incorporate a range of new or updated policies on Biodiversity Net Gain, Nutrient Neutrality, Local Nature Recovery, Flood Risk, Sustainable Transport, Sustainable Energy and Construction etc.	National Planning Policy Framework, Development Plan	March 2024	October 2024	January 2025	May 2025	Winter 2025
Revised Design of New Development/Design Code	SPD	Design guidelines for new development	National guidance & Development Plan	March 2024		Summer 2024		Autumn 2024

4. SUPPORTING STATEMENT

- 4.1 This statement explains the approach to preparing the Local Plan and how resources and risks will be managed.

Relationship with Local Strategies

- 4.2 'One Darlington Perfectly Placed', Darlington's Sustainable Community Strategy, sets out the community's shared vision and outcomes for the future of Darlington for the period 2008-2026. The Local Plan reflects spatially aspects of the strategy and ensures that the land use requirements arising from it are addressed.
- 4.3 Council, and other local strategies, with land use implications directly inform the preparation of DPDs and SPDs. These can all be found on the Council's website www.darlington.gov.uk/planningpolicy. Key examples include the Housing Strategy, the Economic Strategy, the Green Infrastructure Strategy, the Parking Strategy and the Sport and Physical Activities Strategy.

Joint Working

- 4.4 The benefits of joint working on issues with strategic cross boundary implications have been recognised for some time by the local authorities within the Tees Valley. The Localism Act 2011 introduced the 'Duty to Co-operate' placing this work on a statutory footing. A Tees Valley Development Plans Officers' Group meets on a regular basis, to share information and best practice, facilitate joint working and explore further opportunities. Membership of the group also includes representatives of Tees Valley Combined Authority (TVCA), and approximately every quarter meetings have been opened up to local authorities adjacent to the Tees Valley in County Durham and North Yorkshire. The council will prepare a statement of common ground with adjoining authorities in line with national policy requirements.

Sustainability Appraisal

- 4.5 Sustainability appraisal (SA) is carried out for all the development plan documents prepared (and SPDs where screening indicates it is necessary), and is an integral component of all stages of plan preparation. SA identifies the significant environmental, social and economic impacts of the policies and proposals and identifies if/how policies and proposals can be amended to achieve net gains across all three dimensions of sustainability. The process is undertaken to accord with the Strategic Environmental Assessment Directive (European Directive 2001/42/EC). As part of the transposing of European law into UK law following the UK's exit from the European Union the Levelling Up and Regeneration Act (2023) makes provision to replace the requirement to undertake a SA with the requirement to undertake an Environmental Outcomes Report. Secondary Legislation and further guidance on the process and content of these is awaited.

- 4.6 The Sustainability Assessment will be produced using internal resources.

Equalities Impact Assessment

- 4.7 Equalities Impact Assessment and Disability Equalities Impact Assessment is undertaken and its findings will be submitted alongside the Proposed DPD and SPD if required. It is undertaken in-house within the team, with the views of protected characteristics groups being sought at key stages.

Staff Resources

- 4.8 The Planning Policy team is within the Economic Growth Directorate. It leads the preparation of the Local Plan and other planning policy documents. The team currently includes a Head of Planning Policy, Economic Strategy & Environment, one Principal Planning Officer, three full-time Planning Officers, (one seconded to a temporary Garden Communities Officer role), one part-time Planning Officer (4 Days a week) two part-time Technical Officers and a Graduate Planner (Fixed Term for 2yrs). The Assistant Director (Economic Growth) also assists with various aspects of preparation including providing the strategic steer, the Member interface and public consultation.
- 4.9 Success in achieving the milestones set out in this LDS will depend on the amount of non-plan preparation work the team does, on the amount and timeliness of help from colleagues across the Council in specific policy areas, such as transport, climate change and housing, and on there being no further cuts to the staffing resources available for planning policy work.
- 4.12. Consultants are also used on specific pieces of work, particularly work carried out jointly by the Tees Valley authorities, and specialist technical studies and work. Officers from Tees Valley Combined Authority provide some statistical information and manage specific joint commissions of the Tees Valley authorities, such as for the economy and infrastructure.

Financial Resources

- 4.13 A consolidated budget has been established across the Economic Growth Division which covers the costs associated with Development Plan preparation (consultant's fees for evidence gathering, consultations and printing).
- 4.14 The programme proposed in the LDS assumes that the budgetary resources that have been allocated to Planning Policy work in the Council's Medium Term Financial Plan are available in their entirety.
- 4.15 Some additional evidence gathering will be required and the Climate Change DPD will be subject to an examination in public.

Monitoring

- 4.16 The first Local Plan Authorities Monitoring Report (AMR) was recently published reflecting the first financial year of the Local Plan 2022/23. It includes the following information:
- Progress in preparing the Darlington Local Plan, compared with the milestones set out in the latest LDS, reasons for and proposed actions to address any slippage
 - Any factors affecting the current year's LDS milestones and planned action.
 - The need for new evidence or research.
 - A review of policy effectiveness.

- Information showing future housing provision against housing requirements.

4.17 Annual updates will continue to be provided.

Risk Assessment

4.18 A risk assessment has been carried out for the LDS. The key areas of risk have been identified below as well as the actions that will be put in place to mitigate the risks:

Risk Identified	Mitigating Actions
Implications of changes to the national planning system and policy framework.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Keep up to date with best practice, Inspectors and Court decisions relating to plan preparation. • Keep up to date with changes to national policy and implications for the Local Plan process • Maintain up-to-date local evidence base.
Change of political priorities.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Controlling party has changed causing additional work and delay in communicating work and decisions made thus far. • Member involvement throughout the plan preparation process.
Ability to maintain staffing levels.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Regularly review the plan preparation programme through this LDS and its updates to match any changes in staff resources, changes of planning policy workstreams and other policy workstreams that staff are required to contribute to. • Recruit extra (temporary) staff, where necessary, to meet peaks in workload around key stages of plan development
Staff turnover, maternity leave or long term illness within core team.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continues to be a challenge. • Prioritise recruitment activity as soon as notice given. • Manage workloads to reduce stress. • Spread knowledge within core team to ensure a back-up if specialist absent. • Use short and medium term work experience placements for mutual benefit.
Completion of evidence base takes longer than expected.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Clear specification in consultancy briefs, and tighter project management of consultancy commissions. • Ensure core team is kept abreast of latest good practice cited on discussion fora and other sources. • Ensure team carries out appropriate CPD to keep up to date with best practice. • Allow contingency in LDS for project overrun.
Increased volume, complexity or scope of non Local Plan work	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Regular review of extent of non Plan-making work handled by core team. • Assess options for further redeployment from within or outside of the Council.
Key stakeholders/ partners, such as infrastructure providers, unable to provide information or other input at key stages in the process.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Secure commitment to contributing to Plan-making at the highest level in partners organisations, highlighting role of Local Plan in delivering the sustainable community strategy. • Provide stakeholders/partners with good notice of what will be required of them, and when. • Investigate ways of pooling resources to achieve desired outcomes.
Volume and complexity of representations and comment exceeds expectations.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Engage with key stakeholders, developers, landowners and other local interests throughout the policy development • Build capacity outside of team to deal with processing representations received, e.g. colleagues within section and wider Division • Clarify through SCI how representations will be handled and do not respond on an individual basis. • Depends on number of comments at draft stage and how many we are able to negotiate to withdraw to save Examination time.
DPDs prepared are not found sound, have to be withdrawn, or are subject to legal challenge.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Checking against the tests of soundness at each key stage of the plan preparation process, making use of the PAS self assessment toolkit. • Carry out community engagement in accordance with the Council's adopted Statement of Community Involvement. • Be diligent in undertaking and recording actions against new 'duty to co-operate'.

5. LOCAL DEVELOPMENT DOCUMENT (LDD) PROFILES

- 5.1 This section provides a standard profile for each of the LDD's we intend to prepare, as identified in **Table 1**.

Darlington Climate Emergency DPD	
DOCUMENT DETAILS:	
Role & Content:	Sets out development policies to help meet the Councils climate change ambitions. This may incorporate a range of new or updated policies on Biodiversity Net Gain, Nutrient Neutrality, Local Nature Recovery, Flood Risk, Sustainable Transport, Sustainable Energy and Construction etc.
Geographical Coverage:	Borough Wide
Status:	New Development Planning Document
Conformity Review	National Planning Policy Framework and Local Plan N/A
Timetable:	
Commence preparation of DPD	March 2024
Consultation on Draft DPD	October 2024
Estimated Date Adoption	Spring 2025
Production:	
Organisational Lead:	Assistant Director of Economic Growth
Lead Section	Planning Policy
Management Arrangements	Cabinet Economy and Resources Scrutiny Committee Joint Management Team / Chief Officers Board Economic Growth Senior Leadership Team
Internal Resources:	Development Management Building Control Sustainable Transport Environmental Health Communications Unit Xentrall Design and Print Unit.
External Resources:	None
Evidence Base	
Community & Involvement	Other Tees Valley Authorities, Council Members, local Stakeholder people, Darlington Partnership, Parish Councils, development industry representatives, government agencies, in accordance with the Council's adopted SCI.

Revised Design of New Development/Design Code SPD	
DOCUMENT DETAILS:	
Role & Content:	Sets out general and detailed design guidelines for new development to provide a framework to secure high quality, safe, distinctive, sustainable design in new developments.
Geographical Coverage:	Borough of Darlington (excluding Skertingham and Burtree where bespoke Design Code SPDs are already in place)
PRODUCTION:	
Organisational Lead:	Assistant Director of Economic Growth
Lead Section	Tees Valley Development Plans Officers Group
Management	Cabinet
Arrangements	Economy and Resources Scrutiny Committee Joint Management Team / Chief Officers Board Economic Growth Senior Leadership Team
Internal Resources:	Development Management Building Control Sustainable Transport Communications Unit Xentrall Design and Print Unit.
External Resources:	None
EVIDENCE BASE	
Community & Involvement	Other Tees Valley Authorities, Council Members, local Stakeholder people, Darlington Partnership, Parish Councils, development industry representatives, government agencies, in accordance with the Council's adopted SCI
Status:	Supplementary Planning Document
Conformity Review	National Planning Policy Framework and elements of Local Plan. The existing SPD needs to be revised to reflect changes to latest thinking on design and other matters including Building Regulations, Code for Sustainable Homes, Development Management amenity issues, etc.
TIMETABLE:	
Commence preparation of Draft Revised SPD	March 2024
Consultation on Draft Revised SPD	Summer 2024
Estimated Date Adoption	Autumn 2024

**CABINET
5 MARCH 2024**

**RELEASE OF CAPITAL FUNDS – HURWORTH SCHOOLS S106 FUNDING AND
BEAUMONT HILL CAPITAL**

**Responsible Cabinet Member -
Councillor Nick Wallis, Children and Young People Portfolio**

**Responsible Director -
James Stroyan, Group Director of People**

SUMMARY REPORT

Purpose of the Report

1. To seek Member's agreement to:
 - (a) Release S106 funding for Hurworth Primary and Hurworth Secondary School capital works.
 - (b) Release High Needs capital for Beaumont Hill refurbishment

Summary

2. This report seeks Cabinet approval for the release of:
 - (a) £52,808.25 of Section 106 funding to enhance educational facilities in Hurworth Schools.
 - (b) An additional £106,000 of High Needs capital funding to support the redevelopment of Haughton Children's Centre and the refurbishment of the vacated space at Beaumont Hill Academy.
3. All projects will be managed in line with the Corporate Capital Process procedures.

Recommendations

4. It is recommended that Members agree to:
 - (a) Formally release Section 106 funding of £52,808.25 of Section 106 funding to enhance educational facilities in Hurworth Schools.
 - (b) Formally release £106,000 of High Needs capital funding to support the provision of additional places at Beaumont Hill Academy

Reasons

5. The recommendations are supported by the following reasons;
- (a) Release of the Section 106 funding will allow the Hurworth schools to enhance their educational facilities, targeting capital investment in the areas identified as greatest need.
 - (b) Release of the High Needs capital funding will allow Beaumont Hill academy to refurbish Haughton Children's Centre, including the grounds, and remodel the space vacated by their sixth form pupils to make it more suitable for a secondary curriculum.

**James Stroyan,
Group Director of People**

Background Papers

No background papers were used in the preparation of this report.

Paul Richardson 0794 724 7224

S17 Crime and Disorder	Capital investment to improve facilities and provide better building maintenance will contribute to the reduction of crime and disorder.
Health and Wellbeing	Capital investment to improve facilities and provide better building maintenance will contribute to the reduction of crime and disorder.
Carbon Impact and Climate Change	All work undertaken will be designed and constructed with sustainability in mind and aim to reduce the carbon footprint, and re-use energy and environmental resources.
Diversity	This proposal projects have no specific impact on protected groups.
Wards Affected	Schools located in: Hurworth and Haughton and Springfield
Groups Affected	Children and young people of school age (3-16) in Darlington.
Budget and Policy Framework	This report does not recommend a change to the budget and policy framework.
Key Decision	This is a not a key decision.
Urgent Decision	For the purpose of the 'call-in' procedure this does not represent an urgent matter.
Council Plan	The Capital Programme is consistent with the Council Plan providing high quality facilities that support modern approaches to education in schools and for lifelong learning.
Efficiency	Defective materials and plant will be replaced with more efficient products e.g. increasing 'u' value on windows, insulation and modern highly efficiency boilers.
Impact on Looked After Children and Care Leavers	The proposed projects have no specific impact on Looked After Children or Care Leavers.

MAIN REPORT

Section 106 Funding

6. The Council has received a Section 106 contribution from the Miller Homes development (17/01194) of £34,478.25 towards enhancing the education infrastructure at Hurworth Primary and Hurworth Secondary.
7. The Section 106 funding from the Miller Homes development (17/01194) will be split between the two schools based on a proportion of their respective pupil numbers as at the October 2023 census. The Hurworth Secondary share will be £26,012.61 and Hurworth Primary's £8,465.64.
8. In addition, a further Section 106 contribution from the Croft House development (13/01001/FUL) of £18,330.00 has been received to provide additional education facilities at Hurworth Primary.
9. These funds are due to expire late 2024/early 2025, and if unused will have to be returned to their respective developers.

High Needs Capital

10. In January 2024 Cabinet agreed to release £360,000 of High Needs Capital funding for the redevelopment of Haughton Children's Centre as a sixth form centre for Beaumont Hill Academy. These figures were based on estimates provided by external consultants. The original report provided omitted the external works to make the site and grounds wheelchair accessible, this amounts to £48,563. In addition, building contractor quotes have come in higher than the estimates provided. In total, with on-costs and the external works, this amounts to an additional £106,000.
11. Release of the additional funds would bring the total up to £466,000, or £15,533 per place. This still compares very favourably with the average cost of refurbished special school places. The November 2023 EBD OG report on National School Delivery Cost Benchmarking reports that the average for a refurbished special school place is on average between £16,007 and £27,815 per place.
12. Any capital works undertaken using the Section 106 funding will be delivered in consultation with the school's concerned and in line with the school's identified priorities.

**CABINET
5 MARCH 2024**

CHANGING PLACES TOILET (DARLINGTON HIPPODROME) – RELEASE OF FUNDING

**Responsible Cabinet Members –
Councillor Libby McCollom, Local Services Portfolio
Councillor Mandy Porter, Resources Portfolio**

**Responsible Director – Dave Winstanley
Group Director of Services**

SUMMARY REPORT

Purpose of the Report

1. To request Cabinet release funding for a Changing Places Toilet (CPT) within the Hippodrome.

Summary

2. A CPT is a fully equipped accessible facility with enough spaces for a disabled person, their wheelchair and up to two assistants.
3. The Council was successful in securing part funding from the government to provide two CPT facilities: one at the Hippodrome and one at Hopetown.
4. The cost of providing the CPT facilities at the Hippodrome is £89k. £40k from the capital allocation included in the 2024/25 Capital Medium Term Financial Plan (MTFP) and £49k from a combination of government funding and Hippodrome budget.
5. For Hopetown, the £30k contribution for the CPT will be used to support the provision as part of the capital project.

Recommendations

6. It is recommended that Cabinet: -
 - (a) release the £89k allocated to the CPT at the Hippodrome;
 - (b) release the £30k allocated to the CPT at Hopetown from government funding.

Reason

7. To enable the CPT facility to be provided within the Hippodrome.

Dave Winstanley
Group Director of Services

Background Papers

No background papers were used in the preparation of this report.

Ian Thompson: Extension 6628

S17 Crime and Disorder	There is no impact on crime and disorder as a result of this report.
Health and Well Being	There will be a positive impact for disabled people and their carers using the Hippodrome as a result of a new CPT.
Carbon Impact and Climate Change	There is no impact on climate change as a result of this report.
Diversity	The inclusion of a CPT ensures disabled people have accessible and equipped toilet facilities within the Hippodrome
Wards Affected	Park East
Groups Affected	Disabled people, their families, assistants and carers.
Budget and Policy Framework	There is no impact on the Council budget and policy framework.
Key Decision	No
Urgent Decision	No
Council Plan	Providing a CPT at the Hippodrome contributes to making the Theatre more accessible to a wider audience.
Efficiency	There is no impact on the Council's efficiency agenda.
Impact on Looked After Children and Care Leavers	There is no impact on looked after children or care leavers.

MAIN REPORT

Background

8. CPTs ensure that disabled visitors, their families and carers have access to appropriate, well-equipped toilet and changing facilities.
9. There are currently two CPT facilities in Darlington, at the Dolphin Centre and the Memorial Hospital. The funding release recommended in this report will increase the number of CPT facilities in the Borough and ensure that provision is included at venues that are key to our arts and culture offer.
10. The Council was successful in securing funding from the government to provide two CPT facilities: one at the Hippodrome and one at Hopetown. The funding received covers part of the cost with other contributions from Council resources for the Hippodrome and resources from the capital scheme for the facility at Hopetown.
11. The cost of providing the CPT facilities at the Hippodrome is £89k. £40k from the capital allocation included in the 2024/25 Capital MTFP and £49k from a combination of government funding and Hippodrome budget.
12. For Hopetown, the £30k contribution for the CPT will be used to support the provision as part of the capital project.
13. Subject to Member approval, work will start on the CPT at the Hippodrome within the next few months. The CPT facility at Hopetown is included as part of the capital project.

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CABINET
5 MARCH 2024

REGULATION OF INVESTIGATORY POWERS ACT (RIPA)

Responsible Cabinet Member -
Councillor Mandy Porter, Resources Portfolio

Responsible Director -
Elizabeth Davison, Group Director of Operations

SUMMARY REPORT

Purpose of the Report

1. This report informs and update Members about issues relevant to the use of the Regulation of Investigatory Powers Act 2000 and developments that have taken place since the last report to Cabinet in September 2023.

Summary

2. The Regulation of Investigatory Powers Act 2000 ("RIPA") enables local authorities to carry out certain types of surveillance activity, as long as specified procedures are followed. The information obtained as a result of surveillance operations can be relied upon in court proceedings providing RIPA is complied with.
3. The Investigatory Powers Act 2016 ("IPA") is the main legislation governing the acquisition of communications data. The information obtained as a result of these acquisitions can also be relied upon in court proceedings providing IPA is complied with.
4. This report updates members on issues relevant to this area of work and gives details of RIPA directed surveillance applications and IPA communications data applications that have been authorised since the last report to Cabinet.

Recommendation

5. It is recommended that :-
 - (a) Members note the developments that have taken place since September 2023.
 - (b) Members receive further reports on the Council's use of RIPA and IPA and other associated issues.

Reasons

6. The recommendations are supported by the following reasons :-
- (a) In order to ensure that the Council complies with the legal obligations under RIPA, IPA and national guidance.
 - (b) To help in raising awareness and giving transparency about the use of RIPA and IPA in this Council.

Elizabeth Davison
Group Director of Operations

Background Papers

No background papers were used in the preparation of this report.

Amy Wennington : Extension 5466

S17 Crime and Disorder	The appropriate use of and oversight of RIPA and IPA powers will enable the Council to provide evidence to support appropriate prosecutions and tackle crime.
Health and Wellbeing	There are no specific implications for Health and Wellbeing
Carbon Impact and Climate Change	There are no issues that this report needs to address
Diversity	The RIPA Policy treats all groups equally
Wards Affected	All wards
Groups Affected	All groups
Budget and Policy Framework	This does not represent a change to the Council's budget and policy framework.
Key Decision	This is not a key decision.
Urgent Decision	This is not an urgent decision.
Council Plan	The appropriate use of powers is a legislative requirement
Efficiency	Clarity about the lawful use of RIPA and IPA will help in the efficient use of powers
Impact on Looked After Children and Care Leavers	This report has no impact on Looked After Children or Care Leavers

MAIN REPORT

Information and Analysis

Investigatory Powers Commissioner's Officer ("IPCO") Inspection

7. On 29 September 2023, the Assistant Director, Law and Governance provided IPCO with a variety of documents and evidence that they had requested from him. This included, amongst other things, all of the bi-annual Cabinet Reports since the last inspection, the most recent RIPA policy, details around the officer training provided and details about the Council's usage of RIPA and IPA.
8. On 2 October 2023, IPCO confirmed that they were satisfied that we had provided assurance that ongoing compliance with RIPA and IPA will be maintained and, as such, we do not require further inspection until 2026.
9. The Inspector asked that we ensure that the key compliance issues continue to receive the necessary internal governance and oversight through policy refreshes; updates to Cabinet; ongoing training and awareness raising; and internal compliance monitoring by lead managers within their business areas.

Training - Update

10. Training sessions were held during September and October 2023 for Council Officers in service areas that use or may need to consider using RIPA. This training was delivered by the Principal Lawyer (Litigation).

11. In addition, all of the designated Authorising Officers and members of the Chief Officers Executive and Chief Officers Board also received refresher RIPA training. This training was delivered by the Assistant Director, Law and Governance.
12. It is an essential requirement for us to conduct annual refresher training with our staff and we have to demonstrate our compliance with this requirement when we are inspected by IPCO, as referenced in paragraphs 7, 8 and 9 above.

Bi-Annual Report Regarding this Council's RIPA and IPA usage

Directed Surveillance Authorisations

13. There have been no authorisations granted since the last Cabinet Report.

Communications Data Authorisations

14. There have been no authorisations granted since the last Cabinet Report.