

**COUNCIL**  
**1 FEBRUARY 2022**

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**OVERVIEW OF LOCAL SERVICES PORTFOLIO**

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1. Since the last meeting of Council, the following are the main areas of work undertaken under the Local Services Portfolio.

**Highway Maintenance Programme**

2. Highway Maintenance schemes ongoing:
  - (a) Unclassified Greenhill Road, Heighington: Footway Reconstruction (0.320km);
  - (b) Unclassified The Wayside Hurworth: Footway Reconstruction (0.541km).
3. Highway Maintenance schemes due to start:
  - (a) Unclassified Clifton Road: Footway Reconstruction (0.432km).
4. Highway Maintenance Schemes completed:
  - (a) C38 Sadberge Road/Middleton Road: Carriageway Recycling (1.927km);
  - (b) Unclassified Hewitson Road: Carriageway Recycling (0.3km).

**Highway Improvement Schemes**

5. Woodland Road LCWIP  
Construction of the first phase of the walking and cycling route linking West Park to the town centre via Cockerton has started on Woodland Road. The scheme will provide a segregated cycle lane on each side of the road between the junctions with Hollyhurst Road and Outram Street. Consultation has been carried out on the second phase which will continue the route from Hollyhurst Road junction to the roundabout at Woodland Road/B6279 (Staindrop Road).
6. A68 Corridor Improvements  
The A68 has been identified as an important improvement corridor and we are looking to tackle congestion, make public transport more reliable and make it safer and more attractive to cycle and walk.
7. We are currently developing plans to improve A68 Cockerton, A68 Woodlands Road and B6280 Staindrop Road roundabout junctions. The existing mini roundabouts are at capacity and larger conventional roundabouts that can accommodate more traffic are proposed to replace them. If implemented they will reduce delays for all traffic including commercial bus services. We intend to carry out consultation on these proposed schemes early in the new year. Work is progressing to make the scheme shovel ready and we will be looking to bid into all funding opportunities to secure the funding needed to deliver the

scheme.

## **Head of Steam**

### **Events**

8. Nearly 1000 children visited 'Santa at the Station' at the Head of Steam Museum in December. It is the first year that Santa visited the museum on three weekends and tickets sold out in record time for all weekends.

### **Collections**

9. The replica Locomotion No 1 left the museum to undergo a feasibility study to identify the scope of work required to restore it to full working order ready for the 2025 celebrations.

### **Creative Darlington**

10. Dover Art Prize 2019 winner, Bethan Maddocks' exhibition 'Making The Cut' was shown in the gallery at Darlington Library from Monday 22 November to Thursday 16 December 2021, with support from Darlington Cultural Volunteers who stewarded the exhibition. The exhibition shared the artist's experiments with hand and machine cutting to present a series of sculptures and explorations in paper, Perspex and metal, including a story tree, which brought together depictions of children's book characters drawn from many decades.

### **Libraries**

#### **Darlington Library Restoration**

11. Building renovations have started in earnest at Darlington Library with the first stage of scaffolding work in progress. The library remains open, with disruption to services kept to a minimum during this stage of the works.

#### **Home educated children**

12. Work has been undertaken with home educated children, providing a personalised visit to showcase the library stock and online resources, including Britannica Online to help with their studies.

#### **Orange the World**

13. Libraries have supported the campaign around ending violence against women and girls by offering orange ribbons and balloons to customers. In addition, a display was set-up with information to help those who may be in a domestic abuse situation and to increase awareness of issues of violence around the world.

#### **Darlington Hippodrome**

14. The Hippodrome received confirmation of a successful funding application to the Culture Recovery Fund (CRF) Round 3, receiving a further £198,471 to support the Hippodrome

through the November to January period. A total of £1,697,775 has been awarded to the theatre across the three CRF rounds.

15. Darlington Hippodrome's 2021 Pantomime, Cinderella, has been a great success. Gross ticket Sales topped £648,000 with 26,099 Seats sold. Secondary spend sales figures were recording breaking, with bars and stalls selling in excess of £98,000, including: 9,157 ice creams; 8,042 soft drinks; and 2,201 items of merchandise.
16. The 2022 Pantomime, Peter Pan, is now on sale and the curtain goes up on 9 December 2022.

## **Environmental Services**

### **Grounds Maintenance**

17. Grass cutting has now ceased and the team are undertaking their annual prune to shrubs and bushes across the Borough in readiness for the next growing season.

### **Arboriculture**

18. Following Storm Arwen, the Council sustained heavy losses to trees across the Borough. Teams are actively responding to all issues involving fallen/dangerous trees, however, it is estimated that these works may take several months to complete.

### **Winter Maintenance**

19. The 2021/22 winter season is now up and running with teams responding to inclement weather as and when required.

### **Climate Change**

20. Two innovative road surfacing schemes have been completed. By recycling the existing road material at Sadberge Road and Hewitson Road, 2000 tonnes of material which previously would have been sent to landfill has been re-used in the construction. We will continue to use this approach, where appropriate, on future schemes.

### **Cemeteries and Crematorium**

21. The second cremator is now operating and the mercury abatement equipment is installed and will be operating in the next few weeks. Work is progressing well on the new chapel and is scheduled to be completed late spring / early summer.

**Councillor Andy Keir**  
**Local Services Portfolio**