

COUNCIL
26 JANUARY 2023

LEADER OF THE COUNCIL OVERVIEW

Purpose of the Report

1. To inform and update Members on the Leader's Portfolio since the last meeting of Council. The following are some of the areas of work under the Leader's Portfolio.

Strategic Transport

2. There is a comprehensive programme of investment progressing on Transport across the Tees Valley:-
 - (a) Work is ongoing on the Tees Valley Urban Traffic Management and Control (UTMC) system, with delivery of the next phase of work due to commence in early 2023 and complete by 31 March 2024. This phase of work will provide a range of opportunities to better manage the highway network, and includes expanding traffic signal connectivity, upgrades to traffic counters, additional CCTV cameras, implementation of a bus priority module, Automatic Number Plate Recognition (ANPR) cameras, real-time information and expansion of variable message signs.
 - (b) Electric Vehicle Charging Points (EVCP) have recently been installed in Darlington as part of the first phase roll-out across the Tees Valley. Five EVCP have gone in on Winston Street's northernmost car park, with Commercial Street West and two car parks on Park Place to receive 14 EVCP between them. The Feethams multi-storey, Kendrew Street West and Abbott's Yard are also set to see EVCP installed soon.
 - (c) Tees Valley Combined Authority and the Council continue to work alongside Arriva to improve operational performance. Performance improved towards the end of 2022 and Arriva is committed to ensuring that this improvement continues into 2023.
 - (d) The Tees Valley Hydrogen Transport Hub competition closed for bids in late 2022. Bids are now being assessed with an announcement expected in early 2023.

Darlington Station

3. The Department for Transport confirmed £93m of funding for the project. This is in addition to the £33m TVCA are investing. The temporary car park on the cattle market site is being constructed and when complete this will enable works to start on the new station and transport interchange on the Neasham Road side of the project. We will continue to support TVCA, who are the lead on the project with support from Network Rail and LNER, to deliver this major project that is a key building block in TVCA's rail strategy.

Climate Change

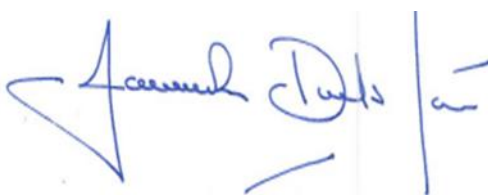
4. The Cross-Party Climate Change Working Group met on 19 December. Members received an update from Ian Thompson, Assistant Director – Community Services, on waste and recycling, including information on the various communications channels being used to encourage residents to recycle more.

Darlington Economic Campus

5. Currently, there are 520 confirmed roles in Darlington across HMT, DLUHC, ONS, DIT, BEIS and CMA. There are also over 750 DfE staff based in Darlington in Bishopsgate House.
6. Over half of these roles (55%) are middle management ranging from executive to senior executive offices. A quarter (26%) are senior management and SCS roles with the remainder comprising of junior grades plus students, apprentices and agency staff.
7. The ratio of jobs that are relocations compared to local recruitment (broken down by job level) for most departments is that they are aiming to secure 20% through relocations and 80% through recruitment.

Towns Fund

8. Development work is progressing across the portfolio of Towns Fund projects, with work continuing on site at Darlington College TLevels project, Skinnergate and the Yards and the Railway Heritage Quarter. Design commenced for the Adult Skills facility, Northgate and Victoria Road.
9. Engagement continues with stakeholders, including an event in Victoria Road, which will help define the strategic direction and identification of specific interventions.
10. A progress return to Government was made on the 15 December 2022.

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Jonathan Dulston', with a vertical line to the right of the name.

Councillor Jonathan Dulston
Leader of the Council Portfolio