

**COUNCIL**  
**21 MARCH 2024**

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**OVERVIEW OF COMMUNITIES AND LOCAL SERVICES SCRUTINY COMMITTEE**

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1. Since the last meeting of the Council, the following are the main areas of work the Communities and Local Services Scrutiny Committee has undertaken.

**Draft Minutes of the Meeting of The Tees Valley Combined Authority Transport Committee**

2. The Committee received Draft Minutes of the Tees Valley Combined Authority Transport Committee, which was held on 23 January 2024, Councillor McCollom spoke to the minutes.
3. Members discussed issues raised in the minutes which were not covered in later agenda items, this included taxi replacement payments which is provided when the last bus has been cancelled and that costs can be reimbursed. The Committee were concerned that this has not been widely promoted.

**Public Sector Executives Group**

4. We received a report which informed members about the work of the Public Sector Executive Group (PSEG).
5. Scrutiny heard that the PSEG was formed as one of the arrangements to replace the Darlington Partnership, following agreement by Council on 15 July. The group includes senior officers from key public sector bodies, the key of aims and memberships of the group.
6. The Committee were provided with details of recent activities of the group, including the announcement of the change in administration at the council and that there is a new Council Plan currently in development.
7. Members were informed that the group will consider the forthcoming Health and Wellbeing Plan, which will support the Council Plan and the Forward Plan of the Integrated Care Board.
8. We recognised how the PSEG is funded, how the PSEG is viable and the partnership working of the group.

**Local Transport Plan**

9. The Committee received a report providing members with an annual update on the delivery of the Darlington Transport Plan, which outlined the delivery, performance, and public satisfaction in 2023/24 as well as information on the 2024/25 programme.

10. Members were informed that Tees Valley Region funding includes £310m City Region Sustainable Transport Settlement (CRSTS) programme and £6.851m Bus Service Improvement Plan (BSIP) which will deliver improvements to the bus services. The report also stated that there has been good progress on the development and delivery of the Transport Capital Programme.
11. Officers also reported that in 2022/23 a new Transport Strategy for the borough was introduced, this included the council adopting a Town Centre Transport Plan and Parking Strategy. A progress report on the schemes delivered in 2023/24, and the proposed programme of schemes 2024/25, was detailed in the report.
12. It was reported to members that planning work on Phase 2 of the Faverdale/West Park to town centre cycle route was ongoing after the recent completion of Phase 1.
13. Reference was also made to the second round of CRSTS for the Tees Valley Region. Funding of £978m will cover the period of 2027/28 to 2031/32, an additional minimum £100.1m of highways maintenance will also be available for the Tees Valley between 2023/24-2033/34.
14. Members discussed pothole funding and the Portfolio Holder confirmed that just over £12m of annual repairs are required to keep roads in their present state and current government funding is only around a quarter of this amount.
15. We reviewed the electric charging vehicles and the parking spaces for them, Members raised concerns around the lack of disabled spaces to charge these vehicles and the provision of on-street chargers.

**Councillor James McGill**  
**Chair of Communities and Local Services Scrutiny Committee**