



## **ECONOMIC REGENERATION AND TRANSPORT SCRUTINY PANEL**

### **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY – PUBLIC TRANSPORT IN MIDDLESBROUGH**

#### **The Review**

The overall aim of the scrutiny investigation was to undertake a review of the current issues facing public transport in Middlesbrough by considering public expectations and to consider areas for improvement.

The panel wanted to see what people's perceptions of public transport were and what they wanted in terms of public transport provision. Members also wanted to see what was taking place which would improve the experience for current users and encourage non-users to switch to public transport.

In undertaking the review panel members visited the bus and train stations, talked to passengers and bus operators and asked the public to comment on public transport via the Council's website.

#### **Summary of Conclusions and Recommendations**

The panel found that the issue of public transport was a wide and far-reaching topic. Where there was no one particular solution that could be implemented to solve the problems. What the panel did agree was that long term plans must be implemented in order to address increasing car use and declining public transport patronage.

There were a number of major initiatives that the Council was involved with at the time of the review. There were 2 major projects in the bidding stage and which if successful would bring major changes and improvements to both bus and rail travel in the area. The panel was therefore supportive of the Major Bus Bid and the elements for improvement that were contained within it. They were especially supportive of the improvements to Newport Road and the plans for an improved gateway to the town centre. The panel was also supportive of the Tees Valley Metro Scheme and especially the possibility of planned new stations at Middlehaven and James Cook University Hospital.

Following the visit to the station the panel agreed that they were pleased to see the work that had taken place to improve the fabric and the facilities at the station.

The panel was very grateful to the bus companies for their participation in the review. The panel had the opportunity to discuss the issue of night time transport provision and were pleased that their comments had been noted. The panel was also pleased that the bus companies had taken on their suggestions and that they would be willing to report their improvements that they had made as a result of the discussions to the panel.

The panel thought that incentives should be targeted at commuters to try and reduce the dependence on the car. They were supportive of the development of green travel plans for major employers. The panel wanted to see the council develop an incentive scheme for their

staff to encourage them to use public transport and ask the Council to work with other major employers in the town to help them implement such a scheme.

The panel were in agreement with the Mayor that an investigation into the potential of a park and ride scheme would be useful and timely. The panel therefore recommended that a review of the potential for a park and ride scheme should be undertaken by the Council and by the panel.

The panel also wanted the Council to write to the appropriate rail authorities and bus companies with the comments and suggestions from the review. The panel would like to see the development a marketing campaign by the bus operators to publicise the special offers available. This would include publicising details of weekly tickets and cheaper tickets with the aim of encouraging more bus patronage because they found that often the special fares and prices weren't being publicised enough.

**Full details of the conclusions and recommendations can be found on page 19 of the report**