



**WEST MIDLANDS**  
COMBINED AUTHORITY

## Board Meeting

<b>Date</b>	20 January 2017
<b>Report title</b>	Strategic Cycle Network
<b>Cabinet Member Portfolio Lead</b>	Councillor Roger Lawrence – Transport
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<b>Report to be considered by</b>	WMCA Programme Board

**Recommendation for action or decision:**

**The Combined Authority Board is recommended to:**

1. Approve the Strategic Cycle Network set out in the appendix, subject to any minor amendments being sent to TfWM by 27 January 2017.

## **1.0 Purpose**

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to gain approval for the proposed Strategic Cycle Network, developed by national cycle planning experts Phil Jones Associates in conjunction with officers from TfWM and the local authorities of the West Midlands metropolitan area.

## **2.0 Background**

- 2.1 The Combined Authority's strategic transport plan "Movement for Growth" contains a draft Metropolitan Strategic Cycle Network. This is a key component of the Metropolitan Tier set out in the plan.
- 2.2 The Department for Transport (DfT) commissioned Sustrans consultancy resource across England to support cycling and walking as part of its forthcoming National Walking and Cycling Investment Strategy (CWIS). Sustrans brought in other specialist consultancies as part of this consultancy advice. The support was provided without charge to Local Enterprise Partnerships (LEPs). In the West Midlands 50 days free consultancy support was provided to the Black Country and Greater Birmingham and Solihull LEPs combined, plus support to the Coventry and Warwickshire LEP.
- 2.3 Transport for West Midlands engaged with the LEPs as part of this initiative. This led to the work focusing on defining the Metropolitan Strategic Cycle Network using the methodology produced by Phil Jones Associates for DfT as part of its draft National CWIS.
- 2.4 Coventry and Warwickshire LEP's consultancy support was to provide specialist input for an expression of interest and for business case development for LEP funding of improvements to the local cycle network. These cycle improvements are related to wider North – South Coventry/Warwickshire Corridor public transport enhancements.

## **3.0 Impact on the Delivery of the Strategic Transport Plan**

- 3.1 A Combined Authority approved definitive strategic cycle network will be an important advance in the delivery of the Metropolitan Tier of the Strategic Transport Plan.

## **4.0 Wider WMCA Implications**

- 4.1 The proposed Strategic Cycle Network includes National Cycle Network links which connect non-constituent authority areas with the constituent areas.

## **5.0 Proposed Strategic Cycle Network**

- 5.1 Phil Jones Associates has produced a proposed Strategic Cycle Network, which has been amended following consideration by TfWM and STOG. This is contained in Appendix 1. This brings together consideration of the Coventry element of the network with that of the Black Country and Birmingham/Solihull. This network is compatible with the draft Black Country Walking and Cycling Strategy and has been produced following engagement with West Midlands Authorities Cycling Officers.

- 5.2 The network is made up of Cycle Investment Corridors, Canal and River Trust paths, Off-Road Greenways, and National Cycle Network links which connect the wider Combined Authority area with this Metropolitan Strategic Cycle Network. This strategic cycle network will be integrated with all authority's more comprehensive local cycle networks, for which much work is in progress at the local level in each authority. This local work is in accord with the more detailed transport plans of councils, such as Solihull Connected, and the Cycling and Active Travel strategies at the local level.
- 5.3 Cycle Investment Corridors are corridors where a high quality cycle route is required as part of this strategic network. Any transport improvements within these corridors therefore need to consider provision of a route on the strategic cycle network from the outset. If the main highway within the corridor is unable to be designed so that all user needs can be appropriately accommodated then an alternative route in the wider corridor must be considered for the high quality cycle route. Potentially competing needs are identified, for example, providing for high quality segregated cycle provision; a rapid transit route; provision for main bus routes; provision for freight movements; and an acceptable level of provision for general traffic. The requirement to consider cycling provision in this way puts a strong onus on ensuring a high quality cycle route is provided for each cycle investment corridor.
- 5.4 The Movement for Growth strategy states that "The strategic routes in this network will be designed in accordance with well-respected design guidelines such as the Welsh Government's Active Travel Design Guidance and will include a cycle route audit tool". It is envisaged, through the Cycle Charter, that Birmingham City Council's forthcoming Cycle Design Guidance will be used as the basis for this strategic cycle network.
- 5.5 In line with the Cycle Charter, a Design Panel will be need to be formed to review proposed schemes and consideration of cycle design training for highway authority staff will need to be pursued.

## **6.0 Financial implications**

- 6.1 There are no direct financial implications as a result of the recommendations within this report.

## **7.0 Legal implications**

- 7.1 There are no direct legal implications arising from this report.

## **8.0 Equalities implications**

- 8.1 Enhanced cycling provision will increase opportunities to travel safely at low cost and with health benefits. This will increase social inclusion and well-being, as well as providing affordable access to skills, training and employment. Therefore the initiative is considered to have a beneficial impact on equalities considerations.

## **8.0 Schedule of background papers**

- 8.1 None.

## **9.0 Appendices**

Appendix 1: Proposed Strategic Cycle Network

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