

Vibrant and Sustainable City Scrutiny Panel

3 September 2015

Report title	West Midlands Strategic Transport Plan (2015 – 2035)	
Cabinet member with lead responsibility	Councillor Peter Bilson City Assets	
Wards affected	All	
Accountable director	Nick Edwards, City Assets	
Originating service	Transportation	
Accountable employee(s)	Marianne Page Tel Email	Service Lead, Transport Strategy 01902 551798 Marianne.Page@wolverhampton.gov.uk
Report to be/has been considered by	Strategic Executive Board Cabinet	25 August 2015 16 September 2015

Recommendation(s) for action or decision:

The Panel is recommended to:

1. Provide comments to inform Wolverhampton City Councils formal response to consultation questions detailed in the West Midlands Strategic Transport Plan.

Recommendations for noting:

The Panel is asked to note:

1. Subject to approval of Wolverhampton's response by Cabinet on 16 September, the intention is to combine Wolverhampton City Councils response within a wider Black Country representation which will include input from each of the Black Country Authorities and as far as possible the Black Country Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP). This will be submitted before the consultation closing date of 16 October 2015.

1.0 Purpose

- 1.1 The purpose of the report is to gather appropriate input to inform the development of a formal response to the West Midlands Strategic Transport Plan.

Councillors are asked to ensure the strategic issues for Wolverhampton City Council are appropriately represented as part of the overall response to the consultation process.

2.0 Background

- 2.1 The West Midlands Integrated Transport Authority (ITA) was established in 2014 to provide strong, clear leadership to strategic transport planning for the West Midlands Metropolitan Area. The ITA, with local authority officer input, has developed a strategic transport plan aimed at delivering strong economic growth and the ability to be the regional powerhouse the UK needs us to be. This plan forms the metropolitan area's overarching Urban Mobility Plan; around which each authority can develop their own bespoke strategies which suit their needs but fit under the umbrella of the overarching objectives for the West Midlands. The strategic transport plan, titled 'movement for growth' is currently subject to public consultation for 12 weeks, ending on Friday 16 October 2015. The consultation documents are available at <http://www.wmita.org.uk/strategy-and-publications.aspx>
- 2.2 The ITA has outlined three main questions on the plan which they are looking for responses to:
1. Is the overall approach supported?
 2. Is there anything significant which is missing? If so, what?
 3. What local sources of finance should be considered for additional investment?
- 2.3 As part of the consultation process Wolverhampton City Council will be providing a formal response on the document content, structured around the 3 questions posed by the ITA. Subject to no conflicting representations, the intention is to combine this response with those of Walsall Metropolitan Borough Council, Dudley MBC and Sandwell MBC to form a Black Country combined response. This will also seek input from the Black Country Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP).

3.0 Detail

- 3.1 Through an evidence based approach and discussion there are four challenges for the West Midlands which have been identified for which an excellent transport system is an essential part of the solution. These challenges are:
1. Economic Growth and Economic Inclusion
 2. Population Growth and Housing Development
 3. Environment and Public Health
 4. Social Well-being

3.2 In order to take on these challenges, a vision for transport in the West Midlands has been drawn up:

“We will make great progress for a Midlands economic ‘Engine for Growth’, clean air improved health and quality of life for the people of the West Midlands. We will do this by creating a transport system befitting a sustainable, attractive conurbation in the world’s sixth largest economy.”

- **Introduce a fully integrated rail and rapid transit network that connects our main centres with quick, frequent services, and which is connected into wider local bus networks through high quality multi-modal interchanges.**
- **Increase the number of people that are within 45 minutes travel time by public transport to a minimum of three main centres and the two main HS2 stations.**
- **Reduce transport’s impact on our environment – improving air quality, reducing carbon emissions and improving road safety.**
- **Use transport improvements to enhance public realm and attractiveness of our centres.**
- **Ensure that walking and cycling are a safe and attractive option for many journeys especially short journeys below 1 or 2 miles, by delivering strategic cycle network and enhancing local conditions for active travel.**
- **Facilitate the efficient movement of people on our transport networks to enable access to education and employment opportunities and health and leisure services.**
- **Enable businesses to connect to supply chains, key markets and strategic gateways through improved strategic connections by road and rail.**
- **Maintain and develop our transport infrastructure and services to help ensure they are safe and easily accessible for all.**

(Movement for Growth: West Midlands Strategic Transport Plan, page 5)

- 3.3 The vision reinforces the importance of the West Midlands as a part of the world economy and creates a clearly understood objective which can then be translated into more specific work-streams, actions and deliverables. Each of the above objectives support existing transportation themes within the Wolverhampton City Council (WCC) Corporate Plan, these include network management, accident reduction and active travel promotion. They also support wider city objectives including public health, environmental health, regeneration and economic development. From this vision a set of defined objectives and policies for transport improvements have been developed, these are listed within the plan document and can be measured against to determine success of the plan.
- 3.4 The long term approach of the plan is based upon making better use of existing road and rail capacity, more public transport capacity, limited new highway capacity, better junctions at bottlenecks, a new strategic cycle network joined-up with local cycle networks and improved conditions for walking, all integrated with smart technology.

This is set out in four tiers of an integrated transport system:

1. National / Regional
2. Metropolitan
3. Local
4. Smart Mobility

The approach has a good strategic fit with the HS2 Growth Strategy, Midlands Connect, Birmingham connected and the transport elements of the metropolitan area's three Strategic Economic Plans. It also integrates with the existing core strategies of the area. Below is a summary of the strategic issues within each tier.

- 3.5 National / Regional -
Proposing to pursue better use of M6 Toll, Improved motorway junctions and rail service improvements.
- 3.6 Metropolitan area -
Supporting the re-allocation of road space for high volume public transport (bus lanes or new infrastructure for SPRINT vehicles), developing HS2 Connectivity, improving the strategic highway network and implementing a metropolitan area cycle network.
- 3.7 Local area -
Continued implementation of area wide 20mph zones, local bus network improvements, further developing a walking and cycling network, smarter choices promotion and improved asset management.
- 3.8 Smart Mobility -
Using technology for improving traffic management, develop a new road safety strategy and establish a personal mobility platform for the West Midlands.

4.0 Discussion

- 4.1 Through internal consultation a number of issues have been raised regarding the plan, these have already been passed on informally as feedback to the ITA. These are noted below, along with some responses received by way of clarification.
- **Involvement of Public Health in the development of the plan:**
Response: As part of informal stakeholder engagement during the plan development stage ITA officers met with Public Health officers from across the West Midlands. A joint meeting of public health officers is being arranged to allow for further input as part of the consultation process.
 - **Emphasis on public transport users with disabilities, including learning disabilities:**
Response: An equalities impact assessment is being performed on the consultation document, any suggested additions or amendments on this issue are welcomed.

- **No mention of ‘well-being’:**
Response: Objectives, policies and approach seek to improve well-being. If this is not explicitly stated enough then it can be strengthened in the final document.
- **Is there enough focus on unlocking growth and competitiveness:**
Response: The strategic approach outlined seeks to improve Gross Value Added (GVA) and jobs; consideration on strengthening this area has been noted.

4.2 Other observations from Strategic Executive Board (SEB) on 28 July and 25 August 2015:

- The use of technology to enhance transport was important.
- Where will smart mobility be focused?
- Information on all modes of travel should be available on one mobile application (app).
- The plan should include reference to affordability, inclusion, disadvantaged groups, well-being, and impact on people’s lives.
- Wolverhampton would like to see a greater commitment to the Black Country’s future growth and connectivity (mainly associated with HS2). In order to do this we see the WMSTP (alongside the CA and devolution work) as needing to reflect a greater level of support by recognising certain requirements.

Directorate leadership teams have been asked to consider the draft plan and SEB will receive a further update prior to any formal response being considered by Cabinet on 16 September.

4.3 Proposed draft response to consultation questions:

- **Is the overall approach supported?**
The overall approach of the plan strongly supports the delivery of economic growth for the West Midlands. The vision reinforces the importance of the West Midlands as a part of the world economy and creates a clearly understood objective which can then be translated into more specific work-streams, actions and deliverables for Local Authorities. The plan supports existing transportation themes within the WCC Corporate Plan, but also supports wider city objectives including public health, environmental health, regeneration and economic development.
- **Is there anything significant which is missing? If so, what?**
All questions and comments raised in paragraphs 4.1 and 4.2 above will be detailed, along with all other comments received from Scrutiny and internal consultation.
- **What local sources of finance should be considered for additional investment?**
Input from finance colleagues will be included within the response. Possible sources of finance to support the delivery of the plan include the use of existing transportation Capital Programme, other local Authority revenue generating activities such as bus lane enforcement, or Local Authority borrowing to support

major scheme delivery. WCC are not committing to use of these funding streams at this time, and any of these options would be subject to detailed discussions following the approval of the plan.

5.0 Financial implications

5.1 To achieve the benefits of the plan an indicative twenty year capital programme has been assembled; combined with minor works and maintenance the cost to achieve the vision is estimated to be £6.5 billion. Equating to approximately £330 million per annum for the twenty year life of the plan. Opportunities to bridge the funding gap for the plan are being considered which includes a new approach to funding, recognising the need for a sustainable local source of financing to contribute to the sums required. Options include:

1. A new local West Midlands Transport Investment Fund, sources of this funding would be contributions from existing and future businesses, developers and residents.
2. Working with Government to ensure greater national government local transport funding.
3. Network Rail financial support for projects.
4. European Union funding streams related to sustainable urban mobility.
5. Other existing and new funding sources, including the potential for public health funding of walking and cycling improvements.

5.2 The third consultation question asks what local sources of finance should be considered for additional investment. No proposals have been made in response to this question to date, but paragraph 4.3 includes some potential funding options without commitment. There are no direct financial implications arising from this report, any financial implications arising as a result of comment within the proposed response will be considered within the Cabinet report. [JB/24082015/E]

6.0 Legal implications

6.1 There are no legal implications arising from this report. [Legal Code: TS/21082105/T]

7.0 Equalities implications

7.1 An equalities impact assessment is being undertaken for the consultation draft, and the equalities implications of the final strategic plan will be considered prior to final approval by the ITA.

8.0 Environmental implications

8.1 The strategic transport plan includes objectives to support environmental improvement.

9.0 Human resources implications

9.1 There are no human resources implications arising from this report.

10.0 Corporate landlord implications

10.1 There are no corporate landlord implications arising from this report.

11.0 Schedule of background papers

11.1 Movement for Growth: The West Midlands Strategic Transport Plan – Public Consultation Draft.

11.2 Movement for Growth: The West Midlands strategic Transport Plan – Summary Report, Public Consultation Draft.

11.3 Link to ITA Consultation: <http://www.wmita.org.uk/strategy-and-publications.aspx>