

Cabinet Meeting

13 January 2016

Report title	Active Travel Strategy	
Decision designation	AMBER	
Cabinet member with lead responsibility	Councillor Peter Bilson City Assets	
Key decision	Yes	
In forward plan	Yes	
Wards affected	All	
Accountable director	Nick Edwards, City Assets	
Originating service	Transportation	
Accountable employee(s)	Tim Philpot Tel Email	Professional Lead – Transport Strategy 01902 555465 Tim.philpot@wolverhampton.gov.uk
Report to be/has been considered by	Place Leadership Team Strategic Executive Board Vibrant and Sustainable Communities Scrutiny Panel	14 September 2015 22 September 2015 1 October 2015

Recommendation(s) for action or decision:

The Cabinet is recommended to:

1. Agree the adoption and implementation of the Active Travel Strategy.

Recommendations for noting:

The Cabinet is asked to note:

1. That implementation of the Active Travel Strategy has wide-ranging implications for future deployment of resources and decision-making.

1.0 Purpose

- 1.1 This report details the development of an Active Travel Strategy (the Strategy) for Wolverhampton, and seeks its adoption.

2.0 Background

- 2.1 Concerns about the consequences of high levels of private motor traffic including the economic impact of congestion, safety, poor air quality and noise have been instrumental in encouraging Government policy to promote alternative means of transport through initiatives such as the Local Sustainable Travel Fund (LSTF).
- 2.2 Concurrently, concern about obesity has grown on the national and local agenda, and Wolverhampton has adopted obesity as its principal Public Health focus. The role inactive lifestyles play in obesity has prompted interest in promoting active travel as a means to addressing this.
- 2.3 In response to these issues, an Active Travel Strategy for Wolverhampton has been drafted. In addition to providing direction for decisions on active travel issues this was intended to support the case for future bids to funding opportunities. Resources for this project were secured from the Public Health Transformation Fund (PHTF) and supplemented by contribution from the LSTF.

3.0 Development of the Active Travel Strategy

- 3.1 The Active Travel Strategy is built around a vision for Wolverhampton to become “a city where active travel modes become the preferred choice, supported by a connected network of high quality and inviting cycle routes and walkways”. The scale of task involved in achieving this vision is such that the Strategy assumes a timescale of 20 years.
- 3.2 The Strategy is rooted in an Evidence Base, which is critical to the integrity of any future bids for resources for active travel. The Evidence Base includes information on the health and activity patterns of the local population, and establishes these key facts:
- Participation in sport and recreational exercise continues to fall behind regional and national averages.
 - 40.6% of children travel to school by car and only 2% cycle.
 - Obesity continues to climb, with excess weight affecting almost 70% of adults and over 40% of children (at age 11).
 - 65% of all journeys to work are made by car despite 45% of all journeys being less than 5km in length.
- 3.3 While the Strategy seeks to influence the well-being of all residents, demographic information has been used to identify three specific “target markets”, so as to direct action in ways most likely to be successful. These are:-
- The “near” market – defined as individuals currently cycling and walking for leisure purposes who could be incentivised to do more. A ‘near market’ area has been defined as a geographical target area in the west of Wolverhampton.

- “Hard to reach” groups – defined as those living in areas suffering from multiple deprivation. These areas encompass low-wage and economically inactive communities, which have very high levels of people being overweight or obese who undertake very low levels of physical activity.
- Children and disabled People – A citywide approach will be taken that focuses on promotion and marketing, as well as development of appropriate infrastructure, to give children the skills and confidence to walk and cycle more safely in the local urban environment.

- 3.4 Following the collation of the Evidence Base, an exercise in Consultation and Stakeholder Engagement was undertaken. Stakeholder engagement events were held at the beginning and draft stages of the strategy development process. An online/smart phone survey was conducted promoted via social media, partners’ websites, the City Council Consultation portal, and links directly emailed to a range of local organisations, with follow-up calls undertaken. The survey was also conducted face-to-face at the annual City Show, and sent to members of the public who have attended local cycling activities previously.
- 3.5 Responses to the consultation from pedestrians identified that barriers to walking more were mainly connected with practicality, for example the need to visit multiple destinations, transport others, and to carry goods. Suggestions for ways to overcome these barriers included infrastructure improvements such as better crossing places, and recreational improvements such as leisure routes and supported walking groups.
- 3.6 Responses from cyclists identified mainly safety concerns relating to the available infrastructure, including speed of motor traffic, lack of segregation, and poor surfaces. They recommended a variety of routes both on- and off-road, along with appropriate signage, mapping and promotion.
- 3.7 Following analysis of the consultation survey results, a review of the existing infrastructure for pedestrians and cyclists was undertaken. This concluded that there was considerable scope for improvement particularly in the cycling infrastructure. It recommended a route-based approach connecting up the existing provision into a network enabling cyclists and pedestrians to access all parts of the city safely.
- 3.8 Taking into account the Evidence Base, Stakeholder Engagement and Consultation, and Infrastructure Review, alongside a range of examples of good practice, the Strategy was developed in three sections: Pedestrians, Cyclists, and Marketing & Engagement. The principles underpinning these are contained in appendix 1.

4.0 Implementation of the Active Travel Strategy

- 4.1 A significant part of implementing the Strategy relates to development of appropriate infrastructure. This necessitates seeking opportunities both for funding and for synergy with other related infrastructure projects.

- 4.2 The Local Sustainable Travel Fund has over recent years provided a source of funding for both infrastructure in the form of new cycling and pedestrian routes between Bilston and the city centre and marketing and engagement activity through the Smart Network, Smarter Choices programme. This will be complemented by development of the Bilston Urban Village providing an opportunity to integrate active travel into a new road network and connect it into the adjacent urban centre.
- 4.3 Wolverhampton is also engaged along with the other Black Country authorities in the Managing Short Trips programme, to develop the pedestrian and cycling network using both canal towpaths and on-road schemes. Funded through the Local Growth Fund, this provides significant opportunity for enhancement of the infrastructure over the next three years.
- 4.4 A pipeline of schemes is being prepared working with partners such as Wolverhampton University so that as funding opportunities are made available a successful submission can be developed and tailored according to the requirements of the fund.
- 4.5 The Strategy recommends development of a “flagship” route as an early priority to focus interest on the vision. To support marketing and promotion Hugh Porter, local resident and champion cyclist, has been approached to act as the Active Travel Champion for Wolverhampton

5.0 Financial implications

- 5.1 Adoption and implementation of the Strategy will require considerable ongoing investment of capital and revenue resources yet to be ascertained. While no specific figures can be given at this stage, the West Midlands Cycle Charter, recently adopted by all West Midlands Authorities, contains an aspiration to invest a minimum of £10 per head of population annually. This equates to an indicative figure of £2.5 million per year for Wolverhampton.
- 5.2 Financial resources will be predominantly used in developing dedicated infrastructure for active travel in the form of a network of purpose-built cycling and walking routes connecting all parts of the city, particularly major trip generators. Revenue funding will also be needed for support and promotion of active travel.
- 5.3 A key source of funding will be grants from Government, such as the current Local Growth Fund and the recent Local Sustainable travel Fund. In demonstrating Wolverhampton’s commitment to active travel, the Strategy will be an essential tool to support bids for funding. [TT/02122015/X]

6.0 Legal implications

- 6.1 Implementation of the Strategy may involve changes to highway space allocation and speed limits, requiring Traffic Regulation Orders. [KR/22122015/T]

7.0 Equalities implications

- 7.1 Implementation of the ATS aims to create wider opportunities for travel which are low cost and open to all. It seeks to address particularly barriers to active travel arising from deprivation, which appear to correlate with incidence of obesity. It also identifies children and the disabled as one of three key target groups for whom the Strategy seeks to create and promote healthier options for travel.

8.0 Environmental implications

- 8.1 Implementation of the ATS aims to increase travel by environmentally benign modes.

9.0 Human resources implications

- 9.1 The ATS is anticipated to sit alongside the Staff Travel Plan and further promote alternative travel modes to the private motor vehicle.
- 9.2 Implementation of the Strategy will of necessity draw on existing staff resources for design, development and management of projects.

10.0 Corporate landlord implications

- 10.1 There are no corporate landlord implications in the development of the ATS.

11.0 Schedule of background papers

- 11.1 There are no background papers to this report.

APPENDIX 1: Principles for Walking, Cycling, and Marketing & Engagement Elements of the Active Travel Strategy

a. Walking

Guiding Principle	Where we want to be	Guiding Principles
Our Routes	Safe, pleasant-to-use route infrastructure	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide high quality and well lit pedestrian footways on all highway routes • Have conveniently located and well-designed crossing facilities suitable for all users. • Provide more, well located, greenways and off road pedestrian routes to increase walking options where possible.
Network Development	High-quality networks with access from neighbourhoods and transport hubs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Link routes up in coherent, legible networks • Review and improve Public Rights Of Way and alleys / connecting routes to encourage walking to key destinations such as schools and local shopping. • Provide open and easy access by walking to bus and Metro stops and the local bus and railway stations • Improved pedestrian connections to jobs, education and local services • Ensure seamless end-to-end journeys where walking can be easily accommodated • New development to be designed to include high quality infrastructure that supports walking and cycling
Public Realm	To have an inviting and engaging urban environment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure the design, lighting, landscaping and general environment provides a feeling of safety and security • Have a more 'open' approach that allows people to walk freely along the routes of their choice – requiring a review of on-street furniture and the use of guard rail. • Implement a high quality design that has the pedestrian as the key user

Disabled Access	Ensuring access for all users	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Balance user needs with intelligent use of infrastructure design – e.g. contrasting colours in footways; well-located and designed crossing facilities with adaptations for disabled users as appropriate. • Ensure close involvement with disabled user groups to ensure appropriate facilities and assist in addressing conflicting needs.
Shared Space	Rebalancing the environment to make it calm and safe for all	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Introduce targeted interventions where traffic levels and space allow • Balance the needs of all users and learn from experience in the design of the spaces
Traffic speeds	Attractive neighbourhood streets and spaces	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Vehicle speed reduction measures in residential areas and the implementation of additional 20 mph areas across the city as set out in the Centro cycle charter • Community led traffic speed awareness and enforcement initiatives • Speed of traffic on the principal road network to be considered in terms of impact on community severance and connectivity as well as traffic flow and safety
Information	Everyone be able to access information to enable clear way-finding	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide high quality and frequent on and off highway signage • Keep maps of routes and facilities up to date • Provide information in both paper and digital forms • Provide mile markers where appropriate on leisure routes to encourage more walking for health. • Make imaginative use of new technology and trends to encourage more active modes of travel e.g. counting steps and walking as a mode of transport

b. Cycling

	Where we want to be	Guiding Principles
Routes	Safe, pleasant-to-use cycle route infrastructure	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The segregation or separation for cyclists, where traffic speeds or volumes require this and where the highway space allows; • Prevent inappropriate on-street parking by upgrading the advisory on-road cycle lanes to routes supported by Traffic Regulation Orders that can be enforced. • More greenways and off road routes accompanied by legible and signposted links to these routes with a view to increasing leisure cycling options; • Changes in junction layouts with cycle friendly design to tackle the higher profile, difficult locations; • All future highway infrastructure schemes to be designed with cyclists considered as equal users of the highway.
Network Development	High-quality networks with access from neighbourhoods and transport hubs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop a 'hub and spoke' network of cycle routes using the existing radial highway network • Link routes up in coherent, legible and logical networks • Integrate cycling with the wider public transport network and provide secure parking facilities at rail, bus and tram stations • Develop the route network to prioritise improved connectivity to jobs, education and local services
Shared Space	Rebalancing the environment to make it calm and safe for all	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Introduce targeted interventions where allowed for by traffic levels and space • Balance the needs of all users and learn from experience in the design of the spaces
Disabled Users	Ensuring access for all users	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Intelligent use of infrastructure design to balance user needs – e.g. contrast colours in footways; well-located and designed crossing facilities with adaptations for disabled users as appropriate. • Ensure close involvement with disabled user groups to ensure appropriate facilities and assist in addressing conflicting needs.
Traffic speeds	Attractive neighbourhood streets and spaces	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Vehicle speed reduction measures in residential areas and the implementation of additional 20 mph areas across the city as set out in the Centro cycle charter

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Community led traffic speed awareness and enforcement initiatives • Speed of traffic on the principal road network to be considered in terms of impact on community severance and connectivity as well as traffic flow and safety • Install accident reduction measures at conflict points
Parking	Provision of safe and secure parking	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To ensure there is seamless, easy, end-to-end journeys • Extensive provision of safe and secure parking along with other facilities, such as showers at key locations –workplaces, retail areas, transport hubs
Information	Everyone be able to access information to enable clear way-finding	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide information in both paper and online forms • Provide high quality and frequent on and off highway signage • Keep maps of routes and facilities up to date • Provide information in both paper and online forms • Provide Mile Markers where appropriate on leisure routes to encourage more walking for health. • Make imaginative use of new technology and trends to encourage more active modes of travel e.g. counting steps and walking as a mode of transport

c. Marketing & Engagement

	Where we want to be	Guiding principles
Promotion	Cycling and walking are recognised as a safe, effective, healthy and enjoyable way to travel	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Focussed promotional activities towards key target groups to encourage change • 12 month event calendar that combines 'Go Active' with the wider activities across the city • One shared promotional portal for all 'active' initiatives such as led walks/cycle training/led rides
Training	For the whole population to hold the tools to be able to walk and cycle	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Overcoming barriers by providing the equipment needed to ensure participation, such as walking groups or 'Bikeability' cycle training • Provision of adult cycle training and 'Wheels to Work' schemes • Provision of cycle maintenance courses • Driver training – the Transport for London Exchanging Places initiatives gives HGV

		<p>drivers and cyclists the opportunity to appreciate the others experience on the highway. Some local authorities and large organisations have this type of training as a requirement of employment or as part of the procurement process.</p>
Support	<p>Gender, age and cost will not be barriers to walking or cycling</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Overcoming barriers by providing appropriate support and messages • Promote initiatives such as the 'Bostin Bikes' programme to provide people with affordable access to a bike, safety accessories and cycle training. • Supporting local cycle and walk champions with training for them to provide appropriate activities in their communities
Activities	<p>Providing more opportunities to give walking and cycling a try</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provision of local events, led cycle rides and walks • Provision of cycle maintenance classes, cycle buddy schemes and general business, school and community support • Cycle hire schemes in public places • Training and promotion on 'how to share spaces' to include speed awareness, use of bells, being visible and generally being considerate and respectful.