

Executive

14 February 2023

Report of the Corporate Director of Place
Portfolio of the Executive Member for Transport

York Local Transport Consultation

Summary

1. The Council has new and emerging policies such as the 10 year plan and 10 year strategies for Climate Change, Health and Economy and The Local Plan which now has planning weight. The 10-Year plan and 10 year strategies set new policies for Transport and the Local Plan and sets the spatial distribution of new development and therefore demands on the network up to 2040.
2. A policy response titled Draft Local Transport Strategy is contained within Annex B and Executive are being asked to approve a consultation on this Draft Local Transport Strategy which sets out the high level principles and priorities for York that will underpin future Transport Strategies.
3. Whilst a Mayoral Combined Authority model for governance in York and North Yorkshire will change where any statutory Local Transport Plan is held, this draft strategy actually strengthens the case for York articulating its transport priorities because it will allow a clear statement of York's transport strategy informed by a robust and timely consultation process with local stakeholders.
4. Following consultation and pending expected guidance on formulation Local Transport Plans from Department for Transport further reports will be brought to Executive to adopt any transport policy which will then feed into a new Local Transport Plan that will require further public decisions before adoption.

Recommendations

5. The Executive are recommended to:

i. approve the Draft Transport Strategy as per Annex B as the basis for consultation on York's future local transport policies
Reason: to ensure transport policy reflects the priorities outlines in the 10 Year strategies and the Local Plan.

ii. delegate authority to the Director for Environment, Transport and Planning, in consultation with the Executive Member for Transport, to commence a period of stakeholder and resident consultation on the Transport Policy. To note a report will be brought forward to Executive following consultation on the proposed policy context in Annex B, along with a list of schemes and policies which the council will seek to deliver.

Reason: to gain residents and stakeholders views on the strategy and provide time to respond within the timescale of a new Local Transport Plan by 2024 as prescribed by Devolution and Department for Transport's current expectations.

iii. note that the guidance from Department for Transport on Local Transport Plans has not yet been issued.
Reason: to put in context the timelines and challenges for producing a full Local Transport Plan.

iv. delegate to the Director of Environment, Transport and Planning, in consultation with the Executive Member for Transport, providing a response to the expected consultation by the Department for Transport on future Local Transport Plans.

Reason: to ensure a response can be made in accordance with government timelines and the priorities and policies for York are made clear to Government.

Background

New Local Policy affecting Transport

6. The Council's current Local Transport Plan runs to 2031.

7. On the 15 December 2022 Council adopted the York 2032 10 year Strategy and Policy framework, which comprises the Climate Change, Economic and Health and Wellbeing 10 year strategies and the emerging 10 year City Plan.
8. York 2032 recognises Transport as one of five city-wide priorities and sets out the ambition and targets for the decade ahead:
 - Ambition: York's transport networks will be inclusive and sustainable, connecting neighbourhoods and communities.
 - Targets: York will have a transport plan which enables and promotes modal shift to sustainable transport. It supports the Climate Change, Public Health and Economic Development strategies, and mitigates the transport consequences of the growth of the city. It will support the equality, health and wellbeing of York's current and future residents, businesses and visitors and enables inclusive economic development whilst respecting the city's heritage. Through the Plan, York will seek to minimise any negative environmental impacts of transport. A key part of the strategy will be supporting measures which reduce the need to travel, as well as those promoting modal shift.
9. In addition, the Climate Change Strategy 2022-2032 identifies transport as one of the biggest carbon emitters in the city (2nd only to buildings) and has set a target of reducing carbon from transport systems by 71%. In the meantime, guidance is expected from the Department of Transport that we anticipate will set carbon reduction targets for transport as well.
10. The reason for adoption of York 2032 the 10 year plan and 10 year strategies was to engage partners, city leaders, businesses, stakeholders and residents to work together on these five key agreed priority areas that aim to actively improve the quality of life for all York's residents.
11. The Local Plan is also emerging, has planning weight and sets the spatial distribution of transport demands to 2040 – and beyond that depending on the delivery trajectory of the larger development site.
12. A report taken to Executive on Thursday 26 January provided an update on the Local Plan examination process, feedback and modifications requested by the inspectors and move forward to the final consultation stage and the Plan's adoption before being submitted to the Planning Inspectorate for final recommendations.

13. The Local Plan provides a framework to guide spatial distribution of development and protect the quality of the city's unique historic, natural and built environment, determining how York develops over the next 15 years and beyond including supporting new transport infrastructure investment.

Transport Response to New Policy

14. In Summer 202, consultation as part of Our Big Conversation allowed some of the key issues around transport to be explored in the context of this CYC's emerging new policies and strategies. Many of these themes were repeated in subsequent consultations about the detail contained in the 10-year strategies. The highlights of the Our Big Conversation were:
 - 81% of respondents agreed with the ambition for York to become carbon neutral by 2030
 - 74% said building an efficient and affordable transport system should be an important part of York's Climate Change strategy – more than any other measure
 - 34% said they thought their car use was likely to fall over the next 5 years – only 16% said they thought it would increase.

However, the consultation saw many challenges to delivering more sustainable transport in York. Specifically:

- 90% see congestion as a problem in York
- 82% see air pollution from traffic as a problem
- 80% say transport has a negative impact on climate change
- 76% want safer cycle routes
- 69% want a more frequent/ reliable/ more extensive/ lower cost bus network
- 64% want more secure cycle parking
- 54% want more charging points for electric vehicles.

Annex A gives more detailed results - for climate change, economic development and transport.

15. Recognising the new emerging policy context, Council established a cross party working group to work with officers on preparing a new Local Transport Plan. This group has helped shape the Draft Transport Strategy attached at Annex B which is a response to the 10 Year Strategies and Local Plan, local transport evidence and the Our Big Conversation consultation.

16. The cross party transport group has been meeting since spring 2021 and has discussed a number of topics including how local transport plans fit into local authority responsibilities, the transport impacts of the development foreseen in the local plan, what the data on transport use in York indicates, process made since the council's 2011 Local Transport Plan, the information on transport gathered during our Big Conversation, the objectives for the Local Transport Plan, the Vision for the Plan and the elements of the emerging strategy.
17. A draft policy context was presented to the cross party group on 25th January 2023. This is attached at Annex B. Some of the headline proposals are:
 - Development of the park and ride network and other key bus routes into a "Bus Rapid Transit" system with high quality vehicles, stop and shelters and better bus priorities – to better effect medium length trips in York
 - A large programme of active travel measures to increase walk and cycle rates in York above their already high levels
 - Measures in the city centre to respond to the decline in the number of private vehicles entering the city centre seen over the last 50 years, and transfer these to walking, cycling and bus.
 - Measures to develop the orbital A1237 and A64 routes so that through traffic is diverted away from York city centre and village centres
 - Extensive improvements to streets in the district centres and York city centre to improve the amenity of these areas and promote local trips on foot and by bike in place of longer distance trips by car (e.g. to our of town shopping)
 - Work with developers to ensure that the strategic sites being progressed through the Local Plan are delivered in ways consistent with high use of sustainable transport.
18. The draft strategy also identifies a number of locations which generate very large numbers of trips (for example, business and retail parks, York city centre, the city's universities and colleges and hospital) and proposes interventions in these areas to promote public and active transport use.
19. The cross party groups initial comments related to including more international examples, this has been added into the document, although legislative frameworks and powers for local authorities are obviously different. Also raised was the importance of cross-referencing the policies as action plans came forward in the future, so that transport

interventions could be considered against other policies such as Climate, Economy and Wellbeing.

20. Building on the Our Big Conversation engagement programme that has taken place since 2021, the next step is to now engage stakeholders and the public on the high level principles and policy context in the draft Local Transport Strategy. This report seeks Executive approval to commence this process.
21. The Local Transport Strategy Consultation and Engagement Plan (Annex D) sets out the approach, different stages and activities the council will undertake to encourage participation and increase representation from across the city.
22. Learning from previous consultations and in line with the stated ambition of the transport strategy, and to be inclusive and accessible, the first stage of the plan is to stress test the engagement plan itself with different community groups whilst starting high level conversations about the evidence base and options. This will be via a series of webinars/information sharing sessions, before moving onto consulting on the content of the draft Local Transport Strategy itself.
23. The consultation and engagement plan proposes “laddering” participants from broad high level principles and policy themes to more detailed proposals. Affirming these high level principles and the policy context will support the development of more detailed proposals and inform the development of York’s Local Transport Delivery Plan, to inform the Mayoral Combined Authority’s Strategic Transport Plan – with engagement activities themed and sequenced to lead to deeper and more nuanced conversations about the proposals the council will include in its transport vision.

Next Steps

24. York’s current Local Transport Plan runs until 2030. As has been explained it is widely accepted that the changing policy context means that as the policy context becomes clearer a new Local Transport Plan is required to reflect new policy.
25. Following consultation on Annex B officers will take the consultation and progress to the next stage of developing a Local Transport Plan. Subject to the guidance from Department for Transport it will include a list of future major transport schemes that the Council sees as key to delivering its strategic ambitions in the 10 year strategies and Local Plan. This will

become York's Local Transport Delivery Plan and help guide the development of the Mayors Strategic Transport Plan for York and North Yorkshire

26. It should be noted that the Department for Transport have committed to new guidance for Local Transport Plans, particularly in relation to carbon reduction.
27. The Department for Transport's indication has been that new Local Transport Plans responding to the guidance should be ready for spring 2024. However, their new guidance is delayed, the bulletins from the Department for Transport about updating Local Transport Plans are included within Annex C and indicate the timelines may be reviewed.

Devolution

28. Under devolution City of York Council still has a key role to play in Transport, it will be a standing member of any new Mayoral Combined Authority's Transport Committee.
29. This Transport Committee will make the key Policy Decisions for Transport affecting York as the Mayoral Combined Authority becomes the Transport Authority for the whole of York and North Yorkshire.
30. The Unitary Councils of North Yorkshire and City of York will remain the Local Highway Authority for their respective areas.
31. As such the Mayoral Combined Authority will approve a Local Transport Plan (LTP) for York and North Yorkshire that responds to the needs of communities. This will be developed in conjunction with North Yorkshire Council and the City Council.
32. By adopting and starting consultation on the Draft Local Transport Strategy will strengthen the policy context leading to the development of a list of major schemes. It will articulate York Transport priorities and enable their incorporation in the Local Transport Plan for York and North Yorkshire.
33. Further the future development of York's Transport Delivery Plan (which is the list of major transport schemes and policies which support the delivery of York's new adopted strategic priorities) can be used as a bidding route for funding either from or through the new Mayoral Combined Authority or direct to government by City of York Council.

34. As well as setting out policy and a list of major transport schemes in a delivery plan, the Local Transport Plan will be supported by a range of other Transport policies and plans. These will include the Bus Service Improvement Plan and the Local Cycling Walking Infrastructure Plan which is currently also being developed with stakeholders and will be brought to a public decision session in the future for adoption.
35. North Yorkshire County Council are also commencing the process of defining their local transport strategies and policies. Officers from both authorities are working together to ensure efficiencies from joint development of the Plans where there is scope to do so. Like City of York Council North Yorkshire Council are proposing consultation throughout 2023 to inform delivery of the Local Transport Plan in spring 2024.

Options:

36. The options available to Executive are as follows:
 - a) To adopt the draft policy context for Transport and commence consultation with stakeholders and residents. (this is the recommended option)
 - b) Not to adopt the draft policy and consult at a later stage in the development of Transport Policy and Strategy.

Analysis

37. Engaging and consulting on the draft policy context for transport now will ensure read across to approved high level strategies and help in the next steps of developing York's Local Transport Plan in timely fashion.
38. By adopting and starting consultation on the draft policy context now, the Council will strengthen and articulation of York's transport priorities and enable their incorporation in a future Local Transport Plan for York and North Yorkshire if devolution goes ahead
39. By understanding stakeholders such as the Civic Trust, transport operators, businesses' and residents' thoughts and priorities in regards to transport policy the list of future major projects will be developed in a way that is conscious of local views and opinions. It is a much better way to be iterative in the development of such important policy. It obviously does not preclude further consultation as the list of projects is developed.

Council Plan

40. This report is about the development of Transport Policy and therefore has the potential to improve the quality of life for residents and support the delivery of all the outcomes in the Council Plan which are:

- Well-paid jobs and an inclusive economy
- A greener and cleaner city
- Getting around sustainably
- Good health and wellbeing
- Safe communities and culture for all
- Creating homes and world-class infrastructure
- A better start for children and young people
- An open and effective council

Implications

Financial Implications

41. The Council has set aside one off funding totalling £400k in over the 2020/21 budget to 2022/23 budgets to support the determination of a New Local Transport Plan. This funding has been utilised for studies, evidence gathering and consultation. This budget will fund the cost of consultation outlined in the report. There is also potential additional funding as part of the devolution deal that if confirmed could be used to develop the plan in conjunction with North Yorkshire Council.

Equalities

42. An equalities impact assessment has not yet been undertaken for the policy and will be developed post consultation. The Council has taken account of the Public Sector Equality Duty under Section 149 of the Equality Act 2010 (to have due regard to the need to eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other prohibited conduct; advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it and foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected

characteristic and persons who do not share it in the exercise of a public authority's functions).

Legal Implications

43. The Transport Act 2000 placed a duty on Transport Authorities to produce and keep under review a Local Transport Plan, which sets out their transport policies and plans. This duty has since been amended in terms of timescales.
44. New government guidance on local transport plans is currently being drafted by Department for Transport (DfT) and was initially expected for release in the Spring of 2022 but was then revised to Autumn 2022. The latest update from DfT is that the guidance will be released soon.
45. The Government had proposed that a Transport Bill would be published to be passed in the current session of parliament but this has now been delayed to the next session, due to start in May 2023.

Risk Management

46. By establishing York Transport Policy context in a single place this proposal enables further engagement with stakeholders and residents and to influence any new and emerging policy that may develop under devolution for transport.

Contact Details

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**Specialist Implications
Officer(s)**

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Wards Affected: List wards or tick box to indicate all

All

For further information please contact the author of the report

Annexes

- Annex A - Big Consultation Report
- Annex B – Draft Local Transport Strategy
- Annex C – DfT Local Transport Plan Bulletins
- Annex D - The Local Transport Strategy Consultation and Engagement Plan

Background Papers

Council – December 2022 - [Agenda for Council on Thursday, 15 December 2022, 6.30 pm \(york.gov.uk\) item 37/M57](#)