

Meeting:	Executive
Meeting date:	14/03/2024
Report of:	James Gilchrist, Julian Ridge and Lara Thornton
Portfolios of:	Cllr Pete Kilbane, Executive Member for Transport and Economy; Cllr Kate Ravilious, Joint Executive Member for Environment and Climate Emergency

Decision Report: York’s new Local Transport Strategy: Update Report

York’s new Local Transport Strategy and Plan

Subject of Report

1. The new Mayoral Combined Authority needs to adopt a new Transport Plan as they will be the ‘transport authority’ for York, as well as North Yorkshire. This new Transport Plan will inform transport decisions to be made by the York and North Yorkshire Mayoral Combined Authority which will impact on the projects and schemes within City of York Council area.
2. To ensure the unique challenges that face the city are reflected in the Mayor’s Transport Plan, City of York Council is developing a Local Transport Strategy for the city and its villages to inform the new Mayoral Combined Authority Transport Plans.
3. The new Local Transport Strategy also needs to respond to York’s 2023-27 Council Plan, the city’s Climate Change Strategy (which seeks to achieve carbon net zero by 2030) and the emerging York Local Plan.
4. Additionally, as this report was being prepared, the Department for Transport announced a significant funding uplift for ‘transport authorities’ to deliver their transport strategies, using funds made available by the cancellation of the northern section of HS2. Local transport authorities will need to state their proposals to the

Department for Transport towards the end of 2024. Proposals will need to include a pipeline of transport schemes for delivery between 2025 and 2033. As such, developing a new Local Transport Strategy for York is timely because it can inform this process.

Benefits and Challenges

5. This update report allows Executive members to consider the information collected in the “Our Big Transport Consultation” exercise and its implications for transport decision making in York. This allows for timely input to the shaping of transport policies for the emerging York and North Yorkshire Mayoral Combined Authority and the recently announced uplift to transport support to local councils from Department for Transport.

Policy Basis for Decision

6. In December 2022, Full Council approved a 10 Year Plan and 10-year strategies covering climate, health and wellbeing and economic growth which all recognised the critical role transport plays in delivering city wide ambitions. Transport also plays a key role in the delivery of York’s emerging Local Plan which is in its final stages of Examination.
7. The Climate Change Strategy 2022-2032 notes that emissions from transport represent 27.9% of York’s emissions and of this, 88% of emissions come from car travel or public transport. The Climate Change Strategy identifies five objectives for reducing emissions associated with transport: reducing overall miles travelled, increasing uptake of active travel and public transport, switching to electric vehicles, reducing freight emissions and future proofing our infrastructure to the impacts of climate change. The Strategy then goes on to set an ambitious target of reducing transport emissions by 71% (against 2019 levels). This requires a reduction of car miles driven in York by approximately 20% from 2019 levels.
8. Improving York’s transport networks responds to the Council Plan 2023-2027 - One York for all, which sets a vision for the Council that over the next four years we will “establish the conditions that would make the city of York a healthier, fairer, more affordable, more sustainable and more accessible place, where everyone feels valued, creating more regional opportunities to help today’s

residents and benefit future generations.” Approval of the new Council Plan has set a new policy context for the council with four core commitments of Equalities and Human Rights, Affordability, Climate and Health and these are embedded throughout all decision making and being key to achieve the vision set in the plan.

Financial Strategy Implications

9. There are no additional implications of this report beyond those set out in the report to Executive in October 2023.
10. Delivering the Transport Strategy itself, post adoption, has significant capital and revenue cost implications which are currently unfunded. A key aspect of delivering the Strategy would have to be a financial programme which would inform the phasing of Strategy delivery – and outline delivery dependencies where funding was needed beyond that which CYC could provide internally.
11. The Government have announced significant increased grant to fund Integrated Transport investment over the period 2025/26 to 2033/34 which will be provided to the Combined Authority to be passed on to constituent authorities. The YNY Combined Authority have been awarded £1m funds to support the updating of the YNY Local Transport Plan and it is proposed that the activity identified in this report be funded in part from those funds.

Recommendation and Reasons

12. Executive is asked to:
 - a) note the results of “Our Big Transport Consultation”, and instruct officers to prepare a Local Transport Strategy guided by the results of the consultation on the Local Transport Strategy’s policies in “Our Big Transport Conversation”. This new Local Transport Strategy will be presented to Executive for adoption later in 2024 so that it can form the basis of discussions about transport investment in York which will take place between City of York Council and the York and North Yorkshire Mayor.

- b) Delegate authority to the Director of Transport, Environment and Planning, in consultation with the Director of Governance and Executive Member for Transport and Economy to publish technical pieces of work, which are required to progress transport plan making in York – as these pieces of work become available. This is likely to include plans to improve bus services, under York’s Bus Service Improvement Plan, the York Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan and various modelled assessments of York’s transport network.
- c) To request that the Director of Environment, Transport and Planning develops a brief for a Movement and Place Plan for York and note that a further report about Supplementary Planning Documents to the Local Plan will be bought before Members later in 2024. This will include the transport Supplementary Planning Document.
- d) Approve the proposed approach of delivering “quick wins” which reflect the results from the engagement process when this can be achieved within existing budgets and powers

Reason: to respond to the Our Big Transport Conversation and develop a Local Transport Strategy to support the new Mayor in the development of a Transport Plan for York and North Yorkshire which reflects the challenges and views of York.

Background

- 13. In October 2023 Executive approved a vision for transport in York which was reflective of the ambitions set out in the 2023-27 Council Plan. Ten “Policy Focus Areas” were detailed. Following this, more detailed policies were taken to Scrutiny Committee and then agreed at an Executive Member Decision Session in November 2023 and approval for consultation on these was given.

Consultation

- 14. These detailed policies were subject to public consultation for 10 weeks between 24th November 2023 and 4th February 2024. Consultation was via a questionnaire, plus a large number of face-to-face events to target communities and users of the transport network who had special requirements. York residents and other stakeholders in York’s transport network were also encouraged to

write in with suggestions if they did not feel that the questionnaire had given sufficient scope for them to respond with their views of York's transport network.

15. City of York Council received 1,342 online responses to the questionnaire, plus a further 35 responses to the survey on paper. The online survey was constructed using "skip logic" which allowed respondents to decide which areas of policy interested them – and also to maximise response rates by avoiding the length of the full survey suppressing response rates. Consequently, there is variation in sample size between the ten individual Policy Focus Areas. More information is contained in Annex B to this report. In addition, 130 emails were received with comments or queries, and all were responded to and are logged.
16. The questionnaire was only one of several ways used to consult on future transport strategy during the engagement period. Alongside the online/ paper questionnaire and guided by the Equalities Impact Assessment produced earlier in 2023, CYC staff also arranged and attended over 50 face to face events. Officers used existing networks such as ward committees but also proactively reached out to community groups and organisations to arrange to go and see residents in their own communities (for example lunch drop-ins at the Foxwood Community Centre, or the monthly Deaf Café). This ensured the consultation did not rely solely on those who had time or access to the online platform. In total, these events were a mix of drop-in sessions in York city centre, meetings with wards facilitated by councillors and meetings with groups who had a particular use of or interest in the transport network (for example, we met and discussed transport with primary and secondary school children and students at York College and York University). Some sessions were also held online. Through this 200 to 300 hours of staff and councillor time was put into the face-to-face consultation.
17. Paper copies of the 'short' version of the questionnaire, ten policies and privacy notice were also sent out via the Explore Libraries network, with posters to advertise the fact that the materials were available. These materials also advertised assistance that could be offered to those who may need different formats or languages. In addition, an Easy Read version of the short questions was produced and used in several face-to-face sessions with people with learning disabilities.

18. Special sessions were arranged to speak to groups in the community who were less likely to respond to an online questionnaire. These sessions were arranged to speak to disabled people, schoolchildren, college students, and elderly people. Officers arranged meetings in several rural wards in York, and also travelled on the mobile library to villages east and west of York to speak to residents about transport problems in the rural areas surrounding the city.
19. Consultations were also held with large local employers, such as York University and the NHS, and were held with business groups and tourist industry representatives. The face-to-face consultations are estimated to have reached between 1,000 and 2,000 people. Locations of the consultation events are shown on the map in Annex A of this report.
20. There was extensive coverage of the consultation in local media, with frequent postings to Council social media accounts throughout the 10 week consultation. This was tailored for each audience (for example businesses on LinkedIn; residents on Facebook, Next Door and Twitter/X). The Council also arranged for promoted posts on Facebook, to a radius of 30km around the boundary, to encourage commuters and visitors to also take part. Collectively, this work saw over 100,000 impressions (the number of times content was seen).
21. Posters advertising the consultation were placed at bus stops across York, and shown on the information screens at bus stops. Councillors were sent a note about the consultation with links and asked to forward information about the questionnaire to their mailing lists and to publicise it in ward newsletters. Large employers and other groups were asked to publicise the consultation to their employees and members.
22. In January 2024, to mark 'one month to go', refreshed graphics were produced and pushed out to audiences. Council officers prepared summaries, links, events info which was sent to community groups including faith groups, disabled residents, children and family services. Many, for example the Friends of Rowntree Park and York University, sent the information out in their own newsletters and internal comms, further spreading the message and encouraging people to take part.

23. The questionnaire used to collect information online was comprehensive and detailed, taking around 30 minutes to fill in (for the shortest version), and longer than that for respondents who wished to go into the issues in detail. Whilst this is likely to have reduced the response rate in comparison to shorter questionnaires in York, it meant that CYC received a very broad range of information on the topics being considered.
24. The sample received in the online questionnaire was:
- a) 42% female, 48% male (10% did not state a gender)
 - b) Largest age categories 40-55 (29%), over 65s (26%), 25-39 (18%), 56-65 (18%) (nb these numbers do not include the large number of schoolchildren we spoke to face-to-face)
 - c) 25% identified themselves as having a disability
 - d) 20% said that they had a carer responsibility
 - e) Use of transport modes was broadly in-line with current travel behaviour in York, with the vast majority of respondents using a mixture of modes, including cars, to get around
 - f) 89% of respondents gave a residential postcode in York with a further 10% in Yorkshire but outside York. Less than 1% gave a postcode outside Yorkshire.
25. As such, the breadth of genders, ages, and modes used for travel, suggests that the information collected is likely to be broadly representative of York as a whole and not dominated by a particular group. Feedback received via the questionnaire also tallied generally with the impression of public opinion received by the project team through the face-to-face events. Consequently it is contended that this consultation, in terms of the number and breadth of respondents is the largest consultation on transport strategy in York for many years – at least since the last Local Transport Plan was submitted to the Department for Transport in 2011 – and quite possibly longer than this. Accordingly, it gives us the greatest level of insight into residents and stakeholders' views on transport that the council has had for many years.
26. The short period of time between closure of the online survey and publication of this report – especially given the extra time required to enter the paper-based questionnaires into the data, mean that it

is only possible to produce a summary of the information gathered (see Annex B). Publication of a draft Local Transport Strategy later this year will provide further detail about the information collected during the consultation, including cross-tabulating the survey responses to look in more detail at what particular groups prioritise (for example, people whose mobility is restricted).

Consultation Analysis

27. It is clear that the consultation overwhelmingly supports the 10 Policy Focus Areas, as per the table below.

Policy Focus Area/ Vision	% support	% neutral	% not support
1. Shape a city that is accessible to everyone	90	6	4
2. Improve walking, wheeling and cycling	85	7	5
3. Shape healthy places	85	8	7
4. Improving Public Transport	88	6	6
5. Safeguarding our environment by cutting carbon, air pollution and noise	74	9	17
6. Manage the road network for Movement and Place	81	11	8
7. Reduce car dependency	78	8	14
8. Improving freight and logistics	85	11	4
9. Effective maintenance and enforcement and management of streetworks	83	11	6
10. Monitoring the transport network and financing the changes	81	14	5

28. Other policies which were supported included the continuation of York's transport hierarchy. Many responses clearly identified a mismatch between the transport provision in York (in all of its forms) and the level of provision people either wanted or considered necessary to deliver the modal shift and decongestion they saw as required in York. 69% of respondents saw the available transport in York as restricting what they did; 50% said York's transport had a negative impact on their physical fitness.
29. Individual modes of transport were seen as having significant problems which would be barriers to their wider adoption – despite greater use being essential to delivering the Climate Change Strategy targets. Cycle routes were seen as insufficiently safe – because they were not segregated from other traffic. Buses were seen as unreliable and insufficiently frequent. Interactive maps were used to gather information about problem locations on York's transport network for pedestrians, cyclists, bus services and the road network.
30. Face to face discussions provided the opportunity to go into more detail about the implications of enacting the policies being consulted on, and time to explore the trade-offs which were inherent in some of the potential changes being consulted upon. Inevitably, face to face discussions were often nuanced, recognising the constraints to action the Council has, such as funding availability, and the need for compromise between different user groups on the highway, which is an asset held commonly and available to all. They were invaluable in trying to assess where the balance was between the views of different road users, noting also that views on transport varied between different areas, age groups and users of different transport modes. As such, face to face discussions were essential in tempering the raw, numerical data received through the questionnaire.

Options Analysis and Evidential Basis

31. The overwhelming endorsement of the 10 policy "Visions" implied by York's Council Plan and Climate Change Strategy, and of the vast majority of the more detailed policies put forward in the consultation indicates that there is a clear groundswell of support in York for transport policies which support the 10 policy "Visions".

32. The Climate Change Strategy seeks to achieve net-zero transport CO2 emissions by 2030 so time is of the essence in achieving the level of change required to deliver the Strategy. Obviously, interventions to achieve the level of behaviour change predicated by the Climate Change targets will be in a number of areas and will vary by scale. The data collected in the online questionnaire and the face-to-face discussions, for example, supports development of new networks of segregated cycle routes and bus priorities, as well as extensive maintenance and repair works for York's existing footways and cycleways would be needed.
33. However, the 2030 Climate Change Strategy targets inject urgency into the need to quickly start the process of reimagining York's transport network to reflect the preferences expressed during the engagement summarised in this report.
34. Transport planning is an evidence-based discipline. Over the last year City of York Council and its partners have been undertaking a number of pieces of work to assess the city's priorities, many of which are expected to complete over the next two months. Amongst these assessments are:
 - a) The York Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan
 - b) Various pieces of work relating to York's Bus Service Improvement Plan
35. Recognising that Transport is intrinsically linked with place, sense of place and regeneration the consultation proposed a "Movement and Place Plan" for York. This was endorsed in the consultation questionnaire, with 81% of respondents agreeing with the vision to develop a Movement and Place Plan and 80% specifically endorsing its development. Consequently, this report proposes development of a Movement and Place Plan for York to match the ambitions expressed in the engagement. The first stage in this process will be to authorise officers to outline the vision and define the scope for the Plan which will inform budget, funding, engagement/ consultation processes and timescales – a first ask of the Mayor.
36. A second important evidence base commission will be development of a Supplementary Planning Document on transport which will form part of York's Local Plan and will specify the transport measures and schemes which will support the new developments around York, ensuring their transport impacts are mitigated and any new infrastructure assists delivery of the Climate

Change Strategy. This document was always seen as a crucial supporting document for the Local Plan, but is listed here for completeness. A further report on the Supplementary Planning Documents for the Local Plan, and their prioritisation, will be taken to Executive later in 2024 by the Strategic Planning Policy team.

37. Therefore options to progress a Local Transport Strategy can be summarised as:
 - a) Building the technical evidence base to help deliver the changes implied by the engagement and York's other strategies and plans;
 - b) Making small scale changes (quick wins) to the transport system now where these can be made without needing additional funding or powers;
 - c) Preparing a new Local Transport Strategy, based on the feedback received from the engagement, for adoption by the Council and use in securing funding settlements with the York and North Yorkshire Mayoral Combined Authority, Department for Transport and other funding bodies.

38. A further engagement exercise undertaken since November has been the formation of a group of experts to inform York about developing new transport policies. Terms of Reference for this group were agreed by Executive in October 2023. Minutes and agendas for the group will be published as part of the Local Transport Strategy evidence base so that people are able to consider the topics that are discussed and the guidance being received by the Council.

39. The urgent need to meet Climate Change Strategy targets implies the need to identify "quick win" policies which will start the work of strategy delivery. Of course, a large body of work is already underway to improve sustainable transport systems in York (for example, the projects to electrify much of the bus fleet, the Bus Service Improvement Plan programme, various active travel initiatives), so these quick wins are in addition to these pre-existing projects. Examples of additional quick win initiatives are:
 - a) Explore how we can better incorporate "place making" in projects in the existing York built up urban area and villages, as well as in proposed developments;

- b) To always look for opportunities to improve accessibility and sustainable travel, and to add sustainable urban drainage and increase biodiversity during any street maintenance works, utility repairs and highways schemes;
 - c) To use the new tools and techniques from LTN1/20¹ (which sets out active travel design guidance) and Active Travel England to assess the accessibility and active travel elements of any highway scheme, with the aim to eliminate all critical fails;
 - d) Continue with the current project to remove barriers from active travel routes;
 - e) Public engagement to provide better information on sustainable transport in York, including working with volunteer organisations to support sustainable transport themed campaigns and events; and
 - f) Data collection around planned highway maintenance so that CYC can improve understanding of traffic dynamics in York and responses to potential interventions which may form part of a longer-term Transport Strategy.
40. A more detailed list of quick wins will form part of the new Local Transport Strategy which will be presented to Executive in late Spring/ early Summer this year, however, this report request authority to start work immediately on delivering those set out above.

Preparing a new Transport Strategy

41. This report recommends transport officers prepare a Local Transport Strategy for York based on the engagement undertaken to date and which sets out:
- a) Objectives, targets and assessment frameworks for transport in York;
 - b) Schemes which can be enacted in the short term to help achieve those targets, without the need for additional funding or powers for the Council; and
 - c) Longer term schemes and policies which would require additional funding or new powers, but which would form part of negotiations with the incoming York and North Yorkshire Mayor.

¹ <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/cycle-infrastructure-design-ltn-120>;
<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/active-travel-england-scheme-review-tools>

42. It is anticipated that the Local Transport Strategy will be presented to Executive in late Summer 2024, with a decision taken then as to whether it should be adopted for discussions with the Mayoral Combined Authority

Organisational Impact and Implications

Risks and Mitigations

43. **Financial:** The recommendations within the report commit further resource for development of Movement and Place Plan. Any expenditure will need to be contained within budgets that have been previously approved.
44. **Human Resources (HR):** Should there be additional resources required to support the Transport strategy, these will follow HR policies and procedures and further HR advice can be sought when required.
45. **Legal:** In accordance with the Local Government Act 2000, the Local Authority (Functions and Responsibilities) (England) Regulations 2000 and the City of York Council Constitution, Full Council must approve, adopt, amend, monitor and /or review the plans, strategies and policies which together make up the Council's Policy Framework, including the Local Transport Plan. The recommendations in this report are in accordance with that requirement. The Constitution of the York & North Yorkshire Combined Authority requires the Mayor to approve the adoption, amendment, modification, revision, variation, withdrawal or revocation of a local transport plan and it is noted the Local Transport Strategy discussed in this report is intended to inform the new York & North Yorkshire Combined Authority's Transport Plan.
46. **Legal principles on consultation:** The approach to consultation recommended for approval is consistent with the requirements for a lawful consultation set out in the Gunning case and subsequently endorsed by the Supreme Court as a "prescription for fairness". These can be summarised as follows: (i) consultation must be undertaken at a time when proposals are still at a formative stage;(ii) it must include sufficient reasons for particular proposals to allow those consulted to give intelligent consideration and an intelligent response; (iii) adequate time must be given for this purpose; and (iv) the product of consultation must be conscientiously taken into account when the ultimate decision is taken.

47. **Procurement:** Whilst there are no direct procurement implications relating to this report, should any procurement arise following the Local Transport Plan, all works and/or services must be procured via a compliant, open, transparent, and fair process in accordance with the council's Contract Procedure Rules and where applicable, the Public Contract Regulations 2015.
48. **Health and Wellbeing:** the Health and Wellbeing implications of the LTP will be substantial, with strong evidence that cities which support greater use of active travel methods and lower use of cars see health gains across a wide range of disease areas, including respiratory and heart health and cancers, as well as generalised mental health and wellbeing. When these shifts are achieved by equitable means, health inequalities are also reduced. The 'Objectives' and 'Policy Focus Areas' proposed in this report have been developed with extensive public health input and reflect the goals of the York Health and Wellbeing Strategy 2022-32.
49. **Climate:** Climate implications are discussed in the body of the report. As well as supporting York's net zero ambition the Transport Strategy will also need to consider climate change resilience and adaptation.
50. **Affordability:** The Local Transport Strategy will address Affordability as it is one of the key components of the Council Plan which the LTS will support.
51. **Equalities and Human Rights:** Although there will be significant equalities and human rights implications of York's new Local Transport Strategy, once developed from the information presented in this report, the presentation of the information does not, in itself have equalities and human rights implications. Consequently equalities and human rights implications will be considered alongside the new Local Transport Strategy once it is presented.
52. **Data Protection and Privacy:** There are no data protection and privacy implications over those set out to Executive Member Decision Session in November 2023 where a Data Protection Impact Assessment was published .
53. **Communications:** Appendix A of the report taken to Executive on 12th October set out a clear communications, engagement and consultation strategy for preparation of York's new The Local Transport Strategy.
54. **Economy:** The Local Transport Strategy will support York's economy as it is one of the key components of the Council Plan which the LTS will support.

Risks and Mitigations

55. No additional risks or mitigations have been identified above those already noted to Executive at the inception of this work in October 2023.

Wards Impacted

56. All wards are impacted by decisions about the Local Transport Strategy, although the decision to not the outcomes of the consultation and prepare a strategy for presentation to the council later does not directly impact any ward.

Contact details

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Background papers

Executive Meeting on 12th October 2023

<https://democracy.york.gov.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=733&MId=13931>

Scrutiny Meeting on 24th October 2023

<https://democracy.york.gov.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=1063&MId=14408>

Executive Member Decision Session 14th November 2023

<https://democracy.york.gov.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=1061&MId=14340>

Annexes

All annexes to the Decision Report must be listed.

- Annex A: Map of consultation events
- Annex B: Our Big Transport Conversation Summary Report
- Annex C: Questionnaire used