

Summary Sheet

Council Report

Title: ROTHERHAM TRANSPORT STRATEGY

Is this a Key Decision and has it been included on the Forward Plan? YES

Strategic Director Approving Submission of the Report:

Karl Battersby, Strategic Director EDS

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Ward(s) Affected: ALL

Executive Summary:

The Transportation and Highways Project Group has produced a draft strategy that outlines the proposed strategic approach to the provision and management of transport and transport infrastructure in Rotherham.

Recommendations:

- i) Provide comments on the draft Transport Strategy as necessary;
- ii) Note the internal consultation that has commenced and the further consultation proposed.

List of Appendices Included: DRAFT Rotherham Transport Strategy (2015-2026)

Background Papers: DRAFT Rotherham Transport Strategy (2015-2026)

The Sheffield City Region Transport Strategy (2011-26)

Rotherham Local Plan Core Strategy

Consideration by any other Council Committee, Scrutiny or Advisory Panel: YES

Council Approval Required: YES

Exempt from the Press and Public: NO

Title: ROTHERHAM TRANSPORT STRATEGY 2015-2026

1. Recommendations

It is recommended that the Improving Places Select Commission:-

- i) Provide comments on the draft Transport Strategy as necessary;
- ii) Note the internal consultation that has commenced and the further consultation proposed.

2. Background

- 2.1 The proposed actions in the strategy contribute to all four of the Council's Corporate Plan priorities. Helping local people into work will be achieved by the provision of sustainable transport links and alternative modes of travel to the private car. Vulnerable people will be helped by the provision of infrastructure (such as tactile paving) and the provision of services that meet their needs. Road maintenance and road safety are central themes of the strategy. The promotion of active travel will help to reduce inequalities and improve health.
- 2.2 The draft Transport Strategy aligns with the themes and ambitions of the Rotherham Growth Plan and the policies and aims of the Local Plan. Transport and accessibility is the glue that binds the Borough together. As the Borough grows it is essential to connect people with jobs, services, friends and families but the demand for travel needs to be balanced with a need to manage traffic congestion and provide attractive, safe, affordable and sustainable travel options to reduce the negative effects of vehicle use and emissions. The draft Transport Strategy is attached at **Appendix 1**.

3. Key Issues

- 3.1 Whilst the Rotherham Transport Strategy (RTS) for the period 2015-2026 is being introduced during a time of unprecedented change and austerity in which transport budgets have been reduced, it must still address two fundamental challenges:-
 - i) To support economic recovery in the Borough and;
 - ii) To adapt to and reduce the transport systems impact on safety, health and climate change to help safeguard its benefits for future generations.
- 3.2 This Strategy explains how we will build on our strong transport policy direction set out internationally, nationally and locally in the Sheffield City Region (SCR) Transport Strategy (2011-2026). It features our proposals to continue to improve the safety and condition of our road network in Rotherham and to support sustainable and affordable transport modes through continuing to improve public transport and enable people to walk and cycle more.
- 3.3 Fairness, safety and sustainability will be embedded in the transport projects we deliver. The purpose of investing in transport and the economy is not just about benefiting one group at the expense of another but to create the personal, social and cultural well-being of all.
- 3.4 It recognises that fuel and other costs are now rising faster than incomes and for some people car travel is simply becoming too expensive. It also addresses concerns about the rising levels of ill-health associated with sedentary lifestyles and obesity, and poor air quality.

- 3.5 Active transport is proven to help reduce this growing problem. The draft strategy therefore seeks to promote alternatives to car travel that will sit alongside traditional road schemes and local projects to ensure everyone has the potential to benefit from economic recovery and future growth in a healthy, sustainable manner. Work will also continue with local communities to deliver small scale improvements in local streets and areas to improve peoples' safety and well-being.
- 3.6 The Council will strive to continue to be a leader in local transport delivery and is committed to delivering a transport system that meets our challenges, works for all of our travelling public and businesses, helps to support growth and is environmentally fit for the future.
- 3.7 The plan (summarised in Appendix 1) lays out a series of challenges with objectives, themes and actions and eventual outcomes that will contribute to the overall vision that by 2026 Rotherham will:-
- Enjoy sustainable growth – new development will be based on compact mixed use centres focussed on high-quality public transport.
 - Be a connected place – people and places are connected by an integrated, safe and efficient transport network.
 - Make sustainable travel choices – walking, cycling and public transport are a normal part of daily travel
- 3.8 A performance monitoring chapter will be added to the strategy before final publication.
- 3.9 The draft Rotherham Transport Strategy is also being adopted at a time of significant pan-Northern and Government collaboration on strategic transport and highways infrastructure, developed through Transport for the North. This work is ongoing and will concentrate on key rail and road inter-city (region) connectivity, such as the integration of High Speed Two with Trans-Pennine/HS3, but also consider issues such as core connectivity improvements within city regions. It is not proposed that the draft Transport Strategy should be delayed until this work is complete, as there is still significant work to be undertaken, but that the principles and key schemes contained within the strategy will influence Rotherham's position on the emerging options and recommendations of Transport for the North.

4. Options considered and recommended proposal

- 4.1 The draft Transport Strategy provides the policy framework against which local decisions will be made, particularly in respect of options for investment in our local highway and transport network. However, whilst transport projects are acknowledged by the Government as providing a key role in supporting economic growth, there is clearly uncertainty in the amount of funding that will be available in the future, not just locally but nationally. Deliverability of the proposed schemes and actions that will ultimately deliver the outcomes of the strategy will be at risk if funding is not forthcoming.

5. Consultation

Consultation undertaken to date:-

- Internal consultation with services that are most likely to be influenced or affected by the proposed strategy, including a seminar held with relevant M3 managers.
- Briefings with Commissioner Kenny and Cllr Lelliott with comments and feedback included.

Proposed consultation:-

- Presentation to the Improving Places Select Commission on the 14 October 2015.
- A 4 week public consultation planned to start in the week commencing 19 October 2015 – to be web based and advertised through local media and customer contact points.
- Member seminar proposed at the start of the consultation process to present the draft transport strategy.
- Final version of the transport strategy prepared, incorporating any comments as required.
- Report to SLT/Commissioner Kenny endorsing the final strategy for approval – November 2015.
- Report to Full Council meeting in December 2015 to approve the strategy.

6. Timetable and Accountability for Implementing this Decision

6.1 The Strategy covers the period 2015 – 2026 and it is expected that [subject to consultation] it will be approved by Council in December.

7. Financial and Procurement Implications

7.1 Whilst the delivery of the ambition and outcomes of the transport strategy is multi-faceted and involves many services across the Council it is significantly affected by the level of funding it has available to deliver transportation and highway projects. Government announcements in early 2015 indicated that the core Local Transport Plan funding (capital grants) for both Integrated Transport (IT) and Maintenance that RMBC receives would continue over a period of 6 years. However, it is likely that the impact of the Spending Review in the autumn will mean that the amount of LTP funding available will be at a much reduced level.

7.2 We have already seen a reduction in LTP IT grant is as a direct result of Government cuts in 2011 and at the start of 2014/15 as a result of the Government transferring existing funds into the Local Growth Fund, a competitive fund aligned to the City Deal process and submission of Strategic Economic Plans. Increasingly Government are reducing down the grants available to Highway Authorities and making funding available on a competitive basis. Rotherham has been successful in submitting bids to and receiving funds from many of these opportunities, both on its own and with South Yorkshire partners. Similarly we have also successfully secured European Regional Growth Funding towards schemes. However, the resources available to prepare and develop successful bids are constrained from the revenue pressures the Council continues to face.

7.3. Some of the funding available, such as the Local Growth Fund, has been devolved to the SCR Combined Authority (SCRCA). With a greater push towards funding being devolved to the SCRCA, and for decisions on how it is spent to be made locally, this presents both an opportunity and a risk. Given the continued austerity Government may reallocate funding from existing funds, which will potentially result in a pressure on funding the Council receives to deliver local transport and highways improvements.

8. Legal Implications

8.1 The council's duties as a highway authority and planning authority are incorporated in the strategy. The transportation policies within the Local Plan Core Strategy, which are included within the draft Transport Strategy, were

examined and endorsed in summer 2014. The proposed actions in the strategy contribute to all four of the council's priorities. Helping local people into work will be achieved by the provision of sustainable transport links and alternative modes of travel to the private car. Vulnerable people will be helped by the provision of infrastructure (such as tactile paving) and the provision of services that meet their needs. Road maintenance and road safety are central themes of the strategy. The promotion of active travel will help to reduce inequalities and improve health.

9. Human Resources Implications

9.1 The proposed strategy has no direct HR implications.

10. Implications for Children and Young People and Vulnerable Adults

10.1 The strategy recognises that children, young people and vulnerable adults are often dependent on public transport, cycling and walking. Work will continue with schools to maintain pedestrian and cycle training. In addition we will work with public transport operators and South Yorkshire Passenger Transport Executive to provide low cost tickets for use on buses in the area, particularly through the Rotherham Voluntary Bus Partnership.

11. Equalities and Human Rights Implications

11.1 The strategy recognises that Rotherham has inequalities in access to mobility which limits opportunities for some. In order to partly redress this balance, the strategy promotes a network of sustainable travel choices that are low cost and help to facilitate journeys to work, education and leisure. In developing schemes and initiatives to implement the strategy officers will consider opportunities to provide facilities to enhance the accessibility of Rotherham's transport and highway networks for users with specific needs or disabilities.

12. Implications for Partners and Other Directorates

12.1 Adoption of this strategy will align action in Rotherham with the Sheffield City Region Transport Strategy without impacting any budgets held by other directorates in the Council. There are considerable synergies with the Council's Air Quality Action Plan as well as close links with Planning and Regeneration. Close partnership working exists between South Yorkshire Local Authorities and South Yorkshire Passenger Transport Executive.

13. Risks and Mitigation

13.1 There is some uncertainty regarding the amount of Government funding that will be available in the future, not just locally but nationally; transport projects are acknowledged by the Government to support Economic Growth and therefore stand a reasonable chance of being supported. Deliverability of the proposed schemes and actions is at risk if funding is not forthcoming. This is largely mitigated by the scalability of the proposed actions.

14. Accountable Officer(s)

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Approvals Obtained from:-

Strategic Director of Finance and Corporate Services:- RORY BATTY (1 JULY 2015)

Director of Legal Services:- STUART FLETCHER (1 JULY 2015)

Head of Procurement (if appropriate):- N/A

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