Birmingham City Council

Report to City Council

9 July 2024

Title:	**SCRUTINY INQUIRY ON ACTIVE TRAVEL SCHEMES: HOW CAN BIRMINGHAM DELIVER ACTIVE TRAVEL SCHEMES QUICKER AND MAKE CITY ROADS SAFER FOR ALL USERS?**
Lead Cabinet Portfolio:	Not Relevant
Relevant Overview and Scrutiny Committee:	Sustainability and Transport Overview and Scrutiny Committee
Report Author:	Amelia Wiltshire, Overview and Scrutiny Manager Legal and Governance 0121 303 9844 amelia.wiltshire@birmingham.gov.uk
Authorised by:	Christian Scade, Head of Scrutiny and Committee Services Legal and Governance
Is this a Key Decision?	Not Applicable
If this is a Key Decision, is this decision listed on the Forward Plan?	Not Applicable
Reason(s) why not included on the Forward Plan:	Not Applicable
Is this a Late Report?	No
Reason(s) why Late:	Not Applicable
Is this decision eligible for 'call in?'	Not Applicable
If not eligible, please provide reason(s):	Not Applicable

Wards: All

Does this report contain exempt or confidential information? No

Has this decision been included on the Notification of Intention to consider Matters in Private? Not Applicable

Reasons why not included on the Notification: Not Applicable

1 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

1.1 This report sets out the key findings and recommendations from the Scrutiny Inquiry – Active Travel Schemes. The Inquiry considered the following question: "How can Birmingham deliver Active Travel schemes quicker and make city roads safer for all users?".

1.2 The Scrutiny Inquiry identified six themes from the evidence set out in Appendix A: Systems; Funding; Governance and Accountability; Resources; Design and Consultation and Information. Based on this evidence, the inquiry group has proposed 13 recommendations.

2 COMMISSIONERS' REVIEW

2.1 This section will be completed by the Commissioners and is mandatory for all reports.

3 RECOMMENDATIONS

That the Council:

3.1 Approve recommendations R01 to R13, set out in Appendix A, and request that the Executive pursue their implementation.

4 KEY INFORMATION

Context

4.1 Active Travel refers to modes of travel which involve a level of physical activity. The term is often used interchangeably with walking and cycling but active travel can also include trips made by wheelchair, mobility scooters and e-scooters. Longer journeys, especially those by public transport, will generally involve an element of active travel as part of them. Local Authorities can play an important role in increasing walking, wheeling and cycling. Through influencing planning and taking a wider, strategic view of travel infrastructure across their area, authorities can ensure that active travel infrastructure connects residents to services. It is important to note that Active Travel is about providing people with choices, not just delivering schemes. The [Birmingham Transport Plan](#) (BTP) sets out Birmingham's ambitions to deliver this.

4.2 The Council has been criticised for the design of, and time taken to deliver Active Travel schemes in comparison to neighbouring Local Authorities. Through this inquiry, its Inquiry group intended to understand if there are different and better ways for the Council to deliver Active Travel schemes and make recommendations to achieve this.

4.3 This Scrutiny Inquiry was established in July 2023 by the Sustainability and Transport Overview and Scrutiny Committee. Evidence gathering took place between August and October 2023. In total, the inquiry considered evidence from 12 separate organisations using a combination of face to face sessions, written

submissions and site visits. The report attached as Appendix A provides a summary of the evidence considered.

4.4 The Sustainability and Transport Overview and Scrutiny Committee will track the implementation of these recommendations and their impact through reports to the Committee.

IMPACT AND IMPLICATIONS

Finance

4.5 The Inquiry recommendations recognise the financial pressures the Council is facing and set out that the implementation of recommendations will be within existing resources and capacity available. There is no request for additional resource or capacity to implement the recommendations.

Legal

4.6 There are no legal implications arising from the recommendations in this report.

Equalities

4.7 The Council has a Public Sector Equality Duty under the Equality Act (2010) to have due regard to the need to:

- eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct that is prohibited by or under the Act;

- advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it;

- foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it.

4.8 There are no equalities implications directly arising from the recommendations in this report. Equality impact assessments will be undertaken in relation to specific recommendations as they are progressed, and as appropriate.

Procurement

4.9 Not Applicable

People Services

4.10 There are no staffing implications arising from the recommendations in this report.

Climate Change, Nature and Net Zero

4.11 Research indicates that increases in active travel mobility significantly lower carbon footprints. It leads to improvements in air quality

4.12 Environmental Sustainability Assessments will be undertaken in relation to specific recommendations as they are progressed, and as appropriate.

Corporate Parenting

4.13 There are no corporate parenting implications arising from the recommendations in this report.

Other

4.14 Research indicates that active travel can play an important role in improving physical health and poor mental health.

5 APPENDICES

5.1 Appendix A – Scrutiny Inquiry Report, Active Travel Schemes,9 July 2024

5.2 Appendix B – Executive Commentary

6 BACKGROUND PAPERS

6.1 [Active Travel Inquiry Pack, Sustainability and Transport Overview and Scrutiny Committee, 7 September 2023](#)

6.2 [Active Travel Local Authority Toolkit, last updated August 2022](#)