

# Birmingham City Council

## Report to Cabinet

21<sup>st</sup> January 2020



**Subject:** BIRMINGHAM WALKING AND CYCLING STRATEGY  
**Report of:** INTERIM DIRECTOR, INCLUSIVE GROWTH  
**Relevant Cabinet Member:** Councillor Ian Ward - Leader  
Councillor Waseem Zaffar – Transport and Environment  
Councillor Paulette Hamilton – Health and Social Care  
**Relevant O&S Chair(s):** Councillor Liz Clements – Sustainability and Transport  
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Are specific wards affected?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No – All wards affected
If yes, name(s) of ward(s):		
Is this a key decision?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
If relevant, add Forward Plan Reference: 006920/2019		
Is the decision eligible for call-in?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
Does the report contain confidential or exempt information?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
If relevant, provide exempt information paragraph number or reason if confidential :		

### 1 Executive Summary

- 1.1 To seek approval for the Birmingham Walking and Cycling Strategy and Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan.

### 2 Recommendations

- 2.1 That Cabinet approves the Birmingham Walking and Cycling Strategy (the Strategy) and Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan (the LCWIP).

### **3 Background**

- 3.1 The strategy sets out a long-term plan to ensure that active travel becomes the popular choice for short journeys and to increase the opportunities for recreational cycling and walking. It addresses the challenges of poor air quality, congestion, rising levels of obesity and overdependence on cars for short journeys. It builds on the success of Birmingham Cycle Revolution and major investment in city centre public spaces, to create a city-wide network of walking and cycling routes, high quality public spaces and 'liveable', low traffic neighbourhoods that support walking and cycling for short journeys. It is in line with Central Government's Cycling and Walking Investment Strategy and the Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan (LCWIP) Technical Guidance, both published in April 2017
- 3.2 The main aim of the strategy is to make walking and cycling the everyday choice for local journeys and leisure activities as part of a safe and integrated transport network for Birmingham. The strategy contains policies and actions – to be delivered by Birmingham City Council and various partners and monitored annually. It is closely aligned with other regional and local strategies.
- 3.3 The strategy offers extensive benefits from increased investment in infrastructure, and higher levels of walking and cycling. These range from individual benefits, in terms of physical and mental health, to wider community benefits in reducing social isolation, improving air quality (which is critical in improving health outcomes for the city), addressing the climate emergency and expanding travel choices. Walking and cycling, whether as transport or recreation, can also help to tackle problems of inactivity and obesity.
- 3.4 The LCWIP identifies opportunities to improve the existing network by making it easier, safer and better-connected so that more people will choose to walk and cycle, regardless of age, gender, fitness level or income.
- 3.5 Consultation feedback has helped to identify partner support, refine the policies and actions and develop clearer priorities for future infrastructure investment.

### **4 Options considered and Recommended Proposal**

- 4.1 Option 1 - Do nothing. This would result in a lack of strategic direction and vision for walking and cycling. It could lead to missed opportunities, for partnership working and potential investment, and delays in meeting cycling targets for the West Midlands Cycle Charter and Birmingham Council Plan 2018-2022 (2019 Update). It could also lead to increased costs in terms of congestion and public health (air pollution, inactivity and road traffic collisions).
- 4.2 Option 2 – Republish earlier strategy documents: Walking Strategy (2002) and Bike Strategy (2012). These need significant updates, particularly in light of progress made with the Birmingham Cycle Revolution, declaration of a climate emergency by Birmingham City Council and emerging plans for a Clean Air Zone, HS2 and the 2022 Commonwealth Games. The existing strategy documents lack plans for infrastructure and are inconsistent with the government's Walking and Cycling Investment Strategy and LCWIP Technical Guidance (2017).

#### 4.3 Recommended Proposal – Approve the Strategy and the LCWIP.

### 5 Consultation

- 5.1 Officers in Highways and Infrastructure, Transport and Connectivity, Planning and Development and Public Health were involved in the preparation of the draft strategy, and positive discussions held with a range of partners and stakeholders.
- 5.2 The draft strategy and LCWIP were available on the City Council's engagement website, BeHeard, between 20 June and 5 August 2019. 524 online survey responses were received from individuals and organisations, as well as 10 written responses from organisations. Overall, there was strong support for the strategy (87% of respondents thought that the Strategy's aims and objectives were just right, or were right but a few changes were needed). There was an excellent response to all the survey questions and a wide range of interesting and innovative suggestions for enabling, developing and inspiring walking and cycling in Birmingham. More information is provided in Appendix 3.
- 5.3 All ward councillors and local Members of Parliament were contacted but no specific responses were received, other than supportive comments from the Cabinet Member for Transport and Environment.

### 6 Risk Management

- 6.1 Key risks are:
- That the strategy will not have a clear vision or measurable actions. In order to mitigate this, the strategy has been developed in collaboration with internal and external partners. Following feedback from consultation and further discussions with partners, the key aim was revised, and a Strategy Action Plan has been added.
  - That there are insufficient staff and budgets to resource the delivery of the strategy and LCWIP. In order to help mitigate this, the Strategy Action Plan identifies lead partners and key actions and the LCWIP sets out priorities for investment. Early discussions have taken place with potential funders including the West Midlands Combined Authority, Highways England and HS2.
  - That competing demands for road space could impact on the ability to develop walking and cycling schemes in key locations.

### 7 Compliance Issues:

#### 7.1 How are the recommended decisions consistent with the City Council's priorities, plans and strategies?

- 7.1.1 The Strategy and the LCWIP are consistent with the City Council Plan 2018-2022 (2019 Update) and Financial Plan 2019 to 2023. They will support delivery of the primary goals of an entrepreneurial city, an aspirational city, a fulfilling city to age well in, a great city to live in, a city that maximises the

benefits from hosting the Commonwealth Games and a city that takes a lead in tackling climate change.

7.1.2 The Strategy and LCWIP will support the following specific priorities:

- Outcome 1, Priority 4: We will develop our transport infrastructure, keeping the city moving through walking, cycling and improved public transport
- Outcome 4, Priority 4: We will improve the environment and tackle air pollution
- Outcome 4, Priority 5: We will work with partners to ensure everyone feels safe in their daily lives
- Outcome 4, Priority 8: We will enhance our status as a city of culture, sports and events
- Outcome 5, Priority 2: We will encourage citizens of all abilities and ages to engage in physical activity and improve their health and wellbeing
- Outcome 6, Priority 2: We will continue to deliver, report and positively promote the Council's extensive climate change and carbon reduction activity, with additional initiatives undertaken in line with leading national and peer practice

## **7.2 Legal Implications**

7.2.1 Both documents are informal planning documents and will not have statutory status, so there are no formal legal requirements, although the consultation took place in accordance with the adopted Birmingham Statement of Community Involvement 2008 and the draft Statement of Community Involvement 2019.

7.2.2 The strategy and LCWIP are consistent with the National Planning Policy Framework and the Birmingham Development Plan, and the LCWIP follows technical guidance set out by the Department for Transport on Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plans.

## **7.3 Financial Implications**

7.3.1 The strategy and LCWIP were prepared using existing Inclusive Growth Directorate (Planning and Development, and Transport and Connectivity) staff resources.

7.3.2 Costs from undertaking the public consultation on the draft strategy were met from approved revenue budgets within Inclusive Growth Directorate (Planning and Development, and Transport and Connectivity)

7.3.3 The strategy includes a wide range of policies and an action plan with clear responsibilities for Birmingham City Council and partners. Some of the Birmingham City Council actions can continue to be undertaken from existing revenue resources. The success of the strategy will require additional revenue funding. Potential future revenue funding sources include Clean Air Zone income, Workplace Parking Levy income and developer funds. Any

additional actions arising from the action plan will only be undertaken where an approved budget exists to cover the required expenditure.

7.3.4 The LCWIP includes proposals for a city-wide network of cycle routes and key walking zones. Whilst most LCWIP proposals are currently unfunded, some Regional Priority Cycle Routes and Core Walking Zones will be able to draw down funding from the West Midlands Transforming Cities Fund. Some schemes may also be eligible for Highways England, HS2, Department for Transport and developer funding.

7.3.5 All future programmes/projects/schemes and any associated funding bids resulting from the approval of the strategy will be progressed in accordance with the Council's Procurement Governance Framework and Financial Approval Framework, which will include the identification of financial implications (both capital and revenue) and associated resources.

#### **7.4 Procurement Implications (if required)**

7.4.1 No implications.

#### **7.5 Human Resources Implications (if required)**

7.5.1 No implications

#### **7.6 Public Sector Equality Duty**

7.6.1 An Equality Analysis has been undertaken for the strategy and LCWIP and is attached in Appendix 2. The greatest impact is likely for the protected characteristics of age and disability. The strategy will help to improve training and education, access to bikes and infrastructure for these groups. Relevant organisations with an interest in equalities issues were included in the consultation and feedback was received from NHS Trusts, community and disability groups, which has helped to shape the final strategy.

### **8 Appendices**

8.1 List of Appendices accompanying this Report:

- Appendix 1 – Birmingham Walking and Cycling Strategy and Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan
- Appendix 2 – Equality Analysis
- Appendix 3 – Consultation and Engagement Report
- Appendix 4 – Risk Register

### **9 Background Documents**

9.1 Updated Transportation and Highways Capital Programme 2019/20 to 2024/25 Options Appraisal report to Cabinet dated 26 March 2019