Appendix 4 – The Council's early commitments: supplementary information

1. Transport

1.1 Reducing the impact of transport at the scale required by the climate emergency is a significant challenge. Surface transport is now the sector with the highest carbon impact in the UK and one of the few that have seen an increase in emissions in the last few years.

1.2 The largest share of emissions from surface transport comes from automobility which, aside from being a significant part of the economy, is deeply embedded in people's lives due to land use development patterns and cultural and status expectations.

1.3 Transport's carbon footprint in Birmingham follows the national trends and automobility has a strong history in the West Midlands. Four paths are proposed through which carbon emissions reductions from transport can be achieved in the short to medium term. These are:

- The proposed draft Birmingham Transport Plan (Appendix 5)
- Awareness campaigns targeting the highest polluting trips and users
- Exploring additional policy measures
- Leading by example

The draft Birmingham Transport Plan (BTP)

1.4 The BTP sets out four proposed big moves that will transform transport in the city until 2031 and beyond. The big moves are:

- Reallocating road space away from cars
- Transforming the city centre
- Prioritising active travel in local neighbourhoods
- Managing travel demand through parking measures

1.5 The ambition of the BTP has been supported by the Council's declaration of a climate emergency. The plan sets out a vision for a sustainable, green, inclusive, go-anywhere transport network. Therefore, adopting the BTP in the next 12 months will mean that Birmingham will have a clear blueprint that supports sustainable transport policies and measures until 2031 and beyond.

1.6 The BTP forms a basis on which a range of ambitious sustainable transport measures can be promoted and supported in the future, such as introducing a Workplace Parking Levy and transforming the A38 through the city centre.

1.7 Some of these were discussed with the public during the Taskforce transport workshop in December 2019 and include:

- Safer cycle parking in the city centre and near key destinations (hospitals, universities, etc.).
- Simple pricing system for public transport.
- Supporting electric car clubs
- Expansion of electric vehicle charging infrastructure
- Extend car-free school streets
- Further pedestrianisation across the city

1.8 Current financial resources and available staff are already dedicated to existing commitments, especially infrastructure delivery commitments ahead of the Commonwealth Games in 2022. In addition, the city itself is expected to undergo changes of unprecedented scale and pace in the next few years, causing sustained disruption for residents and requiring careful delivery planning to avoid significantly impacting existing trips. As such, further action is limited by the constrained means, time and space to deliver it. Any further commitment will require additional financial resources and staff capacity.

1.9 The BTP is out to public consultation from January to March 2020.

Awareness campaigns targeting the highest polluting trips and users

1.10 We acknowledge that transport accounts for a significant part of the carbon emissions and action cannot be postponed in the face of the climate crisis. As such, we recommend a series of actions that will target trips and users who have the biggest carbon footprint.

1.11 These actions are behavioural and policy measures for which implementation can begin in the next 12 months but are expected to deliver a long-term reduction in carbon emissions.

1.12 Responding to the climate emergency requires a dramatic change in people's consumption patterns and lifestyle choices. It is expected that many measures that are specifically targeting the climate emergency will require strong political backing as they may be initially considered controversial both in terms of public acceptance and additional accountability for the Council.

1.13 Targeted action is focused on two areas:

- Unsustainable travel practices
- Highest polluters

1.14 The action could initially involve information and awareness communications, which can form part of the communications materials of the wider R20 work or, if additional funding becomes available, a standalone campaign. Existing information streams, such as social media, can also be used. Information can also be provided in the form of blogposts or testimonials demonstrating positive climate action.

Unsustainable travel practices

1.15 These are especially related to car use[1] but also consumer choices such as next day/hour deliveries or deliveries carried out by small vans or cars. A campaign can also make citizens more conscious of their travel patterns.

1.16 We propose three primary focus areas:

- <u>Information about the impact of short trips by car:</u> 65% of trips are less than 5 miles. Messages could include: live locally, shop locally; 'the 2 mile challenge' where people are challenged to not drive if the distance travelled

[1] Although not directly within the Council's remit, this could also involve information about the detrimental impacts of flying.

is less than 2 miles; 'leave your car at home for a week challenge'. We are also planning to establish 'car free days' from 2020.

- Information about the impact of long trips by car: approximately 3% of trips account for 30% of surface miles travelled. Messages could promote 'staycations', i.e. travelling within UK for holiday by public transport; 'take a day trip by public transport'; campaigns similar to 'See Britain by rail'.
- Information about leisure trips by car: 51% of miles travelled by surface transport are for leisure purposes (if shopping is not included in leisure it is 40% of miles travelled). Messages could include: visit a friend by public transport etc.

Highest polluters

1.17 Although raising awareness is very important, it is also crucial to acknowledge that low-income groups are already low-carbon and locked into their travel choices (i.e. they have limited or no choice to switch to low(er) carbon alternatives). They are also the ones who will be most affected by impacts of global heating and the climate crisis.

1.18 Globally, the richest 10% of the population emits 50% of carbon emissions while the poorest 50% emits 10% of all carbon emissions. WMCA's Climate Action Plan 2041 published in January 2020 confirms these statistics for the region and highlights that emission reductions could be attributed to rising deprivation in certain areas.

1.19 Therefore, it is key for information campaigns to target the highest polluters and those whose lifestyle choices are the most damaging to the planet. In the context of the city, the highest polluters would be primarily owners of multiple cars and especially SUVs, as well as old and vintage cars[2]. Messages could include: comparing the carbon footprint of 'typical' families.

Exploring additional policy measures

1.20 Policy measures can be a further step in the Council's efforts to identify and target the most polluting travel patterns and road users. During and beyond the next 12 months the Council could investigate the implementation of the following policy measures:

- We could get a better understanding of the operation of ride-hailing companies such as Uber and Ola in the city. Many of the vehicles operating in the city are not registered with Birmingham. In collaboration with Transport for West Midlands (TfWM) and the Department for Transport (DfT) we could investigate limits to the operations of such companies including: idling while waiting to be called, special emissions standards, or not allowing vehicles registered with another authority to both start and finish trips within Birmingham. Such policy measures would require coordinated action nationally and regionally as they have proven difficult to implement in other cities.

[2] As the UK leaves the EU it will copy EU's new carbon emission standards (< 95g of CO_2 per km) and, as a result, carmakers are expected to withdraw some highly polluting large vehicles from the UK market. The rise of SUVs in the UK was previously 'offset' by other countries' preference for smaller vehicles but under UK-only standards this will no longer be possible. As such, adopting a strong stance towards SUVs may seem controversial at first but is expected to become widely acceptable in the medium term.

- Investigate the practicalities of creating a carbon fund which developers would contribute to. Contributions would be used to fund measures specifically targeted towards addressing the climate emergency.
- Introduce carbon monitoring and evaluation of transport interventions. Assess future policies and projects based on their forecast carbon emissions reduction impact.
- Investigate if the CAZ can be converted to a clean air and low carbon zone. It is unclear whether we have the power to do this but it could be investigated with the DfT. Currently, the CAZ restrictions are based on Euro vehicle standards which do not include carbon emissions. Therefore, the CAZ is indirectly supporting the climate emergency as newer cars tend to be cleaner and it is expected to lead to a modal shift for trips to the city centre but it is not directly targeting the climate emergency.

The Council to lead by example

1.21 The Council can become a leader in adopting and supporting low-carbon transport practices. For example:

- Internal information campaigns about the climate emergency to raise awareness among staff.
- Cut business mileage. For example, Salford City Council has cut grey fleet mileage by 95% and saved £400,000 and at least 478 tonnes of carbon emissions since introducing a green travel plan. Under the Green Wheels initiative, rather than Council staff using their own vehicles and claiming back business mileage costs, a pool of Co-wheels car club vehicles has been made available.
- Ensure that delivery and collection of goods is consolidated and carried out by environmentally friendly vehicles.
- Ensure that staff minimise car commuting to the absolute minimum. This can include revising parking permits for council staff.
- Adopt a minimum flying policy for domestic and international travel or substitute flights when travelling by train takes fewer than a certain number of hours (for example, that can be reached within fewer than 8 hours by train include: Paris, Brussels, Amsterdam, Frankfurt, Marseille, Lyon, Zurich, Dublin as well as all major cities within Great Britain). It is acknowledged that at the moment rail travel can be much more expensive than air travel so such a policy would need to be assessed on the basis of staff hourly rates, time, and cost to the public.
- No first/business class rail/air travel. First and business class areas take more space than regular seats thereby increasing the individual carbon footprint of passengers.

2. Green and Blue Infrastructure

Improve information and data on webpages

2.1 Making our information as accessible as possible (where this is not ecologically or commercially sensitive).

Nature Recovery Network/Natural Capital Mapping

2.2 Being able to identify those areas of the city that are biologically diverse and/or offer high levels of ecosystem services will enable better strategic decisions to be taken to ensure that these benefits are not compromised by inappropriate

development. Whilst identifying those areas of lower biodiversity or ecosystem services delivery could, through the planning process, make gains either through development or allocation of S106/CIL funding for improvement works.

Urban Forest Management Policy – update technical note

2.3 To be completed as per the 2018 tree policy review recommendations, this will ensure that there are clear expectations for the sustainable management and ambitions targets for the expansion of the urban forest ensuring that we have a resilient resource fit to deal with the pressures of predicted climate trends and emerging pests and diseases whilst delivering essential ecosystem services.

Biochar investigation

2.4 Biochar is a stable carbon rich product created through the pyrolytic conversion of timber. Used in landscaping, agriculture and horticulture it can lock carbon in to the soil and at the same time increases the water retention properties, nutrient take up, mycorrhizal activity and resilience of plants growing with this medium. This would be an investigation into production and use within the city particularly within tree planting activities.

Support other service areas

2.5 Support other service areas in their delivery of R20 where this has an impact on green and blue infrastructure or benefits can be jointly delivered – particularly around transport and housing. Many sections of the council will be delivering projects that could directly benefit the city's R20 aspirations. By our internal environmental professionals providing suitable advice and guidance multiple long term benefits could be delivered for green and blue infrastructure.

Deliver training/awareness sessions

2.6 Climate change adaptation and mitigation is complex as are the requirements for our native biodiversity. Providing training/awareness sessions for internal planning teams and other departments on broad green and blue infrastructure, biodiversity, and sustainability topics will allow those colleagues to gain a clearer understanding of this sphere of work which will help guide them when considering development and /or appropriate management of sites to deliver long term benefits.

Collaborate with partners

2.7 Work with partners to secure funding and deliver projects that contribute to overall R20 aims such as:

- Sky Park – New public realm on the elevated, disused section of viaduct running through Digbeth.
- River Rea through Southside – Breaking out the River Rea through the Southside development area offers a huge opportunity to deliver increased flood resilience to a significant sector of the city along with biodiversity gains.

3. Energy

Commence the Heat Decarbonisation Delivery Plan

3.1 In 2019 Birmingham was one of five cities selected to work with the Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy (BEIS) to develop a bespoke city-level Heat Decarbonisation Delivery Plan.

3.2 The first phase is being undertaken from January 2020 to June 2020. The purpose of this phase is to identify key opportunities for Birmingham to decarbonise heat for domestic dwellings and commercial properties. Interventions are anticipated to include discreet energy and transport related projects, city-wide policy measures and behaviour change at the individual and institutional/corporate levels, as well as wider regional/cross-local authority interventions.

3.3 The next phase (from June 2020) will flesh out potential opportunities, providing the assessment of funding sources, and timelines. This will happen alongside an agenda for action that clarifies the 'asks' from Government to assure the achievement of net zero carbon timelines for heat decarbonisation in terms of necessary and time critical regulatory change, funding incentives, national and local schemes for smart energy use and energy efficiencies.

3.4 This will maximise Government action to impact on carbon emission reductions and will also clarify the scale of the role of the Council and other local authorities in reducing emissions within net zero timelines. Critically, it will also identify what 'energy' is within scope for the Council in order to maximise carbon emissions reductions.

3.5 A first step will be to focus on the Council's own housing stock and ongoing and future housing development plans to provide a leadership role as the UK's second city but also to engage with and encourage behaviour change with private landlords and householders.

The Council's Energy Strategy

3.6 Completion of an outline Energy Strategy for the Council - identifying 'energy' that is in scope for the Council to gain net zero impact from and get agreement on what is possible within the timescale and align with the recommendations of the Taskforce.

Procurement review of energy supply

3.7 Work is currently being undertaken with procurement colleagues to review scheduled contract renewals of energy supply to Council buildings to specify the supply of renewable energy only.

Develop a renewable energy electric charge point network

3.8 Work to develop a renewable energy electric charge point network in the city is due to start in early 2020. This will see 197 charge points installing within the first two years and a further 197 charge points installed across the city, enabling the transition from fossil fuel vehicles to zero emission electric vehicles.

3.9 This is key, given the complexities of the legal framework, to enable a city-scale charge point network deployment on the highway, public car parks, and on

public land and will have a great level of impact on reducing carbon emissions at scale.

4. Housing

Initiate a Passivhaus (zero carbon house) pilot

4.1 One of the key early commitments for housing is to pilot Passivhaus (zero carbon houses) across the city and work on this is expected to develop at pace in 2020. The initial focus will be on identifying potential viable sites, conducting site visits elsewhere in the country to learn from good practice, and developing a detailed specification for the pilot.

4.2 A workshop will be convened on Passivhaus development principles and delivery to support this planned pilot and engage with existing examples of delivery locally.

Deliver a zero carbon retrofit conference

4.3 A conference on zero carbon retrofit will be planned to share good practice and consider how to make retrofit of existing homes a 'bite size' and manageable proposition for property owners. This will include discussion of possible financing models to fund investment.

5. Planning

5.1 ***Review and strengthen planning conditions relating to green and blue infrastructure***

- Green/biodiverse roofs
- Green walls
- Sustainable Urban Drainage – Bioswales, Natural SUDS
- Biodiversity net gain
- Tree planting – canopy cover, planting pit design, species selection
- Tree conditions
- Landscape
- Offsetting/ payments – Biodiversity and Trees

5.2 Ensuring that our planning conditions are robust and fit for purpose will ensure the delivery of the required green and blue infrastructure. Strong conditions will also enable enforcement where these have not been actioned.

Review the design guide

5.3 Review, strengthen and expand design guide information relating to green and blue infrastructure and links to low carbon, sustainability, and biodiversity. The design guide will act as a Supplementary Planning Document and be used alongside the Birmingham Development Plan and the Design Management-Design Policy Document.

5.4 This design guide will set out our expected standards clearly with a number of reference documents providing more in depth information that will help guide prospective developers during their design process.

Commence a review of the Big City Plan

5.5 The Big City Plan was published in 2010 and is due for revision. Work will commence on its revision. This will incorporate the new thinking around climate change and the infrastructure required to move the city to its net zero carbon target.

6. Procurement and Contract Management

6.1 The Council is currently reviewing its procurement and contract management approach and to assist with moving the city towards the 2030 ambition the following areas of focus will be included:

- Exploring how the 2030 ambition can be achieved within new contract requirements
- Reviewing existing contracts to understand providers' plans to reduce emissions and determine how a carbon neutral approach can be achieved
- Understanding the financial impact of achieving a carbon neutral approach and factoring this into decision making processes
- Reviewing existing contract management arrangements to include KPIs required for performance reporting