

Birmingham City Council

Report to Cabinet

12 October 2021



Subject: Birmingham Transport Plan
Report of: Acting Director, Inclusive Growth
Relevant Cabinet Members: Councillor Waseem Zaffar – Transport and Environment
Relevant O & S Chairs: Councillor Liz Clements – Sustainability and Transport
Report author: Phillip Edwards, Assistant Director – Transport and Connectivity
Tel: 07557 203167 Email: philip.edwards@birmingham.gov.uk

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: 008947/2021		
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: Not applicable		

1 Executive Summary

- 1.1 The Birmingham Transport Plan (BTP) sets out the vision and principles for transport investment in the period to 2031. In early 2020, public consultation on the Draft BTP was held and this document summarises the feedback received. This feedback has informed the final version of the plan which seeks adoption at this Cabinet meeting.
- 1.2 The BTP sets our principles that aim to support the city on its journey to tackle climate emergency, reduce transport's damaging impact on the environment and the people's health whilst making the most of opportunities to support the economic growth and development of the city. The measures outlined in the BTP aim to serve a future Birmingham that is home to more people, and that is a better environment in which to live and work for everyone, irrespective of age, disability or income.

2 Recommendations

- 2.1 Adopts the Birmingham Transport Plan, as shown in Appendix A, as Birmingham's vision and principles for transport investment in the period to 2031.
- 2.2 Notes that following adoption of the BTP, the Birmingham Transport Plan Delivery Plan, which is currently being developed, will be published as a live document. The Delivery Plan will be updated periodically, as necessary, in line with changes to local and regional policies.

3 Background

- 3.1 In line with the Birmingham Development Plan 2031 (adopted) 2017, the latest reinvention of Birmingham is progressing at a remarkable rate. Continued national and international confidence in the future of the city means that the level of inward investment is both unprecedented and unabated. It is being put to good use - delivering tens of thousands of new jobs and new homes, creating new urban environments fit for modern life.
- 3.2 Good transport is an essential ingredient in Birmingham's future success. Transport is much more than a means of getting us to where we want to go each day. It also has the potential to open up new opportunities in every aspect of our lives. To unlock the transformational potential of transport, we need to fundamentally change the way people and goods move around the city. Without change in our approach these opportunities and benefits will be constrained by poor air quality in our city, a lack of transport capacity and further adverse social and environmental impacts.
- 3.3 We know that our over-dependence on private motor cars is bad for the health of ourselves and our families, bad for our communities and bad for business, and bad for the future in terms of transport's contribution to carbon emissions, which accelerate the climate emergency. Investment in our transport system and implementation of schemes that prioritise people over cars, will help develop a cleaner, greener, healthier and more sustainable environment to deliver the health and wellbeing benefits for the people of Birmingham and allow Birmingham to continue to grow and prosper.
- 3.4 The declaration of a climate emergency and the introduction of Birmingham's Clean Air Zone is a signal of our intention and an important first step towards establishing a net zero emissions city for the benefit of our citizens, particularly children, whilst standing toe to toe with investment competitors nationally and internationally.
- 3.5 The Birmingham Transport Plan 2031 builds on the aspirations set out in the Birmingham Connected White Paper (2014) and outlines what Birmingham needs to do differently to achieve its strategic vision:

"The vision for Birmingham's transport is for a sustainable, green and inclusive, go-anywhere network.

Safe and healthy environments will make active travel – walking and cycling – the first choice for people making short journeys.

A fully integrated, high quality public transport system will be the go-to choice for longer trips.

A smart, innovative, carbon neutral and low emission network will support sustainable and inclusive economic growth, tackle the climate emergency and promote the health and well-being of Birmingham's citizens".

- 3.6 The Birmingham Transport Plan is clearly aligned with the City Council's Route to Zero, which aims to address the climate emergency and deliver the City Council's decarbonisation target to become net zero carbon by 2030, or as soon as possible thereafter as a 'just transition' allows, while ensuring we reduce inequalities in the city and bring our communities with us.
- 3.7 To achieve the vision and secure the benefits that the vision will deliver, four principles were developed for consultation:
- The allocation of road space will change away from single occupancy private cars to support the delivery of a public transport system fit for a global city, fundamentally changing the way that people and goods move around the city.
 - The city centre of Birmingham will be transformed through the creation of a network of pedestrian streets and public spaces integrated with public transport services and cycling infrastructure. Access to the city centre for private cars will be limited with no through trips. This includes looking at different options for the central section of the A38 including re-routing it to an upgraded ring road.
 - Active travel – walking and cycling – will become how most people get around their locality most of the time. Cars will no longer dominate street life around homes and schools. A limit of 20mph will be standard on all local roads. Residential neighbourhoods and local centres will be places where people are put first.
 - Parking will be used as a means to manage demand for travel by car through availability, pricing and restrictions. Where development potential exists, land currently occupied by car parking will be put to more productive use.

Emergency Birmingham Transport Plan

- 3.8 In early 2020 towards the end of the draft BTP consultation period, the country was placed in lockdown to reduce the spread of COVID-19. As a result, travel patterns were transformed overnight with traffic down to a third of usual levels and public transport services focused only on getting key workers to their workplaces while maintaining social distancing. Schools closed for all but a few pupils and thousands of employees took up working from home, meaning the school run and the commute to work was significantly reduced. In response, work on the main Birmingham Transport Plan was paused and the Emergency Birmingham Transport Plan (EBTP) was created to respond to immediate priorities and make best use of available funding.

- 3.9 On 9th May 2020, the Secretary of State for Transport announced a £2 billion package to support active travel to help the country emerge from the coronavirus crisis, of which £250 million was for swift, emergency interventions to make cycling and walking safer under the Emergency Active Travel Fund. On 11th May 2020, the Government published a national COVID-19 recovery strategy, setting out the conditions for easing lockdown and the steps that would be taken in England to enable more activities to take place whilst continuing to control the spread of COVID-19.
- 3.10 The EBTP, published on 14th May 2020, sets out the short, medium and longer-term actions Birmingham should take to enable a low carbon, clean air recovery from COVID-19 and is clear that measures should be consistent with existing draft and adopted policy (including the Local Walking and Cycling Strategy and Infrastructure Plan) and continue to address the challenges and opportunities already identified, in particular the climate emergency and addressing poor air quality.
- 3.11 As the country moves away from high levels of restrictions on everyday life, it is important that we now adopt and deliver the BTP which now incorporates the COVID-19 green recovery actions within the EBTP.

Public Consultation

- 3.12 The draft BTP consultation was structured around the four Principles identified in the document:
- Reallocating road space;
 - Transforming the city centre;
 - Prioritising active travel in local neighbourhoods;
 - Managing demand through parking measures.
- 3.13 The consultation sought to ascertain levels of support for the City Council's vision particularly, the four Principles. Respondents were asked to prioritise the key delivery components identified against each Principle and encouraged to input ideas and contributions for future delivery and implementation.
- 3.14 Consultation was launched on Monday 13th January 2020, with responses invited between 28th January and 9th April 2020 (extended from the original closing date of 31st March).
- 3.15 The consultation was hosted on the Birmingham Be Heard website. All publicity materials directed people to the main City Council website where details of the Plan could be viewed, with users directed to Be Heard to respond.
- 3.16 For citizens without internet access, copies of the draft Birmingham Transport Plan and a paper questionnaire could be accessed in the Library of Birmingham or by contacting officers working on the consultation.
- 3.17 Key stakeholders were identified and targeted through appropriate communication channels as well as live events, which were held during the consultation period. Information from respondents was gathered at these events, but all attendees were

strongly encouraged to also submit a written response. Details of the stakeholders and the events held are listed in Appendix B.

- 3.18 A presentation to the Access Birmingham group (representatives from disability organisations) on Tuesday 16th March was cancelled due to concerns about COVID-19 and the group's chair circulated details of the Birmingham Transport Plan and asked members to respond directly to the consultation.
- 3.19 The consultation attracted 619 responses from individuals and responses from 44 organisations. Of the 44 organisations, 28 responses were submitted via Be Heard and thus could be included in the quantitative analysis of closed questions. The other responses were submitted via email and are included in the free text analysis only.
- 3.20 Support for the BTP's vision was good, with 48% (309 respondents) saying they strongly agree with it, and 76% (489 respondents) giving a response which was towards the 'agree' end of the scale.
- 3.21 Support for the vision was stronger from organisations than individuals, with only 4% (1 organisation) giving a response which was towards the 'disagree' end of the scale; compared with 25% (154 people) of individuals.
- 3.22 Support for the first Principle, 'Reallocating road space' was generally good, with 43% (277 respondents) saying they strongly agree, and 67% (435 respondents) giving a response which was towards the 'agree' end of the scale.
- 3.23 The most popular delivery components for this Principle are: segregated cycle routes and an extended Metro network. Specific issues raised around the reallocating road space Principle include:
- Cycling facilities
 - Public transport (particularly buses)
 - Regional Transport Control Centre
 - Alternative modes of transport/new technologies
 - Equality impacts
 - Freight and logistics
- 3.24 Support for the second Principle, 'Transforming the city centre' was generally good, with 38% (247 respondents) saying they strongly agree, and 66% (429 respondents) giving a response which was towards the 'agree' end of the scale.
- 3.25 The most popular delivery components for this Principle are cycling and walking infrastructure, cross city buses and considering different options for the A38. Specific issues raised around the transforming the city centre Principle include:
- Public transport (particularly buses)
 - The need to accept cars/car use
 - Displacement of traffic
 - City centre cells
 - Walking and cycling
 - Rail stations

- Impact on business

3.26 Support for the third Principle, 'Reallocating road space' was good, with 44% (284 respondents) saying they strongly agree, and 72% (465 respondents) giving a response which was towards the 'agree' end of the scale.

3.27 The most popular delivery components for this Principle are: 20mph speed limits, and School Streets measures to support safe active travel. Specific issues raised around the active travel in local neighbourhoods Principle include:

- Speed limits/enforcement
- Walking/walking facilities/public realm
- Cycling/cycling facilities
- Schools
- 20mph streets

3.28 Support for the final Principle, 'Managing demand through parking measures' was generally good, with 35% (227 respondents) saying they strongly agree, and 62% (399 respondents) giving a response which was towards the 'agree' end of the scale.

3.29 The most popular delivery components for this Principle was park and ride at suitable locations. Specific issues raised around the managing demand through parking measures Principle include:

- Improve public transport
- Impact on business
- Fees/tariffs/permits
- Park & Ride
- Workplace Parking Levy
- Supplementary Planning Document

3.30 Other comments made, not specifically relating to the Principles were on similar topics to those raised within the Principles, including:

- Improving public transport
- Impact on business
- Health/air quality
- Technology
- More information (requesting detail of the delivery plan)

3.31 Full details of the responses received are available within Appendix B.

Updates to Final Birmingham Transport Plan

3.32 The BTP has been revised to reflect feedback received at consultation and lessons learnt in the last 18 months

3.33 The 'context' and 'challenges and opportunities' sections have been updated to include COVID-19 and changes to travel patterns.

3.34 The Vision stated in the BTP remains the same, however, the Principles included in the Plan have been updated to reflect new developments in the city, insights

resulting from changes in travel patterns during the COVID-19 lockdowns, and from the implementation of measures as part of the Emergency Active Travel Fund and Active Travel Fund. More specifically, the 'Reallocating road space' Principle was updated to reflect the need for a significant reduction in vehicle kilometres travelled in order to meet the city's decarbonisation target.

- 3.35 The 'Transforming the City Centre' Principle has been updated to reflect the progress made as part of the Emergency Active Travel Fund and Active Travel Fund interventions, such as the progress on the city centre segments scheme.
- 3.36 The 'Prioritising active travel in local neighbourhoods' Principle has been amended to incorporate the findings from the implementation of schemes such as Places for People, and the changes observed during the COVID-19 lockdowns.
- 3.37 Finally, the fourth Principle, 'Managing demand through parking measures' has been updated to include further insights into the actions required to decarbonise transport in the city.
- 3.38 Across all Principles, the emphasis on the role of goods movements has been emphasised to reflect the key role freight plays in delivering the Plan.
- 3.39 The BTP Delivery Plan is currently under development. While the BTP provides the vision and guiding principles, the Delivery Plan will provide the detailed interventions required to deliver the vision, including infrastructure, policy and travel behaviour measures required. In addition, the Delivery Plan will align with the regional priorities set by WMCA. The BTP has been updated to reflect the role that the Delivery Plan will play as a complementary document. All schemes taken forward from within the Delivery Plan will follow appropriate governance procedures for the organisations involved (including Birmingham City Council).

4 Options Considered and Recommended Proposal

- 4.1 **Option 1 - Do Nothing.** Should the City Council decide not to adopt the Birmingham Transport Plan, it would result in a lack of strategic direction and vision for transport in the city making Birmingham unattractive and unhealthy, which in turn could be a barrier to future growth, missed opportunities and delays in meeting targets for the Birmingham Council Plan 2018-2022. It would also limit Birmingham in meeting its Route to Zero carbon neutral target which aims to tackle the climate emergency and contribute to addressing poor air quality in the city for the health of Birmingham citizens.
- 4.2 **Option 2 - Retain Existing Strategy Document: Birmingham Connected White Paper (2014).** This Strategy needs significant updates, particularly in light of the declaration of a climate emergency and poor air quality in the city. Since the publication of Birmingham Connected, significant progress has been made with major changes in the city such as a Clean Air Zone and HS2 and hosting of the 2022 Commonwealth Games.
- 4.3 **Option 3 - Adopt the Birmingham Transport Plan.** This is the preferred option which will provide the city with a clear strategic direction and vision for transport in

the period up to 2031 and will enable the City Council to meet its targets for the Birmingham Council Plan 2018-2022. It would also assist Birmingham in meeting its Route to Zero carbon neutral target which aims to tackle the climate emergency and contribute to addressing poor air quality in the city for the health of Birmingham citizens.

5 Consultation

- 5.1 A full public consultation has been undertaken on the draft BTP as detailed in paragraphs 3.11 to 3.30 and within Appendix B.

6 Risk Management

- 6.1 A Risk Register is attached at Appendix C.

7 Compliance Issues

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

7.1.1 The Birmingham Transport Plan performs an essential role in supporting a range of programmes and projects that contribute towards achieving the City Council's key policies and priorities as set out in the City Council Plan and Budget 2021-25, West Midlands Strategic Transport Plan, Birmingham Development Plan, Birmingham Connected transport strategy, Local Walking and Cycling Strategy and Infrastructure Plan, Clean Air/Climate Emergency including Route to Zero, and Commonwealth Games agendas.

7.1.2 In the context of inclusive economic growth, the Birmingham Transport Plan has a strong focus on supporting the City Council's core mission to be a '*city of growth where every child, citizen and place matters*'. In addition, the plan seeks to make a significant contribution towards the key priorities of children, jobs and skills, housing and health by reducing congestion, enabling growth, improving road safety, improving accessibility, improving air quality, encouraging active and sustainable modes of travel, and tackling the climate emergency. The Birmingham Transport Plan is key to supporting the delivery of Inclusive Growth priorities including Route to Zero, East Birmingham Strategy and Our Future City Plan.

7.2 Legal Implications

7.2.1 As the Birmingham Transport Plan is an informal transport planning document and will not have statutory status, there are no formal legal requirements in relation to consultation, but the preparation of the documents and its consultation is in accordance with the adopted Birmingham Statement of Community Involvement 2008 and the draft Statement of Community Involvement 2019.

7.2.2 Under Section 13 of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2014 the Council must keep under review the matters which may be expected to

affect the development of their area including the communications, transport system and traffic of the area and any other considerations which may be expected to affect those matters.

- 7.2.3 The principles of the Birmingham Transport Plan will be taken forward in the Birmingham Development Plan review, which is currently underway. Whilst the Birmingham Development Plan is subject to its own consultation, when it is adopted it will give statutory weight to the implementation of the Birmingham Transport Plan policies.

7.3 Financial Implications

- 7.3.1 The purpose of the report is to adopt the Birmingham Transport Plan following public consultation. The Plan sets out the vision and principles for transport investment up to 2031. There are no direct financial implications as a result of this report, however, individual schemes will be subject to separate reports and approval including specific financial implications.
- 7.3.2 The Birmingham Transport Plan Delivery Plan is currently being developed at an estimated cost of £0.300m. This is funded from the Birmingham Transport Plan Infrastructure budget within the Transport and Highway Capital Programme approved by Cabinet in February 2021.

7.4 Procurement Implications

- 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 (EA) has been undertaken for the Plan and is attached in Appendix D. Relevant organisations with an interest in equality issues were included in the consultation of the draft plan.
- 7.6.2 It is acknowledged that some groups have different travel needs and there may be a correlation between certain protected characteristics and potential impact from the proposals in the plan. The principle is that the more comprehensive, accessible and integrated the transport network is, the more likely it is to cater to the needs of a broad range of groups and so the overall impact is likely to be positive.

8 Appendices

List of Appendices accompanying this report:

Appendix A – Birmingham Transport Plan

Appendix B – Draft Birmingham Transport Plan Consultation Report June 2021

Appendix C – Risk Register

Appendix D – EA Screening

9 Background Documents

Birmingham Connected White Paper (2014)

Draft Birmingham Transport Plan (2020)

Emergency Birmingham Transport Plan (2020)