

**Report of: Chief Officer, Highways and Transportation**

**Report to: Outer East Community Committee**

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**Date: 7 March 2023**

**For decision and to note**

## **TRANSPORT STRATEGY INVESTMENT PLANS LOCAL UPDATE**

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### **Purpose of report**

1. To present a proposal for the development of community committee area focused action plans that draw together key funding proposals for new local area transport investment.
2. An introduction to a new Leeds Healthier Streets, Spaces and Communities project for local sustainable mobility and the plans for a roll out to community committee areas.

### **Main issues**

3. This report and presentation complements briefings on other aspects of the highways and transportation service by providing an update on funding and changes to the project pipeline for transport strategy focused schemes at the local level.
4. Resources for the delivery of the Connecting Leeds Transport Strategy are received from multiple funding streams for new transport capital investment which complement resources it provides and receives highways for maintenance and traffic management. The main sources of funding for sustainable local area transport are received through the West Yorkshire Combined Authority through the government's City Regions Sustainable Transport Settlement (CRSTS) and Active Travel England.
5. The key resources of relevance to local input and the decision-making process are as follows: -
  - a. CRSTS programmes 2022/2027: -
    - i. Better Places: Leeds Healthier Streets, Spaces and Communities. This is a new project for improving sustainability, mobility, and access to local services.

- ii. Safer Roads: Provides resource for the Vision Zero strategy deliver for road casualty reduction and safer movement and mobility.
    - iii. Other programmes including Asset Management, Network Management and Transformational Projects will complement more locally specific schemes.
  - b. Active Travel Fund – the national resource to support sustainable travel networks through implementation of Local Cycling and Walking Investment Plans (LCWIP).
  - c. Other funding from the Council, developers, and national resources such as Levelling Up and Towns Funds could also provide discrete locally specific schemes.
6. As Members know, all the highways capital funding the Council provides or receives is detailed annually in the capital programme. Subsequently, as work progresses Members are consulted on schemes affecting their wards, such as highway maintenance, traffic management and larger strategic schemes. The transport strategy covers this investment strategically, but there is no local funding plan as it applies specifically to local community areas and wards. This is becoming more relevant for new projects such as the CRSTS funded Better Places programme.
7. In the light of the changing funding and strategy landscape, options for identifying a better approach for sharing programmes and enabling greater engagement in targeting the transport strategy and funding with a focus on local issues and priorities. Accordingly, a proposal (described in the presentation) is being considered for the development of individual Local Area Transport Plans for each community committee area, with the purpose of: -
- a. Providing one plan at the local level that sets out local aims and proposals.
  - b. Encouraging more purposeful engagement and dialogue.
  - c. Enabling transparency and alignment to Connecting Leeds strategy and resources.
8. The proposed Local Area Transport Plans will be simple “informal” documents that set out key ambitions for mobility and transport investment for the wards in the community committee area. The documents will reflect the city ambitions aligned with the Big Moves priorities in the Connecting Leeds Transport Strategy prepared with due regard to the Council’s obligations to the Combined Authority, the Department for Transport, and other key partners.
9. The plans will be prepared in consultation with committee members by Highways and Transportation officers in conjunction with the locality teams. In addition, it would be the intention to use the Connecting Leeds web-based Common Place suite for public and stakeholder consultation, as used for previous strategy consultations and on an ongoing basis for new major projects.
10. It is envisaged that once completed the plans will be updated and reviewed periodically as local, city or city region resources and plans change. In order to match staff resources to plan development it is proposed to bring forward to area committees in groups of three

or four thereby allowing reporting to be spread over three quarters to potentially complete the first round by December 2023 with completion of subsequent rounds of sign-offs for Local Area Transport Plans during 2024.

11. In the meantime, while the plans are prepared, established projects and programmes will continue to progress as discussions on the local area transport plans take shape. It is appreciated, however, that some of the CRSTS funded projects are new and without consultation precedent, one of which is Better Places: *Leeds Healthier Streets, Spaces and Communities*.
12. Leeds Healthier Streets, Spaces and Communities aims to strengthen neighbourhood connectivity opportunities for making shorter journeys more sustainably and healthily. The aim is to embed the *twenty-minute neighbourhood* concept in city planning to help people to meet their day-to-day needs within twenty minutes journey from home by access to better places for walking, wheeling, and cycling; and linking into public transport.
13. The early development and scoping of the project has commenced to identify potential sites and priorities using the settlements listing in the Local Development Framework, with an initial focus on the larger towns and centres. Funding will run to March 2027 and, to expedite progress and learning, it is proposed to select two or three “pilot” locations which build on existing transport investments with a good fit to the project. It is also intended that these early schemes will be exemplars to build a strong case for Combined Authority funding to continue rolling out twenty-minute neighborhood transport schemes citywide.
14. As regards Community Committees, therefore, the timetable for reporting will be aligned to the areas likely to have the best fit for hosting a successful “pilot” scheme. This approach will prepare for the evolution of the project to more locations as local area plans are developed and area committees are fully briefed.
15. In terms of the Outer East Leeds area the completion of the East Leeds Orbital Road and planned national investment in the East Leeds railway provide good examples of complementary match funding. Cross Gates is set to benefit from funding to rethink the former A6120 route and will also ultimately benefit from the rail investment, as will Garforth, which makes both locations potential candidates for “pilot” scheme short listing. Kippax may be less suited as a pilot scheme but remains a location of interest.

## **Recommendations**

16. Members are requested to:
  - a. Note and comment on the content of this report and the presentation.
  - b. Endorse the proposals for the development of Area Local Transport Plans.
  - c. Note and comment on potential priorities for local schemes in the *Leeds Healthier Streets, Spaces and Communities* project.

## **Background information**

- Appendix 1 - Briefing note, Better Places: Leeds Healthier Streets, Spaces and Communities