

**Report of Director of City Development**

**Report to Executive Board**

**Date: 21<sup>st</sup> October 2015**

**Subject: Our Transport Vision for a 21<sup>st</sup> Century Leeds**

Are specific electoral Wards affected? If relevant, name(s) of Ward(s): All	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
Are there implications for equality and diversity and cohesion and integration?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
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

**Summary of main issues**

1. This report provides our transport vision for Leeds as a 21<sup>st</sup> century city, building on the vision for the city centre which has emerged from the two city centre conferences held in 2008 and 2010, and the first Leeds Transport Symposium last year.
2. The economic geography of the UK is changing with the growth of knowledge intensive employment sectors, such as financial and professional services. City centres are evolving as critical centres for people to interact, exchange knowledge and drive commerce. With this infrastructure is high on the government's agenda, technology advances are happening and devolution is a real possibility. Transport is a fundamental component of what makes a prosperous and liveable city. Our vision is for Leeds to be a compassionate, caring city with a transport system that helps all our residents benefit from the city's economic growth. Getting our transport system right is a critical element of achieving the Council's Best City ambition.
3. Leeds provides a strong historical illustration of how major investment in transport infrastructure has resulted in transformational economic growth - from the Leeds Liverpool Canal, to the Victorians who cemented the city's position on the railway network, to our emergence as a 'motorway city' in the 1970s. Another defining moment is fast approaching. Leeds is following the global trend towards highly skilled jobs clustering in a compact environment. There is an opportunity to nurture this economic growth through a transport system that can move more people to a denser and more productive city centre. We need to invest now in a transport infrastructure fit for a 21<sup>st</sup> century city if we are to harness the increasing opportunities provided for by devolution and maximise the benefits of HS2 and Trans North (the proposed fast East-West network between Leeds and Manchester and across the north).
4. Transport investment from the 1970's has created a legacy where traffic dominates parts of our city, with roads engineered for capacity rather than streets that cater for

people. Changing our highway infrastructure to create a more people friendly city centre will be challenging and take major capital funding. Creating a more people friendly, productive and accessible city centre will also require transformational change in the way we travel into and around the city centre.

5. Work is already underway to reduce the impact of traffic across the city. The West Yorkshire +Transport Fund City Centre Package will enable the creation of a world class gateway through the closure of City Square to general traffic by 2021. Alongside this we want to make it more attractive for people to travel to the city centre by sustainable modes. We are also working with the West Yorkshire Combined Authority through the emerging Single Transport Plan to develop a compelling ambition for investment in an integrated mass transit network for the city and city region, supported by strategic park and ride infrastructure and car parking policy.
6. Successfully balancing conflicting and complex demands on our land use and road space across different stakeholder groups will be a major challenge for the city. However, we must not lose sight of the end goal of delivering a transport system fit for a Leeds as a 21<sup>st</sup> century city. This will not be realised without clear leadership, close partnership working and a coherent policy approach to transport from the Council. We need to:
  - i) Reshape our city centre for a more attractive place to live, work and visit;
  - ii) Enable a new dimension of travel choice;
  - iii) Reduce the cost of doing business across the city; and
  - iv) Unlock housing and employment growth - through the adoption of the following key principles;
    - a) The Council will continue to take a lead role in HS2 and Transport for the North to develop a transport system that helps to rebalance the economy and positions Leeds City Region at the heart of a strong Northern economy. The Council supports the creation of a major rail hub for the city, the city region and the North which provides the optimum solution for the use of rail capacity capitalising on HS2, TransNorth and the increasing demand for rail.
    - b) The Council supports the creation of a world renowned gateway to the city via the closure of City Square to vehicular traffic with the exception of cyclists, NGT, buses and taxis, the principle of the closure of Neville Street with the possible exception of NGT, and the reduction in traffic in Leeds city centre through infrastructure improvements to the M621 and Armley Gyratory. The Council also recognises the strategic importance of the Inner Ring Road in reducing the impact of traffic in the city centre and the need to review long term options for this key highway asset.
    - c) The Council supports the principle of providing greater priority measures for pedestrians and cyclists alongside integrated proposals for enhancing public realm through reduced vehicle capacity and priority within the city centre and South Bank, in addition to providing enhanced walking and cycling connectivity with the areas surrounding the city centre.
    - d) The Council supports the principle of increasing travel to the city centre by sustainable modes through high quality, high capacity public transport and the creation of an integrated mass transit network for the city. The Council supports the provision of additional public transport and cycling priority on radial routes into the city, alongside attractive strategic park and ride facilities.

- e) The Council will develop a complementary car parking policy which supports the city centre economy maintaining accessibility to the city centre for retail, business and the visitor economy, whilst reducing the economic dis-benefits of congestion and unlocking the productivity benefits of brownfield sites in the city centre.
- f) The Council supports the principle of improving journey time reliability through targeted highway efficiency improvements for orbital movements to alleviate congestion, alongside complementary investment in radial public transport for routine trips, which frees up space on our roads for those with fewer alternatives, servicing the needs of businesses and improving freight efficiency.
- g) The Council supports the delivery of an integrated approach to street design which will unlock the wider economic benefits of a prosperous urban realm for all.
- h) The Council supports the development of a cycle strategy and low emission strategy that promotes healthy living, better air quality and carbon reduction.
- i) The Council supports the provision of transport infrastructure to serve new developments, with a focus on sites of economic importance to the city and city region including Leeds Bradford Airport, the Aire Valley Enterprise Zone and East Leeds Extension.

## **Recommendations**

Executive Board is recommended to:

- i) Approve the vision outlined in paragraph 3.11 and adopt the key policy principles a - i above;
- ii) Request that officers use the vision and principles to work with the West Yorkshire Combined Authority to help shape the Single Transport Plan and that as part of this, develop a compelling ambition for investment in an integrated mass transit network with supporting strategic park and ride infrastructure, and HS2 connectivity package;
- iii) Request that officers bring a report to Executive Board in 2016 which reviews the long term options for Leeds Inner Ring Road;
- iv) In accordance with the Leeds Core Strategy Local Development Framework, request that officers bring a Car Parking Supplementary Planning Document to Executive Board for adoption during 2016;
- v) In partnership with the Communications Team and the West Yorkshire Combined Authority request that officers develop a holistic transport communications strategy, compatible with social media that engages key stakeholders, government, and general public in a city wide conversation;
- vi) Instruct the Director of City Development to co-ordinate the above work with an update to Executive Board in 2016.

## **1. Purpose of this report**

- 1.1 This report sets out a transport vision for Leeds as a prosperous, liveable, healthy and sustainable 21st century city contained within Appendix 1.
- 1.2 This report recognises the challenges and complexities of changing the way we travel into and around the city to create a more people friendly and productive urban core, identifying the key policy principles that the Council will need to adopt to deliver a transport system fit for a Leeds as a 21<sup>st</sup> century city.

## **2 Background information**

### **Transport and the economy – the changing role of city centres**

- 2.1 Nationally, there is an increasingly widely held consensus that transport is an enabler of economic growth. Our city's growth has been predicated on, and in turn, shaped by our transport infrastructure. Leeds provides a strong historical illustration of how major investment in transport infrastructure has resulted in the transformational economic growth of a city. From the completion of the Leeds Liverpool Canal in 1816, to the Victorians who cemented the city's central position on the railway network, to our emergence as a 'motorway city' in the 1970s.
- 2.2 We are fast approaching a defining moment in the evolution of the Leeds economy and its relationship with transport. The government's recent commitment to further devolution and investment in our West Yorkshire plus Transport Fund (WY+TF) will underpin growth by improving both the city and the city region's transport infrastructure. Alongside the national commitment to the arrival of High Speed Rail (HS2) in Leeds, and Trans North providing enhanced east-west connectivity between Northern cities, this marks a watershed in our national transport strategy. This investment in the North will provide a once in a lifetime opportunity to rebalance the economic geography of the nation, consolidating our city's long term international economic competitiveness.
- 2.3 The economic geography of the UK is also changing. City centres once traditionally the centre of retail activity in a city concentrated around the 'high street', now increasingly play a much more fundamental role in bringing people together to not only exchange goods and services, but to exchange ideas and information and drive commerce. Leeds and the City Region are ideally placed to seize these opportunities with the financial and professional services key economic drivers.

### **A defining moment to reshape our city**

- 2.4 Capitalising on this growth trend where an increasing share of the economy is located in concentrated areas of land, will require a transport system that can move more people to a denser and more productive city centre. Alongside this we will need to reduce the impact of traffic in the city centre to ensure that our city is an attractive, welcoming, healthy, liveable and well-connected place where people want to live and interact, firms want to congregate and do business, and premises can access the commercial opportunities of the subsequent high levels of footfall
- 2.5 Leeds is planning for growth - the Council has recently adopted the Core Strategy as part of our Local Development Framework (LDF). This sets out the strategic planning policy framework for the district to 2028 with a long-term spatial vision for housing and employment growth, supported by thematic policies. Spatial Policy 11 (SP11) sets out our transport infrastructure investment priorities, with Transport

Policy 1 (T1) setting our transport management priorities and Transport Policy 2 (T2) which sets out our accessibility requirements for new developments. The first West Yorkshire Local Transport Plan (LTP) was adopted in 2001, investment in local transport has been guided by the strategies and policies within the plan and its two successors. These are not isolated improvements but part of a pipeline of transport schemes spatially aligned to our strategic transport investment priorities to deliver housing and employment growth as set out in the LDF.

- 2.6 Devolution brings opportunities for new powers and funding for the city region. In 2014 the West Yorkshire Combined Authority (WYCA) was set up with responsibility for managing the £1 billion WY+TF. WYCA are currently developing a Single Transport Plan. The new plan will be a twenty year vision for developing an integrated transport network that supports the Leeds City Region Enterprise Partnership's Strategic Economic Plan for sustained and healthy economic growth.
- 2.7 People and places do not stand still. Given the opportunities of new powers and levels of funding through devolution, the changing economic geography and focus on city centres as places for people to interact, it is important to restate within our existing policy framework what our 'best city' ambition means in terms of transport and outline how we will work with our partners to deliver this.

### **3 Main issues**

#### **Growing a compact city well**

- 3.1 Leeds is following the global trend towards highly skilled jobs, with financial services and knowledge intensive business services clustering in a compact environment. Our economy is worth £18bn, is home to over 25,000 businesses, and has grown almost 40% over the last decade. Leeds is also evolving, outside of London, we have the largest financial and business service sector and largest concentration of UK data scientists. With major developments providing new jobs and new homes alongside more shopping and leisure facilities. The city has recently benefited from over £0.5 billion in retail investment, with 600,000 sq. ft. of office space under construction in the city centre and 300 000 sq. ft. of industrial space under construction in the enterprise zone.
- 3.2 Leeds helps drive the growth of the city region, the largest English city region outside London with a £60.5 billion economy. Rail is an essential element in supporting this economic activity and growth as it improves connectivity, opens up the labour market and is critical to the success of the Northern Powerhouse. Leeds railway station is a national piece of transport infrastructure. It is the busiest station in the North of England, and the second busiest in the UK outside London. Over 28 million passengers use the station a year which is comparable to Kings Cross. Leeds station is fundamental to ensuring this growth can continue.
- 3.3 Keeping Leeds moving is an essential element of our economic success story. Cars and the movement of freight will be an important part of our future economy. As the Local Highway Authority under the 2004 Traffic Management Act we have a duty to manage the efficient use of the road network to ensure the smooth flow of goods and people. Targeted highway efficiency schemes across the district to alleviate pinch points on the network and promote the smooth flow of traffic such as the recent capacity improvements on the Leeds Outer Ring Road at Thornbury, Rodley

and Horsforth, will be needed to help deliver the housing and employment growth contained within the Local Development Framework.

- 3.4 The delivery of new highway infrastructure through the WY+TF will be critical to unlocking key areas of growth across the district. The East Leeds Orbital Road will unlock the development capacity of the East Leeds Extension. New road improvements will aim to reduce journey times by car and bus, between the Outer Ring Road and the Airport, reduce traffic on local roads and support the development of employment sites in the vicinity of the Airport to assist the managed growth of the Airport. The provision of new highway infrastructure to access development sites in the Aire Valley enterprise zone will also help drive the growth of the Leeds city region.
- 3.5 Intelligent transport systems will be an intrinsic part of 21<sup>st</sup> century infrastructure. We will need to be ready for technological advances to future proof our city, providing electric vehicle charging points to promote the uptake of electric cars, as well as helping to ensure the smooth flow of traffic through the use technology to help manage congestion and keep people and goods moving for a more efficient and resilient local and strategic road network. Examples already implemented include 'Leeds Travel Info' which provides real time travel information to road users, and the Highways England delivery of 'Smart Motorways'.
- 3.6 Following the arrival of high speed rail in Leeds, the area around the planned HS2 station, including the South Bank will be amongst the best rail connected locations in the country. Other things being equal, this means businesses that benefit most from this kind of connectivity will be more productive if they locate around these stations. To maximise these productivity gains work is underway on a South Bank masterplan. Alongside HS2, the emerging Northern Transport Strategy, overseen by Transport for the North, will also deliver significant connectivity improvements between and within our great Northern cities.
- 3.7 As a city we need to be ready to capitalise on these game changing opportunities. *'World-class events and a vibrant city centre that all can benefit from'* is one of the Council's Breakthrough projects, with the central ambition to create a city centre widely recognised as an exemplar 21st century city that is inclusive, friendly and cutting edge by residents, visitors, businesses, place-makers and others. Key to delivering this vision is to create a people friendly European facing animated city centre, increasing the quality of public realm and reducing the impact of traffic. Leeds is also bidding to be the European Capital of Culture in 2023. As the bid develops we will need to demonstrate the provision of an enhanced cultural and urban realm offer through a programme of improvements to streets, roads and public spaces.
- 3.8 Building upon the work of two city centre conferences a clear vision for a city centre has emerged as a welcoming, liveable, well connected, walkable, cultural and business friendly place. Critical to achieving this vision is the provision of a 21st century infrastructure for the city, with a world class railway station and arrival gateway to the city. The latter will require significant investment in the short, medium and long term with the arrival of HS2 in Leeds.
- 3.9 We also need to connect up better our economic assets in our growing city centre. To create a more people friendly city centre a transformation in pedestrian and cycle connectivity is needed between the pedestrian retail core, Financial and Legal Quarter, to the Civic Quarter, Universities and Hospitals, Cultural Quarter and

Waterfront, to the key areas of growth in the South Bank, West End, Victoria Gate and Quarry Hill.

- 3.10 'The Loop' now separates the pedestrainised core from the surrounding key growth areas of the city centre. The resulting dominance of traffic in certain areas contributes to pedestrian severance and limits the place making and economic potential of our city. For Leeds to prosper as a 21st century city we need a new approach to the way we think about transport in Leeds. In short to create a more people friendly and productive city centre we need to rethink the way we travel into and around the city centre.

### **21<sup>st</sup> Century Leeds - a new direction in transport**

- 3.11 *'Our Transport Vision for a 21<sup>st</sup> Century Leeds' is contained within appendix 1. Transport is a fundamental component of what makes a prosperous, liveable, healthy and sustainable 21<sup>st</sup> century city – to realise our best city ambitions we need a transport system that enables the following;*

- **Prosperous Leeds** - *A transport system for Leeds that facilitates a prosperous, sustainable economy for the City, the City Region, the North, cementing our long-term economic competitiveness both nationally and internationally.*
- **Liveable Leeds** - *A transport system which helps Leeds to be a great place to live and work for everyone.*
- **Healthy Leeds** - *A transport system that has a positive effect on people's health and wellbeing and raises health standards across the city through the promotion of walking and cycling and the reduction of air pollution.*
- **Sustainable Leeds** - *A transport system that does not harm the environment and will specifically reduce the impacts of air and noise pollution, greenhouse gas emissions and energy consumption.*

- 3.12 The vision presents a short, medium and long term transport investment programme contained within appendix 1. This long-term vision for transport in Leeds will enable us to build on the significant major programme of transport improvements recently delivered, already planned or currently underway. Schemes already prioritised in the WY+TF, together with existing major transport schemes such as City Connect, Kirkstall Forge station and NGT, represent a significant investment approaching £900M planned by 2025. Looking to the future the vision identifies a number of unfunded critical transport interventions that we will need to progress.

### **Key transport challenges ahead for the city**

- 3.13 We need to ensure that this vision for a transport system for Leeds as a 21<sup>st</sup> century city is one that everyone can support, which helps all our residents benefit from the city's economic growth. Making our transport vision a reality requires transformational change, not only in the way we travel but also in the level of investment in transport and the way we plan, deliver and manage transport in Leeds and across the city region. As we progress with our transport vision for a 21<sup>st</sup> Century Leeds, this will involve difficult decisions and require close partnership working across the city and city region to explore innovative solutions to the following key challenges;

### Balancing competing demands on our land use and road space

- 3.14 We need to ensure that our city centre is an attractive place where families and people of all ages want to live and interact. Reconciling the impact of traffic in towns across the UK has historically been problematic. Towns derive their economic and social rationale from the concentration of activities in one place and productivity benefits through density of land use, but as they grow the movements they generate progressively worsen conditions on the street.
- 3.15 In Leeds, we have a proven track record of reducing the impact of traffic to enable a civic scale quality urban environment. Millennium Square, once a car park is now a major cultural asset. We have also unlocked the economic potential of our retail offer - Briggate, once a congested through route for traffic, is now one of the retail jewels of the North. The 1990s Leeds Transport Strategy was critical to the success of these improvements, facilitating major changes to the physical and social fabric of the city. The new traffic circulation arrangements and creation of 'The Loop' enabled traffic to by-pass the central pedestrianised core, alongside the Public Transport Box and new quality bus corridors increased city centre accessibility supported a new era of development led growth for the city.
- 3.16 It is important to note that prioritising pedestrian movement can reduce vehicle capacity, and impact on local access, which in turn may produce the economic dis-benefit of congestion unless considered within a wider strategic transport context. Twenty years on from the last Leeds Transport Strategy, current traffic arrangements mean that 'The Loop' services a significant movement of through traffic. In order to maintain network efficiency this high throughput of traffic is currently managed largely through vehicle priority and pedestrian and vehicle segregation, and has the unintended consequence of a poorer quality environment for residents, occupiers and street users including pedestrians and cyclists in certain areas of the city.
- 3.17 Work is already underway to reduce the impact of traffic in the city centre. The WY+TF City Centre Package alongside the HS2 South Bank Master plan work will enable the creation of a world class gateway through the closure of City Square to general traffic by 2021 (with the exception of NGT, buses, taxis and cyclists). As well as creating a HS2 ready site, this package will reduce the impact of through traffic across the city centre by infrastructure improvements to Armley Gyratory, Ingram Distributor and the M621 that will reroute traffic onto the Inner Ring Road. Depending on which HS2 station option is finally agreed, Neville Street could be closed to general traffic, with the possible exception of NGT. The WY+TF City Centre Package will also reduce the scale of highway infrastructure in the South Bank by reallocating space to sustainable modes and enhanced urban realm, providing a further catalyst to this key regeneration area. The closure of City Square to general traffic also opens up the opportunity to review traffic arrangements in the North Bank aligned to our public realm ambitions and bid for the European Capital of Culture in 2023.
- 3.18 The further growth of city centre living is a vital component of the sustainable growth of Leeds. The LDF Core Strategy plans for 10,200 additional dwellings in the city centre. A significant proportion of city centre residents work in the city centre or travel by sustainable modes to locations elsewhere in the city creating an increased

demand for walking and cycling to access facilities within the city centre. New jobs created in the city centre could also be filled by new city centre residents, reducing travel demands and freeing up public transport and road space for other users.

- 3.19 The Leeds Inner Ring Road (LIRR) is a strategic highway asset for the city and an integral part of traffic movement across the whole of urban Leeds. Performing an urban distributor function the LIRR keeps our city moving and reduces the impact of traffic in the centre. Leeds has a significant number of highway assets that we maintain. Following a successful bid for funding from the Department for Transport, we are in the process of completing a short term refurbishment scheme on the LIRR with extensive and high priority repair works to the oldest sections which will enable us to safely manage these structures over the next 15 years. These repairs, although costly, had a very robust business case with significant transport benefits of approximately £2 billion. However, given the age of the LIRR and the lifespan of these original structures, the recent repair works are only an interim solution and we are fast approaching a point where it is becoming unviable from both an economic and engineering argument to continue with repairing these structures.
- 3.20 For the LIRR to continue to perform this strategic traffic distribution function we need a long term strategy. Given the life cycle and cost of such infrastructure investment as a forward thinking city we need to work in partnership with those who live and work in the city to explore long term options for this strategically important highways asset.

#### Delivering an integrated mass transit system for the city and the city region

- 3.21 To realise the economic benefits of HS2 and Trans North in the near future our transport system will need to move more people to a denser, knowledge rich and productive urban core through a step change in investment in an integrated mass transit system for the city and city region. For our urban realm ambitions to be realised we will also need to reduce the impact of traffic in the city centre – to achieve this more people will need to travel by sustainable modes.
- 3.22 Currently many people feel that they have no real alternative to driving their car. A new dimension in travel choice is needed to better connect all Leeds residents with employment opportunities, especially those in areas of high unemployment. It is perhaps not surprising that given our legacy of highways infrastructure and historic under investment in a viable attractive public transport alternative, that currently Leeds has a higher level of car usage for commuting than most other Core Cities. Single car occupancy and car parking reduce the benefits of density in the urban core and take up valuable potential development land, use more road space as well as contribute to congestion, which impacts on freight efficiency. Whilst public transport, combined with excellent conditions for walking and cycling, provides an optimum mechanism for the mass movement of people.
- 3.23 The Council supports the introduction of an integrated mass transit system for West Yorkshire. The emerging West Yorkshire Single Transport Plan sets out the ambition for a 'metro-style' public transport network. Integrating all transport modes into one system that is easily understood, easy to access by a range of options and offers quick, convenient connections. This system needs to be fully integrated city region wide system that can help move people easily and conveniently, particularly between our main city and town centres and between our rail and airport hubs. Different corridors will require different technology (NGT, light rail, heavy rail,

strategic park and ride) but all should have the passenger experience at the heart of its design.

- 3.24 Nevertheless, cars and the movement of goods will still be an important part of our future economy. Investing in a mass transit system which enables a new dimension of travel choice for routines trips, means that space on our roads will then be freed up for those with fewer alternatives, servicing the needs of businesses and improving freight efficiency. Park and ride at strategic locations across the city will be a crucial element of an integrated mass transit system offer in ensuring accessibility to city centre from the strategic road network. With the success of Elland Road Park and Ride and the anticipated opening of Temple Green Park and Ride in 2016, we will continue to progress our park and ride strategy in partnership with WYCA.
- 3.25 A consequence of the recent economic downturn in Leeds was that many development sites in the South Bank and across the city centre stalled, and were subsequently used to provide temporary long stay parking. A major sustainable growth location for the Leeds City Region, the South Bank provides the room to grow that Leeds now needs. The further regeneration of the South Bank and arrival of HS2 will deliver land values significantly greater than at present, with an economic viability greater than the current temporary car parking use which dominates a number of potential development sites.
- 3.26 One of the key supporting documents to the Core Strategy is the Parking SPD, which will contain the detailed parking policies for the city that underpin Transport Policy 1. Following public consultation in 2014 the SPD is currently being revised with the intention to formally adopt it during 2016. The Parking SPD will seek to maintain accessibility to the city centre for retail, business and the visitor economy, whilst reducing the economic dis-benefit of congestion and unlocking the productivity benefits of brownfield sites in the city centre, alongside an attractive park and ride offer providing access to the city centre from the strategic road network.
- 3.27 We are working with WYCA to increase accessibility whilst reducing the impact of traffic in the city centre through developing a compelling ambition for investment in an integrated mass rapid transit network for the city supported by strategic park and ride facilities and the car parking policy contained within the LDF Car Parking Supplementary Planning Document (SPD).

#### Delivering a holistic integrated approach to street design

- 3.28 We want to inspire more people to walk and cycle more often as part of a healthy lifestyle and getting people active. Introducing greater priority measures for pedestrians and cyclists within the city centre core and district centres will create better conditions for these modes. Providing residents and visitors with greater choice helps reduce congestion, improves the environmental sustainability of our transport system, and promotes individual health and wellbeing.
- 3.29 To do this we need to work towards a cycling and walking friendly city with appropriate infrastructure, adequate training and safety initiatives and which capitalises on major events to secure greater participation. In creating a more people friendly city centre there are several elements in terms of modern quality street space and design. These include how the street space and movement is managed, how the street looks and is designed, and how these concepts manifest

themselves in the design of junctions and pedestrian crossings and the use of street furniture to deliver outcomes.

- 3.30 A new holistic integrated policy approach to urban design, traffic engineering and road safety which unlocks the wider economic benefits of a safe and prosperous public realm environment for all in our city and district centres is a key element of our transport vision. Through prioritising the role of people and place, we can facilitate our growth potential through the delivery of a world class transport system fit for a 21st century city. A separate report on this agenda outlines our approach to street design and public realm.

#### Promoting a transport system which improves air quality and reduces carbon

- 3.31 Working towards decarbonising our transport system is a crucial element of a 21<sup>st</sup> century transport system. We have the opportunity to be at the forefront of technology changes to the vehicle fleet. To accelerate the uptake of cleaner vehicles, people need to have support through incentives and greater confidence to switch, the provision of appropriate refuelling infrastructure, be that gas or electric is an essential element of a smart and future proofed city centre.
- 3.32 As a Council we can lead the way by making significant steps to greening our own fleet. We have also been shortlisted for Government funding to become a Low Emission City. A West Yorkshire Low Emission Strategy 2016 to 2021 has been developed through collaboration between the Councils of Bradford, Calderdale, Kirklees, Leeds and Wakefield Council as well as Public Health England and West Yorkshire Combined Authority. A separate report on this agenda provides an update on air quality in Leeds.

#### Harnessing the opportunities of devolution

- 3.33 Achieving our vision requires transformational change, not only in the way we travel - but also in the level of investment in transport and the way we plan, deliver and manage transport in Leeds and across the city region. Transport has been a main element in city devolution deals so far. Now is the time to ask for greater control to be passed to the local and regional level so we can determine our own priorities for funding. Working in partnership with the Combined Authority securing greater devolution will help us explore innovative solutions to these transport challenges.

## **4. Corporate Considerations**

### **4.1 Consultation and Engagement**

- 4.1.1 Schemes already prioritised with the WY+TF will be subject to the appropriate individual scheme consultation. There has already been wide spread consultation and engagement on the overall aspirations of the transport vision from city centre conferences held in 2008 and 2010, and more recent consultation undertaken as part of the Council's Breakthrough Project '*World-class events and a vibrant city centre that all can benefit from*' workshop and Transport Symposium. Core Strategy Policies SP11, T1 and T2 were subject to formal consultation in accordance with the LDF.
- 4.1.2 We will use our annual stakeholder event to continue this city wide conversation on transport. As we develop our transport vision for the Leeds as a 21<sup>st</sup> century city we

will work alongside our partners at the Combined Authority to fully integrate our vision with the emerging Single Transport Plan for city region connectivity.

## **4.2 Equality and Diversity / Cohesion and Integration**

4.2.1 An Equality, Diversity, Cohesion and Integration Screening (EDCI) has been undertaken on this report and identifies that the strategic proposition for our transport vision for a 21<sup>st</sup> century Leeds has the potential positive impact of improved public transport and local connectivity, which in turn could increase access to employment, education and leisure services and facilities for all equality groups.

4.2.2 The screening highlights that any specific impacts on equality characteristics will need to be looked at as part of the progression of individual transport schemes. As the project proceeds the appropriate EDCI assessment procedure will then be invoked. It is anticipated that this will highlight that any specific impacts on equality characteristics will need to be looked at in-line with the specific areas identified for progression.

## **4.3 Council policies and the Best Council Plan**

4.3.1 The anticipated benefits of our transport vision for Leeds as a 21<sup>st</sup> century city have the potential to contribute to the vision for Leeds 2030 to be the best city in the UK, and the following best Council objectives; promoting sustainable and inclusive economic growth, supporting communities and tackling poverty, building a child-friendly city and contribute to the Council's cross cutting '*World-class events and a vibrant city centre that all can benefit from*' Breakthrough Project'. The vision also contributes to the objectives of the Local Development Framework, Leeds Core Strategy, Local Transport Plan 3, emerging WYCA Single Transport Plan, and Strategic Economic Plan.

## **4.4 Resources and value for money**

4.4.1 The development of our transport vision for Leeds as a 21<sup>st</sup> century city is currently being met through existing staffing resource within Highways and Transportation. Staffing resources for the progression of schemes identified within the West Yorkshire plus Transport Fund are being supported as part of this fund.

4.4.2 It is anticipated that the unfunded critical transport interventions will be secured through a devolution deal and associated new levels of investment across the city region. In order for Leeds to be ready to secure the very best outcome from devolution for the city, it is likely that Council funding will be requested to support feasibility work to progress critical future transport interventions identified within the vision. The Council is also exploring funding and financing options through national funding streams and mechanisms such as Tax Incremental Financing, as well as seeking opportunities for local funding through Community Infrastructure Levy and the Leeds Bid.

## **4.5 Legal Implications, Access to Information and Call In**

4.5.1 This report is eligible for call-in. There are no specific legal implications arising from this report.

## **4.6 Risk Management**

- 4.6.1 There are no immediate risk management issues. Appropriate risk management arrangements are in place for the progression of the WY+YF schemes.

## **5. Conclusions**

- 5.1 Successfully balancing conflicting and complex demands on our land use and road space across different stakeholder groups will be a major challenge for the city. However, we must not lose sight of the end goal of delivering a transport system fit for a Leeds as a 21<sup>st</sup> century city. This will not be realised without clear leadership, close partnership working and a coherent policy approach to transport from the Council.

We need to:

- i) Reshape our city centre for a more attractive place to live, work and visit;
- ii) Enable a new dimension of travel choice;
- iii) Reduce the cost of doing business across the city; and
- iv) Unlock housing and employment growth. It is proposed to adopt the following principles:
  - a) The Council will continue to take a lead role in HS2 and Transport for the North to develop a transport system that helps to rebalance the economy and positions Leeds City Region at the heart of a strong Northern economy. The Council supports the creation of a major rail hub for the city, the city region and the North which provides the optimum solution for the use of rail capacity capitalising on HS2, TransNorth and the increasing demand for rail.
  - b) The Council supports the creation of a world renowned gateway to the city via the closure of City Square to vehicular traffic with the exception of cyclists, NGT, buses and taxis, the principle of the closure of Neville Street with the possible exception of NGT, and the reduction in traffic in Leeds city centre through infrastructure improvements to the M621 and Armley Gyratory. The Council also recognises the strategic importance of the Inner Ring Road in reducing the impact of traffic in the city centre and the need to review long term options for this key highway asset.
  - c) The Council supports the principle of providing greater priority measures for pedestrians and cyclists alongside integrated proposals for enhancing public realm through reduced vehicle capacity and priority within the city centre and South Bank, in addition to providing enhanced walking and cycling connectivity with the areas surrounding the city centre.
  - d) The Council supports the principle of increasing travel to the city centre by sustainable modes through high quality, high capacity public transport and the creation of an integrated mass transit network for the city. The Council supports the provision of additional public transport and cycling priority on radial routes into the city, alongside attractive strategic park and ride facilities.
  - e) The Council will develop a complementary car parking policy which supports the city centre economy maintaining accessibility to the city centre for retail, business and the visitor economy, whilst reducing the economic dis-benefits of congestion and unlocking the productivity benefits of brownfield sites in the city centre.

- f) The Council supports the principle of improving journey time reliability through targeted highway efficiency improvements for orbital movements to alleviate congestion, alongside complementary investment in radial public transport for routines trips, which frees up space on our roads for those with fewer alternatives, servicing the needs of businesses and improving freight efficiency.
- g) The Council supports the delivery of an integrated approach to street design which will unlock the wider economic benefits of a prosperous urban realm for all.
- h) The Council supports the development of a cycle strategy and low emission strategy that promotes healthy living, better air quality and carbon reduction.
- i) The Council supports the provision of transport infrastructure to serve new developments, with a focus on sites of economic importance to the city and city region including Leeds Bradford Airport, the Aire Valley Enterprise Zone and East Leeds Extension.

## **6. Recommendations**

### 6.1 Executive Board is recommended to:

- i) Approve the vision outlined in paragraph 3.11 and adopt the key policy principles a - i above.
- ii) Request that officers use the vision and principles to work with the West Yorkshire Combined Authority to help shape the Single Transport Plan and that as part of this, develop a compelling ambition for investment in an integrated mass transit network with supporting strategic park and ride infrastructure, and HS2 connectivity package.
- iii) Request that officers bring a report to Executive Board in 2016 which reviews the long term options for Leeds Inner Ring Road.
- iv) In accordance with the Leeds Core Strategy Local Development Framework, request that officers bring a Car Parking Supplementary Planning Document to Executive Board for adoption during 2016.
- v) In partnership with the Communications Team and the West Yorkshire Combined Authority request that officers develop a holistic transport communications strategy, compatible with social media that engages key stakeholders, government, and general public in a city wide conversation.
- vi) Instruct the Director of City Development to co-ordinate the above work with an update to Executive Board in 2016.

## **7. Background documents<sup>1</sup>**

### 7.1 None

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<sup>1</sup> The background documents listed in this section are available to download from the Council's website, unless they contain confidential or exempt information. The list of background documents does not include published works.