

## **Connecting Leeds Transport Strategy and Action Plan**

Date: 20th October 2021

Report of: Director of City Development

Report to: Executive Board

Will the decision be open for call in? Yes No

Does the report contain confidential or exempt information? Yes No

### **What is this report about?**

#### **Including how it contributes to the city's and council's ambitions**

- The Connecting Leeds Transport Strategy (and executive summary) sets out our vision for Leeds to be a city where you don't need a car, where everyone has an affordable, low carbon, healthy and accessible choice in how they travel. This report presents the Connecting Leeds Transport Strategy for adoption following an extensive consultation and engagement exercise undertaken in 2021.
- The Strategy also sets out the overarching challenges and opportunities facing the district and our strategic policy and infrastructure measures to achieve our vision. An Action Plan until 2024 has been developed which details the specific actions, policy, and infrastructure we are going to develop to ensure we work towards the overarching objectives of tackling climate change, delivering inclusive growth and the health and wellbeing strategy.
- This report seeks the adoption of the Connecting Leeds Transport Strategy and associated Action Plan 2021-24.

### **Recommendations**

Executive Board is recommended to:

- a) Agree to the adoption and publication of the Connecting Leeds Transport Strategy and first Action Plan 2021-24.
- b) Accept an annual progress report of the Strategy and Action Plan
- c) Agree that the Director of City Development alongside the Chief Officer Highways and Transportation will lead on implementing the delivery of the Connecting Leeds Transport Strategy and Action Plan.
- d) Note that the future Action Plans beyond 2024 will require greater levels of funding to achieve the targets as set out in the Connecting Leeds Transport Strategy.

## Why is the proposal being put forward?

- 1 Transport effects everyone across the district, whether you live, work, or visit Leeds. The Connecting Leeds Transport Strategy sets out our strategic transport policy for the City and wider district, setting out the challenges and opportunities facing transport and travel and the proposed measures to achieve our vision and objectives. Ultimately, the Strategy will inform and guide future decision making and investment across the district. A copy of the final Strategy is appended to this report.
- 2 This report seeks to formally adopt the Connecting Leeds Transport Strategy and Action Plan as Council policy. Following endorsement by Executive Board in December 2020 the [Connecting Leeds Transport Strategy – Draft for consultation](#) was published last year and has been subject to an extensive public consultation and engagement exercise, and has been subsequently updated into a final version ahead of adoption.
- 3 The Transport Strategy will enable Leeds to retain its role as local, regional, and national transport hub and prepare the city for the arrival of high-speed rail. Subject to the outcome of the Integrated Rail Plan, High-speed rail alongside the Transpennine Route Upgrade is expected to help transform the economy of the north of England by significantly improving the capacity, frequency, and journey time of rail links between the region's main economic centres. The Strategy will ensure these benefits are distributed across city and wider city region maximising the investment.
- 4 The Transport Strategy and Action Plan build on the significant progress that the Connecting Leeds programme of works has delivered in recent years, which has demonstrated the Council's ability to deliver at pace when it has the resources and freedoms to do so. Over 60km of new dedicated cycle lanes have been installed since Leeds hosted le grand depart in 2014. In the last year we have seen the completion of the world class city centre gateway at The Headrow and Park Row alongside the delivery of new cycle superhighways and public transport enhancements. In the last month, the country's first fully solar powered park and ride facility has opened at Stourton which is operated with new electric buses connecting into the city centre. We have continued to invest in local communities delivering new pedestrian crossings, road and footway maintenance and street lighting improvements.
- 5 Our current and future funding position remains uncertain with a high reliance on variable government grants and competitive bidding processes. The cost of delivering our long-term ambition in the Connecting Leeds Transport Strategy is significantly beyond the level of funding currently available. As we turn our attention to tackling the transport challenges in the city and responding to the economic impacts of covid 19, the Council will need to secure additional funding to ensure that we can drive green and inclusive growth that achieves both the Government's levelling up ambitions, Net zero carbon strategy and meets local need.
- 6 An Action Plan has been developed to detail the measures we are going to implement and deliver until 2024. The Strategy and Action Plan are clear that further action beyond 2024 will be required to meet our targets. A comprehensive monitoring and evaluation plan of current measures will best inform future decision making and investment.
- 7 This report seeks approval to undertake further development in relation to measures within the Action Plan which are aligned to four themes policy development, infrastructure delivery, mobility and service and network management and maintenance.

## What impact will this proposal have?

**Wards Affected: All**

Have ward members been consulted?

Yes

No

- 8 The overarching Connecting Leeds vision is for “Leeds to be a city where you don’t need a car”. Achieving this vision of moving our transport system away from personal car ownership, towards more efficient, low carbon, shared, active and public transport based system will:
- Allow individuals to choose the most suitable transport option for each journey.
  - Ensure the transport network and infrastructure is accessible to everyone
  - Dramatically reduce the number of vehicles needed.
  - This efficiency will translate into reduced cost of travel for all.
  - Reduce congestion by making more efficient use of the road space available.
  - Reduce carbon emissions and improve air quality.
  - Allow more efficient use of land, with less space needed for parking.
- 9 Our vision is aligned to three key objectives which are also the Council’s pillars:
- *Tackling Climate Change*
  - *Delivering Inclusive growth*
  - *Improving health and wellbeing*

### Big Moves

- 10 To achieve the vision and enable our objectives to be achieved, the strategy outlines six big moves, which will be our focus areas for the strategy going forward:
- Decarbonising Transport – Reducing the need to travel, re-mode how we travel away from private car use and encouraging the further uptake of Alternative Fuelled vehicles and associated infrastructure. Transport needs are different in rural areas, but this doesn’t necessarily mean that solutions are always different. Many car journeys undertaken in rural areas are short and could transfer to active modes where conditions allow. We need to better understand what further solutions are right for rural areas and we are committed to undertaking a further study as part of our first Action Plan
  - Creating healthier streets and communities – ensuring walking and cycling are the first choice for the shortest trips, creating places and spaces where people want to spend time which are inclusive and accessible to all. By focusing on district and local centres, and ensuring economic growth is within local communities, this will help reduce commuting distances and enable more walkable and cyclable neighbourhoods.
  - Transform the city centre – continue to deliver and develop transformational change in the city centre, from world-class gateways to ensuring all modes are integrated, supporting Leeds role as a local, regional and national transport hub.
  - Enhance public transport – build on the successes we have had in recent years at improving the bus network and working with partners to expand and enhance the offering in the future.

- New mobility solutions – thinking about transport differently, encouraging the use of shared transport, paying for transport differently and the use of technologies to improve mobility across the whole city including our outer districts.
- Deliver a mass transit network –delivering a low carbon mass transit in Leeds, enhancing the transformational work already going on in the city centre through partnership with the Combined Authority.

### Targets

- 11 The targets for the Transport Strategy are set out as follows:
- Net-zero Carbon emissions by 2030
  - Vision Zero
  - Modal shift
  - Reduction in distance travelled by private car

### Strategy Update post-consultation

- 12 Extensive consultation and engagement on the draft transport strategy identified that the strategy was well received in its current form. A copy of the full consultation report can be found in the Appendices.
- 13 The consultation did identify areas emerged where further work was required to update the strategy: These are:
- Disability and accessibility – Feedback was that more detail was required about the specific needs of these stakeholders to ensure they will be met in subsequent policy and schemes.
  - Motorcycles – Stakeholders identified a need to identify the role of the motorcycles within the city and what provisions should be made such as parking provision and the trial access to bus lanes.
  - Rural Transport – Further work is ongoing to understand national transport policies in rural areas and also identify best practice examples of rural transport services and how the challenges surrounding lower density and infrequent trips could be overcome. A further study is proposed within the action plan.
- 14 There was general feedback with regards to the language used to ensure this is accessible for everyone. A review has been undertaken to simplify technical terms and explain terms. In lieu of this, our ‘New Mobility Solutions’ big move has been re-titled “New Technologies”.

### Transport Action Plan

- 15 The Transport Strategy sets out our strategic vision and approach to mobility across the district. The Action plan sets out the policy development and infrastructure to be undertaken within the three-year period until 2024 and can be found in Appendix 1.
- 16 A three-year period has been identified as the most appropriate plan time frame and permits for three plan periods over the course of the Strategy until 2030. We have a good level of funding certainty for the schemes in the Action Plan 2021-24. During the first Action Plan period we will also develop a pipeline of future schemes and policies that respond to achieving the targets set out in the Strategy.

- 17 The plan details our continued annual investment in road maintenance, behaviour change initiatives such as school streets, traffic management, road safety and investment in street lighting.
- 18 Alongside our continued investment, new actions are proposed within the plan that support the delivery of the Connecting Leeds Transport Strategy. Our actions and deliverables are focused around four themes:
- Policy development - measures to encourage behaviour change
  - Infrastructure delivery - new Infrastructure to support our 6 big moves
  - Mobility and service – provision of services and mobility solutions, road user training and campaigns
  - Network management and maintenance - ensuring our networks are maintained and managed to support our 6 big moves
- 19 Key actions and deliverables of the plan include but are not limited to the following are:
- Vision Zero Strategy – Is currently under development and will outline the actions required to achieve our target of zero people seriously killed or injured.
  - Road Space Re-allocation policy – will set out a new approach to Leeds' streets prioritising vulnerable road users and encouraging active travel. The policy will also look to how we prioritise public transport, creating a more efficient and reliable network.
  - Safe and sustainable travel – prioritising road safety working towards our Vision Zero target and also reducing crime and anti-social behaviour of network users.
  - Continued partnership with the West Yorkshire Combined Authority on the development of a Bus Service Improvement Plan, associated infrastructure and bringing mass transit to the city.
  - Prioritising the development and delivery of investment within local communities, developing the 20-minute neighbourhood concept and delivering further Active Travel Neighbourhoods, segregated cycle routes along with safer, greener and wider streets.
  - Behavioural Change – Expand our Walk It Ride It campaign to more areas in the city, learning best practice lessons.
  - Maintenance - We want to do more regular maintenance of our network especially footways and cycle tracks and are committed to identify how this can be funded.
  - Funding – As part of the Action Plan we will start a conversation with stakeholders in the city about how local contributions could contribute to the vital transport investment the district needs.
- 20 Monitoring and evaluation play an important role within the Action Plan, we need to ensure our schemes and policies are having the desired effect and where there are unintended consequences further action proposed. By having a greater understanding of the impact of schemes we can better inform future policy, schemes and decision making which in turn will deliver better outcomes for everyone.
- 21 A series of Key Performance Indicators aligned with those of the Best Council Plan will measure the wider impact of the strategy.

#### Ongoing considerations

##### Local Plan alignment

- 22 The Transport Strategy is aligned with the Local Plan and its current update focused on carbon reduction, green infrastructure, place-making and sustainable infrastructure to

mitigate the impacts of climate change. The recent consultation on the Local Plan update specifically focused on these themes and sought feedback on how Leeds can integrate the 20 minute neighbourhood concept, a key action of the first Transport Strategy Action Plan.

#### *National, sub-national and regional policy*

- 23 The draft strategy was clear that our actions alone will not be enough to meet the scale of the challenge facing us all and we will require input from regional and national bodies. Since the publication of the draft strategy, the Department for Transport<sup>1</sup> and Transport for the North<sup>2</sup> have published plans on de-carbonising transport.
- 24 Although Climate Emergencies have been declared elsewhere, the time scales for achieving carbon neutrality targets differ. Our pledge is for 2030 however the West Yorkshire Combined Authority are working towards a 2038 target and the Department for Transport's national target is for 2050. This will ultimately mean that different targets are set in relation to transport at the local, regional, and national scale.
- 25 Whilst we require input from regional and national bodies with regards to regulation, such as the banning of sales of fossil fuelled vehicles from 2030, the plans set out at the national, sub-national and regional level are clear that there is a role for local authorities to bring forward their own actions themselves. Our Action Plan is clear that we have to go further, quicker and require more support to deliver more schemes to reach our targets within a shorter timeframe.

#### *Collaborative Working*

- 26 Both the strategy and action plan will only be successful if we continue the collaborative working approach with local communities and key stakeholders throughout the district.
- 27 Our continued partnership with the West Yorkshire Combined Authority and the newly elected Mayor will enable us to deliver elements of the Transport Strategy and work together on the development of a Bus Service Improvement Plan (BSIP).

#### *Covid -19 Pandemic*

- 28 Covid-19 has brought unprecedented challenges for the Leeds economy and has changed the way we think about place and how we use our spaces, as well as how we travel, work and shop. In October 2020 we published our Leeds Economic Recovery Framework, outlining our approach to recovery from the Covid-19 pandemic as being centred around the need to Respond, Reset and Renew and Build Resilience, all within our overall ambition to create a strong economy set within a compassionate city. The Framework provides us with an approach to economic recovery for the city as a whole and has provided a catalyst for us to undertake several pieces of work to support our recovery. Overall, the Leeds economy is showing positive signs of a return to growth with employment beginning to rise. Workers are returning to the city centre and we have seen footfall steadily increasing (at mid-September 2021) to around 15% below 2019 levels. Furthermore, city centre retailers are generally reporting that transaction levels are higher than normal, meaning that the lower footfall is partly compensated for by higher 'basket spend', alongside a number of restaurants recording a higher summer turnover this year than in 2019. Although Covid-19

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<sup>1</sup> Department for Transport – Transport decarbonisation Plan - <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/transport-decarbonisation-plan>

<sup>2</sup> Transport for the North Decarbonisation Strategy -

has certainly presented huge challenges to our economy, there are also real reasons for optimism moving forwards as a result of Leeds seeing major investments into the city and new businesses choosing to locate there too.

- 29 In relation to transport and mobility, the Covid-19 pandemic has changed how, when and the frequency of our travel, with travel behaviour patterns only emerging in recent weeks, there is a need to obtain an understanding of the changes and assess how they will affect our priorities. Recent data has evidenced a strong return to private car trips nationally with 90% of weekday trips compare to pre-Covid levels. Bus patronage has made a strong recovery but usage remains 40% below baseline with rail travel around 60% lower. Local data suggests lower travel activity than nationally.<sup>3</sup> We will continue to monitor travel behaviour to identify changes to the historic patterns to better inform the implementation of the strategy.

#### *Consideration of further measures*

- 30 Our targets combined with the big moves will not only transform our city but will make significant progress towards our pledge to become a carbon neutral city by 2030. It is clear however that these actions alone will not be enough to meet the scale of the challenge facing us all and we will require input and support from regional and national bodies.
- 31 The council's has a role in every measure we consider however the nature of that role is dependent on the measure themselves. The role of the council can be set out as follows:
- Influence and encourage – influence individuals, businesses to make low carbon choices
  - Lead – lead on local Leeds specific measures
  - Support – Support measures which need to be brought in at either a West Yorkshire, City Region or Northern scale
  - Lobby – Lobby for measures which can only be introduced at a national or international level

#### Equality, Diversity, Cohesion and Integration (ECDI) impact assessment

- 32 Through the previous Transport Conversation and subsequent engagement on Leeds Public Transport Investment Programme, transport has the potential to have a differential impact on equality groups with regard to:
- Gender - There are different transportation needs for all identities, with certain groups more likely at risk of transport disadvantage, having different travel patterns and be more sensitive to safety concerns.
  - Disability - Disabled people travel more frequently by bus than others, so public transport plays a vital role in ensuring that they can participate in community life and avoid social exclusion. Disability can also lead to a greater reliance on private vehicles.
  - Race - Differential access to the transport system and the effects of transport policies, particularly for Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic people are around impacts on access to employment, education and training.
  - Age – both younger and older people are both reliant on public transport both sharing concerns over security and reliance on availability of evening and weekend services.
- 33 During the consultation period, extra effort was taken to ensure equality groups representing the protected characteristics had opportunity to feed back into the development of the Transport Strategy.

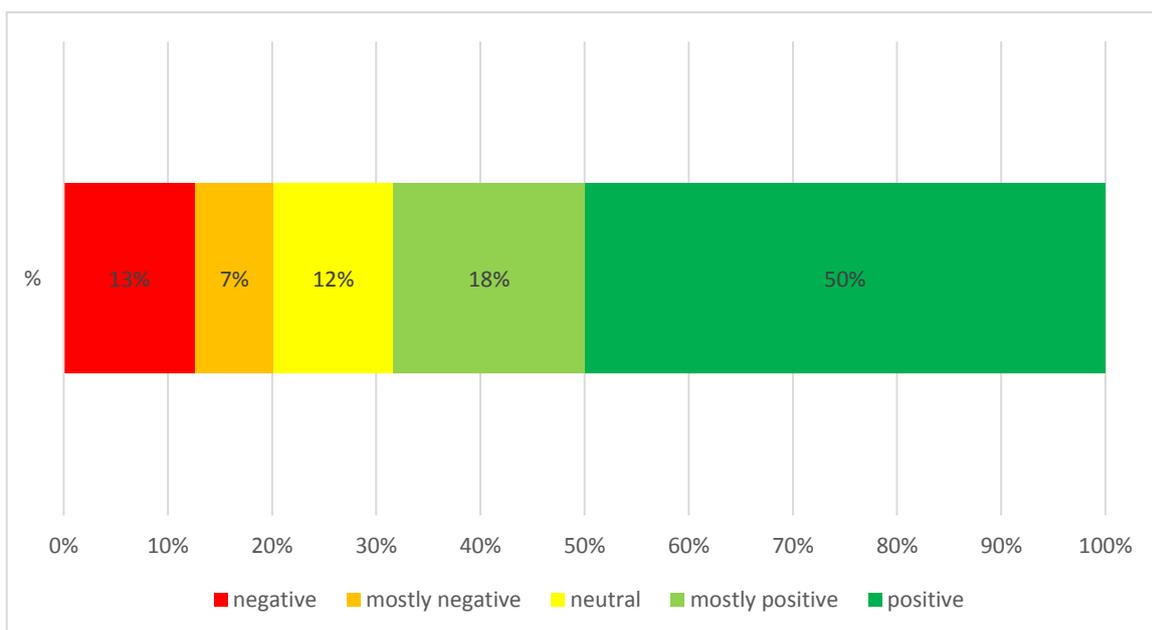
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<sup>3</sup> West Yorkshire Combined Authority Covid-19 Fortnightly insights reports – 28<sup>th</sup> May 2021

- 34 Leeds Involving People (LIP) were engaged to help reach seldom-heard groups within the community and utilised their links with existing groups, partnerships, networks, members, workers, and volunteers. They built upon the nine protected characteristics under the Equality Act and were expanded to cover a fuller range of communities.
- 35 A full ECDI assessment has been undertaken of the Transport Strategy and is appended to this report.

**What consultation and engagement has taken place?**

- 36 The Connecting Leeds Transport Strategy was presented to Executive Board as a draft for public consultation in December 2020. An extensive consultation and engagement programme were launched following the approval between December 2020 and April 2021.
- 37 A summary of the consultation findings is presented below and the full consultation report can be found in the appendices of this report.
- 38 This consultation was done as best practice and aimed to continue the ongoing Transport Conversation started in 2016 with the residents, businesses, and other stakeholders within the city.
- 39 The 16 week engagement included a dedicate Commonplace site, eight webinars which brought together industry leaders, academics and Councillors, Community Committees, presentations to stakeholders and dedicated focus groups with seldom heard voices.
- 40 The engagement exercise was undertaken during a period of a national lockdown due to the coronavirus pandemic therefore no face to face engagement could be held. In order to ensure everyone could access the consultation, copies of the Strategy alongside the questionnaire and a freepost return envelope which could be requested by email or dedicated phone line.
- 41 The consultation webpage has 19,072 visitors, 4,636 contributions from 1,739 respondents. The webinars have subsequently watched over 3,000 times.
- 42 The strategy received overall support, with 68% of respondents on the website saying they felt positive or mostly positive about the strategy. 20% of respondents felt negative or mostly negative and 12% were neutral.



*Figure 1 Overall sentiment towards the strategy*

- 43 The initial results indicated a high agreement amongst respondents (70%) with the objectives of the strategy with other responses of 9% neutral and 20% disagreed or strongly disagreed. A similar result was recorded for the targets, which 71% considered to be very ambitious or ambitious. The breakdown of other responses included neither ambitious nor unambitious (14%), unambitious (7%), very unambitious (4%) and don't know (3%).
- 44 Further analysis has been undertaken to identify why respondents have disagreed or strongly disagreed with the objectives and or found the targets to be unambitious or very un-ambitious. The following top themes have emerged:
- Economy (12) – responses include “Preserve the economic wellbeing of the city. Avoid a city centre ghost town”, “Economic growth rather than taxing every car related activity” and “Need to focus on Leeds as a place for business and growth rather than wish washy climate and inclusivity goals”.
  - Personal Choice (16) responses include “Allow everyone free access to the city - even if they choose to use a car”, “Individual choice on how people wish to travel” and “Not put barriers up or regulations or rules or charges to penalise people making their own transport choice”.
  - Disability (15) responses include “Absolute equality for the disabled”, “There still needs a place for those that have mobility issues to be able to drive in city centre” and “Disabled people must be put at the heart of any changes.”
- 45 The survey asked respondents to prioritise the six big moves of the strategy. A ranked voting analysis identified the following priority for the big moves:
- 1- Enhance public transport,
  - 2- Creating healthier streets, spaces and communities,
  - 3- Deliver mass transit,
  - 4- De-carbonising transport,
  - 5- Transform the city centre; and
  - 6- New mobility solutions.
- 46 Respondents strongly agreed (mean score of 81 out of 100) that more needed to be done to reduce Carbon Emissions from transport however only 58% of respondents were willing to change to a lower carbon mode, other responses to this question include: neither likely or unlikely (15%), quite unlikely (6%), very unlikely (11%), Don't know (1%) and not applicable (8%). Of the respondents who were unlikely or quite unlikely to change, 44 stated they would continue to drive and 28 stated nothing would encourage them to travel differently.
- 47 Respondents were asked what we, Leeds City Council, can do to help you change how you travel, the top result was provision of reasonably priced transport followed by better integration of bus and rail.

#### Written submissions

- 48 A total of 586 written responses were received on Commonplace, these have been thematically coded and alongside written submissions received. Three sample responses for each theme have been provided as examples. A broad range of theme have been identified but the most common was Mass transit where a range of views was submitted both in support and against. The emerging themes included but is not limited to:

- **Healthy streets (18)** - Healthy streets (18) was the big move that had the most interest. Interlinked themes were 'Streetscape' (5), 'Crossings (5), School Streets (3) and Inclusivity and accessibility (7). Within responses around Healthy streets there was support for rolling out Active Travel Neighbourhoods across Leeds, with some groups wanting to see their area of Leeds benefit from an ATN and others advocating a Leeds wide roll out of ATNs. A lot of respondents felt future strategy should focus as much as possible, on the needs of all residents being able to comfortably move around their local area, and to enjoy spending time out and about was of importance. The theme of crossings could reflect a desire to see less focus on radial routes into the city centre and more of a focus on the inclusivity and accessibility of local centres, with enhanced streetscapes as particularly desirable.
- **Zero-carbon travel (13)** - The next big move that attracted interest was de-carbonising transport reflected in the themes of 'Zero carbon travel' (13), the interlinked theme of 'Low carbon zone' (6) also attracted interest. The idea of a low carbon zone was one stakeholders felt really needed deep engagement on and several asked to be involved in any developing proposals for an Ultra Low Emission Zone should proposals come forward. Some respondents focused more on the need to achieve 'Modal shift' (5) as being of greater importance than to simply focus on de-carbonising existing modes.
- **Deeper Engagement (11)** - was a theme that interested a third of stakeholders. For some this reflected a sense some of the implications of the transport strategy were likely to be radical, and that communities (and business) were going to need to be involved as much as possible to ensure an equitable transition to a lower carbon future, with all groups accessibility needs still met. For others a theme that seemed to link in to a desire for Healthy Streets, was a desire for community co-production of schemes, for instance Active Travel Neighbourhoods.
- **Parking management (10)** - Responses indicated that some form of low or zero Carbon zone or other form of road user charging, parking management through some degree of reducing the availability of parking and/or making it more expensive, the greater use of residential parking zones and much more robust enforcement of pavement parking prohibition would be effective at achieving the goals.
- **Gap between aspiration and deliverability (7)** – this theme included comments such as "*fine words are not enough – they must be followed through with determined action*" and "*we are not confident that this strategy demonstrates how this major change in culture will be achieved. What restrictions will be needed and what can we offer to people to motivate them to change*".

### Webinars

- 49 In lieu of the inability to host face to face events a series of webinars were held which covered the six big moves alongside initial and closing sessions. The sessions brought together LCC Members, Officers and other key stakeholders including the West Yorkshire Combined Authority, Leeds Transport Advisory Panel, academia, industry, and operators. The session included a 30-minute question and answers slot for stakeholders to participate in the discussions.
- 50 The sessions were well attended and have now been re-watched on YouTube over 3,000 times.

### Community Committees

- 51 During the engagement the strategy was brought before all ten Community Committees throughout February and March 2021. A range of themes emerged during the committees which include but are not limited to:

- The public transport network notably the bus network including timetables, cost, operation, and routes.
- Disability and inclusivity of the transport network –ensuring everyone can access services and that future schemes are right for everyone.
- Electric vehicle infrastructure – ensuring there is adequate provision of charging facilities to encourage the uptake of electric vehicles.
- Mobility hubs – development of mobility hubs which could ease integration between modes alongside providing enhanced facilities such as real time travel screens.
- Rural transport – the need to recognise the different challenges there are within rural communities compared to urban locations.

52 A copy of the full consultation report is available in Appendix 2.

53 Consultation and Engagement will continue throughout the lifetime of the strategy as we continue to enact our action plan and deliver the schemes and measures detailed within it.

### **What are the resource implications?**

54 Our current and future funding position remains uncertain with a high reliance on variable government grants and competitive bidding processes. Obtaining sufficient funding for feasibility work in order that the city has a pipeline of schemes ready for a competitive bidding process is also problematic. Leeds has a track record of proactively delivering solutions within this funding landscape. As a demonstration of our delivery credentials, in the last couple of years we have delivered high quality infrastructure schemes to promote sustainable travel totalling approximately £190 million of spend per annum. Ongoing work on the City Region Sustainable Transport Settlement (CRSTS) bid with WYCA indicates the level of investment Leeds will receive is likely to significantly reduce in the next 5 year period.

55 We estimate there is a significant funding gap if we are to meet 2030 carbon targets and ambition outlined in the Transport Strategy. Funding is needed both for ongoing maintenance and to deliver a number of key infrastructure programmes needed to facilitate the levels of transformational mode shift to active travel and public transport. We will continue to work with WYCA and call on national government for the support, powers, and funding to deliver the Connecting Leeds Transport Strategy.

56 We are also committed to starting a conversation with stakeholders in the district about how local contributions could contribute to the vital transport investment the district. The Department for Transport have indicated that local contribution will be a requirement of future funding settlements.

### **What are the legal implications?**

57 This report seeks to formally adopt the Connecting Leeds Transport Strategy and adjoining action plan as the Council's transport plan. The plan details the local measures required in support of the West Yorkshire Transport Strategy 2040.

58 This report is eligible for Call-In.

### **What are the key risks and how are they being managed?**

- 59 The Transport Strategy and the implementation of the schemes and policies which it will guide have a fundamental part to play in addressing the corporate risk on Keeping the City Moving.
- 60 There is always a risk to the Leeds economy through both policies and external pressures. The Council recognises that growing the economy has positive benefits to the city and that the enhanced connectivity through the Connecting Leeds Transport Strategy is a crucial component of delivering our Inclusive Growth Strategy ambitions.
- 61 The risks relating to the Climate Emergency are that the actions of the Connecting Leeds Transport Strategy do not adequately address the need to reduce carbon emissions in-line with the Council's and national objectives.

**Does this proposal support the council's 3 Key Pillars?**

Inclusive Growth

Health and Wellbeing

Climate Emergency

Climate Emergency

- 62 In March 2019 the Council declared a "Climate Emergency". The West Yorkshire Combined Authority, Bradford, Calderdale, Kirklees and others have also done so highlighting the importance of this issue across the Leeds City Region and the rest of the country.
- 63 The Strategy will now form the Council's transport plan and as such details how the council seeks to work towards the 2030 net-zero target. The strategy is clear that the current projections are unlikely to meet the target without further interventions.
- 64 In relation to the Climate Emergency the strategy objectives are to reduce the need to travel and the number of car journeys, encourage people to choose active travel and public transport, improve the efficiency of the transport network and encourage the update of zero emission vehicles.
- 65 The Strategy and Action Plan are aligned with our Air Quality Strategy 2021-2030 and its action plan.

*Strategic Environmental Assessment*

- 66 The Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations came into force in England on the 20th July 2004. The regulations derived from the European Union Directive 2001/42/EC aim 'to provide a high level of environmental protection and contribute to the integration of environmental consideration into the preparation and adoption of plans and programmes with a view to promoting sustainable development'. The environment as defined by the Directive incorporates biodiversity, population, human health, fauna, flora, soil, water, air, climatic factors, material assets, cultural heritage, landscape, and the interrelationship of the above factors. The Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) has assessed the likely impact of the strategic level plans and programmes on the environment, and to inform the decision-making throughout the plan-making programme

- 67 Consultation has been undertaken with Statutory Undertakers and the general public which has informed the final assessment.
- 68 Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) has been undertaken and can be found in Appendix 5a, the SEA appendices can be found in appendix 5b . As part of the assessment it was identified that the strategy can play a role to identify and ensure opportunities to expand biodiversity, changes to the final strategy have been made to strengthen the opportunities for transport related enhancements to Biodiversity.

### Inclusive Growth

- 69 The Inclusive Growth Strategy acknowledges the role of Transport in supporting and delivering inclusive growth in the city. Transport can help develop and regenerate places supporting the economy with the efficient movement of goods and people.
- 70 The Transport Strategy aims to improve connectivity for all communities and their access to opportunities through reducing cost barriers associated with transport. The delivery of new infrastructure will enable walking and cycling, the cheapest modes of travel, and will expand opportunities in the most deprived localities.

### Health and Wellbeing

- 71 The streets of Leeds bind our city together – connecting communities, businesses, families and friends. They can improve our health and wellbeing, by reducing social exclusion and loneliness as well as promote physical activity such as walking and cycling. Healthy streets provide everyone with better access to education, services and employment opportunities as well as creating an environment where businesses can thrive. A healthy street environment will have far reaching benefits across all our daily lives. In essence streets provide an enormous opportunity for transport to improve everyone’s quality of life and broader experience of our city
- 72 The strategy objectives are to ensure walking and cycling are the first choice for the shortest journeys, help make the city the best city to grow old in and child friendly through investment in our streets and eliminate road danger through adoption of a vision zero approach.
- 73 During the consultation period, respondents were asked to prioritise the three objectives in relation to the Transport Strategy, the objectives were prioritised as follows: Tackling Climate Change (Climate Emergency), Improving Health and Wellbeing and Delivering Inclusive Growth .

## **Options, timescales and measuring success**

### **a) What other options were considered?**

- 74 Three scenarios were considered in the development of the Transport Strategy:
- 75 **Option 1: Do Minimum – Delivery of the West Yorkshire Transport Strategy without an additional Leeds specific strategy or action plan.** Leeds City Council would rely on the WY Transport Strategy 2040 solely without any local specific guidance; investment in transport would continue as at present. This option was discounted as it didn’t enable Leeds specific actions to be brought forward.
- 76 **Option 2: Do Minimum + Produce Connecting Leeds Transport Strategy + action plan** Produce Leeds specific transport strategy which aligns with WY Transport Policy but also meet Leeds specific targets; strategy document outlines vision for Leeds with an associated implementation plan to allow the Strategy objectives to be realised. This option was

selected as it enables the strategic transport policy for Leeds to be established and also detailed specific actions that could be brought forward within the appropriate timescales.

**77 Option 3: Do Minimum + Produce Leeds Action plan without strategy**

Produce a standalone action or implementation plan to enact WY transport strategy within Leeds without a Leeds specific strategy to coordinate measures. This option was discounted as the action plan would have lacked the strategic context for the district.

**b) How will success be measured?**

78 Success will be measured against the Strategy's targets and objectives. The Action Plan sets out a series of Key Performance Indicators which will be used to monitor progress against our objectives and targets. The KPIs are aligned to the Best Council Plan.

79 An annual progress report on the Transport Strategy and Action Plan will be brought before Executive Board.

**c) What is the timetable for implementation?**

80 The strategy sets out our policies until 2030. The Strategy has already started to be delivered and builds upon our successful schemes brought forward in recent years.

81 The Action Plan sets out our next steps until 2024 but there are some actions proposed within the action plan that will not materialise or be implemented before 2024.

82 As we progress to 2030, a range of measures will be brought forward over the duration of the strategy period and these will be best informed through monitoring and evaluation process to ensure the right schemes and policies are delivered for Leeds.

**Appendices**

83 Appendix 1a Connecting Leeds Transport Strategy

84 Appendix 1b Connecting Leeds Transport Strategy Executive Summary

85 Appendix 2 Connecting Leeds Transport Strategy Action Plan 2021 – 2024

86 Appendix 3 Connecting Leeds Consultation and Engagement Report

87 Appendix 4 Equality Diversity, Cohesion and Integration Assessment

88 Appendix 5a Strategic Environmental Assessment

89 Appendix 5b Strategic Environmental Assessment Appendices

**Background papers**

90 None