

Leeds Safer Roads Vision Zero 2040 – Draft for consultation

Date: 9 February 2022

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

- This report provides an overview of the draft Leeds Safer Roads Vision Zero 2040 Strategy, which is included within Appendix 1 and details how we are going to work towards achieving our ambition 'to ensure that by 2040 no one is killed or seriously injured on the roads in Leeds'.
- In October 2021, Leeds City Council adopted the Connecting Leeds Transport Strategy. This signalled a step change in our approach to travel and road danger and set the bold ambition that by 2040 no one will be killed or suffer serious injuries on roads in Leeds.
- This change is needed because the number of people killed and injured on our roads has, after falling steadily in the years to 2013, remained roughly the same since then. Between 2016 and 2020, 1,455 crashes on roads in Leeds killed 83 people and seriously injured a further 1,538. If we continue on the current trajectory the target of achieving Vision Zero will take many years to achieve. If we wish to achieve our stated ambition, an entirely new and different approach is needed.
- Behind each statistic, there is a personal tragedy, someone whose health has been impacted or life cut short, families and loved ones traumatised and bereaved and other impacts on those who have witnessed and/or been involved in dealing with the incident on site, particularly amongst the emergency services.
- The draft Leeds Safer Roads Vision Zero 2040 Strategy outlines the emerging issues facing the city and the step change in our approach away from a target-based approach and a move towards the safe systems approach, acceptance of responsibility and the 'pillars' or themes to achieve our vision. This strategy will help to support the Connecting Leeds Transport Strategy aim 'to be a city where you don't need a car' and vice versa as an overall reduction in car use and ownership will be likely to result in an overall reduction in collisions.

- In order to realise our vision and meet our objectives, the Leeds Safer Roads Partnership needs to work with all individuals using roads in Leeds as well as organisations, businesses, regional bodies including the West Yorkshire Combined Authority and Transport for the North as well as Central Government. There is a need to move away from the Police and Highway Authority being seen as the organisations responsible for road safety; every individual, user of the public highway and partner needs to take responsibility and play their part.
- The Best Council Plan KPI 'Number of people killed or seriously injured in road traffic collisions' will continue to be the key measure and will be supported by a number of additional measures to be reported annually to Chief Officer, Highways and Transportation.
- The strategy supports the Council's overarching objectives to tackle Climate Change, deliver inclusive growth and improve health and wellbeing and progress towards a carbon neutral city by 2030.
- Public consultation and engagement will follow Executive Board. Given the importance of this new strategy, a minimum eight-week consultation period is being recommended commencing late February/ early March. The feedback obtained will inform the development of the Strategy ahead of publication in Summer 2022.
- Local authority funding for road safety initiatives is included as part of the City Region Sustainable Transport Settlement (CRSTS) funding settlement. This covers funding for schemes to address past road traffic collisions and unmet demand for pedestrian crossing provision, etc. Funding for behaviour change programmes often relies on grants and bids. Leeds City Council will seek out all available funding to help with these.
- A commitment from Council officers to adopt Leeds Safer Roads Vision Zero 2040 is needed to help us achieve our objectives in the strategy and this will require a change in our thinking, our plans, operational decisions and funding strategies.

Recommendations

Executive Board is requested to:

- a) Endorse the draft Leeds Safer Roads Vision Zero 2040 Strategy contained within Appendix 1.
- b) Approve a minimum eight-week public consultation and engagement exercise following Executive Board commencing late February/ early March to help inform the final strategy and initial action plan.
- c) Agree that the Director of City Development alongside the Chief Officer Highways and Transportation will lead on the development of the Leeds Safer Roads Vision Zero 2040 Strategy and will report back to Executive Board in Summer 2022 following public consultation with a final strategy.
- d) Note that future funding required to achieve our Vision Zero ambition in Leeds will be identified through work on delivery plans.

Why is the proposal being put forward?

- 1 The Connecting Leeds Transport Strategy identifies the ambition for Leeds to have no deaths or serious injuries on our roads by 2040. To support this ambition, the Leeds Safer Roads Vision Zero 2040 Strategy is now being promoted.

What impact will this proposal have?

Wards Affected:

Have ward members been consulted?

Yes

No

- Leeds City Council has had significant success in recent decades in reducing the total number of casualties in road traffic collisions. Improvements in vehicle manufacture and safety, police enforcement, education, training and implementation of road safety schemes and projects have all played their part in reducing the numbers.
- Figure 1 shows the trend between 2000 and 2021, with a 61% reduction between 2000 and 2019, and a 75% reduction between 2000 and 2020 although it is worth highlighting that the number of casualties in 2020 was impacted by the reductions in traffic flows caused by the COVID-19 pandemic and associated travel restrictions. Provisional data for 2021 suggests a larger number of casualties than 2020, which is due to the increase in traffic following the lifting of restrictions. There were fewer casualties in 2021 than in any year prior to 2020.

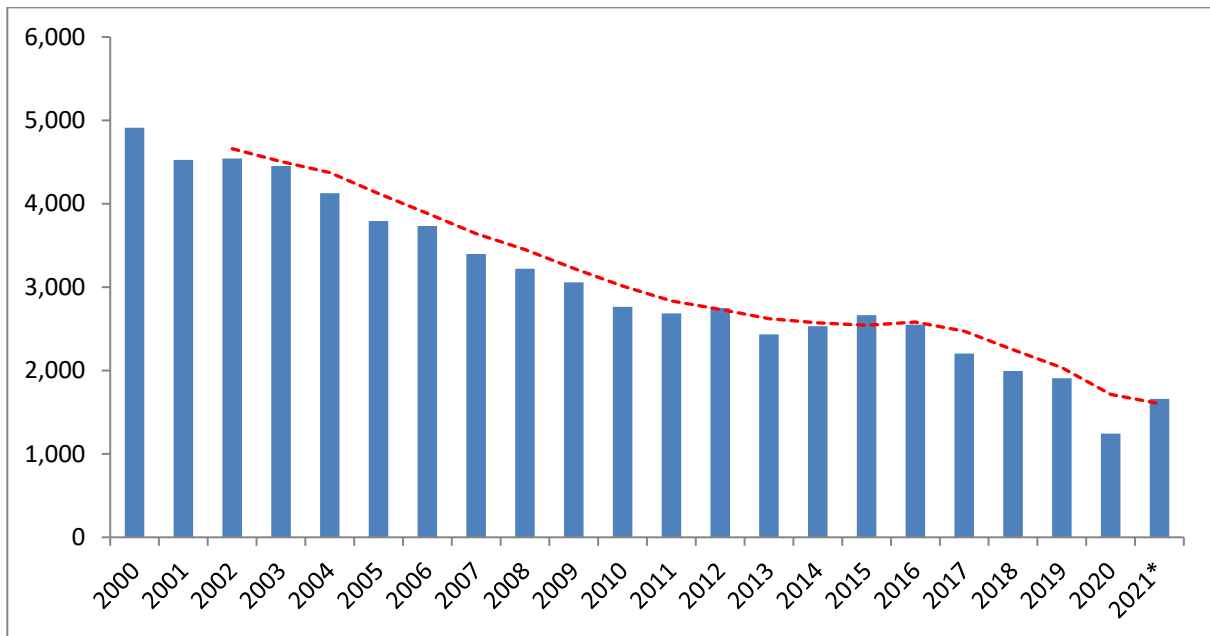


Figure 1. Casualties in road traffic collisions, Leeds, 2000-2021. *Data for 2021 is provisional.

- However, reductions in the numbers of casualties killed or seriously injured (KSI) in road traffic collisions in Leeds have been smaller, and the trend in recent years has been relatively flat. Figure 2 shows the data for KSI casualties in Leeds, 2000 to 2020. The data shows a 39% reduction between 2000 and 2010, but most years since 2010 have seen more KSI casualties than 2010, excepting the marked reduction in 2020, which again is attributable to the reduction in traffic during the COVID-19 pandemic.

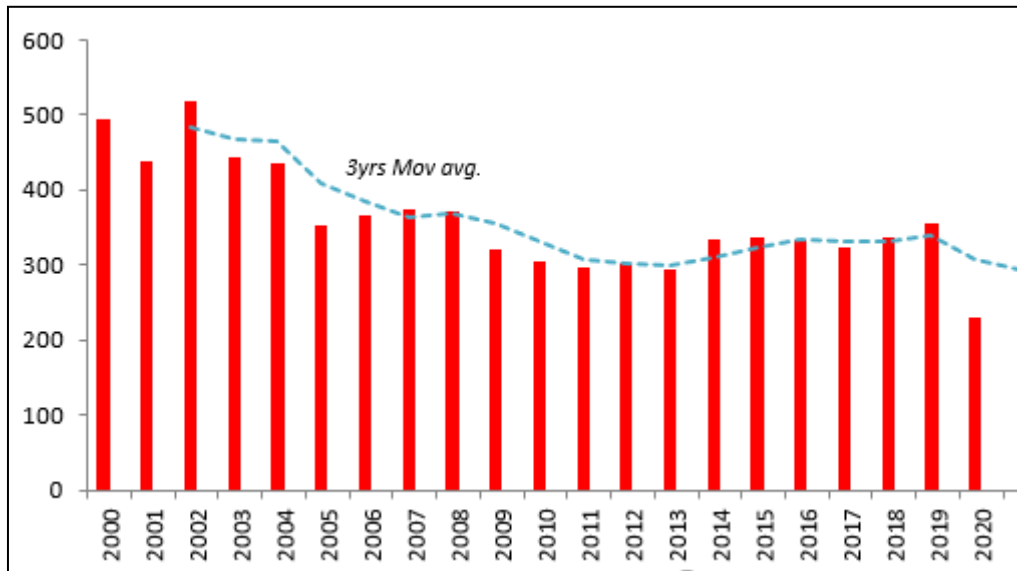


Figure 2. Casualties killed or seriously in road traffic collisions, Leeds, 2000-2020.

- 5 Figure 3 shows the number of fatalities in Leeds, 2000-2021. The 2021 data is provisional at the time of writing this report but not expected to change. Invariably, the causation factors involved in these collisions are beyond engineering influence, involving factors such as excessive speed, injudicious manoeuvres, drink/drugs, crime/police involvement etc.
- 6 The numbers of fatalities in Leeds in any given year are thankfully relatively small, but this does mean that fluctuations from year to year can be relatively large particularly if multiple occupants in vehicles are involved, which tragically has been the case in recent years. The data in Figure 3 shows that the annual number of fatalities has consistently been less in the period from 2009 onwards than it was from 2000 to 2008. However, since 2009 there has been no obvious trend. Each KSI collision is a personal tragedy and a tremendously traumatic experience having life changing implications for families, friends and all those individuals and services involved.

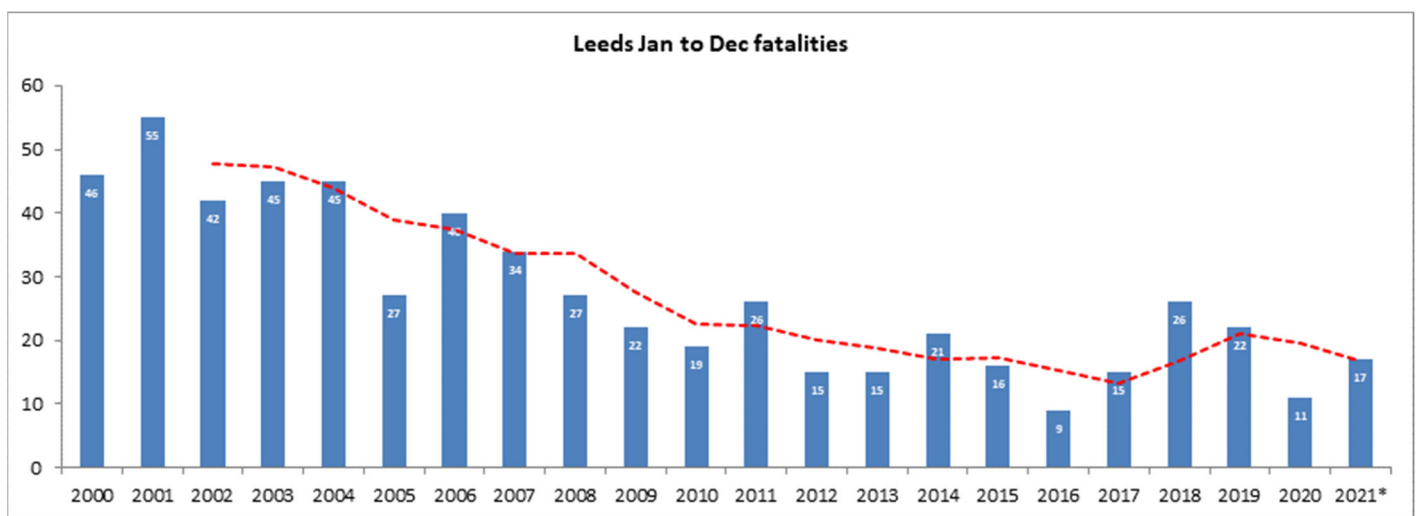


Figure 3. fatalities in Leeds, 2000-2021.

- 7 The Department for Transport evaluate the cost of collisions and casualties as below, taking into account a number of factors including disruption to the road network from collisions and

the emergency response to them incur significant economic costs. Every fatality prevented could have saved over £2 million. Every serious injury that is averted saves over £245,000.

Average value of prevention ¹ per reported casualty and per reported road accident ² GB 2020		
		2020 price base
Accident/casualty type	Cost per casualty	Cost per accident
Fatal	1,930,329	2,120,669
Serious	216,915	246,109
Slight	16,722	24,960
Average for all severities	75,711	101,415
Damage only	-	2,303
1 The costs were based on 2020 prices and values		
2 The number of reported road accidents were based on 2020 data		Last updated: 30 September 2021

8 In April 2021, West Yorkshire Police (WYP) changed the system being used to record road traffic collisions. The system now being used, called CRASH, automatically assigns a severity classification to each casualty according to the injuries recorded by the reporting Police Officer, whereas the previous system allowed the reporting officer to specify the severity directly. Where CRASH has been previously rolled out elsewhere in the country, there has generally been a significant increase in the proportion of reported casualties which are classified as serious. This seems to be being replicated in Leeds and across West Yorkshire. In light of this change to the reporting of road traffic collision severities, the Department for Transport has published an 'adjusted' dataset of casualties of road traffic collisions, which estimates the likelihood that a given casualty would have been recorded as slight or serious, had the CRASH system (or similar) been in use at the time. The DfT is recommending that this adjusted data is used in assessing long term trends in road traffic collisions. Figure 4 shows the adjusted KSI data for 2016-2019, alongside unadjusted data (officers are still working through the pre-2016 data, and data for 2020 and 2021 has not yet been published). In the period since CRASH was introduced in West Yorkshire, from 1st April 2021 to 31st December 2021, the provisional data suggests 321 people KSI in road traffic collisions in Leeds. This is 12% less than the average of 365 KSI in Leeds in April-December of the years 2016 to 2019 (in the adjusted data).

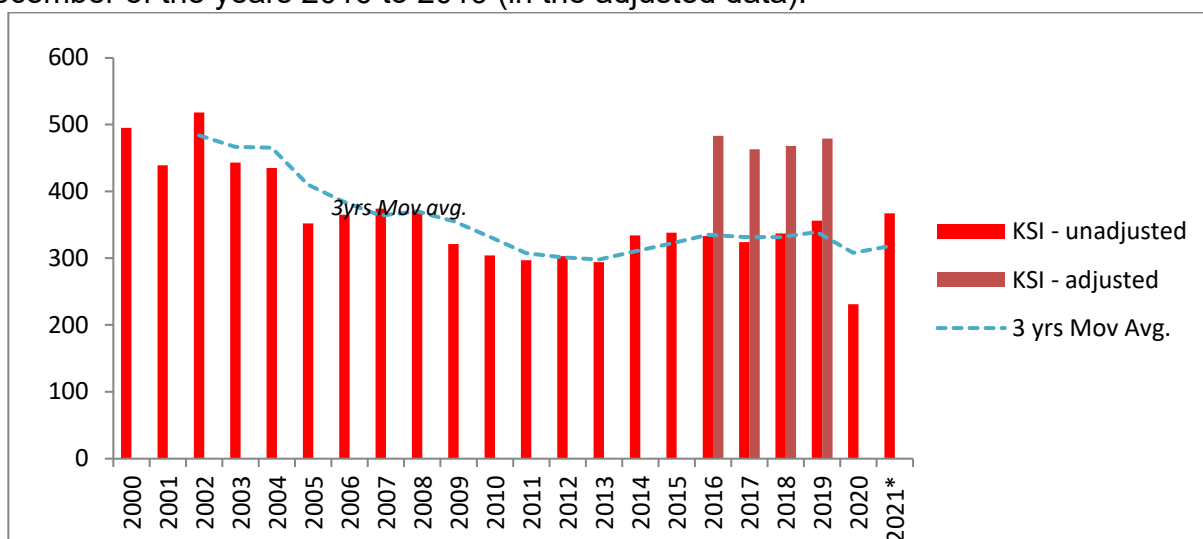


Figure 4. the adjusted KSI data for 2016-2019, alongside unadjusted data.

- 9 Whilst there are some positives to be taken from the progress made, certainly since 2000, the effective flat lining of reduction in injury collisions and the scale of the challenge clearly suggests if a step change in the current trends is the ambition then a completely new approach is necessary.
- 10 Too often in the past, for officers working in these areas, it seems there has been an over reliance on local highway authorities (LHAs) being requested to introduce measures to resolve road safety issues and for the police to enforce them, despite many, certainly the more serious collisions, being the result of anti- social driving, driver error and/or extenuating circumstances. This has often led to a high demand for road safety work which has always outstripped supply by a considerable margin. The high demand has inevitably led to the prioritisation of requests culminating in dissatisfaction and frustrations amongst staff working in these areas but also local communities and ward members.
- 11 The Vision Zero 2040 Strategy incorporates a Safe System approach to road safety which moves away from traditional approaches which assume that humans can be faultless road-users. Instead, it takes the view that all of those involved in planning, building, maintaining, managing, enforcing, or using the road as road users must accept responsibility for road safety, and act on this in an integrated and holistic way and an appropriate manner.

Along with the adoption of a 'safe system' approach the five key areas of focus or 'pillars' are:

- Safe Behaviours
- Safe Streets
- Safe Speeds
- Safe Vehicles and
- Post collision response.

The Strategy explains the casualty reduction actions and measures that will improve the safety of people in Leeds and help to support an increase in active travel.

What consultation and engagement has taken place?

- 12 Public consultation events and key stakeholder engagement is planned for early 2022. These will include presentations to the Community Committees and discussions with ward members. Online engagement will be undertaken via the Commonplace portal, a webinar and public drop-in session.
- 13 Following the publication of the draft strategy we will continue our engagement with key campaign groups; community groups; businesses and equality hubs to further explore issues and find out what residents, communities, businesses, and key stakeholders think about our proposals for Leeds.
- 14 Leeds City Council cannot achieve this level of change on its own and alongside the publication of the draft strategy and consultation we will also be asking for commitment from other businesses, organisations and individuals to help us achieve our objectives in the strategy.
- 15 In 2020, the Infrastructure, Investment and Inclusive Growth Scrutiny Board had set out an ambition to carry out an inquiry to look in more detail where people have been killed or seriously injured in road traffic collisions (RTCs) in Leeds and local road safety initiatives, particularly in relation to initiatives that aim to reduce speeding. In light of challenges

associated with the covid-19 pandemic, members determined that the inquiry should be deferred until 2021/22. The Board subsequently met in September and October 2021. At the October meeting, we heard from three parents whose children were killed by road crashes.

16 Discussions were centred around:

- Improving the safety of road environments in local communities, particularly for vulnerable road users and young people.
- Making best use of technology and policy development to manage behaviours such as speeding.
- Identifying further opportunities to influence behaviour change through effective and/or targeted education/information campaigns.

17 Exploring how partners can work together, in particular with people who have lived experience of road death

18 The intention is that each year, Leeds City Council will publish an annual report to record progress against the actions and measures to Chief Officer of Highways and Transportation. Progress reporting will also be made to the Infrastructure, Investment & Inclusive Growth Scrutiny Board. We will also explore how to best to work alongside bereaved families to achieve change, guided by them as well as by bereavement and trauma specialists where appropriate.

19 At the time of writing this report, the Scrutiny report on its inquiry into Vision Zero approach was awaited. It is expected imminently and its recommendations will be considered prior to the planned public consultations.

What are the resource implications?

20 To achieve the vision set out in this report by the due date, a wide range of interventions across a broad range of areas at a local and national level could be required. Some could be no /low cost e.g. encouragement/ education to change behaviour; others could be high cost. It is expected that significant investment by partners, businesses, local and central government will be required, certainly beyond the levels provided to date.

21 LCC will continue to work with WYCA and call on national government for the support, powers and funding to deliver the Leeds Safer Roads Vision Zero 2040 Strategy.

22 LCC should set the highest standards and set the example for others to follow; this may bring the need for further investment in terms of further training and education for those who drive for the Council and undertake business mileage. In addition, the ability to influence and potentially change the behaviour of 12000 Council employees who use the public highway on a regular basis is an area to examine.

23 We acknowledge that to achieve Vision Zero, we will need to go far beyond those areas covered as 'business as usual'. This will include the work of the Highways and Transportation Service as well as many other teams and services across the council. A council-wide review of how services and teams will respond to this important new agenda will be vital, as will a potential review of budgets.

24 The West Yorkshire Casualty Prevention (Safety Camera) Partnership manages cost recovery from driver retraining courses delivered as an alternative to prosecution and is used to sustain and develop the scope of safety camera operations and deliver additional road danger related preventative initiatives.

25 As highlighted earlier in the report, disruption to the road network from crashes, the cost of the emergency response to collisions and the loss of productivity present a significant economic cost. The Department for Transport (DfT) worked out that, in 2020, every fatality prevented could save the country just under £2 million. Every serious injury averted saves about £200,000. This includes cost saving to Council.

What are the legal implications?

26 The 1988 Road Traffic Act, Section 39 - puts a statutory duty on the local authority to undertake studies into road traffic collisions, and to take steps both to reduce and prevent them. The publication of this Strategy sets out the actions we intend taking that will help to reduce road traffic collisions and thereby discharge that statutory duty.

27 The proposals in this report update the Council's Road Safety Strategy and meet the requirements of this duty. There are no significant legal issues relating to the recommendations in this report. This report is eligible for Call-In.

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

28 The existing Leeds Safer Roads Action Plan 2017 – 2018 is out of date and no longer fit for purpose. This Strategy provides a new approach to roads safety and will provide short, medium and long term measures along with regular review to monitor progress to achieve the vision of eliminating collisions where people are killed or seriously injured.

29 Council could opt not to support the draft Strategy or could request further development prior to consultation.

30 Council cannot achieve this level of change on its own and alongside the publication of the draft strategy and the following consultation we will also be asking for commitment from other businesses, organisations and individuals to help us achieve our objectives in the strategy. Delivery through partnership is required along with recognition that Leeds City Council cannot be solely responsible for eliminating fatal and serious injury, one of the key Vision Zero concepts is that we all must accept responsibility.

31 Funding and staff resources to deliver the actions is required and must be considered as part of the annual budget review. Our current and future funding position remains uncertain. 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.

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

Inclusive Growth

Health and Wellbeing

Climate Emergency

32 The Leeds Safer Roads Vision Zero 2040 Strategy supports all three of the Council's key pillars. By preventing road death and serious injury and promoting increased active travel this will positively impact on access to jobs and services and inclusive growth. Active travel is an achievable way of increasing levels of activity which promotes health and wellbeing; and reductions in traffic levels and increases in active travel will reduce carbon emissions from transport.

Inclusive Growth

33 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. The draft

Strategy aims to improve road safety for all communities and improved infrastructure will enable walking and cycling, the cheapest modes of travel, and will expand opportunities in the most deprived localities.

Health and Wellbeing

- 34 The strategy objectives eliminate road danger through adoption of a vision zero approach.
- 35 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

Climate emergency

- 36 In March 2019 the Council declared a "Climate Emergency". The draft Strategy is aligned with our Air Quality Strategy 2021-2030 and its action plan.
- 37 We regularly hear from people during engagement that they do not cycle or walk because they are concerned about safety. Increasing cycling and walking would help Leeds achieve the emission reduction targets and safe active travel must be supported. The measures within this draft Strategy will support an increase in active travel trips by improving the safety of these modes.

Options, timescales and measuring success

a) What other options were considered?

- 38 A general update to the existing Leeds Safer Roads Action Plan was not considered to meet the vision for no road death and serious injury on our roads by 2040. A Vision Zero Strategy for Leeds is therefore the only option considered. West Yorkshire Police have recognised the lead that Leeds is taking in West Yorkshire to move forwards with this Strategy. A Vision Zero Strategy for West Yorkshire is also being proposed but the issues raised in the Leeds Safer Roads Vision Zero 2040 Strategy are aimed at addressing Leeds specific issues assessed from road casualty data pertaining to Leeds. Whilst there will no doubt be areas which address common issues the West Yorkshire Strategy will need to address Regional issues of concern and National lobbying.

b) How will success be measured?

- 39 Success will be reported against the Strategy's objectives and measures. The Action Plan sets out a series of measures which will be used to monitor progress against our objectives and targets. The KPIs are aligned to the Best Council Plan.
- 40 An annual progress report will be provided to the Chief Officer Highways and Transportation and KPI's reported on an annual basis to Executive Board.

c) What is the timetable for implementation?

- 41 The strategy sets out our actions until 2030.
- 42 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.
- 43 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 the monitoring and evaluation process to ensure the right schemes and policies are delivered for Leeds.

Appendices

- 44 Appendix 1 Leeds Safer Roads Vision Zero 2040 Consultation draft (final version will be available for the Exec Board meeting)
- 45 Appendix 2 Equality Diversity, Cohesion and Integration Assessment
- 46 Appendix 3 Consultation Plan

Background papers

- 47 None.