Bath & North East Somerset Council		
MEETING	**Cabinet**	
MEETING	**12th November 2014**	EXECUTIVE FORWARD PLAN REFERENCE: E 2712
TITLE:	**Getting Around Bath – A New Transport Strategy for Bath**	
WARD:	All Bath Wards	
AN OPEN PUBLIC ITEM		
List of attachments to this report: Getting Around Bath Transport Strategy Bath Transport Strategy Consultation Findings		

1 THE ISSUE

1.1 A new Transport Strategy for Bath was approved by Cabinet for consultation in May 2014. The Strategy has been well received and supported by the majority of those who responded and is now recommended for approval by Cabinet. The Cabinet are asked to recommend the Strategy to Council for Adoption at their meeting on 13th November.

2 RECOMMENDATION

2.1 That the Cabinet endorse the Getting Around Bath Transport Strategy and recommends that it be adopted by Council on 12th November 2014.

2.2 That Cabinet approves the capital budget of £350k in 2014/15 and £150k in 2015/16) towards the development of the P&R to the east of Bath.

3 RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS (FINANCE, PROPERTY, PEOPLE)

3.1 The Getting Around Bath Transport Strategy will support the growth proposed in the Council's Adopted Core Strategy and the Master Plan for the Bath City Riverside Enterprise Area. Its implementation will draw on a number of funding sources and decisions on individual projects will subject to the Council's annual budget process. In addition the development of individual sites including those within the Enterprise Area will contribute to the Strategy by being part of an integrated/co-ordinated development to reduce the impact of traffic on the city and where appropriate, making financial contributions to particular infrastructure needs.

3.2 The Getting Around Bath Transport Strategy will be delivered through a wide range of projects which will be funded from various funding sources principally, but not exclusively, the Integrated Transport Capital grant (received annually from Government) and bids for additional monies from the Single Growth Fund

managed by the West of England Local Enterprise Partnership; importantly the strategy will ensure that other funding opportunities can also be targeted. Funding associated with other key strategies which support the actions within 'Getting Around Bath' may also be targeted, if approved through the annual budget process.

3.3 Council in February gave provisional approval to £5.2m for the development of a new Park & Ride to the east Bath funded by Corporate borrowing. This £500k is the first element of the £5.2m. The annual profiling of expenditure is different from originally anticipated and this is reflected in the sum requested.

3.4 There is a small revenue reversion risk in the case that a capital project does not go ahead.

4 STATUTORY CONSIDERATIONS AND BASIS FOR PROPOSAL

4.1 Equalities, Sustainability equalities, planning, human rights and public health.

5 THE REPORT

5.1 Introduction

5.2 The Cabinet at its meeting in April 2013 agreed that a new Transport Strategy should be prepared for Bath in the light of the housing and economic growth proposed in the Council's Draft Core Strategy and the emerging Bath City Riverside Enterprise Area. The strategy is needed to support this growth agenda but also to improve the environment within the city itself which is damaged by the impact of traffic and congestion. The Strategy is designed to set out an agreed long term vision for Transport which will have broad and enduring agreement. The longevity of the Strategy is key to providing a consistent vision for the city and to accommodate the ambitious housing and jobs targets set out in the Core Strategy. The Transport Strategy is being prepared in tandem with the Placemaking Plan in light of the interrelationship of the two initiatives.

5.3 The Strategy was subject to public consultation during the early summer, details of the results of this consultation have been independently analysed by Mott MacDonald, who prepared the Strategy, and are summarised in Appendix 1. The public consultation was launched by Sir Peter Hendy, chair of the Bath Transport Commission on 26th June. The strategy had been reviewed by the Transport Commission at several meetings and has received their support. Sir Peter Hendy has offered to provide an endorsement for the Strategy which could be included as a Forward when published.

5.4 The Strategy builds upon existing initiatives including:

- the Bath Transport Package such as the expanded Park and Ride Sites and Variable Message Signs;
- the Better Bus Area funding by introducing further bus priority measures; and
- the opportunities offered by Network Rail Electrification of Great West Mainline.

5.5 **Vision:** The Strategy encompasses the following vision for transport in Bath:

> *"Bath will enhance its unique status by adopting measures that promote sustainable transport and reduce the intrusion of vehicles, particularly in the historic core. This will enable more economic activity and growth, while enhancing its special character and environment and improving the quality of life for local people*

5.6 This vision was well received during the public consultation and it is not recommended that this is changed.

5.7 The Strategy has considered, in broad terms, the impact of the growth in the Core Strategy and taken forward in the Enterprise Area. It recommends a co-ordinated approach to manage the growth in travel which is going to take place over the next 20 years. Robust parking standards and improvements to public transport will be important in accommodating this growth. Key to this will be accommodating the increase in commuting into the city from surrounding areas. Both the Metro West project, which will improve local rail services, and the electrification of the Great Western Mainline, which will improve regional services, will provide improved public transport into the city. This will be complemented by other measures such as new and expanded Park and Ride.

5.8 Within the city walking and cycling with improved bus services will be priorities. Off-street parking will remain important to supporting a strong city centre economy and a balanced approach is recommended. The Strategy proposes a review of public off-street parking to ensure the proposal to retain 500 parking spaces is sufficient to maintain the vitality of the city centre economy and to encourage modal shift.

5.9 The majority of the recommendations within the draft Strategy were supported in the consultation (see Appendix 2). The following are the main changes that Cabinet are asked to endorse in agreeing the final Strategy.

5.10 **Access for All:**

5.11 The Strategy proposes that we establish an expert panel to provide advice on how those with special needs can be accommodated in through the transport Strategy. This issue will continue to emerge as elements of the Strategy are brought forward and have been considered in detail in the recent designs for Stall Street and Seven Dials. Part of this work will involve an independent review of how the city centre is accessed, building on best practice from York.

5.12 **Air Quality:** Improving air quality will be key to the future of the city. Almost all of the measures within the Strategy should help with this objective. The Strategy recommends we continue to investigate the potential for a Low Emission Zone.

5.13 **Walking and Cycling:** One headline in the Strategy is that we aim to make the city of Bath Europe's most walkable city and this will be one of the most important messages we will need to promote. In addition, cycling will be an essential element of this aim. Sustrans have recently completed a review of cycling routes within the city and the proposed routes for improvement have been incorporated into the Strategy. This study will be used to prioritise future expenditure on cycle network and will be integrated into projects as they emerge.

5.14 **Coaches:** The Strategy recognises that Coaches are an essential part of the transport network which services the city. An interim coach park is recommended at Weston Island to allow the North Quays redevelopment to be taken forward. There are 2 outstanding areas of work which will still need to be concluded. A longer term permanent coach park and an alternative coach drop-off within the city centre.

5.15 **Environmental improvements:** The Strategy suggests that we develop a programme of environmental improvements to reduce the impact of traffic within the city centre building on the approach set out in the Public Realm and Movement Strategy and developed subsequently.

5.16 **P&R:** The Strategy confirms the need for a new Park and Ride to the east of Bath as an essential complementary measure to accommodate the increased demand for travel from within the Enterprise Area. The Strategy recognises that there are many advantages to a rail based Park and Ride but the time that this might take to be brought forward may mean that an interim bus based Park and Ride may be necessary. Work to identify if this is the case is currently underway. In addition the traffic modelling and environmental work to establish which site could be brought forward and how many spaces it might contain is also in progress and the budget to finance this is identified in the previous sections of the report. This will allow a preferred site to be identified during the summer of 2015 and promoted through the Placemaking Plan.

5.17 There may, in addition, be a need to expand the existing Park and Ride sites at some point in the future should demand continue to grow and be required and to minimise the impact of traffic generated by the development proposed by the Core Strategy and within the Enterprise Area.

5.18 **Through Traffic:** The inadequate nature of the national road network east of Bath has long been recognised and the Council has a long standing wish to remove 'through traffic', and in particular HGVs, from the city. The Air Quality benefits of this simple measure are well understood. The Strategy recommends that the Council work with Wiltshire Council and the Highways Agency to develop a solution to the problems of through traffic. This work is already underway as well.

5.19 **Off Street Parking:** As already mentioned a balanced approach is recommended regarding the off-street car parks within the Enterprise Area. Business interests recognise the benefits of other improvements recommended in the strategy but do not want these introduced at the expense of maintaining an adequate supply of parking for shoppers and visitors.

5.20 **Other measures:** The strategy recognises the important role of travel plan, city car clubs and other measures, many of which are being implemented by the Council at the moment. There are specific recommendations for taxi. Finally the Strategy highlights to potential to use the river more.

5.21 As proposals emerge to deliver the outcomes identified by the Strategy they will be subject to a detailed appraisal (which will include a funding analysis) on an individual basis.

5.22 **Rail:** The Strategy recognises that the increase in the capacity of both local and regional rail, delivered by the Metro West project and the electrification of the

GW Mainline respectively, will provide improvements to the public transport network. These improvements, particularly the ½ hourly services to Oldfield Park, will support the development of the Enterprise Area making it accessible to non-car users. The Council has recently received a report on the feasibility of re-opening a railway Station in Saltford which could provide a more sustainable way for residents to travel into Bath. Officers are still considering this work which will be reported to a future Cabinet meeting.

6 RATIONALE

6.1 The draft strategy has emerged following extensive research and discussion with stakeholders last year. It has built on the representation made at the initial conference held in September 2012. The proposals are based on current policies and the approach contained within the Joint Local Transport Plan. The authority now wishes to approve the strategy to inform and support both the Enterprise Area Masterplan and the Core Strategy and other key initiatives.

7 OTHER OPTIONS CONSIDERED

7.1 The strategy has emerged following extensive research and consultation which considered a wide range of options. A report on the consultation is attached to the report for information and the background report is available as a background document.

8 CONSULTATION

8.1 Strategic Management Team, Section 151 Officer, Cabinet member for Transport, PTE Scrutiny, Stakeholders and the Bath Transport Commission. In addition there was a period of public consultation in June/July this year the results of which are summarised in the final Strategy itself.

9 RISK MANAGEMENT

9.1 A risk assessment related to the issue and recommendations has been undertaken, in compliance with the Council's decision making risk management guidance.

Contact person	Peter Dawson 01225-395181
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Background papers	Supporting Strategy Report revD Oct14
Please contact the report author if you need to access this report in an alternative format	

Appendix 1 – Getting Around Bath Transport Strategy
Appendix 2 - Bath Transport Strategy Consultation Findings