

Bath & North East Somerset Council

MEETING	Cabinet	
MEETING	14 th May 2014	EXECUTIVE FORWARD PLAN REFERENCE:
		E 2650
TITLE:	“Getting Around Bath – A New Transport Strategy for Bath” proposed consultation	
WARD:	All Bath Wards	
AN OPEN PUBLIC ITEM		
List of attachments to this report: Getting Around Bath Launch Document – Mott MacDonald		

1 THE ISSUE

- 1.1 A new Transport Strategy has been prepared entitled ‘Getting Around Bath’ and the draft is now ready for formal consultation with stakeholders. The Strategy was launched at the Bath Conference on 30th April.

2 RECOMMENDATION

- 2.1 That the Cabinet endorse the recommendations and the Getting Around Bath Launch Document as attached for consultation.

3 RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS (FINANCE, PROPERTY, PEOPLE)

- 3.1 The Getting Around Bath Transport Strategy will support the growth proposed in the Council’s agreed Draft Core Strategy and the emerging Master Plan work for the Bath City Riverside Enterprise Area. Its implementation will draw on a number of sources of funding and decisions on individual projects will be taken through the Council’s annual budget process. In addition the development of individual sites within the Enterprise Area will be expected to 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 future budgets principally, but not exclusively, the Integrated Transport Capital funds (received annually from Government) and bids for additional monies from the Single Growth Fund managed by the WoE LEP. In addition there may be opportunities to bid from funding from other sources. Other Council Strategies will also support the Transport Strategy particularly the Masterplan for the Enterprise Area and the Leisure and Health and Well Being Strategies. Projects will have to be subject to the Council’s normal approval processes including its annual budget setting.

3.3 The Cabinet approved a budget of £140,000 for the development of a new Transport Strategy for Bath which will fund the consultation recommended below.

4 STATUTORY CONSIDERATIONS AND BASIS FOR PROPOSAL

4.1 Equalities and Sustainability.

5 THE REPORT

5.1 The Cabinet at its meeting in April 2013 agreed that a new Transport Strategy should be prepared for the city of Bath in the light of the housing and economic growth proposed in the Council's agreed 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 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.

5.2 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
- Network Rail Electrification.

5.3 **Vision** Mott MacDonald, who were commissioned to prepare the Strategy, have developed 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

5.4 The recommendations of the Strategy are set out in the Appendix to this report. Its main proposals are for:

- (1) A walking/cycling strategy to make Bath the UK's most walkable city
- (2) A parking strategy to support the economic growth but at the same time reducing the amount of off-street spaces within the city centre
- (3) Supporting greater use of buses and rail to reduce the number of cars entering the city.
- (4) Continue to expand our existing P&R sites, where we can, to reduce the number of parking spaces within the city.
- (5) Better management of HGVs within the city

- (6) Finding a new location for coaches to park once they have dropped off visitors in the city centre.
- 5.5 The Getting Around Bath Transport Strategy is a high level review of existing transport policies and commitments in the light of the Council's housing and economic growth agenda within the city. It looks to develop a set of policies to support this growth. The statutory considerations will be met when individual proposals are brought forward for decision. The consultation will enable us to obtain views on the main principles established within the Strategy prior to more detailed work being undertaken.
- 5.6 As proposals emerge to deliver the outcomes identified by the Strategy they will be subject to a detailed appraisal on an individual basis as each is brought forward.
- 5.7 Cabinet will see that the emphasis within the strategy is on improved walking and cycling which has highlighted a need to create a new forum for engagement with representatives of these groups and those representing disability groups to engage and seek their endorsement of the strategy. It is therefore proposed that an Access Forum is created
- 5.8 The Cabinet is asked to endorse the Strategy as attached in Appendix 2 as a basis for consultation.

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 undertake a final period of consultation to allow the strategy to inform and support both the Enterprise Area Masterplan and the Core Strategy.

7 OTHER OPTIONS CONSIDERED

- 7.1 The draft strategy has emerged following extensive research and consultation which considered a wide range of options.

8 CONSULTATION

- 8.1 Strategic Management Team, Section 151 Officer, Cabinet member for Transport, Stakeholders and the Bath Transport Commission.

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
Background papers	None
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Appendix 1 – Recommendations of the Strategy

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Recommendation 1. That a strong emphasis should be given to reducing the impact of vehicles by supporting trips that are made by means other than car, particularly walking and cycling with more people using improved bus and rail networks.

Recommendation 2. That walking be given highest priority in the strategy. It creates a healthier population, an ambience to the historic core of the city and reduces the number of local car journeys. Bath should be an exemplar walking city demonstrating commitment to sustainable transport at a European level.

Recommendation 3. That consideration for the needs of people with mobility impairments is regarded as a core element of the strategy and the measures included within it.

Recommendation 4. That cycling be promoted through better cycling routes with appropriate infrastructure where needed, building a cycling culture for people of all abilities.

Recommendation 5. Vehicle movement should be better managed, particularly in those parts of the city where there is least space available.

Recommendation 6. That the Enterprise Area is developed as part of an integrated approach with strong sustainable transport links to the city centre and rail stations. The development should focus initially on office and related development at the eastern end of the site and have limited car parking. Subsequent housing development should also focus on accessibility by non-car modes.

Recommendation 7. Car parking is a central feature of the strategy, enabling other components to take effect. The policy of reducing central area public parking and expanding long stay capacity at Park and Ride sites should continue, enabling greater emphasis to be given to walking, cycling and bus services in the historic core and on key corridors.

Recommendation 8. That further work is required to establish the need for increased Park and Ride capacity as part of a wider parking strategy and to undertake a detailed assessment of sites to the East of the City

Recommendation 9. Improved bus services, with ticketing and other improvements and measures to improve reliability, will provide alternative travel options to car use, promoted through travel plans and comprehensive marketing.

Recommendation 10. Travel plans should be promoted for all main activities in the city to support a move from car use to other means of travel:

- Travel plans will be built into the planning process;
- Existing plans will be refreshed for workplaces and education establishments;
- Travel need for healthcare, particularly the Royal United Hospital will be considered;
- Access to rail stations (currently around 100 trains per day serving Oldfield Park and 340 serving Bath Spa) will be reviewed; and
- Travel plans will be developed working with transport providers: train and bus operators, cycle shops, etc.

Recommendation 11. Maintain the taxi network as part of the wider range of transport options.

Recommendation 12. The growth in rail capacity and the range of services available as part of the Great Western Main Line electrification scheme and the development of MetroWest will support significantly more rail journeys. Access to local stations will need to be improved and new stations may be appropriate. Better services should be promoted to link Bath with the west Wiltshire towns.

Recommendation 13. That coaches continue to be promoted as an important means of bringing visitors to the city. A replacement coach park should be provided at either Weston Island or Odd Down Park and Ride site. The city centre set down/pick up point should be Terrace Walk (with some adjustments).

Recommendation 14. That freight movements be considered more fully, working with businesses and operators, particularly to promote consolidation of deliveries and to better manage loading and unloading arrangements.