

| <b>Bath &amp; North East Somerset Council</b> |                                       |
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| MEETING/<br>DECISION<br>MAKER:                | <b>CES Scrutiny Panel</b>             |
| MEETING/<br>DECISION<br>DATE:                 | <b>23 OCTOBER 2025</b>                |
| TITLE:  | <b>The Movement Strategy for Bath</b> |
| WARD:   | All                                   |

## **1 THE ISSUE**

- 1.1 Transport accounts for 36% of carbon related emissions within Bath and North East Somerset Council, impacting the Council goal to achieve Net Zero by 2030. Following the Journey to Net Zero Strategy in 2021, a Circulation Plan, now named a Movement Strategy was identified to recognise Bath's historic layout and constrained road network. The Movement Strategy proposes a shift away from years of car dependency by improving alternatives such as walking, wheeling, cycling and public transport. This will not only reduce transport emissions and congestion but also enhance the quality of life for everyone who lives in, works in, or visits the city.

## **2 THE REPORT**

- 2.1 In 2021, Bath & North East Somerset Council pledged to introduce a circulation plan as a standalone project as part of the Journey to Net Zero (J2NZ) document. Since then, this commitment has evolved into a comprehensive Movement Strategy. Why do we need a Movement Strategy?
- (1) Transport accounts for over 30% of Bath's carbon emissions and nitrogen dioxide emissions from transport has been linked to over 300 premature deaths a year in the West of England
  - (2) 36% of trips happen entirely within the city—many are short and could be walked, wheeled or cycled
  - (3) Public transport is often delayed by traffic, making it less reliable. Only 62% are satisfied with bus reliability and punctuality within B&NES
- 2.2 It's not just about congestion, but about how people move, how space is shared, and how we can shape a more sustainable, inclusive future for Bath.
- 2.3 Currently, around 294,000 trips are made each day on the Bath transport network, comprising journeys within the city, to and from Bath, and through Bath. With the expected population growth in the region over the next 10 years, if no

intervention is made, forecasts suggest an increase of 21,000 additional daily trips (7% growth). When considered alongside the wider West of England region, congestion is estimated to cost the regional economy approximately £800,000 per day, driven by lost productivity, longer journey times, and reduced reliability across the transport network.

2.4 A Movement Strategy is required to reimagine how we use, and view, our streets. It should aim to rebalance the city's transport network to better serve residents, businesses and visitors, while supporting our climate goals. The objectives underpinning the Movement Strategy reflect the Council's Corporate Strategy:

- (1) Create a high-quality place – this aligns with the Corporate Strategy to provide healthy lives and places. This involves working with health and other partners to tackle inequalities, promote healthy places, and support people to live healthier lives
- (2) Improve travel choices – this aligns with the Corporate Strategy to provide more travel choices, making it easier for people to walk, wheel and use public transport to reduce transport emissions.
- (3) Reduce vehicular traffic volumes – this aligns with the Corporate Strategy to create clean, safe and vibrant neighbourhoods. This would be achieved by working with local communities to promote civic pride and preventative approaches.

2.5 A Movement Strategy is necessary to provide the framework for delivering the Journey to Net Zero ambitions. The Strategy should identify measures, specifically for the city of Bath, that will help to significantly reduce transport-related emissions.

2.6 The Council will consult on a draft Movement Strategy from Tuesday 14<sup>th</sup> October to Friday 28<sup>th</sup> November. The aim of the consultation will be to listen to residents. The consultation is proposed to be conducted jointly with the Local Plan public consultation to make it easier for a wide range of people to have their say.

2.7 Following the public consultation the Movement Strategy will be revised to reflect the comments made and adopted in 2026.

### **3 CLIMATE CHANGE**

3.1 The Movement Strategy sets out a shift away from decades of car dependency by prioritising sustainable travel options such as walking, wheeling, cycling, and public transport. This shift is designed to reduce transport-related carbon emissions and congestion, while also improving air quality and enhancing the overall quality of life for residents, workers, and visitors.

3.2 Once implemented, the strategy will directly support the Council's commitment to achieving net zero carbon emissions by 2030. By reducing reliance on private vehicles and encouraging low-carbon modes of transport, the strategy will help to lower one of the largest contributors of local emissions. In doing so, it will also increase our climate resilience, making the city better prepared for the environmental challenges ahead.

## 4 OTHER OPTIONS CONSIDERED

- 4.1 An alternative to delivering the Movement Strategy would be to take no action. However, this option was rejected as Bath and North East Somerset Council declared a climate emergency in 2019. Without a plan in place, future growth would likely lead to increased congestion and rising transport emissions, undermining the Council's environmental commitments.
- 4.2 The Movement Strategy analysis confirmed that with no action taken, there will be a 7% increase in total car journeys over a 10-year period, resulting in additional transport related emissions.
- 4.3 The Movement Strategy represents the next critical step in achieving the carbon reduction targets set out in the Journey to Net Zero. It provides a proactive and coordinated approach to managing transport demand, reducing emissions, and supporting sustainable development within Bath.

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| <b>Background papers</b>   | See the website for the main report and appendices:<br><a href="https://banestransport.co.uk/">https://banestransport.co.uk/</a> |
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