

Public Document Pack

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Date: 9 July 2021

To all Members of the Council

** Physical Meeting

While the meeting will take place in person at the Town Hall it will also be live broadcast on YouTube (see link below). In line with ongoing public health advice, members of the public and media are encouraged to watch the meeting online and not to attend in person. Should you wish to attend in person we ask that you notify the Contact Officer above at least 24 hours before the meeting as this will help us to manage the meeting safely.

Dear Sir or Madam

Summons to attend the Council Meeting – MONDAY, 19 July 2021 at 3.00 pm New Council Chamber, Town Hall

You are requested to attend the Meeting of the Council to be held at 3.00 pm on Monday, 19 July 2021 at the Town Hall, Weston-super-Mare.

Please Note that any member of the press and public may listen in to proceedings at this meeting via the weblink below –

<https://youtu.be/sqiZ9QD3HC4>

The agenda is set out below.

Yours faithfully

Assistant Director Legal & Governance and Monitoring Officer

This document and associated papers may be made available in a different format on request.

Agenda

1. **Public Participation, petitions, and deputations (Standing Orders 2(vi) and 17)**

The Council will hear any person who wishes to address it in accordance with the Standing Orders. The Chairman will select the order of the matters to be heard. Each person will be limited to a period of five minutes for public participation and deputations and three minutes for petitions. This section of the meeting must not exceed 30 minutes and discussion must not refer to a current planning application.

The Council will also receive questions from the public and provide answers thereto, subject to the Chairman being satisfied that the questions are relevant to the business of the meeting.

Requests must be submitted in writing to the Assistant Director Legal & Governance and Monitoring Officer, or to the officer mentioned at the top of this agenda letter, by noon on the day before the meeting and the request must detail the subject matter of the address.

2. **Apologies for absence**

3. **Petitions to be presented by Members (Standing Order No. 16)**

These have to be received by the Assistant Director Legal & Governance and Monitoring Officer by 12.00 noon on the day of the meeting.

4. **Declaration of Disclosable Pecuniary Interest (Standing Order 37)**

A Member must declare any disclosable pecuniary interest where it relates to any matter being considered at the meeting. A declaration of a disclosable pecuniary interest should indicate the interest and the agenda item to which it relates. A Member is not permitted to participate in this agenda item by law and should immediately leave the meeting before the start of any debate.

If the Member leaves the meeting in respect of a declaration, he or she should ensure that the Chairman is aware of this before he or she leaves to enable their exit from the meeting to be recorded in the minutes in accordance with Standing Order 37.

5. **Minutes - 20 April 2021 (Pages 7 - 30)**

20 April 2021, to approve as a correct record (attached)

6. **Motions by Members (Standing Order No. 14) (Pages 31 - 34)**

(1) **Motion to Review and Strengthen the Council's Low Carbon Advertising Policies**

Councillor Petty (attached)

(2) **Planning for the Future and the Planning Bill**

Councillor Bell, on behalf of the Liberal Democrat Group (attached)

7. Matters referred from previous meeting

None

8. Chairman's announcements

9. Leader's announcements

10. Chief Executive's announcements

**11. Forward Plan dated 2 July 2021 (Pages 35 - 56)
(attached)**

12. Policy and Scrutiny Panel Report

None

13. Corporate Parenting (Pages 57 - 62)

Report of Councillor Gibbons (attached)

14. Question Time (Standing Order No. 18)

Questions must relate to issues relevant to the work of the Executive. Question Time will normally last for 20 minutes.

Members are requested to supply the Democratic Services Officer with a note of each question at, or just after, the meeting. A summary note of each question will be included in an appendix to the minutes.

15. Report and matters referred from the Executive, 23 June 2021

None

16. Reports and matters referred from the Policy/Overview and Scrutiny Panels other than those dealt with elsewhere on this agenda (Pages 63 - 70)

- (1) **Peer Review Member Working Group**
Response to Peer Review recommendations on Planning (attached)

17. Reports and matters referred from the other Committees other than those dealt with elsewhere on this agenda

None

18. Heritage and Regeneration Champion Report (Pages 71 - 76)

Report from Councillor Crockford-Hawley (attached)

19. Reports on joint arrangements and external organisations and questions relating thereto (Pages 77 - 80)

- (1) **Avon Fire Authority**
Report from Councillor Payne (attached)
 - (2) **Avon and Somerset Police and Crime Panel**
Report from Councillor Westwood (attached)
 - (3) **West of England Combined Authority Joint Scrutiny Committee**
No report
- 20. Development Programme: Business Case and Commissioning Plan for Development of Council-owned Land to the south of The Uplands, Nailsea**
(Pages 81 - 96)
- Report of Councillor Canniford (attached)
- 21. Submission of Bid to the Levelling Up Fund** (Pages 97 - 108)
- Report of Councillor Canniford (attached)
- 22. Adoption of the North Somerset Active Travel Strategy (ATS)** (Pages 109 - 214)
- Report of Councillor Davies (attached)
- 23. MetroWest Phase 1 - Delivery Update (includes exempt appendix)** (Pages 215 - 246)
(appendix exempt under para 3 - Information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the authority holding that information))
- Report of Councillor Bridger (attached)
- 24. Urgent business permitted by the Local Government Act 1972 (if any)**
- For a matter to be considered as an urgent item, the following question must be addressed: "What harm to the public interest would flow from leaving it until the next meeting?" If harm can be demonstrated, then it is open to the Chairman to rule that it be considered as urgent. Otherwise the matter cannot be considered urgent within the statutory provisions.
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Exempt Items

Should the Council wish to consider a matter as an Exempt Item, the following resolution should be passed -

"(1) That the press, public, and officers not required by the Members, the Chief Executive or the Director, to remain during the exempt session, be excluded from the meeting during consideration of the following item of business on the ground that its consideration will

involve the disclosure of exempt information as defined in Section 100I of the Local Government Act 1972.”

Mobile phones and other mobile devices

All persons attending the meeting are requested to ensure that these devices are switched to silent mode. The chairman may approve an exception to this request in special circumstances.

Filming and recording of meetings

The proceedings of this meeting may be recorded for broadcasting purposes.

Anyone wishing to film part or all of the proceedings may do so unless the press and public are excluded for that part of the meeting or there is good reason not to do so, as directed by the Chairman. Any filming must be done as unobtrusively as possible from a single fixed position without the use of any additional lighting, focusing only on those actively participating in the meeting and having regard to the wishes of any members of the public present who may not wish to be filmed. As a matter of courtesy, anyone wishing to film proceedings is asked to advise the Chairman or the Assistant Director Legal & Governance and Monitoring Officer’s representative before the start of the meeting so that all those present may be made aware that it is happening.

Members of the public may also use Facebook and Twitter or other forms of social media to report on proceedings at this meeting.

Emergency Evacuation Procedure

On hearing the alarm – (a continuous two tone siren)

Leave the room by the nearest exit door. Ensure that windows are closed.
Last person out to close the door.

Do not stop to collect personal belongings.

Do not use the lifts.

Follow the green and white exit signs and make your way to the assembly point.

Do not re-enter the building until authorised to do so by the Fire Authority.

Go to Assembly Point C – Outside the offices formerly occupied by Stephen & Co

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Minutes

of the Annual Meeting of

The Council

Tuesday, 20th April 2021

held via Microsoft Teams

Meeting Commenced: 18:00 Meeting Concluded: 20:46

Councillors:

P David Shopland (Chairman)

P Richard Westwood (Vice Chairman)

P Marc Aplin (joined after attendance roll call)

P Nigel Ashton

P Mike Bell

P Mike Bird

P Steve Bridger

P Peter Bryant

P Gill Bute

P Mark Canniford

P Ashley Cartman

P John Cato

P Caritas Charles

P Caroline Cherry

P James Clayton (joined after attendance roll call)

P Sarah Codling

P Andy Cole

P Peter Crew

P John Crockford-Hawley

P Ciaran Cronnelly

P Mark Crosby

P Donald Davies

P Catherine Gibbons

A Hugh Gregor (unable to join for technical reasons)

P Wendy Griggs

P Ann Harley

P Karin Haverson

P Sandra Hearne

P David Hitchins

P Steve Hogg

P Nicola Holland

P Ruth Jacobs

P Huw James

P Patrick Keating

P John Ley-Morgan

P Stuart McQuillan
P Ian Parker
P Robert Payne
Marcia Pepperall
P Bridget Petty
P Lisa Pilgrim
P Terry Porter
P Geoffrey Richardson
P Tim Snaden
P Mike Solomon
P James Tonkin
Stuart Treadaway
P Richard Tucker
P Roz Willis
Vacancy

P: Present

A: Apologies for absence submitted

Officers in attendance: Jo Walker (Chief Executive), Lucy Shomali (Director of Place), Sheila Smith (Director of Children's Services), Matt Lenny (Director of Public Health), Hayley Verrico (Director of Adult Social Care), Nicholas Brain (Assistant Director Governance & Monitoring Officer), Vanessa Andrews (Corporate Services Directorate), Hazel Brinton (Corporate Services Directorate), Sue Efford (Corporate Services Directorate), Mike Riggall (Corporate Services Directorate), Melanie Watts (Corporate Services Directorate)

COU Chairman's Welcome

1

The Chairman welcomed everyone to this virtual Annual Council meeting and referred to the procedure to be followed.

COU Minute's Silence for HRH The Duke of Edinburgh

2

Before moving to the formal business of the meeting, Council observed a minute's silence in remembrance of HRH The Duke of Edinburgh.

Following the minute's silence, and at the invitation of the Chairman, the Assistant Director Governance and Monitoring Officer took a roll call of members to confirm attendance at the start of the meeting. Additional members joined the meeting after the roll call.

COU Election of the Chairman of the Council for the Municipal Year 2021/22 3 (Agenda Item 2)

Motion: Moved by Councillor Gibbons, seconded by Councillor Cato and

Resolved: that Councillor Richard Westwood be elected Chairman of the Council for the 2021/22 Municipal Year.

Councillor Westwood in the Chair

Councillor Westwood addressed the Council, thanking councillors for the honour of electing him as Chairman. He looked forward to returning to some form of normality with the ongoing lifting of Covid restrictions, and looking back over the past year was proud of the way in which councillors, staff and the community had worked together to get through the pandemic.

He reported that he was intending to hold a Civic Service in September and had appointed the Rev Fran Binding, vicar of All Saints, Kingston Seymour as his chaplain. He also hoped to arrange a Christmas event in early December.

On behalf of the Council, Councillor Westwood expressed his thanks and appreciation to Councillor Shopland as outgoing Chairman for his service to the Council.

Councillor Shopland addressed the Council, expressing his thanks and appreciation to those who had helped and supported him during his extended two-year term of office. He was encouraged by the way the council and its members had worked together as a united body and achieved a great deal for the community over what had been a difficult year. It had been an honour to serve as Chairman and he congratulated Councillor Westwood on his election and extended his best wishes to him for his term of office. These sentiments were echoed by other councillors throughout the meeting.

COU 4 Appointment of the Vice-Chairman of the Council for the Municipal Year 2021/22 (Agenda Item 3)

Motion: Moved by Councillor Petty, seconded by Councillor Crosby and

Resolved: that Councillor Karin Haverson be appointed Vice-Chairman of the Council for the 2021/22 Municipal Year.

The Chairman congratulated Councillor Haverson on her appointment.

At the invitation of the Chairman, Councillor Haverson thanked councillors for appointing her and stated she would endeavour to serve the council to the best of her ability.

COU 5 Public Participation, petitions, and deputations (Standing Orders 2(vi) and 17, as amended by new Standing Order 5A) (Agenda Item 4)

The Chairman drew members' attention to the four submissions received that had been published with the supplementary papers for the meeting, as follows:

1. 20mph Speed Limits: Stephen Kinsella, Clevedon Resident
2. 20mph Zones: Dr John Simmons, Winscombe Resident
3. Active Travel Fund funding and implementation of 20 mph speed limits in North Somerset: Cresten Boase, Sandford Resident
4. Test and Trace System: Dr Martin Hime, Clevedon Resident

The Chairman thanked the members of the public for their submissions and proposed that they be noted and addressed under the relevant agenda item later in the meeting or referred to the relevant Executive Member as appropriate.

COU 6 Petitions to be presented by Members (Standing Order No. 16) (Agenda Item 5)

The Chairman drew members' attention to the two petitions published with the supplementary papers for the meeting and invited Councillor Keating and Councillor Gibbons to present them.

1. Changes to the A368 in Churchill

Councillor Keating presented a petition signed by 63 residents of Dinghurst Lane requesting the council to make alterations to the A368 in Churchill to make it a safer road for residents and pedestrians.

The Chairman thanked Councillor Keating for the petition and proposed that it be noted and referred to the relevant Executive Member.

2. Rainbow Crossing for the High Street, Weston-super-Mare

Councillor Gibbons presented a petition with 379 signatories calling on North Somerset Council to not only agree but to fund the painting in the colours of the Pride flag of a crossing on the High Street to brighten up the town centre and champion the commitment to the LGBTQ+ community.

The Chairman thanked Councillor Gibbons for the petition and proposed that it be noted and referred to the relevant Executive Member.

COU 7 Declaration of Disclosable Pecuniary Interest (Standing Order 37) (Agenda Item 6)

None

COU 8 Minutes of the meeting held on 23 February 2021 (Agenda Item 7)

Resolved: that the minutes of the meeting be approved as a correct record.

COU 9 Motions by Members (Standing Order No. 14) Local authorities' mental health challenge (Councillor Charles) (Agenda Item 8 (1))

In introducing his Motion, Councillor Charles referred to the current mental health emergency arising from the impact of the pandemic, outlining recent research findings and stressing the crucial role of the council in improving the mental health of everyone in the local community and tackling some of the widest and most entrenched inequalities in health.

Motion: Moved by Councillor Charles and seconded by Councillor Holland

"This council notes:

- 1 in 4 people will experience a mental health problem in any given year.
- The World Health Organisation has highlighted the adequate provision of mental health services one of its key priorities for 2021.
- Mental ill health costs some £105 billion each year in England alone.
- People with a severe mental illness die up to 20 years younger than their peers in the UK.
- There is often a circular relationship between mental health and issues such as housing, employment, family problems or debt.
- Just over three out of 4 suicides (76%) are by men and suicide is the biggest cause of death for men under 35.

This council further notes:

- The Pandemic has caused an unprecedented rise in issues around collective and individual mental health in the last 12 months.
- The Centre for Mental Health forecasts a rise in those in poor mental health to 8.5 million this includes an additional 3.2 million who have never previously reported mental health concerns.
- The centre also predicts that over 200k of NHS workers may need support including nearly 37 k for PTSD.
- A recent survey by the charity Young Minds found that 67% of the young people they surveyed (aged 13-25) believed the Pandemic will have a long-term effect on their mental health.

This council believes:

- As a local authority we have a crucial role to play in improving the mental health of everyone in our community and tackling some of the widest and most entrenched inequalities in health.
- Mental health should be a priority across all the local authority's areas of responsibility, including housing, community safety and planning.
- All councillors, whether members of the Executive or Scrutiny and in our community and casework roles, can play a positive role in championing mental health on an individual and strategic basis.

This council resolves:

- To sign the Local Authorities' Mental Health Challenge run by Centre for Mental Health, Mental Health Foundation, Mental Health Providers Forum, Mind, Rethink Mental Illness, Royal College of Psychiatrists and YoungMinds.
- We commit to appoint an elected member as 'mental health champion' across the council.
- We will seek to identify a member of staff within the council to act as 'lead officer' for mental health
- Consider mental health impact within our COVID recovery plans across all aspects of our work.

- The council will also:
 1. Support positive mental health in our community, including in local schools, neighbourhoods and workplaces
 2. Work to reduce inequalities in mental health in our community
 3. Work with local partners to offer effective support for people with mental health needs
 4. Tackle discrimination on the grounds of mental health in our community
 5. Proactively listen to people of all ages and backgrounds about what they need for better mental health.

Member champion role description

The role of member champion for mental health may include, but not be limited by:

- Advocating for mental health issues in council meetings and policy development
- Reaching out to the local community (eg via schools, businesses, faith groups) to raise awareness and challenge stigma
- Listening to people with personal experience of mental ill health to get their perspectives on local needs and priorities
- Scrutinising the work of local services that have an impact on mental health: eg health, social care, housing, police.
- Fostering local partnerships between agencies to support people with mental health problems more effectively
- Encouraging the council to support the mental health of its own workforce and those of its contractors.

The member champion will have access to the following *benefits* to help them in these roles:

- Advice and support from the mental health challenge national partners (usually by phone or email)
- Access to resources on the challenge web site members' area
- A monthly update on relevant news, events and key policy developments
- An annual meeting with other member champions to share intelligence, experiences and ideas.

As local leaders for better mental health, we expect *all* member champions to:

- Provide a vocal presence for mental health within their council where this is necessary
- Identify at least one priority each year for focused work
- Seek the views of people with lived experiences of mental ill health when identifying priorities and concerns
- Work respectfully, sensitively and empathically with people with mental health problems at all times
- Respond to occasional requests from the challenge coordinator for updates on activities undertaken in the role of member champion.

We are aware that member champions are elected members of councils who have a number of competing priorities and limited time to put into the role of member champion.

The national partners reserve the right to raise concerns where member champions whose conduct falls below the expectations set out above. Where steps are not taken to address concerns expressed by the national partners, councils may be removed from the challenge membership.

Lead officer role description

The role of *lead officer* can be taken by any staff member in the council. Their role may include, but not be limited by:

- Providing information to the member champion to support their work
- Advising the member champion on current issues and priorities
- Supporting implementation of strategies initiated by the member champion
- Raising awareness within the council's staff about mental health issues
- Seeking external support for activities led by the council to promote mental health and wellbeing
- Liaising with the mental health challenge national partners to secure information and advice

The lead officer will also have access to the benefits described above for member champions."

Seven members signalled their support for a debate on the Motion.

Councillor Charles spoke in support of his Motion and urged all members to support it and to agree to sign the Local Authorities' Mental Health Challenge.

In discussing the Motion members expressed support for the proposals. Reference was made to the Health and Wellbeing Strategy which included a section covering mental health and was currently out for consultation, and it was noted an action plan on this would be published in the summer. It was also noted the Mental Health Working Group was looking at developing detailed measures to tackle the current mental health challenge. It was generally recognised that increased investment was needed to address the current crisis and that various groups and panels had been involved in looking at this matter across all age ranges of the population. It was suggested that the Health Overview and Scrutiny Panel may be the appropriate panel to take this forward.

Following further discussion, it was

Resolved: that the Motion as set out in full above be approved and adopted.

COU Motions by Members (Standing Order No. 14)
10 Test and Trace System (Councillor Haverson) (Agenda Item 8 (2))

In introducing her Motion, Councillor Haverson referred to the limited impact of the government's test and trace system at huge cost to the tax payer and stressed an effective test and trace system was still vital in stopping the spread of the virus over coming months and years. She referred to the submission made earlier in the meeting by Dr Hime and confirmed she was happy to take on board his proposals as part of her Motion.

Councillor Willis stated she had a number of friends who were employed as part of the current test and trace system and confirmed she would take no part in the debate or the vote on this item.

Motion: Moved by Cllr Haverson and seconded by Councillor Gibbons

"A recent cross-party government advisory committee has stated that during the current pandemic, the Test and Trace system has only made a marginal impact in the UK. This system is run by private companies at huge expense to the tax payer.

It is now apparent that local authorities are much more successful in tracing contacts, they also have the local knowledge for backwards tracing, ie tracing the source of an outbreak. North Somerset like many other local councils have run a supplementary service since January, contacting local residents who could not be contacted by the existing service. Some other LAs such as Sandwell (West Midlands) and others have taken all of contact tracing on as early as last summer, Lambeth Borough Council have recently done so.

A functioning Test and Trace system is still absolutely vital to stopping this virus spreading over the coming months and year, as Independent SAGE members led by Sir David King, the WHO and public health experts like Prof. Devi Sridhar have asserted time and time again. Scientists also expect future pandemics.

I therefore move that North Somerset Council expresses concern about the poor performance of the existing Test and Trace system and ask our Chief Executive and our Leader to write to the Secretary of State for Health Matt Hancock and to Robert Jenrick. Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government as well as our local MPs, to ask for meaningful dialogue with local authorities on co-designing our future health protection rather than receiving a national policy decision. This should include considering the Contact Tracing system to be devolved to Local Government, with rapid data transfer from the testing service and appropriate funding support. This may be both more cost effective and more successful in encouraging compliance, as local authorities know their communities and are trusted. However, this will have to be clearly dependent on adequate funding both for staff and data systems.

I also move to explore the possibility of expanding our current follow up system by involving volunteers such as retired GPs and nurses, analogous to our successful North Somerset Together scheme. This could be brought forward in time for the next 'wave' expected by many scientists for the autumn.

In addition, the letter to the Secretary of State for Health should include reference to the need for adequate financial support for those that are asked to isolate. It is established that people who have difficult financial circumstances with poor housing and precarious employment are both most vulnerable to the effects of the virus and least able to comply with the isolation requirements. Council must find the means to support these people.

Furthermore, the Council accepts the aim of public health policy should be eradication rather than control of the virus. The probability of new virus variants makes any idea of "living with the virus" an extremely dangerous long-term option. Council policy should be to put an effective Track and Trace system in place in order to further the aim of eradication."

Seven members signalled their support for a debate on the Motion.

Councillor Haverson spoke in support of her Motion and urged all members to support it. In discussing the Motion members expressed their support for the proposals but noted the complexities and challenges around this issue. Members recognised the tremendous efforts of public health and health service colleagues in responding to the pandemic and in reacting to the flaws of the centralised test and trace system which had initially been ineffective due to lack of local knowledge and resourcing. Members noted that the council's local enhanced contact tracing service was now far more effective and that further service developments were planned to adapt and respond to national processes.

It was noted that discussions between the Local Government Association (LGA) and the government on the test and trace system were ongoing and it was suggested that the LGA be copied in to the letter to the Minister. It was also proposed that the wording of the letter be amended to reflect the latest position and address the need for any devolved powers to be properly resourced.

Councillor Haverson as mover of the Motion and Councillor Gibbons as seconder agreed to take on board the proposed revisions to the Motion.

It was subsequently

Resolved: that the Motion as set out in full above be approved and adopted, subject to the final wording of the letter to the Minister and the Local Government Association to be agreed by group leaders, in consultation with the Chief Executive and Councillor Haverson.

COU Motions by Members (Standing Order No. 14)
11 Tackling Disability Stigma and Discrimination (Councillor Codling)
(Agenda Item 8 (3))

In introducing her Motion, Councillor Codling referred to the many people struggling with unseen disabilities and to the importance of taking action to ensure maximum accessibility for all who live in, work in or visit North Somerset.

Motion: Moved by Councillor Codling and seconded by Councillor Willis

“A ‘hidden disability’ is a disability that may not be immediately obvious. Hidden disabilities don’t have physical signs and include learning difficulties, mental health conditions as well as mobility, speech, visual or hearing impairments. It is regrettable that there have been instances where people with hidden disabilities which require urgent visits to toilet facilities, have faced abuse from the public and even accusations by staff members of being ineligible to use accessible toilets.

Crohn’s and Colitis UK is encouraging venues providing accessible toilets to install new signage. This is to help stop stigma and discrimination towards people with Crohn’s Disease, Ulcerative Colitis and other invisible conditions. The signage has two standing figures and a wheelchair user with the words ‘Accessible Toilet’ and the logo ‘Not every disability is visible’.

It is encouraging that the Council are currently exploring becoming a ‘*Sunflower Friendly Council*’ to promote that the authority is Hidden Disability-friendly. Choosing to wear a lanyard bearing a sunflower logo enables people to discreetly indicate to others that they have a Hidden Disability and may need additional support, time or help. By adopting the scheme, the Council will be able to offer residents with a hidden disability the recognition, understanding and help they may need when out and about across North Somerset.

In terms of wider disability issues, changes to statutory guidance came into effect from January 2021 requiring the provision of ‘*Changing Places*’ toilets in certain new buildings. These are larger accessible toilets for people who cannot use standard disabled toilets, with equipment such as hoists, curtains, adult-sized changing benches and space for carers. Campaigners declared that the provision of these toilets will open up a whole new world for the hundreds of thousands of people who rely on them. The Government has announced a new £30 million fund to increase the number of facilities across England. Councils are invited to “opt in” to bid for a proportion of the funding in order to install such facilities in their communities.

In view of its duties under the Equality Act 2010 and as a demonstrable indication that it supports the dignity of all its residents, whilst aiming to do all it can to prevent and challenge instances of abuse and discrimination, this Council resolves to:

1. Ensure that all Council accessible toilets bear the Accessible Toilet signage;
2. Encourage town and district centre retailers and leisure outlets to do likewise with their accessible toilets;
3. Seek advice from disability charities on the information and training that could be provided for Council staff, to further their understanding of these conditions and to prevent potential embarrassment for those who have them;
4. Complete exploratory work required to become a ‘*Sunflower Friendly Council*’;
5. Opt in to bid for a proportion of the Government ‘*Changing Places*’ toilets

- fund;
6. Use its community leadership position to exploit opportunities to raise awareness of hidden disabilities; be explicit in condemnation of disabilism; and work continuously to ensure maximum accessibility for all who live in, work in or visit North Somerset.”

Seven members signalled their support for a debate on the Motion.

Councillor Codling spoke in support of her Motion, stating this was not a marginal issue but one that affected many people and she urged all members to support it. During the ensuing discussion members welcomed the Motion and expressed their support for the proposals. It was noted that officers were currently looking at signing up to the scheme and supporting and encouraging local businesses to become involved. Members recognised the disproportionate impact of the pandemic on many with disabilities and the importance of taking action to tackle discrimination in all its forms. Councillor Bell referred to the work of the Disability Access Group and asked any members who would like to be part of this group to let him know.

Following further discussion, it was

Resolved: that the Motion as set out in full above be approved and adopted.

COU Chairman’s announcements (Agenda Item 10)

12

None

COU Leader’s announcements (Agenda Item 11)

13

None

COU Chief Executive’s announcements (Agenda Item 12)

14

None

COU Political Balance and Leaders and Deputy Leaders of the Political Groups for the Municipal Year 2021/22 (Agenda Item 13)

15

The Assistant Director Governance & Monitoring Officer reported on the current political balance as follows -

Independent 16: Conservative 13: Liberal Democrat 11: Labour 6: Green 3

He reported that he would update members at the next Council meeting following the by-election on 6 May 2021.

The Assistant Director, Governance & Monitoring Officer confirmed there were no changes to the leaders and deputy leaders of the political groups.

Resolved: that the political balance, as reported, be noted and approved as required by the Local Government and Housing Act 1989.

COU The Council's Constitution 2021 (Agenda Item 14)

16

The Assistant Director Governance & Monitoring Officer presented the report. He outlined the changes proposed in relation to policy and scrutiny panels, the staffing establishment, authorisations of persons other than officers to discharge functions and to the Planning and Regulatory Committee arising from the planning peer review.

In discussing the recommendations of the planning peer review, reference was made to the working group set up to consider these recommendations and it was proposed the working group be allowed the opportunity to address these matters first before Council reached a decision. During the debate concerns were raised at the implications of reducing the size of the committee to 13 members on a permanent basis, and to the benefits of providing for local input and a broader spectrum of views. Members noted the difficulties around managing a larger committee whilst Covid restrictions were still in place, particularly in the event of a return to physical meetings, but generally agreed that a decision on the appropriate size of the committee would be premature at this stage. Members were encouraged to submit their views to the working group which would consider these alongside the planning peer review recommendations and report back with recommendations to the next Council meeting in July.

Motion: Moved by Councillor Davies, seconded by Councillor Bell and

Resolved:

(1) that Council approves the changes to the Constitution in relation to the policy and scrutiny panels, the staffing establishment and authorisations of persons other than officers to discharge functions as referenced in the report, and authorises the Assistant Director Governance & Monitoring Officer to implement them; and

(2) that the recommendations from the planning peer review be referred to the Review Working Group for further discussion and the Working Group recommendations be brought back to Council in July for determination.

COU Constitutional appointments etc. (Agenda Item 15)

17

The Leader reported some changes to the Executive. He announced the Executive would comprise the following members, with indicative portfolios as below:

Donald Davies	Leader of the Council
Mike Bell	Deputy Leader of the Council and Executive Member for Adult Services, Health and Housing
Steve Bridger	Executive Member for Assets and Capital Delivery
Mark Canniford	Executive Member for Placemaking and Economy
Ashley Cartman	Executive Member for Corporate Services

Catherine Gibbons	Executive Member for Children's Services and Lifelong Learning
Bridget Petty	Executive Member for Climate Emergency and Engagement
Mike Solomon	Executive Member for Neighbourhoods and Community Services
Nicola Holland	Assistant Executive Member for Post Covid Education and Skills Recovery (working with Catherine Gibbons)
Robert Payne	Assistant Executive Member for Parking Strategy (working with Mark Canniford)

The Leader welcomed Councillor Bridger and Councillor Payne to the Executive and thanked Councillor Tonkin and Councillor Richardson for their work and support.

Motion: Moved by Councillor Davies, seconded by Councillor Bell and

Resolved:

(1) that subject to the changes to panels referred to and approved under the previous item, existing arrangements for the policy/overview and scrutiny panels and the committees be approved, and the following Chairmen be appointed for the 2021/22 municipal year, these changes to take effect in a week's time (from 27 April 2021) -

Adult Services and Housing Policy and Scrutiny Panel

Chairman: Councillor Crosby

Children and Young People's Services Policy and Scrutiny Panel

Chairman: Councillor Griggs

Health Overview and Scrutiny Panel

Chairman: Councillor Cronnelly

Partnerships, Corporate Organisation Policy and Overview Management Policy and Scrutiny Panel

Chairman: Councillor Richardson

Place Policy and Scrutiny Panel

Chairman: Councillor Crockford-Hawley

Audit Committee

Chairman: Councillor Cato

Licensing Committee

Chairman: Councillor Cole;

Planning and Regulatory Committee

Chairman: Councillor Tonkin;

Public Rights of Way Sub-Committee

Chairman: Councillor Harley; and

(2) that Vice-Chairmen be appointed by each of the above committees/panels at their first meetings, and any remaining committees/bodies not dealt with above appoint their own Chairman and Vice-Chairman at their first meetings.

COU 18 Municipal Calendar 2021/22 (Agenda Item 16)

The Assistant Director Governance & Monitoring Officer presented the report. He reminded members that the May Council meeting had since been cancelled.

Motion: Moved by Councillor Davies, seconded by Councillor Jacobs and

Resolved:

(1) that the municipal calendar for 2021/22 as attached to the report be approved; and

(2) that the Leader of the Council be authorised to approve any amendments not dealt with elsewhere.

COU 19 Appointments to Outside Bodies 2021/22 (Council) (Agenda Item 17)

The Assistant Director Governance & Monitoring Officer presented the report. He referred to the current vacancy on the Police and Crime Panel (PCP) and suggested that a decision on this appointment be delegated to the group leaders to determine in accordance with the political balance requirements of the PCP following the local elections.

With reference to the earlier Motion on the agenda regarding mental health it was agreed that the proposed Mental Health Champion role be added to the list, the appointment to be agreed by the group leaders in due course following consultation with the Health Overview and Scrutiny Panel.

Motion: Moved by Councillor Davies, seconded by Councillor Bell and

Resolved:

(1) that the appointments contained in the updated schedule attached as an appendix to these minutes be approved and adopted;

(2) that the nomination to fill the vacancy on the Police and Crime Panel be delegated to the group leaders, having regard to the political balance requirements following the local elections; and

(3) that the appointment to the newly created role of Mental Health Champion be delegated to the group leaders, following consultation with the Health Overview and Scrutiny Panel.

COU 20 Forward Plan dated 1 April 2021 (Agenda Item 18)

Councillor Davies presented the Forward Plan.

Resolved: that the Forward Plan be noted.

COU 21 Corporate Parenting Responsibilities (Agenda Item 20)

Councillor Gibbons presented the report. She drew attention to the key issues within the report and with reference to the Corporate Parenting Panel, announced that Councillor Pilgrim would be taking over as Chairman as Councillor Snaden was stepping down temporarily for health reasons. She thanked Councillor Snaden for his work on the Panel. She referred to the excellent cross-party work that had been undertaken to date and encouraged members to have children, young people and families in mind in all that they did.

In noting concerns raised by a member in relation to the role of the Corporate Parenting Panel and the lack of scrutiny work being undertaken, Councillor Gibbons responded that the Corporate Parenting Panel was not a scrutiny panel but asked for any concerns to be referred to her in writing and she would address them accordingly.

Resolved: that the report be noted.

COU 22 Question Time (Standing Order No. 18) (Agenda Item 21)

Oral questions were directed to members concerned and the summary notes and topics involved are contained in Appendix 1.

The Chairman drew members' attention to the three advance written questions received as published with the supplementary papers for the meeting as follows:

1. Question from Cllr Willis to Cllr Tonkin, Executive Member for Planning, Highways and Transport, and Cllr Petty, Executive Member for Climate Emergency and Environment on the reasoning behind the TRO for Yatton moor rural lanes and vehicle access.

2. Question from Cllr Ashton to Councillor Tonkin, Executive Member for Planning, Highways and Transport on the TRO proposals and the council's policy on installing local 20 mph schemes.

3. Question from Cllr Bryant to Councillor Tonkin, Executive Member for Planning, Highways and Transport on whether the current system of starting and indeed completing a development without planning permission is legal in accordance with Planning Rules and Regulations.

In response to the questions raised the Leader referred to the changes in Executive portfolios as announced earlier in the meeting and stated that written responses would be provided to questions 1 and 2 above and proposed that question 3 be referred to the working group looking at the planning peer review.

In a supplementary question, Councillor Ashton referred to the reduction in the use of physical speed restriction methods which were causing damage to vehicles, for example speed cushions. He suggested such measures were costly but had little impact so questioned why they would be included in the policy. The Leader responded this would be addressed within the written response but referred to Department for Transport guidance on this issue, adding that schemes needed to be viable but not overly draconian.

In a supplementary question, Councillor Bryant referred to the large number of cases being reviewed in the enforcement team with limited and to the impact this may be having on the planning process, suggesting this needed to be addressed to prevent flawed practices. In response Councillor Canniford agreed current resources were insufficient and recognised the pressures within the planning and enforcement teams, adding this would be addressed as part of the planning peer review.

COU 23 Reports and matters referred from the Policy/Overview and Scrutiny Panels (Agenda Item 23): SPR 22 - SPEDR Panel Work Plan March 2021

Council received the reference from the meeting of the Strategic Planning, Economic Development and Regeneration Panel on 10 March on the Active Travel Strategy (item 26 on the agenda).

Resolved: that the reference be noted.

COU 24 Reports on joint arrangements and external organisations and questions relating thereto (Agenda Item 25)

Avon Fire Authority

Councillor Jacobs presented the report.

Resolved: that the report be noted.

COU 25 Adoption of the North Somerset Active Travel Strategy (Agenda Item 26) Withdrawn

The Chairman announced that in light of the decision to withdraw a recent Traffic Regulation Order to provide residents and road users with more opportunities to help shape the 'quiet rural lanes' proposals around Nailsea,

Clevedon and Yatton, the Active Travel Strategy had been withdrawn from this agenda and would be reconsidered at a future Council meeting.

He confirmed that North Somerset Council was committed to growing walking and cycling to improve public health, tackle the climate emergency, support the economy and help shape future planning. Following more engagement on the quiet rural lanes proposals, to be announced shortly, the Active Travel Strategy would be brought back to Council for full consideration.

COU 26 Updating the Creating Sustainable Buildings and Places Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) (Agenda Item 27)

Councillor Canniford presented the report which now came within his portfolio following the changes to the Executive announced earlier in the meeting. He referred to the principle changes to the document arising from the climate emergency and changing national guidance.

In discussing the report members welcomed the updated SPD and thanked officers for their work on this. It was noted that new requirements for developers to achieve reductions in carbon emissions would be addressed as part of the Local Plan with the aim of achieving carbon negative developments. Reference was made to the importance of developers working closely with the council to ensure new developments facilitated easy and efficient waste collection using council-supported kerbside services rather than private waste collection arrangements and welcomed inclusion of this within the SPD. Whilst welcoming the requirement for higher quality development reference was made to importance of ensuring this wasn't at the cost of fewer affordable housing units or reduced infrastructure provision.

Motion: Moved by Councillor Canniford, seconded by Councillor Petty and

Resolved: that the updated Creating Sustainable Buildings and Places Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) be adopted as Council policy.

Chairman

Section A - Appointments subject to political balance (appointments of three or more)

Organisation	Appts	Auth. Granted by	Representative(s)	Political Group Nominating	Term of Office Expires	Name & Address of Correspondent
Avon Fire Authority	4 (1:1:1:1) [Exp N]	COU 22/2019	Cllr Donald Davies Cllr Ruth Jacobs Cllr Robert Payne Cllr Richard Tucker	I C LD L	May 2023 4-year term (subject to 8 year limit in total)	Amanda Brown The Clerk to the Fire Authority the.clerk@avonfire.gov.uk
Local Government Association General Assembly	4 (1:1:1:1) [Exp Y]	COU 17/2021	Cllr Nigel Ashton Cllr Mike Bell Cllr Don Davies Cllr Catherine Gibbons	C LD I L	Municipal Year End	Fatima de Abreu, Member Services, Local Government Association Fatima.DeAbreu@local.gov.uk (Alternative: MemberServices@local.gov.uk)

Section B - appointments not subject to political balance (less than three appointments)

Organisation	Appts	Auth. Granted by	Representative	Term of Office Expires	Name & Address of Correspondent
Alliance Homes Board	1 [Exp N]	COU 17/2021	Cllr Huw James	Municipal Year End	Company Secretary Alliance Homes philippa.armstrong-owen@alliancehomes.org.uk
Birnbeck Regeneration Trust	2 [Exp Y]	COU 17/2021	Cllr Robert Payne Cllr Mike Solomon	Municipal Year End	Charles McCann chales@talk21.com
Bristol Airport Consultative Committee	1 [Exp Y]	COU 17/2021	Cllr Steve Hogg	Municipal Year End	James Gore, Bristol International Airport igore@bristolairport.com

Organisation	Appts	Auth. Granted by	Representative	Term of Office Expires	Name & Address of Correspondent
Bristol Port Company Liaison Committee	2 [Exp Y]	COU 17/2021	Cllr Nigel Ashton Cllr Don Davies	Municipal Year End	PA to the Chief Executive Officer, Bristol Port Company julie.lock@bristolport.co.uk
Campaign to Protect Rural England	1 [Exp Y]	COU 17/2021	Cllr Steve Bridger	Municipal Year End	Gill Sayzeland, CPRE gillsayzeland@googlemail.com
Clevedon Business Improvement District	1 [Exp Y]	COU 17/2021	Cllr Geoffrey Richardson	Municipal Year End	George Grace, BID Manager george@clevedonbid.com
Clevedon Community Association	1 [Exp Y]	COU 17/2021	Cllr Caroline Cherry	Municipal Year End	Anne Scholes, Centre Manager, Clevedon Community Association anne@clevedoncommunitycentre.org.uk
Clevedon Pier & Heritage Trust	1 [Exp Y]	COU 17/2021	Cllr Mark Crosby	Municipal Year End	Clevedon Pier & Heritage Trust admin@clevedonpier.com NicoleLaken@clevedonpier.com
Clifton Suspension Bridge Trust	1 [Exp Y]	COU 17/2021	Cllr Ashley Cartman	Municipal Year End	Tim Baines, Clerk to the Trustees tbaines@bcscsconsultants.co.uk
Durnford Quarry Local Liaison Group	1 [Exp Y]	COU 17/2021	Cllr Stuart McQuillan	Municipal Year End	Tarmac Southern Ltd. andy.cadell@tarmac.com
North Somerset Citizens Advice Bureau	1 [Exp Y]	COU 17/2021	Cllr Catherine Gibbons	Municipal Year End	Director North Somerset Citizen's Advice Bureau bureau@nsomersetcab.cabnet.org.uk
Police and Crime Panel	2 [Exp N]	COU 42/2019 COU 17/2021	Cllr Richard Westwood Vacancy (nomination tbc by group leaders post elections)	May 2023 4-year term	Clerk to the Police & Crime Panel, Patricia Jones PLJones@somerset.gov.uk

Organisation	Appts	Auth. Granted by	Representative	Term of Office Expires	Name & Address of Correspondent
Portishead Youth Centre Management Committee	1 [Exp Y]	COU 17/2021	Cllr Nicola Holland	Municipal Year End	Kimberley Jones, Head of Centre and Youth Provision, Portishead Youth Centre mail@portisheadyouthcentre.co.uk
Severnside Sirens Trust	1 [Exp N]	COU 17/2021	Cllr Tim Snaden	Municipal Year End	Victoria Bywater, Cooksley & Co (Trust Administrators) info@severnsidesirens.co.uk
South-West Armed Forces Covenant Partnership Board	2 [Exp Y]	COU 17/2021	Cllr Donald Davies Cllr David Shopland	Municipal Year End	Garry Hawkes, Secretariat South-West Armed Forces Covenant Partnership Board Garry.Hawkes@n-somerset.gov.uk
Standing Conference of Severnside Local Authorities	1 [Exp: Y]	COU 17/2021	Cllr Bridget Petty [Cllr Don Davies as substitute]	Municipal Year End	Severn Estuary Partnership, c/o School of Earth and Ocean Sciences, Main Building, Park Place, Cardiff, CF10 3AT severn@cardiff.ac.uk
Strawberry Line Society	1 [Exp Y]	COU 17/2021	Cllr Ann Harley	Municipal Year End	Treasurer & Membership Secretary Irene.threasher@btinternet.com info.sls1978@gmail.com
Uphill Village Society (formerly known as 'Uphill Victory Hall Committee')	1 [Exp Y]	COU 17/2021	Cllr Peter Bryant	Municipal Year End	Leigh Morris, Secretary, Uphill Village Society secretary@uphillvillage.org.uk
Wessex Reserve Forces & Cadets Association	2 [Exp N]	COU 17/2021	Cllr David Shopland Cllr Roz Willis	Municipal Year End	Hannah Owen, Association Staff Officer, Wessex RFCA wx-offman@rfca.mod.uk

Organisation	Appts	Auth. Granted by	Representative	Term of Office Expires	Name & Address of Correspondent
Weston Town Centre Co Ltd	2 [Exp Y]	COU 17/2021	Cllr Mike Bell Cllr Mark Canniford	Municipal Year End	Steve Townsend steve.townsend@wsmtcp.co.uk
Winter Gardens Access Board	1 [Exp Y]	COU 17/2021	Cllr Sarah Codling	Municipal Year End	Lorraine Bush, Policy & Partnerships Development Officer, NSC lorraine.bush@n-somerset.gov.uk

Appointments to other roles / Council led partnership groups:

Organisation	Appts	Auth. Granted by	Representative(s)	Term of Office Expires	Name & Address of Correspondent
North Somerset Armed Forces Covenant Partnership (previously listed as 'Armed Forces Champion')	1 [Exp Y]	COU 17/2021	Cllr David Shopland	Municipal Year End	Garry Hawkes, Armed Forces Co-ordinator Garry.Hawkes@n-somerset.gov.uk
Corporate Parenting Panel (previously known as Children's Champions Group)	Unlimited [Exp Y]	COU 17/2021	Cllrs Caroline Cherry, Ciaran Cronnelly, Ann Harley, Hugh Gregor, Wendy Griggs, Nicola Holland, Lisa Pilgrim, Tim Snaden, Mike Solomon, Richard Westwood	Municipal Year End	Roz Hime, Democratic Services Roz.Hime@n-somerset.gov.uk
Disabilities Champion	1 [Exp Y]	COU 17/2021	Councillor Mike Bell	Municipal Year End	Louise Roberts, Equality and Diversity Manager louise.roberts@n-somerset.gov.uk
Disability Access Group	1 [Exp Y]	COU 17/2021	Councillor Mike Bell	Municipal Year End	Louise Roberts, Equality and Diversity Manager louise.roberts@n-somerset.gov.uk
Equality Stakeholder Group [previously known as Equality Scheme Implementation Group]	1 [Exp Y]	COU 17/2021	Councillor Nicola Holland	Municipal Year End	Louise Roberts, Equality and Diversity Manager louise.roberts@n-somerset.gov.uk
[Responding to] Hate Incidents in North Somerset	1 [Exp Y]	COU 17/2021	Councillor Huw James	Municipal Year End	Louise Roberts, Equality and Diversity Manager louise.roberts@n-somerset.gov.uk

Organisation	Appts	Auth. Granted by	Representative(s)	Term of Office Expires	Name & Address of Correspondent
Heritage & Regeneration Champion	1 [Exp Y]	COU 17/2021	Cllr John Crockford-Hawley	Municipal Year End	Roger Willmot, Development & Environment Roger.Willmot@n-somerset.gov.uk
Home to School Transport Appeals Panel	1 [Exp Y]	COU 17/2021	Councillor nominated	Municipal Year End	Integrated Transport Unit Bella Fortune, Transportation Service Manager Bella.Fortune@n-somerset.gov.uk
Joint Safety & Consultative Committee (JSCC)	8 [Exp Y]	COU 17/2021	Cllr Peter Crew (C) Cllr Andy Cole (I) Cllr Mike Bell (LD) Cllr Ciaran Cronnelly (LA) Cllr Donald Davies (I) Cllr Wendy Griggs (LD) Cllr Mike Solomon (I) Cllr James Tonkin (I)	Municipal Year End	Roz Hime, Democratic Services Roz.Hime@n-somerset.gov.uk
Mental Health Champion (New appointment)	1 [Exp Y]	COU 9/2021 COU 17/2021	Appointment to be agreed by group leaders	Municipal Year End	Lead Officer for Mental Health – to be identified.
North Somerset Local Access Forum	3 [Exp Y]	COU 22/2019	Cllr Mike Bird (I) Cllr Ann Harley (C) Cllr Robert Payne LD)	May 2023 4-year term	Roz Hime, Democratic Services Roz.Hime@n-somerset.gov.uk
Older People's Champion	1 [Exp Y]	COU 17/2021	Cllr Ian Parker	Municipal Year End	Director of Adult Social Services Hayley.Verrico@n-somerset.gov.uk

Organisation	Appts	Auth. Granted by	Representative(s)	Term of Office Expires	Name & Address of Correspondent
Standing Advisory Council on Religious Education	3 [Exp Y]	COU 42/2019	Cllr Stuart Treadaway (LD) Cllr Sarah Codling (C) Cllr Mike Solomon (I)	May 2023 4-year term	Mike Newman, Strategy & Policy Development Manager, NSC mike.newman@n-somerset.gov.uk Roz Hime, Democratic Services Roz.Hime@n-somerset.gov.uk
Younger People's Champions	2 [Exp Y]	COU 17/2021	Cllr Ciaran Cronnelly Cllr Huw James	Municipal Year End	Director of Children's Services Sheila.Smith@n-somerset.gov.uk

Motion to review and strengthen the councils Low Carbon Advertising Policies

As of November 2020, over 480 councils in the UK have made climate emergency declarations. Low Carbon Advertising Policies present an opportunity for local authorities to further their existing health and environmental policy goals relating to air pollution, active travel, climate change, sustainability and town planning.

It should be noted that restricting advertising for harmful products (e.g tobacco or SUVs) is not the same as banning the products themselves.

Fossil fuel companies, car companies and airlines spend billions each year advertising their high carbon products -despite growing public concerns over air pollution and climate breakdown.

Extracts here have been taken from a toolkit for local authority councillors and officers in the UK wishing to implement a 'Low Carbon Advertising Policy' which would prohibit adverts for these products in council-owned ad spaces.

This motion looks at the ecological and climate impacts of advertising from these high carbon industries:

- petrol and diesel car advertising, particularly for the largest and most polluting cars such as Sports Utility Vehicles (SUVs)
- airline advertising for flights
- fossil fuel companies (such as Shell and BP)

There is plenty of additional information available to read about this subject on these links

<https://www.badverts.org/>

Advertising's role in climate and ecological degradation. What does the scientific research have to say? Professor Tim Kasser with Andrew Simms, David Boyle and Emilie Tricarico

Upselling Smoke: The case to end advertising of the largest, most polluting new cars New Weather Institute and Possible, August 2020

Taking Down Junk Food Ads - how local areas are taking action on outdoor advertising Sustain, 2019
Why Taking Down Billboards is Good for the Local Economy Adblock Bristol, 2019

All here - <https://www.badverts.org/reports-and-publications>

This council notes:

- That it is possible for local authorities to implement advertising policies against specific products if they consider them to be harmful to the amenity of an area.
- This Council notes that the Greater London Authority (GLA), which controls Transport for London (TFL) property, were able to enact a *Healthier Food Advertising Policy* in 2018 prohibiting High Fat, Sugar or Salt (HFSS) food advertising on TFL property. Council planning departments will be able to advise on how to restrict the use of 'deemed consent' under the Town and Country Planning (Control of Advertisements) (England) Regulations 2007 including writing to the relevant Secretary of State.
- That North Somerset Council currently holds an Advertising Concession Agreement with Clear Channel UK involving the upkeep and maintenance of over 25 bus stops across the

area all of which include advertising panels (there are over 600 bus stops across the district).

- That advertising prohibitions and restrictions already exist regarding all tobacco products and e-cigarettes, guns and offensive weapons, breath testing and products designed to mask the effects of alcohol, 'pyramid schemes', prostitution services, 'obscene material' as well as other rules regarding marketing to children, high fat sugar and salt products, medical and health claims, religion, financial products, and pornography. (<https://www.badverts.org/case-studies>)
- That a double-sided digital bus stop advertising screen uses four times the electricity of the average British home. (<https://adfreecities.org.uk/2019/11/the-electricity-costof-digital-adverts>)
- That a climate emergency was declared by this council in February 2019, which included a commitment to reduce area wide carbon emissions and become carbon neutral by 2030.

This council believes:

- That the purpose of advertising is to stimulate demand for goods and services.
- That some advertising content undermines the council's objectives regarding public health, air pollution and sustainable consumption. For example, High Fat Sugar and Salt products undermine health objectives, petrol and diesel car adverts, especially for Sports Utility Vehicles, undermine climate and air quality objectives and airline advertising undermines carbon emission reduction targets.

This council resolves:

- That the Director of Place in liaison with the Executive Member for public transport reviews the scope of the Advertising Concession Agreement[s] which are currently being updated in readiness for an imminent tendering process to investigate the possibility of amending the current set of prohibitions and restrictions to include products that contribute to climate change and air pollution – it is recognised that this may have some impact on the potential value of those concessions and in order to evaluate any impact the option of seeking variant bids should be considered
- That the Director of Place in liaison with the Executive Member for planning policy be asked to investigate and to the extent possible implements a Low Carbon Advertising Policy as part of the council's planning policies, to apply to bus stops, billboards and advertising spaces in the area within the jurisdiction of the local planning area

Proposed by Cllr Bridget Petty, Seconded by Cllr Ciaran Cronnelly

Council – 19 July 2021

Motions by Members (Standing Order No. 14)

Motion from Cllr Bell, on behalf of the Liberal Democrat Group

Planning for the Future and the Planning Bill

Council notes:

- The significant concerns that have been expressed about the planning reforms proposed by the Conservative Government in their Planning for the Future white paper.
- The Government's intention to introduce a Planning Bill, announced in the Queen's Speech in May, which builds on the Planning for the Future white paper.

Council is concerned that Government proposals:

- Perpetuate an arbitrary target-driven approach that will require 20,085 homes in North Somerset, irrespective of evidence of community need or land supply.
- Take away many of the opportunities for communities and their locally elected representatives to have a final say on how their areas develop.
- Reduce or remove the right of residents to object to applications near them by giving automatic rights to build in 'growth' areas, and increase permitted development rights, risk unregulated growth and unsustainable communities.
- Remove local Section 106 payments and the Community Infrastructure Levy for infrastructure and replace them with a national levy; it is unclear how the new level of developer contributions would work.
- Fail to recognise the climate emergency by making it a key priority that would enable the planning system to respond to the climate crisis.

Council believes that the Government's Planning Bill should give local councils greater powers to:

- Challenge unrealistic housing targets.
- Deliver improved infrastructure alongside new developments.
- Require new development to meet high sustainability standards.
- Require quality design standards as part of new developments.
- Strengthen developer contributions to essential services including health, employment, and education.
- Prevent land banking and poor delivery by developers where planning consents are in place.

Council resolves to write to the Government and our local MPs to set out our concerns and to emphasise our belief that local councils, in consultation with their businesses and residents, are best placed to understand the issues in their area and respond with an appropriate spatial strategy.

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Forward Plan

for the four-month period commencing on

1st August 2021

published on 2 July 2021

This Forward Plan gives details of decision items to be presented during the forthcoming four months.

Councillors are invited to review the items and to consider whether any of them should be referred for scrutiny or discussed with the appropriate Executive Member.

Executive Members (8) (revised portfolios as announced at Council on 20 April 2021)

Leader of the Council - Councillor Don Davies: external liaison including strategic partnerships: Local Enterprise Partnership, North Somerset Partnership, Joint Executive Committee (WECA and North Somerset Council), Alliance, Police; strategic policy/corporate plan development, forward programme and strategic review; strategic communications and marketing (with Deputy Leader and Executive Member Engagement); strategic transport - transport policy, public transport, home to school transport, bus and rail strategy.

Deputy Leader of the Council and Executive Member for Adult Services, Health and Housing - Councillor Mike Bell: adult social care; Health and Wellbeing Board; public health and regulatory services; NHS, health and liaison; emergency management; housing solutions, private sector housing and unauthorised encampments.

Executive Member for Children's Services and Lifelong Learning – Councillor Catherine Gibbons: children and young people's services; education and skills; further and higher education liaison.

Executive Member for Corporate Services – Councillor Ashley Cartman: finance – revenue, capital programme and income generation; procurement; legal and democratic services (including electoral and registrar); property and asset management – financial business cases & financing; ICT, digital and customer services; lead for business support contracts – Agilisys and Liberata; human resources and organisational development; shareholder representative role for council companies.

Executive Member for Climate Emergency and Engagement – Councillor Bridget Petty: climate and ecological emergency; community engagement and consultation; town and parish liaison; North Somerset Together; voluntary sector liaison.

Executive Member for Placemaking and Economy – Councillor Mark Canniford: Placemaking and development - placemaking strategies, culture strategy, Weston placemaking delivery, Tropicana and Playhouse Theatre, strategic events programme, visitor economy development, development and commercial programme, affordable housing delivery; planning - policy, spatial planning, building control; economy and recovery - inward investment, business development and engagement, employment, high street and town centre renewal; parking strategy.

Executive Member for Neighbourhoods and Community Services – Councillor Mike Solomon: libraries; community venues; safer communities; environmental services - recycling and waste minimisation, waste and street cleansing contracts, enforcement strategy; highways operations and parking - highway network management, highway maintenance contract, streetlighting, parking management; highway technical services and delivery - liveable neighbourhood schemes, active travel schemes, highway structures; open spaces and natural environment – sports and leisure centre contracts, flood risk management, seafronts parks and lakes operational management, crematoria and cemeteries, marine environment.

Executive Member for Assets and Capital Delivery – Councillor Steve Bridger: major infrastructure project delivery – HIF, Metrowest, major schemes; property technical services and project delivery - strategic asset planning, corporate estate (including allocation/appropriation of assets between council directorates/functions), accommodation strategy project delivery, capital projects delivery.

The items and the final decision taker are indicative. Decision making is subject to the Constitution.

Copies of documents listed can be obtained by contacting the officer named in the attached schedules. Other relevant documents may be submitted to the decision maker and can be requested from the named officer as they become available or may be available on the Council's website www.n-somerset.gov.uk

August 2021

1. Council and Executive Items

(NB No Council or Executive meetings scheduled for August)

2. Executive Member Items and Director Key Decisions

Decision not before	Item/Issue requiring decision	Background Documents for Consideration	Decision Taker	Exempt Item? Yes/No/Part	Policy & Scrutiny Panel Activity & Engagement / Timeline	Contact Officer for Further Details
01/08	Article 4 directions on preventing the demolishing of stone walls and stone gate posts in Great Weston Conservation area. Area of Advertising and Shopfront Control in Great Weston Conservation area	NSC adopted policy document 04/12/18: Great Weston Conservation area management plan http://www.n-somerset.gov.uk/sites/default/files/2020-02/Great%20Weston%20Conservation%20Area%20management%20guidance.pdf	Executive Member (Cllr Canniford)	No	Research work April /June 2021. Scrutiny panel July 2021	Contact: Cara MacMahon 01934 426825
01/08	Award of contract for professional design services in support of Weston Business Quarter infrastructure development	North Somerset Economic Plan: https://www.n-somerset.gov.uk/sites/default/files/2021-03/29981%20Economic%20Plan%20ACC.pdf Executive 23/06/2021	Director of Place (key decision)	No	Place Panel all-member briefing on Junction 21 Enterprise Area and Weston Business Quarter to be arranged in discussion with Chair (expected early June)	Contact: Alex Fear 01934 426458

Decision not before	Item/Issue requiring decision	Background Documents for Consideration	Decision Taker	Exempt Item? Yes/No/Part	Policy & Scrutiny Panel Activity & Engagement / Timeline	Contact Officer for Further Details
01/08	Award of contract for Winterstoke Hundred Academy expansion site preparation works	HIF Commissioning plan http://apps.n-somerset.gov.uk/cairo/docs/doc29685.pdf	Executive Member (Cllr Bridger)	No	Present Procurement Paper to Place Panel on 14 June 2021.	Contact: Jon d'Este-Hoare 07385 402975
01/08	MetroWest Phase 1 – Utilities Side Agreement with West of England Combined Authority (previously listed for May)	25th June 2019 report to Full Council http://apps.n-somerset.gov.uk/cairo/docs/doc29690.htm	Director of Place (key decision)	No	10 November 2020 report to Full Council on agreements with utility companies / statutory undertakers. https://apps.n-somerset.gov.uk/Meetings/ByCommittee/15/2020/84	Contact: James Willcock 01934 426414
01/08	MetroWest Phase 1 – Bristol Port Company agreement (previously listed for May)	25th June 2019 report to Full Council http://apps.n-somerset.gov.uk/cairo/docs/doc29690.htm	Director of Place (key decision)	No	10 November 2020 report to Full Council on agreements with utility companies / statutory undertakers. https://apps.n-somerset.gov.uk/Meetings/ByCommittee/15/2020/84	Contact: James Willcock 01934 426414

Decision not before	Item/Issue requiring decision	Background Documents for Consideration	Decision Taker	Exempt Item? Yes/No/Part	Policy & Scrutiny Panel Activity & Engagement / Timeline	Contact Officer for Further Details
01/08	MetroWest Phase 1 – National Trust Agreement (previously listed for June)	25th June 2019 report to Full Council http://apps.n-somerset.gov.uk/cairo/docs/doc29690.htm	Director of Place (key decision)	No	10 November 2020 report to Full Council on agreements with utility companies / statutory undertakers. https://apps.n-somerset.gov.uk/Meetings/ByCommittee/15/2020/84	Contact: James Willcock 01934 426414
01/08	Leigh Woods parking scheme approval of Traffic Regulation Order (TRO) to implement on-street pay and display with residents permits – Decision needed to confirm design and whether/not to proceed with the scheme following 3 week statutory consultation (previously listed for June)	October 2020 Executive Report https://apps.n-somerset.gov.uk/Meetings/document/report/NSCP/M-111-566	Executive Member (Cllr Canniford)	No	Informal SPEDR input was sought on 14 th September 2020	Contact: Rob Thomson 01934 426718

Decision not before	Item/Issue requiring decision	Background Documents for Consideration	Decision Taker	Exempt Item? Yes/No/Part	Policy & Scrutiny Panel Activity & Engagement / Timeline	Contact Officer for Further Details
01/08	MetroWest Phase 1 – Western Power Distribution - agreement (previously listed for May)	25th June 2019 report to Full Council http://apps.n-somerset.gov.uk/cairo/docs/doc29690.htm	Director of Place (key decision)	No	10 November 2020 report to Full Council on agreements with utility companies / statutory undertakers. https://apps.n-somerset.gov.uk/Meetings/ByCommittee/15/2020/84	Contact: Richard Matthews 01275 888937
01/08	MetroWest Phase 1 – Exolum (formerly Compañía Logística de Hidrocarburos) – agreement for building and working over and in proximity to oil pipelines (previously listed for May)	25th June 2019 report to Full Council http://apps.n-somerset.gov.uk/cairo/docs/doc29690.htm	Director of Place (key decision)	No	10 November 2020 report to Full Council on agreements with utility companies / statutory undertakers. https://apps.n-somerset.gov.uk/Meetings/ByCommittee/15/2020/84	Contact: Richard Matthews 01275 888937

Decision not before	Item/Issue requiring decision	Background Documents for Consideration	Decision Taker	Exempt Item? Yes/No/Part	Policy & Scrutiny Panel Activity & Engagement / Timeline	Contact Officer for Further Details
01/08	MetroWest Phase 1 – Bristol Water - agreement for building and working over and in proximity to water pipelines (previously listed for May)	25th June 2019 report to Full Council http://apps.n-somerset.gov.uk/cairo/docs/doc29690.htm	Director of Place (key decision)	No	10 November 2020 report to Full Council on agreements with utility companies / statutory undertakers. https://apps.n-somerset.gov.uk/Meetings/ByCommittee/15/2020/84	Contact: Richard Matthews 01275 888937
01/08	MetroWest Phase 1 – Wales and West Utilities agreement (previously listed for May)	25th June 2019 report to Full Council http://apps.n-somerset.gov.uk/cairo/docs/doc29690.htm	Director of Place (key decision)	No	10 November 2020 report to Full Council on agreements with utility companies / statutory undertakers. https://apps.n-somerset.gov.uk/Meetings/ByCommittee/15/2020/84	Contact: Richard Matthews 01275 888937
01/08	MetroWest Phase 1 – National Grid agreement (previously listed for May)	25th June 2019 report to Full Council http://apps.n-somerset.gov.uk/cairo/docs/doc29690.htm	Director of Place (key decision)	No	10 November 2020 report to Full Council on agreements with utility companies / statutory undertakers. https://apps.n-somerset.gov.uk/Meetings/ByCommittee/15/2020/84	Contact: Richard Matthews 01275 888937

Decision not before	Item/Issue requiring decision	Background Documents for Consideration	Decision Taker	Exempt Item? Yes/No/Part	Policy & Scrutiny Panel Activity & Engagement / Timeline	Contact Officer for Further Details
01/08	Award of contract for Tutshill agricultural crossing (to enable WestonClevedon Cycle Route) (previously listed for May)	https://apps.nsomerset.gov.uk/Meetings/document/report/NSCPM-111-490 Executive Member decision 20/21 DP272 https://www.nsomerset.gov.uk/councildemocracy/councillorscommittees/decisionsmeetings/executive-memberdecisions/2020-executivemember-decisions	Director of Place (key decision)	No	Regular briefings with the Chair of Place / Chairman's authority	Contact: Ben Searle 01934 426962
01/08	Award of contract/s for path construction and other elements of Weston – Clevedon Cycle Route (previously listed for May)	https://apps.nsomerset.gov.uk/Meetings/document/report/NSCPM-111-490 Executive Member decision 20/21 DP272 https://www.nsomerset.gov.uk/councildemocracy/councillorscommittees/decisionsmeetings/executive-memberdecisions/2020-executivemember-decisions	Director of Place (key decision)	No	Regular briefings with the Chair of Place / Chairman's authority	Contact: Ben Searle 01934 426962

Decision not before	Item/Issue requiring decision	Background Documents for Consideration	Decision Taker	Exempt Item? Yes/No/Part	Policy & Scrutiny Panel Activity & Engagement / Timeline	Contact Officer for Further Details
01/08	Agreement to submit a funding bid to Department for Business, Energy & Industrial Strategy (BEIS) under the Sustainable Warmth programme (new entry)	BEIS – Sustainable Warmth Guidance <u>Apply for the Sustainable Warmth competition - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)</u>	Executive Member (Cllr Bell)	No	Climate Emergency Member/Officer Group (July) ASH Panel Working Group – briefing note to be circulated (July)	Contact: Howard Evans. 01934 426673
01/08	MetroWest Phase 1 – Implementation Agreement with Network Rail (new entry)	19 July 2021 report to Full Council 23 February 2021 report to Full Council and 10 November 2020 report to Full Council	Director of Place (key decision)	No	Briefing given to Place Scrutiny Panel on 8 th June 2021	Contact: James Willcock 01934 426414
01/08	Amendment to the 2021/22 school term and holiday dates to allow for an extra holiday day to celebrate the Queen's Platinum Jubilee (new entry)	School Term and Holiday Dates 2021/22 – PC101 (2019/20)	Director of Children's Services (key decision)	No	None in relation to this change. CYPS Steering Group on 19 January 2021 - for dates for 2022/23	Contact: Janice Allen 01275 888619

September 2021

1. Council and Executive Items

Meeting Date	Item/Issue requiring decision	Background Documents for Consideration	Decision Taker	Exempt Item? Yes/No/Part	Policy & Scrutiny Panel Activity & Engagement / Timeline	Contact Officer for Further Details
08/09	2021/22 Month 4 Budget Monitor	Previous Budget Monitor reports to Executive	Executive	No	Partnerships, Corporate Organisation & Overview Management Policy & Scrutiny Panel: consideration of budget monitoring reports	Contact: Melanie Watts 01934 634618
08/09	Medium Term Financial Plan (MTFP) and Revenue Budget 2022/23	Previous Budget and Medium Term Financial Plan reports to Executive	Executive	No	Partnerships, Corporate Organisation & Overview Management Policy & Scrutiny Panel: briefing on MTFP engagement plan, 15th July (informal)	Contact: Melanie Watts 01934 634618
08/09	Award of the Nursing & Healthy Child Programme Contract	Commissioning Plan Procurement Plan	Executive	No	Engagement with Children's and Health Panels during the procurement process	Contact: Hayley Burton 01275 888202
08/09	Adoption of new brand identity and vision for Junction 21 Enterprise Area	J21EA revisioning prospectus	Executive	No	Special Place Panel July 2021 (to be confirmed with Place secretariat and chair)	Contact: Alastair Shankland

Meeting Date	Item/Issue requiring decision	Background Documents for Consideration	Decision Taker	Exempt Item? Yes/No/Part	Policy & Scrutiny Panel Activity & Engagement / Timeline	Contact Officer for Further Details
08/09	Approval of the revised Travel Plan SPD for public consultation	Revised Draft Travel Plans SPD and additional documents for schools Current Travel Plan SPD https://www.n-somerset.gov.uk/sites/default/files/2020-02/travel%20plans%20supplementary%20planning%20document.pdf	Executive	No	Informal Place Panel prior to 23 June (date TBC) Panel engagement will also be sought after the conclusion of public consultation and prior to formal adoption of the revised SPD.	Contact: Steve Thorne 01934 426920/James Wigmore 01275 888076
08/09	Approval of Green Infrastructure Strategy	Report: Pre-consultation sign-off of the draft North Somerset green infrastructure strategy – in preparation for public consultation (February-March 2021) https://apps.n-somerset.gov.uk/Meetings/document/report/NSCPM-111-603	Executive	No	Ongoing engagement with Community and Corporate Organisation Scrutiny Panel	Contact: John Flannigan 01934 427346

Meeting Date	Item/Issue requiring decision	Background Documents for Consideration	Decision Taker	Exempt Item? Yes/No/Part	Policy & Scrutiny Panel Activity & Engagement / Timeline	Contact Officer for Further Details
08/09	Development Programme: affordable housing programme update and award of grants for affordable housing delivery (new entry)	Affordable Housing Delivery Partnership Agreement with Alliance Homes: https://n-somerset.moderngov.co.uk/Data/Council/201909241800/Agenda/23%20Affordable%20Housing%20Delivery%20Partnership%20Agreement%20with%20Alliance%20Homes.pdf Affordable Housing Supplementary Planning Document: https://www.n-somerset.gov.uk/sites/default/files/2020-03/Affordable%20housing%20supplementary%20planning%20document.pdf	Executive	Part	To be incorporated into PCOM discussion on Development Programme, July 2021. Additional briefings can be arranged if required.	Contact: Jenny Ford 01934 426 609/ Kevin Stamper

Meeting Date	Item/Issue requiring decision	Background Documents for Consideration	Decision Taker	Exempt Item? Yes/No/Part	Policy & Scrutiny Panel Activity & Engagement / Timeline	Contact Officer for Further Details
21/09	Climate Emergency Progress Update (for information, no decision required)	<u>Climate emergency strategy</u> <u>Climate emergency Action Plan – update Jan 2021</u> <u>Climate Emergency Progress Report – Jan 2021</u> Baseline evidence reports: <u>Council Area</u>	Council	No	PCO meeting 15 th July (TBC)	Contact: Nicola Webb 01275 884835
21/09	Adoption of the Revised North Somerset Parking Standards SPD following public consultation (new entry)	Executive Report 28/04/21 Revised North Somerset Parking Standards SPD (in progress)	Council	No	Formal pre-consultation SPEDR input 10 th March 2021 Informal post-consultation Place Panel engagement meeting 28 th July 2021	Contact: Jack Wyatt

Meeting Date	Item/Issue requiring decision	Background Documents for Consideration	Decision Taker	Exempt Item? Yes/No/Part	Policy & Scrutiny Panel Activity & Engagement / Timeline	Contact Officer for Further Details
21/09	Development Programme: approval of Commissioning Plan for development of Weston Town Centre sites (updated listing from July)	<p>Council report on Asset, Accommodation and Development Strategies, 23rd Feb 2021: https://apps.n-somerset.gov.uk/Meetings/document/report/NSCPM-38-641</p> <p>Weston Placemaking Strategy: https://superweston.net/wp-content/uploads/2021/04/Prospectus_weston_super_mare.pdf</p> <p>Weston Town Centre Supplementary Planning Document: https://www.n-somerset.gov.uk/sites/default/files/2020-03/Weston-super-Mare%20town%20centre%20regeneration%20supplementary%20planning%20document.pdf</p>	Council	Part	<p>SPEDR update on Homes England and North Somerset development sites, 9th Jan 2021</p> <p>PCOM to host discussion on Development Programme, July 2021</p>	Contact: Jenny Ford 01934 426 609/ Alex Hearn

September 2021

2. Executive Member Items and Director Key Decisions

Decision not before	Item/Issue requiring decision	Background Documents for Consideration	Decision Taker	Exempt Item? Yes/No/Part	Policy & Scrutiny Panel Activity & Engagement / Timeline	Contact Officer for Further Details
01/09	Winterstoke Road Bridge – acceptance of MOD funding and adding ~£4.5m to the capital programme	19.10.16 WRB Full 12.11.19 Council Report	Director of Place (key decision)	No	Briefing to Cllr John Crockford-Hawley as Place Chairman June 2021	Contact: Alex Fear 01934 426458
01/09	Approval to submit the A38 MRN scheme Outline Business Case and on Local Contribution funding	Director Decision 19/20 DE295 https://www.n-somerset.gov.uk/sites/default/files/2020-05/19-20%20DE%20295.pdf	Executive Member (Cllr Bridger)	No	Place P&SP Chairman consulted with and liaison ongoing	Contact: Konrad Lansdown: 07917 184804
01/09	Approval to run an update to the school organisation consultation previously undertaken in September/October 2019 to seek an expansion of Baytree Special School (previously listed for June)	www.n-somerset.gov.uk/baytreeconsultation Decision No 2019/pc19 - https://www.n-somerset.gov.uk/council-democracy/councillors-committees/decisions-meetings/executive-member-decisions/2019-executive-member-decisions/july-2019-executive-member-decisions Report to the Children & Young People Policy & Scrutiny Panel – 20 June 2019 - http://apps.n-somerset.gov.uk/cairo/docs/doc29644.pdf	Executive Member (Cllr Gibbons)	No	Report to the CYPS Panel – 20 June 2019 - http://apps.n-somerset.gov.uk/cairo/docs/doc29644.pdf Updates to the CYPS Panel School Organisation Steering Group – 19 September 2019 16 December 2019 10 June 2020 26 November 2020 19 January 2021 25 May 2021	Contact: Sally Varley 01275 884857 or 07917 587280

Decision not before	Item/Issue requiring decision	Background Documents for Consideration	Decision Taker	Exempt Item? Yes/No/Part	Policy & Scrutiny Panel Activity & Engagement / Timeline	Contact Officer for Further Details
08/09	Affordable housing: approval of capital grant for delivery of affordable housing at Diamond Court extra care housing scheme, Weston-super-Mare (new entry)	Affordable Housing Supplementary Planning Document: https://www.n-somerset.gov.uk/sites/default/files/2020-03/Affordable%20housing%20supplementary%20planning%20document.pdf Planning application: https://planning.n-somerset.gov.uk/online-applications/applicationDetails.do?keyVal=QADNGULPKT100&activeTab=summary	Executive Member (Cllr Canniford)	Part	To be incorporated into PCOM discussion on Development Programme, July 2021. Additional briefings can be arranged if required.	Contact: Jenny Ford 01934 426 609/ Kevin Stamper
21/09	Development Programme: approval of Procurement Plan for development of Weston Town Centre sites (new entry)	Report on Commissioning Plan for Weston Town Centre sites, Full Council meeting, 21 st Sept 2021	Executive Member (Cllr Canniford)	Part	SPEDR update on Homes England and North Somerset development sites, 9 th Jan 2021 PCOM to host discussion on Development Programme, July 2021	Contact: Jenny Ford 01934 426 609/ Alex Hearn

October 2021

1. Council and Executive Items

(NB No Council meeting scheduled for October)

Meeting Date	Item/Issue requiring decision	Background Documents for Consideration	Decision Taker	Exempt Item? Yes/No/Part	Policy & Scrutiny Panel Activity & Engagement / Timeline	Contact Officer for Further Details
20/10	2021/22 Month 6 Budget Monitor	Previous Budget Monitor reports to Executive	Executive	No	PCOM November	Contact: Melanie Watts 01934 634618
20/10	Medium Term Financial Plan (MTFP) and Revenue Budget 2022/23	Previous Budget and Medium Term Financial Plan reports to Executive	Executive	No	PCOM November – consideration of draft MTFP and savings plans	Contact: Melanie Watts 01934 634618
20/10	Bus Back Better: Approval of the Joint Bus Service Improvement Plan (BSIP)	Report to Executive 23/06/2021 Also, Ministerial statement of 15 March 2021: https://www.gov.uk/government/speeches/local-transport-update-national-bus-strategy-for-england-published New National strategy launched 15 March 2021: https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/bus-back-better	Executive	No	Place Panel session to be arranged prior to Executive to allow detailed scrutiny of the Joint Bus Service Improvement Plan (BSIP)	Contact: Bella Fortune or Lindsay Margerison 01934 427408

Meeting Date	Item/Issue requiring decision	Background Documents for Consideration	Decision Taker	Exempt Item? Yes/No/Part	Policy & Scrutiny Panel Activity & Engagement / Timeline	Contact Officer for Further Details
20/10	Contract award to appoint a contractor to construct the Winterstoke Hundred Academy expansion at Locking Parklands (new entry)	<p>HIF Commissioning plan http://apps.n-somerset.gov.uk/cairo/docs/doc29685.pdf WHAE Procurement Plan https://www.n-somerset.gov.uk/sites/default/files/2020-09/2021%20DE123%20signed.pdf Contract Award for the Design of WHAE https://www.n-somerset.gov.uk/sites/default/files/2020-12/CY11%20signed.pdf Planning application number: 21/P/1596/FUL</p>	Executive	No	Details of intended appointment will be presented to the Scrutiny Panel.	Contact: Naomi Addicott Senior Project Manager 07469406075

Meeting Date	Item/Issue requiring decision	Background Documents for Consideration	Decision Taker	Exempt Item? Yes/No/Part	Policy & Scrutiny Panel Activity & Engagement / Timeline	Contact Officer for Further Details
20/10	Development Programme updates including recommendations from consultation on sites (new entry)	Executive report on Development Programme updates and consultation programme, 23 rd June 2021: https://n-somerset.moderngov.co.uk/documents/s1105/15%20Development%20Programme%20Updates%20and%20Consultation%20Programme.pdf	Executive	Part	PCOM to host discussion on Development Programme, July 2021	Contact: Jenny Ford 01934 426 609/ Alex Hearn

October 2021

2. Executive Member Items and Director Key Decisions

Decision not before	Item/Issue requiring decision	Background Documents for Consideration	Decision Taker	Exempt Item? Yes/No/Part	Policy & Scrutiny Panel Activity & Engagement / Timeline	Contact Officer for Further Details
01/10	Permission to commence the Presumption Route competition process with the DfE to seek a sponsor for a new primary school in Weston super Mare to meet new development demand	Education Provision in North Somerset ~ A Commissioning Strategy 2021 – 2024 –report to Executive 23 June 2021	Executive Member (Cllr Gibbons)	No	CYPS School Organisation Steering Group – 25 May 2021	Contact: Sally Varley 01275 884857

Page 54

November 2021

1. Council and Executive Items

(NB No Executive meeting scheduled for November)

Meeting Date	Item/Issue requiring decision	Background Documents for Consideration	Decision Taker	Exempt Item? Yes/No/Part	Policy & Scrutiny Panel Activity & Engagement / Timeline	Contact Officer for Further Details
09/11	Make the Abbots Leigh, Ham Green, Pill and Easton-in-Gordano Neighbourhood Plan (new entry)	Abbots Leigh, Ham Green, Pill and Easton-in-Gordano Neighbourhood Plan (referendum version)	Council	No	Place Scrutiny Panel chair has confirmed that no panel involvement is necessary (04/06/21)	Contact: Celia Dring 01934426244
09/11	Development Programme updates including recommendations from consultation on sites (new entry)	Executive report on Development Programme updates and consultation programme, 23 rd June 2021: https://n-somerset.moderngov.co.uk/documents/s1105/15%20Development%20Programme%20Updates%20and%20Consultation%20Programme.pdf	Council	Part	PCOM to host discussion on Development Programme, July 2021	Contact: Jenny Ford 01934 426 609/ Alex Hearn

November 2021

2. Executive Member Items and Director Key Decisions

Decision not before	Item/Issue requiring decision	Background Documents for Consideration	Decision Taker	Exempt Item? Yes/No/Part	Policy & Scrutiny Panel Activity & Engagement / Timeline	Contact Officer for Further Details
01/11						

North Somerset Council

Report to the Full Council

Date of Meeting: 19 July 2021

Subject of Report: Corporate Parenting

Town or Parish: All

Officer/Member Presenting: Executive Member for Children's Services and Lifelong Learning

Key Decision: No

Reason:

Not an Executive Decision

Recommendations

Members are asked to note the report.

1. Summary of Report

1. Summary of the report

1.1 The report provides members with information on three aspects of corporate parenting responsibilities:

- An update on the findings of our care leavers' contributions to the national survey, 'Your Life Beyond Care.'
- A message linked to members' individual offers of support, made during last year's Corporate Parenting seminar
- A briefing on the Case for Change published by the Independent Review of Children's Social Care following the last Full Council meeting

2. Policy

2.1 Whilst the concept of members viewing themselves as the parents of all children who are looked after came from the Quality Protects initiative launched in 1998 by Frank Dobson, the then Secretary of State for Health, the Children and Social Work Act 2017 defined for the first time in law the responsibility of corporate parents to ensure, as far as possible, secure, nurturing and positive experiences for 'our' children. This means that they should:

- act in their best interests, and promote their physical and mental health and wellbeing;
- encourage them to express their views, wishes and feelings, and take them into account, while promoting high aspirations and trying to secure the best outcomes for them;
- make sure they have access to services;
- make sure that they are safe, with stable home lives, relationships and education or work;
- prepare them for adulthood and independent living.

3. Details

3.1 Your Life Beyond Care, the views of our Care leavers on their wellbeing, report – June 2021

Currently official statistics only provide a partial picture of care leavers' lives. Data focuses on adult perspectives, objective outcome measures – where young people live, education. None of this information tells us about young people's own viewpoints: are they happy, safe and feel they are doing well? The Bright Spots Programme seeks to address these gaps by measuring children and young people's subjective well-being. Subjective well-being is defined as feeling good and doing well at an individual and interpersonal level.

In January and February 2021 all care leavers in North Somerset were asked to participate in an online survey to find out how they felt about their lives. Here are some highlights of the findings

- 96 young people responded to the survey from a care leaver population of 181: a response rate of 53%;
- 49 (52%) were female, 43 (45%) male; 2 identified as transgender, 1 as gender-fluid, and 1 did not answer;
- 39% of care leavers reported having a disability/long term illness; a much larger proportion compared to care leavers (24%) in 21 other LAs and more than triple the rate in the general population (12%).

What's working well?

- A higher proportion of care leavers in North Somerset having a trusted person (87%) in their lives than in 2018: 83%;
- Care experienced young people in North Somerset were 5% more likely to report having a good friend than care leavers nationally (although this was not a statistically significant difference);
- Care experienced young people in North Somerset were more likely to have a pet than their counterparts nationally;
- Most care-experienced young people (83%) knew who their worker was.

What's improved since last time? (Your Life Beyond Care Survey in 2018)

- Easier to contact their leaving care worker - up 22%;
- Satisfied with life as a whole - up 9%;
- Always feel safe where they live - up 6%;
- Can connect to the internet at home - up 17%.

What could be better?

- Care leavers feel less safe and settled where they live than children who are in our care;
- In comparison to young people in the general population, care leavers in North Somerset were almost three times more likely to report financial difficulties;
- Stress - only a fifth (21%) reported being confident 'very often' in their ability to handle personal problems, and a tenth (11%) that things were going their way (this is similar to the picture for care leavers nationally – 22% and 12% respectively);
- Wellbeing - 40% of care leavers reported high or very high happiness the previous day compared to 76% of young people (16-24yrs) in the general population.
- A higher proportion of care leavers also reported have 'high' or 'very high' satisfaction with life overall (37%) than in in 2018 (28%).

The Corporate Parenting Panel will receive information on how we are seeking to improve our care leavers' lives and Council will then receive an update on progress.

3.2 Corporate Parenting Offers

Just before 'lockdown', members will recall the All Member seminar focused on the role of Corporate Parenting and being asked to think of anything that could be done individually to support our Care Leavers and demonstrate how members are fulfilling their corporate parenting role. Many members made very generous and thoughtful pledges. Whilst it has been difficult to take up lots of these offers so far, due to COVID19, we would like to progress these kind offers over the summer. Officers will be in contact in the coming weeks to link your offers with individual young people's needs.

3.3 The Case for Change

3.3.1 The Review finds that children and families are: "...not yet getting a good enough deal," but notes that this is not a criticism of the many dedicated professionals working to improve the lives of children and families. "In the majority of cases, families become involved with children's social care because they are parenting in conditions of adversity, rather than because they have, or are likely to, cause significant harm to their child."

3.3.2 The Review finds that decision-making and risk assessment related to harms is too inconsistent and often isn't good enough in relation to child protection. Too much energy is spent on assessing and investigating families instead of providing support, which is described as costly and intrusive. There is a high level of anxiety when making decisions, both social workers and organisations continue to feel very vulnerable to public, regulatory and government scrutiny if things do go wrong.

3.3.3 The report notes several times that social workers spend less than a third of their time working directly with children and families. Too often they don't have the freedom to follow their judgement of what is in the best interests of children and families. The Review finds that too many local authorities have disempowering, complicated processes to make decisions and allocate resources.

3.3.4 Evidence shows contributory causal relationship between income, maltreatment and state intervention: "We have now reached the point where the weight of evidence showing a relationship between poverty, child abuse, neglect and state intervention in family life is strong enough to warrant widespread acceptance... this should lead us away from framing these differences as 'variations' in social care interventions and be framed as welfare inequalities." A parallel is drawn with the now widely accepted view of education inequalities.

3.3.5 On policy and practice responses, the Review finds: "... teens who experience criminal exploitation have been particularly failed," noting different parts of the children's social care, justice and health systems are responding differently to the same children and young people, resulting in gaps, confusion and worse outcomes. Similarly, there has been a long-term failure to support parents who have had child/ren removed, this has led to: "... unacceptable entrenched and multi-generational cycles of adversity." With such complex needs, it is unrealistic to expect general family help would ever be enough to stop these parents continuing on the same path.

3.3.6 Investing in family help matters, but more money alone is not a silver bullet. The report points to emerging evidence on the impact of early investment in help and support reducing the need for more acute interventions. “The government’s focus should be on supporting the resources of families and the wider community... whilst acting decisively and swiftly where children need protection.” An agreed definition of early help / family support is needed and a first draft is put forward for feedback.

3.3.7 Care must build rather than break relationships and more must be done to keep children safely out of care, although it is recognised that the state will always need to step in and provide care for some. There have been attempts to improve parts of the system but so far they have failed to prioritise loving relationships. So, shared and supported care options may have a role. “When children enter care, they are separated from the most significant adults in their lives, even if this is for good reason.” More emphasis is needed on building and maintaining relationships as well as life story work. Too often entry into care means a move away from school and friends; every change has a profound impact on child/ren.

3.3.8 On placements, greater focus and attention should be paid to identifying kinship carers before entering into proceedings. The report notes that previous reviews of residential (2016, DfE) and foster care (DfE, 2018) have not led to significant changes. Many concerns about independent and semi-independent placements were raised with the Review, particularly in relation to under 16s and UASCs, however, some young people told the Review this was the right option for them.

3.3.9 The Review finds that the market for care and local authority commissioning is “broken” and there is significant fragility in the system. The Review is concerned about cost, profit and financial health of providers and the impact of the current system on children and young people. A Competition and Markets Authority market review is underway.

3.3.10 Care for children who need a secure placement reflects short term, siloed thinking across government and urgent action is needed. Better planning, co-ordination and investment, with leadership across health, justice and social care, is needed. We also need to consider the needs of these children and ask whether any home that currently exists is able to meet their needs while still providing a loving environment.

3.3.11 “There is no situation in the current system where we will not need to spend more... Children’s social care is under significant financial pressures and urgent action is needed.” The Review notes that the latest MHCLG figures show spend on children’s social care is rising faster than any other area of local authority spend. This increase is being driven in the most acute end of the system, a cycle that must be broken.

3.3.12 The complexity of the policy landscape around children’s social care has led to uncoordinated policy initiatives from a range of government. Children’s social care needs a clear vision and purpose. The Review is interested in the role communities could play here. Multiagency arrangements and the partners involved have different footprints, priorities and procedures and health are often not closely involved in safeguarding conversations. Partners know their own roles but lack a shared understanding of their collective goal, echoing the findings of the recent Wood Review (DfE, 2021). Too often reform initiatives over the past decade have had limited impact or are too small scale to transform practice across the country. Similarly, there is a systematic overconfidence that additional top down duties or changes to legislation will lead to positive change for children and families.

3.3.13 The review heard “time and time again” about the role inspection plays in driving behaviour. Are we measuring the things that matter to children and families, does

inspection take account of their experiences? We need to be able to measure change and understand whether things are genuinely improving for children and families.

3.3.14 Other areas of interest include disparity in court decision making, SEND support, the need for better facilitation of information sharing for safeguarding purposes, the collection and use of data and metrics for success: "We are over-reliant on Ofsted gradings."

3.3.15 In closing, the Review notes that a significant number of the problems diagnosed in the document have been exposed and described again and again with sensible, considered recommendations for change. Yet actually achieving change has been stubbornly difficult.

3.3.16 Actions the Review will undertake, have commissioned and/or future areas of focus:

- Deeper look at ethnicity and intergenerational experience of care going forward;
- The tension between protection and support work;
- Testing out a definition of family help in the next stage of the Review;
- A new approach to work with teens who face risks outside of the home;
- Recognition and support for kinship carers is to be looked at in the next stage of work;
- Continue to work closely with the Competition and Markets Authority on their market review of care placements;
- Engage with the SEND Review on shared areas of interest, particularly support for children and families e.g. respite care;
- The Review recognises the stigma children in care and care experienced adults face and wants to hear ideas about how to address this in the next phase of work;
- What it will cost to achieve a shift from acute to earlier spending and the benefits of this will be the focus of the next stage of the review;
- Central government's willingness to work together to develop policy in a coordinated way.

3.3.17 Specific questions posed by the Review for feedback on or before 13 August

- What do you think the purpose of children's social care should be?
- What is the role of the Children's Social Care system in strengthening communities rather than just providing services?
- How do we address the tension between protection and support in Children's Social Care that families describe? Is a system which undertakes both support for families and child protection impeded in its ability to do both well?
- What do you think about our proposed definition of family help?
- How do we raise the quality of decision making in child protection?
- How do we fill the accountability gap in order to take effective action to keep teenagers safe?
- What can we do to support and grow kinship care?
- Given the clear evidence, why aren't more programme that support parents at the edge of care and post removal more widely available and what will it take to make this the case?
- If we were creating care today, what would it look like?
- How can care help to build loving lifelong relationships as the norm?
- What changes do we need to make to ensure we have the right homes in the right places with the right support? What role should residential and secure homes have in the future?
- How can we strengthen multi-agency join up both locally and nationally, without losing accountability?
- How do we free up social workers to spend more time in direct practice with children and families and reduce risk aversion?
- How can monitoring and inspection make the most difference to children's and families' experiences and engender greater freedom and responsibility in the workforce?

- What will need to be different about this review's recommendations compared to previous reviews so that they create a tipping point for improvement?

4. Consultation

None, this is for information.

5. Financial Implications

None.

Costs

None.

Funding

None.

6. Legal Powers and Implications

None.

7. Climate Change and Environmental Implications

None.

8. Risk Management

None.

9. Equality Implications

[Have you undertaken an Equality Impact Assessment? Yes/No No

10. Corporate Implications

None.

11. Options Considered

None.

Author:

Sheila Smith, Director of Children's Services

Appendices:

None.

Background Papers:

The Review's website:

<https://childrensocialcare.independent-review.uk/>

North Somerset Council

Report to the Council

Date of Meeting: 19th July 2021

Subject of Report: Response to Peer Review recommendations on Planning

Town or Parish: All

Officer/Member Presenting: Cllr John Crockford-Hawley, Chair of Peer Review Member Working Group

Key Decision: No

Reason:

Not an Executive decision

Recommendations

The recommendations of the Local Government Association Planning Advisory Service Planning Peer Review be noted, the recommendations made therein be agreed and the Assistant Director Legal & Governance and Monitoring Officer, Director of Place and Head of Planning be authorised to implement them.

1. Summary of Report

The Peer Review of Planning was carried out in January 2021. As a result, 12 recommendations were made which were referred by Council on 20th April to a Review Working Group for further discussion. The member Working Group has had 5 meetings to consider all the recommendations and agree that Council be recommended to accept them.

2. Policy

None

3. Details

3.1 Background

The aim of the Peer Review of Planning was to assess the operation of the Council's Planning service (the Service) focusing on pre application responses and decision making, structure and workforce, member engagement and Planning & Regulatory Committee (P&R Committee) in the context of becoming a more 'enabling' council.

The review took place virtually during the week of 25th January and comprised a "critical friend" assessment by a small team of officers and members from other Councils and of the

LGA. The review team met with almost 100 stakeholders in discussion groups and one to one interviews. These included:

- Members – the Leader, relevant Executive Member, the P&R Committee Chair & Vice Chair, Chair of SPEDR, the political group leaders, and P&R committee members.
- The Chief Executive, Director of Place and other managers and officers
- Representatives of Town and Parish Councils
- Two groups of agents and planning consultants
- Representatives of the planning policy and enforcement teams
- Internal stakeholders such as officers from Human Resources and legal and democratic services, and
- Representatives of internal and external consultees to the planning process (eg Environment Agency, Historic England, Natural England).

The Review Team has provided its report and the executive summary sets out the main findings (see below). 12 specific recommendations were made (see section 3.3 below) and these have been considered by a member Working Group chaired by the Chair of the Place Policy and Scrutiny Panel as requested by Council at its April meeting. The Working Group met on five occasions between 10th May and 10th June on a “task and finish” basis to consider the 12 recommendations.

3.2 Summary of findings

The Executive Summary of the review team’s report highlighted the following conclusions which led to the recommendations set out in 3.3 below and which have been considered by the Member Working Group.

- The development of a new Local Plan provides a great opportunity for the relatively new political administration to ensure that its corporate priorities guide and influence planning policy and delivery. Given that planning and land use needs to be at the heart of place making and tackling climate change, members, officers, public and stakeholders can work collaboratively to devise an appropriate spatial approach for North Somerset.
- To achieve the corporate and new Place Directorate ambitions to become an ‘enabling’ council the review team saw the need for a ‘gear change’ in culture and practice in the Planning and supporting services. It recommends that the current transformation programme reviews how it can best achieve clear prioritisation, stronger collaboration and more focus on delivery. The report encourages the council to reinforce its Planning Service as vital and at the heart of place shaping in its main towns such as Weston-super- Mare.
- The Planning Service is well managed and performs very well against Government indicators on speed and quality. However, staff capacity and resilience are stretched. Managers, staff and customers see the need for Service improvements and the review team make recommendations about creating efficiencies in order to try and free up staff capacity. In particular there is an urgent need to tackle blockages in responses of internal consultees in the development management process that are having a debilitating impact. The recommendations (see below) are designed to support the Service in becoming more outward looking and more outcome focussed.
- The P & R Committee moved on line during the Covid 19 pandemic and its operation has improved as members and officers have become more proficient in this virtual

setting. The review team found good practice in the way the Committee owns Service performance through regular updates.

- The review team strongly recommend that in order to support the council's growth agenda through acting strategically with well-trained members, that the Committee's size stays as close as possible to its current number of 13. Changes to public speaking offer potential to better meet the administration's value of becoming a more 'inclusive' and 'listening' council.
- The Service can demonstrate good strategic working in planning policy issues with the authorities that make up the West of England Combined Authority (WECA). Town and Parish Councils are heavily engaged in their role as statutory consultees and the report makes a recommendation as to how to perhaps better manage expectations in closing the feedback loop. The Service recognises weaknesses in its preapplication and Planning Performance Agreement (PPA) offer. The review team consider this area so important to delivering improved engagement and better outcomes that it suggests an overhaul in approach, focus and prioritisation.
- The peer review team recognises that the council is self-aware of many of the improvement areas required. This offers good potential for significant improvement.

3.3 Peer Review Recommendations

Following on from the main findings, the Peer Review made 12 recommendations (abbreviated as "R" below) which have been considered by the Member Working Group as requested by Council on 20th April. The Group noted that a number of recommendations were matters for the Director of Place and Head of Planning to deliver but endorsed the work being carried out.

R1 Move at speed to meet key milestones in Local Plan delivery including testing the aspirations of the administration and ensuring timing of vital infrastructure delivery.

Summary of Working Group discussion and conclusions:

The Group noted and supported the work in progress and in particular noted that the Executive agreed the Spatial Strategy and key principles on 28th April. It noted that the timetable and key milestones were being established as recommended by the Peer Review.

R2 Undertake a wider review of the structure of Place Directorate to give capacity to key managers to take a more focused role on delivery. This should include a review of where in the hierarchy the Head of Planning should sit.

Summary of Working Group discussion and conclusions:

The Group noted that the Director of Place had carried out a consultation on the future structure of the Place Directorate which ran from 4th May to 7th June. This included relevant proposals and further work was ongoing to deliver a new Directorate structure.

R3 Review the pre application processes, including internal collaboration and potential beneficial impact across whole organisation, by using bench marking with best practice councils to ensure that strategically important development proposals help to meet the Local Plan delivery aspirations.

Summary of Working Group discussion and conclusions:

The Group noted that a review of processes is to be carried out by officers following consultation with agents focus group and a review of best practice. This would include a senior officer forum to consider key development proposals at the earliest opportunity (see below). The Group agreed that briefings of relevant members by prospective applicants on emerging major development proposals should be encouraged as part of the pre-application process. Officers must attend such briefings

R4 Examine the establishment of an internal forum that enables the key decision makers in the development management process to support and guide case officers on key strategic applications.

Summary of Working Group discussion and conclusions:

The Working Group noted that an officer "Development Forum" is being set up to meet this recommendation. The first meeting took place on 7th June to consider the group's objectives, governance and Terms of Reference.

R5 Review opportunities to create a more flexible team structure to enable officers to gain greater breadth of experience and career path to support recruitment and retention and increased staff morale.

Summary of Working Group discussion and conclusions:

The Group noted that the consultation on the Place Directorate restructure closed on 7th June. Relevant proposals included consideration of revised structures to give greater opportunity for officers to gain new experiences. Responses to the consultation are being considered and options will be developed through an officer steering group from across the service. The opportunity for greater officer training/development opportunities, expanded career grades, apprenticeship and Employer of Choice initiative are all being considered.

R6 Create the opportunity to maximise staff resources and staff retention by better linking staffing to funding sources e.g. increased Urban Design and case officer capacity through NSC led regeneration projects, PPAs and S106 planning obligations.

Summary of Working Group discussion and conclusions:

It was noted that work on maximising PPA income is also underway as a means of securing additional resource through NSC development projects as well as other developments. The review of the pre-application advice process (see R3 above) would also consider the income generation opportunities. The Place Directorate transformation project will also to consider the role of S106 and CIL.

R7 Take the opportunity to reduce the size of the P & R Committee. The current size of 13 appears to work well and a tighter more focussed Committee can assist in delivering the Place shaping aspirations.

Summary of Working Group discussion and conclusions:

The Working Group supports the recommendation to reduce the Committee to 13. In doing so it took into account comments received from other members, considered examples of committee sizes at other councils in the area and further advice from the Planning Advisory Service (PAS) about the characteristics of a good committee. The Group considered that a committee of 13 was consistent with the size of similar committees elsewhere and with PAS advice. It recognised that the committee is required to be politically balanced but that non-members of the committee should be able to attend. Non-members of the committee should be able to address the committee on applications in their ward or where an application materially affects their ward. The issue of substitution arrangements was considered. It

was recommended that group leaders be asked to nominate two members per group who would attend the member training (see R10 below) and act as substitutes for any committee member who could not attend.

R8 Introduce a member training programme, involve members in planning it and consider use of independent facilitators/trainers to deliver so it is both owned by members and fit for purpose.

Summary of Working Group discussion and conclusions:

The Working Group supports the recommendation. The Group agreed that members of the committee should be expected to have attended refreshers on planning law and procedures to be provided by officers or external trainers as appropriate. Members not on the Committee would also be able to attend if they so wished. The Group reviewed the training provided in 2018 which involved a combination of full day event led by an external trainer coupled with internal officer led workshops supported by written material. A number of issues and options related to member training were considered, including recognition of different learning styles, and the Head of Planning was requested to develop a programme in consultation with the Working Group.

R9 Introduce a specific Code of Conduct for Planning that addresses Planning specific probity matters and the roles of members and officers. This could include a review of public speaking arrangements including: 1) Allow public to join MS teams and speak at Committee during Covid regime. 2) Public input at start of relevant agenda item rather than all together at start of meeting.

Summary of Working Group discussion and conclusions:

The Working Group supports the recommendation to move public speaking on planning applications so that the public speaking on an individual planning application takes place just before that application is considered (as opposed to the current arrangement whereby all speakers are heard at the start of the meeting). The Group considered that all other existing public speaking arrangements should remain unchanged although it noted that the Committee had the power to agree the suspension of Standing Orders when circumstances warrant it. The Working Group considered the LGA's "Probity in Planning" advice to Councils and considered an example of a local Code of Conduct for Planning currently operated by South Gloucestershire Council. It acknowledged that a Code of Conduct for Planning would be helpful in the wider context of model Code of Conduct for the Council and provide a single source of guidance on the Councils various planning procedures, codes and protocols.

R10 Ensure that the P & R Committee focuses on the most strategically important section 1 decisions in order to optimise time to facilitate enabling and growth agenda and address needs to deliver wider community benefits.

Summary of Working Group discussion and conclusions:

The Working Group supported this recommendation. In doing so it reviewed the mix and balance of planning applications considered by the P&R Committee since May 2019. It supported the existing arrangements for "section 1" and "section 2" items and recommended that the revised delegation arrangements introduced during the Covid lockdown be made permanent. These arrangements reduce the number of automatic triggers for referral of applications to committee. The Working Group was supportive of the P&R Chairman playing a role in officer discussion with members seeking to refer uncontentious small applications to committee. It also recommended that members

wanting to call applications in to committee should speak to the Chairman, Vice Chairman and officers first. It considered call into a committee should be an exception.

R11 Create a more collaborative approach with developers/agents eg through recasting the developers'/agents' forum and targeted regular liaison with key partners.

Summary of Working Group discussion and conclusions:

It was noted that after being suspended during lockdown, the service reinstated its 6 monthly Agents Forum on 27th May. Two separate smaller focus groups representing major developers and agents for small scale developments were held in the winter and it is proposed to convene these on a more regular basis as a sounding board for service issues and initiatives.

R12 Create space for Enforcement Service to develop clear processes, prioritisation and work with members/parishes including:

- Wider messaging and comms around expediency and planning harm to assist better understanding of national issue.
- Process review to identify efficiency for example through use of triage
- Focus proactive work on priority cases with strong and effective public communication

Summary of Working Group discussion and conclusions:

The Group noted that initial actions are being implemented by service managers to assist with current work pressures pending preparation of longer term action plan. The Group agreed to convene a further meeting of the Working Group to consider further the issues raised by this recommendation.

4. Consultation

The Peer Review involved consultation and discussion with a range of parties as set out in the report. Further discussion and consultation has taken place with relevant stakeholders following publication of the review findings.

5. Financial Implications

It is expected that any associated costs arising from the implementation of the recommendations can be met with existing budgets. Further income generation through PPAs and pre-application advice services will be reviewed as part of ongoing financial management.

6. Legal Powers and Implications

As set out in the Town and Country Planning Acts and Local Government Act 1972 and related legislation and regulations

7. Climate Change and Environmental Implications

The proposals have no direct climate change or environmental implications.

8. Risk Management

Implementation of the individual recommendations will be risk assessed as appropriate.

9. Equality Implications

Equality implications will be assessed as required according to the changes being implemented. It is not anticipated that any process changes would disproportionately affect protected characteristic groups.

10. Corporate Implications

The Peer Review was carried out to inform the Corporate and Place Directorate transformation programmes. The recommendations arising from the review have been taken into account as appropriate in future service design and planning.

11. Options Considered

As set out in the report.

Authors:

Richard Kent Head of Planning.

Nick Brain Assistant Director Legal & Governance and Monitoring Officer

Appendices:

None

Background Papers:

Peer Review Report

Working Group notes and related material

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Heritage & Regeneration Champion Report 2021

Despite the trials and tribulations of pandemic restrictions and the cessation of public gatherings it has been interesting to see how a number of local amenity societies have embraced 'zooming' and, though my usual hectic round of talks throughout North Somerset and historic Somerset has stopped, some societies have increased participation as a result of on-line participation. Several are now considering how best to offer both virtual and actual programmes. It's also been a delight to hear of some older and frailer members say they can now 'attend' without the need to traipse to a local community hall on a dreary winter's night. Let's be cheerful: Zoom need not be gloom.

Though social media can be a force for rose-tinted glasses wearing negativity it has also encouraged many people, with no more than a passing interest in heritage, to jump aboard the screen sharing ship. The wealth of hitherto unseen photographs and unrecorded anecdotes which regularly pop up on Facebook have sometimes kept the Heritage Champion awake way past his bedtime!

There is no doubt in my mind that an increasing number of people not only want to know more about their localities but also want to become more involved in shaping their futures. For some this means allowing selectively remembered 'good old days' nostalgia to take hold; for others it means using the wealth of our cherished environment to help shape the future. People really do want to belong. This is why my title intentionally links heritage with regeneration.

In conclusion I must sing the praises of professional colleagues who, despite desperate under-staffing, do so much to further the important 'Heritage Matters' message.

Thank you all.

Know Your Place/Sharing Heritage

The Sharing Heritage/Know Your Place North Somerset project has continued to be extremely successful, with volunteers having added over 1000 new records onto the website showcasing the rich history and heritage across North Somerset.

The first national lockdown meant no public engagement would be able to take place, so heritage officers set up Facebook and Twitter accounts to disseminate information in a digital format in March 2020. They worked in collaboration with staff at Weston Museum to produce educational activities, content and videos which were very well received.

The social media channels have allowed for engagement with over 1 million people in the last 15 months and there has also been a marked increase in users of the mapping website itself with local residents adding their own information.

Heritage officers continue to collaborate with Weston Town Council and Weston Museum as the project was extended thanks to funding made available through the Great Weston Heritage Action Zone.

There is also a short exhibition opening at the Museum in June to celebrate National Volunteer Week to display some of the key records the volunteers have added to the website and their research.

North Somerset Historic Environment Record (NSHER)

Externally-hosted database & GIS

Due to lack of accessibility to the HER working from home, the Senior Archaeologist instigated and managed the move to an externally hosted system. This has now been set up and also allows access for the Conservation & Heritage Officer. New system tested and working for all 3 officers (much faster than previous arrangement and now CL can actually use it for first time in over 14 months).

NRHE to HER project

A year-long project to accession data from Historic England's database to the NSHER will be undertaken by the Senior Archaeologist, who will relinquish 1 day a week to complete this. Over 2400 records are due to be accessioned during this period. A pre-requisite of this project is to sign up to Heritage Gateway which allows researchers to search nationwide databases for historic environment data.

Historic England Audit

Work is due to commence on preparation for the audit which takes place every five years. Significant progress has been made in a number of areas regarding procedures and management of the HER, as well as reduction of the considerable backlog of reference material. There are still several areas for improvement.

Heritage Action Zones

Great Weston Heritage Action Zone

Enhancement work on Walker & Ling shopfront commenced in Jan 2021 and the shop reopened on 12 April 2021. Over 40,000 people have engaged with the project on social media.

Other retail premises that are considering enhancement include 8- 10 South Parade and 80-82 High Street.

The Heritage Action Zone work also includes a £45,000 engagement programme. This work supports Know Your Place, Heritage Open Days Marketing support for retailers, and investment in the Weston Civic Society annual awards as well as Chamber of Commerce awards.

High Street Heritage Action Zone

In August 2020 we learned that our funding bid for £1.1 million for a High Street Heritage Action Zone was successful. The High Street Action Zone was launched in October 2020. The new programme area in Weston, which is in addition to the existing Heritage Action Zone (HAZ), focuses on Weston-super-Mare's southern end of the High Street around Oxford Street and Walliscote Road, North for works over four years. Activities include:

- Community engagement – to help shape the delivery and sustainability of the new programme through volunteering and stakeholder initiatives
- Public realm and restoration of architectural features – the restoration and repair of original street features, improved lighting, paving, street furniture and bringing back original architectural characteristics
- Development and management of a shop front enhancement grants scheme, improving the exterior of retail units and reinstatement of historical features
- Conversions to new homes – working with property owners to support the sympathetic, appropriate and high-quality conversion of upper floors, empty units and potentially bringing forward up to 20 new homes in the town centre

- Explore the development of training opportunities in traditional conservation skills, building on the work of the current HAZ, and in partnership with local providers

High Street Heritage Action Zone cultural work-

In April 2021 we learned that our bid for £119,680 to Historic England for a cultural programme has been successful.

Culture Weston will lead on the '21st century super Shrines' cultural programme working with the Arts Council England, National Lottery Heritage Fund and the local community.

'21st Century super Shrines' is an exciting programme co-created by professional artists in partnership with local emerging artists and communities for which a series of innovative contemporary 'shrines' will appear on the high street. These shrines will be installations or live arts experiences. Together, the shrines will create a sense of shared values, determining a new sense of 'worth' on the high street.

Coronavirus and its implications for Heritage Action Zone and High Street Heritage Action Zone

During this period the Heritage Action Zone Officer has focused on work that is possible to carry out while working from home. This includes work on:

- the delivery plans for the HAZ and HSHAZ- these have to be redrawn in the light of covid-19.
- developing article 4 directions for stone walls in Weston
- completing monitoring and evaluation reports for Historic England

National Grid Hinkley C Connection Project

The Senior Archaeologist continues to monitor archaeological elements of the National Grid Hinkley C Connection project. This includes weekly virtual meetings via Teams and fortnightly on-site monitoring visits. Currently 5 of the 14 stages are under way in North Somerset alone. Discussions around publication and exhibition of findings for local communities are under way with various stakeholders.

Middle Engine Pit, Nailsea

Several of the dilapidated buildings on the colliery site, which is a Scheduled Monument and contains a number of listed buildings, were successfully repaired at the end of 2019 with funding from Historic England and NSC.

Heritage officers were prepared to engage a volunteer group to control vegetation growth on the site and also clear and remove debris, but this has been postponed due to Covid-19. They hope to hold the initial meeting with volunteers this summer.

Officers have produced a draft management plan for the site which was subject to public consultation in May/June 2021. The results from this consultation are currently being reviewed and the draft management plan amended. Once this has been completed the management plan will be put forward for official adoption. The management plan will then inform funding bids to bring the site into public use.

Conservation Areas

The new Churchill Conservation Area was officially adopted by the Council on 29th January 2020 along with the accompanying Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Plan.

Work continues on the creation and adoption of the Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Plans for the remaining conservation areas in North Somerset that currently do not have them.

The Conservation & Heritage Officer is currently working with Banwell Archaeological Society and Banwell Parish Council on the appraisal and management plan for Banwell Conservation Area. The final draft is complete and once a public consultation has been undertaken this will be put forward for adoption.

Worlebury Camp Hillfort

Covid has resulted in some unforeseen delays with the Worlebury hillfort project, not least because there was no funding available between June 2020 and April 2021, and the Forestry Commission took over 2 years to make a decision on the felling licence. This has now been granted and work is under way by a multidisciplinary team to bring together the application for the National Lottery Heritage Fund which will be submitted this summer.

The scope of felling is almost agreed and upon success of being awarded funding that will take place Winter 2021/22. This has been pulled forwards due to significant risks with ash dieback in this area.

Volunteers from the Worlebury Hillfort Group have continued working to clear vegetation across the site when restrictions have allowed, and the group has grown considerably with local residents wishing to engage in outdoor activities.

Unfortunately, whilst Covid meant that more people were exploring their local areas, there was a considerable rise in anti-social behaviour at the hillfort resulting in illegal fires and metal detecting. The Council's Senior Archaeologist has been working closely with Avon & Somerset Police to introduce more regular patrols of Weston Woods to discourage this behaviour.

North Somerset Heritage Forum

Due to the Covid pandemic the last 2 Heritage Forums have been held virtually via Zoom, the last one taking place in November 2020. 22 representatives from North Somerset's local heritage groups attended this meeting to give updates on what they have been working on and hear the updates from the Council's Heritage & Regeneration Champion, heritage officers, HAZ officers and Library staff since the last meeting. The next Forum is taking place in May 2021.

Young Archaeologists' Club (Rusty Club)

Limited events have run due to national lockdowns, but heritage officers have continued to work with Weston Museum staff to provide content and engage with the Rusty Club through Know Your Place.

Heritage Open Days

The September 2020 Heritage Open Days was held as a virtual festival. Over 3,000 people participated. We have gained funding to hold Heritage Open Days in 2021.

Work is just beginning on confirming the activities for this year's event. The project is being led again by the HAZ officers, with heritage officers feeding in with activities relating to the Know Your Place website to allow a digital platform so as the festival can continue for people not able to physically attend events.

Festival of Archaeology

This year's event is planned for 17th July to 1st August this year and heritage officers are once again collaborating with Weston Museum around the theme of 'exploring local places'.

Heritage officers are creating a virtual treasure hunt on the Know Your Place website using the information the volunteers and public have added over this last year to encourage people to explore the local area.

They are also working with Weston Museum to hold a physical family-friendly event for the Festival on 24th July, providing restrictions at that time allow for this.

Development Management and Enforcement

Significantly higher numbers of planning applications and enforcement cases in 2020 required input from heritage officers.

Large applications have included the Clevedon Triangle, 38-40 Birnbeck Road & Lynton House (W-s-M), Birnbeck Pier, Portbury Priors, Old Angel (Flax Bourton) and Claremont Crescent, W-s-M, as well as a bigger enforcement case on a Grade I listed building for the Conservation & Heritage Officer. The Senior Archaeologist has been involved in a variety of applications including Gatcombe Farm (Long Ashton) and Youngwood Lane (Nailsea), multiple applications at West Wick and around Weston-super-Mare and Banwell, Congresbury and Yatton.

Delivering responses to applications whilst adapting to working from home has also been a challenge for the team, especially when site visits were not permitted. Officers were quick to adapt and instigated new methods of working in order to determine listed building applications and to virtually monitor archaeological fieldwork. Despite these challenges, formal comments and input into applications has been accomplished in a timely manner.

Banwell Bypass

Preliminary archaeological investigations have been completed to inform the potential route for the bypass. Heritage officers will need to continue to liaise closely with project team, appointed archaeologists and Historic England to ensure heritage is properly considered during scoping and construction stages, and with the design and details of the spur road which cuts through Banwell Conservation Area.

Local List

The Local List criteria and management procedures have been set out and are being put before the Executive Members for adoption at the Executive Meeting on 23rd June. The report has been to an informal SPEDR meeting and received their support.

If this is successfully adopted the heritage team will work towards producing an official handbook utilising funding from the HAZ. Subsequent to this the launch of the Local List will take place include press releases requesting the public to submit their nominations via Know Your Place North Somerset.

Engagement

Limited public engagement has been viable over the last year, but the Senior Archaeologist has given talks on a number of subjects including her role as a local authority archaeologist, the North Somerset Historic Environment Record, and the Worlebury Hillfort project.

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Report on Avon Fire Authority to the meeting of North Somerset Council, July 2021

The Fire Authority met on 30th June 2021 for the AGM. It took place at Hick's Gate Fire Station, near Keynsham, and was the first face-to-face meeting of the full authority since the start of the pandemic. We welcomed some new members of the authority, mainly due to the council elections in Bristol in May, along with some other changes. The political balance has changed slightly with the Green Party having an additional member and Labour one fewer. The authority as a whole now has appointed from its constituent councils 7 Conservative, 5 Liberal Democrat, 5 Labour, 2 Green and 1 Independent members. Cllr Brenda Massey from Bristol was elected as the new Chair of the authority, with Cllr Don Davies as Vice-Chair. Thanks were given to Cllr Davies for his term as the chair which was effective through difficult times.

The following strategies were agreed and adopted:

The Reserves Strategy. The authority has reserves at 20% of core spending, against a national average of 39%. General Reserves have been held at £1.5million, or about 3% of the revenue budget for some years. This is considered to be a good position.

The Treasury Management Strategy. The treasury management service is carried out under a Service Level Agreement by Bristol City Council. This covers matters such as cash flow, borrowings and investments. There has been no external borrowing for some years, due to the level of internal resources from the disposal of the former HQ in central Bristol. The strategy ensures that we have value-for-money and affordability.

Copies of these strategies are available on request.

We reviewed the charges which the Fire & Rescue service can apply. These are for certain services which are not fire or emergency related, such as hiring out of equipment, certain types of inspections, removal of water, dealing with hazardous materials, removal of unsafe structures and so on. These are charged on a cost recovery basis, and will be remaining the same as last year.

The scheme of members' allowances were considered. These have been increasing at the same rate as employees' pay since 2018, and will be fully reviewed by an independent remuneration panel in advance of the 2022-23 financial year.

The authority dealt with an application from the newly-elected Police & Crime Commissioner to join the Fire Authority. This is a controversial matter for some members, and it was decided to put back the decision to the next meeting, when the PCC could be invited to set out what he can bring to the authority.

In other news, the fire service is expecting an increase this summer in wild water swimming, particularly with the possibility of more staycations. So it is launching a new summer water safety campaign, highlighting the hidden dangers beneath the water. The campaign will seek to raise awareness of these hazards, along with cold water shock and water currents, and to inform the public how to keep safe and of what to do in an emergency.

The service has welcomed 14 new recruits in June, including 8 on-call firefighters some of whom will be based in Weston-super-Mare and Portishead, and 6 control staff answering 999 calls.

Staff are providing volunteer support for the vaccination programme at Ashton Gate and some other locations; and are continuing to provide volunteers to drive ambulances to support the NHS where there is still pressure due to the pandemic.

We were saddened by the news of the death of Watch Manager Steve Angell of Bath On-Call, who died following a motocross accident. He had been with the service since 1988. Our thoughts and condolences go to his family.

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North Somerset Council

19 July 2021

Report on the Police and Crime Panel Meeting of 24 June 2021

Councillor Richard Westwood

The Police and Crime Panel for Avon and Somerset Constabulary met for their Annual meeting on Thursday, June 24, at Taunton Cricket Ground. This was the first face to face meeting held since the lockdown restrictions were introduced in March of last year.

Mark Shelford was welcomed as our new, and duly elected, Police and Crime Commissioner.

We also welcomed and confirmed Sarah Crew as acting Chief Constable for Avon and Somerset.

We noted the following changes in the panel's membership : Cllr Nicola Clark (South Somerset DC), Cllr Peter Crew (North Somerset Council), Cllr Jonathan Hucker and Cllr Lisa Stone (Bristol City Council). These arose as a result of the need to maintain political balance on the panel.

Two members of the public, Gary Davies and Julie Knight, were appointed as independent panel members.

All of the above were welcomed onto the panel.

The panel then appointed Cllr Heather Shearer as our Chair for the forthcoming year and Cllr Richard Westwood as Vice Chair.

After he had given the Annual Commissioner's report the new Commissioner set out his intention to turn the manifesto upon which he had been elected into a Plan for policing in Avon and Somerset. He then took questions from members of the panel.

Details of the Annual meeting agenda can be found via the link below. Minutes will be available in due course.

<https://democracy.somerset.gov.uk/ieListMeetings.aspx?CIId=355&Year=0>

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North Somerset Council

Report to the Council

Date of Meeting: 19th July 2021

Subject of report: Development Programme: Business Case and Commissioning Plan for development of council-owned land to the south of The Uplands, Nailsea

Town or Parish: Nailsea

Officer/Member presenting: Cllr. Mark Canniford, Executive Member for Placemaking and Economy

Key Decision: No

Reason: Council decision

Recommendation

- To approve the business case and Commissioning Plan for the procurement of a development partner for residential development on council-owned land to the south of The Uplands, Nailsea, as set out in Section 3 of this report.

1. Summary of report

- 1.1 This report sets out a business case for the delivery of residential development on council-owned land to the south of The Uplands, Nailsea. It recommends that the development should be taken forward through the procurement of a development partner and the creation of a Joint Venture, most likely a contractual Joint Venture. The council is proposed to input its land and £481,028 of grant received from the Land Release Fund. In return, the selected developer would deliver the scheme to agreed parameters and would pay the council an agreed land receipt and potentially a share of profits.
- 1.2 The report requests authorisation for a Commissioning Plan for the procurement of the development partner. The procurement process will be PCR 2015 compliant and due to its value will be advertised and open to all potential bidders. It is expected to take the form of a two-stage competitive tender, commencing with an Expression of Interest stage prior to Invitation to Tender.
- 1.3 The procurement is proposed to be carried out from August – November 2021, reporting back to the Executive in December with a recommendation as to the preferred development partner and seeking authority to enter into the Joint Venture or other contractual arrangements. This timescale meets funding requirements to enable a start on site by 1st April 2022.

- 1.4 The recommendations in this report are subject to the appropriation decision on the land in question, which is expected to be considered in advance of the Council meeting. In the event that the decision is made not to appropriate the land for development, the report will be withdrawn.

2. Policy

- 2.1 This proposal supports the Corporate Plan objective of creating a Thriving and Sustainable Place, in particular “the delivery of a broad range of new home to meet our growing need, with an emphasis on quality and affordability”.
- 2.2 The site is allocated for residential development in the adopted Local Plan. It has secured planning approval and was included in the list of potential sites in the Development Strategy adopted by council in February 2021.
- 2.3 North Somerset Council’s Development Strategy was adopted by Council in February 2020 and is a key part of NSC’s Capital Investment Strategy for 2020 to 2030. It sets out a core ambition to create a balanced programme of development and investment that also delivers on the wider corporate objectives of NSC, particularly in relation to affordable housing, sustainability and placemaking.
- 2.4 In taking forward development on its landholdings, the strategy emphasises that the council’s role is not to compete with the private sector or replicate their usual outcomes, but to deliver beyond the market norms. Objectives are to:
 - Deliver where the market fails.
 - Set higher standards and drive the market forward for better quality, more sustainable buildings.
 - Make the most of our assets and capture value to fund other council pressures and priorities – including reinvestment in the asset programme.
 - Provide homes, employment and other facilities that meet the needs of our communities – current and future.

3. Details

Development proposals

- 3.1 This report makes proposals for delivery of residential development on land owned by North Somerset Council to the south of The Uplands, Nailsea.
- 3.2 The site comprises approximately 2 hectares of land and has secured planning approval for 52 homes including 30% affordable housing.
- 3.3 Proposals for the site have been developed by a design team headed by Mikhail Riches Architects, winners of the 2019 Stirling Prize for Architecture for a 100% Passivhaus housing scheme using Modern Methods of Construction (MMC) with Norwich City Council.
- 3.4 Features of the proposals for The Uplands include:
 - A housing mix targeted at meeting local needs, including a higher than standard proportion of two-bedroom homes and eight bungalows.

- A landscape-led approach, with a high proportion of green space including communal shared gardens for some of the properties and new footpaths across the site linking into the adjacent woodland and bridleway.
- All homes meet Passivhaus certified standards: a very high standard of sustainability which also helps ensure good build quality and low energy bills.
- All homes are a minimum 10% above Nationally Described Space Standards and have been provided with additional storage space both internally and externally.
- Additional provision of adaptable and accessible homes, above the policy requirement.
- Electrical vehicle charging for all homes, as well as contributions to fund an electric vehicle car sharing club.

3.5 The proposals are supported by £557,510 Homes England Local Authority Accelerated Construction Funding (LA-AC, revenue) and £481,028 One Public Estate Land Release Funding (LRF, capital). In addition, the council has secured a further £55,000 capacity funding from Homes England to support the procurement of a development partner.

3.6 Failure to comply with the terms of funding can lead to clawback of grant. The terms include:

- A start on site by 1st April 2022 and completion by 1st March 2024.
- Use of panellised Modern Methods of Construction (MMC) throughout.
- A minimum of 30% affordable housing (this can include public subsidy support).
- Use of LRF funds to deliver capital enabling works, specifically site clearance, groundworks and access.
- Repayment of LA-AC grant if land receipts exceed the projected value at the time the grant was awarded.

3.7 Viability testing of the proposals indicate that the site can secure a high standard of quality as well as a good financial return to the council. Soft market testing by Jones Lang Lasalle found a high level of market interest in the proposal

Options for delivery

3.8 In taking forward the scheme, the council needs to have regard to a range of factors including control over quality, ability to deliver within timescales, financial returns and exposure to risk.

3.9 In considering the appropriate route to delivery, the following principles are considered fundamental:

- Given the quality aspirations of the scheme, and to ensure value is secured from the work to date, the view of officers is that the design team, led by Mikhail Riches, should be retained throughout the development period.
- The council's requirement is to develop a scheme of high-quality homes built to the best sustainability standards and achieve PassivHaus certification. This is in accordance with the Corporate Plan of an Open, Fairer and Greener North Somerset. In this the council is wanting to be seen as promoting, through this exemplar scheme, a new future for housing development in North Somerset.
- Although planning has been obtained, it is recognised that a development partner may wish to make changes. A degree of change would be acceptable provided that the overall objectives and outcomes are maintained.

- As well as its construction and sustainability aims, the council requires the scheme to be a commercial success and create a financial return to support other projects.
 - The LA-AC grant requires that a building lease be used in the event of the development being taken forward by a third party. This could be discussed with Homes England if viewed as likely to create a significant issue.
 - The terms and conditions of Homes England and Land Release Funding timelines agreed with Homes England under the Grant Funding Agreement (GFA) must be met, in particular the use of panellised MMC and start on site by 1st April 2022. In order to meet this programme, the contractor would need to be appointed by early December.
- 3.10 Options for delivery include direct delivery by NSC, a Joint Venture partnership, or direct disposal to the market. The advantages and risks of each of these approaches are set out in Appendix A.
- 3.11 Officers recommend that the option for a Joint Venture is pursued as the route to delivery, as this allows the council to retain a good degree of control over quality, sustainability and pace without full exposure to the risks of delivering the site itself (including capital exposure) or the need to establish a separate Development Company.
- 3.12 Soft market testing as to the potential appetite for a Joint Venture was carried out on behalf of the council by Jones Lang Lasalle (JLL) in September 2020, targeting SME developers likely to be able to deliver the required quality of product. Ten responses were received, including two unsolicited responses. These confirmed credible market led interest willing to adhere to the criteria set out. JLL report that they have received repeated and persistent enquiries about progress from respondents since the conclusion of the exercise.
- 3.13 There are different forms of Joint Venture, for example, contractual or corporate. It is envisaged that this JV would take a contractual form. Specialist legal and property advice has been secured on this matter and a final recommendation will be made in the Procurement Plan for this project.

Procurement of a Joint Venture partner

- 3.14 Jones Lang Lasalle (JLL) have been appointed to advise and support the council on the form of Joint Venture and the procurement of a development partner.
- 3.15 Given the value of the Joint Venture, the procurement process will need to be open to all potential bidders and will be run through the Find a Tender Service (FTS – the successor to OJEU). JLL will work with NSC to shape the process and marketing to target those developers most likely to be able to deliver the council's objectives as set out in paragraphs 3.4, 3.6 and 3.9 above.
- 3.16 It is anticipated the partner procurement will take the form of a two stage competitive tender, commencing with an Expression of Interest stage prior to Invitation to Tender, with shortlisting / elimination of unsuitable bidders between the stages. This will be finalised in discussion with JLL and legal advisors, and the process confirmed in the Procurement Plan. The Procurement Plan will also confirm the final evaluation criteria and weightings.

3.17 The expected timeline for the procurement is as follows:

Date	Action/milestone
13 th July	Full Council approval of Commissioning Plan
By 30 th July	Executive Member approval of Procurement Plan
Aug - Nov	Procurement process for Joint Venture partner
8 th December	Approval of preferred partner and delegation of authority to enter into Joint Venture contract (Executive)
Jan – Mar 2022	Conclusion of legal agreements and developer mobilisation
1 st April 2022	Start on site
1 st March 2024	Practical completion

4. Consultation

4.1 Public consultation on the proposals for this site has taken place over a number of years:

- i. Planning policy consultations on the Sites and Allocations Plan (SAP), which led to the allocation of the site for residential development in the plan adopted in April 2018.
- ii. Two rounds of public consultation run by the Development Team in 2020 prior to the submission of a planning application. The first consultation was through a public event; the second, due to Covid, was carried out on line.
- iii. Statutory planning consultations in determining the application.
- iv. Public consultation on appropriation of the land, i.e. the change of use in the purpose for which the land is held.

4.2 Reports summarising the consultation responses and the council's response to the points raised are available as follows:

- Sites and Allocations Plan: <https://www.n-somerset.gov.uk/my-services/planning-building-control/planning-policy/sites-policies/sites-policies-plan-part-2-site-allocations-plan-examination>
- Development Team consultation and planning application consultations: <https://planning.n-somerset.gov.uk/online-applications/applicationDetails.do?activeTab=documents&keyVal=QFKEOMLPHBT00>
- Appropriation: Executive Member decision: <https://www.n-somerset.gov.uk/council-democracy/councillors-committees/decisions-meetings/executive-member-decisions/2021-executive-member-decisions/june-2021-executive-member-decisions>

4.3 Market consultation and engagement has taken place through the soft market testing by JLL described above.

- 4.4 Members have expressed a desire to be more closely involved in the procurement of development partners. It is proposed that an informal working group of relevant Executive and local members be established to be consulted on the design of the procurement and the relative priorities in the selection of a partner. The membership and terms of this group will be agreed with the Executive Member for Placemaking.

5. Financial implications

Costs and funding sources

- 5.1 The design and development of the proposals for this site have been funded through £557,510 Local Authority Accelerated Construction grant received from Homes England.
- 5.2 A further £55,000 has been awarded by Homes England to fund the work to procure a development partner and enter into a Joint Venture. It is possible that additional funding may be needed to meet the full costs of procurement and legal negotiations. An allocation of up to £50,000 has been made from the Driving Growth reserve to cover this, if required.
- 5.3 Capital works at the site will be supported by £481,028 grant from the One Public Estate Land Release Fund. This is proposed to be passed to the developer through the Joint Venture and must be used to deliver capital enabling works, specifically site clearance, groundworks and access.
- 5.4 The construction costs of the development are initially estimated at £12m. Other costs such as planning and finance are estimated in the order of £2.7m. These costs would be met by the development partner, other than for the £481,028 Land Release Fund detailed above.
- 5.5 The council will incur ongoing costs to monitor the delivery of the scheme as it is brought forward. This will include staff time in contract management, as well as specialist support to check building quality etc. The specifications for the procurement of a developer will include that the partner must make reasonable provision to pay NSC for its costs in this regard.
- 5.6 The terms and conditions of the Homes England and One Public Estate funding sources are detailed in section 3 above.

Receipts

- 5.7 The estimated financial return from this site is expected to be in the realm of £2 – 3m, but the procurement process will seek the maximum receipt within the quality parameters required. The receipt could also be lower, subject to the market's response and the final costs of development. The receipt may be a single payment, or phased over the build period.
- 5.8 The Gross Development Value of this site (i.e. the total income from the house sales) has been estimated at £19m. This needs to cover the costs set out in paragraph 5.4 above, as well as the land value and development profit.
- 5.9 In the event that the council secures a financial return of more than £2.9m after covering its costs, it would be required to repay the LA-AC grant.

Authorisation requirements

- 5.10 The value of this contract exceeds £10m. The following approvals are required in taking forward the proposals:
- Approval of Commissioning Plan: Full Council.
 - Approval of Procurement Plan: Executive Member, advised by Director and Head of Strategic Procurement.
 - Award of Contract: Executive.
- 5.11 The financial implications included within this report are estimated and at this stage in the process are not fully known as they will be determined by the type of joint venture entered into by the council. The full financial implications and details on the financial governance will be included for approval within the executive report for award of contract, expected in December.
- 5.12 The award of contract decision will also include the formal approval to dispose of the site to transfer the Land Release Fund grant to the developer.

6. Legal powers and implications

- 6.1 The Local Government Act 1972 gives the Council the power to dispose of land held by it in any manner it wishes provided that the council achieves the best consideration that can reasonably be obtained.
- 6.2 The procurement process will be compliant with the Concessions Contracts Regulations 2016. The council has appointed external legal advisors to advise on the procurement process and to prepare the relevant contract documentation.
- 6.3 The procurement process will be compliant with the Public Services (Social Value Act) 2012 by ensuring it seeks additional social value during the tender process.
- 6.4 The council must ensure that the disposal and delivery of the site is in line with the contractual terms and conditions of the Homes England and One Public Estate funding of the scheme.

7. Climate change and environmental implications

- 7.1 This development seeks to be an exemplar of environmental sustainability. Features of the scheme include:
- All homes to be Passivhaus certified. This represents a very high standard of sustainability which also helps ensure good build quality and low energy bills.
 - The scheme will not include any provision of domestic gas.
 - A landscape led approach, with a high proportion of green space.
 - Electrical vehicle charging for all homes, as well as contributions to fund an electric vehicle car sharing club.
 - Planning policies require a Habitat Regulations Assessment demonstrating ecological mitigations and enhancements.

7.2 The procurement process will emphasise the importance of this sustainability ethos and target development partners who will be willing and able to deliver to the required standards. This should also emphasise the need for the development partner to target occupiers who are interested in a sustainable lifestyle.

8. Risk Management

8.1 Key risks and mitigations are as identified in the table below:

Risk	Mitigation
The procurement timeframes (outlined above) are delayed or unachievable, which impacts the ability to meet grant funding requirements, including start on site date.	Specialist legal and property advice on designing the process to ensure compliance with timescales. Close monitoring of progress. Any potential for delay will need to be communicated to funders at the earliest possible stage.
Insufficient interest from developers, or lack of interest from suitable companies who are willing/able to meet the criteria set by NSC and funding partners.	Soft market testing has identified strong demand. Specialist consultants are advising on structures, procurement and marketing to optimise interest from suitable partners.
Financial return is less than expected.	Specialist consultants advising on design of process and requirements to maximise interest and return within the criteria set by NSC.
The appointed partner defaults on the scheme or fails to deliver some of the specified requirements.	Legal and property advice to ensure a robust Joint Venture arrangement that protects NSC's interests and requirements. JV agreement to ensure strong governance of the partnership/contract and to include funding for compliance monitoring.
Staff resource is inadequate to support process.	Consultants supporting process. Monitoring/management of staff time and priorities.

9. Equality implications

Have you undertaken an Equalities Impact Assessment? Yes, see appendix B

9.1 The decision on a Commissioning Plan, in that it relates to a procurement process, has minimal Equalities implications. However, for completeness, an Equalities Impact Assessment for the wider impact of developing the site follows at Appendix B.

9.2 The procurement of a development partner will include a contractual requirement for the partner to ensure compliance with Equalities legislation. Criteria for the procurement will seek to protect the aspects of the development which are of benefit

in relation to equalities impacts, for example the provision of additional adaptable and accessible homes.

- 9.3 The Planning Consent for this site complies with the requirements of the Local Plan and other planning policies, which have been subject to EIA assessments.

10. Corporate implications

- 10.1 This proposal supports the Corporate Plan objective of creating a Thriving and Sustainable Place, in particular “the delivery of a broad range of new homes to meet our growing need, with an emphasis on quality and affordability”.
- 10.2 The resourcing of the procurement of a development partner and delivery of development will be led by the Development Team, with support from procurement and legal colleagues.
- 10.3 The scheme is estimated to generate a financial return of £2 – 3m (but could be either higher or lower) which will support delivery of the council’s wider capital programme and priorities.

11. Options considered

- 11.1 Options for the delivery of this site are considered in section 3 above and are further detailed in Appendix A.
- 11.2 The option not to develop/deliver the proposed scheme has been discounted for the following reasons:
- The proposal is for development on an allocated site and has secured planning consent. Failure to deliver would increase the gap in the council’s housing supply, which would need to be met elsewhere. The opportunity to deliver high quality, sustainable housing that meets local needs would be lost.
 - Significant revenue resources have been expended in the preparation of the scheme. Failure to deliver would lead to a requirement to repay grant funding received to date. This would damage the council’s reputation for delivery and potentially undermine our ability to secure further funding in the future.
 - The council would lose a potential financial income, which is needed to support other capital projects and priorities.

Author:

Jenny Ford, Head of Development

Appendices:

Appendix A: Options for models of delivery

Background papers:

Council report on Asset, Accommodation and Development Strategies, Feb 2021:
<https://apps.n-somerset.gov.uk/Meetings/ByCommittee/15/2020/100>

Uplands planning application: <https://planning.n-somerset.gov.uk/online-applications/applicationDetails.do?keyVal=QFKEOMLPHBT00&activeTab=summary>

Options for models of delivery

Option	Description	Advantages	Risks
Direct delivery by NSC	<p>NSC would take on the developer lead role.</p> <p>The council would contract out the construction to a suitably qualified construction company and instruct relevant professionals to assist in the drive for quality, specification and marketing.</p> <p>A development company or similar would have to be put in place to hold and dispose of the resulting homes.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Full control over the quality of the development and homes built. • NSC would receive the full land value and profits from the development. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • NSC would need to provide the capital for the development, in the realm of £10 – 15m, which would tie up capital funding that might be needed for other schemes. • Staffing resources required to manage the delivery of this scheme and disposal of homes would be significant and would detract from work on other priorities. • Current staff do not have significant experience in direct delivery of housing schemes. • The council would need to establish a mechanism for the holding and disposal of properties. • The full financial, delivery and reputational risks would sit with the council.
Joint Venture	<p>The council would seek a developer partner who would drive forward the development, including the appointment of contractors and sourcing finance. The NSC would receive a land receipt and would seek to share the resulting development profit, after accounting for the partner's costs.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • NSC would retain a good degree of control over quality of the development and homes, whilst allowing some flexibility in the design and development in response to the market. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • NSC must accept some of the risks of the development without being in complete control of the project. • Financial return less than if choosing direct delivery.

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The developer would provide the capital for the development and would manage delivery. • Less resource-intensive in terms of NSC staff time. • No requirement to set up a development company. • NSC might be entitled to a share of the development profit, as well as the agreed capital sum for the land. 	
Disposal to market	NSC would sell the land as a commercial transaction, with limited conditions as to the details or timing of delivery.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Would maximise the likely land receipt and the timing of the receipt would probably be earlier than under other options. • A commercial transaction would remove any ongoing financial risks and reduce the reputational risks, once initial sale was completed. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Very limited control over timescales or product: by law, commercial transactions cannot include detailed specifications of what needs to be delivered. • A high risk of breach of funding conditions. • No opportunity for a share of developer profit.

1. Proposal

Directorate: Place

Service area: Development Team

Lead Officer: Jenny Ford, Head of Development

Links to a budget reduction proposal: No

Date of assessment: 21.06.2021

Description of the proposal:

Proposed development of 52 homes on land owned by NSC to the south of The Uplands, Nailsea.

2. Summary of changes:

- Delivery of 52 high-quality, Passivhaus certified homes.
- 30% of homes to be affordable.
- 30% of all homes to meet M4(2) building regulations as “accessible and adaptable buildings”. 53% of affordable homes to meet M4(3) standards which means they are fully accessible for wheelchair users.
- Landscaping of site including new footpaths.
- Loss of informal open space as a result of development.
- Impact of development on surrounding areas, e.g. loss of amenity, increased traffic.

3. Customer equality impact summary

Will the proposal have a disproportionate impact on any of these groups?

Insert X into one box per row, for impact level and type.

H = High, M = Medium, L = Low, N = None

+ = Positive, = = Neutral, - = Negative

Impact level

Impact type

	H	M	L	N	+	=	-
Disabled people		X			Yes		Yes
People from different ethnic groups			X				Yes
Men or women (including those who are pregnant or on maternity leave)			X			Yes	
Lesbian, gay or bisexual people			X				Yes
People on a low income	X				Yes		
People in particular age groups		X			Yes		Yes
People in particular faith groups				X			

	H	M	L	N	+	=	-
People who are married or in a civil partnership				X			
Transgender people			X				
Other specific impacts, for example: carers, parents, impact on health and wellbeing, Armed Forces Community etc. Please specify: Parents Carers Young people Health & wellbeing Community Homelessness/rough sleepers					Yes		Yes

4. Explanation of customer impact

a) Negative impacts:

Change and reduction in open space could have negative impacts for those who benefit physically and mentally from the use of such space. Particular impacts identified are:

- i. Disabilities: open space has positive benefits for many people with disabilities, in particular those suffering from mental health issues. Development proposals could also add to mental health stress and anxiety for some people.
- ii. Several of the groups identified as suffering potential negative effects above are because those people in those groups are known to have a higher prevalence of mental health issues than in other population groups. As with (i), this means that there could be negative impacts as a result of the development. The government's JSNA mental health kit identifies the following groups as at high risk of mental health problems (see <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/better-mental-health-jsna-toolkit/3-understanding-people>):
 - o Black and minority ethnic groups (BAME).
 - o People living with physical disabilities.
 - o People living with learning difficulties.
 - o People with alcohol and/or drug dependence.
 - o Prison population, offenders and victims of crime.
 - o People who are lesbian, gay, bisexual or transgender.
 - o Carers.
 - o People living with sensory impairments.
 - o Homeless people.
 - o Refugees, asylum seekers and stateless persons.
- iii. People in particular age groups: the population of the surrounding area has a demographic with a relatively high proportion of older people. Consultation responses suggest that many enjoy the use of the open space and the peace and quiet it offers. These groups would experience a negative impact through the loss of space.

- iv. Those who are pregnant, on maternity leave, parents, carers, and young people are also thought to be frequent users of the space who may experience a negative impact if it is lost.
- v. In general, the open space offers health and wellbeing benefits and offers opportunity for positive community activity.

b) Positive impacts

The proposed change of use to development and the associated development proposals offer a number of benefits of relevance:

- The provision of 30% affordable housing, which will be available to those on a low income as well as those with specific needs including homelessness and rough sleepers.
- 30% of all homes will meet M4(2) building regulations as “Accessible and adaptable buildings”. This exceeds the planning policy requirement of 17%. 53% of affordable homes will meet M4(3) standards which means they are fully suitable for wheelchair users. This exceeds the planning policy requirement of 10%. The availability of these homes offers significant benefits for people with disabilities and for older people who want to be able to move into an adaptable property.
- New and improved pedestrian routes through the site will be suitable for people with disabilities and other mobility issues, increasing their access to the site and the adjacent bridleway.
- A number of the homes have been designed to be suitable for ‘downsizing’, targeted at older people who may wish to stay in the area but who lack a suitable range of choice of properties.
- The housing mix is in line with local need as specified in the Local Plan. This includes a higher than normal proportion of smaller, two-bedroom homes which may be of benefit to younger people seeking to access the housing market.
- Other aspects of the proposals offer benefits for health & wellbeing and community:
 - Homes are proposed to meet Passivhaus standards which will lead to low energy bills, which are of benefit to those on low incomes. Good insulation of homes also brings health benefits.
 - Homes will exceed National Described Space Standards by a minimum of 10%.
 - The proposal is “landscape led” with a relatively high proportion of green space including communal gardens for some properties.

5. Staff equality impact summary

Are there any staffing implications for this proposal? No

Explanation of staff impact: None expected.

6. Consolidation savings

Please complete for medium or high impact areas

Does this budget saving include many service areas/savings/projects? No

If so, please identify the areas included in this proposal that could potentially have a medium or high impact for equality groups.

Service area	Value of saving
N/a	
	Total

7. Review and sign-off

Service Manager review

Insert any service manager comments here:

N/a

Is a further detailed equality impact assessment needed? Yes

If 'yes', when will the further assessment be completed?

To inform decision on award of contract and disposal of land, expected December 2021.

Service Manager: Alex Hearn, Assistant Director, Placemaking & Growth

Date: 22/06/2021

North Somerset Council

Report to the Council

Date of meeting: 19th July 2021

Subject of report: Submission of bid to Levelling Up Fund

Town or Parish: Weston-super-Mare

Officer/Member presenting: Cllr. Mark Canniford, Executive Member for Economy

Key Decision: No

Reason: Council decision

Recommendations

- To retrospectively approve the submission of a bid to the government's Levelling Up fund, in support of the delivery of SuperWeston Placemaking Strategy objectives and to a value of £14,893,438, matched by local funding of £2,930,582 as set out in paragraph 3.2.6 below.

1. Summary of report

- 1.1 This report requests retrospective authority to submit a bid to the government's Levelling Up fund to support placemaking and regeneration in Weston-super-Mare.

2. Policy

- 2.1 These recommendations support delivery of the Corporate Plan priority of creating a Thriving and Sustainable Place and delivery of the vision and objectives set out in the SuperWeston Placemaking Strategy adopted in September 2020.
- 2.2 Projects are in line with the commitments of the Economic Plan adopted October 2020 and will be delivered in line with the council's Development Plan and relevant Supplementary Planning Guidance.

3. Details

3.1 Levelling Up Fund

- 3.1.1 On 3rd March 2020, Government published details of its Levelling Up Fund. The fund aims to "*invest in local infrastructure that has a visible impact on people and their communities*" in order to tackle the economic differences between different parts of the UK, "*bringing more places across the UK closer to opportunity; and demonstrating that government can visibly deliver against the diverse needs of all places and all geographies*". The Fund is jointly managed by HM Treasury (HMT),

the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG) and the Department for Transport (DfT).

3.1.2 The fund invited local authorities to bid for funding of up to £20m each. Projects that could be put forward were:

- Transport investments: high-impact small, medium and by exception larger local transport schemes to reduce carbon emissions, improve air quality, cut congestion, support economic growth and improve the experience of transport users.
- Regeneration and town centre investment, building on the Towns Fund framework to upgrade eyesore buildings and dated infrastructure, acquire and regenerate brownfield sites, invest in secure community infrastructure and crime reduction, and bring public services and safe community spaces into town and city centres.
- Cultural investment maintaining, regenerating, or creatively repurposing museums, galleries, visitor attractions (and associated green spaces) and heritage assets as well as creating new community-owned spaces to support the arts and serve as cultural spaces.

3.1.3 Authorities across the UK were categorised as priority levels 1, 2 or 3 according to their assessed level of need, based on the following data sources:

- Need for economic recovery and growth:
 - Productivity, measured using gross value added (GVA) per hour.
 - 16+ unemployment rate.
 - Proportion of the working-age population without a national vocational qualification (NVQ).
- Need for improved transport connectivity: average journey times to employment centres by car, public transport and bike.
- Need for regeneration: commercial and dwelling vacancy rates.

3.1.4 There are 123 authorities in each of the levels. Priority level 1 areas were awarded £125,000 capacity funding to develop substantial bids that could be awarded a share of £3.4bn in future rounds of funding starting from next year.

3.1.5 North Somerset was categorised as a priority level 2 area as a result of the assessments. The bid documentation states that bids from areas outside of priority level 1 “*could still be successful if they are of exceptionally high quality*”, with the guidance implying that this will be from an initial round of £600m this financial year. Bids will be assessed according to:

- Deliverability: with a requirement to demonstrate investment or begin delivery on the ground within the 2021 – 22 financial year and to complete all expenditure by March 2024.
- Strategic fit against national and local priorities.
- Value for money.

3.1.6 Bids were required to be submitted by noon on Friday 18th June 2021. Funding decisions are expected from the autumn of this year. There will be several rounds of bidding, but future rounds may be more rather than less competitive, as Priority Level 1 areas are likely to bid in the later rounds.

- 3.1.7 Authorities were permitted to make more than one bid, with a total combined value of no more than £20m and capped according to the number of Members of Parliament whose constituencies fall wholly within the local authority area. In the case of North Somerset Council this would have represented two bids. The bid documentation emphasised the need for engagement with local MPs as part of preparing a submission, and there is a strong implication that MP support will be important in the decision-making process. MPs can choose to back all of the bids within their area, but the guidance asks them to prioritise their preferred bid.
- 3.1.8 Bidders were encouraged to focus on a small number of larger projects, with a maximum of three projects per bid within the funding envelope of £20m. Fund Guidance also encouraged bids to include a local financial contribution representing at least 10% of total costs, as a commitment to deliverability and to enhance the value for money of government contributions.
- 3.1.9 As North Somerset is in the category 2 level of priority for this fund, it was felt unlikely that two separate bids would be successful. Bids can only be submitted once – if unsuccessful they cannot be resubmitted to future rounds.

3.2 North Somerset Council bid

- 3.2.1 North Somerset Council's bid is focused on Weston Town Centre and seafront. Due to the deadline for the bid, this was submitted on 18th June as required. The Council is asked to retrospectively approve the submission. The full bid documentation is lengthy so is not appended to this report, but is available to elected members to view on request.
- 3.2.2 The focus on Weston town centre and seafront was chosen due to its close match with the funding criteria, including:
- High levels of deprivation and disadvantage: eight Local Super Output Areas (LSOAs) in Weston are within the most deprived 10% in England, with the Argyle Avenue, Byron Road and Alfred Street areas within the most deprived 2%. Health and employment are particular concerns.
 - An agreed strategy for change (the SuperWeston Placemaking Strategy), based on extensive community engagement and with delivery supported by a strong cross-sector partnership.
 - A series of identified, high profile projects deliverable within the required timelines, specifically a start on site this financial year and completion by 31st March 2024.
 - The availability of match-funding through existing projects and partner contributions.
- 3.2.3 Analysis by the Business Intelligence Team suggested that Weston, if it had been treated as a local authority in its own right, would be comparable with Priority 1 areas such as Scarborough, Folkstone & Hyde, and Sedgemoor. The council is actively lobbying government, including through its local MPs, to recognise this comparability and to prioritise the area for funding on that basis.
- 3.2.4 North Somerset's bid is centred on delivery of the agreed SuperWeston Placemaking Strategy, focusing on key schemes at Weston's seafront and town centre that are

deemed to be transformational but deliverable within the required timescales, and in line with the following themes:

- **A year-round destination:** The transformation of Birnbeck Pier and the Tropicana, bookmarking the north and south of the seafront to create “must visit” destinations. At the Tropicana, investment will create an 8,000 capacity outdoor events facility, coupled with flexible spaces for cultural and creative economy uses. At Birnbeck, funding will support the restoration and bringing back into use of the pier by the RNLI.
- **Reinventing the town centre:** delivery of phase 2 of the Sovereign Centre (“Weston General Stores”) business case as agreed by the Executive in February 2021. The creative reuse of vacant spaces within this centre will build on funding secured through the Getting Building Fund to create job opportunities, build social and economic resilience, and become a beacon of sustainable activity and vibrancy through a new space for food and drink, trading and bike hub.
- **Building connections:** wayfinding improvements to drive footfall of Weston’s 5m visitors and local residents to the re-imagined high street and seafront destinations, inviting them to re-discover what the ‘new’ Weston has to offer. This will include making more of the routes from the station to the seafront and town centre, and of links to the South West coastal routes due to open next year.

3.2.5 The title of the bid is “If not now, when? – a Levelling Up Fund bid for the future of Weston-super-Mare”. This title is taken from the graffiti shown in the photo below. It is intended in part to reflect the desire of local communities to see rapid progress, but also the opportunity of this moment in time, post-Covid, and with a renewed energy from the Placemaking Strategy, to make lasting change.



3.2.6 The split of funding requests and match-funding proposals are as set out in the table below:

Project	LUF funding requests	Match-funding	Match-funding source	Total
Tropicana: arena and creative industry space	£6,072,000	N/a	N/a	£6,072,000
Birnbeck: restoration and re-opening for public access	£2,755,038	£980,782	RNLI	£3,735,820
Sovereign Centre / high street	£4,403,200	£1,765,000	Getting Britain Building Fund (£1.7m) + NSC capital programme commitment to phase 1 works (£65k)	£6,168,200
Wayfinding and connectivity	£1,663,200	£184,800	NSC capital programme commitment: attributed from Alexandra Parade scheme	1,848,000
Total	£14,893,438	£2,930,582		£17,824,020

3.27 Match-funding sums from NSC represent committed monies from current projects and do not therefore require further approvals.

3.28 These schemes complement a range of other activity already happening in Weston, including the restoration of Marine Lake, South West coastal path links, town centre 'Welcome Back' activity, and the Alexandra Parade improvements.

3.29 The schemes are designed to ensure a more economically and environmentally sustainable future for the projects:

- At the Tropicana, the expansion of the site's capacity to 8,000 people opens up significant new markets and opportunities for events and performances. Discussions are underway with a range of potential partners interested in taking on the operation of the site once works are complete.
- At Birnbeck Pier, the council is working closely with Historic England and the RNLI, with the latter expected to take the site on and deliver the works. The funding from the LUF will allow early stages to move forward and to close the overall funding gap.
- The business case for the Sovereign Centre / Weston General Stores was agreed by the Executive in Feb 2021. Phase 1 is already progressing with support from the Getting Britain Building Fund; the LUF money will deliver phase 2. Please see meeting reports at <https://n->

somersemodern.gov.co.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=152&MId=647&Ver=4
for further details.

- Wayfinding improvements will help guide residents and businesses to the new destinations and to other locations within the town that might otherwise be missed, increasing footfall and overall trade. They will also help improve the public realm around potential future development sites, assisting in efforts to attract investment.

3.30 The overall Benefit to Cost Ratio of the bid is calculated as 2.55, which is typically classified as “good”. Amongst other benefits, projects are expected to create 120 construction jobs and 127 long-term jobs.

4. Consultation

4.1 The Levelling Up Fund bid is based on key projects identified through the development of the SuperWeston Placemaking Strategy (see <https://superweston.net/>). This included extensive engagement activity with more than 5,000 responses from residents, businesses and visitors.

4.2 At the launch of the Levelling Up Fund, an e-mail was sent from Jo Walker to all elected members explaining the intended focus on Weston and inviting suggestions for project bids. Two responses were received; one related to a transport scheme outside of the town centre which was felt to fit better with other funding streams; the other offered an extensive list of suggestions for the town centre and seafront, some of which have been incorporated into this bid. The councillors in question have been contacted to explain this position.

4.3 Progress on the bid has been reported regularly at informal meetings of the Executive and to a fortnightly working group meeting of Cllr. Don Davies, Cllr. Mike Bell, Cllr. Mark Canniford and Cllr. Mark Solomon as the relevant Executive Members for the bid (and also representing local wards).

4.4 Stakeholder engagement has taken place with key partners including Weston College, the North Somerset Enterprise Agency, Culture Weston, the RNLI, local businesses, the Town Council and the Business Improvement District. Approaching 50 letters of support have been received from business and community organisations.

4.5 Local MPs for Weston and North Somerset have been briefed and are very supportive. They have provided letters of support to the bid and have committed to further lobbying activity to promote the proposed investment.

5. Financial implications

5.1 The preparation and submission of the bid required completion of a lengthy business case including economic and technical assessments to HMT Green Book standard. In addition to officer time, this was supported by Inner Circle consultants at a cost of £21,367. Legal advice on potential State Aid implications was sought at a cost of £2,000. These costs were met from Corporate Reserves.

5.2 If successful, the bid will secure capital income of £14.89m. The council would be required to commence spending within the current financial year and to complete

expenditure by 31st March 2024. Projects have been selected and designed in line with this timescale.

- 5.3 Bid guidance recommends match-funding of 10% from local sources. In the case of NSC's bid, the total commitment is £2.93m (16.4%), as detailed in the table at paragraph 3.2.6 above.
- 5.4 Income from the Levelling Up fund is unlikely to cover all aspects of project development and delivery – for example, it is likely to exclude officer costs. In the event that the bid is successful, further reports and decisions may be needed to authorise appropriate resourcing.
- 5.5 In submitting the bid, the council's 151 officer was required to confirm on behalf of the council its commitment that it:
- Has allocated sufficient budget to deliver this scheme on the basis of its proposed funding contribution.
 - Accepts responsibility for meeting any costs over and above the UK Government contribution requested, including potential cost overruns and the underwriting of any funding contributions expected from third parties.
 - Accepts responsibility for meeting any ongoing revenue requirements in relation to the scheme.
 - Accepts that no further increase in UK Government funding will be considered beyond the maximum contribution requested and that no UK Government funding will be provided after 2024-25.
 - Confirm that the authority commits to ensure successful bids will deliver value for money or best value.
 - Confirms that the authority has the necessary governance / assurance arrangements in place and that all legal and other statutory obligations and consents will be adhered to.
- 5.6 These commitments are now a standard requirement of government funding. They entail a degree of risk for the council in the event that project costs increase. To mitigate this risk, an allowance for 10% contingency has been made in the funding requests for each project. Projects have been designed so that, if required, some elements could be de-scoped, although this would impact on the outputs and outcomes achievable.
- 5.7 As set out in paragraph 3.28, the interventions proposed by the bid are designed to ensure more economically sustainable models of operation for the various projects and to minimise ongoing management and maintenance costs for the council and other parties involved.

6. Legal powers and implications

- 6.1 There are no direct legal implications from the decisions recommended in this report.
- 6.2 The legal implications for any scheme brought forward through Levelling Up Funds will be addressed in more detail on a project by project basis with decisions taken in line with the constitution.

- 6.3 Early legal advice was sought in cases where specific concerns were identified about potential Subsidy Control (State Aid) issues. It was concluded that Subsidy Control requirements did not apply, or were satisfied, for the following reasons:
- Birnbeck Pier: transfer of grant to RNLI: legal advice concluded that Subsidy Control does not apply, as the RNLI is not an economic actor or participating in economic activity in relation to the Pier.
 - Sovereign Centre: previous advice on the business case and Getting Britain Building Fund concluded that, as the benefits of the works would be made available on terms available to all interested parties, this would satisfy Subsidy Control requirements.
 - Subject to compliance with procurement regulations in selecting an operator, the advice applicable to the Sovereign Centre would also apply to works at the Tropicana.
 - Wayfinding: these works will take the form of public open infrastructure, which are not subject to Subsidy Control.

7. Climate change and environmental implications

- 7.1 Government guidance on the Levelling Up fund states that projects should be aligned to and support Net Zero goals: for instance, be based on low or zero carbon best practice; adopt and support innovative clean tech and/or support the growth of green skills and sustainable supply chains. Bids should also consider how projects can work with the natural environment to achieve project objectives – considering at a minimum the project’s impact on our country’s natural assets and nature, as well as the resilience of capital and infrastructure project to potential hazards such as flooding.
- 7.2 The SuperWeston Placemaking Strategy sets “Carbon Neutral Weston” as an objective. Any projects brought forward through the Levelling Up fund will seek to achieve the highest possible standards of sustainability including through procurement exercises and the setting of appropriate standards for development and delivery. Specific examples include:
- Promoting sustainable transport through wayfinding measures that encourage walking, cycling or use of bus or rail.
 - Measures to improve the energy performance of the Tropicana and potentially the Sovereign Centre.
 - The use of sustainable construction materials and methodologies.
- 7.3 Further reports and assessments will be provided as and when the projects move forward.

8. Risk management

- 8.1 Key risks and mitigation for this bid are summarised below. Each project will be subject to more detailed individual risk assessments in support of the high-level programme assessment, and the risks monitored through the council’s Capital Board.

Ref	Risk	Mitigation
1	Failure to secure grant	Advice has been sought from government contacts and specialist consultants in preparing the bid. A programme of lobbying activity is proposed to take place over the summer.
2	Grant award is lower than the requested amount	In the first instance, the council would review whether any further funding was available, either through pushing back in relation to this funding stream, through discussion with partners such as Historic England, or through its own resources. If no further funding is available, a prioritisation of interventions would be needed. Whilst this would lead also to a reduction in benefits, schemes are constructed of a package of smaller interventions and it would be possible to de-scope some of the works.
3	Cost increases	Funding requests have allowed 10% per project as contingency. In the event that costs increased above this amount, the mitigations listed in (2) above would apply.
4	NSC is unable to provide its match-funding commitments	Commitments stem from existing approved projects within the capital programme and are relatively low amounts.
5	Third party match-funding is withdrawn	<p>Letters from the RNLI and WECA have confirmed their commitment to match-funding of the Birnbeck and Sovereign Centre schemes. In the event of the organisations withdrawing funding, this is likely to indicate a more fundamental issue with the schemes.</p> <p>Match-funding is encouraged, but is not a requirement of Levelling Up funding; if the amount available was reduced this would need to be discussed with government to agree a way forward.</p>
5	Expenditure cannot commence within financial year as required by funding	<p>The range of projects and sub-projects mean that it is unlikely the council would not be able to incur at least a small amount of spend within year.</p> <p>The most likely cause of such a risk would be a delay in funding announcement, in which case a request would be made to government to delay spend requirements accordingly.</p>

Ref	Risk	Mitigation
6	Projects/expenditure cannot be completed by the required end date of 31 st March 2024	<p>Project governance will be established to ensure that projects can be delivered within timescales, with regular monitoring through the council's Capital Board.</p> <p>The nature of schemes as a conglomeration of smaller elements means that any residual underspend by 2024 should be de minimus.</p> <p>Project-specific risk registers will be created to oversee this risk and to fully map and manage the associated dependencies.</p>

9. Equality implications

Have you undertaken an Equality Impact Assessment? Yes (available on request)

9.1 An initial Equalities Impact Assessment has been carried out in support of NSC's Levelling Up bid. This has identified significant positive benefits for people from groups with one or more protected characteristics and/or other individuals facing disadvantage, including:

- Improved access to facilities and across the town for people with disabilities, or other people with mobility issues.
- Improved signage for those with visibility impairments.
- Improved economic opportunities and support (jobs and training) for those on a low income, and/or for individuals from groups with protected characteristics that statistically are likely to have a low income.
- Improved health and wellbeing benefits, including mental health benefits, through encouraging access to the open air and facilities of Weston seafront and town centre.

9.2 These benefits are particularly significant in the context of the data showing high levels of deprivation and disadvantage in Weston, specifically issues in relation to health and employment. Opportunities arising from the scheme – such as employment and training opportunities – will seek to target groups known to be disadvantaged or otherwise unable to easily access the employment market.

9.3 Individual projects within the bid will be subject to more detailed EIAs as part of standard project governance requirements. These will seek to ensure that any negative impacts are addressed and the positive impacts maximised.

10. Corporate implications

10.1 The recommendations of this report support delivery of the Corporate Plan priority of creating a Thriving and Sustainable Place and delivery of the vision and objectives set out in the SuperWeston Placemaking Strategy adopted in September 2020.

10.2 The selection of bid proposals, and potential delivery of projects detailed in this report are likely to have implications a wide range of council services and functions.

Project groups and briefings will ensure representation from all relevant directorates and teams.

11. Options considered

- 11.1 Not to submit a bid to the Levelling Up Fund: this is not recommended, as it would rule out the possibility of securing up to £20m funding. There are limited large-scale funding opportunities of this type which offer placemaking funding for town centres.
- 11.2 To submit two Levelling Up bids for different areas of North Somerset, or to submit bids for areas other than Weston: areas outside of Weston are felt less likely to meet the criteria of this funding stream. As North Somerset is in the category 2 level of priority for this fund, it is felt unlikely that two separate bids would be successful and better to focus energy and resources on maximising the chances of a single bid. The preparation of bids is time-consuming and incurs expense in terms of officer time and in commissioning specialist inputs. If two bids are submitted, the total amount of funding available would remain capped at £20m.

Author:

Jenny Ford, Head of Development

Appendices:

N/a

Background papers:

- “If not now, when? – A Levelling Up Fund Bid for the future of Weston-super-Mare”: application form and appendices available to on request from jenny.ford@n-somerset.gov.uk
- SuperWeston Placemaking Strategy: https://superweston.net/wp-content/themes/superweston-holding/pdf/prospectus_weston_super_mare.pdf
- Levelling Up Fund Prospectus: https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/966138/Levelling_Up_prospectus.pdf
- Levelling Up Prioritisation Methodology: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/levelling-up-fund-additional-documents/levelling-up-fund-prioritisation-of-places-methodology-note>

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North Somerset Council

Report to Full Council

Date of Meeting: 19 July 2021

Subject of Report: Adoption of the North Somerset Active Travel Strategy (ATS), following strong endorsement from its public consultation (November 2020 – January 2021)

Town or Parish: All

Officer/Member Presenting: Cllr Donald Davies – Executive Member for Strategic Transport Policy

Key Decision: No

Reason:

The adoption of the Active Travel Strategy will not result in the direct expenditure of more than £500,000. The Strategy will also not have a direct effect on two or more wards within the authority, but will have an indirect benefit to communities across North Somerset as investment and infrastructure guided by the Strategy helps to improve active travel and public spaces for a greener, cleaner, healthier and more locally prosperous future.

Recommendations

To adopt the North Somerset Active Travel Strategy.

Summary of Report

The shift in central Government policy towards active travel priority and accompanying new funding, strategy and infrastructure standards since March 2020 has been notable. The [Spring 2020 budget announced £5billion for walking, cycling and public transport](#), with around £2billion of this for walking and cycling specifically. This was followed up in July 2020 with the Government's new national walking and cycling plan for England, [Gear Change: A bold vision for walking and cycling](#). This plan describes the vision to make England a great walking and cycling nation and sets out the actions required at all levels of government to make this a reality, grouped under four themes:

- better streets for cycling and people;
- cycling and walking at the heart of decision-making;
- empowering and encouraging local authorities;
- enabling people to cycle and protecting them when they do.

This was supported by the announcement of a significant update to cycle infrastructure design standards, in the form of [Local Transport Note 1/20 \(LTN 1/20\) in July 2020](#). For the first time, this made it clear that:

- Cyclists must be physically separated and protected from high volume motor traffic, both at junctions and on the stretches of road between them. White painted cycle lanes in isolation are no longer an acceptable form of cycle provision;
- Cyclists must be physically separated from pedestrians and should not share space with pedestrians. Where cycle routes cross pavements, a physically

segregated track should always be provided. At crossings and junctions, cyclists should not share the space used by pedestrians but should be provided with a separate parallel route;

- There must be a demonstration of the opportunities to improve cycling provision as an expectation of any future local highway schemes funded by Government.

This clear, physical segregation for cycling is a step change away from previous guidance and is important in enabling a meaningful uptake in active travel journeys. Part of the LTN 1/20 announcement was the introduction of a new inspectorate, Active Travel England, to inspect and ensure that local authority-built active travel infrastructure (such as segregated cycle lanes and other active travel improvements) meet the new LTN 1/20 standards. Although this has not yet been formed, it is certainly a positive step towards ensuring that infrastructure for active travel is high quality, safe and enjoyable to use.

To provide a clear new direction on the importance of increasing active travel locally, in alignment with the updated national policy on active travel priority, North Somerset Council has developed its draft Active Travel Strategy (ATS). Following [NSC Executive Committee approval \(October 2020\)](#), NSC consulted on the strategy in public with residents, businesses, stakeholders and other interested parties between November 2020 and January 2021. The results of this are discussed below under the 'Consultation' section.

The aim of the ATS is to create a 10-year plan to enable, promote and increase walking, cycling and other active travel modes such as running, wheeling and scooting. It sets out an aspiration for active travel in North Somerset which is encapsulated by the vision statement for the Active Travel Strategy:

'Making walking and cycling the natural choice for a cleaner, healthier and more active North Somerset'.

The ATS sets out how we will reshape places to become healthy, vibrant and clean. Using new and improved walking and cycling infrastructure, we strive for residents and businesses to choose walking and cycling as the natural choice for short and medium length journeys and for the first and last mile of longer journeys (including accessing a much-improved [bus](#) and [rail](#) network). We aim for them to take these journeys via a safe, connected network, making active travel the most attractive option wherever possible. This will be important in working towards making our transport network carbon neutral by 2030, as committed to in the [North Somerset Council Climate Emergency Strategy](#).

The provision of a high-quality, segregated cycle network will also attract visitors to North Somerset to cycle, walk and spend more within the District. There is a wealth of evidence to show how improved active travel infrastructure and access to local centres can boost the local economy:

- economic growth can result from high density, cycle friendly urban design
- reduced infrastructure maintenance costs
- cycle parking allows 5 times more retail spend than the same space for car parking
- cycle friendly neighbourhoods can have greater retail spend.

([Department for Transport, 2016](#))

This will be to the benefit of the local economy, as we work towards a green recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic.

Following strong endorsement through the public consultation, as well as the Place Policy & Scrutiny Panel being supportive of both the strategy and the proposals to strengthen it following consultation, a decision is sought to approve the final amended ATS document and adopt it as Council policy.

Policy

The ATS is a key strategic document that interacts with a wide range of policies in North Somerset and across the West of England. It sets out how we will act to deliver key aims and objectives:

- Deliver safe and frequent active travel to enable improved public health;
- Tackle the Climate Emergency;
- Drive local economic development, and;
- Shape active travel neighbourhoods through an enabling planning system.

Achieving these four objectives will result in the successful outcomes highlighted in the 'Detail' section of this report below.

The ATS has strong policy alignment with the following North Somerset Council policies and strategies:

- The [Climate Emergency declaration](#), including the [NSC Climate Emergency Strategy](#) and [NSC Climate Emergency Action Plan](#);
- The [NSC Corporate Plan 2020-24](#);
- The emerging NSC Health and Wellbeing Strategy (more information [here](#) – strategy is due to be adopted later in 2021);
- The emerging North Somerset Local Plan (more information available [here](#));
- The [North Somerset Economic Plan](#).

The ATS also has a strong fit in policy terms with the following West of England 'sub-regional' strategies and plans:

- The West of England [Joint Local Transport Plan \(JLTP4\)](#);
- The West of England [Joint Green Infrastructure Strategy](#);
- The West of England [Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan \(LCWIP\)](#).

More detail on the alignment of the Active Travel Strategy with all of the above is included in Appendix 2 of this report. Other relevant policies include:

- Weston-super-Mare Town Centre Regeneration SPD
- Weston Villages SPD
- Travel Plans SPD (revised during 2020 and due for consultation in Autumn 2021)
- Draft NSC 20mph Policy
- North Somerset Rights of Way Improvement Plan 2007-2017 (Revised 2010).
- North Somerset Road Safety Strategy (which will be brought to Executive in due course).
- Creating Sustainable Buildings and Places SPD
- Parking Standards SPD (out for public consultation May-June 2021).

Details

The ATS sets out our approach to supporting active travel over the next eight years to 2030. It explains how active travel delivers Council priorities. It is intended to guide the Council's decisions which impact upon active travel and sets out how the Council plans to increase active travel.

This Active Travel Strategy differs from any active travel plans and policies produced by NSC in the past. This time, we are placing active travel as the number one priority within transport planning considerations.

We are serious about decarbonising our transport network, achieving carbon neutrality by 2030 and ensuring a green and fair recovery from the COVID-19 crisis. As a result, active travel will be the first priority. After all, the first and last stages of all trips should be walking whenever possible. The strategy is intentionally ambitious and we are already developing, designing and delivering schemes that will help us achieve the ambitious targets of the strategy and also help us monitor our progress. Examples are included below.

It is our responsibility to help create and reshape environments that provide equal access for all people regardless of their physical and socio-economic mobility; not just for those who have access to a car. Reshaping can take the form of reallocation of street space, priority or through improvement in the experience. Green Infrastructure is also vital to the experience of places and streets, and the aim in the ATS is to ensure that we deliver appropriate green infrastructure improvements through all of our schemes.

We will create active travel neighbourhoods from new and transform existing neighbourhoods dominated by the motor car to create green, safe and active environments for North Somerset residents, businesses and visitors. Accompanied by an enhanced, safer strategic cycle network (within and between our towns and villages), we will achieve our ultimate vision of making walking and cycling the natural choice for a cleaner, healthier and more active North Somerset. Green Infrastructure will play a key role in our active and green neighbourhoods, creating information play areas, visually breaking up space to reduce the dominance of motor vehicles, providing places to stop and spend time or rest, and redefining the street as a civil and community space, not only for the passage of motor vehicles.

The ATS has four key objectives, showing what we aim to achieve for North Somerset:

- Deliver safe and frequent active travel;
- Tackle the Climate Emergency;
- Drive local economic development;
- Shape active travel neighbourhoods through an enabling planning system.

Although we received strong support for our four objectives from the public consultation, we have amended the first objective, following feedback that public health was not as prominent in the key objectives as it should be. The first objective now reads:

‘Deliver safe and frequent active travel to enable improved public health’

The other main changes we are proposing to make following public consultation are summarised in the ‘Consultation’ section of this report below.

The strategy is wide-ranging in scope, covering new infrastructure, promotion, cycle training, and opportunities which may be gained by the Council changing how it carries out existing duties. This final ATS will form a local supporting strategy to the emerging Local Plan, [Joint Local Transport Plan 4](#), and in due course, the emerging successor to the JLTP4.

The strategy’s four objectives aim to achieve the following successful outcomes:

- High-quality walking and cycling networks are delivered, enabling residents and visitors to make active journeys more frequently, with improved public realm and access to local shops, facilities and green spaces.
- Safety and perceptions of safety are addressed through improved infrastructure and suppressed demand for active travel is released through reallocated street space to improved walking and cycling facilities.
- Major infrastructure schemes such as the Banwell Bypass maximise opportunities to deliver high quality active travel measures and green infrastructure to improve local cycle and walking routes and strengthen the wider active travel network.
- Awareness is increased, supported by a strong, consistent media campaign showing the active travel options available. Residents are supported to make changes using education, training and publicity.
- Improved health and wellbeing of residents through increased regular walking and cycling, making a healthier, happier and more resilient North Somerset.
- A lower carbon transport network with lower fossil fuel and car dependency, reduced carbon emissions and improved air quality across North Somerset, especially around schools and shopping areas. Transport is playing a central role in contributing towards carbon neutrality by 2030 to help tackle the climate emergency.
- A stronger local economy, supported by improved access to work, services and businesses, as part of our green recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic. Income from tourism is higher, supported by attractive active travel facilities and the reduced dominance of cars in central spaces.
- Council spending priorities will be more focussed towards delivering identified active travel improvements and funding opportunities are maximised.
- An enabling planning system that ensures development is active travel focused.
- Other local policies ensure that new developments are active travel neighbourhoods from the outset and support the rapid growth in retrofitting our transport network to prioritise active travel.

The recently approved [West of England Local Cycling and Walking Investment Plan](#) (LCWIP) has helped to identify key routes for delivery and/or improvement and these are incorporated into the ATS. The national methodology for the LCWIP means these route improvements are mainly focussed around urban areas with significant opportunity for active mode increase, but the ATS takes a wider view of the issues and locations for improvements, including improving access to rural areas as well as public transport and strategic cycling corridors.

We are already designing and delivering a number of flagship active travel priority and improvement schemes. The ATS includes the commitment to improve our strategic inter-urban and rural cycle routes and we are already working on the following (as just a few examples of schemes in development):

- River Avon Trail (Pill Path) between Pill and Bristol. Work is set to begin on an interim patching and vegetation management upgrade that will be delivered while we develop a more permanent rebuild/reconstruction of this path;
- The Strawberry Line Extension (Yatton to Clevedon);
- Weston-super-Mare – Clevedon ‘Pier to Pier’ section of North Somerset Coastal Towns Cycle Route.

The ATS also includes the policy commitment that ‘we will design and build infrastructure to give priority to pedestrians and cyclists over vehicular traffic and segregate paths away from traffic wherever possible’ and that we will ‘create active travel neighbourhoods from new and transform existing neighbourhoods dominated by the motor car to create green,

safe and active environments.' Our ambitious Active Travel Fund package of schemes, already under development (with the Clevedon Seafront & Hill Road Active Travel Improvements scheme already out to public consultation) will help us achieve these policy commitments. The scheme package also contains:

- Milton Road - Baker Street Active Travel Improvements (Weston-super-Mare);
- Weston Station Active Travel Gateway (Hildesheim Bridge);
- School Pedestrian & Cycle Zone Package.

We will closely monitor:

- the public consultation on these schemes to see how we can improve the schemes further;
- the active travel take-up once they are built to show how we are progressing towards the strategy's ambitious targets.

There are many other smaller-scale improvements we are working on delivering. Routes included are mainly derived from existing policy, engagement and prioritisation work (including the LCWIP), based on their strategic value and their potential to generate the greatest uplift in active travel. Also included are routes that promote leisure and tourism, which are essential for the economic benefits this brings across North Somerset, and to ensure that opportunities for healthy exercise are available to all residents. Proposals contained within the ATS were circulated amongst all relevant council officers. North Somerset Cycle Forum have also inputted and various elected Members. Further local schemes will also be required, especially for new development.

It is well documented that the key factors which facilitate mode shift from car to foot/bike include the following, and it is these this strategy intends to address:

- Comprehensiveness of the network (i.e. can a complete journey be made by foot/bike). The Strategy includes a detailed schedule of all the main walking and cycling routes and improvements across the District that we should be striving to deliver up to 2030. It does not mean these will all happen but helps ensure opportunities will not be missed. Specific projects will also be subject to more detailed environmental assessment and consideration as necessary as a part of their detailed project-specific management arrangements. The progress of this and implementation will be subject to council resources and success in obtaining external funding.
- Safety of the network both actual and perceived safety (i.e. greater segregation from motorised traffic is perceived as safer and will therefore attract more users). The Strategy seeks to provide safer routes and road conditions, with complementary Education, Training and Publicity (ETP) programmes aimed at all road users. This has a crucial role in supporting physical improvements.
- Attractiveness and ease of use. The Strategy includes plans to improve the maintenance of routes, provide public realm improvements, greater legibility of routes and more widespread and improved cycle parking. The safer, the more attractive, and more comprehensive the cycling and walking network is, the greater numbers of people will switch to their bikes and walking.

Consultation

Public and stakeholder consultation on the NSC Draft Active Travel Strategy ran from November 2020 to January 2021, following an extension to the consultation to allow more interaction and engagement over the festive period.

There were 312 responses to the consultation overall and they set a clear message of support to adopt the strategy. The responses also allowed us to further improve the strategy, adding extra emphasis on the importance of public health, connections to public transport networks, rural connectivity and explaining that the proposals are not anti-car but more a rebalancing of the limited transport and street space that we have.

A more detailed analysis of the methods undertaken for the consultation, detail of the results and also the changes made to the strategy (to strengthen it as a result of the consultation), is available in Appendix 3 of this report.

Overall, the results from the consultation show clear support and give a strong mandate to adopt the Active Travel Strategy.

Financial Implications

Costs

The ATS has no immediate direct financial impact. However, the document will inform and shape our financial allocations from within existing resources and our bidding and project development priorities. For example, we have reprioritised our Transport & Infrastructure Capital Works Programme 2021-24 to focus heavily on active travel and public transport.

The ATS outlines potential funding sources for proposals where this is known. The delivery of the ATS schemes will require further funding for proposals to be developed and delivered and this will be sought as appropriate opportunities become available, for example through external grants. North Somerset have a good track record in securing external and Government funding through bids.

As schemes reach deliverability, approvals will be sought through standard processes to add them to the Capital Programme.

Funding

Many schemes will require external funding and these usually require some element of match funding (for example, through our Integrated Transport Block funding from the DfT or from developer contributions).

The ATS also outlines a range of existing and proposed ETP (Education, Training and Publicity) activities, some of which is already funded and some by short term funding streams. Other proposals may require additional funding to be sought.

Where resources (including additional staff) are required this will be dealt with via the processes of the MTFP and restructuring.

There are also implications for our contracts. For example, when we receive grant allocations for scheme delivery, due to our alignment with the national policy requirements. This will mean additional sums could be spent through the Highways term contract (currently with Milestone Infrastructure).

As with any new or changed infrastructure schemes, there may be indirect costs or savings associated (e.g. maintenance).

Legal Powers and Implications

None. The ATS is a guidance document and would not itself create commitments or statutory requirements on the Council, legal, financial or otherwise. There are no land or

property implications as any schemes proposed would remain subject to the usual consultation, planning and land acquisition requirements.

Climate Change and Environmental Implications

The more we increase active travel the greater the reduction in transport-based emissions. The delivery of the ATS will have direct positive effects on climate change and directly eliminate polluting journeys.

The Council has included active travel within the North Somerset Council Climate Change Motion 2019 – the main aim of which is to be carbon neutral by 2030. The ATS is intended to maximise active travel within the North Somerset as rapidly as possible.

The shift away from the private motor vehicle to cycling and walking will also have direct positive impacts on air quality as cycling and walking do not emit particulate matter or NOx.

Risk Management

If the draft ATS draft document is not approved this will jeopardise progress of a whole range of schemes and aims of the Council as set out in the Policy section above. The key aims of this strategy are to:

- Deliver safe and frequent active travel to enable improved public health
- Tackle the Climate Emergency
- Drive local economic development
- Shape active travel neighbourhoods through an enabling planning system

If implemented, it would provide a very wide range of positive outcomes including (but not limited to) delivery on the Council's efforts to address the climate emergency, air quality, health benefits, access to work, equality and tourism. All of these are key corporate aims and objectives for North Somerset Council.

Public Health is a key risk to the Authority, as shown by the COVID-19 pandemic. Delivering public health resilience is reliant on underlying good health both physically and mentally and active travel is a very easy way for people to achieve this.

The change in cycling and walking levels during the COVID-19 lockdown period evidenced the strong suppressed demand for active travel; only when motor traffic levels were down to approximately 25% of pre-COVID-19 levels did many people feel it safe enough to cycle on our transport network. Motor traffic presents risks of road dangers, air quality and noise, which can all be addressed through altering the priority and allocation of space on our streets.

As individual schemes are developed these will be subject to their own risk management procedures.

Equality Implications

Have you undertaken an Equalities Impact Assessment? No.

The ATS directly addresses current transport inequalities as it focuses on improvements for vulnerable road users such as pedestrians and cyclists, including those with disabilities.

As schemes are developed NSC officers will engage closely with user/interest groups to ensure that proposed interventions reflect the needs of vulnerable users. The objectives

within the ATS align with both the cycling and walking approach within the JLTP4, and with current DfT guidance.

Active travel is an activity which is open to all. In accordance with Policy DM 33 of the Sites and Policies Plan (Part 1), new infrastructure would be planned with the path surface, gradients, and all access points designed to facilitate access by disabled people. This will be of the same standard as that provided for able-bodied people; this includes those who use wheelchairs and mobility aids.

The latest guidance and design standards will be followed during the design of and construction of this scheme and it is not foreseen that any deviations from standard will be required.

Corporate Implications

The ATS document supports the NSC policies (including strong alignment with the NSC Corporate Plan 2020-24), as outlined in Section 2 and Appendix 2 of this report.

Options Considered

Not developing the ATS would put the District at a disadvantage when applying for DfT and other external funding for cycling and walking schemes. We have therefore considered that not producing this document is not an option. Presentation of a less ambitious strategic approach will fail to deliver on our corporate aims and ambitions.

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Background Papers:

None.

Appendices:

Appendix 1 – NSC Active Travel Strategy (*attached separately due to file size constraints*)

Appendix 2 – Policy alignment of NSC Active Travel Strategy with other NSC and West of England policies, strategies and plans

Appendix 3 – More detailed analysis from the Active Travel Strategy consultation

Appendix 2 – Policy alignment of NSC Active Travel Strategy with other NSC and West of England policies, strategies and plans

Climate Emergency Declaration

North Somerset have been making good progress increasing levels of walking and cycling, increasing active trip numbers through the provision of off-road networks. Between March 2017 and March 2020, North Somerset saw an increase of 25% in cycling trips (pre-COVID-19, Annual Average Daily Cycle Trips). This was significantly higher than the national trend of in this period. However, there is plenty more work to do and this strategy reframes the progress that is now required in order to deliver on our target of Net Carbon Neutrality by 2030.

At 42%, the transport sector is the largest single source of [carbon emissions in North Somerset](#). This is considerably higher than the regional (South West) average of 32% and the national average of 33% from transport (2018 figures, Gov.uk). For the West of England region, transport CO2 emissions will rise by a further 22% by 2036 if we don't act - increasing the risk of droughts, floods and extreme heat globally and extreme weather events in the South West region.

Consequently, North Somerset Council (NSC) and the other four authorities in the West of England have declared climate emergencies and are urgently working on action plans to mitigate this. The Active Travel Strategy will be an important part of North Somerset's carbon reduction action planning.

In order to achieve carbon neutrality for North Somerset by 2030, we set out in this Active Travel Strategy to increase walking and cycling trips by at least 300% by 2030. According to the 2011 Census, 1.1% of North Somerset residents cycled to work as their main transport choice (2.2% walking). We also know that there was a 25% increase in cycling trips between March 2017 and March 2020 alone, so along with other cycling and walking improvements across the district (both physical measures and awareness campaigns and training), as well as the increased environmental consciousness since 2011, we would be comfortable assuming that there has been at least a 100% increase in both walking and cycling since 2011 Census data. This would mean that the 1.1% cycling to work (and 2.2% walking) would have increased to 2.2% for cycling (and 4.4% for walking).

Setting the strategy's key target as increasing cycling (and walking) trips by 300% by 2030 would see us increase the 2.2% for cycling to work (4.4% walking) up to 8.8% of all trips to work being made by cycling (and 17.6% for walking). These are assumptions and the results of the 2021 Census (expected in March 2022) will allow us to update our baseline data in the strategy to become more accurate. However, meeting these targets would form an important jigsaw piece of enabling carbon neutrality on our transport network by 2030.

Clearly the trip to work is just one of the many types of trips that people make. It has been used here as traditionally there are more statistics available for this journey type. There is a large consensus that monitoring other types of trips needs to continue to improve to capture the wider spectrum of journey types, especially as post-COVID-19 commuting patterns are likely to be different. Again, the 2021 Census data will allow us to update the strategy baseline data and check that our targets are both ambitious and realistic.

Corporate Plan

The [NSC Corporate Plan 2020-24](#) was approved by Full Council in February 2020.

The priorities are grouped under three broad aims, and the key areas related to the ATS are described below:

1. A healthy, sustainable and thriving place
 - A great place for people to live, work and visit
 - Safe, welcoming, clean and vibrant communities
 - A reduction in our carbon footprint to net zero by 2030
 - A transport network which promotes active and low carbon travel
2. A council which empowers and cares for people
 - A commitment to protect the most vulnerable people in our communities
 - A focus on tackling inequalities, improving outcomes and encouraging healthier lifestyles
 - An approach which enables children, young people and adults to lead independent and fulfilling lives
3. As an open and smart organisation, we will
 - Engage with and empower our communities
 - Collaborate with partners to deliver the best outcomes

Public Health Strategy (including COVID-19)

The ATS supports the local and national public health agendas by making physical activity easier to incorporate into everyday life. The lack of adequate physical exercise by a large proportion of the population threatens to become a national emergency with huge implications for the wellbeing of individuals and NHS resources. The COVID-19 pandemic has had a range of impacts on people travel habits and resilience to public health threats is an important theme of the ATS.

Despite being a significant, ongoing resource and public health challenge, North Somerset Council is determined to maximise the benefits of our changed world for decarbonising the transport network and delivering public health resilience and improvement through significant active travel growth.

During the first lockdown (March – May 2020), we saw a staggering 364% increase in cycling on one of our routes and even as we continue to ‘reopen’ as a district and as a nation, walking and cycling levels across our network remain much higher than pre-COVID-19 levels. The COVID-19 crisis has shown us the importance of underlying good health both physically and mentally and active travel is a very easy way for people to achieve this. It also showed the strong suppressed demand for active travel; only when motor traffic levels were down to approximately 25% of pre-COVID-19 levels did many people feel it safe enough to cycle on our transport network. Such opportunities must be harnessed.

Nationally, we are actively inputting to and responding to the changing national policy and guidance on both COVID-19 and active travel.

The update of local design guidance for cycling infrastructure, in the form of [LTN 1/20](#), was very welcomed by NSC, as it sets out for the first time that cycling should take priority over other highway users wherever possible in order to gain Governmental funding.

Accompanying updates to the Highway Code with improved priority for cycling offer vital support and make clear the national government’s recent shift towards cycling as a crucial ‘form of mass transit’ that is key to aid social distancing and improve public health in the short term, and reduce motor vehicle dependency and carbon emissions in the medium to long term.

The Department for Transport’s Active Travel Fund (Tranche 2) welcomes only ambitious walking and cycling scheme bids that ‘meaningfully alter the status quo on the road’ and

'include segregation or point closures to through traffic'. This sets a strong agenda for a mass increase in active travel via significantly improved active travel infrastructure and awareness.

The COVID-19 pandemic will continue to have a significant impact on our local and national economy. As we continue into the 'reopening' phase of the recovery, we have the opportunity to reshape and strengthen the North Somerset economy. The evidence on the increased footfall, income, vitality and general attractiveness of local shopping streets and areas that have strong pedestrian, cycle and public realm is staggering. We should not make the false assumption that prioritising access by cars will deliver economic success, where more often than not, this is just not the case.

Joint Local Transport Plan (JLTP4)

This is our 15-year vision for transport investment in the West of England.

The focus for investment is on increasing the attractiveness of more active and sustainable modes, both by improving these networks and opportunities and implementing measures that can manage private car use.

JLTP4 seeks to deliver a well-connected sustainable transport network that offers greater, realistic travel choice and makes walking, cycling and public transport the preferred way to travel. The aim is to empower individuals to change their travel habits, with sustainable modes becoming the preferred choice for journeys, if journeys need to be made at all.

Green Infrastructure Strategy

Also at the West of England 'sub-regional' level, links with the emerging [West of England Green Infrastructure Strategy](#) will be key in supporting the growth in safe and frequent active travel by maximising active travel connections with improved and greener public spaces. This will enable people to feel comfortable to dwell and spend time and money in our popular places and spaces both within towns and in our beautiful rural areas.

A successful Active Travel Strategy will rely heavily on and be interdependent on Green Infrastructure. The inclusion on elements such as permeable pavement, bioswales, planter boxes and trees will create environments that will encourage the uptake of active travel modes, and the enjoyment of the experience of both travel corridors and destination places. Meanwhile Green Infrastructure can also deliver solutions on wider issues created by the transport network (such as highway runoff) or experienced by it (e.g. stormwater runoff).

North Somerset Local Plan 2038 (Emerging)

Locally, through our emerging NSC Local Plan up to 2038, we will ensure that new developments (both residential and employment) will be active travel neighbourhoods from the outset and connect into our growing strategic cycle network. We are also striving to reduce the need to travel, and therefore car dependency, by incorporating new development around existing services and/or providing relevant services and jobs within new developments.

Significant 'decarbonisation reviews' of our Parking Standards Supplementary Planning Document (SPD), Travel Plans SPD, Transport & Infrastructure Capital Works Programme and our ongoing [Active Travel Fund 2 ambitious scheme package](#) will continue to ensure that the Active Travel Strategy is a strong fit with existing and emerging local policy; to reduce carbon and get North Somerset moving.

North Somerset Economic Plan (2020)

Transport, retail, the visitor economy and creative industries have been hit particularly hard by the COVID-19 pandemic. Unemployment has risen and our young people are especially at risk with fewer job opportunities and apprenticeships. The lockdown has also highlighted digital poverty; those without access to broadband or the right equipment and skills are at a big disadvantage. And these unprecedented times have put huge pressure on mental and physical health – highlighting the importance of well-being.

The changes to lifestyle and work as a result of the pandemic means we need a new approach to our existing economic plan, which was due to run until 2036.

Our new plan will have two core drivers: Helping those suffering economic hardships and building on the opportunities the crisis has revealed.

The priority is to first identify projects which can help residents experiencing exacerbated deprivation due to the impact of the pandemic. Job losses, business closures, reduced access to digital learning or reskilling courses must be addressed to lessen the impact felt by our vulnerable communities.

Our second driver is rooted in the changes we've all had to make to the way we live and work and the opportunities that has revealed. Economic and financial values will remain a core priority in our recovery, but the lockdown has also highlighted a different set of values. Community, connectivity and well-being, as well as a healthy and sustainable environment, are now much more prominent drivers for decision-makers.

In response, the Council is prioritising economic renewal activity around three key pillars:

- Providing inclusive growth and well-being for North Somerset people.
- Delivering digital access for all.
- Supporting green business and low carbon activities.

Appendix 3 – Active Travel Strategy consultation - detailed analysis

Methods:

Following approval from NSC Executive Committee in October 2020, the public consultation ran from November 2020 until January 2021, following an extension to the consultation to allow more interaction and engagement over the festive period and into the new year.

Due to COVID-19 restrictions on social distancing and gatherings of people, the consultation consisted of entirely digital means. We used NSC's online portal (eConsult) as the host website for information and submission of responses, including a short questionnaire to aid the consultation responses. We also sought engagement through the use of social media (via Facebook) as well as press releases on the NSC website (shared by other local news outlets). We also directly contacted many stakeholders, including all town and parish councils in North Somerset and groups representing walking and cycling interests, to encourage them to get involved.

Internally, we set up a workshop with the (then named) Strategic Planning, Economic Development and Regeneration policy and scrutiny panel (SPEDR, now renamed the Place Policy & Scrutiny Panel) to ensure that Local Member involvement and scrutiny was central in the ATS consultation, to further represent the residents, businesses and other stakeholders in North Somerset. We shared the results of the consultation (more information below) and a positive engagement session resulted in the support of SPEDR for both the strategy and the proposed changes to be made to the strategy following the consultation.

We publicised the consultation via The Knowledge to try to engage with the full range of service areas and specialisms within the Council. This proved fruitful as we engaged closely with other teams such as the Planning Policy Team, Highways Development Management and Public Health teams to ensure that their input was taken on board to strengthen the strategy. It was also important to do this to manage the information and messaging around our Active Travel Strategy public consultation in a consistent and clear manner that does not confuse or result in consultation overload for residents at the same time as other NSC consultations. For example, the NSC Local Plan Choices consultation also went live for public for engagement in November/December 2020 which was around the same time as this ATS.

Results:

We received 307 responses to the consultation via eConsult and a further 5 responses directly via email. 29 of these responses were made by organisations, the rest via individuals or otherwise not specified. There was a good mix of age demographics responding to the consultation, although the under-30s category was under-represented at just 4% of the responses. This is a consistent theme with NSC transport consultations.

Overall, the consultation responses proved to be very supportive of the strategy:

- 91% agreed that an increase in active travel (for example walking, cycling, jogging, wheeling, scooting) is needed to help North Somerset reduce its carbon emissions from transport;
- 77% of respondents voted either 'strongly agree' or 'agree' that we need to do more to give priority to pedestrians and cyclists over private motor vehicles wherever possible;
- Just 6% of respondents believe the North Somerset active travel network is 'good' (4%) or 'very good' (2%). This shows that change is both needed and wanted;

- 81% of respondents voted either 'strongly agree' or 'agree' with the ATS vision to 'Make walking and cycling the natural choice for a cleaner, healthier and more active North Somerset'.
- 76% of respondents voted either 'strongly agree' or 'agree' with the strategy's key target to increase walking and cycling trips by at least 300% by 2030. A large proportion of the 'disagree' or 'strongly disagree' responses were qualified by comments which indicated they felt the target was not strong enough.
- Strong agreement for the four key objectives, although support for explicitly naming public health within one of the objectives and not just a sub-objective (which we have now amended);
- Strong support for the types of interventions we will make to improve walking and cycling facilities across North Somerset:
 - High Street or district centre active travel improvement schemes (82% 'strongly agree' or 'agree');
 - Active and Green Neighbourhoods (82% 'strongly agree' or 'agree');
 - 20mph limits/zones (68% 'strongly agree' or 'agree');
 - School pedestrian and cycle zones and priority walking schemes (88% 'strongly agree' or 'agree');
 - Strategic urban cycle routes (86% 'strongly agree' or 'agree');
 - Strategic inter-urban/rural cycle routes (87% 'strongly agree' or 'agree');
 - Segregated cycle lanes (84% 'strongly agree' or 'agree');

Many of the criticisms of the strategy were that it wasn't going far enough with its ambition to improve active travel, which shows the levels of support for significant and meaningful upheaval of our transport network to be rebalanced towards people and active travel and less dominated by the more carbon-emitting and less space-efficient private motor car.

As a result of the consultation responses, including the free text questions on how to improve the strategy further, we have strengthened the text around these main themes:

- Clearer on the physical & mental health benefits of active travel, including adding this as one of the four key objectives (instead of a sub-objective);
- More explanation that proposals are not 'anti-car' – we are just rebalancing what has increasingly become a heavily car-dominated network– some trips will always be needed by the car (an increasing proportion by electric vehicles);
- Relationship to public transport, including first & last mile of trips;
- Rural connectivity: strengthen importance of and plans to improve active travel connectivity;
- More of a focus on directly asking what elderly, disabled, and young families need for active travel;
- Targets: added more detail & qualification.

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NORTH SOMERSET COUNCIL

Active Travel Strategy 2020 – 2030

Making walking and cycling the natural choice for a cleaner, healthier and more active North Somerset

Page 125



EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Ambition and vision

Active Travel refers to the movement of people or goods by using the physical activity of a person for movement. During this Active Travel Strategy, active travel refers to the most popular forms walking and cycling most commonly, but also includes important options such as running, wheeling and scooting.

The aspiration for active travel in North Somerset is represented by the ambitious but achievable vision statement for this Active Travel Strategy:

'Making walking and cycling the natural choice for a cleaner, healthier and more active North Somerset.'

Within North Somerset, we will use active travel improvements to help reshape places to become healthy, vibrant and clean. Using new and improved walking and cycling infrastructure, we strive for residents and businesses to choose walking and cycling as the natural and enjoyable choice for short and medium length journeys and for the first and last mile of longer journeys. We aim for residents to take these journeys via a safe, connected network, making active travel the most attractive option wherever possible. This

will be important in working towards making our transport network carbon neutral by 2030.

The provision of a high-quality, segregated cycle network will also attract visitors to North Somerset to cycle, walk and spend more within the District. This will be to the benefit of the local economy, as we work towards a green recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic.

We have four key objectives, showing what we aim to achieve for North Somerset:

- Deliver safe and frequent active travel to enable improved public health.
- Tackle the Climate Emergency.
- Drive local economic development.
- Shape active travel neighbourhoods through an active travel focused planning system.

Achieving these four objectives will result in the following successful outcomes:

- High-quality walking and cycling networks are delivered, enabling residents and visitors to make active journeys more frequently, with improved public realm and access to local shops, facilities and green spaces.
- Safety and perceptions of safety are addressed through improved infrastructure and suppressed demand for active travel is

released through reallocated street space to improved walking and cycling facilities, as well as to public transport interchanges such as bus stops and railway stations.

- Awareness is increased, supported by a strong, consistent media campaign showing the active travel options available. Residents are supported to make changes using education, training and publicity.
- Road safety awareness will also be increased through an ongoing positive campaign that highlights the needs and safety of pedestrians and cyclists.
- Improved physical, mental health and wellbeing of residents through increased regular walking and cycling, making a healthier, happier and more resilient North Somerset.



- A lower carbon transport network with lower fossil fuel and car dependency, reduced carbon emissions and improved air quality across North Somerset, especially around schools and shopping areas. Transport is playing a central role in contributing towards carbon neutrality by 2030 to help tackle the climate emergency.
- A stronger local economy, supported by improved access to work, services and businesses, as part of our green recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic. Income from tourism is higher, supported by attractive active travel facilities and the reduced dominance of cars in central spaces. Council spending priorities will be more focussed towards delivering identified active travel improvements and funding opportunities are maximised.
- An active travel focused planning system that minimises the need for car travel. Other local policies will ensure that new developments are active travel neighbourhoods from the outset and support the rapid growth in retrofitting our transport network to prioritise active travel.

Foundations and the context for change

North Somerset has laid strong foundations for a significant rise in walking and cycling through to 2030. Between March 2017 and March 2020, North Somerset saw an increase of 25% in cycling trips (pre-COVID-19, Annual Average Daily Cycle Trips). This was significantly higher than the national trend in this period. This has been partly due to the delivery of some flagship strategic active travel routes, including the increasingly popular Festival Way commuter-route into Bristol from Nailsea and Backwell (via Long Ashton) and the more leisure-focused Brean Down Way section of our ambitious North Somerset Coastal Towns Cycle Route. When completed this route will link the Somerset and North Somerset Coast with Bristol via our three coastal towns of Weston-super-Mare, Clevedon and Portishead.

However, there is plenty more work to do. In order to help achieve carbon neutrality for North Somerset by 2030, we set out in this Active Travel Strategy to **increase walking and cycling trips by at least 300% by 2030**. A baseline of 2.2% for cycling and 4.4% for walking has been assumed. Refer to Section 6, Monitoring & Evaluation for further information.

It is only by setting ambitious aims like this that we will raise our game sufficiently to ensure that the North Somerset transport network and its users are contributing to carbon neutrality as much and as soon as possible.

The United Nations Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) has warned that a rise in temperatures of just 1.5 degrees could lead to ecological, environmental and humanitarian



disaster. The Panel concludes we will require rapid, far-reaching and unprecedented changes in all aspects of society to avoid this. This is especially true for the transport sector which, at 42%, is the largest single source of carbon emissions in North Somerset. This is considerably higher than the regional (South West) average of 32% and the national average of 33% from transport (2018 figures, Gov.uk). For the West of England region, transport CO2 emissions will rise by a further 22% by 2036 if we don't act – increasing the risk of droughts, floods and extreme heat globally and in the South West Region. Consequently, North Somerset Council (NSC) and the other four authorities in the West of England have declared climate emergencies and are urgently working on action plans to mitigate this. The Active Travel Strategy will be an important part of North Somerset's carbon reduction action planning.

2020 was already set to be a year for active travel growth with the climate emergency and resulting work on decarbonising transport well underway. Momentum was building, with young people particularly helping to invigorate climate action, supported by a moving speech from global climate activist Greta Thunberg in nearby Bristol at the end of February 2020. This helped represent the West of England's ambition and commitment for carbon neutrality via meaningful carbon action.

This was before the COVID-19 global pandemic dramatically changed the world as we know it. Despite being a significant and ongoing resource and public health challenge, North Somerset Council is determined to maximise the benefits of our changed world for decarbonising the transport network and delivering public health resilience (both physical and mental) and improvement through significant active travel growth. During the first national lockdown (March - May 2020), we saw a staggering 364% increase in cycling on some routes and even as we continue to 'reopen' as a district and as a nation, walking and cycling levels overall remain higher than pre-COVID-19 levels.

The COVID-19 crisis has shown us the importance of underlying good health both physically and mentally and active travel is a very easy way for people to achieve this. It also showed the strong suppressed demand for active travel; only when motor traffic levels were down to approximately 25% of pre-COVID-19 levels did many people feel it safe enough to cycle on our transport network. Indeed, many people have found they can work well at home, at least some of the time, reducing their car dependency. This opportunity to reshape and reprioritise our transport network towards active travel must be harnessed.

Work is required to deliver safe and frequent active travel and we will use this unique opportunity to decarbonise our transport network,

improve public health and transform our often car-dominated streets and town centres; not just for the benefit of us all today but for generations to come.

This Active Travel Strategy has strong links with other important strategies, plans and guidance at the local, regional and national levels. Our ambition to make active travel the natural choice for short journeys and a part of longer ones reflects this key ambition set out in the Government's Cycling & Walking Investment Strategy. The Department for Transport's publication of updated guidance, Cycle Infrastructure Design, LTN 1/20, builds on this as it sets out for the first time that cycling should take priority over other highway uses wherever possible, in order to gain Governmental funding. This has all been very welcomed by NSC. Accompanying updates to the Highway Code with improved priority for cycling offer vital support and make clear the national government's recent shift towards cycling as a crucial 'form of mass transit' that is key to aid social distancing and improve public health in the short term, and reduce motor vehicle dependency and carbon emissions in the medium to long term. The Department for Transport's Active Travel Fund (Tranche 2) welcomes only ambitious walking and cycling scheme bids that 'must meaningfully alter the status quo on the road' and 'include segregation or point closures to through traffic'.

This sets a strong agenda for mass increases in active travel via significantly improved active travel infrastructure and awareness.

The COVID-19 pandemic will continue to have a significant impact on our local and national economy. As we continue into the 'reopening' phase of the recovery, we have the opportunity to reshape and strengthen the North Somerset economy. The evidence on the increased footfall, income, vitality and general attractiveness of local shopping streets and areas that have strong pedestrian, cycle and public realm is staggering. We should not make the false assumption that prioritising access by cars will deliver economic success, where more often than not, this is just not the case.

At the West of England 'sub-regional' level links with the emerging West of England Green Infrastructure Strategy will be key in supporting the growth in safe and frequent active travel by maximising active travel connections with improved and greener public spaces. This will enable people to feel comfortable and spend time and money in our popular places and spaces both within towns and in our beautiful rural areas.

Locally, through our emerging NSC Local Plan up to 2038, we will ensure that new developments (both residential and employment) will be active travel neighbourhoods from the outset. They will connect into our growing strategic cycle network and will have or be located very

close to facilities that reduce car dependency. Significant 'decarbonisation reviews' of our Parking Standards Supplementary Planning Document (SPD), Travel Plans SPD, Transport and Infrastructure Capital Works Programme and our ongoing active-travel focussed COVID-19 response (including the ambitious Active Travel Fund Tranche 2 scheme work) will continue to ensure that the Active Travel Strategy is a strong fit with existing and emerging local policy; to reduce carbon and get North Somerset moving.

It's different this time...

This Active Travel Strategy differs from any active travel plans and policies produced by NSC in the past. This time, active travel will be the number one priority within transport planning and considerations. We are serious about decarbonising our transport network, achieving carbon neutrality by 2030 and ensuring a green and fair recovery from the COVID-19 crisis. As a result, active travel will be the first priority. After all, the first and last stages of all trips should be walking whenever possible. This is not to say that cars, (and increasingly electric vehicles) do not have a place – some journeys will always remain difficult by other means. However, current levels of motor traffic, and a certain level of driver behaviour that is not as accepting of, or careful around those who actively travel as it should be, squeezes out this possibility for many people.

It is therefore our responsibility to help create and reshape environments that provide equal access for all people regardless of their physical and socio-economic mobility; not just for those who have access to a car. We will create active travel neighbourhoods from new and transform existing neighbourhoods dominated by the motor car to create green, safe and active environments for North Somerset residents, businesses and visitors. Accompanied by a growing, enhanced, safer strategic cycle network (within and between our towns and villages), we will achieve our ultimate vision of making walking and cycling the natural choice for a cleaner, healthier and more active North Somerset.



CONTENTS

Section 1:
Our vision for active travel

Section 2:
Foundations for future success

Section 3:
Challenges and opportunities for active travel success

Section 4:
Objectives and interventions

Objective 1:
Deliver safe and frequent active travel to enable improved public health

- Deliver infrastructure and awareness
- Achieve meaningful health and social benefits
- Collaborate effectively with internal and external partners

Objective 2:
Tackle the climate emergency

- Reduce reliance on fossil fuels and car dependency
- Improve air quality and public realm

Objective 3:
Drive local economic development

- Improve access to services, jobs and training
- Guide spending priorities and maximise funding opportunities

Objective 4:
Shape active travel neighbourhoods through an active travel focused planning system

- Guide development planning to create active travel communities
- Ensure local supporting policies and SPDs help to expediate active travel growth

Section 5:
Funding and delivery

Section 6:
Monitoring and evaluation

Section 7:
Summary of objectives and interventions

Section 8:
Conclusions and key points

Appendices

SECTION 1:

Our vision for active travel

Active Travel refers to the movement of people or goods by using the physical activity of a person for movement. During this Active Travel Strategy, active travel refers to the most popular forms walking and cycling most commonly, but also includes important options such as running, wheeling and scooting. The wide range of benefits of active travel are well-documented for public health (both mental and physical), air quality and the environment, social interaction and for providing key forms of transport connectivity to help the economy at local, regional and national levels.

The aspiration for active travel in North Somerset encompassed in the ambitious but achievable vision statement for this Active Travel Strategy:

'Making walking and cycling the natural choice for a cleaner, healthier and more active North Somerset.'

This is supported by four key objectives:

- Deliver safe and frequent active travel to enable improved public health.
- Tackle the Climate Emergency.
- Drive local economic development.
- Shape active travel neighbourhoods through planning.

Within these four key objectives are more detailed sub-objectives. These help to achieve several

successful outcomes for active travel in North Somerset and are shown in [Table 1](#).

Carbon neutrality

North Somerset Council declared a Climate Emergency in 2019 and we have since set out our [Climate Emergency Strategy](#) and accompanying [Climate Emergency Action Plan](#) (both agreed in 2019). As part of this, we commit to becoming carbon neutral by 2030. But what does this mean?

Carbon neutrality means having a balance between emitting carbon and absorbing carbon from the atmosphere in carbon sinks. The end result, carbon neutrality, is net zero carbon emissions.

We are working hard to 'decarbonise' our transport network (as well as all other sectors within North Somerset, including business, housing and many others) – that is reduce the carbon we are using through transport, such as choosing active travel for short journeys or to get to public transport – instead of the petrol or diesel car. This Active Travel Strategy has an important role to play in setting out how we do this.

Reducing our carbon to a 'carbon neutral' status is a huge challenge and one that will only be achievable by increasing opportunities to store carbon, such as through planting trees (that store carbon) and allowing regularly maintained natural areas such as grass banks and verges to grow longer. North Somerset's Rewilding

programme sets out to plant over 50,000 young trees in our area, as well as allowing grass to grow longer to reduce our carbon footprint and encourage wildlife.

However, we know that carbon offsetting is just a part of the ambitious aim to become carbon neutral by 2030, with most of the carbon reduction coming from making changes to the daily choices we make, with transport currently the most carbon emitting sector both in North Somerset and nationally. Whether walking, scooting or cycling to school and work, working from home more to reduce travel or using active travel to get to the shops and to see friends and family; we all have a big role to play in making greener, cleaner and more active choices to become carbon neutral and address this climate emergency.

Interventions

Throughout this Active Travel Strategy, every time there is a commitment for NSC to 'intervene', that is a sentence that starts with '**We will**', it represents an '[Intervention](#)' for NSC to provide action to improve active travel. For example, in Section 2, we outline how:

We will embark on a programme of delivering Active Travel Neighbourhoods to improve the safety and attractiveness of active travel for residents, businesses and visitors in our towns and villages.



All of these 'Interventions' will be displayed in **bold green** font to outline their importance. These Interventions are included throughout the main body of this strategy (largely from Section 4 onwards) and are summarised in Table 3 in Section 7. This table also shows which of the Objectives each Interventions contribute towards.



Table 1: Objectives, Sub-Objectives and Outcomes for the Active Travel Strategy

Objectives	Sub-objectives	Outcomes
Deliver safe and frequent active travel to enable improved public health	Deliver infrastructure and awareness	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> High-quality walking and cycling networks are delivered, enabling residents and visitors to make active journeys more frequently, with improved public realm and access to local shops, facilities and green spaces Safety and perceptions of safety are addressed through improved infrastructure and suppressed demand for active travel is released through through reallocated street space to improved walking and cycling facilities, as well as to public transport interchanges such as bus stops and railway stations Awareness is increased, supported by a strong, consistent media campaign showing the active travel options available. Residents are supported to make changes using education, training and publicity
	Achieve health and social benefits	
	Collaborate effectively with internal and external partners	
Tackle the Climate Emergency	Reduce reliance on fossil fuels and car dependency	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Road safety awareness will also be increased through an ongoing positive campaign that highlights the needs and safety of pedestrians and cyclists. Improved physical, mental health and wellbeing of residents through increased regular walking and cycling, making a healthier, happier and more resilient North Somerset
	Improve air quality and public realm	
Drive local economic development	Improve access to jobs and services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A lower carbon transport network with lower fossil fuel and car dependency, reduced carbon emissions and improved air quality across North Somerset, especially around schools and shopping areas. Transport is playing a central role in contributing towards carbon neutrality by 2030 to help tackle the climate emergency A stronger local economy, supported by improved access to work, services and businesses, as part of our green recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic. Income from tourism is higher, supported by attractive active travel facilities and the reduced dominance of cars in central spaces
	Guide spending priorities and maximise funding opportunities	
Shape active travel neighbourhoods through planning	Guide development planning to create active travel communities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Council spending priorities will be more focussed towards delivering identified active travel improvements and funding opportunities are maximised A planning system that ensures development is active travel focused. Other local policies ensure that new developments are active travel neighbourhoods from the outset and support the rapid growth in retrofitting our transport network to prioritise active travel
	Ensure local supporting policies and SPDs help to expediate active travel growth	

SECTION 2:

Foundations for future success



This Strategy builds upon our recent foundation-setting for facilitating growth in active travel. We have successfully delivered flagship strategic cycle network schemes, including:

- The Festival Way shared-use commuter route, providing off-road cycle access from Nailsea and Backwell to Bristol via Flax Bourton, Long Ashton and the Long Ashton Park and Ride. For commuters and tourists alike, it has seen a year on year increase in use since its opening in 2013. It saw an increase of 364% in cycling numbers during peak lockdown in May 2020.
- The Brean Down Way, completed in 2017 is the first section of our ambitious Coastal Towns Cycle Route, already proving very popular with approximately 100,000 trips per year. It connects Somerset's picturesque Brean Down and the Brean holiday resort with the bustling Weston-super-Mare promenade via paths through nature reserves.
- A371 Locking Parklands to Haywood Village shared use cycle path, providing active travel connection between two new major development locations (with onward linkages with Weston Town Centre)
- The very popular Strawberry Line off-road shared-use path, along the old Strawberry Line rail route between Clevedon and Cheddar. This provides active travel connections for leisure trips and commuters between Winscombe (and on into Somerset) in the south, Congresbury and the A370 and Yatton Railway Station in the north.

These highly successful schemes have been delivered through a mixture of strong funding bids to external agencies and government departments as well as local contributions, with some private developer contributions. We also continue to deliver a programme of more 'local'

cycle improvement schemes using extremely limited local resource, with funding contributions towards schemes like the Uphill Road North cycle link (as part of the Coastal Towns Cycle Route) and active travel, public realm and public transport improvements at Alexandra Parade in Weston-super-Mare town centre.

Levels of cycling at key employers such as Weston College and North Somerset Council continue to rise through the provision of infrastructure and support through Business Engagement, funded through the Local Sustainable Transport Fund and the Access Fund. Significant work is ongoing engaging with schools, by helping them develop and commit travel plans to increase walking and cycling levels amongst pupils, which has been increasing as a result of these interventions.

Overall, thanks to the early progress achieved above, active travel is increasing in North Somerset. But it is not growing fast enough to contribute sufficiently to achieving carbon neutrality by 2030 and tackling the climate emergency.

To speed up the transition to active travel,

we will accelerate improvements to our strategic cycle network routes, allowing medium to long distance active travel for leisure, education and commuter trips (via segregated cycle paths, cycle lanes and active travel focused 'Quiet Lanes').

This allows those key connections between our towns, villages and countryside and beyond into Bristol, Bath and North East Somerset and Somerset.

As well as these between-settlement 'strategic' routes

we will embark on a programme of delivering Active Travel Neighbourhoods to improve the safety and attractiveness of active travel for residents, businesses and visitors in our towns and villages.

Improving access to key facilities and improving the public realm in town and village centres – making popular areas feel cleaner, greener and more attractive for active travel and for residents and visitors to just 'dwell' – is crucial to getting people out of their cars and onto their feet and their cycles; for the good of themselves, the economy and the environment.

Providing this infrastructure is important to shift trips to walking and cycling as a safe, attractive travel choice. However, without sufficient awareness boosting, all potential users (everyone in North Somerset) will not be aware of the active travel option and all the benefits that come along with it.

We will increase Education, Training and Promotion (ETP) for active travel, for events and for all existing and new active travel infrastructure across North Somerset.

Only with this intervention will we achieve any meaningful shift towards the greener, lower-carbon transport choices of walking and cycling; enabling residents and businesses to choose active travel as the natural choice for regular journeys and for this to be an enjoyable and rewarding experience.



SECTION 3:

Challenges and opportunities

Of course, there are a number of challenges for active travel success. The most important challenges are identified below, along with an opportunity that can be harnessed from each challenge.

Challenges...

Culture shift: creating a positive attitude to active travel

Road safety and air quality concerns breeding a lack of confidence

Lack of awareness of active travel routes and options

Lack of appropriate active travel infrastructure

Lack of funding for active travel infrastructure, historical and present

Failure to manage demand for private car

Geography of North Somerset

Economy of North Somerset

Creating equal and fair access

Opportunities...

Harness the momentum from growth in active travel seen during COVID-19 lockdown and from growing acceptance of urgency of climate emergency

Traffic calm and reallocate street space to footway, cycleway, public open space in areas of most need (town/village centres, tourist spots, road safety hotspots). Promote active travel awareness campaigns to improve road safety.

Increase Education, Training and Promotion of cycling on the highway and awareness boosting of off-road/segregated/ Quiet Lane cycle and walking routes

Deliver enhanced programme of active travel infrastructure including Active Travel Neighbourhoods and strategic cycle network

Maximise fresh impetus in national funding for active travel and reprioritise internal investment for active travel first within transport, planning and maintenance

Start to use demand management tools such as reallocating highway and parking spaces in town centre areas for walking, cycling and public open space

Continue to upgrade the strategic network along flat land and valley floors between settlements. Promote awareness of electric bikes for hills and longer distances

Deliver and document the positive impact of prioritising active modes and reducing car dominance in driving economic success

Providing facilities for all forms of disability. Ensure our work improves conditions for the poorest and most disadvantaged in society

SECTION 4:

Objectives and interventions

Objective 1:

Deliver safe and frequent active travel to enable improved public health

1.1 Deliver infrastructure and awareness

North Somerset Council has a well-established track record in delivering active travel schemes, supported by Education, Training and Publicity (ETP) programmes. We must build on this success and further accelerate strong growth in active travel seen during the COVID-19 crisis. During lockdown we saw a situation where people took to using the transport network for walking and cycling, despite the provision of active travel infrastructure still being well below acceptable levels for new and lower-confidence pedestrians and cyclists. A big factor in this increase was due to a reduced level of car use. We are going to learn from this and actively prioritise our networks for walking and cycling.

Delivery and design standards

The good design of walking and cycling infrastructure is key to increasing the usage and maximising the impact of facilities. All new walking and cycling facilities must be designed to current best practice design standards whilst existing infrastructure needs to be reviewed and upgraded to ensure that it remains fit for purpose and of a condition which provides safe and comfortable access for all users. All our highway

engineers need to be familiar with the latest guidance and best practice – for example [LTN 1/20](#).

We will:

- run workshops to ensure that all internal NSC highway engineers, planning, regeneration, Elected Members (and all other relevant or interested teams and officers) are familiar and comfortable using latest guidance and best practice design standards for walking and cycling infrastructure, learning from national and international best practice
- deliver on the five design principles set out by the Department for Transport which are the essential requirements to achieve more people travelling by active modes, based on best practice both internationally and across the UK.

Networks and routes should be Coherent; Direct; Safe; Comfortable and Attractive. Inclusive design and accessibility are to run through all five of these core design principles, in order to provide infrastructure that caters for the broadest range of people. Walking and cycling

infrastructure should be accessible to everyone from 8 to 80 and beyond: it should be planned and designed for everyone. The opportunity to walk and cycle in our towns and villages should be universal.

For existing infrastructure, and where pedestrian and cycle desire lines have been identified, the LCWIP audit process will be followed before any changes to a route are carried out. This will ensure opportunities for improvements are not missed. It will also guide which routes should be prioritised for investment. Multi-modal audits will be carried out at all stages of a scheme to ensure active mobility is not compromised.

We will use audit processes (both LCWIP and multi-modal) to prioritise important, quick-win and value-for-money infrastructure improvements to our existing walking and cycling network.

All walking and cycling provision must be designed or adapted to facilitate access by disabled people which is of the same standard as that provided for able-bodied people. This includes those who use wheelchairs, mobility aids, and cycles of various kinds as mobility aids, as well as people with sensory impairments.



Case study: West of England LCWIP

The priorities of walking and cycling infrastructure for the West of England is shaped by a vision for investment in strategic and local infrastructure. The West of England wide Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan (LCWIP) has developed packages to improve walking, cycling and other forms of active travel, as well as public realm.

The West of England LCWIP is a significant step towards transforming active travel in the region. The Plan proposes investment of £411m by 2036, improving the environment for cyclists and pedestrians, focussing on 30 local high streets as well as improvements along 55 continuous cycle routes across the West of England region.

The five West of England authorities, Bath & North East Somerset, Bristol, North Somerset and South Gloucestershire councils and the West of England Combined Authority (WECA), are aiming to provide high quality infrastructure to ensure the West of England is a region where cycling and walking are the preferred choices for shorter trips and to access public transport.

This plan was adopted in June 2020 and builds on the draft published as part of a public consultation held earlier in the year – receiving nearly 2,000 responses from across the region. North Somerset Council have adopted the proposed infrastructure improvements for North Somerset within this Active Travel Strategy (please see Appendix 2 for more details).

Surfaces and access points must be smooth, free draining, and designed to accommodate walkers and cyclists of all abilities whilst gates and access controls should be omitted where possible. Where not possible, for design and inclusivity purposes, a cycle should be considered as a vehicle 1.2m wide by 2.8m long, as per Highways England's Interim Advice Note 195/16 (IAN 195/16).

While in some cases deviations from design standards may be required due to a site's particular conditions, such deviations should be a last resort and only used where no practical alternative exists. One example is where livestock must be controlled and no other solution found. RADAR gates can also be used but should also be a last resort.

Prior to the design, construction, or adoption of any walking or cycling facility, a literature review should be undertaken to ensure that current design standards and best practices are being followed where relevant. The most relevant current guidance which should be listed in the following box.

Current design guidance:

- Local Transport Note 1/20 (July 2020). This replaces previous guidance LTN 2/08 and LTN 1/12
- Local Transport Note 1/04 'Planning and Design for Walking and Cycling'*
- Interim Advice Note 195/16 Cycle Traffic and the Strategic Road Network – HE
- NSC Highways Development Design Guide (currently being updated, to be adopted early 2020)
- Planning for Cycling – CIHT
- Guide to Inclusive Cycling (2019) – Wheels for Wellbeing
- Designing for Cycle Traffic, International principles and practice – ICE

It should also be recognised that walkers and cyclists have different needs that unless considered carefully can lead to conflict. The specific needs of all users should be considered at all stages of the design process. Shared spaces in urban environments should be avoided if at all possible. Where (lesser used) rural paths are shared adequate provision, such as width and forward visibility, should be provided, and equestrian needs considered.

Wherever practical and where it does not compromise safety, priority will be given to walkers and cyclists as opposed to vehicular traffic; for example, at access ways or junctions of roads with lower levels of traffic. The alignment of new paths will be segregated from carriageways as much as possible, for example, by including grass verges or studs in between paths and the carriageway edge.

Frequent access points should be provided on cycle paths where adjacent to carriageways as a way of encouraging users to exit and join the carriageway with ease. Crossing points should be frequent, on all desire lines, and with good visibility. Controlled crossings should provide for cyclists wherever necessary.

The needs of visually impaired users will continue to be accommodated including, where relevant, consideration of strong contrasting colours and tactile features to indicate where surfaces are to be shared or segregated.

We will design and build infrastructure to give priority to pedestrians and cyclists over vehicular traffic and segregate paths away from traffic wherever possible. This will transform our transport network from spaces where people are 'able' to walk and cycle to environments in which they are 'invited' to walk and cycle.

Enhancement features

Walking and cycling are much more engaging modes of transport compared to travelling in motor vehicles. As a result, the inclusion of interactive features can greatly enhance the enjoyment, and hence likelihood of repeated use, of walking and cycling routes. Such features can also enhance inclusivity by providing stopping or resting points for less able users. These features enhance walking and cycling routes, and more generally our popular places and spaces, and will be maximised wherever possible.

This will help us to deliver the wider economic and social need for streets that invite us to linger and dwell, to socialise and play. The creation of low-traffic or traffic-free spaces mean children can enjoy being more active and sociable, allowing our streets to be transformed into cleaner, safer and more welcoming places for people of all ages. Some of the key interventions can consist of the following:

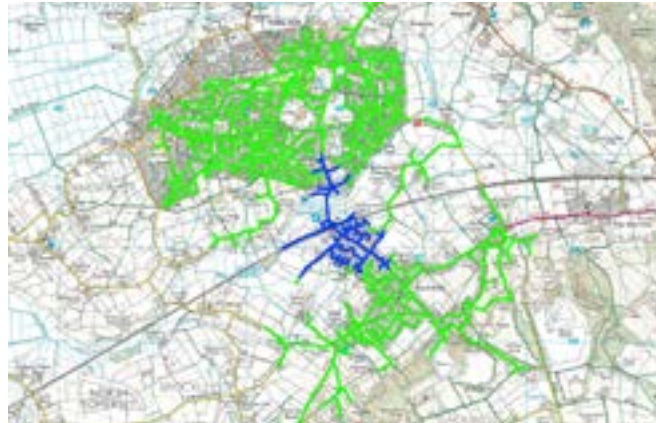
- seats and benches (these help older and disabled people consider a walk or make it easier for them, particularly on steep hills)
- public art and displays
- interpretation and notice boards
- planting, trees, landscaping and picnic areas
- mileposts
- ecological features
- 'Pop-up' or permanent cafe or refreshment stops.

Case study: Cycling and Walking Journey Distances and Times

We recognise that for many people, cycling is more attractive than walking. For many other people, walking is more attractive or may be the only option. Cycling is not more important than walking, but in this Active Travel Strategy it may sometimes seem that cycling is being emphasised and referenced more often than walking.

The infographic to the right shows routes providing a 10-minute walk (in blue) and a 10-minute cycle (in green) to Nailsea & Backwell railway Station from the Nailsea & Backwell area.

The map shows that nearly the whole of Nailsea and Backwell are within a 10-minute cycle from the station, whereas the relatively small areas in south Nailsea and north-west Backwell (shaded in blue) show how walking to the station within 10 minutes is far more limited. Cycling can therefore offer a far greater reach in terms of the shorter journey times and greater distances for those choosing to or are able to cycle instead.



As a result, many of our active travel improvement schemes prioritise improving the environment and infrastructure for cycling to local facilities such as shops, schools, workplaces and transport interchanges as it unlocks a far greater area and number of people to choose active travel to get to where they need to be quickly, safely and conveniently.

We continue to understand the huge role of walking on a more local level to get people to their destinations on a regular basis. We remain committed to investing in making walking and other forms of active travel such as jogging the natural choice for shorter, local journeys or to public transport options to go further afield.

Sometimes enhancement features may be implemented across both new and existing infrastructure, for example mileposts or public art trails. It may also be possible to find funding for enhancement features beyond the scheme construction budget, for example, Arts Council funding.

We will incorporate the attractive features such as benches, public art, notice boards, planting and landscaping on or close to walking and cycling routes wherever possible.

Wider Infrastructure

A multi-modal design approach will help deliver the strategy by overcoming barriers.

The interventions below are required to achieve and maintain the necessary behavioural change; encouraging and empowering more residents to travel actively for shorter journeys, instead of driving when making new trips.

As set out in the DfT's Cycling Delivery Plan (2014)

we will seek also to 'cycle proof' the road network – to ensure that active modes are considered as first priority at the design stage of new or improved road infrastructure.

The Government and NSC want to ensure that all cycling interventions, wherever possible, benefit both the walking and cycling environment and, by considering the most vulnerable road users first, avoids bringing pedestrians and cyclists into conflict.

North Somerset Council's position on new road infrastructure:

As specified in North Somerset Council's Executive Committee decision to adopt the West of England Joint Local Transport Plan 4 (JLTP4) in February 2020, the Council's position on the building of new road infrastructure is as follows:

'We will only construct new roads to provide access to major development sites, to improve transport corridor flow at pinch-points that will have benefits for public transport connectivity, air quality, public realm or to provide road safety improvements, or to reallocate street space to more sustainable modes on existing roads (to optimise the use of highway space).'

This shows the Council's commitment to enabling a carbon neutral North Somerset transport network by 2030, by only building new road infrastructure to facilitate improvements to other, less carbon-emitting transport choices.

This Executive Committee Report is available to view on the North Somerset Council website.

Concerns over safety are often cited as one of the main reasons why people do not cycle or walk. Perceptions as well as real road dangers need addressing in tandem (for example nationally those who already cycle have better perceptions of cycling safety than non-cyclists). For people to choose to walk or cycle the conditions need to be right. The street environment can be a discouragement to walking and cycling with a real or perceived threat of high traffic speeds, road safety, noise and poor air quality. Poor signage and route legibility also contribute to a hard to follow and therefore less attractive walk, jog, wheel, scoot or cycle.

We will develop an infrastructure network of high capacity, quality cycle tracks along main road corridors as well as a plan for strategic cycling infrastructure to address missing links, pinch-points and safer cycling within neighbourhoods.

There are many different types of interventions we will use to deliver safe and frequent active travel:

- road safety and awareness campaigns targeted at all road users
- traffic calming
- speed limits
- reallocation of street space, including on-carriageway cycle lanes and advance stop lines

- contra-flow cycle lanes
- implementation of road user hierarchies
- use of Intelligent Transport Systems
- pedestrian crossings and footway maintenance
- designing out crime, such as increasing natural surveillance (for example avoiding largely hidden, narrow alleyways)
- improved signage and route legibility
- urban realm improvements
- public cycle pumps and parking.

We will use a package of measures as part of our Active Travel Neighbourhood programme, to prioritise walking and cycling, reduce vehicle dominance and improve public open space in town and village centres.

Cycle parking

Cycle parking makes a statement that cyclists are welcome, enables cycles to be parked conveniently and securely at facilities, businesses and homes, and encourages cycling.

A cycle audit of North Somerset's main towns was completed in 2017 to inform the need for the increased provision.

Adequate cycle parking, normally in the form of 'Sheffield' stands, needs to be provided at convenient locations – including shops, tourist attractions, workplaces, schools, leisure centres and railway stations. After all, per square metre, cycle parking can deliver 5 times higher retail spend than the same area of car parking. Further to this, a compact town optimised for walking and cycling can have a "retail density" (spend per square metre) 2.5 times higher than a typical urban centre¹.

North Somerset Council's Parking SPD sets out minimum cycle parking standards for new developments. Cycle parking needs to be further addressed on-street and at local town, village and retail centres over this Strategy period. This is most effective as small groups of stands in lots of places rather than large banks of racks and should be convenient to building entrances. Grant match-funding for cycle parking has been provided to schools and workplaces over the past



Photo: Aliaksander Karankevich/Shutterstock.com

seven years through our 'Claim a Stand' scheme, and subject to funding will continue.

We will work with private businesses, organisations and stakeholders to fund and improve cycle parking provision both on-street and at town, village and retail centres. This includes working to provide secure bike storage for people living in HMOs (houses of multiple occupancy) or flats/apartment blocks, where people living in small or crowded accommodation are likely to struggle with bike storage. Where this is not possible we will work to promote the use of folding bikes for easier storage and more active and green travel choices.



Holistic Interventions and awareness boosting

Without knowledge that a route exists, or that a journey is achievable by active means, then infrastructure improvements will not meet their full potential. This is recognised by the DfT who recommend a reasonable proportion of an infrastructure scheme budget should be spent on so called 'soft' measures. To achieve the highest Benefit/Cost Ratios (BCRs) for the improvement scheme, the principle has been established that capital investment should be balanced by revenue supported Education, Training and Publicity (ETP).

Research for the DfT ('Finding the Optimum: Revenue / Capital Investment Balance for Sustainable Travel', 2014) has shown that nearly all infrastructure (capital) schemes are more effective when complemented by an element of revenue funded education, training and promotion (ETP).

¹ https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/the-value-of-cycling-rapid-evidence-review-of-the-economic-benefits-of-cycling?fbclid=IwAR0pAvkhZl8lW6Qip6J0gcbBEFhNNN20shahqc8AZybYbg4_SvCJjrKQuA#

The amount that's appropriate can vary significantly. For example, a network of new and improved routes in a town with a low baseline of cycling will require a whole change in culture to maximise the full potential benefit of these. This is because cycling, and to a lesser degree walking, require more than just the provision of routes to encourage greater uptake. A holistic approach is required that overcomes all the potential barriers to more active travel. Marketing of existing and new infrastructure is essential to maintain current users and encourage uptake. Those already active need targeting to ensure they are aware of new provision and this includes potential visitors from outside of North Somerset.

As part of their 'Moving the Nation' framework (2018), the Cycling and Walking Alliance prioritised five policy changes to begin the transformation of our roads and streets and trigger wider societal change towards active travel. Along with Speed, Space, Safety and Priority, Culture is an important strand that will need to adjust for us to meaningfully alter the status quo on our transport networks to active travel priority but also our attitude towards active travel as a realistic, attractive and first choice form of transport for as many short and medium journeys as possible.

Active mobility culture is a powerful instrument for building sustainable, healthy, and equitable places which can catalyse widespread change through movement away from the negative norms of



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car-centric development; segregated, congested, unhealthy and polluted communities. The social, environmental, and economic drawbacks of over-reliance on private cars have become overwhelmingly clear. In response to this, we will build a mainstream, inclusive, district-wide cycling culture as well as project specific promotions.

We are committed to giving people a realistic choice to travel actively so that anyone, of any age, gender, fitness level and income can make this their choice. The case for shorter journeys is strong, and the resulting benefits are wide reaching – to the economy, to the environment and to the enjoyment and health of individuals and communities. A real step change cannot be achieved overnight, and it requires strong leadership and commitment and vital long-term planning for incremental changes to take place until active travel becomes the norm for everyone.

In order to deliver an active-travel supportive culture we will require a suite of engagement and promotional activity.

We will develop and coordinate the following:

- Education and training:
 - Support and where possible arrange led-rides and other promotional events, especially when new flagship cycle infrastructure is completed.
 - Bike maintenance for adults of all ages and abilities.
 - Cycle training for all children during their primary and secondary school years and embed a culture of walking and cycling throughout the school curriculum.
 - Adult cycle training programmes.
- Media:
 - We will develop a range of media promotional activities, as part of a mainstream, inclusive, public-facing media strategy. This will include but not be limited to:
 - Digital and paper mapping of our active travel network, including journey planner functions.
 - Various media publicity, including North Somerset Life magazine and through various NSC social media channels (including Facebook, Twitter and YouTube at present).

- Including press releases (NSC website and local media outlets) at key stages of a project to promote schemes and improvements under development, ready for their completion.
- A multi-media campaign targeted at all road users to think about how they drive, including whether their journey is necessary by car and encouraging drivers to drive in a way that is respectful and safe around pedestrians and cyclists.
- Other promotions that may be considered, subject to staff resource and funding, are as follows.

We will also aim to support community groups to develop bike recycling, disability cycling programmes and other initiatives.

Bikeability

North Somerset Council operates Bikeability in schools, to ensure that habits are formed from an early age and young people develop cycling as a habit, and then continue this into adult life. The Bikeability scheme is one of a series of measures that the DfT put in place to improve safety on British roads. It has links to the sport strategy – Sporting Future – from the Department for Culture, Media and Sport which stresses the importance of ensuring that children are given

the opportunity to get involved in cycling and be active from a young age. Bikeability teaches young people the necessary skills to ride on today's roads while encouraging them to be active and healthy both mentally and physically.

We offer three levels of Bikeability:

- **Level 1 (red badge)** – covers basic bike handling skills and is delivered in a traffic-free environment, such as a playground.
- **Level 2 (amber badge)** – is taught on quiet roads but in real traffic conditions and covers simple manoeuvres and road sense.
- **Level 3 (green badge)** – covers more complex situations and equips the cyclist to handle a wide range of traffic conditions and road layouts.

Other Bikeability Plus Modules are available and in the past we have delivered:

- **Bikeability Balance** – is a series of school-based sessions that aims to prepare children with the skills that they will need to take part in Bikeability Level 1, by using games and balance bikes to develop their handling and awareness. North Somerset Council does not currently provide Bikeability Balance.
- **Bikeability Fix** – sessions teach Bikeability trainees how to perform basic maintenance on their bikes and, when run prior to courses, also serves to make sure that bikes are roadworthy when they are brought to training sessions.



We will aim to train 50% of pupils to Bikeability Level 1 by the end of year 4, 50% of children to Level 2 by the end of primary and 20% of children to Level 3 by the end of year 9. We currently have Bikeability Funding until March 2022.

The DfT Access Fund supports the majority of our active travel ETP work including leaflets for cycle schemes, Modeshift STARS work, adult cycle training, cycle parking (extended until November 2021).

We are awaiting the outcome of the DfT Capability Fund bid (now due June 2021) to be able to continue to achieve the full range of benefits through to March 2022, and going forwards we will need to prioritise spend

according to the availability and requirements of funding streams.

Adult cycle training

For those who haven't ridden a bike for a while, or perhaps never learnt to cycle, North Somerset Council offers the opportunity of free sessions with a trainer. You can have up to two sessions, either on a one-to-one basis, with a partner or friend, or as part of a group. The trainer will go to a person's location of choice, adjust their bike and even accompany them on a given journey. Advice is provided on planning a journey and local facilities can be highlighted by the trainer. The purpose is to give participants the skills, confidence and knowledge to cycle whichever journeys are important to them. This will require additional funding – We will seek all opportunities to continue to deliver this.

We will continue, where funding allows, to coordinate adult cycle training to enable people to boost their skills, confidence and knowledge to cycle the journeys that they wish to.

Cycle hire

Cycle hire offers visitors the opportunity to cycle when it may be difficult to transport their own cycles, or when cycling is unplanned. It also enables residents who do not own cycles to try cycling without making a large investment, perhaps trying a new kind of cycle such as electric assisted cycles (electric bikes). Commuters can also benefit by not having to take their own cycle on crowded public transport. We have worked with partners to deliver a Cycle Hub at Yatton Station. This includes cycle hire and a focal point for led rides and free maintenance sessions. Further to this,

we will deliver a dedicated Cycle Hub for Weston centre at Weston seafront offering a wide range of cycles for hire, cycle maintenance, and a shop/café if possible.

Events and guided rides

We have previously publicised very popular group rides to launch and publicise routes such as the Strawberry Line and Brean Down Way.

We will continue to publicise group rides to help ensure new infrastructure gets off to a flying start.

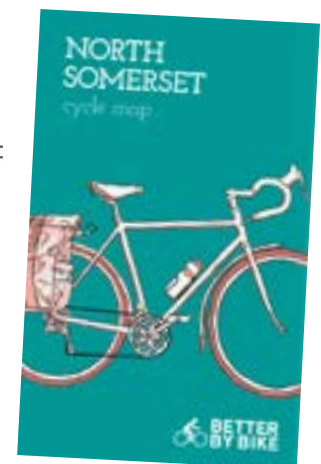
We can also publicise smaller rides, aimed at for example, employees at a workplace to discover local routes.

Maps

Awareness of new routes and the network as a whole, will be raised through comprehensive signing, North Somerset Council's free cycle map, articles in the council's magazine 'North Somerset Life', its website and social media accounts. In addition, the West of England initiative www.betterbybike.info is a comprehensive sub-regional resource promoting local cycling routes and resources. We have published our ever-popular North Somerset Cycle Map for nearly two decades. It maps our cycle route network and quieter routes; this information is also **digitally mapped on our website** to help keep information up to date.

We have also subscribed to full functionality of an online cycle planner (via Better By Bike) until March 2022. Subject to a review of usage and success, as well as staff resources and funding, we may look to continue this.

Even in this digital age a hard copy map has a place to instantly see the network of routes available, and to plan and follow journeys. It's an important part of publicising new routes to ensure they are known about. Funding permitting,



we will continue to update and distribute the North Somerset Cycle Map as well as producing online versions.

From time to time we also publish other more local maps – for example detailing all paths in certain urban areas.

Travel plans – workplace and residential

Workplace travel planning and residential travel plans are a planning requirement for larger developments. They are a means to encourage cycling and walking and make employees and residents aware of new opportunities and the health benefits of active travel. A revised Travel Plans Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) is being prepared outlining the expectations on developers to deliver these.

Personal Travel Planning (PTP)

PTP is a proven and cost-effective way of creating modal shift in favour of sustainable transport. It often involves travel advisors visiting households interested in exploring sustainable travel options. They assess people's current travel situation, establish travel desires and provide information and incentives specific to their needs. It provides information for local authorities about what the public want to help them change their travel behavior as well as creating good will, as

people feel they are being listened to. PTP can also be performed in other settings, such as in workplaces and schools. PTP is often funded by a development as part of a Travel Plan.

Borrow a Bike

Since 2012, residents have been able to borrow a bike, for free, for two to four weeks to see how they get on. The scheme is aimed at those in work or job-seekers, to encourage more sustainable commuting. Conventional, electric-assist and folding cycles are available with the bikes being provided by The Bicycle Chain – a local shop. Since 2010, there have been over 500 cycle loans. We plan to continue this, subject to funding.

Cyclists Welcome

'Cyclists Welcome' (www.cyclistswelcome.co.uk) is a listing scheme managed by Cycling UK (the largest UK cycling organisation) to help cyclists find welcoming establishments which meet their needs.

As our network of tourism friendly routes grow North Somerset intends to take a proactive role in encouraging local businesses such as; bed and breakfasts, cafes, pubs, and leisure facilities to sign up to the scheme, which can be enhanced with a dedicated website (for example – www.cyclescottishborders.com). Cyclists are

more likely to book accommodation in the area if they know there is somewhere safe and dry to leave their bike and eat a hearty meal. Some establishments provide tool kits, workshop pumps and bike wash facilities.

1.2 Achieve meaningful health and social benefits

Transport in general has direct and indirect impacts on health through transport-related accidents, physical activity levels and well-being, air quality and access to a range of services, employment and training. It is well-evidenced that active travel provides an extensive range of health benefits, both physical and mental.

The health benefits of increased active travel have been modelled. Over the period 2012-31 DfT calculated that roughly £17BN could be saved nationally by an increase in cycling and walking levels over the 20-year period². £9BN could be saved through the reduced cost of type 2 diabetes alone. In addition to the potential savings, the 'cycling economy' contributed £2.9BN to the UK economy in 2010³.

Increases in regular walking and cycling are proven to have a substantial impact on the health and wellbeing of an individual. This means a reduced bill for the NHS, reduced sick days

² Davis, A, Claiming the Health Dividend: A summary and discussion of value for money estimates from studies of investment in walking and cycling, DfT, 2014

³ Grous, A., 2011 The British Cycling Economy, the Gross Cycling Product Report, London: LSE

and stress and a healthier and happier North Somerset.

Figure 2.3: Effects of cycling investment



Source: Cycling and Walking Investment Strategy, DfT, 2016

The negative effects of transport are more likely to affect people living in more deprived neighbourhoods and the effects of lack of access to transport particularly affect those in rural areas. This problem is even worse for lower income groups. People living in the least prosperous areas are twice as likely to be physically inactive as those living in more prosperous areas.

We need to better understand why this is the case and seek to help where we can. Improved infrastructure may help but take-up of active travel may be about affordability, space to store bikes, juggling work with other responsibilities, doing more tiring manual work/longer hours, poorer health, cultural, or a combination of factors.

Whether deprived or not, rural connectivity for active travel remains a challenge that will be difficult to address at scale without changes to how we use our roads.

This physical inactivity is a major public health issue, directly contributing to one in six deaths in the UK. Around half of women and a third of men in England are damaging their health through a lack of physical activity, failing to achieve a minimum of 30 minutes of activity a day. In some communities only one in ten adults are active enough to stay healthy.⁴

Walking and cycling for transport are the most appropriate physical activity options, as they are

low impact and safe. Increasing walking and cycling reduces health inequalities and we know that interventions are effective for individuals as well as being cost effective. Additionally, the risk to health from physical in-activity far outweighs the risks from being a road casualty (ref PHE report for directors of Public health).

We will work with local communities and stakeholders to understand the specific local barriers to increasing active travel take-up in rural and deprived areas.

We will increase active travel investment in or linking to rural and deprived areas of North Somerset to level up on health inequalities across the district.

We will promote the awareness and take-up of electric bikes for hills, longer distances and into our more rural areas where conventional cycling is more difficult

Building physical activity into everyday life through active travel is the most cost-effective and sustainable way to encourage people to meet their recommended levels of physical activity. More than half (55%) of UK adults say they are willing to walk more often in order to reduce their impact on the environment, and one in four (27%) say they are willing to cycle more⁵. However, many do not feel safe enough to do

⁴ Everybody Active, Everyday (Public Health England, 2014)

⁵ Attitudes and behaviour towards climate change, Department for Transport, 2011

so, as a study compiled by Brake and Direct Line indicated that as many as one in three non-cyclists would be persuaded to cycle if there were safe local cycling routes⁶. Currently, only 15% of North Somerset residents cycle once a month, compared to a South West average of 16.6%. North Somerset also has the second lowest percentage of people in the West of England who walk for 30 minutes, five times a week (Public Health England). It is clear that we need to get North Somerset moving.

We will monitor requests using public interaction sites for active travel such as Widen My Path and Space to Move, for active travel improvements from North Somerset residents, businesses and visitors to develop and deliver improvements wherever possible.

Public Health England and the Local Government Association outline in their paper; **Healthy people healthy places: briefing on Obesity and the environment** (ref PHE and LGA, Healthy people, healthy places briefing) a number of steps that can be taken to increase individuals' levels of physical activity through active travel. This includes the recommendation of prioritising active travel in local transport plans, and outlines several steps that local authorities can take to increase active travel. NSC is committing to these interventions, by confirming that

we will:

- invest in localised cycling infrastructure appropriate for different locations and complexities
- identify and investigate proposals for active travel routes to provide 'health loop' routes. Incorporating local schools, shops and other facilities, they will enable people to hit their 10,000 daily steps by making safe and attractive routes following on from other nearby trips (for example a local walk or cycle after taking children to school)
- use shared space developments where safe to do so to encourage increased footfall in town centres
- use local research and consult and collaborate with residents, businesses and stakeholders to inform active travel planning
- implement 20mph zones in town and village centres and residential areas, prioritising schools and health care facilities
- use the Health Economic Assessment Tool (HEAT) and the Active Mode Appraisal Toolkit (AMAT) to estimate cost effectiveness of active travel interventions.



These strong interventions will ensure that walking and cycling quickly become the natural choice, for a cleaner, healthier and more active North Somerset.

1.3 Collaborate effectively with internal and external partners

NSC has a long history of successful collaboration and partnership working with both internal stakeholders and local and regional external partners. Internal partners have included health, leisure, sports and active lifestyles and public rights of way expertise and external partners have been varied between national organisations such as Sustrans, regional groups such as Bristol Cycling Campaign and more local stakeholders such as town and parish councils and local activist groups (for example via the North Somerset Cycle Forum). This enables us to maximise our collective experience and resources to result in the best possible outcomes for active travel improvements.

⁶ Brake and Direct Line Report on Safe Driving: A Risky Business, Brake, 2011

**Case Study: Brean Down Way
(North Somerset Coastal Towns Cycle Route)**

North Somerset Council opened the most southern leg of its flagship Coastal Towns Cycle Route in July 2017. The three-mile Uphill to Brean section has been an exemplary project showing how we work with a very wide range of partners, volunteers and funding sources, and the determination to realise a long-held ambition. It was jointly led by North Somerset Council and national cycling charity, Greenways and

Cycleroutes Ltd. It also involved the Environment Agency, Wessex Water, Natural England, Somerset County Council, Sedgemoor District Council and their contractors, Brean Parish Council, the National Trust and landowners.

The route continues for three-miles to the tip of Brean Down, which used to look close to Weston-super-Mare, but the barrier of the River Axe and poor connecting paths meant holiday makers and residents had to drive, take two buses, or cycle the busy, narrow and circuitous Accommodation

Road, which was also three-miles longer. The route was instantly very popular when it opened in July 2017, and it now averages at least 100,000 trips/annum. Almost all the active travel journeys are new leisure trips, which were not possible or desirable before. The route won the Highway Partnership Award at the Institute of Highway Engineers (IHE) South Western awards in May 2018.

Photo: Anna Jastrzebska/Shutterstock.com



An example of this strong and continuing collaborative way of working was the opening of the Brean Down Way in 2017, as the first part of NSC's flagship strategic cycle route the North Somerset Coastal Towns Cycle Route.

Engagement with both the public and our internal and external stakeholders helps ensure infrastructure and other measures are fit for purpose.

We will improve further our collaborative way of working with internal and external stakeholders and funders to secure important active travel improvement schemes and measures across North Somerset.

Page 154
Cycle Forum

North Somerset Council has had an active and very positive Cycle Forum for over a decade. Local cycling organisations are represented as well as individuals, who play a great advocacy role in the District. The Forum is consulted and given the opportunity to comment on all our cycling schemes and initiatives and bring forward their own ideas (FFI see www.n-somerset.gov.uk/cycleforum). Wider public consultation will be used where appropriate for all our active travel schemes.

We will continue to use the Cycle Forum as the voice for North Somerset cyclists to aid our active travel improvement planning. We will also work with the new North Somerset Citizens' Panel once it is set up to understand further how we can help less confident cyclists to feel comfortable choosing cycling as the first choice for small and medium journeys.

Business engagement

As improvements to benefit commuters have been made, our sustainable travel business engagement officers have targeted employers to ensure their employees are aware of the improvements and how they can benefit. With routes connecting to Bristol we have ensured that our Bristol counterparts have also been aware of these routes to encourage commuters to travel to Bristol via bicycle, bus or car share.

We also have 25 successful Active Travel Champions, based at many of our larger employers, established through the Access Fund.

Case study: Active Travel Champions

The purpose of the Champions project is to get more people walking or cycling to work through peer lead support. Our champions are empowered and supported to make positive changes within their organisation and change the behavior of those around them. Some of the ways in which they can do this is through the organisation of free bike health check events, bike loans, cycle confidence training, led rides, personalised travel planning, organisation travel challenges and the provision of maps, walking and cycling accessories and an Emergency Bike Repair Kit for all staff to use.

We will continue to engage with businesses to increase awareness of existing active travel options and seek guidance on future improvements that will deliver a further increase in cycling to employment and services across North Somerset.

Without collaboration with internal and external partners, we would struggle to implement effective, the most appropriate and well-publicised active travel improvements for North Somerset.

School Engagement

Building active adults starts at school and within families. We have a programme of activities that help to increase children's physical activity, reduce congestion and improve safety around schools and take part in national promotions which schools can participate in increase to encourage active travel journeys, such as Bike Week.

Children who walk or cycle to school tend to be more attentive and achieve better results and cycle-friendly environments promote more physical activity in later years⁷.

We will:

- continue to promote resources, incentive schemes, events and activities to help targeted schools take part in activities to encourage active travel
- further develop our programme of Safer Routes to Schools and access restrictions to support children's safe walking and cycling to schools across the district.

⁷ https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/the-value-of-cycling-rapid-evidence-review-of-the-economic-benefits-of-cycling?fbclid=IwAROpAvkhZI8lW6Qip6J0gcbBEFhNNN20shahqc8AZybYbg4_SvCJjr-kQuA#



Objective 2: Tackle the Climate Emergency

2.1 Reduce reliance on fossil fuels and car dependency

Significant progress has been made both nationally and within North Somerset in the last twenty years to reduce our reliance on fossil fuels such as gas, oil and coal and increase the proportion of our energy sources coming from renewable energy sources. Even better than this, efforts are being made to reduce the amount of energy we are using full stop.

However, progress is not being made fast enough. Much of the world is continuing with 'business as usual'. The depletion of reserves of fossil fuels is continuing at an alarming rate and as such, fuel costs are likely to continue to rise for the foreseeable future.

As warned by the United Nations' Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC), we will require rapid, far-reaching and unprecedented changes in all aspects of society to avoid a rise in temperatures of just 1.5 degrees, which could lead to ecological, environmental and humanitarian disaster. This is especially true for the transport sector which, at 32%, is the largest single source of carbon emissions in the South West. For the West of



The Somerset Levels flooding in January 2014 flooded the London and Exeter main railway line (pictured) and local roads and paths leaving thousands cut off. Extreme weather events like this are expected to become more common with climate change.

England transport CO2 emissions will rise by a further 22% by 2036 if we don't act – increasing the risk of droughts, floods and extreme heat not just globally but also for the South West region.

Consequently, North Somerset Council (NSC) and the other four authorities in the West of England have declared climate emergencies and are urgently working on action plans to mitigate this. The Active Travel Strategy is an important part of North Somerset's carbon reduction action planning.

For transport in North Somerset, despite a 25% increase in cycling since 2016/17, we have continued to rely heavily on the private petrol or diesel car for transport, with 74% of journeys to

work made by car in North Somerset (Census 2011)⁸. In the West of England region, 2 of every 5 journeys under 2km are made by car. There is clearly work to do to achieve this mass shift to active travel, helping us to decarbonise the transport network and tackle the climate emergency.

Active travel provides a sustainable alternative not just for economic and environmental benefits, but also social benefits, as we set about retrofitting and creating a transport network designed for the benefit of people and not just motor vehicles as is present.

⁸ 2011 Census data. Includes those 'driving a car or van' plus those as a 'passenger in a car or van', divided by the total number of North Somerset residents in employment and therefore travelling to work.

Reducing speed and improving road safety

One important way for us to facilitate the growth in active travel is to reduce vehicle speeds and improve actual and perceived road safety. Lower speeds help release suppressed demand and encourage active travel through addressing actual and perceived danger. NSC has developed and approved a revised 20mph policy. 20mph zones have been demonstrated to both encourage walking and cycling and make the roads safer for all by reducing the speed of moving vehicles and raising awareness of the importance of slower speeds. They can help lead to more vibrant and economically successful areas as movement between businesses is easier, as seen with the highly successful low traffic neighbourhoods in the 'Mini-Holland' at Waltham Forest in London (see case study box below). Any loss of time for vehicle journeys is minimal within built up areas due to the impact of queuing – balanced by easing exiting parking and joining primary routes.

Our emerging Road Safety Strategy sets out a range of measures to address the real and perceived threat of road traffic accidents as these act as a considerable deterrent to increasing active travel. These measures form some important interventions from NSC to delivery growth in active travel and tackle the climate emergency:

We will:

- use DfT Modeshift STARS to target the delivery of sustainable travel training skills in order to increase levels of sustainable and active travel and to document road safety concerns and requests for highway improvement
- continue to deliver Bikeability training in accordance with best practice
- continue to facilitate child pedestrian training to children in KS1
- offer a traded school crossing patrol service to schools
- work with the police to identify the most appropriate tool to encourage drivers to slow down. These include: Community Speedwatch, Vehicle Activated Signs, mobile safety camera enforcement and static safety camera installation
- work with the Police where our data shows that speeding is a contributory factor in collisions and reviewing speed limits
- develop highway schemes to tackle speed of motor traffic as a significant cause of road danger for vulnerable road users at identified and high-risk road safety hotspots

- expand the number of 20mph zones covering built up areas and expand 40mph limits on minor rural roads to make our roads and streets safer for everyone.

All of the above will allow us to increase resilience by providing active travel alternatives to reliance on fossil fuels (continued high levels of dependency on private petrol and diesel vehicles). This will help us break away from 'business as usual' to bring about a change in culture from car-dominated travel to active travel as the natural choice.

2.2 Improve air quality and public realm

North Somerset has not had an Air Quality Management Area (AQMA) since 2002, that is an area that exceeded regulatory amounts of nitrogen dioxide (or other harmful gases) as part of annual air quality monitoring. However, there are many areas of North Somerset, particularly in town and village centres and along major transport corridors, where air quality is noticeably poor. These are due to the high levels of private petrol and diesel vehicles. As well as the perceived safety concerns of traffic dominating our transport network spaces, the poor air quality is a strong suppressor of demand for active travel.

Taking the 'Moving the Nation' framework as our starting point we have considered how NSC will enact measures to address these issues within its powers. By adopting and ensuring consistent application of existing 'best-in-class' infrastructure design standards we can create safe, attractive and inviting places for people of all ages and abilities. When people are given high quality and segregated walking and cycling spaces, people then chose to walk and cycle. The Waltham Forest 'Mini Holland' scheme provides a great example of what can be achieved, subject to adequate funding.

Photo: Edward Crawford / Shutterstock.com



Case study:
Waltham Forest 'Mini-Holland':
Low Traffic Neighbourhood

The London Borough of Waltham Forest, through its Liveable Neighbourhood project, has bucked the trend of worsening air quality, and over the course of a decade, reduced the number of residents exposed to dangerous levels of nitrogen dioxide by 85%. The council engaged closely with residents and businesses, involving them as closely as possible with the project through design workshops, drop-in sessions, and door-knocking. Changes on the ground in Waltham Forest have involved giving pedestrians and cyclists priority and junctions, with widened pavements and segregated cycle tracks, and removing the opportunities for rat-running through residential streets.

Although there was some initial resistance to the changes, Waltham Forest is seeing significant behaviour change, with more people from a range of backgrounds starting to cycle, and increased life expectancy for the borough's children. While schemes to prevent through traffic were initially divisive, follow-up evaluation of the schemes revealed a change in attitudes, and local businesses have flourished since through-traffic bans were introduced.



We will use existing 'best-in-class' infrastructure design standards to create cleaner, attractive and inviting places for people of all ages and abilities. They will be able to enjoy the improved air quality from the reduction in motor vehicles in town and village areas and along our strategic cycle routes between places.

By creating Active Travel Neighbourhoods in our towns and villages, supported by an enhanced and safer strategic cycle network (that is off-road or on quieter roads wherever possible), we will deliver increases in active travel as residents, businesses and visitors alike increasingly choose these healthier, lower-carbon and often more enjoyable ways of travelling.

Objective 3: Drive local economic development

Walking and Cycling: Economic benefits

- Well designed and located walking infrastructure has the potential to deliver very high benefit to cost ratios, of up to £37.6 per £1 spent, according to recent research. Well-planned improvements to public spaces such as pedestrianisation can boost footfall and trading by up to 40% ('The pedestrian pound...', Living Streets, 2013).
- The pedestrian environment is crucial for town and village retailers. In Bristol for example, just 22% of shoppers arrive by car, with the majority arriving by foot. Over a month, people who walk to the high street spend up to 40% more than people who drive to the high street (TfL, 2013).
- Walking projects have also been found to increase land values. A review of earlier literature suggests retail and commercial rates increase in the range of 10-30% (The Value of Cycle Tourism: Opportunities for the Scottish Economy – Sustrans, 2013).

- Cyclists visit local shops more regularly, spending more than users of most other modes of transport.
- Per square metre, cycle parking delivers five times higher retail spend than the same area of car parking.
- A compact town optimised for walking and cycling can have a "retail density" (spend per square metre) 2.5 times higher than a typical urban centre.
- Public realm improvements, including those that cater for cycling, have been shown to result in increased trade at local businesses.
- Neighbourhoods with cycle-friendly characteristics – low traffic volumes, walkable, close to off-road cycle paths – are more desirable or have higher property values.

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/509587/value-of-cycling.pdf

We are determined to debunk the common misconception that the higher the access for motor vehicles and parking outside local shops, the increased economic vitality. Multiple studies both in the UK and abroad have shown that increased active travel access to local centres such as town and village high streets has led to higher numbers of people accessing the shops and more money being spent. Shoppers and visitors that arrive by foot or cycle on average spend significantly more money locally than those that arrive by car. For example, Public realm improvements, including those that cater for cycling, have been shown to result in increased trade at local businesses; up to 49% in New York City⁹. The improved environment or 'public realm' encourages them to spend longer and 'dwell' in cleaner, safer and less motor-vehicle dominated environments around shops, leading to further spending. Most businesses significantly over-estimate the economic contributions of car users and by the same token under-estimate the positive benefits of pedestrians and cyclists.

Walking and cycling schemes typically have a much higher cost-benefit ratio than road or public transport schemes, which means that they are relatively low cost to deliver and provide far-reaching economic benefits including:

⁹ https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/the-value-of-cycling-rapid-evidence-review-of-the-economic-benefits-of-cycling?fbclid=IwAR0pAvkhZl8lW6Qip6J0gcbBEFhNNN20shahqc8AZybYbg4_SvCJjr-kQuA#

- **Connecting people to employment opportunities.** People living in deprived areas with low car ownership particularly benefit from such schemes. Those living in deprived areas generally need better places to walk the most. In 2011, 25 per cent of households in the UK did not have access to a car, and households in the highest income quintile travelled just over three times further by car than the lowest income quintile¹⁰.
- **Enhancing the retail environment.** Studies show that pedestrians and cyclists spend more money than people arriving by car, due to more time to browse with no restrictive parking time allocation. Providing better access to town centres and high streets and improving a better walking environment will increase trips and spend, boosting local businesses.

Many people do not need a car for the family shop, or use it only occasionally. Capacious panniers, cycle trailers, shopping 'little and often', often as part of other journeys (aided by the door to door nature of cycling and no parking problems), 'high street' as opposed to supermarket shopping, and online shopping can all be part of the solution. Ebikes and cargo bikes can further help make light of heavy loads.

¹⁰ The pedestrian pound: The business case for better streets and places (Living Streets, 2013).

Cycling: Economic benefits

Cycle tourism contributes £2.24bn to the UK economy each year. Although overnight trips make up less than 1% of the overall volume, their economic contribution is just under 20% of the total value of cycle tourism. The significant difference between the value and volume can be attributed to the expenditure behaviour patterns and the contribution of accommodation costs to the total expenditure. Expenditure from single-day trips averages £15, and mainly includes the cost of food and refreshments, while accommodation expenditure for overnight trips alone averages £27 per person per night.

The average multi-day cycle trip is 7.7 days and the direct expenditure per trip averages £350. As such, it will be beneficial to focus development of leisure cycle activities on multiple day tours rather than single day trips. This is mainly due to accommodation expenses, but also to the greater propensity to spend more on multi-day trips. Larger groups tend to spend more per cyclist per day. Those who are on cycle holidays for a longer time would be likely to spend more money per day per cyclist. On average event participants staying away from home overnight spent £65.90 per day, while visitors staying only for a single day spend £16.40.

Many rural pubs have closed in recent years – nationally at 29 per week (CGA figures, June – Dec 2014, twice the closure rate of 2011) where located on or near appropriate routes, the encouragement of cycling can help make a real difference to their viability.



3.1 Improve access to services, jobs and training

Key to improving active travel access to services and jobs is investment in the infrastructure and facilities of the active travel network. This will allow residents, businesses and visitors to access our local shops and facilities via healthier and more sustainable forms of travel such as walking and cycling, which has proven to increase footfall and economic vitality of shops in other areas.

Invest and Improve

We will invest an increasing proportion of our resources to improve walking and cycling networks and deliver benefits for active travel modes.

'Moving the Nation' (The Cycling and Walking Alliance, 2018)

The Cycling and Walking Alliance, a group of the UK's leading walking and cycling organisations, has published 'Moving the Nation'. This identified a set of priority policy changes that would begin the transformation of our roads and streets and trigger wider societal change. These are:

- Speed
- Space
- Safety
- Priority
- Culture

Page 161

NSC is broadly supportive of the national proposals for change contained within this document, which for example, include more specific speed limit changes, the adoption and consistent application of best infrastructure design standards, revisions to the Highway Code to improve safety for pedestrians and cyclists, the prohibition of pavement parking and the provision of cycle training for children throughout their school years.

Previously, appraisal methodologies underestimated the contribution of these schemes due to difficulties in defining social cost benefit, suppressed demand and health benefits. However, with new tools such as the Active Mode Appraisal Tool (AMAT), we are now able to better calculate the likely benefits of active travel improvement schemes.

Photo: Simon Pugsley/Shutterstock.com



Taking the 'Moving the Nation' framework as our starting point we have considered how NSC will enact measures to address these issues within its powers. The Speed, Space and Safety elements are covered under Sections 2.1 and 2.2 above and Culture under Section 1.1. Here we look at how 'Priority' can transform our roads and streets to trigger wide societal change and make active travel the first choice for short and medium length journeys.



Local Transport Note 1/20 (LTN 1/20) – the cycling priority transport guidance

Released in July 2020, LTN 1/20 goes further than any other national government transport guidance with regards to the priority and importance given to cycling infrastructure. From now, cycling must be placed at the heart of the transport network, with capital spending, street space and transport planning attention to benefit this central role. Cycling must no longer be treated as marginal, or an afterthought. It must not be seen as mainly part of the leisure industry, but as a means of everyday transport. The Department for Transport state that 'it is of the utmost importance that local authorities follow this guidance closely in designing any cycle infrastructure scheme in future'.

Most current cycle provision is squeezed into spare space or on the margins of roads. It reflects a belief, conscious or otherwise, that hardly anyone cycles, that cycling is unimportant and that cycling provision must not affect more important road users, such as motor vehicles and pedestrians. However in some places, even without much special provision, cycling is already mass transit.

To achieve the significant increase in cycling that is required for us to become carbon neutral by 2030, the quality of cycling infrastructure must sharply improve. This new guidance reflects current best practice, standards and legal requirements. LTN 1/20 states that physically

segregated bike lanes, cycle-safe junctions and low-traffic streets to encourage people to cycle must become the norm. The design options include segregation from traffic, measures for cycling at junctions and roundabouts, and updated guidance on crossings, signal design and the associated traffic signs and road markings. Inclusive cycling is an underlying theme throughout so that people cycling of all ages and abilities are considered.

The Government are also in the process of setting up a new national cycling inspectorate to examine all proposed schemes against the new LTN 1/20 guidance before funding is agreed, and that finished schemes will be inspected to ensure that they have been delivered in compliance. The DfT also state that funding will be returned to national government for any schemes built in a way which is not consistent with the guidance, ensuring that these new standards are met.

Updates to the Highway Code are also being consulted on, with the proposed changes set to better protect and prioritise cyclists and pedestrians against motor vehicles. These include providing guidance that drivers and riders should give way to pedestrians crossing or waiting to cross the road; turning drivers to give priority to cyclists travelling straight ahead at junctions and finally on safe, wide passing distances and speeds when overtaking cyclists and horse riders.

Priority

The adopted Highway includes footways and usually the verges. However the carriageway often provides the only available space and so more must be done to meet active travel demand and safety concerns.

We will reallocate carriageway space to active modes to improve safe walking and cycling provision.

Pavement parking creates real problems and jeopardises safety, particularly for those with limited mobility, and those with young children. It needs to be prohibited (subject to national legislation and Police enforcement) or deterred to create safer and more accessible streets.

We will work with the police and lobby national government to make illegal and enforce pavement parking bans. We will then prioritise streets for improvements according to the scale of nuisance and danger caused.

In July 2020, the Department for Transport released the priority-shifting **Local Transport Note 1/20 (LTN 1/20)**, as an updated cycle design guidance note (replacing LTN 1/12 and LTN 2/08). For the first time in national government transport guidance, cycling must be placed at the heart of the transport network and no longer treated as marginal or an afterthought.

A summary of these important is provided in the case study box on the previous page. This important guidance will enable NSC to ensure that the increase of cycling through high-quality infrastructure will be at the heart of all of transport improvement schemes going forward.



Photos: Wheels for Wellbeing, Guide to Inclusive Cycling, 2017

Accessibility and mobility

The “first and last-mile” connection describes the beginning or end of an individual trip made primarily by another (often public transport) mode. In many cases, people will walk or cycle if they are enabled to do so; if it is close enough

and there is a perception of safety. The first and last mile trip concept is particularly relevant in neighbourhoods, as mode choice for longer trips is likely to be determined by the choices available to travel the first mile i.e. from home. The first and last mile of longer journeys to key destinations such as employment and leisure sites should be targeted for switching to active modes. This will be supported by, and build on the benefits being generated, from shorter trips being made by non-car modes.

We will work with public transport operators to ensure that it is easy to make the first and last mile of public transport journeys by active travel modes such as walking, scooting and cycling, by facilitating cycle parking at transport hubs and allowing easy access and storage for cycles and scooters on buses and trains.

Reducing the number of neighbourhood car journeys can have wide reaching benefits. Journeys within neighbourhoods are short, and for pedestrians, most neighbourhoods already have an extensive network of footways and Public Rights of Way. Fewer car journeys can increase the attractiveness of other modes, such as the use of scooters, particularly by younger children, to access local destinations. The importance of reduced traffic on equestrian links, can also not be overlooked in some areas.

Walking and cycling to/from public transport services can play a large role in encouraging physical activity and improving health both mentally and physically. Knowledge and accessibility to legible information are required about how to travel without a private car, supporting equal access opportunities for people in all neighbourhoods. Another measure that we will consider is the creation of Low Traffic Neighbourhoods. This is a similar concept to TfL’s Liveable Neighbourhoods as described in the Waltham Forest case study box. In Low Traffic Neighbourhoods motor traffic is either discouraged or removed, typically resulting in reduced traffic speeds, and quieter and safer feeling streets. This change to the physical environment enables and encourages residents and visitors to switch to more healthy and active modes such as walking and cycling.

We will integrate active travel improvements with public transport modes to provide improved options for local accessibility between active travel and public transport as the ‘first and last mile’ of journeys to services, jobs and training.

Integration with public transport (and improved public transport) is critical as it widens the catchment area for a particular service, increasing its viability and possibly enabling improvements such as increased frequency. Good connectivity also means households may be able

to give up a car or second car, further increasing the frequency of active travel they undertake.

The DfT “Inclusive Transport Strategy: Achieving Equal Access for Disabled People” (July 2018 –) notes that local authorities are responsible to ensure any pedestrian environment scheme, including a shared space, is inclusive and meets the requirements of the Equality Act 2010. NSC will consider our duties to deliver inclusive pedestrian environments and will also engage with all road users, at an early stage of scheme development, to enable concerns to be raised and acted on effectively.

Page 164

We will ensure that the transport network is reshaped so that people with limited mobility are able to move around freely through the pedestrian environment, and use it to access other modes of transport.

Cycle provision must be inclusive. This is a Local authority duty under the Equality Act 2010. For many people a cycle is a mobility aid, which may be a conventional or adapted cycle. Data collected by Transport for London found that the proportion of disabled Londoners who sometimes use a cycle to get around (15%) is only slightly less than for non-disabled Londoners (18%), demonstrating that cycling is an important mode of transport for everyone. (Wheels for Wellbeing, Guide to Inclusive Cycling, 2017).



(Wheels for Wellbeing, Guide to Inclusive Cycling, 2017)

3.2 Guide spending priorities and maximise funding opportunities

Since both the declaration of the Climate Emergency by NSC in February 2019 (and subsequent ongoing carbon reduction action planning) and also the adoption of the West of England Joint Local Transport Plan 4 (JLTP4) as our regional transport planning and policy framework, changes have been made to increase

the proportion of our annual expenditure on active travel improvements.

Transport and Infrastructure Capital Works Programme

Both the Climate Emergency and the JLTP4 have helped shape how we develop our annual Integrated Transport delivery programme, as part of our Transport and Infrastructure Capital Works Programme (that also includes our Highway Maintenance Programme). For the 2020-23 Integrated Transport Programme, a scheme scoring and prioritisation process was developed to ensure that only schemes that fit strongly against a set of selected scoring categories made it onto the delivery programme. The scoring process is described in more detail in the case study box below, but it has ensured that our Programme has the most active travel schemes and highest percentage of expenditure on active travel than ever before.

Although our capital programme is a three year programme, it is updated annually to reflect resources, progress and bidding opportunities. The Scheme Proposal Evaluation process was reviewed, updated and used to develop the 2021-24 Transport and Infrastructure Capital Works Programme, using the principles set out above and the latest best practice guidance such as LTN 1/20.

Scheme Proposal Evaluation:

Creating an active travel-focused Transport and Infrastructure Capital Works Programme

The below categories, based on the HM Treasury's best-practice 5 Case Model Approach, were designed to ensure an active-travel focussed, value for money and deliverable Integrated Transport Programme. This has been a success with more active travel schemes included than ever before, where active travel schemes generally scored well across the five cases.

Strategic case:

- Weston-super-Mare promenade via the picturesque Brean Down
- Support sustainable and inclusive economic growth
- Enable equality and improve accessibility
- Contribute to better health, wellbeing, safety and security
- Create better places.
- Strategic reach
- Contribution to NSC Corporate Plan objectives
- Access to development sites

Economic case:

- Economic, environmental and social effects



Advanced cycle stop line in Weston-super-Mare

Financial case:

- Estimated cost to Council budgets; Funding sources; Estimated ongoing maintenance costs; potential to generate income/provide an ongoing saving

Commercial case:

- Procurement; Risk Management

Management case:

- Project management and reporting; External stakeholder involvement; Consultation

Supported by the delivery of our annual, three year Transport and Infrastructure Capital Works Programme,

we will work to ensure that:

- our towns are served by a core network of segregated cycle routes and networks of walkable routes to and within centres
- communities have access to green spaces and are connected by traffic-free cycling and walking networks for all
- rail and bus stops are attractive for people travelling on foot or by bike and have facilities that prioritise cycling and walking. This is particularly important since national Government's release of the **Bus Back Better national bus strategy (March 2021)** and the **Great British Railways: Williams-Shapps Plan for Rail (national rail strategy, May 2021)**; both of which emphasise the importance of improving infrastructure, information and awareness for first and last mile trips to public transport interchanges being made by active travel.
- families have routes to walk and cycle to school in safety and with confidence, gaining essential life skills
- we provide opportunities and support for people to take up walking and cycling, through programmes in schools, workplaces and local communities.

Maintenance

Maintenance schemes also create opportunities to improve conditions for pedestrians and cyclists that add relatively little or zero cost, such as cycle lanes, pseudo pavements in constrained villages, and Advance Stop Lines for cyclists (see photo above). Changes to road markings can be used to encourage drivers to take more care (such as removal of the centre line).

We will incorporate early into our highway maintenance programming procedures the consideration of active travel improvements, by carrying out an active travel audit to identify possible improvements to be made as part of the works.

Routes for active travel such as provision of shared-use paths, require regular maintenance to ensure they are safe and attractive to use. Funding needs to be and will be dedicated for this purpose from existing budgets and also external budgets wherever the funding specifications allow.

Over the past year we have used the DfT's Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plans (LCWIP) methodology¹¹ to identify the highest priority cycling and walking routes we should be delivering in North Somerset. This national

best practice process includes a detailed audit of routes to set out interventions required to bring infrastructure up to a standard that will increase walking and cycling. To date the highest priority routes have been audited and recommendations put forward. These are included in the Schedule of Routes and in the LCWIP document which covers the whole West of England and contains more detail for the highest priority routes. Over time,

we will audit more routes to prioritise further rounds of improvements. Audits will also be used for new build and more general Highway schemes to ensure opportunities are not missed.

Other necessary maintenance includes; keeping vegetation cut back and removing litter, fly-tipping, leaf fall and broken glass to keep pedestrians and cyclists safe and feeling welcomed. Without such maintenance walkers and cyclists are more likely to drive or use the carriageway – falling on ice is one of the most common types of cycling injury accounting locally for 17% of cycle accident hospital admissions¹².

We will review the case for where winter salting of key commuter routes should be introduced. It is especially on bends, steep sections and where adjacent to busy roads where cyclists are most at risk of falling on ice.

Highway-based schemes are covered by the Council's obligation to maintain the Highway, and funding for these is provided by the DfT. DfT guidance now suggests that 9% of maintenance budgets be spent on active travel infrastructure¹³. As the Highway is an essential element of the cycle route network we need to be mindful that it needs to be properly maintained for both the safety and comfort of cyclists. The edges of the Highway in particular can be subject to poor surfaces, sunken gulleys, overhanging vegetation and other litter/debris. This may cause a cyclist to divert suddenly (or be thrown) into traffic. Potholes need to be addressed promptly. North Somerset Council practices a risk-based approach to Highway maintenance, which is used as the basis to prioritise spending on highway, footway and cycleway maintenance¹⁴.

Our Highway Maintenance Programme, part of the Transport and Infrastructure Capital Works Programme, does not require schemes to be tested through the Scheme Proposal Evaluation process. Instead, the maintenance schemes we allocate our funding to are identified using survey condition data, accident records, customer request reviews and officer identified schemes. However, since the Climate Emergency and the rapid need to decarbonise by 2030, we have been making a number of changes to ensure that our

¹¹ <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/local-cycling-and-walking-infrastructure-plans-technical-guidance-and-tools>

¹² <https://bristolcycling.org.uk/cycling-hospital-admissions-in-2016>

¹³ https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/390216/highways-maintenance-explanatory-note.pdf

¹⁴ <http://www.ukroadsliaisongroup.org/en/guidance/index.cfm>

Maintenance Programme is helping contribute to increasing active travel. These include:

- An 408% increase on the expenditure on Footway and Cycleway Maintenance from the 2019/20 Programme, encouraging more journeys by walking and cycling via a better overall maintained network of footways and cycle paths. Additionally, the commitment to maintain the highway network benefits not just car users, but also cyclists, equestrians and pedestrians (as well as public transport), all of which share the public highway.
- Incorporating a review of highway lining and signing to include an improvement to active travel provision wherever possible. For example, instead of relining a stop line for all vehicles at a traffic signal junction, we would review and incorporate where possible an Advanced Stop Line for cyclists ahead of motor vehicles to give cyclists a safe place to stop at busy crossings and allow a head start ahead of motor vehicles as the traffic signals change.

We will continue to ensure that a significant proportion of Highways Maintenance Programme spend is on Footway and Cycleway maintenance.

Non-Highway routes (for example, across private land or other NSC land) can stretch the existing dedicated revenue budget. It is not possible to secure funding for these from typical funding

sources such as DfT, Local Growth Fund (LGF) and developer contributions (S106 Agreements). We are grateful to Sustrans volunteer rangers who carry out regular vegetation cut backs on selected NCN off-highway routes but new routes will require additional funding for maintenance.

We will continue to work with external organisations and volunteers to help maintain off-road vegetation management on our footpaths, footways and cycleways.

Bidding opportunities

At North Somerset Council we remain reliant on funding opportunities to deliver our ambitious active travel programme of infrastructure improvements and awareness campaigns. We have a good track record with competitive bidding opportunities, securing numerous external funding in the last five years alone, including (but not limited to) the following:

- Housing Infrastructure Fund (Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government) – for the Banwell Bypass and secondary school at Locking Parklands
- Emergency Active Travel Fund (Department for Transport – additional funding awarded due to the strength of the bid) – for a range of active travel and COVID-19 response schemes across the district including at Nailsea, Portishead, Clevedon, Weston-super-Mare and Worle



- National Productivity Investment Fund (Department for Transport) – for the Weston Town Centre Transport Enhancement Scheme at Alexandra Parade and Walliscote Road, Weston-super-Mare
- MetroWest Phase 1 (Department for Transport – additional funding awarded due to strength of project) – for the reopening of the Portishead to Bristol Railway Line
- European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development (Department for the Environment, Food and Rural Affairs) – for the Weston-super-Mare to Clevedon segment of the North Somerset Coastal Towns Cycle Route
- Users and Communities Fund (Highways England) – as above



- Local Growth Fund (West of England Local Enterprise Partnership) – various walking and cycling schemes across the district, including the Uphill Road North cycle improvements and Alexandra Parade improvements, both in Weston-super-Mare (latter of which is also funded by the DfT’s National Productivity Investment Fund (NPIF)).

All of these schemes either have, or are planned to encourage active travel uptake, albeit to varying extents. The Emergency Active Travel Fund and Users and Communities Fund are solely for active travel improvements (including segregated cycle lanes, point closures to through traffic and improved pedestrian environments). Even the lesser active travel focused MetroWest Phase 1 and the Housing and Infrastructure Fund funded projects will be required to deliver significant and high quality active travel improvements.

The national, regional and local stances on implementing meaningful active travel infrastructure improvements, are now more closely aligned than they have been in the past. This has meant that as of the summer of 2020, funding opportunities are increasingly tailored towards achieving meaningful alteration of the status quo of street space in favour of active travel. This has been significantly helped by the substantial increase of active travel during the COVID-19 lockdown and reopening periods, and subsequent reduction in public transport usage



Emergency Active Travel Fund measures to support active travel and social distancing measures at busy town centre locations, such as on Waterloo Street in Weston-super-Mare

due to the current and ongoing public health concerns. Funding opportunities such as the Emergency Active Travel Fund Tranche 1 (DfT), have enabled ambitious active travel and social distancing schemes to reallocate street space to widened footways, segregated cycle lanes and point closures to through traffic. These schemes, and subsequent ambitious proposals as part of the Active Travel Fund Tranche 2 funded scheme package) – to improve segregated cycling, public realm and facilitate the released demand for active travel – are only set to become more popular with funding opportunities increasingly tailored towards these types of interventions.

We will continue to maximise external funding opportunities for active travel at the national and regional level.

Objective 4:

Shape active travel neighbourhoods through an active travel focused planning system

It will take significant, sustained and collaborative investment to retrofit our car-dominated transport network to shift the priority to active travel and succeed in our aim to increase cycling by 300% by 2030. To avoid further, more resource-consuming intervention to retrofit our network, it is imperative that we ensure that all new developments are planned and delivered in a way that truly makes active travel the natural choice for short and medium journeys, and as the first/last mile for longer journeys.

and their partners adopt a series of interventions to increase active travel. In this Active Travel Strategy, NSC commit to delivering active travel growth by saying that

we will:

- Adopt the road user priority hierarchy to protect those who use active forms of transport. We will ensure that pedestrians, cyclists and users of other modes of transport that involve physical activity are given the highest priority when developing and maintaining our streets and roads.
- Ensure planning applications for new developments always prioritise the need for people (including those whose mobility is impaired) to be physically active as a routine part of their daily life.
- Plan and provide a comprehensive network of routes for walking, cycling and using other modes of transport involving physical activity.
- Ensure public open spaces and public paths can be reached by foot, bicycle and using other modes of transport involving physical activity.



For smaller development sites that do not require the provision of on-site facilities or services such as shops and employment, there will be an even stronger emphasis on working with developers for transport improvements and mitigations to include high quality, direct walking and cycling linkages to off-site local facilities. Accessibility will be maximised through a consistent walking and cycling-focused street pattern, ensuring the necessary safe and direct cross-site permeability that makes active travel attractive. Clear priority for pedestrians and cyclists at junctions will be incorporated. With integrated on-site provision and access, more trips are retained within local areas so people are not forced to travel to access basic services, thereby encouraging the use of more active modes. The improvement and expansion of our segregated walking and cycling network, including strategic cycle routes to link new developments, villages and towns, is critical to providing access to local services to aid a green economic recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic.

Page 169

1 Guide development planning to create active travel communities

We have a certain degree of control in shaping our future developments to enable active travel to have priority over other transport choices, such as creating our own Local Plan to guide development and adopting planning guides like our Highways Development Design Guide (HDDG). First published in 2015 and updated in 2020, this helps guide development planning and delivery to create new safe and active travel communities. We also use external best practice guidance such as the [National Institute for Health Care Excellence \(Ref NICE Guidance PH43 and PH8\)](#), including the below strong direction for active travel focused new communities. In this guidance it is recommended that local authorities

Through the planning process, we will continue to use existing mechanisms such as developer contributions to leverage support for constructing high quality active travel infrastructure and people-friendly, attractive public realm in new developments from the outset.

We will guide development planning by identifying active travel schemes either to be delivered by the developer as part of development construction or where appropriate through developer contributions to help create communities centred around sustainable and active travel.

The West of England Joint Local Transport Plan (JLTP4), adopted in March 2020 as NSC's overarching transport planning and policy framework, outlines how walking and cycling needs to be prioritised in the design of new developments under the below interventions:

We will:

- continue to encourage new developments in locations that are accessible by existing walking, cycling and public transport networks, and discourage proposals that fail to actively encourage mode shift away from the private car

- engage with developers at the start of the planning process to ensure key services to be provided on site, based on the thresholds included in guidance, are high-quality, but also in the best location to maximise their accessibility via active travel modes and public transport
- work with developers to ensure they are using existing street design principles, but increasingly focus on providing an attractive, integrated network that offers segregated areas for active modes
- work with developers to ensure the high-quality walking and cycling infrastructure provided on-site does not stop at the site boundary, but integrates into the wider walking and cycling network, facilitating

seamless onward active travel for the necessary journeys between villages, towns and city neighbourhoods

- work with developers to ensure that routes within and connecting to new development sites feel safe and are overlooked by occupied buildings, ideally with plentiful doors and windows at the ground level. Promoting 'active frontage' is a key urban design principle that is likely to come through in the government's new national model design code.

These interventions are brought through to this Active Travel Strategy as firm commitments for NSC to work with developers to ensure the designing and building of all new developments prioritise active travel.



4.2 Ensure local supporting policies and SPDs help to expediate active travel growth

The JLT4 clearly sets out the direction that all new developments must be active travel neighbourhoods from the outset. The interventions stated in this regional, West of England policy framework allows us to build on these commitments and go further at the local level. Through our emerging Local Plan, guiding residential and employment growth in North Somerset to 2038, and other bespoke local policies and supplementary planning documents (SPDs), we will ensure that local policies will help to expediate active travel growth. This will be crucial in our efforts to ensure a green, active and inclusive recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic and become carbon neutral by 2030.

Local Plan 2038

- North Somerset Council has commenced a new Local Plan which will set the framework for development across the district to 2038. The new Local Plan will shape investment and funding for the infrastructure which will support new homes, workplaces and community facilities for the next 15 years and beyond. Once adopted, all applications for planning permission in North Somerset will be assessed against our new Local Plan.



This first stage of Local Plan consultation focuses on the challenges we believe we face in North Somerset and the issues the plan needs to address. This went out to public consultation in Summer 2020 and once responses to this consultation have been taken on board, we will begin to develop spatial options for where to locate growth. This will form a second stage of consultation on the choices we face around development types and locations. A draft plan will follow in Spring 2021 with the final version due to be published in 2022.

Transport officers have been involved in developing our Local Plan from the very beginning, to ensure that active travel priority and provision is placed at its very core. This is an unmissable chance to ensure that all new developments are truly active travel neighbourhoods from the outset.

We will use our emerging Local Plan to ensure that active travel priority and provision is at the very core of this planning framework to assess all developments in North Somerset up to and beyond 2038. This will ensure that all new developments and communities are active travel neighbourhoods from their inception and reduce car dependency.

As our fellow West of England authorities develop their Spatial Development Strategy (SDS) as the overarching planning policy framework for the rest of the sub-region, we will stay informed of plans, policies and commitments that border with North Somerset here and in other neighbouring authorities such as Somerset and Sedgemoor.

We will keep informed and involved in policies, plans and commitments that have meaningful impacts on North Somerset from the neighbouring local authorities, such as the emerging SDS as the planning policy framework for our fellow West of England authorities.

North Somerset Council Corporate Plan 2020-24

The Corporate Plan is NSC's overarching strategic document which sets out our priorities for the area to 2024. Approved and adopted by the NSC's Executive Committee in February 2020, the vision is for 'An open, fairer and greener North

Somerset'. We have reflected on all aspects of this in developing this Active Travel Strategy.

- 'Open' means that we engage with and empower our communities, are realistic about our challenges and transparent in our decision making.
- Becoming 'fairer' means aiming to reduce inequalities and promote fairness and opportunity for everyone.
- Becoming 'greener' means leading our communities to protect and enhance our environment, tackle the climate emergency and drive sustainable development.

Active travel has a clear role to play in each of the above themes. Priorities are then grouped under three broad aims, and the key areas related to this strategy are described below:

1. A healthy, sustainable and thriving place
 - A great place for people to live, work and visit.
 - Safe, welcoming, clean and vibrant communities.
 - A reduction in our carbon footprint to net zero by 2030.
 - A transport network which promotes active and low carbon travel.

2. A council which empowers and cares for people
 - A commitment to protect the most vulnerable people in our communities.
 - A focus on tackling inequalities, improving outcomes and encouraging healthier lifestyles.
 - An approach which enables children, young people and adults to lead independent and fulfilling lives.
3. As an open and smart organisation, **we will:**
 - engage with and empower our communities
 - collaborate with partners to deliver the best outcomes.

This Active Travel Strategy builds on these commitments with strong alignments with the green, inclusive and active travel focused Corporate Plan for North Somerset.



North Somerset Council Core Strategy

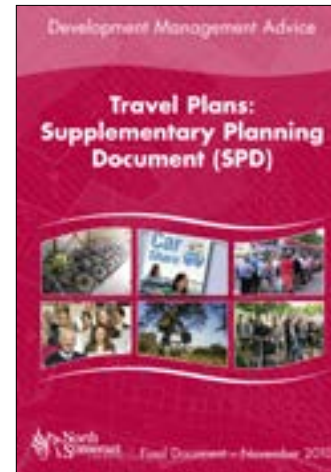
Both the Corporate Plan (above) and this Active Travel Strategy align with the North Somerset Council Core Strategy, which in line with the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), includes the following transport requirements under Policy CS10:

- Enhance the facilities for pedestrians, including those with reduced mobility, and other users such as cyclists.
- Improve road and personal safety and environmental conditions.
- Reduce the adverse environmental impacts of transport and contribute towards carbon reduction.
- Mitigate against increased traffic congestion.

The Core Strategy and this Active Travel Strategy has been developed using the following relevant strategies and SPDs to ensure that all local supporting policies and SPDs are helping to expediate active travel growth (all of which are available to view in full using Appendix 1 below):

- **Travel Plans SPD** – Large new developments are required to develop Travel Plans to reduce car travel and encourage sustainable travel, especially walking opportunities for journeys less than one mile. This is due to be updated later in 2021-22.
- **Parking SPD** – All new developments are required to provide minimum levels of convenient and secure cycle parking. This is being updated at present and is expected to be consulted upon and adopted later in 2021.

- **Weston-super-Mare Town Centre Regeneration SPD** – This outlines many public realm and street improvements which are aimed at increasing levels of cycling and walking and reducing the dominance of motor traffic. These are included in the Examples of Proposed Early Interventions.
- **Weston Villages SPD** – This includes how the walking and cycling network will be developed across this substantial development. The plans are included in the Examples of Proposed Early Interventions.
- **Highway Development Design Guide (HDDG)** – a more technical guide covering wide-ranging standards, guidance and specifications for highway works, but also helps guide development planning and delivery to create new safe and active travel communities.
- **North Somerset Local Development Plan**, consisting of: North Somerset Core Strategy (2017); Sites and Policies Plan Part 1: Development Management Policies (2016); Sites and Policies Plan Part 2: Site Allocations Plan (2018); West of England Joint Waste Core Strategy (2011); Backwell Neighbourhood Development Plan (2015); Long Ashton Neighbourhood Development Plan (2015); Claverham Neighbourhood Development Plan (2018); Yatton Neighbourhood Development Plan (2019); Congresbury Neighbourhood Development Plan (2019).



- **Creating Sustainable Buildings and Places SPD** – The Council has updated the Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) originally adopted in 2015. This is for a number of reasons, including changes in national policy and new and updated local policy. This includes the council’s Climate Emergency declaration in 2019 and ambition to be carbon neutral by 2030. The Climate Emergency Strategic Action Plan sets out an aim for all new homes to be zero carbon or net carbon plus. In order to achieve this, it is crucial for all new development to achieve the highest possible carbon reduction standards as soon as possible.

The SPD supports Core Strategy policy CS1: Addressing Climate Change and Carbon Reduction and policy CS2: Delivering Sustainable Design and Construction.



- **Emerging Health and Wellbeing Strategy**
As we develop the Health and Wellbeing Strategy in 2021, we will ensure that it interlinks strongly with this Active Travel Strategy, with both strategies using elements of the **Transport for London (TfL) Healthy Streets** approach including the key drivers of public health and carbon reduction. Additional relevant studies and documents are included at Appendix 1.



SECTION 5:

Funding and delivery

This Active Travel Strategy is intentionally ambitious. It will require an unprecedented level of both capital (one-time investment of money to deliver physical infrastructure improvements) and revenue (day-to-day running costs) with a large acceleration in spending on active travel from previous levels. However, active travel measures usually have high benefit-cost ratios and therefore provide high value for money, resulting in a wide range of public health, decarbonisation, social and economic benefits. This helps to place high confidence in their investment.

Funding

Although this Active Travel Strategy does not provide detailed costings of all our proposed active travel improvement schemes and Education, Training and Publicity (ETP) work, it is clear that significant resource will be required to deliver on our ambitious aims to get North Somerset moving. The drastic, ongoing resource pressures from the COVID-19 outbreak has undeniably caused a prolonged period of uncertainty both locally and nationally (and globally). This has made us all more acutely aware of the importance of measures that we need to take to support public health and community resilience.

What remains constant however is the Climate Emergency, which will continue to shape decisions and investment not only in transport



and active travel but in every aspect of everyday life, way beyond the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic. As a result, the need to rapidly decarbonise our transport network to become carbon neutral by 2030 remains the overarching and consistent short, medium and long term challenge for North Somerset Council with regards to transport and active travel provision.

National government and the Department for Transport (DfT) have recognised the opportunities to harness the significant increase in walking, cycling and other forms of active travel during the COVID-19 lockdown and recovery period. Some of the unexpectedly positive impacts from the virus outbreak have been used to start to accelerate the decarbonisation of our transport network for the better. In May 2020, the DfT announced the Emergency Active Travel Fund (EATF). This fund is split into two 'tranches', with Tranche 1 allocated to authorities to provide emergency relief, quick-to-implement schemes that aided social distancing and active travel at busy

town and village locations, either around shops and services, schools or other pinch-points. North Somerset Council implemented the following emergency temporary schemes on High Streets, popular leisure destinations and schools.

These Tranche 1 temporary measures have all been reviewed by officers and Members and have either been made permanent, semi-permanent (while we wait for Tranche 2 schemes to formalise the improvements) or have been removed if the interventions are no longer required.

North Somerset's Active Travel Fund Tranche 2 bid to the DfT was accepted in November 2020 and NSC was one of two authorities in England to receive more than it bid for for both Tranche 1 and Tranche 2, due to the strength of the bids submitted. A full consultation on the scheme proposals contained within the Tranche 2 bid package started in Spring 2021. The bidding requirements for this funding clearly set out national government's expectations for the type of active infrastructure that would and would not

be funded. This was stronger than any previous direction nationally on the level of quality and segregation required for walking and cycling infrastructure:

- Local authorities need to make clear that they have **quick and meaningful plans to reallocate street space to both cyclists and pedestrians**, including on strategic corridors.
- Schemes need to show real ambition and **must meaningfully alter the status quo on the road, otherwise they will not be funded**.
- All cycling schemes, permanent or temporary, will **need to include segregation or point closures to through traffic**. White paint advisory cycle lanes will not be funded!

This clearly set out the Government's position on high-quality, segregated infrastructure for cycling, walking and other active travel choices as we emerge from the COVID-19 pandemic and refocus on the decarbonisation work required from everyone to meet the Climate Emergency challenge.

The Active Travel Fund is only one part of national government's funding commitment to increase the uptake of active travel across the UK. Announced in February 2020 but launched in July 2020, national government are committing £2 billion for walking and cycling as a core part of the Government's work to create a long-term cycling programme and budget. As part of this all new

routes will be built to robust new design standards, ensuring more people can cycle safely and making getting around by bike a more convenient option. It is likely that further active travel funding opportunities for local authorities will come from this £2 billion investment and it is positive that any improvements funded from this must meet the guidelines to ensure high-quality infrastructure with segregation and priority over motor vehicles.

North Somerset Council remains reliant on funding opportunities from central government and other sources such as external agencies including Highways England and rail operators

(for example Network Rail and Great Western Railway) for significant capital investment to decarbonising our transport network through active travel. Regionally, we continue to rely on funding opportunities from the Local Enterprise Partnership such as the Local Growth Fund to add significant capital to our resources to deliver our ambitious programme of improvements.

Photo: Joe Dunckley/Shutterstock.com

We will need to ensure that our developments contribute appropriately to both local and area-wide infrastructure mitigations that support active mobility,



as well as ensuring all new developments are planned and delivered in a way that prioritises active travel modes.

Despite the positivity around the increased capital funding opportunities for active travel investment, there has been a consistent lack of long-term revenue funding, with projects and programmes such as Local Sustainable Transport Fund (delivering travel behaviour change), running only for short periods. Revenue budget pressures within Councils are continuing.

We will continue to lobby central government to increase the amount of revenue funding available to support new infrastructure schemes with the essential ETP and media awareness campaigns.

This type of investment and work is critical to change attitudes and behaviours towards active travel as well as raise awareness of the new and existing active travel options as realistic choice for short and medium length journeys.

At the local level, we are doing all in our power to prioritise funding to be spent on expediting the growth of active travel. As described in Section 3.2, we revamped our 2021-22 Transport and Infrastructure Capital Works Programme, to ensure that it has a strong fit against active travel and value for money objectives.



We will continue to review how we allocate funding to our annual Transport & Infrastructure Capital Works Programme to ensure that the majority of funding focuses on improvement schemes that alter the status quo of our limited street space to benefit active travel.

It is not just national, regional and local government funding that will enable us to ensure that active travel becomes the natural choice for short and medium journeys (and the first and last mile for longer journeys). It will require continued positive collaborative work with and funding support from local, stakeholders, organisations and pressure groups in partnership with North Somerset Council to achieve our common goals for active travel growth.

We will continue to collaboratively work with external stakeholders, organisations and other groups to progress, fund and deliver active travel improvements both physically and to raise awareness of active travel options in North Somerset.

Delivery

Delivery of our active travel ambitions will come through a number of different channels, including our Local Plan to 2038, which will ensure that all new development sites are delivered as Active Travel Neighbourhoods. Supporting policies, including Supplementary Planning Documents (SPDs) such as an Active Travel Neighbourhood SPD and updates to our Travel Plans SPD and Parking SPD, will support the Local Plan guidance for the types of active travel infrastructure we will require as part of development growth in North Somerset.

Internal and external funding will allow us to plan, programme and deliver changes to expediate active travel growth on our transport network through our Transport and Infrastructure Capital Works Programme. Here we outline four showcase schemes to show our ambition for active travel in North Somerset, each of which directly contribute towards achieving the four objectives of this Active Travel Strategy:



Showcase scheme 1:

**Weston to Clevedon Cycle Route
(North Somerset Towns Coastal Cycle Route)**

Objective 2: Tackle the climate emergency

Details: This exciting scheme will provide a continuous cycle route from Weston-super-Mare to Clevedon via Tutshill Sluice, connecting two of North Somerset's largest towns and tourism centres. This would provide a 'Pier to Pier' connection for residents, commuters and visitors alike. Highways England are part-funding the scheme through their Users and Communities Fund, with the M5 motorway causing significant severance and a very unattractive cycling route between the two towns. The Department for the Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (DEFRA) are also providing a significant amount of funding. This scheme will replace this unattractive and unsafe cycle route along the A370 via Congresbury and reduce the journey distance between Weston-super-Mare and Clevedon by a full 4 miles.

This opens up the new route to be a highly attractive commuter route as well as a very scenic leisure route parallel to the Severn Estuary and is the latest part of North Somerset Council's flagship strategic cycle network improvement scheme: the North Somerset Towns Coastal Cycle Route. The most southerly section, between Brean and Weston-super-Mare, has already been delivered and sees over 100,000 users annually.

Showcase scheme 2:

Clevedon Seafront and Hill Road

Objective 3: Drive local economic development

Details: This exciting proposal is to provide a permanent, segregated, cycle route from the ever-popular Clevedon seafront into the bustling retail, business and dining area at Hill Road.

A new one-way system and 20mph limit along The Beach and Hill Road will meaningfully alter the status quo of these roads by reallocating street space to segregated cycling and making a safer environment for pedestrians. This will be

supported by making the connecting roads

in the seafront and Hill Road neighbourhood area one-way and introducing 20mph zones to facilitate further safety improvements for both cyclists and pedestrians. We will further enhance the area using greening and street trees, as well as installing cycle parking pods to support cycle ownership for residents. This will help harness and further increase the high levels of walking and cycling in this area and along the promenade, where at present pedestrians and cycles are experiencing a conflict with space and social distancing.

The scheme will link into the flagship North Somerset Coastal Towns Cycle Route as part of the strategic cycling network in North Somerset. The scheme package will improve the provision and awareness of safe walking and cycling facilities to local shops and businesses, reduce private car dominance of this popular seafront space and improve road safety perception. The overcoming of these short-term challenges will help North Somerset Council achieve strong progress against the wider challenges of public health, carbon reduction and the car-dependency and congestion culture.



Artist's impression of
The Beach at Clevedon Seafront



Showcase scheme 3: Nailsea Youngwood Lane cycle path to station

Objective 4: Shape active travel neighbourhoods through an active travel focused planning system

As part of the development appeal process, a planning application to build 450 houses at Youngwood Lane, in south-west Nailsea, resulted in developers being required to provide either funding for or the construction of a high-quality, off-road walking and cycling path linking down

to Nailsea and Backwell Railway Station to the south-east of the site.

This was a good example of North Somerset Council's use of the planning system to enable growth in active travel via securing a significant contribution to a high-quality active travel link to the transport interchange at Nailsea and Backwell. There are future aspirations to connect the station to the existing Festival Way cycle route that provides off-road cycling access to Bristol city centre from the south-east corner of Nailsea via

Flax Bourton, Long Ashton and the Long Ashton Park and Ride.

It shows how we are able to use the planning system to ensure that new sites are properly connected to nearby existing and planned transport networks for both active travel and public transport, as well as local shops, services and facilities and also secure appropriate contributions from developers.

We have a full pipeline of active travel schemes, including both strategic cycle network schemes (linking our towns and villages), key corridors (within towns) and active travel neighbourhood schemes. We are still developing our prioritised list of active travel schemes, but the target is that

we will deliver:

- at least 1 Active Travel Neighbourhood pilot scheme per year
- at least 2 20mph zones per year
- at least 1 High Street or district centre active travel improvement scheme per year
- make annual progress on the delivery of our strategic cycle routes (either in full or in phases)
- increase participation in cycle training, Dr. Bike cycle maintenance and other cycle training or promotional events.

It is only by committing to ambitious delivery plans that we will make any notable progress towards enabling the decarbonisation of our transport network to carbon neutrality by 2030. A robust prioritisation process will test all of the contending schemes to be delivered each year. This process will most likely be the same or similar process as the scoring and prioritisation process we developed to decide which active



Photo: Joe Dunckley/Shutterstock.com

travel schemes were included within our Active Travel Fund (ATF) Tranche 2 bid in August 2020. A briefing note explaining this process is not available online but can be shared on request.

A list of our Examples of Proposed Early Interventions is included at Appendix 2. This is not an exhaustive list however as we are consistently developing both existing and new active travel schemes. These are regularly identified by officers and also residents, businesses and stakeholders using such online portals as the Space to Move and Widen My Path websites.

Delivery of the all-important support work through Education, Training and Publicity will be delivered by a combination of in-house resource from experienced transport officers, and external support such as Sustrans or external consultants. This will enable us to develop a strong programme consisting of:

- **Education:** including led-rides, promotional events, bike maintenance.
- **Training:** including cycle training for children, adults and community groups.
- **Publicity:** including a range of media publicity, communications, press releases, social media campaigns and other promotional media.

Without this vital work we will be extremely limited in our ability to promote enough awareness of existing and new walking and cycling routes to enable a culture shift to active travel as a realistic, attractive and natural choice for short and medium journeys (and for the first and last mile of longer journeys). This will enable us to harness, reinvigorate and further increase the culture shift towards active travel that was happening during the lockdown periods of the COVID-19 outbreak, which happened without infrastructure intervention. This is a key lesson learned for transport planners and decision makers at the local (and national) level: that attitudes are key to significant uptake. The ETP work is therefore vital in securing this all-important shift.

SECTION 6:

Monitoring and evaluation

In March 2020, the West of England Joint Committee adopted the West of England Joint Local Transport Plan 4 (JLTP4) – this strategy aims to achieve a number of improvements for active travel, including:

- A step change in the number of healthy, low carbon walking and cycling trips.
- A continued reduction in the number of road casualties on the transport network.

In line with JLTP4, this Active Travel Strategy aims to significantly increase the number of cycle trips, and walking trips, amongst people of all ages and abilities in North Somerset in line with the Cycling and Walking Investment Strategy (CWIS) national targets (to be achieved by 2025).

We will aim to:

- increase walking and cycling trips by at least 300% by 2030

And match these national targets based on local data:

- double cycling, where cycling activity is measured as the estimated total number of bicycle stages made each year, from 0.8 billion stages in 2013 to 1.6 billion stages in 2025
- increase the percentage of children aged 5 to 10 that usually walk to school from 48% in 2013 to 55% in 2025.

Of course, an increase in active travel without a corresponding decrease in motor-traffic will make it much harder to meet our carbon neutrality target, as well as hinder the growth of active travel. The West of England’s Joint Transport Study (JTS) states (pre-COVID) that car commuting is forecast to reduce from 59% to 45% (single occupancy), against a backdrop of forecast growth in housing and employment. Technical work is now being carried out to determine the level of mode shift and

interventions required for the sub-region to become carbon neutral by 2030.

With road safety,

We will aim to:

- reduce the rate of cyclists killed or seriously injured on England’s roads, measured as the number of fatalities and serious injuries per billion miles cycled, each year
- reverse the decline in walking activity, measured as the total number of walking stages per person per year.

To achieve these targets we are very much dependent on sufficient funding being made available by national Government to roll out our programme of improvements. Without a substantial increase we will likely fail to do this.

Table 2: Walking and cycling data for North Somerset from the National Travel Survey and Active Lives Survey (2017/18)

	Walk or cycle at least five times/week	Cycle at least once per month	Walk at least once per month	Cycle at least three times per week	Walk at least three times per week
Any purpose	39.9%	21.3%	82.8%	8.6%	45.1%
Travel (inc commuting)	-	11.4%	73.7%	3.3%	29.9%
Leisure	-	16.7%	42.2%	5.3%	15.7%

These statistics and many more, including demographics, are available at: www.gov.uk/government/collections/walking-and-cycling-statistics

The typical North Somerset sample size is 690 individuals per survey.

Baseline data

The most reliable data source to measure progress is the Census. According to the 2011 Census ('usual mode of travel to work') cycling made up 1.1% of commuter trips by North Somerset residents and walking made up 2.2%.

More recent data (2017/18) is available through the National Travel Survey and Active Lives Survey, as detailed below. This data is less robust due to the comparatively small data sets but covers non-work-related active travel.

In order to help achieve carbon neutrality for North Somerset by 2030, we set out in this Active Travel Strategy to increase walking and cycling trips by at least 300% by 2030. According to the 2011 Census, 1.1% of North Somerset residents cycled to work as their main transport choice (2.2% walking). We also know that there was a 25% increase in cycling trips between March 2017 and March 2020 alone, so along with other cycling and walking improvements across the district (both physical measures and awareness campaigns and training), as well as the increased environmental consciousness since 2011, we would be comfortable assuming that there was been at least a 100% increase in both walking and cycling since 2011 Census data. This would mean that the 1.1% cycling to work (and 2.2%

walking) would have increased to 2.2% for cycling (and 4.4% for walking).

Setting the strategy's key target as increasing cycling (and walking) trips by 300% by 2030 would see us increase the 2.2% for cycling to work (4.4% walking) up to 6.6% of all trips to work being made by cycling (and 13.2% for walking). These are assumptions and the 2021 Census will allow us to update our baseline data in the strategy to become more accurate. However, meeting these targets would form an important jigsaw piece of enabling carbon neutrality on our transport network by 2030.

Clearly the trip to work is just one of the many types of trips that people make. It has been used as a metric here as traditionally there are more statistics available for this journey type. There is a large consensus however that monitoring other types of trips needs to continue to improve to capture the wider spectrum of journey types, especially as post-COVID-19 commuting patterns are likely to be different. Again, the 2021 Census data will allow us to update the strategy baseline data and check that our targets are both ambitious and realistic.

School travel data is collected annually through the use of the DfT tool use DfT Modeshift STARS. In 2018 cycling made up 3.7% of school trips (Primary and Secondary average, 2018).

Walking was 54.0%, and bus 4.6% (which would usually involve a short walk).

We are also progressing a new Road Safety Strategy. Our 2020 target is a 40% reduction in KSIs compared with the 2005 to 2009 baseline average. This is in line with the national framework set out in the DfT's Strategic Framework for Road Safety (2011).

Additionally, we target a 40% reduction in all road casualties by 2020. This stretches a 30% target originally agreed with the West of England (WoE) Partnership.

The DfT report "The Road Safety Statement 2019, A Lifetime of Road Safety" announce in their two year action plan that a review of research on road safety targets and their effectiveness will be commissioned.

Our short-term target ambition is to simply project the current 2020 target to 2021, at this point all targets will be reviewed following the release of the DfT research.

Monitoring and evaluation approach

We must monitor and measure the achievements of our active travel interventions to evaluate their success. Section 7 summarises the interventions we are committing to as part of this Active Travel Strategy. This section also outlines what type of interventions we are making to achieve the

ambitious but achievable targets in this strategy, along with the timescales to achieve them, the North Somerset Council service to deliver the intervention and finally the resource implications of each intervention.

Further to this, the targets outlined in this strategy will be monitored through the following means:

Census data

This provides the most reliable way to measure how journeys to work are made on a District and Ward wide basis. The 2021 Census data is expected to be made available in March 2022.

There is some doubt whether the Census will continue after this. If the Census is discontinued the Office for National Statistics plan to replace it with a range of other data sources that may provide more frequent updates by which to check progress towards our targets.

The National Travel Survey (NTS) and Active Lives Survey

This provides useful background for national trends and comparative purposes. The data is broken down to District level but is less robust than the Census due to the smaller data set.

West of England Travel to Work Survey

An annual survey offered free of charge (subject to ongoing resources) to employers with more than 50 employees including North Somerset Council.

Other travel to work surveys

Some large employers in North Somerset run their own surveys to meet travel plan monitoring requirements or other needs – we expect annual or bi-annual data from Bristol Airport, Weston General Hospital and Weston College amongst other employers.

School travel data

This data is collected every year via a Mode of Travel data collection survey. As well as active modes, recording bus use is also important as the journey includes an active travel element. While transferring bus travel to active travel can lead to revenue savings for the Council reducing car journeys is the greater aim.

Automatic counter data

North Somerset maintains around twelve automatic cycle counters (including two combined walking and cycling counters) installed on dedicated cycle and walking routes throughout the district. These provide feedback on whether new facilities have achieved their aim (often required by funders and helpful for new funding bids) and in the long-term help monitor the general level of cycling across the District.

SECTION 7:

Summary of interventions

Table 3: Summary of objectives and interventions

Interventions	Intervention type	Timescale Short (2023) Medium (2026) Long (2030)	Delivery by	Resource implication
Section 2: Foundations for future success				
We will accelerate improvements to our strategic cycle network routes, allowing medium to long distance active travel for leisure, education and commuter trips (via segregated cycle paths, cycle lanes and active travel focused 'Quiet Lanes')	Strategic infrastructure	All	Transport	High
We will embark on a programme of delivering at least 1 Active Travel Neighbourhood per year, to improve the safety and attractiveness of active travel for residents, businesses and visitors in our towns and villages	Local infrastructure	Short (2023)	Transport	Medium
We will increase Education, Training and Promotion (ETP) for active travel, for events and for all existing and new active travel infrastructure across North Somerset	Education, Training and Publicity	Short (2023)	Transport and Marketing and Communications	Medium
Section 4, Objective 1: Deliver safe and frequent active travel to enable improved public health				
1.1 Deliver infrastructure and awareness				
We will run workshops to ensure that all internal NSC highway engineers, planning, regeneration, Elected Members (and all other relevant or interested teams and officers) are familiar and comfortable using latest guidance and best practice design standards for walking and cycling infrastructure, learning from national and international best practice	Education, Training and Publicity	Short (2023)	Transport and Infrastructure, Planning, Regeneration	Low
We will deliver on the five design principles set out by the Department for Transport which are the essential requirements to achieve more people travelling by active modes, based on best practice both internationally and across the UK	Planning and Policy	Short (2023)	Highways	Low
We will use audit processes (both LCWIP and multi-modal) to prioritise important, quick-win and value-for-money infrastructure improvements to our existing walking and cycling network	Local infrastructure	Short (2023)	Sustainable Travel, Highways	Medium

Interventions	Intervention type	Timescale Short (2023) Medium (2026) Long (2030)	Delivery by	Resource implication
We will design and build infrastructure to give priority to pedestrians and cyclists over vehicular traffic and segregate paths away from traffic wherever possible. This will transform our transport network from spaces where people are 'able' to walk and cycle to environments in which they are 'invited' to walk and cycle	Local infrastructure	All	Transport and Infrastructure	High
We will incorporate the attractive features such as benches, public art, notice boards, planting and landscaping on or close to walking and cycling routes wherever possible	Local infrastructure	Short (2023)	Transport and Infrastructure, Environment Team	Low
We will seek also to 'cycle proof' the road network – to ensure that active modes are considered as first priority at the design stage of new or improved road infrastructure	Local infrastructure	Short (2023)	Transport and Infrastructure	High
We will develop an infrastructure network of high capacity, quality cycle tracks along main road corridors as well as a plan for strategic cycling infrastructure to address missing links, pinch-points and safer cycling within neighbourhoods	Local infrastructure Strategic infrastructure	Long (2030)	Transport and Infrastructure	High
We will, as part of our Active Travel Neighbourhood programme, use a package of measures to prioritise walking and cycling, reduce vehicle dominance and improve public open space in town and village centres	Local infrastructure	Long (2030)	Transport and Infrastructure	Medium
We will work with private businesses, organisations and stakeholders to fund and improve cycle parking provision both on-street and at town, village and retail centres	Stakeholder collaboration	Medium (2026)	Sustainable Travel	Low
We will build a mainstream, inclusive, district-wide cycling culture as well as project specific promotions	Education, training and publicity	Long (2030)	Sustainable Travel and Marketing and Communications	High

Interventions	Intervention type	Timescale Short (2023) Medium (2026) Long (2030)	Delivery by	Resource implication
<p>We will develop and coordinate the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Education and training: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support and where possible arrange led-rides and other promotional events, especially when new flagship cycle infrastructure is completed. • Bike maintenance for adults of all ages and abilities. • Cycle training for all children during their primary and secondary school years and embed a culture of walking and cycling throughout the school curriculum. • Adult cycle training programmes. • Support community groups to develop bike recycling, disability cycling programmes and other initiatives. 	Education, training and publicity	Short (2023)	Sustainable Travel	Medium
<p>We will develop a range of media promotional activities, as part of a mainstream, inclusive, public-facing media strategy. This will include but not be limited to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Digital and paper mapping of our active travel network, including journey planner functions. • Various media publicity, including North Somerset Life magazine and through various NSC social media channels (including Facebook, Twitter and YouTube at present). • Including press releases (NSC website and local media outlets) at key stages of a project to promote schemes and improvements under development, ready for their completion. 	Education, training and publicity	All	Sustainable Travel and Marketing and Communications	Medium
We will also aim to support community groups to develop bike recycling, disability cycling programmes and other initiatives.	Education, training and publicity	Short (2023)	Sustainable Travel	Medium
We will aim to train 50% of pupils to Bikeability Level 1 by the end of year 4, 50% of children to Level 2 by the end of primary and 20% of children to Level 3 by the end of year 9	Education, training and publicity	All	Sustainable Travel, Schools	Medium

Interventions	Intervention type	Timescale Short (2023) Medium (2026) Long (2030)	Delivery by	Resource implication
We will, where funding allows, continue to coordinate adult cycle training to enable people to boost their skills, confidence and knowledge to cycle the journeys that they wish to	Education, training and publicity	All	Sustainable Travel	Low
We will deliver a dedicated Cycle for Weston centre in Weston-super-Mare town centre offering a wide range of cycles for hire, cycle maintenance, and a shop/café if possible	Local infrastructure	Short (2023)	Transport and Infrastructure	High
We will continue to publicise group rides to help ensure new infrastructure gets off to a flying start	Education, training and publicity	All	Sustainable Travel and Marketing and Communications	Low
We will continue to update and distribute the North Somerset Cycle Map as well as producing online versions	Education, training and publicity	All	Sustainable Travel	Low
1.2 Achieve health and social benefits				
We will work with local communities and stakeholders to understand the specific local barriers to increasing active travel take-up in rural and deprived areas	Local infrastructure	All	Transport and Infrastructure	High
We will increase active travel investment in or linking to rural and deprived areas of North Somerset to level up on health inequalities across the district.	Local infrastructure	All	Transport and Infrastructure	High
We will promote the awareness and take-up of electric bikes for hills, longer distances and into our more rural areas where conventional cycling is more difficult	Local infrastructure	All	Transport and Infrastructure	Low

Interventions	Intervention type	Timescale Short (2023) Medium (2026) Long (2030)	Delivery by	Resource implication
<p>We will monitor requests for active travel improvements from North Somerset residents, businesses and visitors to develop and deliver improvements wherever possible. One new way we will do this is by using public interaction sites for active travel such as Widen My Path and Space to Move</p> <p>We will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> invest in localised cycling infrastructure appropriate for different locations and complexities use local research and consult and collaborate with residents, businesses and stakeholders to inform active travel planning use shared space developments where safe to do so to encourage increased footfall in town centres implement 20mph zones in town and village centres and residential areas, prioritising schools and health care facilities use the Health Economic Assessment Tool (HEAT) and the Active Mode Appraisal Toolkit (AMAT) to estimate cost effectiveness of active travel interventions. 	Education, training and publicity	Short (2023)	Transport and Infrastructure	High

1.3 Collaborate effectively with internal and external partners

We will improve further our collaborative way of working with internal and external stakeholders and funders to secure important active travel improvement schemes and measures across North Somerset	Stakeholder collaboration	All	Transport and Infrastructure	Low
We will continue to use the Cycle Forum as the voice for North Somerset cyclists to aid our active travel improvement planning. We will also work with the new North Somerset Citizens' Panel once it is set up to understand further how we can help less confident cyclists to feel comfortable choosing cycling as the first choice for small and medium journeys	Stakeholder collaboration	Short (2023)	Sustainable Travel	Low

Interventions	Intervention type	Timescale Short (2023) Medium (2026) Long (2030)	Delivery by	Resource implication
We will continue to engage with businesses to increase awareness of existing active travel options and seek guidance on future improvements that will deliver a further increase in cycling to employment and services across North Somerset	Stakeholder collaboration	All	Sustainable Travel, Regeneration, Economic Development	Medium
We will continue to develop resources, incentive schemes and events to help all schools take part in activities to encourage active travel and we will work harder to deliver work in schools (for example through assemblies and classroom sessions, alongside outdoor practical lessons such as learn to ride, cycle maintenance and bike breakfasts)	Education, training and publicity	Short (2023)	Sustainable Travel, Travelwest roadshow Team	Medium
We will further develop our programme of Safer Routes to Schools and access restrictions to support children's safe walking and cycling to schools across the district	Local infrastructure	Medium (2026)	Transport and Infrastructure	Medium

Section 4, Objective 2: Tackle the Climate Emergency

2.1 Reduce reliance on fossil fuels and car dependency

We will use DfT Modeshift STARS to target the delivery of sustainable travel training skills in order to increase levels of sustainable and active travel and to document road safety concerns and requests for highway improvement	Education, training and publicity	Short (2023)	Sustainable Travel, Schools	Low
We will continue to deliver Bikeability training in accordance with best practice	Education, training and publicity	Short (2023)	Sustainable Travel, Schools	Low
We will continue to facilitate child pedestrian training to children in KS1	Education, training and publicity	Short (2023)	Sustainable Travel, Schools	Low
We will offer a traded school crossing patrol service to schools	Education, training and publicity	Short (2023)	Road Safety, Schools	Low

Interventions	Intervention type	Timescale Short (2023) Medium (2026) Long (2030)	Delivery by	Resource implication
We will work with the Police to identify the most appropriate tool to encourage drivers to slow down. These include: Community Speedwatch, vehicle activated signs, mobile safety camera enforcement and static safety camera installation	Stakeholder collaboration	All	Road Safety	Low
We will work with the Police where our data shows that speeding is a contributory factor in collisions and reviewing speed limits	Stakeholder collaboration	All	Road Safety	Low
We will develop highway schemes to tackle speed of motor traffic as a significant cause of road danger for vulnerable road users at identified and high-risk road safety hotspots	Local infrastructure	All	Road Safety	Low
We will expand the number of 20mph zones covering built up areas and expand 40mph limits on minor rural roads to make our roads and streets safer for everyone	Local infrastructure	Medium (2026)	Transport and Infrastructure	Medium
2.2 Improve air quality and public realm				
We will use existing 'best-in-class' infrastructure design standards to create cleaner, attractive and inviting places for people of all ages and abilities. They will be able to enjoy the improved air quality from the reduction in motor vehicles in town and village areas and along our strategic cycle routes between places	Planning and policy	Short (2023)	Transport and Infrastructure	Low

Section 4, Objective 3: Drive local economic development

3.1 Improve access to services, jobs and training

We will invest an increasing proportion of our resources to improve walking and cycling networks and deliver benefits for active travel modes	Local infrastructure	Short (2023)	Transport and Infrastructure	Medium
We will reallocate carriageway space to active modes to improve safe walking and cycling provision	Local infrastructure	All	Transport and Infrastructure	Medium
We will work with the police and lobby national government to make illegal and enforce pavement parking bans. We will then prioritise streets for improvements according to the scale of nuisance and danger caused.	Stakeholder collaboration	Short (2023)	Transport and Infrastructure	Low

Interventions	Intervention type	Timescale Short (2023) Medium (2026) Long (2030)	Delivery by	Resource implication
We will work with public transport operators to ensure that it is easy to make the first and last of public transport journeys by active travel modes such as walking, scooting and cycling, by facilitating cycle parking at transport hubs and allowing easy access and storage for cycles and scooters on buses and trains	Stakeholder collaboration	Short (2023)	Public Transport	Low
We will integrate active travel improvements with public transport modes to provide improved options for local accessibility between active travel and public transport as the 'first and last mile' of journeys to services, jobs and training	Planning and policy	Medium (2026)	Transport	Low
We will ensure that the transport network is reshaped so that people with limited mobility are able to move around freely through the pedestrian environment, and use it to access other modes of transport	Local infrastructure	Long (2030)	Transport and Infrastructure, Accessibility	Medium

3.2 Guide spending priorities and maximise funding opportunities

<p>We will, through the delivery of our annual three year Transport and Infrastructure Capital Works Programme, work to ensure that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> our towns are served by a core network of segregated cycle routes and networks of walkable routes to and within centres communities have access to green spaces and are connected by traffic-free cycling and walking networks for all rail and bus stops are attractive for people travelling on foot or by bike and have facilities that prioritise cycling and walking families have routes to walk and cycle to school in safety and with confidence, gaining essential life skills we provide opportunities and support for people to take up walking and cycling, through programmes in schools, workplaces and local communities. 	Local infrastructure	Long (2030)	Transport and Infrastructure, Streets and Open Spaces, Public Transport, Schools, Local Stakeholders	High
We will incorporate early into our highway maintenance programming procedures the consideration of active travel improvements, by carrying out an active travel audit to identify possible improvements to be made as part of the works.	Planning and policy	Short (2023)	Highways	Low

Interventions	Intervention type	Timescale Short (2023) Medium (2026) Long (2030)	Delivery by	Resource implication
We will audit more routes to prioritise further rounds of improvements. Audits will also be used for new build and more general Highway schemes to ensure opportunities are not missed	Local infrastructure	Short (2023)	Sustainable Travel, Highways	Medium
We will review the case for where winter salting of key commuter routes should be introduced especially on bends, steep sections and where adjacent to busy roads	Planning and policy	Short (2023)	Highways	Low
We will continue to ensure that a significant proportion of Highways Maintenance Programme spend is on Footway and Cycleway maintenance	Planning and policy	Short (2023)	Transport and Infrastructure	Low
We will continue to work with external organisations and volunteers to help maintain off-road vegetation management on our footpaths, footways and cycleways	Stakeholder collaboration	Short (2023)	Sustainable travel, Local stakeholders	Low
We will continue to maximise external funding opportunities for active travel at the national and regional level	Stakeholder collaboration	All	Transport	High

Section 4, Objective 4: Shape active travel neighbourhoods through an active travel focused planning system

4.1 Guide development planning to create active travel communities

We will:	Planning and policy	All	Transport	Medium
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Adopt the road user priority hierarchy to protect those who use active forms of transport. We will ensure that pedestrians, cyclists and users of other modes of transport that involve physical activity are given the highest priority when developing and maintaining our streets and roads. Ensure planning applications for new developments always prioritise the need for people (including those whose mobility is impaired) to be physically active as a routine part of their daily life. Plan and provide a comprehensive network of routes for walking, cycling and using other modes of transport involving physical activity. Ensure public open spaces and public paths can be reached by foot, bicycle and using other modes of transport involving physical activity. 				

Interventions	Intervention type	Timescale Short (2023) Medium (2026) Long (2030)	Delivery by	Resource implication
We will guide development planning by identifying active travel schemes either to be delivered by the developer as part of development construction or where appropriate through developer contributions to help create communities centred around sustainable and active travel	Planning and policy	All	Transport	Low
We will continue to encourage new developments in locations that are accessible by existing walking, cycling and public transport networks, and discourage proposals that fail to actively encourage mode shift away from the private car	Planning and policy	All	Transport, Planning	Low
We will engage with developers at the start of the planning process to ensure key services to be provided on site, based on the thresholds included in guidance, are high-quality, but also in the best location to maximise their accessibility via active travel modes and public transport	Planning and policy	All	Transport, Planning	Medium
We will work with developers to ensure they are using existing street design principles, but increasingly focus on providing an attractive, integrated network that offers segregated areas for active modes	Planning and policy	All	Transport, Planning	Low
We will work with developers to ensure the high-quality walking and cycling infrastructure provided on-site does not stop at the site boundary, but integrates into the wider walking and cycling network, facilitating seamless onward active travel for the necessary journeys between villages, towns and city neighbourhoods	Planning and policy	All	Transport, Planning	Low
We will work with developers to ensure that routes within and connecting to new development sites feel safe and are overlooked by occupied buildings, ideally with plentiful doors and windows at the ground level. Promoting 'active frontage' is a key urban design principle that is likely to come through in the government's new national model design code	Planning and policy	All	Transport, Planning	Low
4.2 Ensure local supporting policies and SPDs help to expediate active travel growth				
We will use our emerging Local Plan to ensure that active travel priority and provision is at the very core of this planning framework to assess all developments in North Somerset up to and beyond 2038. This will ensure that all new developments and communities are active travel neighbourhoods from their inception	Planning and policy	Short (2023)	Transport, Planning	Medium

Interventions	Intervention type	Timescale Short (2023) Medium (2026) Long (2030)	Delivery by	Resource implication
We will keep informed and involved in policies, plans and commitments that have meaningful impacts on North Somerset from the neighbouring local authorities, such as the emerging SDS as the planning policy framework for our fellow West of England authorities	Planning and policy	Short (2023)	Transport, Planning Policy	Low

Section 5: Funding and delivery

We will need to ensure that our developments contribute appropriately to both local and area-wide infrastructure mitigations that support active mobility, as well as ensuring all new developments are planned and delivered in a way that prioritises active travel modes	Planning and policy	Short (2023)	Transport, Planning	Low
We will continue to lobby central government to increase the amount of revenue funding available to support new infrastructure schemes with the essential ETP and media awareness campaigns	Planning and policy	Short (2023)	Transport	Low
We will continue to review how we allocate funding to our annual Transport & Infrastructure Capital Works Programme to ensure that the majority of funding focuses on improvement schemes that alter the status quo of our limited street space to benefit active travel.	Planning and policy	Short (2023)	Transport and Infrastructure	Low
We will continue to collaboratively work with external stakeholders, organisations and other groups to progress, fund and deliver active travel improvements both physically and to raise awareness of active travel options in North Somerset	Stakeholder collaboration	All	Transport and Infrastructure	Low

Interventions	Intervention type	Timescale Short (2023) Medium (2026) Long (2030)	Delivery by	Resource implication
<p>We will deliver:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> at least 1 Active Travel Neighbourhood pilot schemes per year (with a detailed review and prioritisation of each enabling the most successful to become permanent the following year) at least 2 20mph zones per year at least 1 High Street or district centre active travel improvement scheme per year make annual progress on the delivery of our strategic cycle routes (either in full or in phases) an increase in participation in cycle training, Dr. Bike cycle maintenance (subject to further funding) and other cycle training or promotional events an increased Education, Training and Publicity programme to raise awareness of existing and new active travel routes and options. 	Local infrastructure and strategic infrastructure	All	Transport and Infrastructure, Schools, Marketing and Communications	High

Section 6: Monitoring and evaluation

<p>We will aim to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> double cycling, where cycling activity is measured as the estimated total number of bicycle stages made each year, from 0.8 billion stages in 2013 to 1.6 billion stages increase the percentage of children aged 5 to 10 that usually walk to school from 48% in 2013 to 55%. 	Planning and policy	Long (2030)	Transport and Infrastructure	High
<p>With road safety, we aim to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> reduce the rate of cyclists killed or seriously injured on England's roads, measured as the number of fatalities and serious injuries per billion miles cycled, each year reverse the decline in walking activity, measured as the total number of walking stages per person per year. 	Planning and policy	Long (2030)	Road Safety, Transport and Infrastructure	High

SECTION 8:

Conclusions and next steps

This Active Travel Strategy seeks to raise the bar and go further than any previous strategy to improve and promote active travel within North Somerset. It provides a step change in our planning, prioritising and delivery of segregated cycling, high-quality public realm, significantly enhanced pedestrian facilities, where people are prioritised over the private motor car.

We are committing to our vision statement:

'Making walking and cycling the natural choice for a cleaner, healthier and more active North Somerset.'

In order to help achieve this vision and achieve carbon neutrality for North Somerset by 2030:

We will increase walking and cycling trips by at least 300% by 2030.

We will achieve this by delivering:

- at least 1 Active Travel Neighbourhood pilot schemes per year (with a detailed review and prioritisation of each enabling the most successful to become permanent the following year)
- at least 2 20mph zones per year
- at least 1 High Street or district centre active travel improvement scheme per year
- make annual progress on the delivery of our strategic cycle routes (either in full or in phases)



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- increase participation in cycle training, Dr. Bike cycle maintenance and other cycle training or promotional events
- an increased Education, Training and Publicity programme to raise awareness of existing and new active travel routes and options.

The main challenges to our success will be:

- Securing sufficient resourcing and funding, both externally and internally, to match our ambitious plans for the active travel transformation of North Somerset.
- Commitment from all key stakeholders to champion and deliver these ambitious, exciting schemes for active travel, regardless of whether they seem unpopular to some at

the outset. Similar schemes elsewhere in the country have flourished and become very popular with businesses, residents and visitors alike after being unpopular to start with. We must use these examples and be strong and positive in our engagement with local communities and stakeholders to help them realise the significant benefits available for all.

It is only by overcoming these challenges and committing to ambitious delivery plans that we will make any progress towards enabling the decarbonisation of our transport network to be carbon neutral by 2030 and ensuring a green recovery from the COVID-19 crisis. This will make for a happier, healthier, cleaner and more active North Somerset.



APPENDICES

Appendix 1:
Policy framework and additional
studies/documents

Appendix 2:
Examples of Proposed Early
Interventions

Appendix 3:
Additional health and social benefits of
active travel

Appendix 1: Policy framework and additional studies/documents

The ATS is a local policy strategy that supports a number of other strategies and plans at the local, regional and national level. More than ever before there are a number of converging and strengthening policy changes that guide our need to make urgent and substantial changes to the way we travel, in favour of active modes.

National policy context

Key points:

- Support for active travel should be integral to the local planning process.
- Current government policy and funding streams support active travel.
- The DfT has developed a ten year plan for walking and cycling with an aim to double funding for these modes in England, but a funding commitment on the scale required is still awaited.

In 2012 the British Medical Association highlighted the link between Transport and health through its policy paper entitled “healthy transport = healthy lives”, which asked the government to do more to promote active travel,

¹ Add reference to latest version of CDP.

such as investing in appropriate infrastructure. The report states that the health of people and the built environment are closely linked. It emphasises planning for accessibility by walking and cycling.

Planning

The National Planning Framework states that active travel should be a key consideration when making decisions about new developments.

‘In preparing Local Plans, local planning authorities should therefore support a pattern of development which, where reasonable to do so, facilitates the use of sustainable modes of transport.’

As stated by the framework, local policies, plans, and planning decisions should consider the provision and availability of active travel options between residential, employment, service and leisure sites. This Active Travel Strategy goes further than the comparatively loose statement above by ensuring that active travel provision must be the first thought when master planning a site, not ‘where reasonable to do so’. Master planning will enable us to strategically consider the right blend of development types that support local trips by active travel modes.

Planning for the Future White Paper

Changes are being proposed to the planning system, which might affect the way that this Active Travel Strategy will be applied in the future. The changes proposed in the White Paper are relevant to this strategy, as the new planning system would show commitment to climate change action, focusing on design codes, which could also include design guidance for this type of infrastructure. Updates will be made to this strategy as and when planning changes are made as a result of this Planning for the Future White Paper consultation.

Transport

Despite this, only two percent of total transport spending nationally is on cycling and walking. Cycling UK, Living Streets and Sustrans say this should rise to at least five percent by 2020, and 10 percent by 2024, with a large proportion of this allocated to support local authorities’ plans to increase cycling and walking.

In response to the need to encourage wider active travel in England the DfT has produced their [Cycling Delivery Plan](#)¹ which sets out their aspirations for active travel until 2025. It makes it clear that walking and cycling is a top priority for the government and makes a commitment to

double the level of cycling funding in England from £5 per person to £10 per person each year by 2021. The Cycling Delivery Plan invites local authorities to apply for funding by submitting expressions of interest, which the West of England Partnership has done. However, there is a requirement that we produce our own ten year walking and cycling plan, which is fulfilled by this Active Travel Strategy.

Supporting this, its **Cycling and Walking Investment Strategy (CWIS)** is a long-term vision which became law July 2015. In the Chancellor's March 2020 statement, £2bn was allocated for active travel nationally. There is also a legal requirement to report to Parliament on the progress made in terms of targets. National walking and cycling targets are set out under the Aims and Targets section of this document. The Strategy must be reviewed at least every five years.

Although both the CWIS and the ATF funding are a welcome increase in active travel funding, they are not seen as being sufficient to enable local authorities to become carbon neutral through active travel infrastructure improvements and subsequent uptake.

Despite the lack of central Government funding that will be required to deliver the outcomes the DfT expects, over the past five years NSC has secured circa £5Million for walking and cycling schemes. This has been sourced from a wide

range of funders, usually through competitive bids. Included within this is our wider holistic approach consisting of education, training and publicity.

Regional policy context

Our **Joint Local Transport Plan 4 (JLTP4)** is our principal transport policy document, and was developed in partnership with the other West of England authorities. It reflects all the key policy areas above and this strategy is part of a suite of documents that provides further information on specific areas within the JLTP.

The West of England **LCWIP** (Local Walking and Cycling Infrastructure Plan) is the key regional active travel strategy for walking and cycling improvements. Many principles and North Somerset related improvements are included within this North Somerset Active Travel Strategy.

Local policy context

At the local level, these include:

Climate Emergency

- North Somerset Council has declared a 'Climate Emergency' and are committing resources to address this emergency. The council will take active steps to make North Somerset carbon neutral by 2030, taking into account both production and consumption emissions.

Placemaking and regeneration

- A range of local planning policy and SPD documents seek to:
 - enhance facilities for pedestrians, including those with reduced mobility, and cyclists
 - improve road and personal safety and environmental conditions
 - reduce the adverse environmental impacts of transport and contribute towards carbon reduction
 - mitigate against increased traffic congestion.
- North Somerset seeks to improve opportunities for active travel by those living in the most deprived areas (all within South or Central wards of Weston-super-Mare), to improve access to work and training via low-cost travel and provide healthy active leisure opportunities.

The **NSC Corporate Plan's** proposed vision is: An open, fairer and greener North Somerset. Under this vision, priorities are grouped under three broad aims:

- a healthy, sustainable and thriving place;
- a council which empowers and cares for people; and
- an open and smart organisation.

For a more detailed local and national policy background refer to the **Section 4.2**.

Additional background papers/studies

- North Somerset Local Plan 2038:
Challenges consultation
- North Somerset Corporate Plan 2020-24
- North Somerset Core Strategy
- Travel Plans Supplementary Planning Document (SPD)
- Parking SPD
- Weston-super-Mare Town Centre
Regeneration SPD
- Weston Villages SPD
- North Somerset Highways Development
Design Guide (HDDG)
- Climate Emergency Strategy
- Climate Emergency Action Plan

Appendix 2: Examples of Proposed Early Interventions

The following tables list a range of schemes which we are committed to or for which funding has been applied for. These will all be subject to consultation (unless this has already been carried out). Additional schemes indicated as 'outline proposal' give a flavour of further schemes we would like to pursue and will generally be subject to further prioritisation work and funding opportunities. Other schemes not listed here may

be delivered before these, particularly those which are development-led.

The LCWIP proposals referred to, and additional ones, are detailed in the Final West of England Local Cycling & Walking Infrastructure Plan available at <https://travelwest.info/projects/local-cycling-and-walking-infrastructure-plan>. This used a Department for Transport prioritisation process to identify where active travel improvements would be most effective, and these are mostly urban.

More information on this is included within the main strategy above, at [page 18](#).

North Somerset Council also maintains a full register of wider active travel scheme proposals to ensure future opportunities for delivery are not missed. These are under continuous review and refinement, but the schemes below represent the top priority schemes at the time of publishing this strategy.

A [full map of already delivered cycle routes in North Somerset](#), and proposed routes will be added to this in due course.

Scheme	Summary	Status
High Street or district centre active travel improvement schemes		
Weston High Street (part of LCWIP Weston Cycle Route 2 and Walking Route 1)	Permit cycling where north – south links are otherwise poor. Improve walking facilities and public realm to encourage not just walking but dwelling in a more attractive, inviting High Street	Options assessment
Clevedon Seafront and Hill Road (part of LCWIP Clevedon Walking Routes)	A segregated cycle route along the ever-popular Clevedon seafront to Clevedon Pier and on into the bustling retail, business and dining area at Hill Road. Widened footways along Hill Road and an enhanced pedestrian area outside of the Pier will make walking around this historical seafront more comfortable and enjoyable	Post-consultation, Pre-Delivery
Orchard St and Meadow Street (part of LCWIP Weston Cycle Routes 1 and 6)	Reduce dominance of cars and traffic, possibly through a shared space arrangement. Improve public realm with clear benefits for walking	Options assessment
Worle High Street	Reduce or remove through traffic to improve pedestrian and cyclists' safety. This will encourage active travel to the High Street and to nearby schools. Improving public realm will encourage people to spend time and money in a more attractive, cleaner and safer Worle High Street	Outline proposal

Scheme	Summary	Status
Clevedon Triangle and Old Church Rd (part of LCWIP Clevedon Cycle Routes 1 and 2 and Walking Routes)	Reduce or remove through traffic to improve pedestrian and cyclists' safety, encourage these modes and improve public realm. More attractive streets and central areas in Clevedon will help to give the town centre a new lease of life by being cleaner, greener and more attractive/inviting	Outline proposal
Portishead High Street (part of LCWIP Portishead Cycle Routes 1 and 2 and Walking Routes)	Reduce through traffic, provide consistent improved walking experience, improved crossing points, and a segregated cycle route where possible	Outline proposal
Yatton High Street (part of LCWIP Yatton Walking Route 17)	Improve safety and perceptions of safety for pedestrians and other active transport choices between North End and Yatton village centre, including improving the safety of children, parents and guardians walking, cycling and scooting to school. This will help increase the proportion of journeys made by active, lower-carbon modes within Yatton, including to the railway station and other village facilities.	Post-consultation, Pre-Delivery
Active and Green Neighbourhoods		
School Pedestrian and Cycle Zones	Package to significantly alter the status quo of roads and create a safer environment for pedestrians and cyclists on thirty-nine different streets around seven of North Somerset's schools; Yatton Infant and Junior, All Saints (Clevedon), St Nicholas Chantry (Clevedon), St Peters (Portishead), West Leigh (Backwell)	Delivery
Christchurch, Weston-super-Mare	To include the residential area bounded by Meadow St Baker St, Milton Rd, Ashcombe Rd, Locking Rd. A significantly enhanced active travel experience for residents, businesses and visitors alike	Outline proposal
Backwell (forms part of LCWIP Backwell Walking Route)	To include the residential area west of Station Rd and bounded by the A370, and West Leigh School, which is well-used for walking and has high cycling potential	Options assessment
Clevedon Hill Rd Alexandra Rd area	To include the residential area bounded by Hill Rd, Bellevue Rd and Seavale Rd and The Beach. To be delivered in association with Clevedon Seafront and Hill Road scheme. Significant enhancements for active travel in this historic area that has seen suppressed demand for active travel facilities released during 2020	Post-consultation, Pre-delivery

Scheme	Summary	Status
20mph Zones		
Uphill Village	Scheme covers whole village improving the on-carriageway sections of the Coastal Towns Cycle route and wider benefits to the village, including two schools and Weston General Hospital	Options assessment
Pill and Easton-in-Gordano	Village-wide 20mph zone will help to secure benefits of new railway station and encourage walking and cycling to schools	Options assessment
Weston Town Centre 20mph Zone	An easily understood 20mph zone covering the area of Weston Town Centre where pedestrian and cycle movements are most concentrated	Options assessment
Long Ashton Village Enhancement scheme: Phase 2	20mph limit through the village centre, improved formal and informal crossing points and aim to deter drivers from using Weston Road/Long Ashton Road as a commuter route	Options assessment
20mph Request Process	We receive a range of requests from different town and parish councils, as well as from residents, businesses and other stakeholders. We remain committed to reviewing proposals for 20mph zones and limits. Where possible and where funding allows, we will implement any that are a strong fit against the criteria as part of our three year delivery programme (which is refreshed annually). This means that schemes that we will deliver are not limited to those listed currently	Options assessment

School pedestrian and cycle zones and priority walking schemes

It should be noted that the schemes in the High Street or district centre active travel improvement schemes, Active and Green Neighbourhoods and 20mph Zones schemes sections all have strong benefits for walking.

Yatton High Street Improvements package (relates to LCWIP Walking Route Yatton)	Improved pedestrian and cycle access to Yatton School grounds. Traffic calming, 20mph zone, new raised Zebra crossing by B3133/Cherry Grove, tightening of junction bell mouths	Post-consultation, Pre-delivery
Bristol Road Pedestrian Facilities, Portishead	To improve pedestrian facilities along and across Bristol Road, which includes two schools, bus stops, housing, a football club and an office park located in close vicinity	Options assessment

Scheme	Summary	Status
School Pedestrian and Cycle Zones Programme	Annual programme of school pedestrian and cycle zones, locations to be prioritised this year, with the highest scoring against a set criteria being implemented first. To improve facilities for walking, cycling and other active travel such as wheeling and scooting around schools across the district. Can include but not be limited to: point closures to through traffic, reallocating street space to walking and cycling, use of planters/barriers/signage to increase active travel space and reduce car parking (maintaining residents' access)	Committed
Strategic urban cycle routes		
LCWIP Weston Cycle Routes 4 and 6 – Weston Town Centre to Locking Castle)	Improve route from Worle Station to Summerlands Way and extend along Milton Road, Baker Street, Meadow Street, and Regent Street, to create an active travel priority route into the heart of the town centre and seafront	Bidding – Milton Rd and Baker St
LCWIP Weston Cycle Routes 3 and 7 – Weston Town Centre to Locking Parklands (includes Weston Station Active Travel Gateway/Hildesheim Bridge)	In particular, improve railway crossing points (Winterstoke Rd and Hutton Moor Lane/Aisecome Way area). Extend existing routes over Hildesheim Bridge and significantly alter the status quo of this entry point into Weston-super-Mare town centre, its railway station and forthcoming bus interchange	Bidding – Weston Station Active Travel Gateway Committed – Winterstoke Rd Bridge
LCWIP Cycle Routes Clevedon 1 and 2 – South West Clevedon to Clevedon School	Provide new segregated cycle lanes and traffic calming/reduce traffic to connect existing paths, providing a continuous route. Improve Clevedon triangle area for all directions of travel	Outline proposal
LCWIP Cycle Route Portishead 1 and 2 – Ashlands to High St and Gordano School	Provide new/improved segregated cycle lanes and traffic calming to connecting the north east to the south west of the town, incorporating the High Street and the proposed railway station	Outline proposal
LCWIP Cycle Route Nailsea 1 – Town Centre to Nailsea and Backwell Station	Provide a direct high-quality route, segregated where possible or otherwise traffic calmed	Outline proposal

Scheme	Summary	Status
Strategic inter-urban/rural cycle routes		
The Strawberry Line Extension (Yatton to Clevedon)	Continuous route based on former railway from Yatton Station to Clevedon connecting communities to rail network	Bidding
Weston-super-Mare – Clevedon ‘Pier to Pier’ section of North Somerset Coastal Towns Cycle Route	New shared-use path at Yeo and Oldbridge rivers (Tutshill), connecting existing lanes and improvements in Weston and Clevedon areas to provide a complete ‘Pier to Pier’ route	Bidding
The Gordano Greenway	New off-road shared-use path parallel to the B3124 connecting Clevedon and Portishead	Outline proposal
River Avon Trail (Pill Path)	Significant upgrade (to commuter standard) of riverside path from Ham Green to Bristol Cumberland Basin (in partnership with Bristol City Council)	Outline proposal

Segregated cycle lanes

A371 Weston outskirts to Banwell	Continue A371 provision from Locking to within Banwell 30mph zone (shared use but low pedestrian demand)	Committed
Long Ashton Rd to Park and Ride	Connect Long Ashton Rd to Park and Ride Site to improve connectivity of village to Bristol and access public transport	Bidding
Engine Lane to Nailsea Town Centre (LCWIP Cycle Route Nailsea 2)	Provide segregated path along north side of Queens Road and transition points. Continue route along Mizzymead to town centre	Outline proposal
A38 – various corridor improvements	Study underway to review demand and what’s possible in association with proposed new development	Outline proposal

Appendix 3: Additional Health and Social benefits of Active Travel

Physical activity greatly reduces the risk of ill health and premature death including reducing the risk of heart disease, stroke, cancer, falls and mental health problems. Illness as an outcome of physical inactivity has been conservatively calculated to directly cost the NHS up to £1.0 billion per annum (2006-07 prices). Indirect costs have been estimated as £8.2 billion per annum (2002 prices).² If current trends continue, the increasing costs of health and social care will destabilise public services and take a toll on quality of life for individuals and communities.³

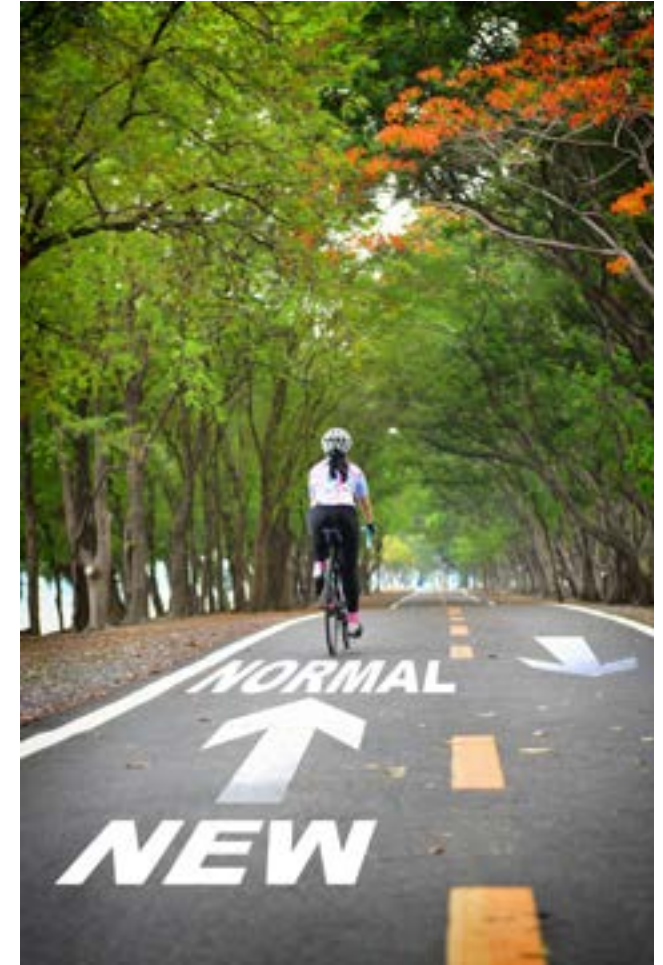
One outcome of increasingly sedentary lifestyles is the increased rates of overweight and obesity. Levels in the UK have been increasing over recent decades for both adults and children. Current estimates of levels of obesity in North Somerset (22.7%) are similar to the average for England (23%). In childhood, levels of obesity rise with age from 8.07% in 4-5 year olds to 16.6% in 10-11 year olds. In North Somerset the proportion of 4-5 year olds who are overweight and obese is slightly higher than the average for England at 24%. Being overweight or obese puts

people at greater risk of death from a number of conditions including, cancer, heart disease, and stroke. Children need at least an hour of moderate to vigorous physical activity every day, 30 minutes of which can be provided in school time. The journey to school is one way to help incorporate this.

According to the UK Chief Medical Officers' Physical Activity Guidelines⁴ children and young people (aged 5-18) should engage in moderate-to-vigorous intensity physical activity for an average of at least 60 minutes per day across the week. This can include all forms of activity such as physical education, active travel, after-school activities, play and sports.

Each week, adults (aged 19-64) should accumulate at least 150 minutes (two and a half hours) of moderate intensity activity (such as brisk walking or cycling); or 75 minutes of vigorous intensity activity (such as running); or even shorter durations of very vigorous intensity activity (such as sprinting or stair climbing); or a combination of moderate, vigorous and very vigorous intensity activity. Each week older adults (65+) should aim to accumulate 150 minutes (two and a half hours) of moderate intensity aerobic activity, building up gradually from current levels. Children reach a

peak of physical activity at five years which tends to decline into adulthood. As such, ensuring that all children are as active as possible throughout childhood is important for current and future population health.



² Claiming the Health Dividend: A summary and discussion of value for money estimates from studies of investment in walking and cycling (Dr Adrian Davies / DfT, 2014).

³ Everybody Active, Everyday (Public Health England, 2014).

⁴ https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/832868/uk-chief-medical-officers-physical-activity-guidelines.pdf, 2019

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North Somerset Council

Report to the Council

Date of Meeting: 19th July 2021

Subject of Report: MetroWest Phase 1 – Delivery Update

Town or Parish: All

Officer/Member presenting: Cllr Steve Bridger, Executive Member for Assets and Capital Delivery

Key Decision: No

Reason:

Not an Executive Decision

Recommendations

The Council is asked to:

1. a) agree to approve delegated authorisation to the Director of Place in consultation with the Executive Member for Assets and Capital Delivery, the Assistant Director Legal & Governance & the Director of Corporate Services to enter into (jointly with the West of England Combined Authority) an Implementation Agreement with Network Rail, Part 1 – Detail Design GRIP5 and subsequent addendums to the agreement as outlined in section 5 of this report, as per the values in confidential appendix 2, leading up to Full Business Case approval, subject to:
 - b) NSC and WECA firstly entering into a Side Agreement to extend the 50:50 cost sharing to include all project costs (except revenue costs associated with the operation of the train service), through to the completion of the project, including risks and liabilities arising from NSC entering into Protective Obligations and Protective Provision Agreements with statutory undertakers, as set out in section 4 of this report, and
2. Note that following completion of Detailed Design GRIP5 and the approval of the Full Business Case, a separate report will be brought to Council in summer 2022 seeking authorisation to proceed with Part 2 of the Implementation Agreement and award construction contracts including GRIP 6-8, via Network Rail and authorisation for all other contract awards required to implement the project and re-open the branch line for scheduled passenger train services, and
3. Authorise the Client Owned Scope Procurement Plan, attached in appendix 1 and outlined in section 6 of this report entailing the procurement of the (NSC & WECA) scope of works via the route to market identified for each package at an estimated cost of between £0.800M and £1.100M leading up to Full Business Case approval.

4. Authorise the Director of Place to agree terms for the acquisition of land by agreement or any interests in land and to complete acquisition transactions (including the entering into of options for the acquisition and/or use of land and agreements as to compensation and/or accommodation works) as may be required for the proposed railway and associated works, up to a further £500,000, leading up to the decision on the Development Consent Order by the Secretary of State for Transport (anticipated Autumn 2021) as outlined in section 7 of this report.
5. Authorise an indicative budget of up to £14.4M for the 2022-23 financial year up to the award of Part 2 of the Implementation Agreement and award construction contracts including GRIP 6-8, to be met from the allocated Economic Development Funding, within the approved £116.4M total project cost and to add this to the Council's Capital Programme, as set out in section 10 of this report.
6. Authorise the disposal of some historic railway assets within the Portishead area of the dis-used railway to Avon Valley Railway for re-use for their heritage railway line extension into Bath, as set out in section 8 of this report. The historic railway assets are not needed by MetroWest Phase 1 and have to be removed to make way for new railway assets and only have a nominal scrap value. The arrangements for the disposal of these assets will be managed via Network Rail and any additional costs incurred will be passed onto Avon Valley Railway, subject to further discussion between the parties. The assets will not be removed before the decision by the Secretary of State on the Development Consent Order. It is anticipated the assets will be removed in mid to late 2022.

1. Summary of Report

- 1.1. MetroWest Phase 1 (the Project) proposes to upgrade the existing local train service for the Severn Beach Line and the Bath Spa to Bristol Line (Phase 1A) and re-open the Portishead rail line with stations at Portishead and Pill (Phase 1B). The Project is being promoted by North Somerset Council and the West of England Combined Authority (WECA) on behalf of the authorities across the West of England including; Bath & North East Somerset, Bristol City and South Gloucestershire Councils. The Project forms part of a wider MetroWest programme to deliver strategic enhancements to the local rail network over the next 10 years.
- 1.2. This report seeks authorisation to complete Detailed Design GRIP5 (Governance for Railway Investment Projects – a project management framework) for the main works to be delivered by Network Rail. In order to progress the Detailed Design (GRIP 5) it is necessary for NSC and WECA to jointly enter into an Implementation Agreement with Network Rail, before it can issue an invitation to tender to the market. The Implementation Agreement will entail two parts as follows; Part 1 – Detail Design (GRIP5) with an option to proceed with Part 2 – Construction, testing, commissioning, scheme hand back and project close (GRIP 6-8), following Full Business Case approval, which is scheduled for summer 2022.
- 1.3. This report also seeks authorisation for the Client Owned Scope Procurement Plan, entailing the procurement of the NSC & WECA scope of works set out in Table 1 & 2 of appendix 1, via the route to market identified for each package. This report also seeks authorisation to continue the process of acquisition of land by agreement or any interests in land (including the entering into of options for the acquisition and/or

use of land) up to a further £500,000, in advance of the decision on the Development Consent Order by the Secretary of State for Transport (anticipated Autumn 2021).

- 1.4. The final recommendation of this report seeks authorisation to dispose of some historic railway assets within the Portishead area of the dis-used railway to Avon Valley Railway for re-use for their heritage railway line extension into Bath, as set out in section 8.

2. Policy

- 2.1. The project is identified in the Joint Local Transport Plan 4, and North Somerset's Core Strategy as a priority for early delivery. Re-opening the Portishead line was also included in the 2007 Replacement Local Plan and successive Local Plans over a number of decades. MetroWest contributes to the package of infrastructure to support the delivery of housing land in North Somerset through urban intensification, job creation and sustainable growth. As part of a wider package of public transport advancements across North Somerset and the region, the project will promote alternatives to car use and improve the resilience of the existing and future highway network.
- 2.2. The delivery of the project aligns with the vision and priorities set out in the North Somerset Council Corporate Plan 2020 – 2024. The project underpins 'An open, fair and green North Somerset Council', through the delivery of a mode of transport that will be accessible to all including young and elderly people (many of whom have limited access to transport), with step free access to station platforms enhancing transport equality. This is reflected in the Council's priorities to achieve:
 - A thriving and sustainable place
 - A council which empowers and cares about people
 - An open and enabling organisation

Phase 1A – Severn Beach Line & Bristol to Westbury Line

3. Introduction of Enhanced Train Services

- 3.1 MetroWest Phase 1a (led by WECA) is progressing and the works the upgrade level crossings east of Bath are scheduled to be completed by late 2021. The aspiration is the enhanced train service for the Severn Beach line will commence from December 2021 with the enhanced train service for Bristol to Westbury line commencing from May 2022, subject to finalising contractual arrangements and rail industry technical processes.

Phase 1b – Portishead Line

4. Agreements between NSC & WECA

- 4.1. The rest of this report relates to MetroWest Phase 1B – Portishead Line (led jointly by NSC & WECA).
- 4.2. The arrangements between NSC & WECA for project governance, joint working, and sharing of costs and risks are set out in the Third Initial Promotion Agreement (Third IPA) entered into in September 2019. The third IPA is in the process of being

updated through a Side Agreement with the WECA, to extend the 50:50 cost sharing to include all project costs (except revenue costs associated with the operation of the train service), through to the completion of the project, including risks and liabilities arising from NSC entering into Protective Obligations and Protective Provision Agreements with statutory undertakers. The revenue costs associated with the operation of the train service have not yet been concluded with Great Western Railways and the Department for Transport. It is anticipated agreement will be reached in principle by early 2022 and this will be reported back to Full Council for approval.

- 4.3. Authorisation was delegated to the Director of Place by Full Council at its meeting of 10th November 2020, to finalise and enter into the Side Agreement. The terms of the Side Agreement have been agreed and the final draft is in the process of being finalised. It is anticipated it will be signed and sealed before Full Council's meeting on 19th July 2021. In any event it will be necessary for NSC and WECA to complete on the Side Agreement before both parties enter into the Implementation Agreement with Network Rail. Therefore, any delay in completing on the Side Agreement would delay completing on the Implementation Agreement with Network Rail. This means if the Side Agreement is not in place by 19th July 2021 and Full Council determine to agree recommendation 1a), it will not be possible for the Director of Place to enter into the Implementation Agreement until the Side Agreement has firstly been entered into between NSC and WECA.

5. Implementation Agreement

- 5.1. A previous report to Council of 10th November 2020 outlined the Delivery & Procurement Strategy for the procurement of the detailed design and construction of the project, including consideration by the Chief Executives of North Somerset Council and the West of England Combined Authority.
- 5.2. Agreement has been reached with Network Rail on the ownership of the delivery of the technical scope of the project. Agreement has also been reached with Network Rail on the contract structure and route to market to ensure the most efficient and effective delivery model. This entails Network Rail leading on three main design and build contracts as follows:
- A main works contract for all the works to upgrade the freight line and re-build the disused line including most of the associated highway works, via competitive tender.
 - A signalling contract to deliver the proprietary signalling system to enable operation of both passenger and freight trains on the branch line, via an existing Network Rail framework contract.
 - A main line contract for the works to upgrade Parson Street Junction and the works at Bedminster to provide a facility to regulate freight train movements, via an existing Network Rail framework contract.
- 5.3. The advantages of this approach are the majority of the physical works can be delivered by a single tier 1 railway / civils contractor which removes the need for complex physical and contractual interfaces, which has caused issues for other rail projects. Separating the signalling contract into a larger Network Rail contract will

put the project in a better position to engage with the proprietary supplier to get these works completed to specification, on time and on budget. Separating the works to the main line will provide an opportunity to include these works in a larger Network Rail contract for Bristol West Junction and will enable the project to make use of pre-booked line possessions, which reduces risks for the project.

5.4. A Pre-qualification Questionnaire was issued to the market by Network Rail in May 2021, and the invitations to tender for the above contracts are to be issued to the market by Network Rail imminently. In order to enable Network Rail appoint a contractor following the completion of the procurement process it is necessary for NSC & WECA to enter into an Implementation Agreement with Network Rail. The draft Implementation Agreement has been produced and is based on a template agreement approved by Network Rail's regulator, the Office of Rail & Road. The Implementation Agreement sets out the roles and responsibilities of the respective parties, along with the arrangements regarding costs and liabilities.

5.5. The Implementation Agreement entails:

- Part 1 – Detail Design (GRIP5) with an option to proceed with (subject to Full Business Case approval) Part 2
- Part 2 – Construction, testing, commissioning, scheme hand back and project close (GRIP 6-8)

The estimated cost of Part 1 Detail Design (GRIP5) is within the approved project budget of £116.4M. This cost element is part of the current live procurement. It is commercially sensitive and therefore is included confidential appendix 2 . This is scheduled to commence in Q4 of this financial year and substantially conclude by Q2 (with signalling deliverables to follow later) of 2022/23. The estimated cost of Part 2 Construction (GRIP6-8) is commercially sensitive and publishing a specific number at this stage could be financially detrimental to the Council and WECA. The project is currently proceeding within the approved project budget and the Part 2 construction cost will be reported back to Full Council, following the conclusion of the procurement process and designed design GRIP 5, in summer 2022. Construction is scheduled to commence in Q3 of 2022/23 with the construction works substantially completed by Q1 of 2024/25. The opening date of the project with the re-introduction of scheduled passenger train services is to be confirmed, however the aspiration is for this to be by or before September 2024.

5.6. As with the previous Development Services Agreement with Network Rail (for GRIP 2 – 4), it will be necessary to update the Implementation Agreement with Network Rail as the technical development of the project progresses. It is anticipated there will need to at least two updates as follows:

- Implementation Agreement Addendum 1 – November 2021. This will include any changes that need to be incorporated into the delivery contracts as a result of the tender process and as a result of the decision by the Secretary of State on the DCO.
- Implementation Agreement Addendum 2 – February 2022. This will include any changes that need to be incorporated into the delivery contracts as a result of

contract negotiations and the latest available technical information before appointing the contractors for detailed design GRIP 5.

- 5.7. Authorisation is sought through recommendation 1a) of this report to approve delegated authorisation to the Director of Place in consultation with the Executive Member for Assets and Capital Delivery, the Assistant Director Legal & Governance & the Director of Corporate Services to enter into (jointly with the West of England Combined Authority) an Implementation Agreement with Network Rail, Part 1 – Detail Design GRIP5 and subsequent addendums to the agreement, leading up to Full Business Case approval; to be met from already secured project funding.
- 5.8. Following completion of Detailed Design GRIP5 and the approval of the Full Business Case, a separate report will be brought to Council in summer 2022 seeking authorisation to proceed with Part 2 of the Implementation Agreement and award construction contracts including GRIP 6-8, via Network Rail and authorisation for all other contract awards required to implement the project and re-open the branch line for scheduled passenger train services.
- 5.9. The terms of the Implementation Agreement are currently being concluded between NSC, WECA and Network Rail. The agreement comprises the following structure:
- 1 Definitions and Interpretation
 - 2 Obligations of the Customer
 - 3 Obligations of Network Rail
 - 4 Necessary Consents
 - 5 Additional Expense
 - 6 Variations
 - 7 Compensation and Relief
 - 8 Intellectual Property
 - 9 Completion
 - 10 Network Rail Costs
 - 11 Value Added Tax
 - 12 Limitation of Liability
 - 13 Force Majeure Events
 - 14 Suspension and Termination
 - 14A Extraordinary Termination
 - 15 Consequences of Termination, or Completion
 - 16 Confidential Information
 - 17 Escalation and Dispute resolution
 - 18 Notices
 - 19 Not Used.
 - 20 Anti-Bribery and Slavery
 - 21 Equality and Diversity
 - 22 Confidential Data and Protection of Personal and Confidential Data and Information
 - 23 Freedom of Information
 - 24 Miscellaneous
- Schedule 1: Contact Particulars and Representatives
Schedule 2: Network Rail Costs

6. Procurement Plan for Delivery of the Client (NSC & WECA) Scope

- 6.1. The remaining scope to be delivered by the Client Team (NSC & WECA) in summary includes:
- Ecology & Landscape Planting
 - Highway Bridges
 - Highways & Drainage
- 6.2. Appendix 1 sets out details of the scope of works, timescales, estimated contract value, estimated spend before Full Business Case approval (before Summer 2022) and the route to market. Some of the works require highly specialist expertise and consequently a direct award contractual arrangement is required, for the reasons set out in the table. For some of the works an existing framework contract can be used, with the rest of the works to be competitively tendered.
- 6.3. In addition to the Client Owned Scope of works set out in appendix 1, the Client Team will also continue to require the ongoing specialist support as previously set out in the report to the Council Executive of 29th April 2020, including:
- Rail engineering technical support prior to the appointment of the GRIP 5 contractor - Network Rail
 - Legal services - Womble Bond Dickinson
 - Land agent – Ardent
 - Environmental Impact Assessment services – Jacobs
- 6.4. The spend to date against contract values is shown in the following table.

Professional Service	Contractor	Value of contract Approved April 2020	Spend to date
Rail engineering technical support	Network Rail	Up to £2.0M	£978,452
Legal services	Womble Bond Dickinson	Up to £2.9M	£1,551,069
Land agent	Ardent	Up to £0.9M	£346,984
Environmental Impact Assessment services	Jacobs	Up to £1.9M	£721,391

- 6.5. Authorisation is sought through recommendation 3) of this report for the Client Owned Scope Procurement Plan, attached in appendix 1 entailing the procurement of the (NSC & WECA) scope of works via the route to market identified for each package at an estimated cost of between £0.800M and £1.10M leading up to Full Business Case approval.

6. Land Acquisition

- 7.1. While the DCO examination closed on 19th April 2021, the Client Team continue to engage with landowners to reach agreement on the acquisition of permanent land, temporary land and land rights. Progress is being made and it is now necessary to refresh a previous authorisation for the acquisition of land, made by Full Council on 19th June 2019, which provided authorisation for land acquisition leading up to and during the DCO Examination.
- 7.2. Since June 2019 land acquisitions including option agreements have totalled approx. £360,000. Recommendation 4) of this report seeks authorisation for a land acquisition spend of up to a further £500,000 post the DCO Examination leading up to the DCO decision by the Secretary of State, which totals less than the total £1M agreed by Full Council on 19th June 2019.
- 7.3. Where agreement has not been reached with landowners upon receipt of the DCO decision by the Secretary of State, on the assumption the decision will be to grant the DCO powers, the Client Team will then proceed with the legal process of issuing notices for the compulsory acquisition of the remaining land.

8. Avon Valley Heritage Railway Proposal for the disposal of some historic railway assets owned by North Somerset Council

- 8.1. The Avon Valley Railway (AVR) is a three-mile heritage railway operating between Oldland Common (South Gloucestershire) and Avon Riverside (Bath & North East Somerset). Its head office at Bitton is the principal station, offering visitors the opportunity to experience a bye-gone age of steam and heritage diesel-hauled trains along the old Midland Railway branch between Mangotsfield and Bath. The original line was closed in 1966.
- 8.2. A dedicated team of volunteers have restored the railway, bit by bit since the late 1970s. The station at Bitton was a derelict shell and is now home to the railway's ticket office, administration offices and gift shop. Recent additions have included an extension across the River Avon (2004) and a popular restaurant and café (2008) serving a wide range of snacks and meals. The railway which is a registered charity is believed to be the third biggest tourist attraction in the local area.
- 8.3. AVR proposes to extend the railway to Newbridge in Bath where there is a large park and ride car park. The Avon Valley Railway has the legal power to operate under a Transport & Works Order and is managed by the Office of Rail & Road, who ensures a suitable Safety Management System is in place. The extension will require permission from the landowner (Bath & North East Somerset Council) and appropriate regulatory approvals.
- 8.4. AVR's proposal is to recover the following historic railway assets within the Portishead area of the dis-used line:
 - Rails
 - Chairs and chair screws
 - Clips
 - Fishplates and fishbolts
 - All elements of points (noses, switches, stock rails, stretch bars, slide chairs)
 - 2 x rail built buffer stop assemblies

- 5 or 6 steel location cabinets



The assets are located in the areas shown below.



- 8.5. The historic railway assets are not needed by MetroWest Phase 1 and have to be removed to make way for new railway assets and only have a nominal scrap value. The arrangements for the disposal of these assets will be managed via Network Rail, in consultation with the MetroWest Phase 1 Client Team and AVR. The assets will not be removed before the decision by the Secretary of State on the Development Consent Order. It is anticipated the assets will be removed in mid to late 2022.
- 8.6. Recommendation 5) of this report seeks authorisation to dispose of these assets to AVR on the basis that any additional costs incurred will be passed onto Avon Valley Railway, subject to further discussion between the parties.

9. Consultation

- 9.1. Extensive public consultation has been undertaken over several years on the project proposals. The response to the consultations was very high with almost 2,000 separate responses received over both stages and the level of support for the scheme is also very high with 95% of community respondents fully or mainly in support of the proposals. Further information on the project consultation is set out in the DCO Consultation Report which is a DCO application document and is available from:

<https://infrastructure.planninginspectorate.gov.uk/projects/south-west/portishead-branch-line-metrowest-phase-1/?ipcsection=docs>

10. Financial Implications

- 10.1. The estimated capital out-turn cost of the project is £116.4M, as set out in detail in the project Outline Business Case in December 2017, of which £24.460M has been spent to date, up to April 2021. The project budget sources and spend are set out in the table below.

Project Budget

Funding Source	Total Funding Secured	Spend to date 2020-21 Q4
Local Growth Funding	£18,868,719	£18,868,719
Contributions to date by four Councils	£4,413,000	£4,413,000
NSC additional contribution Dec 17	£5,860,000	£1,178,617
WECA contribution Infrastructure Fund Dec 17	£5,860,000	£0
Economic Development Funding	£49,531,281	£0
DfT Contribution via CP6 Rail Network Enhancements Pipeline	£31,900,000	£0
Total	£116,433,000	£24,460,336

- 10.2. As shown in the table above, all the allocated Local Growth Funding has been spent along with the original cash contributions made by the four unitary councils.
- 10.3. The forecast spend for 2021/22 is up to £7,392,650, as approved by Council at its meeting on 23rd February 2021. This is to be funded from the WECA Infrastructure Fund and Economic Development Funding.
- 10.4. The forecast spend for the 2022-23 financial year up to the award of Part 2 of the Implementation Agreement and award construction contracts including GRIP 6-8, is up to £14.4M. Authorisation is sought through recommendation 5 for budget approval of £14.4M for the 2022-23 financial year up to the award of Part 2 of the Implementation Agreement and to add this to the Council's Capital Programme, to be met from the allocated Economic Development Funding, within the approved £116.4M total project cost. The £14.4M is required to meet the cost of Network Rail's contractor for detailed design GRIP 5, Network Rail technical and project management costs, industry fees, access costs, early enabling works, legal fees, long lead items, costs of booking possessions, land acquisition costs, land agent costs, ecology surveys, ecology works, business case costs and client project management costs.
- 10.5. The project has a quantified risk register with a total risk allowance of £22M allocated within the £116M overall project budget. However, there are some key financial risks, which require highlighting as follows.
- Review of the impact of Covid-19 on market prices and programme implications. Discussions are taking place at a senior level of understand the full impact of this fast moving situation. The invitation to tender bids for the Network Rail main works contractor are scheduled to be submitted in October 2021. This will give us detailed costings, from which we can extrapolate any Covid-19 impact.
 - As the project is utilising capital funding there remains a risk of revenue reversion should the project not be delivered. In such an event if part of the project is delivered it may be possible to limit the revenue costs arising,

through the consent of the DCO, delivery of phase 1A, and the purchase of any assets.

- Further work is underway to refresh estimated delivery costs in anticipation of the DCO consent being confirmed by the Secretary of State for Transport in October 2021. Any change to the £116M current estimated capital out-turn will be taken through the Governance boards and reviewed in the context of the existing project risk allowance, design and procurement options; with any recommendations from these boards being brought back to Council, with the objective of maintaining the £116M budget allocation.

10.6. There are a number of factors that have potential to cause project cost escalation beyond the risks identified in the risk register and provided for within the £22M risk budget. These factors are sometimes referred to as the known unknowns. These factors include:

- the project is dependent upon multiple formal processes that are not in the control of NSC / WECA,
- the project entails a major investment on an asset base that is not owned and operated by NSC / WECA, and this results in additional commercial complexity that cannot be fully known at this stage,
- there has been a number of high profile cost escalations within the rail industry in recent years, from very large national rail projects, to regional and local projects.

10.7. These wider project risks are under continual review by the project team, sponsors and the S151 officers. Achieving a successful decision by the Secretary of State for Transport by October 2021 will reduce the wider risk exposure and will provide greater certainty that the project will be delivered. Furthermore, the completion of the detailed design (GRIP5) and the Full Business Case by summer 2022 (which will identify the remaining delivery risks) will enable a decision to be made jointly by NSC Full Council and WECA Committee on the award of contracts to deliver the project.

11. Legal Powers and Implications

11.1. The Development Consent Order has a range of legal implications which are set out in the report to Council at its meeting of 25th June 2019.

<https://apps.n-somerset.gov.uk/Meetings/document/report/NSCPM-38-603>

12. Climate Change and Environmental Implications

12.1. MetroWest Phase 1 requires an Environmental Statement to support the Development Consent Order (DCO) application. Climate change and environmental impacts have been assessed in the Environmental Statement. The Environmental Statement is a key DCO application document and is available from:

<https://metrowestphase1.org/dco-application/>

13. Risk Management

13.1. The overall project risk register is currently being reviewed in the context of Covid-19, which is not a risk, it is an issue (a risk that has occurred). Therefore, all major

risks relating to programme delay, cost increase, market failure etc will all be reviewed in the context of Covid-19 with the appropriate likelihood and impact assessments made, including any revisions to the risk mitigation.

- 13.2. Risks at the project and programme level are managed through the WoE Strategic Rail Board, which reports to the WoE Joint Committee. While at this stage there remains potential for the scheme costs to increase as the scheme design and technical work progresses, this risk applies to all major transport schemes up to completion of the design, consents / approvals and the tendering of the construction works. As the project is a third party railway project the principal risks of implementing the proposals have to be met by the Council and WECA as the co-promoters. The Council and WECA each have a 50% share of the risks and there is a total risk allowance of £22M, within the project capital budget. Following the Full Business Case a further agreement between the Council and WECA will be needed for the construction phase of the project. For further details about risk refer to the report to Full Council of 10th November 2020.

<https://apps.n-somerset.gov.uk/Meetings/document/report/NSCPM-38-603>

14. Equality Implications

- 14.1. An Equality Impact Assessment has been undertaken and was attached to the report to Full Council of 10th November 2020.

15. Corporate Implications

- 15.1. The improvement of the transport network is a key priority in the Corporate Plan. The project will play a significant role in Supporting Economic Prosperity (Aim 5) and Protecting and Improving the Environment (Aim 3). There are no specific cross-service implications.

16. Options Considered

- 16.1. The WoE Joint Transport Board (superseded by the WoE Joint Committee) considered three main options at its meeting on 17th March 2017 and determined to take a staged approach to the delivery of the scheme. Chapter 3 Scheme Development and Alternatives Considered of the Environmental Statement which is a DCO application documents sets out the options considered in detail. The document is available from:

<https://infrastructure.planninginspectorate.gov.uk/projects/south-west/portishead-branch-line-metrowest-phase-1/?ipcsection=docs>

- 16.2. The wider context for the project option selection is as follows; the local rail network across the West of England is under-developed in comparison with similar sized city regions, the local highway network is congested at key locations on arterial corridors and the overall demand for transport continues to increase. The focus of the project option selection was to address the project objectives by making effective use of dis-used / under-used strategic rail corridors in parallel with enhancements to existing local rail lines.

Author

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Appendices

Appendix 1 - Client Owned Scope Procurement Plan

Appendix 2 – Confidential paper

Background Papers

Report to Council 23rd February 2021 MetroWest Phase 1 - 2021/22 Budget

<https://n-somerset.moderngov.co.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CIId=169&MIId=718&Ver=4>

Report to Council 10th November 2020 MetroWest Phase 1 Update - Programme and

Procurement - <https://apps.n-somerset.gov.uk/Meetings/document/report/NSCPM-38-603>

Report to Executive 29th April 2020 MetroWest Phase 1 Update – Budget, Professional Services Contracts and Procurement Approvals

<https://n->

[somerset.moderngov.co.uk/CeListDocuments.aspx?CommitteId=169&MeetingId=196&DF=10%2f11%2f2020&Ver=2](https://n-somerset.moderngov.co.uk/CeListDocuments.aspx?CommitteId=169&MeetingId=196&DF=10%2f11%2f2020&Ver=2)

Report to Council 25th June 2019 MetroWest Phase 1 Submission of Development Consent Order Application and Associated Approvals

<https://n->

[somerset.moderngov.co.uk/CeListDocuments.aspx?CommitteId=169&MeetingId=187&DF=25%2f06%2f2019&Ver=2](https://n-somerset.moderngov.co.uk/CeListDocuments.aspx?CommitteId=169&MeetingId=187&DF=25%2f06%2f2019&Ver=2)

Appendix 1 – Client Owned Scope Procurement Plan**Appendix 2 – Confidential paper**

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Procurement Plan

MetroWest Phase 1 - Client Owned Scope

01 July 2021

BACKGROUND:

MetroWest Phase 1 (the Project) proposes to upgrade the existing local train service for the Severn Beach Line and the Bath Spa to Bristol Line (Phase 1A) and re-open the Portishead rail line with stations at Portishead and Pill (Phase 1B). The Project is being promoted by North Somerset Council and the West of England Combined Authority (WECA) on behalf of the authorities across the West of England including; Bath & North East Somerset, Bristol City and South Gloucestershire Councils. The Project forms part of a wider MetroWest programme to deliver strategic enhancements to the local rail network over the next 10 years.

DECISION:

It is requested that the Client Owned Scope Procurement Plan be authorised. The Procurement Plan entails the procurement of the NSC & WECA scope of works set out in the sections below, via the route to market identified for each of the works set out in the over-arching work packages.

REASONS:

Introduction

Delivery of the client owned scope is integral to the MetroWest Phase 1. Several of the work packages are required to be delivered prior to the start of the main railway works and is therefore on the critical path to delivery of MetroWest Phase 1. This includes some ecological works and works to highway bridges.

The Commissioning Plan requirements have been dealt with by the-

- Report of 29th April 2020 to the Executive see section 5
- Report Of 10th November 2020 to Full Council, see section 6

Requirement

The remaining scope to be delivered by the Client Team (which comprises NSC and WECA) includes:

- Ecology & Landscape Planting
- Highway Bridges
- Highways & Drainage

These works are essential for the delivery of the MetroWest Phase 1 project and interface with the main construction works to re-open the Portishead branch line. A description of these works, their contract value and estimated spend before Full Business Case (up to summer 2022) are set out in Table 1.

MetroWest Phase 1 is being jointly promoted by North Somerset Council and the West of England Combined Authority (WECA). The joint working arrangements and cost sharing between the two parties is set out in the Initial Promotion Agreement

ver3 and a joint Client Team has been established with each party providing specific expertise and resources.

The procurement of the client owned scope of the MetroWest Phase 1 works will be led by NSC

Table 1 – Contract value of works and estimated spend before Full Business Case approval (up to Summer 2022)

Package	Description of Works	Start of contract	Estimated Contract Value	Estimated Spend before Full Business Case Approval
Ecology & Landscape Planting	Translocation of species along the whole railway corridor including final European Protected Species licences. Ecologist & botanist supervision advising on the Avon Gorge Habitat Regulation Assessment constraints and wider constraints along the dis-used railway.	July 2021	Up to £1,200,000 over a three year period	Up to £400,000
	Ecology and landscape planting works	July 2021	Up to £225,000 over a three year period	Up to £75,000
	Ecological compensation works at Leigh Woods as defined by Package 2 of the Habitat Regulation Assessment.	Autumn 2023	Up to £50,000	£0
	Ecology works (Lineside contractor) erect fences to protect vegetation to be retained, translocate protected species and destructive searches.	March 2022	Up to £75,000	£25,000
Highway Bridges	Assessment and design of work Gas Works pedestrian bridge entailing defect rectification.	Assessment of structures – June 2021 Design work – September 2021	up to £39,000	up to £39,000
	Assessment and design of work to Royal Portbury Dock over rail bridge entailing defect rectification and vehicle restraint works	Design work – September 2021	up to £20,000	up to £20,000
	Assessment and design of work to Marsh Lane over rail bridge entailing defect rectification and vehicle restraint works	Assessment of structures – July 2021 Design work – September 2021	up to £42,000	up to £42,000

Appendix 1 to MetroWest Phase 1 – Delivery Update report to Full Council 19th July 2021

	Assessment and design of work to Sheepway over rail bridge entailing defect rectification and vehicle restraint works	Assessment of structures – July 2021 Design work – September 2021	up to £45,000	up to £45,000
	Assessment and design of work to Old Station Rd over rail bridge entailing defect rectification and vehicle restraint works	Assessment of structures – July 2021 Design work – September 2021	up to £42,000	up to £42,000
	Construction works to four road over rail bridges and one pedestrian bridge entailing defect rectification and vehicle restraint works.	January 2022	up to £600,000	up to £300,000
Highways & Drainage	Hardware and software (MOVA) upgrade to the signals of the Ashton Vale Road and Winterstoke Road junction in Bristol.	September 2023	Up to £30,000	£0
	Detailed design & construction of extension to the left turn lane from Winterstoke Road into Ashton Vale Road, Bristol including and diversion and protection of utilities	January 2023	Up to £750,000	£0
	Detailed design & construction of improvements to bus stops on Lodway/ Heywood Road (Memorial Club) Pill to improve highway visibility and to provide fully accessible bus stops.	January 2023	Up to £75,000	£0
	Detailed design & construction of improvements to highway drainage at Underbanks and Avon Road, Pill.	January 2023	Up to £100,000	£0
	Detailed design & construction of extension to footway on Station Road and associated improvements between Monmouth Road and Pill station forecourt on Station Road.	January 2023	Up to £50,000	£0
	Ground investigation works for highway works, temporary and permanent compounds, haul roads and associated ancillary works.	Sept 2021	Up to £99,000	Up to £99,000
	Miscellaneous technical investigations, surveys and minor civils works outside of the main railway corridor eg works to various footpath links.	January 2023	Up to £250,000	£0
	TOTAL			Up to £3,692,000

Route to market

As set out in Table 2, a range of different route to market approaches are proposed for each work package and a justification for each approach has been set out. Some of the work packages require highly specialist expertise and consequently a direct award contractual arrangement is required, for the reasons set out in Table 2. For some of the work packages an existing framework contract can be used. The remaining work packages, will be competitively tendered.

Table 2 – Route to market

Package	Description of Works	Route to Market	Notes	Duration of works
Ecology & Landscape Planting	Translocation of species along the whole railway corridor including final European Protected Species licences. Ecologist & botanist supervision advising on the Avon Gorge Habitat Regulation Assessment constraints and wider constraints along the disused railway.	Jacobs direct award via formal cost estimates at each stage which will be assessed for value for money. Gateway reviews including use of performance indicators will take place by the project sponsors.	<p>This highly specialist work requires ecologist & botanist embedded knowledge of the project including specific constraints in the Avon Gorge SAC relating to the losses of ancient woodland and extremely rare flora which is documented in the Habitats Regulation Assessment, Avon Gorge Vegetation Management Plan, Statement of Common Ground with Natural England and other DCO documents. The ecology and botany interfaces along the 15 km railway and complex and many interfaces at the sub-species level transcend cross both the operational railway and the disused railway. It is therefore essential to maintain continuity of this specialist knowledge into the delivery phase of the project to avoid unnecessary delays and or additional costs.</p> <p>The Council Executive approved delegated authorisation for up to £1,900,000 via direct award contracts with Jacobs at its meeting on 29th April 2020. The spend to date is just over £700,000.</p>	July 2021 to Spring 2024 (33 months).

Appendix 1 to MetroWest Phase 1 – Delivery Update report to Full Council 19th July 2021

	Ecology and landscape planting works	Streets & Open Spaces Term Maintenance contract (Glendale)	The term maintenance contractor quotes for each job. The experience to date has been positive in terms of cost and quality and the contractor has been responsive.	July 2021 to Spring 2024 (33 months).
	Ecological compensation works at Leigh Woods as defined by Package 2 of the Habitat Regulation Assessment.	The Forestry Commission (Forestry England) direct award	These works are to be undertaken on Forestry Commission land and MetroWest has entered into a wide ranging option agreement including provision for Forestry Commission to undertake these works, which is the preferred option given the proximity of the site to the Avon Gorge SAC and very rare flora.	Autumn 2023 to Spring 2024 (6 months)
	Ecology works (Lineside contractor) erect fences to protect vegetation to be retained, translocate protected species and destructive searches.	Invite quotations from local contractors	Translocation starts in March 2022, fencing needs to be done before September 2022	March 2022 to Spring 2024 (33 months)
Highway Bridges	Assessment and design of work to Gas works pedestrian bridge entailing defect rectification.	WECA professional Services Framework		July 2021 to Sept 2022 (15 months)
	Assessment and design of work to Royal Portbury Dock Road Bridge	WECA professional Services Framework		July 2021 to Sept 2022 (15 months)
	Assessment and design of work to Marsh Lane highway bridge entailing defect rectification and vehicle restraint works.	WECA professional Services Framework		July 2021 to Sept 2022 (15 months)
	Assessment and design of work to Sheepway highway bridge entailing defect rectification and vehicle restraint works.	WECA professional Services Framework		July 2021 to Sept 2022 (15 months)
	Assessment and design of work to Old Station highway bridge entailing defect rectification and vehicle restraint works.	WECA professional Services Framework		July 2021 to Sept 2022 (15 months)
	Construction works to four road over rail bridges and one pedestrian bridge	Competitive procurement (open)	Procurement will use NEC4 Engineering & construction	January 2022 to Sept 2022 (9 months)

	entailing defect rectification and vehicle restraint works.		Contract	
Highways & Drainage (work elements shaded green in this table will be delivered in a single lot).	Hardware and software (MOVA) upgrade to the signals of the Ashton Vale Road and Winterstoke Road junction in Bristol.	Bristol City Council Traffic Signals Team direct award	This is a highly specialised hardware and software upgrade, which the Bristol City Council Traffic Signals Team needs to lead and deliver.	September 2023 to Spring 2024 (6 months)
	Detailed design & construction of extension to the left turn lane from Winterstoke Road into Ashton Vale Road, Bristol including and diversion and protection of utilities	Competitive procurement	Procurement will use the WECA PSF framework, NEC4 Engineering & construction Contract and will be procured in a single lot with other work elements shaded green in this table.	January 2023 to Spring 2024 (15 months)
	Detailed design & construction of improvements to bus stops on Lodway/ Heywood Road (Memorial Club) Pill to improve highway visibility and to provide fully accessible bus stops.	Competitive procurement	Procurement will use NEC4 Engineering & construction Contract and will be procured in a single lot with other work elements shaded green in this table.	January 2023 to Spring 2024 (15 months)
	Detailed design & construction of improvements to highway drainage at Underbanks and Avon Road, Pill.	Competitive procurement	Procurement will use NEC4 Engineering & construction Contract and will be procured in a single lot with other work elements shaded green in this table.	January 2023 to Spring 2024 (15 months)
	Detailed design & construction of extension to footway on Station Road and associated improvements between Monmouth Road and Pill station forecourt on Station Road.	Competitive procurement	Procurement will use NEC4 Engineering & construction Contract and will be procured in a single lot with other work elements shaded green in this table.	January 2023 to Spring 2024 (15 months)
	Ground investigation works for highway works, temporary and permanent compounds, haul roads and associated ancillary works.	Invite 5 written quotations from specialist contractors	These ground investigation works must be undertaken this summer (2021) to feed into the start of the project detailed design starting in early 2022. The duration of the works	Sept 2021 to Dec 2021

			including the results of lab testing is minimum of 4 months. Any delays to completing these works could impact the overall project programme.	
	Miscellaneous technical investigations, surveys and minor civils works outside of the main railway corridor eg works to various footpath links.	Competitive procurement	Procurement will use NEC4 Engineering & construction Contract and will be procured in a single lot with other work elements shaded green in this table.	January 2023 to Spring 2024 (15 months)

Timescales

Table 3 sets out the timescales for the procurement and delivery of the client owned scope.

Table 3 – Procurement and delivery timescales

Package	Description of Works	Procurement timescales	Timescales for work
Ecology & Landscape Planting	Translocation of species along the whole railway corridor including EPS licences. Ecologist & botanist supervision advising on the Avon Gorge Habitat Regulation Assessment constraints and wider constraints along the dis-used railway.	Contract award: July2021	Ecologist and botanist supervision is on-going with the quantum of work increasing leading up to the start of the main construction works in Autumn 2022 and continuing throughout construction up to Spring 2024.
	Ecology and landscape planting works	Contract award: July2021	Pre-construction ecology works to be delivered by Autumn 2022. Ecology works during main construction works between Autumn 2022 and Spring 2024.
	Ecological compensation works at Leigh Woods as defined by Package 2 of the Habitat Regulation Assessment.	Contract award: September 2023	The works must be completed by spring 2024, before the opening of MetroWest P1 and the start of passenger train services.
	Ecology works (Lineside contractor) erect fences to protect vegetation to be retained, translocate protected species and destructive searches.	Contract award: March 2022.	Pre-construction ecology works to start in March 2022 and be delivered by Autumn 2022. Ecology works during main construction works between Autumn 2022 and Spring 2024.

Highway Bridges	Assessment and design of work to Gas works pedestrian bridge entailing defect rectification.	Work specification – March 2021 Contract award for assessment of structures – July 2021 Contract award for design work – September 2021	The works must be completed by Sept 2022, as the MetroWest main works contractor is programmed to start in Autumn 2022.
	Assessment and design of work to Royal Portbury Dock Road Bridge	Work specification – March 2021 Contract award for design work – September 2021	
	Assessment and design of work to Marsh Lane highway bridge entailing defect rectification and vehicle restraint works.	Work specification – March 2021 Contract award for assessment of structures – July 2021 Contract award for design work – September 2021	
	Assessment and design of work to Sheepway highway bridge entailing defect rectification and vehicle restraint works.	Work specification – March 2021 Contract award for assessment of structures – July 2021 Contract award for design work – September 2021	
	Assessment and design of work to Old Station highway bridge entailing defect rectification and vehicle restraint works.	Work specification – March 2021 Contract award for assessment of structures – July 2021 Contract award for design work – September 2021	
	Construction works to four road over rail bridges and one pedestrian bridge entailing defect rectification and vehicle restraint works.	Develop tender documents – October 2021 Submission window – Nov – Dec 2021 Evaluation - January 2022	The works must be completed by Sept 2022, as the MetroWest main works contractor is programmed to start in Autumn 2022.

		Approval – January 2022 Contract award: January 2022	
Highways & Drainage (work elements shaded green in this table will be delivered in a single lot).	Hardware and software (MOVA) upgrade to the signals of the Ashton Vale Road and Winterstoke Road junction in Bristol.	Work specification – November 2022 Contract award: January 2023	The works must be completed by Spring 2024, before the opening of MetroWest P1 and the start of passenger train services.
	Detailed design & construction of extension to the left turn lane from Winterstoke Road into Ashton Vale Road, Bristol including and diversion and protection of utilities	Develop tender documents – October 2022 Submission window – Nov – Dec 2022 Evaluation - December 2022 Approval – January 2023 Contract award: January 2023	The works must be completed by Spring 2024, before the opening of MetroWest P1 and the start of passenger train services.
	Detailed design & construction of improvements to bus stops on Lodway/ Heywood Road (Memorial Club) Pill to improve highway visibility and to provide fully accessible bus stops.	Develop tender documents – October 2022 Submission window – Nov – Dec 2022 Evaluation - December 2022 Approval – January 2023 Contract award: January 2023	The works must be completed by Spring 2024, before the opening of MetroWest P1 and the start of passenger train services.
	Detailed design & construction of improvements to highway drainage at Underbanks and Avon Road, Pill.	Develop tender documents – October 2022 Submission window – Nov – Dec 2022 Evaluation - December 2022 Approval – January 2023 Contract award: January 2023	The works must be completed by Spring 2024, before the opening of MetroWest P1 and the start of passenger train services.
	Detailed design & construction of extension to footway on Station Road and associated improvements between	Develop tender documents – October 2022	The works must be completed by Spring 2024, before the opening of MetroWest P1 and the

	<p>Monmouth Road and Pill station forecourt on Station Road.</p>	<p>Submission window – Nov – Dec 2022</p> <p>Evaluation - December 2022</p> <p>Approval – January 2023</p> <p>Contract award: January 2023</p>	<p>start of passenger train services.</p>
	<p>Ground investigation works for highway works, temporary and permanent compounds, haul roads and associated ancillary works.</p>	<p>Detailed technical brief and lab testing requirements – July 2021</p> <p>Invitation for quotations issued to specialist contractors - Aug 2021 Contract Award – Sept 2021</p> <p>Contract to be awarded based on: a) ability to meet the technical requirements, b) ability to undertake the works in the required timescale, and c) the price</p>	<p>These ground investigation works must be undertaken this summer (2021) to feed into the start of the project detailed design starting in early 2022. The duration of the works including the results of lab testing is minimum of 4 months. Any delays to completing these works could impact the overall project programme.</p>
	<p>Miscellaneous technical investigations, surveys and minor civils works outside of the main railway corridor eg works to various footpath links.</p>	<p>Develop tender documents – October 2022</p> <p>Submission window – Nov – Dec 2022</p> <p>Evaluation - December 2022</p> <p>Approval – January 2023</p> <p>Contract award: January 2023</p>	<p>The works must be completed by spring 2024, before the opening of MetroWest P1 and the start of passenger train services</p>

Governance

MetroWest Phase 1 is being jointly promoted by North Somerset Council and the West of England Combined Authority (WECA). The joint working arrangements and cost sharing between the two parties is set out in the Initial Promotion Agreement ver3 and a joint Client Team has been established with each party providing specific expertise and resources.

Governance will be as follows:

- Strategic Procurement Service Lead – Miranda Huntley
- Contract Manager – Richard Matthews / James Willcock
- For bridge works only - Chandan Bhumpelly

- Highways Technical Approval - Colin Chandler

The estimated capital out-turn cost of the project is £116.4M, as set out in detail in the project Outline Business Case in December 2017. The budget for 2021/22 is £7,392,650, as approved by Council at its meeting on 23rd February 2021.

The scheme programme is highly complex and requires the Client Procurement Plan to be progressed now with some expenditure being incurred ahead of Full Business Case approval. Full Business Case approval is scheduled to be confirmed in summer 2022. By that point all the detailed design for the Client owned scope will have been completed. Authorisation will be sought in summer 2022 from NSC Full Council (and WECA Committee) to award construction contracts for the whole scheme.

Market / Suppliers

The work packages are generally routine works that comprise a small part of the overall scope of MetroWest Phase 1 and as the intention is to bundle the schemes this should make it more attractive to the market. As set out in Table 2, some of the work package elements will be direct awards to suppliers that have already been working on the MetroWest Phase 1 project.

Social Value, Sustainability & VCSE

In accordance with the council's Social Value Policy, 10% of the quality weighting will be for tangible social value commitments which the bidders will propose. Within the evaluation of tenders, we will assess quality responses around Social Value against the following objectives which are detailed within the Council's Social Value policy:

- **Increased employment to local people**
 - Increased employment to those most removed from the labour market
 - Increased employment to young people
- **Increased use of local supply chain**
- **Reducing negative and promoting positive environmental impacts**
- **Increased health and wellbeing for all**
 - Supporting schools and life-long learning
 - Developing cultural heritage
 - Stronger local voluntary/community sector

The items highlighted are likely to be most relevant to the proposed work packages.

Evaluation

The evaluation methodology will follow North Somerset's standard procurement process. The evaluation criteria for competitive tenders is set out in Table 4.

Table 4 – Evaluation

Package	Description of Works	Evaluation Weightings
Highway Bridges	Construction works to four road over rail bridges and one pedestrian bridge entailing defect rectification and vehicle restraint works.	The weightings will depend on the level of work required following the bridge assessment work. Estimated to be as follows: Price 70-65, Quality 30-35

Highways & Drainage (work elements shaded green in this table will be delivered in a single lot).	Detailed design & construction of extension to the left turn lane from Winterstoke Road into Ashton Vale Road, Bristol including and diversion and protection of utilities	Standard highway works, so lower quality weighting acceptable. Price 70, Quality 30
	Detailed design & construction of improvements to bus stops on Lodway/ Heywood Road (Memorial Club) Pill to improve highway visibility and to provide fully accessible bus stops.	Standard highway works, so lower quality weighting acceptable. Price 70, Quality 30
	Detailed design & construction of improvements to highway drainage at Underbanks and Avon Road, Pill.	Standard highway works, so lower quality weighting acceptable. Price 70, Quality 30
	Detailed design & construction of extension to footway on Station Road and associated improvements between Monmouth Road and Pill station forecourt on Station Road.	Standard highway works, so lower quality weighting acceptable. Price 70, Quality 30
	Miscellaneous technical investigations, surveys and minor civils works outside of the main railway corridor eg works to various footpath links.	Standard highway works, so lower quality weighting acceptable. Price 70, Quality 30

Each of the questions with the quality submission will be scored using the scoring matrix shown in Table 5 below.

Table 5 – Scoring Matrix

Score	Classification	Award Criteria
5	Excellent	A response that inspires confidence; specification is fully met and is robustly and clearly demonstrated and evidenced. Full evidence as to how the contract will be fulfilled either by demonstrating past experience or through a clear process of implementation.
4	Good	A response supported by good evidence/examples of the Bidders' relevant ability and/or gives the council a good level of confidence in the Bidders' ability. All requirements are met and evidence is provided to support the answers demonstrating sufficiency, compliance and either actual experience or a process of implementation.
3	Satisfactory	A response that is acceptable and meets the minimum requirement but remains limited and could have been expanded upon.
2	Weak	A response only partially satisfying the requirement with deficiencies apparent. Not supported by sufficient breadth or sufficient quality of evidence/examples and provides the council a limited level of confidence in the Bidders' ability to deliver the specification.
1	Inadequate	A response that has material omissions not supported by sufficient breadth and sufficient quality of

		evidence/examples. Overall the response provides the council with a very low level of confidence in the Bidders' ability to deliver the specification.
0	Unsatisfactory	No response or response does not provide any relevant information and does not answer the question.

Price: Based on the submission of activity schedule? The lowest total price will receive the maximum score of 100% and the prices of all other tenders will be expressed as a percentage of the maximum score

Quality: Quality will be assessed against the project outputs, behaviours and project management including assessment on the following topics.

1. Business capability and resource
2. Professional expertise
3. Commercial offering
4. Project team
5. Track record
6. Carbon advocacy and Social Value contribution

The evaluation team will comprise the following:

- James Willcock (MetroWest Phase 1 Programme Manager)
- Richard Matthews (Principal Policy Officer, MetroWest Phase 1)
- Highways engineer (to be assigned)
- Chandan Bhumpelly (Lead Engineer, Structures) – *for bridge competitive tenders only*

Contract Management

Contract management will entail management via the WECA PSF framework, some direct award contracts and use of the NEC4 PSC & NEC4 Engineering & Construction Contracts. The contracts will include performance indicators and there will be regular contract performance meetings with contractors.

To provide certainty of out-turn cost the NEC3 Engineering and Construction Contract Option A: Priced Contract with activity schedule should be used. With Option A, the contractor offers to provide the works described in the contract for a sum of money. The contract provides for certain risks to be carried by the client which will result in the lump sum being adjusted if the compensation events occur. The activity schedule is normally written by the contractor since they know what activities will be carried out. Each activity is priced as a lump sum by the contractor which is the amount paid when the contractor has completed the activity. In pricing an activity, the contractor takes responsibility for estimating quantities and resources, and assessing and pricing risks that the contractor owns.

The contracts will be managed by Richard Matthews (Principal Transport Policy officer, MetroWest Phase 1) and James Willcock (MetroWest Phase 1 Programme Manager).

OPTIONS CONSIDERED:

As already detailed above, the following packages are being direct awarded due to the specialist nature of the work:

- Translocation of species along the whole railway corridor including EPS licences. Ecologist & botanist supervision advising on the Avon Gorge Habitat Regulation Assessment constraints and wider constraints along the dis-used railway (Jacobs).
- Ecological compensation works at Leigh Woods as defined by Package 2 of the Habitat Regulation Assessment (Forestry Commission).
- Hardware and software (MOVA) upgrade to the signals of the Ashton Vale Road and Winterstoke Road junction in Bristol (Bristol City Council).
- Assessment and design of work to the highway bridges.
- The Ecology and landscape planting works package will be awarded to our term maintenance contractor, Glendale, as this is the most efficient way of procuring this type of work.

The Highways Term Maintenance Contract has been considered as an option for the delivery of the highway works, however the expertise does not exist in this contract to deliver the complexities of the structural works to the bridges and while the other highway elements are standard highway works, the main part of the works are within Bristol City Council on a key transport link at Winterstoke road and as such the ability to assess and select a quality contractor is critical. It was decided to package the other smaller highways works together with the works to Winterstoke road as this would be more efficient to procure and manage.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

The financial implications are covered in the main report.

LEGAL POWERS AND IMPLICATIONS

The procurements will be compliant with the Public Contract Regulations 2015.

CLIMATE CHANGE AND ENVIRONMENTAL IMPLICATIONS

Through the supply chain procurement and project documentation it is proposed to enable:

- Leadership – to create the environment for change;
- Innovation – to be an enabler of change within the supply chain, and;
- Methodology – to provide the mechanisms that enable the supply chain to respond.

PAS2080:2016 Carbon Management in Infrastructure provides a framework on all sectors and value chain members, on how to manage whole life carbon when delivering infrastructure assets. Use of the PAS will promote reduced carbon, reduced cost of infrastructure delivery and foster more collaboration across the supply chain.

Procurement will consider the PAS2080 specification, and include this as a quality metric in scoring the submitted tenders, to ensure carbon reduction is a key consideration in design and construction of the Programme.

The proposal is to undertake the design, development and delivery of the programme to align with the principals within the specification PAS2080. Suppliers may detail their own specific carbon management and measurement systems.

As part of the aim to encourage innovative solutions to carbon reduction, it is proposed that a sustainability toolkit be developed to identify sustainability outcomes to be achieved. This is to be developed in collaboration with the Contractor and Employers Agent and the purpose specified to put tangible metrics against sustainability into the project as goals.

All supply chain partners will play an active and key role in ensuring the council’s ambition of carbon reduction and biodiversity net gain is secured and achieved through both as an active member of the project team and through as necessary application of statutory and non-statutory legislation in the design, development and delivery of the proposed infrastructure.

The procurement process will also challenge the suppliers on their carbon footprint and how infrastructure can be delivered in the most sustainable way including project specific requirements around communications, meetings and also at an organisational level with their corporate approach and initiatives to sustainability, including the use of energy, transport, purchasing and staff. It is proposed to appoint a carbon advocate to help the project team realise its carbon reduction ambition and provide a framework for future projects.

The project team will also be working with the suppliers on ensuring efficient supply chains, maximising the use of both sustainable materials and renewables including primary sourcing of power.

The outcomes that can be secured from all parties working collaboratively towards a common goal of carbon reduction;

- Reduced carbon, reduced cost of infrastructure;
- Promotion of innovation delivering wider society and community benefits;
- Contribute to tackling climate change;
- More sustainable solutions providing a blueprint for future projects;
- Identification of carbon offsetting to mitigate capital carbon created.

CONSULTATION

Previous consultation is covered in the main report. The market will be advised of upcoming work packages.

RISK MANAGEMENT

Risk management is covered in the main report. Several key risks have been identified in the procurement of the work packages and are summarised in Table 6.

Table 6 – Procurement risks

Description	Impact	Mitigation
Lack of market appetite	Limited returns and reduce value for money	Early market engagement to ensure market has resources available to bid and carry out works.

Description	Impact	Mitigation
Lack of OJEU and Public Contract Regulations compliance	Rejected tender	Procurement procedure and contract independently checked by the Council.
Lack of council engineering resource involved in the project	Specification, contract and evaluation sub-standard?	Ensure adequate council resource appointed to project or Appoint consultant and legal advisor with experience of NEC4 to support procurement?
Lack of alignment with project outcomes	Benefits not achieved and/or needs not met	Specify contract and performance metrics aligned with agreed Project Brief and critical success factors.

EQUALITY IMPLICATIONS

Have you undertaken an Equality Impact Assessment? Yes

Equality implications are covered in the main report.

CORPORATE IMPLICATIONS

Corporate implications are covered in the main report.

By virtue of paragraph(s) 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A
of the Local Government Act 1972.

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