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| Meeting: | <b>JOINT COMMITTEE ON STRATEGIC PLANNING AND TRANSPORT</b> |
| Date:    | June 2021  |
| From:    | Joint Officer Steering Group                               |

## **Transport Update**

### **1 SUMMARY**

1.1 This report provides an update on the transport related issues across the Greater Nottingham conurbation. The report gives an update on traffic and transport demand in response to the COVID – 19 restriction changes together with information on the Active travel fund and the bus quality partnership as well as information regarding recent funding awards.

### **2 BACKGROUND**

#### **Covid-19 Transport and Infrastructure Recovery Coordinating Group**

2.1 The City Council has been monitoring the transport network to understand the effects of the restrictions on travel brought in to control the Covid 19 outbreak. This monitoring has continued over the last 12 months. Non-essential Shops were reopened in mid-April and pubs and restaurants were able to start serving people outside.

- Car Travel is currently recovering quicker than Public Transport and with car traffic levels now at 90% of normal.
- Bus patronage has started to rise slowly. Throughout January and February bus patronage was around 25% of normal. this has gradually increased as university students returned in March and restrictions were eased in April. Bus patronage is now at approximately 50% of normal levels.
- Tram Patronage was at 25% following the easing of restrictions however this figure has fallen back due to city centre works to the trams lines.
- In general rail has seen a much smaller recovery than bus or tram.
- Cycling is the only mode that is consistently recorded at over 100% of pre-covid levels. This is also the case nationally.

#### **Active Travel Fund and Continuity Fund Covid Recovery Measures**

2.2 At the last joint planning committee, we reported on measures funded through the active travel fund. This section of the report gives an outline of the measure taken by the city council to affect behaviour change and to help people to overcome barriers to walking and cycling.

2.3 It is essential to give people the skills, confidence and motivation to cycle more. The council has developed a number of effective behaviour change packages in partnership with local and national cycling providers such as Sustrans, Ridewise, Nottingham Bikeworks and British Cycling to support our businesses, our communities and more recently our schools, to provide a comprehensive package of active travel services to encourage and support new and returning cyclists.

2.4 This puts Nottingham in a strong position to capture the benefits of a renaissance in cycling as the UK emerges from the COVID19 crisis, and is key to helping us to deliver on our zero carbon 2028 vision. As previously mentioned in this report our monitoring

has provided evidence of a real increase in cycling levels over the pandemic, in particular at weekends indicating sustained increase in leisure cycling, with the potential to convert this to more frequent everyday commuter cycling.

- 2.5 To date our active travel behaviour change projects have been funded by DfT revenue grant funding from the Access Fund (in partnership with Derby CC) boosted by additional COVID emergency response funding through the Active Travel Fund and s31 Travel Demand Management fund. In March DfT has announced a further 12 months of interim revenue grant for active travel behaviour change for 21/22 under the new Capability Fund, in advance of a longer term 3 year settlement.
- 2.6 Nottingham has also been provisionally allocated £400,432 from the Capability Fund. We are awaiting confirmation of the grant award and a Portfolio Holder DDM report to accept the grant, approve allocations and associated contract extensions will be circulated shortly.
- 2.7 The aim of this programme is to make cycling a realistic and attractive option for everyday journeys of up to 5 miles for travel to work, school and leisure and social activities. Cycling is not possible for everyone so it is also important to promote walking as well as supporting other inclusive cycling options such as ebikes and use of adaptive bikes.
- 2.8 The active travel behaviour change programme is split into three areas 1) support for businesses and jobseekers 2) support for communities and 3) support for schools. The project aims to provide a comprehensive package of services tailored to each audience underpinned by Transport Nottingham communications through web and social media:
- 2.9 Active Travel to work supporting businesses job seekers and key workers:
  - The Workplace Travel Service offers an active travel support package for organisations and businesses as to promote sustainable travel options and to employees commute to work by bike. This offer is targeted to businesses that apply for Workplace Travel grant funding for support with cycle parking, and facilities such as showers and changing, pool bikes and ebikes.
  - The jobseeker support package provides journey planning sessions to explore travel options and referral into free services offering a mix of a reconditioned bike with helmet, cycle training, basic bike mechanics training, BuildaBike courses to address barriers to accessing employment and training.
  - Nottingham Bike Aid grew out of the existing business and jobseeker cycle support package as an emergency response and provides refurbished bikes receive a helmet, journey planning and safe cycling advice to low income key workers.
- 2.10 Active travel to work supporting communities
  - Community Cycle Centres provide regular fortnightly pop up cycle events in four locations from March to October where citizens can get help, advice and free cycle training, either in family groups or one to one. Aim is to help more people take up cycling and for returning cyclists who need a bike skills refresher to build their confidence to cycle more often for everyday journeys
  - British Cycling Partnership provides the next steps for those that are enjoying a return to cycling and want to get more involved and provides a programme of informal and

led rides, community cycle sessions at Harvey Hadden, and work with cycle clubs and interest groups, training for ride leaders and school based sessions to complement the Bikeability training package.

- LovetoRide cycle challenge will provide 4 seasonal challenge windows with a all year Ride 365 campaign platform offering competitions and prizes and other incentives to encourage and celebrate cycling for people at all levels of activity.
- We are also developing proposals for social prescribing ebike library pilot and some small scale neighbourhood engagement pilots once Capability Fund allocation is confirmed

## 2.11 Active Travel to schools

- All schools are eligible to sign up to Modeshift STARS to provided structured and accredited approach to guide schools through a travel action plan process to promote more sustainable travel to school.
- Working with Sustrans to provide school engagement package for 12 schools in the School Streets programme giving them access to assemblies and curriculum activities along with a grant scheme to fund measures on site such as cycle and scooter parking.
- Funding secured for a school focussed offer through the Ridewise bike library to provide loans of bikes to children and families for travel to school.
- Living Streets is running a walking incentive promotion in 10 schools in the city as part of national DfT funded programme.
- Supported by citywide school travel specific comms. Also looking at providing Travel Choices information packs in the areas around the additional schools in the phase 2 of the School Street programme.

## **Advanced Quality Partnership Scheme**

2.12 The Nottingham Bus Quality Partnership, comprising all local bus operators, public transport officers and representatives from DVLA and Nottingham Campaign for Better Transport. Has come to agreement on the conditions for a revised bus partnership scheme (known as an “Advanced Quality Partnership Scheme” Bus Services Act 2017). Which will regulate the use of bus stops and codify quality standards for all bus services using them, with the objective of raising standards and improving both the passenger experience and integration, efficiency and punctuality of bus services.

2.13 The Bus Partnership Advanced Quality Partnership Scheme will be implemented from April 2021 which will lock in the Euro VI emissions criteria as a minimum standard for operating form city centre shops.

2.14 When implemented the new partnership scheme will deliver:

- A minimum Euro VI emission standard for all buses using stops in the city centre.
- A Euro VI Emission standard for Broadmarsh bus station upon reopening and Victoria Bus Station from 2022.
- An updated council commitment to invest in bus priority infrastructure and digital information and ticketing technology as part of the Transforming Cities Program.

- An up to date slot booking schedule and long-term commitment to multi-operator smart ticketing.
- 2.15 The cost of the new scheme will be fully met by external grant funding, primarily in the form of the capital investment from the Transforming Cities Fund.

### **Bidding Opportunities – Levelling up fund**

- 2.16 Both the City and Council councils are actively investigating bidding opportunities through the governments levelling up fund. Bids are at an early stage of development and more information will be provided at the next meeting.

## **3 RECOMMENDATION(S)**

- 3.1 It is recommended that the contents of this report be noted.

## **4 BACKGROUND PAPERS REFERRED TO IN COMPILING THIS REPORT**

none

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