

Meeting:	JOINT COMMITTEE ON STRATEGIC PLANNING AND TRANSPORT
Date:	September 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 and County Councils have 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 18 months. On the 19th July the UK entered step 4 of the Government roadmap, this meant an end to social distancing and a gradual return to work over the summer period. We will refer to Normal levels as those which occurred during the week before the first national lockdown in March 2020.

- Car traffic peaked at around 95% of normal levels in June and has now (as of 15th August) dropped to 86% of normal due to the school holidays.
- Throughout the early part of the year bus patronage started to rise and reach a peak of 66% of normal levels in early June.
- Tram patronage was at 25% following the easing of restrictions. This has now grown to around 45% in early August, although this figure is affected by overhead line issues in early August and the summer holidays.
- Cycling is the only mode that is consistently recorded at over 100% of pre-covid levels. This is also the case nationally.

Capability Fund

2.2.1 The Department for Transport (DfT) announced the local transport authority revenue funding allocations under their new Capability Fund to support active travel behaviour change measures for 2021/22. The funding is to be used for interventions and activities that promote increased levels of physical activity through walking and cycling for everyday journeys including access to new and existing employment, education and training. Nottingham City has been allocated £400,432 and Nottinghamshire County £276,845 of revenue grant for active travel behaviour change projects for spend in 2021/22 to support the capital investment in walking and cycling infrastructure under the Active Travel fund and Transforming Cities programmes.

The Measures being funded are outlined as follows:

- 1) **Transport Nottingham Behaviour change communications and activities**, targeted active travel promotions and campaigns including web, social, print and suite of everyday cycling videos to showcase cycling for local trips in different areas of the city.

Contribution towards staffing costs as well as monitoring and evaluation activities. The County is also funding additional design and consultation of ongoing LCWIP work.

- 2) **Workplace Travel Service (WTS)**, Continuation of specialist active travel offer to support businesses in the WTS programme, comprising: Business travel advisor package providing 30 business webinars and staff travel events with employee PTP, to work in depth with 15 organisations referred through the council's Workplace Travel Service, supported by Active travel services at work sites including cycle training, ebike training, Dr Bike, led rides, cycle awareness for professional drivers bespoke to each business Contribution to business ecargo bike loan pilot project. A similar approach within the County will work with 20 employers countywide targeting 2000 individual employees.
- 3) **Job Seeker Support package** (to be commissioned as extension to a joint Nottingham - Derby contract with contribution from Derby City Council for Derby area) providing dedicated travel advisor to support 250 jobseekers in each city, as well as tailored cycle support package for jobseekers. Within the County the equivalent numbers are 500 jobseekers countywide.
- 4) **Community activation programme** – this will include community based activities continuation of the partnerships with British Cycling and a school streets support package.

These projects form a comprehensive programme of active travel measures to support our communities, our businesses, jobseekers and schools which will ensure as many citizens as possible living and working in the city will benefit from the investment in walking and cycling infrastructure and support a carbon neutral approach to restart and recovery.

Active Travel Fund Capital Bid

- 2.3 Linked to the covid pandemic and to contribute to the decarbonisation of transport, the Government is promoting more walking and cycling (Active Travel). They have worked with Nottingham and Nottinghamshire councils to develop a D2N2 wide Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan (LCWIP). New national design guidance has been published which aims to improve the quality of cycling and walking schemes. Further funding has now been made available through a third tranche of Active Travel Funding. This latest grant is for permanent cycling and walking infrastructure.

The city council has bid for £2.2m of funding and this will enable improvements for walking and cycling along the St Anns Well Road. This corridor has been prioritised as it serves the north of the City where cycling provision is currently lacking compared to other areas. It has the support of the Portfolio Holder and ward councillors. Design work for the scheme is at an advanced stage. There is no requirement to provide any match funding. The scheme is scalable if less funding is provided meaning no additional financial burden would be imposed on the Council.

The County Council's bid for funding includes two potential schemes within the Greater Nottingham conurbation:

- Provision of a new facility along an existing bridleway and a mixed traffic facility for cyclists on Baulk Lane, Stapleford to improve walking/cycling connections between Stapleford and the Toton tram terminus

- Upgrade of a section of the path along the River Trent to improve walking/cycling facilities between the sporting venues in West Bridgford and Holme Pierrepont. The proposals will help deliver actions included in the County Council's Covid-19 Economic Recovery Action Plan, Visitor Economy Strategy and will enhance the proposed cycling and walking improvements on Regatta Way.

The funding available will cover all elements of the projects including construction, fees and officer time for project management.

Transport Decarbonisation Plan

- 2.3 The Department for Transport published its transport decarbonisation plan on the 14th July 2021. The report sets out a plan for reducing carbon emissions from transport. It recognises that transport is now the largest contributor to UK domestic greenhouse gas emissions (over 55% of total emissions) with cars and taxis making up the largest contribution of emissions from the transport sector. The commitments contained within the plan are summarised below.

Increased Cycling and Walking

The plan recognises that increasing the number of people cycling and walking has the potential to substantially reduce the number of car journeys particularly in urban areas. Trips below five miles represent 58% of all private car journeys and provide an opportunity for switching to cycling and walking.

The plan commits to investing £2bn in funding over five years with the aim that all trips in towns and cities will be cycled or walked by 2030. The plan also commits to delivering a world class cycling and walking network in England by 2040.

The plan aims to continue promoting Low Traffic Neighbourhoods and promoting walking to school for primary age children.

The plan also aims to ensure that cycling and walking routes are better integrated with other modes of transport particularly public transport.

Zero Emission buses and coaches

The plan commits to delivering the National Bus Strategy. It specifies that bus services should be better integrated with other modes of transport – with more bus routes serving railway stations and improved integration with cycling and walking routes and networks – and provides a roadmap to decarbonise. The strategy also outlines that on key radial routes there should be significant investment in bus priority.

The government will also consult on the modernisation of the bus operator services grant (BSOG). It proposes to change the BOSG to enable better take up of zero emission vehicles. The take up of zero emission buses is crucial to improving the carbon footprint of the sector, and the imbalance between the existing support provided to diesel buses through BSOG against that provided to zero emission buses needs to be addressed.

The plan also sets out commitments to support the delivery of 4000 new zero emission buses and the infrastructure to support them and will also consult on phasing out the sale of non-zero emission buses.

Zero emission cars and vans

Removing tailpipe emissions from car vans and motorcycles is fundamental to transport decarbonisation. From 2030 the government will end the sale of new petrol and diesel cars and vans 10 years earlier than previously planned. From 2035 all new cars and vans must be zero emission at the tailpipe between then new cars and vans will only be able to be sold if they offer significant zero emission capability. The government expects that the price difference between new electric and petrol or diesel alternatives will reduce to zero around the mid 2020's.

A range of other measures will be introducing in order to encourage the uptake of electric vehicles. These include:

- The introduction of a new vehicle CO₂ regulatory regime (around 2024 subject to consultation)
- Addition grants will be made available to help reduce the price of new electric vehicles
- Changes to the tax regime will be introduced to make electric company cars more attractive.
- Green number plates for new zero emissions vehicles were introduced in December 2020. The plates make it easier for vehicles to be identified as zero emission. This helps local authorities to design and implement new policies, such as zero emission zones, to incentivise people to own and drive a ZEV.
- Investing £1.3 billion to accelerate the rollout of charging infrastructure on motorways, on streets, in homes and workplaces
- An Electric Vehicle Infrastructure Strategy will be published in 2021
- The government will continue to fund grants for charge points in homes, workplaces and on-street until at least 2024/25
- £15 million of investment in 2021/22 will help highway authorities to make their signals working effectively again. Investing in the maintenance of this essential asset will not only improve emissions but also enable new technologies and data systems that will support the delivery of a digital and connected road network.

Sales of nonzero emission vehicles are expected to be phased out by 2040.

Decarbonising our railways

Rail is one of the greenest modes of transport nationally with 38% of the network already electrified. The plan aims to deliver a net zero rail network by 2050 with sustained carbon reductions along the way. Targets to remove all diesel only trains for passengers and freight by 2050 have been included.

A key part of the plan will be a programme of electrification across the network. Detailed plans for further electrification of the network should be released shortly with the integrated rail plan (see below). Notwithstanding the additional electrification the plan aims to support new technologies such as battery and hydrogen trains.

The plan also aims to increase capacity for passenger services across the rail network; however no specific plans have been included for this. A commitment to work with the industry to modernise fares and ticketing is also included. The plan will be to increase convenience for passengers and ensure that no sudden price increases occur. Again few details have been included in the plan which show how this will be achieved.

Sustainable transport links to rail stations will also be improved with additional secure cycle storage being provided at stations and linking station to the network of cycling and walking infrastructure.

Delivering a zero emission freight and logistics sector

The vast majority of freight is moved by vehicles on our roads. Removing these emissions requires the development and deployment of clean technologies, as well as the use of more sustainable forms of transport, many of which are already available including cargo bikes and rail. The plan includes the following commitments to reduce carbon emissions from the freight sector:

- Consulting Phase out the sales of non-zero emission HGV's by 2035 for vehicles 26 tonnes and under.
- There will be plans to demonstrate zero emission Technology on UK roads by the end of this year
- Stimulate the demand for zero emission HGV's through various financial incentives.
- The plan includes commitments to transform last mile delivery.
- The plan also supports the shift of freight transport from road to rail and other more sustainable forms of transport such as e-cargo bikes and inland waterways.

Integrated Rail Plan

- 2.4 The publication of the integrated rail plan has now been delayed until the autumn. The plan was expected to include details of the electrification of the Midlands Mainline and the HS2 link to Toton.

Clifton Bridge Works Update

- 2.5 The overall works programme for repairs and strengthening of Clifton Bridge are progressing on schedule. While lanes have been closed Highways England have been taking the opportunity to carry out other maintenance work that would have been needed in the future. Towards the end of September another southbound lane is to be reopened which will also allow the slip road from Queens Drive to be re-opened. Some weekend lane closures and some complete overnight closures will continue. All lanes are expected to reopen by the end of November and original traffic layout restored.

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

Contact Officers

Chris Carter, Development and Growth, Nottingham City Council

Tel: 0115 8763940

Email: chris.carter@nottinghamcity.gov.uk

Kevin Sharman, Place Department, Nottinghamshire County Council

Tel: 0115 9772970

Email: kevin.sharman@nottscc.gov.uk