

**Report title: Draft Kirklees Transport Strategy, Policy Themes & Consultation Plan**

<b>Meeting</b>	<b>Cabinet</b>
<b>Date</b>	<b>11 February 2025</b>
<b>Cabinet Member</b> (if applicable)	<b>Cllr Moses Crook</b>
<b>Key Decision Eligible for Call In</b>	<b>Yes</b> <b>No</b>
<b>Purpose of Report</b>  To present the Draft Kirklees Transport Strategy including policy themes contained within the Draft Strategy document. Decisions are needed to commence a district wide public consultation on the Strategy and to endorse the Consultation Plan.	
<b>Recommendations</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• That Cabinet approve the draft strategy at Appendix 1 to this report.</li> <li>• That Cabinet agree to commence public consultation as detailed in this report.</li> <li>• That Cabinet approve the commission of a report detailing the outcome of the public consultation, to present in 2025 when seeking approval of the final strategy.</li> </ul>	
<b>Reasons for Recommendations</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To have the necessary authority to progress consultation and engagement with the public on the Draft Transport Strategy. Maintain progress towards the formal adoption of the strategy in Summer 2025.</li> </ul>	
<b>Resource Implication:</b> The delivery of the strategy is not generating a resource request or aligne with a specific budget. The cost to develop the Transport Strategy, included all consultation and engagement activity, is derived from external WYCA funding. Capacity is being regularly reviewed and assessed throughout the process.	
<b>Date signed off by <u>Executive Director</u> &amp; name</b>	David Shepherd
<b>Is it also signed off by the Service Director for Finance?</b>	Kevin Mulvaney
<b>Is it also signed off by the Service Director for Legal and Commissioning (Monitoring Officer)?</b>	Samantha Lawton

**Electoral wards affected:** Kirklees-wide consultation/strategy, all wards affected.

**Ward councillors consulted:** Portfolio holders have been briefed on the draft strategy, with wider member engagement due to take place in February 2025.

**Public or private:** Public

**Has GDPR been considered?** Yes.

## **1. Executive Summary**

The Council's Transport Strategy & Policy team have been working with our partners and key stakeholders to develop the Kirklees Draft Transport Strategy. The draft strategy is presented to Cabinet for consideration and endorsement with a request to commence public consultation. A better approach to transport in Kirklees will help to deliver against core Council priorities: good transport is a core factor in the support of investment and regeneration, it helps places to thrive and allows communities to become more connected. A stronger focus on more sustainable forms of transport, which supports mode shift, will help to deliver a greener, healthier Kirklees and work in tandem with our Net Zero ambitions. The adoption of a distinct Transport Strategy will direct this approach and allow the Council to work to better transport for Kirklees and its communities.

The purpose of this report is to present the draft strategy for consultation and to present the plan in consulting and engaging the public and other stakeholders on this. This will include a series of activities which are set out in the communications plan. This has been developed with our internal Comms Team.

Following the feedback and comments received a final Transport Strategy will be presented at a future Cabinet for adoption in Summer 2024.

## **2. Information required to take a decision**

The Transport Strategy and Policy Team have been working on the production of a draft strategy since early 2024. Alongside external consultants, a Literature Review, Communications Plan and Draft Strategy document have been developed.

Before this strategy can be finalised, we will be needing to consult and engage with the public and other appropriate stakeholders and partners.

Once adopted, the Strategy will establish the Council's transport ambition, support decision making, direct future funding bids, project activity and spend. The Strategy will remain fully aligned with the key priorities detailed in the Council Plan.

It may be necessary to make minor updates to the strategy annually to ensure references in the documentation remain relevant (e.g. references to an initiative or project). Such updates will also ensure alignment to local, regional and national policy or legislative changes. This will be done in conjunction with our monitoring and evaluation exercises, to determine progress in meeting our overall strategy objectives.

## **3. Implications for the Council**

## **Council Plan**

The Transport Strategy is centred around five key strategic objectives:

1. Improving health and wellbeing
2. Protecting our environment
3. Transformational public transport investments
4. Developing inclusive places with better connections
5. Prioritising economic growth

The Transport Strategy will help contribute to the following shared outcomes detailed in the Council Plan: Well, Independent, Sustainable Economy, Safe and Cohesive, Clean and Green. The Transport Strategy is also in alignment with the Key Strategies (Kirklees Health and Wellbeing Strategy, Inclusive Communities Framework, Inclusive Economy Strategy and the Environment Strategy).

Policies within the strategy all contribute to achieving one or more of these objectives, which are aligned with the Council priorities. In particular; achieving a greener, healthier Kirklees and addressing the challenges of Climate Change. And the need to invest and regenerate our towns and villages to support our diverse places and communities to flourish.

### **3.1 Financial Implications**

The development of the Council's Transport Strategy and the activities within the Communications Plan is supported by external WYCA funding. There are no financial implications linked to Council's revenue budgets.

The Transport Strategy, once adopted, will support future strategic decision making around funding bids in delivering the wider ambition.

### **3.2 Legal Implications**

The Council has decided to undertake a non-statutory consultation on its proposals, which is set to commence in March 2025, to improve the quality of the decision making. A fair consultation is one undertaken when proposals are at a formative stage; sufficient reasons are given for proposals to allow intelligent consideration together with criteria that will be applied when considering proposals and which factors will be considered decisive or of substantial importance; adequate time is given for consideration and response; and the product of consultation must be conscientiously taken into account before any final decision is taken. Members should carefully consider the outcomes of the consultation when considering the recommendations put forward by officers in this report including the IIA and all other relevant issues.

The council must comply with its Public Sector Equality Duty in section 149 Equality Act 2010. An Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) of the proposed options is advisable. The Council when exercising its functions must have "due regard to the need to": a) Eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct that is prohibited by or under this Act. b) Advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it. c) Foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it. Section 149(7) sets out 7

protected characteristics namely: age, disability, gender reassignment; pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex or sexual orientation.

### **3.3 Other (e.g. Risk, Integrated Impact Assessment or Human Resources)**

#### **Risk**

The Draft Transport Strategy has been drafted to present a future transport ambition that is fair, balanced and reflects the diverse geographies of Kirklees. There will remain a reputational risk around the extent of representation of certain transport modes.

In managing expectations, it is important we consult and engage with our partners, communities and businesses in ensuring a balanced strategy is developed.

#### **Integrated Impact Assessment (IIA)**

An IIA has been completed to ensure protected characteristic groups (as defined in the Public Sector Equality Duty, under the Equality Act 2010) are not adversely impacted.

#### [Integrated Impact Assessments - IntegratedImpactAssessment](#)

We will ensure environmental impacts across Kirklees remain in support of Council's Climate Emergency commitments.

## **4 Consultation Plan**

Transport Strategy and Policy Team have been working closely with our Communications Team to develop our communication plan to support the consultation and engagement activity we will be undertaking before the strategy is adopted. The Strategy is a document which will impact the whole of Kirklees, and we aim to encourage a wide a response as possible. Transport is something which affects all of us, no matter how we travel and get around, and we want to encourage engagement with this issue. We are keen to ensure that the messaging around the strategy is of the right balance, to influence a positive narrative with the public and other relevant stakeholders.

There will be some social media activity around the consultation which will commence in early January 2025. A press release on the strategy will be released in January 2025, prior to the publication of the Scrutiny Report, after which the proposed consultation will be in the public domain. The public consultation will be live for 8 weeks, and will commence on the 3<sup>rd</sup> March. There will be external advertisement of the survey, which has been planned by our internal communications team. This will include advertisements in public spaces, on social media, and on forms of public transport. We will also be advertising the strategy in council buildings across the district, and promoting the consultation through council-managed newsletters, forums, meetings and community groups.

There will be a survey questionnaire, which will also be live for a period of 8 weeks. This will primarily be available online, with alternative formats available on request. Throughout the live consultation period, a number of face-to-face engagement events will be held across the district. Rather than holding events where information is presented to residents, these will be 'drop-in'

events, where members of the Transport, Strategy and Policy Team will be available to answer questions on the Kirklees Transport Strategy, and to discuss the questionnaire or help residents fill this in. These events will be located at rail and bus stations, supermarket, markets, Health Centres and Religious Centres. We have consulted with the Communities Team on this approach, and they have recommended that 'drop-in' sessions, at spaces where residents naturally visit, is likely to be the most successfully for survey response rates. The response will be analysed and presented at future Cabinet meeting. Census data is being used to derive benchmark figures for target response rates from the following demographics: Gender, Age, Disability, Employment Status and Usual Mode of Travel.

We are also taking steps to consult directly with local community groups and organisations which work with particular cohorts of residents, including those who have reduced mobility or identify as having a disability, older or elderly residents, and those who may not speak English as their first language. We are aware that these particular cohorts may face barriers to transport which others do not, and we want to understand these barriers as fully as possible.

We are working to correspond directly with schools, colleges and other educational institutions, to gain access to the views of younger people and familial groups. Again, we understand that these particular groups may face specific barriers to transport which we hope to address within the final strategy document.

We are also keen to hear from businesses in Kirklees, and we are working closely with the Council's dedicated business team on how to best approach this.

Several live consultations relating to transport which took place during the 2024 Autumn period by WYCA. To avoid this period of high consultation activity, we plan to commence our live consultation period from the week commencing the 3<sup>rd</sup> March, to help avoid confusion or misunderstanding among survey respondents, and to avoid consultation fatigue.

## **5 Engagement**

We have already undertaken early engagement activity on the draft strategy in late October 2024. These include workshop sessions booked in with relevant internal technical colleagues, WYCA, the other WYCA districts, and cross-border districts outside of West Yorkshire. This engagement activity has helped to inform our draft strategy document.

We are conscious of the need to align with other Council plans and strategies. Throughout the process, we have been meeting regularly with Officers regarding the Local Plan, to ensure full alignment, and we have met with Officers who have developed adopted Council strategies to ensure cohesion here.

The Portfolio Holder has been briefed on and agreed to the strategy and policies. We have also consulted other relevant Portfolio Holders where we have cross-cutting priorities. Member engagement will be undertaken in February 2025, with a planned in-person event, where members will have the opportunity to review the draft strategy in detail, and ask any questions they may have. We will continue liaising closely with members during the live consultation period, and during the formal adoption of the strategy.

## **6 Options**

### **6.1 Options Considered**

There are no other acceptable options as an alternative to the proposed actions detailed in this report.

## 6.2 Reasons for recommended Option

Not Applicable.

## 7 Next steps and timelines

Should Cabinet approve, the public consultation and engagement line with the Communications Plan, officers will consider comments made during the consultation. Officers will then present a final Transport Strategy at Cabinet in Spring 2024 and hope to publish the document by Summer 2024.

## 8 Contact officer

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## 9 Background Papers and History of Decisions

None.

## 10 Appendices

Appendix 1 - Draft Transport Strategy Document

## 11 Service Director responsible

Edward Highfield – Service Director, Skills & Regeneration