



## WMCA Board

<b>Date</b>	8 December 2017
<b>Report title</b>	West Midlands Cycle Design Guidance
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<b>Report has been considered by</b>	Strategic Transport Officers Group - 2 October 2017 Programme Board - 24 November 2017

### Recommendation(s) for action or decision:

#### WMCA Board is recommended to:

- (1) To approve the adoption of the West Midlands Cycle Design Guidance.
- (2) To continue to support a common approach to cycling across the West Midlands.

## **1.0 Purpose**

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to advise the WMCA board on the adoption of a single West Midlands Cycle Design Guidance, developed by national cycle planning experts Phil Jones Associates.
- 1.2 This report also updates WMCA Board on supporting work for delivery of the West Midlands Cycle Design Guidance.

## **2.0 Background**

- 2.1 The West Midlands Cycling Charter was developed and approved in 2014.
- 2.2 The West Midlands Cycling Charter outlines the key principles that all partners have adopted to deliver the required step change in cycling across the West Midlands Metropolitan area. It represents a shared vision and approach that will increase cycling levels across the West Midlands.
- 2.3 A detailed Action Plan was outlined in September 2015 and is currently being delivered with the target of increasing levels of cycling to 5% of all trips by 2023.
- 2.4 The Cycling Charter is based on the following four principles:
  - Leadership and Profile
  - Cycling Network
  - Promoting and Encouraging Cycling
  - Funding

## **3.0 Impact on the Delivery of the Strategic Transport Plan**

- 3.1 The Metropolitan Tier: Rail and Rapid Transit Network, Key Route Network, Strategic Cycle Network
- 3.2 The Local Tier

Approximately 41% of journeys under 2 miles in the West Midlands are made by car. There is therefore great scope for a substantially increased role for sustainable travel including cycling, which can be a viable choice for many people. Smarter choice initiatives have an important role to play in the approach, as do improvements to cycle-public transport integration to support longer journeys. The Cycling Charter aims to influence higher standards of cycling infrastructure provision, including segregated cycle routes and improved canal towpath provision.

- 3.3 The policies that are supported include:
  - Policy 1 – To accommodate increased travel demand by existing transport capacity and new sustainable transport capacity.
  - Policy 4 – To improve connections to new economic development locations to help them flourish, primarily through sustainable transport connections.
  - Policy 6 – To improve connections to areas of deprivation.
  - Policy 8 – To improve connections to new housing development locations to help them flourish, primarily through sustainable transport connections.

- Policy 10 – To help tackle climate change by ensuring a large decrease in greenhouse gases from the West Midlands Metropolitan Area’s transport system.
- Policy 11 – To significantly increase the amount of active travel in the West Midlands Metropolitan Areas.
- Policy 12 – To significantly reduce road traffic casualty numbers and severity.
- Policy 14 – To increase the accessibility of shops, services and other desired destinations for socially excluded people.

3.4 ‘Movement for Growth: The West Midlands Strategic Transport Plan’ makes reference to strategic cycling routes in the network and design guidance:

*Paragraph 4.54 “A new Metropolitan Cycle Network will be developed to serve main flow corridors and to raise the profile of cycling in the West Midlands. This network will be comprised of high quality core cycle routes supplemented by quietways using a combination of green corridors, well maintained canal towpaths and low traffic flow and speed streets. The Metropolitan Cycle Network will be integrated with local cycle networks across the West Midlands”.*

*Paragraph 4.55 “The strategic routes in this network will be designed in accordance with well-respected design guidelines such as the Welsh Government’s Active Travel Design Guidance and will include a cycle route audit tool. The strategic routes will be designed to ensure cycle journey times on the routes are competitive to those on main roads and we will seek a peer review of our initial routes by internationally acclaimed Dutch or Danish colleagues”*

3.5 Across the UK, there are on average 2 deaths and 60 injuries per week to cyclists, and 1 death and 14 injuries to pedestrians. In TfWM’s commitment to developing the region’s transport systems, there is a recognition in Movement for Growth that road safety needs to be addressed through development of a road safety strategy.

#### **4.0 Wider WMCA Implications**

4.1 Transport for West Midlands (TfWM) will work with the Constituent Local Authorities to manage cross border relationships and align cycling and walking schemes to ensure consistency in access and quality. Approximately 57% of total journeys in the West Midlands cross an administrative boundary. Several members of the West Midlands Cycling Charter Steering Group have remits that cover the wider WMCA 3 LEP geography.

4.2 The **WMCA Strategic Economic Plan (SEP)** has a vision to develop the West Midlands into the best region in the UK to do business. Eight Priority Actions are identified in the SEP including HS2 Growth, housing and exploiting the economic geography.

4.3 The SEP has a vision to increase the number of jobs from 1.9m to 2.4m by 2030. Healthy life expectancy will rise from 61.5 years to 62.3 for men and from 62.3 years to 63.9 years for women. The rate of housing construction will increase to 1.9m homes by 2030.

4.4 Cycling and walking schemes support the vision of the SEP by providing a low cost, accessible, and active form of transport that addresses the low levels of physical activity in the region. Social inclusion and access to employment objectives are also supported through development of spaces that connect people with movement and place. These schemes will also help mitigate local transport challenges including poor air quality and congestion.

4.5 **West Midland's On the Move Strategic Framework** (Move WM) outlines a number of actions where physical activity can provide significant added value to the WMCA priority themes including transport and productivity and skills. The framework recognises the importance of walking and cycling to encourage more people to adopt an active lifestyle, reducing the West Midlands chronic levels of physical inactivity.

4.6 Move WM has the following actions in support of the adoption of a West Midlands Cycling Design Guidance:

*Action 1.1 Aiming to create an extensive, safe and coherent network of well-designed off and on-road active travel links connecting key destinations irrespective of administration boundaries. We will work with transport planners to remove as many barriers as possible to active travel.*

*Action 1.3. Developing a combined authority approach to promoting the benefits of this enhanced network for physical activity.*

4.7 **Thrive, An Action Plan to drive better mental health and wellbeing in the West Midlands**, identifies five themes which include supporting people whilst in work and developing safer and stable places to live. The aims of the Cycling Charter to improve provisions for cycling and walking play an important role in this plan as active travel increases physical activity and there is significant evidence that active travel also has a positive impact on mental wellbeing.

4.8 As part of Thrive West Midlands, WMCA are developing Thrive at Work, an accreditation scheme encouraging employers to meet criteria in four key areas of health – mental health, physical health, musculoskeletal health and health promotion. Active Travel is one component of the physical health strand and TfWM are currently working alongside colleagues to develop criteria.

4.9 The Mayor's Renewal Plan for the West Midlands includes commitment to supercharge cycling and walking. This includes increasing current levels of cycling to 5% (which is in line with the aim of the Cycling Charter) and upgrading cycle routes including their surfaces and lighting. The Mayor has also committed to seeking funding to increase local spend on cycling to £10 per head over ten years.

## 5.0 **Cycling Charter Action Plan - Cycling Network**

5.1 The Cycling Charter Action Plan objective is to ensure there are significant changes in the planning, design and maintenance of the West Midlands transport network if we are to increase cycling levels. This objective supports the aims set out in Movement Growth, SEP and the Mayor's Renewal Plan for the West Midlands.

- 5.2 From 2011 Census data, the West Midlands has a low uptake of cycling at only 1.7% of the population cycling to work or for education. Significant changes are needed if we are to achieve an increase to the 5% target. The quantity and quality of provisions requires significant improvement in terms of:
- Direct and joined up routes that improve access via these modes to trip generators and destinations
  - Adequate levels of road space
  - Safe crossing points
  - High standards of safety and visibility including signage/wayfinding and lighting
- 5.3 In the Cycling Charter Action Plan 2016/17, there is a priority to develop **West Midlands based Cycling Design Guidance** to ensure consistency of high quality cycling design routes across the region. Local authority engineers confirmed that the design guidance documents currently available didn't address the specific challenges of the West Midlands and it would be beneficial to have a document for the region. Working with Phil Jones Associates (PJA), BCC developed guidance that was released in March 2017.
- 5.4 TfWM contracted PJA to complete a draft of West Midlands Cycling Design Guidance, by expanding some of the scope of the Birmingham Design Guidance to include all of the 7 constituent Local Authorities of the WMCA. The guidance contains 13 chapters on the principles of design for cycle provisions based on best practice. Full copies of the guidance are available upon request or can be viewed online (included link in Appendix 1).
- 5.5 The West Midlands Cycling Design Guidance brings together the existing BCC guidance along with feedback from members of the Cycling Charter Steering Group, Metro Midland Alliance and Sprint. A supplemental section on light rail is also included in the document (link provided in Appendix 1).
- 5.6 The current version of the West Midlands Cycle Design Guidance will be a living document that will be reviewed annually to ensure that the best practice contained within is up to date. The aim is to have the guidance adopted and used by all engineers and designers in the West Midlands when designing cycling provisions within a movement corridor while integrating with other modes including motor vehicles, bus, and light rail.
- 5.7 No law or standard currently exists in the UK that defines the dimensions of cycling provisions. The West Midlands Cycle Design Guidance is a resource that contains best practice and recommendations for designing high quality cycling infrastructure. Highways engineers and designers should therefore continue to follow current law and requirements for highway and road design and to use the standards and guidance for roads and highways (e.g. Design Manual for Roads and Bridges) required by the local highway authority.
- 5.8 The Strategic Cycle Network included in Movement for Growth identifies key movement corridors for cycling across the region based on Propensity to Cycle data (Census 2011), destinations (education, employment, retail or recreation) and desired lines of travel. The Strategic Cycle Network overlaps with the Key Route Network as well as the HS2 Connectivity Package.

- 5.9 Future investment along corridors identified in the Strategic Cycle Network should be designed using best practice contained within the West Midlands Cycle Design Guidance to ensure consistency and cyclist safety across the region. Where provisions will be shared with pedestrians, appropriate route dimensions are included in the Guidance that will be needed to avoid conflict as well as to ensure spaces take into account accessibility for those with special needs (e.g. adapted cycles).
- 5.10 WMCA is responsible for the strategic oversight and management of the 23 routes of the KRN with the local authorities retaining the maintenance and day to day operations. The emerging strategy for improvements to the performance of the KRN will include improvements to traffic management, increasing safety and reducing the rate of those Killed or Seriously Injured (KSI). The West Midlands Cycle Design Guidance can be used to inform and develop future improvements.
- 5.11 Given that 57% of total journeys cross an administrative boundary, there is a need for a joint approach to ensure consistency and high quality provisions for cycling across the West Midlands. It is anticipated that designers and scheme promoters will give consideration to the West Midlands Cycle Design Guidance. WMCA, constituent local authorities, and other partners will need to cooperate on the approach to future designs of cycling provisions within a corridor.
- 5.12 In order to be in line with the priorities of Movement for Growth, and in areas or corridors where WMCA/TfWM have provided programme investment, **procurement specifications** should include the use of the best practice contained within the West Midlands Cycle Design Guidance. This also includes where WMCA/TfWM have contracted out designs as a stakeholder or partner in other schemes.
- 5.13 **Road space allocation** is a challenge for designers and engineers when integrating several modes of travel within a corridor. In the 2017 Birmingham BikeLife Report, 79% of residents supported building protected cycle lanes, even if it would result in less room for other road traffic.
- 5.14 While the Guidance describes the requirements for routes that are shared space between cycling and pedestrians, such as the canal towpaths and greenways, it does not cover specific issues within some public spaces and public realm. The Guidance can be used alongside planning and development best practice to help develop spaces that encourages physical activity and social inclusion but reduce conflict between pedestrians and cyclists. There are emerging WMCA strategies on transport and health, as well as housing and developments and health.
- 5.15 A delay in the delivery of the West Midlands Cycling Design Guidance will risk an impact on the design of future cycling provisions with the KRN and Strategic Cycle Network. The risks include a lack of consistency in design across the region, as well as construction of cycling routes based on designs that don't include best practice.
- 5.16 The implementation of the West Midlands Cycling Design Guidance will be achieved by engaging with local authority planning, highway engineers, and design staff through training on the use of the West Midlands Cycle Design Guidance.
- 5.17 The training outcomes for participants to include:
- An understanding and awareness of the needs of vulnerable road users

- An understanding of the design recommendations for routes, junctions and public spaces based on the basic principles (coherence, directness, safety, comfort, and attractiveness).
- Awareness of the way designing with high quality cycling and walking provisions contributes to meeting the targets of local strategies and priorities

5.18 It is proposed that a database of engineers and planners will be maintained to monitor the number of staff that have attended the training.

5.19 Local authority engineers have expressed an interest in an informal forum where issues with allocating road space to active travel or specific challenges can be discussed amongst colleagues. Given the challenges with allocating road space through a corridor, providing support to those working to integrate active travel and other modes can help ensure that there is a) uptake of the Guidance, and b) ongoing feedback on any limitations or omissions in the Guidance are identified which can be included in future versions.

## **6.0 Financial Implications**

6.1 The existing 2016/17 Cycle Charter budget funded by Local Sustainable Transport Fund (LSTF) together with the levy budget for 2017/18 will cover completion of the delivery of the West Midlands Cycle Design Guidance.

6.2 Further training may be required depending on demand and there will also be a need for ongoing provision. In the event of WMCA budgets not being able to cover these further costs it will be necessary to charge out the training costs for each participant.

## **7.0 Legal implications**

7.1 Any external services required to support the implementation of the scheme will be subject to procurement regulations and any terms and conditions of any appointment for any services supplied will need to be reviewed.

## **8.0 Equalities implications**

8.1 The West Midlands Cycle Design Guidance does not result in any negative disproportionate impact for any of the protected characteristics. However, cycling nationally (and regionally) is unequal with cyclists more likely being male, young, non-disabled and white. To address such inequalities and improve wider participation and representation there needs to be a stronger focus on the creation of more inclusive cycling environments (both in terms of infrastructure and cycling route choices) that can cater for bikes of all sizes, including tricycles, trailers and tandems and for all different types of cyclists. Moreover, promotion of cycling activities and opportunities needs to be reflective of the diversity of the region, both in terms of the images used and the way information is disseminated and communicated to West Midlands residents.

8.2 People with special needs or physical disabilities are referred to programmes in the region that use adapted bicycles. Wheels for All is an initiative organised by Cycling UK in various locations across the UK including the West Midlands (Coventry, Birmingham and Solihull).

## **9.0 Other implications**

- 9.1 Increasing cycling helps improve air quality, reduce carbon emissions and reduces overall noise pollution.

## **10.0 Schedule of background papers**

- 10.1 West Midlands Cycling Charter  
<https://www.tfwm.org.uk/media/2566/cycle-charter.pdf>
- 10.2 Movement for Growth- The West Midlands Strategic Transport Plan  
<https://www.tfwm.org.uk/media/1099/movement-for-growth.pdf>
- 10.3 Interim Advice Note 195/16 (Cycle Traffic and the Strategic Road Network)  
<http://www.standardsforhighways.co.uk/ha/standards/ians/pdfs/ian195.pdf>
- 10.4 Welsh Government Active Travel Design Guidance December 2014  
<http://gov.wales/docs/det/publications/141209-active-travel-design-guidance-en.pdf>
- 10.5 Nottingham City Cycling Design Guide January 2016  
<https://nottinghaminsight.org.uk/f/114351/Library/Enterprise/Major-Projects/Cycle-City-Ambition-Programme/>
- 10.6 Local Transport Note 1/12  
[https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/9179/shared-use-routes-for-pedestrians-and-cyclists.pdf](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/9179/shared-use-routes-for-pedestrians-and-cyclists.pdf)
- 10.7 On the Move Physical Activity Strategic Framework 2017-2030  
<https://www.wmca.org.uk/media/1865/wm-on-the-move-strategy.pdf>
- 10.8 West Midlands Combined Authority Strategic Economic Plan  
<https://www.wmca.org.uk/media/1382/full-sep-document.pdf>

## Glossary

<b>Word / Acronym</b>	<b>Explanation</b>
<b>BCC</b>	Birmingham City Council
<b>DfT</b>	Department for Transport
<b>KRN</b>	Key Route Network
<b>KSI</b>	Killed or Seriously Injured
<b>LCWIP</b>	Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan
<b>LEP</b>	Local Enterprise Partnership
<b>LSTF</b>	Local Sustainable Transport Fund
<b>On the Move</b>	On the Move Physical Activity Frame work 2017-2030
<b>PJA</b>	Phil Jones Associates – firm of consultants with expertise in transportation
<b>SEP</b>	West Midlands Combined Authority Strategic Economic Plan
<b>STOG</b>	Sustainable Transport Officers Group
<b>TfGM</b>	Transport for Greater Manchester
<b>TfWM</b>	Transport for West Midlands
<b>WMCA</b>	West Midlands Combined Authority

## **Appendix 1**

The West Midlands Cycle Design Guidance

<https://governance.wmca.org.uk/ecCatDisplay.aspx?sch=doc&cat=13150>

To view the detailed design drawings please contact the WMCA's Governance Services office.