



West Midlands  
Combined Authority

## Environment & Energy Board

<b>Date</b>	9 September 2021
<b>Report title</b>	West Midlands Local Transport Plan Green Paper Update
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### Recommendation(s) for action or decision:

### The Environment & Energy Board is recommended to:

- (1) Note the progress on development of the West Midlands Local Transport Plan (LTP) and the publication of the West Midlands Transport Green Paper and members views are sought on the key issues raised in the document.
- (2) Note the planned approach for engaging with Leaders on key transport challenges through a transport 'summit' proposed to be held in September.
- (3) Note the high-level programme timescales for developing the core LTP strategy through to Summer 2022.

- (4) Note the plan to publish a West Midlands Transport Plan Prospectus to tie into wider West Midlands representation at COP 26 in Glasgow in November.

## 1. Purpose

- 1.1 The purpose of this note is to provide an update to Environment & Energy Board on the development of a new West Midlands Local Transport Plan including the publication of the transport Green Paper, proposed West Midlands Leaders summit and COP26 prospectus, and the wider programme for developing and adopting a new Local Transport Plan.

## 2. Background

- 2.1 Developing and managing a Local Transport Plan (LTP) is one of WMCA's key statutory functions. The current LTP, Movement for Growth, was adopted in 2016 but significant developments and changes have taken place in the last 5 years including increasing concerns regarding the Climate Emergency and the current Covid-19 global pandemic.
- 2.2 Well evidenced and robust transport strategy will be an essential part of our economic recovery, delivering inclusive growth and taking action to address carbon emissions in line with WMCA's commitments. The new LTP will set out the longer-term vision for transport in the region and set out a policy framework within which the programmes brought forward in the Implementation Plan funded through the City Region Sustainable Transport Settlement (CRSTS) and other capital and revenue funding streams will need to align.
- 2.3 Whilst WMCA is formally the Local Transport Authority, the combined authority is a partnership and the LTP is developed collaboratively with the constituent authorities. WMCA and the constituent authorities have duties to deliver the policies and implementation proposals in the LTP. The WMCA's Strategic Transport Board provides the elected member direction for this work, however, changes to the LTP must be approved by WMCA Board and (as a minimum) meet specific statutory requirements on consultation on LTPs.

## 3 West Midlands Local Transport Plan Green Paper

- 3.1 To support the development of a new West Midlands LTP, Transport for West Midlands has recently published a Green Paper. The purpose of the Green Paper is to start a conversation about how and why we could think differently about how we plan, deliver, manage and ultimately use our transport system. The need to decarbonise transport rapidly will be a critical objective in the new LTP. However, there are other systemic challenges with the transport system, which also stand in the way of the region's ambitions for inclusive growth. The Green Paper sets out 5 Motives for Change for transport:
- **Sustaining economic success:** Support the building of an inclusive and green West Midlands economy, through better use of existing infrastructure, land, technology and sustainable transport options.
  - **Tackling the climate emergency:** Changes to where people travel to / from, reducing the frequency of travel and changing the vehicles we use to travel.

- **Creating a fairer society:** How land is used, the availability and affordability of transport and the experience and usability of transport.
  - **Supporting local places and communities:** Re-imagining local neighbourhoods, reducing dominance of transport and providing quick and easy access to key local services.
  - **Becoming more active:** Enable safe, convenient and accessible walking and cycling opportunities and increase active travel for journeys.
- 3.2 None of the motives are necessarily a greater priority, and all could justify significant change to the transport system. However, tackling the climate emergency is unique in the explicit and significant pace and scale of desired carbon reductions that have been set out at the local and national level, and the global consequences that are faced.
- 3.3 The Green Paper does not set out what policy responses are required but provides an overview of the sorts of changes and measures which could be made to the transport system to tackle climate change and meeting the ambitious target set by WMCA to be carbon neutral by 2041, whilst making positive progress against the other motives for change. It also highlights where other policy areas, including land use and digital connectivity could play a stronger role in helping to reduce the overall demand for travel.
- 3.4 The Green Paper was published on 6th July and engagement has now begun with the full document and summary document together with links to the consultation now available on the TfWM website (<https://www.tfwm.org.uk/who-we-are/our-strategy/green-paper-2021/>). The engagement period will run until the end of September.
- 3.5 A broad range of stakeholders as well as the general public are being encouraged to engage and respond through a range of channels. Significant effort will be made throughout the process to pro-actively seek input from a demographically and geographically representative range of West Midlands citizens. This includes more traditional approaches such as online surveys but once again we are using the TfWM market research community to enable deliberative engagement on the key issues to provide a valuable deeper understanding of people's feelings and views. In addition, local engagement will take place with local authorities separately (e.g. cabinet, scrutiny) and arrangements are being made with officers.
- Deliberative engagement with general public via the MROC platform,
  - Focussed events with representative bodies of private and third sector organisations,
  - Online questionnaire style consultation with general public and wider stakeholders,
  - Press activity fronted by the Mayor and Cllr Ian Ward
  - Engagement with local authorities,
  - Ongoing conversation with LA partners as LTP options are developed and assessed.

## 4 Developing the new West Midlands Local Transport Plan

- 4.1 Although the Green Paper starts to explore a broad scope of options for the region (both in terms of the vision for the future and state intervention), further work is required to develop these with more detail to inform the approach for a new West Midlands LTP.
- 4.2 Commitments to rapidly decarbonise transport have specific implications for local transport strategy as this cannot rely on a shift to Ultra Low Emission Vehicles alone and so requires a reduction in energy demands of the transport system, largely through behaviour change but also potentially through wider changes to vehicles (e.g. reducing vehicle weight and power). Wider transport objectives also require behaviour change but the decarbonisation agenda introduces a definitive pace of change. The Government has now published its Transport Decarbonisation Plan which places responsibility for much of the behaviour change (which it acknowledges is needed) on local authorities, with reaffirmation of capital funds, signposting to existing design and best-practice guidance, promises for further guidance, and a requirement for Local Transport Plans to “set out how local areas will deliver ambitious quantifiable carbon reductions in transport”. Emphasis is also placed on the greater scope for behaviour change in urban areas compared to rural areas.
- 4.3 The WM2041 five year plan set out a view on how travel behaviours and lifestyles could change to deliver substantial progress towards WMCA’s carbon budget. However, it did not provide the detail on the sorts of measures and interventions that would be required to generate the sorts of behaviour change that is required. In order to do this and support members with their understanding of the issues and options, TfWM is developing thinking around three hypothetical policy futures which will help to illustrate the sorts of policy choices at the national and local level that could deliver transport decarbonisation and their wider implications. These are options which could be considered as part of the development of the new LTP to help address the key challenges as described in the motives for change.
- 4.4 This stage of work requires a structured approach to developing policy options and officers have developed a framework of three policy scenarios within which to explore choices. In essence, these policy scenarios explore the potential opportunities and threats to deliver against all motives for change where appetite for action is constrained by different levels of commitment to decarbonise transport. TfWM has been working closely with local authority officers to develop thinking around the scenarios.
- **Conventional:** what the world might look like with continuation of ‘Business as Usual’ strategy
  - **National Policy Aligned:** change consistent with Climate Change Committee’s UK “Balanced Net-Zero Pathway” recommendations.
  - **Transformational:** providing a transformational change for the region, delivering against WM2041 carbon budget.
- 4.5 The outputs of this work will be used, together with the responses to the Green Paper engagement, to inform and shape discussion with members on how we could successfully start to successfully affect change in travel and wider behaviours to achieve strategic outcomes.

- 4.6 None of these scenarios are intended to represent an optimal scenario, each has strengths and weaknesses. The approach to be set-out in the LTP itself will likely require a blend of elements from the three scenarios. Ultimately it is less likely to be tensions between particular motives that influence the blend; compromise is likely to be driven primarily by public acceptability and wider national policy context.
- 4.7 It is proposed that a ‘summit’ with West Midlands Leaders is held in late September to work through some of the key messages and confirm the scope of ambition and approach for the new West Midlands LTP.
- 4.8 Following the steer provided by the summit, TfWM will continue to develop the LTP strategy during the second half of 2021 working closely with local authorities. The work on the new LTP will also seek to consider the transport challenges presented in wider areas of planning (including Local Development Plans and WMCA’s plans for energy infrastructure).
- 4.9 It is anticipated that a draft West Midlands LTP will be presented to WMCA Board in January 2022 where approval to undertake the statutory consultation on the document will be sought. Further to the consultation and subsequent review in light of responses it is anticipated that the LTP will be sent to WMCA Board for formal approval in Summer 2022.

## **5 26th UN Climate Change Conference of the Parties (COP 26) November 2021**

- 5.1 The scenarios work and outcomes of the Leaders ‘summit’ in September will also be used to develop a short LTP ‘prospectus’ to be published in late October. This will tie in with the UK hosting COP26 in Glasgow in November this year. The prospectus is proposed to be a short high-level document which will affirm the West Midlands’ commitments to working towards achieving a net zero transport system in the shortest possible time. The document will provide high level messages around the emerging ambition for the new Local Transport Plan.

## **6 LTP Framework and Development Programme**

- 6.1 It is proposed that the new LTP will comprise of a framework of documents which will provide a comprehensive set of policy and strategy for transport in the region. It is proposed that this framework will consist of the following:
- **Core LTP strategy** – providing the overarching vision and approach, considering transport issues at a number of spatial tiers (local, regional, national, and international) and accounting for the different kinds of places we have within the West Midlands
  - **Area strategies** – to be led by local authorities, albeit within a common framework, and to identify implementation proposals for delivering the core strategy based on understanding local context at the neighbourhood, centre and corridor level.
  - **Supplementary regional policies (and guidance)** – these documents will include more nuanced policymaking (and guidance) to address and account for specific issues in particular parts of the transport system and identify appropriate implementation proposals at the region level; for example, park and ride, fares and ticketing etc.

- **Implementation plan** – this document will provide a consolidated view of how implementation proposals will be prioritised, resourced and delivered over the plan period. This will include proposals to develop policy to address any outstanding gaps between the effect of committed proposals and SMART LTP objectives.
- 6.2 Whilst it is intended that the Core LTP strategy will remain relatively static over a longer review period, the wider documentation is likely to remain more “live”, to enable additional identification and commitment to implementation proposals and reprioritisation of resource where required.
- 6.3 The high-level programme for developing the new LTP is as follows:
- March-September 2021 – Technical work underway developing and assessing LTP policy scenarios in co-development with local authorities.
  - June 2021 – Green Paper published and engagement runs until end of September 2021.
  - September 2021 (date to be confirmed) - Leaders ‘summit’.
  - November 2021 - COP 26.
  - Autumn - Winter 2021 - LTP Strategy development.
  - January 2022 - WMCA Board – approval to undertake statutory consultation.
  - January to April 2022 - LTP Statutory consultation
  - Summer 2022 – WMCA Board – formal adoption of new LTP.

## **7 Financial Implications**

- 7.1 There are no immediate financial implications as a result of the proposals within this paper.
- 7.2 However, the West Midlands Local Transport Plan will consist of several investable opportunities requiring capital and revenue funding. This will range from national capital funds (eg. including City Regional Sustainable Transport Settlements, Levelling Up Fund, National Bus Strategy/BSIP, etc), to local revenue funding (eg. public transport fare subsidies).

## **8 Legal Implications**

- 8.1 Under the Transport Act 2000, local transport authorities (LTAs) have a statutory duty to produce and review a local transport plan (LTP). As a consequence of the Local Transport Act 2008 and the West Midlands Combined Authority Order 2016, WMCA is the sole LTA. WMCA and the seven metropolitan district/borough councils of the West Midlands must carry out their functions so as to implement these policies.

## **9 Equalities Implications**

- 9.1 In preparing and implementing the LTP, the WMCA and seven metropolitan district/borough councils must take into account the requirements of the Equality Act 2010. In order to ensure that potential impacts of the LTP on equalities have been considered and to fulfil the requirements of equalities legislation, an Equalities Impact Assessment (EqIA) will be undertaken in a fully integrated fashion with the wider Strategic Environmental Assessment process required for LTPs as part of an Integrated Sustainability Appraisal.

- 9.2 EqlA objectives will be identified and reviewed in the light of the Equality Act 2010. The approach to the EqlA review will ensure that all relevant topics are considered throughout the assessment process from establishing the baseline and building up a picture of the area in terms of equalities, identifying the key issues, developing the SA/SEA Framework, assessing the LTP options.

## **10 Inclusive Growth Implications**

- 10.1 Covid-19 has exacerbated many already underlying inequalities – be it socioeconomic or health. As more evidence comes to light, it demonstrates how vulnerable groups are suffering more – the impacts of which are then further exacerbated as we move into recovery and as we then seek to tackle climate change. This will present a significant challenge for delivering Inclusive Growth. The Green Paper presents Creating a Fairer Society as one of the five motives for change and describes the need to address inequity of access and of transports impacts. The Green Paper takes account of the principles of WMCA’s inclusive growth framework and these will need to be considered through the development of the new Local Transport Plan, to ensure all WMCA activity drives more inclusive and sustainable growth. The aforementioned Integrated Sustainability Assessment will provide a framework to ensure that strategy development is challenged.

## **11 Geographical Area of Report’s Implications**

- 11.1 The WMCA exercises transport powers overwhelmingly in respect of the area covered by its constituent authority members, however, there is significant interaction with the wider area. The health and performance of the transport system in metropolitan area has a profound impact on the wider area and vice-versa. Deep engagement with surrounding Local Transport Authorities and with Midlands Connect will essential. Additionally, opportunities to align policies and timescales with surrounding Local Transport Authorities will be explored, especially noting that transport does not stop or start at administrative boundaries.

## **12 Other Implications**

None.

## **13 Schedule of Background Papers**

- 13.1 ‘A Transport System Fit to Tackle Climate Change? - Reviewing the West Midlands Local Transport Plan to support a Greener, Fairer, Healthier Recovery’, WMCA Board Report, 24 July 2020.  
<https://governance.wmca.org.uk/documents/s4451/WMLTP%20Review.pdf>