

North Tyneside Council
Report to Cabinet
Date: 16 September 2024

Title: North Tyneside Transport Strategy Annual Report 2023-24

Portfolio(s): Environment	Cabinet Member(s): Councillor H Johnson
----------------------------------	--

Report from Service Area: Regeneration and Economic Development

Responsible Officer: John Sparkes, Director of Regeneration and Economic Development (Tel: 0191 643 6091)

Wards affected: All

PART 1

1.1 Executive Summary:

The Authority is responsible for managing the Borough's network of highways, cycling and walking routes, alongside a range of other transport responsibilities. The updated North Tyneside Transport Strategy ("the Strategy"), approved by Cabinet on 18 October 2021, sets out the Authority's vision for transport in the Borough, and reflects the priorities of the regional North East Transport Plan.

The North Tyneside Transport Strategy seeks to ensure that "North Tyneside will have a safe, easy to use, healthy, affordable, accessible and integrated travel and transport infrastructure, that works for residents, businesses and visitors effectively and efficiently"; it sets out five principles which are key to achieving this, which are set out in the report.

As transport is a major contributor to carbon emissions, the Strategy has a vital part to play in the Authority's response to its declaration of a Climate Emergency.

This report fulfils the commitment within the Strategy to provide Cabinet with an annual report outlining activities and trends relating to transport in the Borough over the last year.

The report highlights that North Tyneside's transport network is becoming safer compared with the baseline, reflecting the Authority's significant and targeted investment in major schemes over recent years. Cycling continues to be prevalent as a way of getting around North Tyneside and air quality in the Borough is compliant with legal standards.

1.2 Recommendation(s):

It is recommended that Cabinet

- a) notes the content of this report and receives and notes the contents of the North Tyneside Transport Strategy Annual Information Report 2023/24 attached to this report at Appendix 1.

1.3 Forward Plan:

Twenty-eight days' notice of this report has been given and it first appeared on the Forward Plan that was published on 28 June 2024.

1.4 Council Plan and Policy Framework

The proposals in this report relate to a number of priorities in the Our North Tyneside Plan 2021 to 2025.

- A thriving North Tyneside
 - We will regenerate the high streets of North Shields and Wallsend, and in addition to the Master Plan for North Shields, we will bring forward Master Plans for Wallsend and Whitley Bay town centre areas. We will also bring investment and improvements to the North West area of the Borough and ensure that regeneration delivers ambition, opportunity and benefits for all of our residents
- A family friendly North Tyneside
 - We will support local schools, making sure all children have access to a high-quality education with opportunities to catch up where needed after the pandemic

- We will provide outstanding children’s services, events and facilities so North Tyneside is a great place for family life.
- A secure North Tyneside
 - We will continue to invest £2m per year in fixing our roads and pavements
- A green North Tyneside:
 - We will increase opportunities for safe walking and cycling, including providing a segregated cycleway at the coast

The proposals also support the following priority in the Carbon Net Zero 2030 Action Plan.

- Travel
 - Support funding bids for Bus Fleet upgrades to EV.
 - Bid for EV Charging Infrastructure (On-Street, Fast, HPC).
 - Support Metro Fleet Upgrade.
 - Creation of fully connected cycling network (LCWIP) and school streets programme.
 - Bikeability, Cycle Training, Access to low-cost bicycles
 - Traffic Signals ULV upgrades.
 - Reduce carbon emissions from highways construction.
 - Reduce car-based school trips via Go Smarter initiatives.

1.5 Information:

1.5.1 Background

The updated North Tyneside Transport Strategy (“the Strategy”) was approved by Cabinet on 18 October 2021 and sets out the Authority’s vision for transport in the Borough. The Strategy reflects the priorities of the Our North Tyneside Plan 2021 to 2025; relevant policies in the North Tyneside Local Plan; the regional North East Transport Plan; and the Authority’s declaration of a climate emergency.

The Strategy seeks to ensure that “North Tyneside will have a safe, easy to use, healthy, affordable, accessible and integrated travel and transport infrastructure that works for residents, businesses and visitors effectively and efficiently”. It sets out five principles which are key to achieving this.

To provide regular information about transport in North Tyneside, the Strategy contains a commitment to provide an annual report to Cabinet on the effectiveness of the Strategy.

Since the adoption of the Strategy, the following policies and strategies relating to transport in North Tyneside have been revised.

- Supplementary Planning Document – Transport and Highways (LDD12) – refreshed October 2022.
- North Tyneside Parking Strategy – refreshed August 2022.
- Highway Asset Management Plan (HAMP) – adopted September 2017.
- North Tyneside Cycling Strategy – refreshed July 2023.
- North Tyneside Travel Safety Strategy – adopted March 2018.
- North Tyneside Network Management Plan – adopted October 2018.
- North Tyneside Hackney Carriage and Private Hire Licensing Policy – adopted May 2022.
- North Tyneside Home to School/College Transport Policy – reviewed May 2021.
- North Tyneside Zero Emission Vehicles (ZEV) Strategy – adopted November 2021.

One of the Strategy's key principles involves reducing carbon emissions, by encouraging modal shift and taking part in regional initiatives to encourage wider adoption of low-carbon technologies in both vehicles and transport infrastructure.

The importance of this objective was magnified when full Council formally declared a Climate Emergency at its meeting in July 2019. In declaring the climate emergency, full Council set a target to half the Authority's and Borough's carbon footprint by 2023. It also committed the Authority and the Borough to being carbon neutral by 2050 in line with the national target. In August 2022, Cabinet approved the Carbon Net-Zero 2030 Action Plan which sets out the steps the Authority will take and the national investment the Authority will seek to make North Tyneside carbon net zero by 2030.

Transport accounts for just under a third of North Tyneside's carbon dioxide emissions. In order to deliver the Authority's Climate Emergency aims it is important that the Authority meets its objectives and makes transport more sustainable.

1.5.2 Summary of performance

The Strategy's Annual Report, attached as Appendix 1, sets out relevant information and summarises relevant data on transport matters, based around the five principles of the Strategy. Information presented within the report includes the following:

Principle 1 – Reduce carbon emissions from transport

Transport emissions in the Borough decreased by 95,000 tonnes of CO₂ equivalent (tCO₂e) between 2005 and 2022. The Authority is investing in measures which help reduce carbon emissions from transport such as encouraging active travel as an alternative to car use and seeking funding to expand the provision of electric vehicle (EV) charging to support the use of EVs in preference to petrol or diesel vehicles.

Principle 2 – Improve health outcomes

Cycling continues to be prevalent as a way of getting around the Borough, having increased by 68% over five years.

The Authority continues to work with schools on 'School Streets', schemes that support children and their families to get to and from school by walking, wheeling, cycling or 'park and stride'; three new School Streets schemes were introduced in 2023/24.

The Authority continues to develop its 'Go Smarter' offer for schools, including road safety education and Bikeability cycling training, while the annual Summer of Cycling campaign has continued to be popular and well attended.

Motorised traffic levels in the Borough were marginally above their pre-Covid 2019 level; however, the number of road casualties has remained below 2019 levels. The three-year average figures for 2021-23 showed a decrease in casualties compared with the baseline.

The Authority continues to invest significantly in the Borough's highway network and in local road safety, network management and maintenance schemes.

Air quality in the Borough has been confirmed as compliant with legal standards.

Principle 3 – Support inclusive economic growth

The Authority has continued to deliver the regeneration of the Borough. The new North Shields Transport Hub opened in September 2023, bringing buses, Metro and taxis together in the same location alongside the new town square. The Authority continues to progress the development of key projects identified within the Ambition for Wallsend masterplan. Plans for the North West area of the Borough have been developed throughout 2023/24 and engagement on the Village Plans has commenced. The Authority seeks to bring investment to the North West area of the Borough and ensure regeneration has benefits for all residents, in accordance with the Our North Tyneside Plan 2021-2025.

Principle 4 – Improve connectivity

The Authority continues to deliver its programme of transport schemes, with substantial external funding. The first phase of the Sea Front Sustainable Route has provided a high-quality safe space for people cycling, walking and wheeling, and improved links to Metro stations and other local destinations were completed at South Parade in Whitley Bay and Norham Road in North Shields. This investment is helping to address the Authority's goals to create a safer environment which supports everyday cycling, walking and wheeling.

The Authority continues to support the delivery by Northumberland County Council of the Northumberland Line major project, to re-introduce a passenger rail service between Ashington and Newcastle. When complete, this will include a rail station at Northumberland Park which will support accessibility to employment, including major employment sites in central areas of the Borough, by a more sustainable mode of transport.

Nexus has secured funding of £362m to deliver a new Metro fleet which will improve comfort and reliability for people travelling by Metro in the Borough; the Authority works with Nexus as appropriate on aspects of the process to facilitate this project.

The Authority continues to work with partners across the region on the delivery of the North East Bus Service Improvement Plan (BSIP). New ticketing products have been introduced, such as Tyne and Wear and regionwide day tickets, helping to encourage a shift from car use to public transport.

Principle 5 – Manage demand and enable smart choices for all

The Authority is committed to managing the transport network so that it operates effectively and efficiently for all highway users, including public transport, cycling, wheeling and walking.

The Authority actively manages street works requests from utilities and their contractors, with 38% of permit requests being challenged or modified in 2023/24, and a good compliance rate on site.

The Authority has been successful in obtaining external funding to improve technology in the highway to support improved efficiency in network management. For example, funding has been secured for traffic signal improvements along bus corridors in Whitley Bay Town Centre, to be delivered in 2025.

1.6 Decision options:

No decision is being taken by Cabinet. It is asked to receive and note the content of the Transport Strategy Annual Information Report for 2023/24.

1.7 Appendices:

Appendix 1 – Transport Strategy Annual Information Report 2023/24
Appendix 2 – Equality Impact Assessment

1.8 Contact officers:

Paul Watson, Head of Highways and Transportation, 0345 2000 101
Andrew Flynn, Senior Manager – Integrated Transport, 0191 643 6083
John Cram, Integrated Transport Officer, 0191 643 6122
Gary Walker, Sustainable Transport Team Leader, Capita, 0191 643 6219
Amar Hassan, Principal Accountant, Investment (Capital) and Revenue, 0191 643 5747

1.9 Background information:

The following background papers/information have been used in the compilation of this report and are available at the office of the author:

- (1) [North Tyneside Transport Strategy](#)

- (2) [North East Transport Plan](#)
- (3) [North Tyneside Local Plan](#)
- (4) [Transport and Highways SPD](#)
- (5) [North Tyneside Travel Safety Strategy](#)
- (6) [North Tyneside Cycling Strategy](#)
- (7) [North Tyneside Parking Strategy](#)
- (8) [North Tyneside Network Management Plan](#)
- (9) [North Tyneside Zero Emission Vehicles Strategy](#)
- (10) [North Tyneside Highway Asset Management Plan \(HAMP\)](#)
- (11) [North Tyneside Hackney Carriage and Private Hire Licensing Policy](#)
- (12) [North Tyneside Home to School/College Transport Policy](#)
- (13) [North Tyneside Carbon Net-Zero 2030 Action Plan](#)
- (14) [North Tyneside Air Quality Strategy 2023-2028](#)
- (15) [North Tyneside Joint Health and Wellbeing Strategy 2021-2025](#)
- (16) [Tyneside Walking and Cycling Index](#)

PART 2 – COMPLIANCE WITH PRINCIPLES OF DECISION MAKING

2.1 Finance and other resources

There are no financial and resource implications directly arising from this report. This report provides the Annual Information Report relating to the Strategy.

It is envisaged that all actions within the Strategy itself can be delivered within existing budgets (the Local Transport Plan capital budget and Technical Services Partnership managed budget) or using specific external grant

funding, where applicable. Any expenditure which cannot be contained within existing budgets will be reported to Council / Cabinet, as appropriate for a decision before any expenditure is incurred or committed.

2.2 Legal

The Authority is responsible for undertaking a number of transport-related functions and statutory duties under relevant pieces of highways and transport legislation and those obligations are discharged in accordance with the law and in line with specific policies, plans and programmes approved by the relevant decision-making body.

Some of the Authority's transport functions must be discharged through the North East Mayoral Combined Authority. The Authority works with the North East Mayoral Combined Authority on a range of transport-related matters.

2.3 Consultation/community engagement

There are no consultation or community engagement implications directly arising from this report. This report provides the Annual Information Report relating to the Strategy.

The Strategy reflects the priorities of the regional North East Transport Plan, which was subject to public engagement prior to its adoption in 2021. Engagement is also carried out on strategies and plans within the context of the Transport Plan, such as the 'Big Bus Conversation' carried out between July and September 2023 as part of work to refresh the North East Bus Service Improvement Plan (BSIP).

Actions within the Strategy itself involve engagement as appropriate: for example, the Authority continues to engage with schools in the Borough to encourage children and their parents to travel actively to school or use 'park and stride' as described in section 1.5.2.

2.4 Human rights

There are no human rights implications directly arising from this report.

2.5 Equalities and diversity

An Equality Impact Assessment for the Strategy (2021 revision) – Annual Information Report 2023/24 has been undertaken and is attached as

Appendix 2 to this report. This notes that several identified potential impacts are positive, e.g. elements of the works described in the report will contribute to advancing equality of opportunity between people with a disability and those who do not have a disability, such as the provision of signalised crossing facilities as part of transport projects.

2.6 Risk management

There are no risk management implications directly arising from this report. Strategic and operational risks associated with transport matters are assessed via the established corporate process.

2.7 Crime and disorder

There are no crime and disorder implications directly arising from this report.

2.8 Environment and sustainability

The Strategy Annual Report provides information and data regarding aspects of transport in the Borough including, for example, levels of cycling, electric vehicles and public transport. As such it may have positive environment and sustainability implications as it offers relevant information on progress towards environment and sustainability objectives.

PART 3 - SIGN OFF

- Chief Executive
- Director of Service
- Mayor/Cabinet Member
- Chief Finance Officer
- Monitoring Officer
- Interim Director of Corporate Strategy and Customer Service