

10 September 2015

The West Midlands Strategic Transport Plan '*Movement for Growth*'

Ward(s) All

Portfolios: Cllr Adrian Andrew - Deputy Leader, Economy, Infrastructure & Development

Executive Summary:

The creation of a reorganised West Midlands Integrated Transport Authority (ITA) in 2014 saw the need for a new West Midlands-wide Strategic Transport Plan to be created to replace the existing West Midlands Local Transport Plan.

The ITA's West Midlands Strategic Transport Plan '*Movement for Growth*' is currently under public consultation, with comments from Walsall Council invited by 16th October, 2015.

The establishment of the ITA provides a strong, clear leadership to strategic transport planning for the West Midlands metropolitan area. This leadership will ensure that profound and enduring improvements are made to the West Midlands' transport system, matching the scale of the challenges faced over the next twenty years.

The strategic transport plan sets out the long term approach to guide the £6.5bn of improvements over the twenty year period. This includes improvements at a national/regional, metropolitan and local levels, to address the four challenges identified for the West Midlands which are: -

- Economic Growth and Economic Inclusion
- Population Growth and Housing Development
- Environmental and Public Health
- Social Well-Being

For Walsall, proposed transport improvements include: -

- Improvements at motorway junctions, including capacity enhancing proposals at M6 Junction 10.
- Better utilisation of the M6Toll.
- Improvements to the rail network with connections to Wolverhampton, Aldridge and Brownhills.
- Rapid transit links to Birmingham, Darlaston, Dudley, Stourbridge, Willenhall, Wolverhampton, and Wednesbury.
- Improvements to the local cycle network, with connections to strategic

centres throughout the metropolitan area.

- Improvements to the bus network with core routes identified and enhanced.

However, the document precedes the conclusion of a technical review of the Black Country Rapid Transit Network which is due to report in October 2015. The Strategic Transport Plan includes an ambitious and comprehensive network of passenger rail and rapid transit routes across the West Midlands. The specific rapid transit mode (e.g. Bus Rapid Transit or SPRINT, Light Rail, Ultra Light Rail, Tram-Train, Heavy Rail) and the sequencing of routes in the Black Country, will be determined by the review.

A public meeting is being held on Monday 28th September at 6pm at Walsall Council House in Conference Rooms 1 and 2. ITA and Walsall Council officers will be in attendance to engage with residents and other local stakeholders.

Reason for scrutiny:

The publication of the draft West Midlands Strategic Transport Plan sets out the long-term approach to improving the transport network in the metropolitan area. A formal response to the Strategic Transport Plan will be collated by the Strategic Transportation Team on behalf of Walsall Council. This will inform a proposed Black Country-wide response to the Plan, which is intended to represent the views of the Black Country local authorities and the Black Country Local Enterprise Partnership.

This Scrutiny and Performance Panel is asked to note the publication of the draft West Midlands Strategic Transport Plan.

Recommendations:

That:

- 1. The Panel notes the publication of the West Midlands Strategic Transport Plan as a key document to help achieve the Council's long-term aspirations for transport improvements.*
- 2. The Panel consider the overarching vision and objectives of the West Midlands Strategic Transport Plan, as set in Sections 1 and 2 of the Summary Report, and advise the portfolio holder of its view.*

Background papers:

The West Midlands Strategic Transport Plan 'Movement for Growth', Summary Report, Public Consultation Draft.

Resource and legal considerations:

The Transport Act 2000 requires each local authority to prepare a local transport plan containing policies for the promotion and encouragement of safe, integrated, efficient and economic transport facilities and services. Local authorities in the West Midlands Metropolitan Area have a long history of producing joint transport plans.

The Transport Act 2008 allowed for the establishment of the West Midlands Integrated Transport Authority (WMITA) and the responsibility to coordinate and produce the joint local transport plan now rests with that body.

The expectation is that the WMITA functions will be absorbed within the proposed West Midlands Combined Authority. *Movement for Growth* would then become the transport plan for the Combined Authority area.

Citizen impact:

The strategic transport plan sets out the vision for creating a transport system to support the growth of the West Midlands' local economy. This will bring multiple benefits to the public and businesses across the borough and the wider West Midlands area.

Environmental impact:

Environmental impacts associated with specific transport schemes within the Strategic Transport Plan will be assessed on an individual basis, to a level appropriate to the scheme.

Performance management:

No implications.


Equality Implications:

An Equality Impact Assessment has not been carried out at this stage. The final Strategic Transport Plan will be subject to an Equality Impact Assessment to be undertaken by the ITA.

Consultation:

The West Midlands ITA is consulting on the draft Strategic Transport Plan for 12 weeks between Monday 27th July and Friday 16th October.

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