

Executive Councillor

**Open Report on behalf of Richard Wills
Executive Director for Environment & Economy**

Report to:	Councillor R G Davies, Executive Councillor for Highways, Transport and IT
Date:	23 February – 28 February 2017
Subject:	Boston Transport Strategy 2016 – 2036
Decision Reference:	I012423
Key decision?	No

Summary:

Lincolnshire County Council, in partnership with Boston Borough Council, commissioned a project to develop a new Boston Transport Strategy building on the improvements delivered since the last strategy was published in 2006. The new strategy aligns to the South East Lincolnshire Local Plan and is focused both on easing existing problems and supporting the future development of the town.

Boston is a traditional market town and port, rich in heritage, character and history and is one of the largest urban areas in Lincolnshire making its economic success important not only locally but also for the County and wider region. As part of the proposals for growth in the town, it has been important to understand the relationship between that growth and the transport system that will support it.

This Transport Strategy presents a range of short, medium and long term proposals to improve access within the town and the immediate surrounding area. The Strategy aims to support people travelling as part of their daily lives and how businesses reach their markets; the proposals aim to do this through influencing travel behaviour, prioritising walking and cycling, promoting public transport and providing for traffic while reducing its negative impacts.

Recommendation(s):

It is recommended that the Executive Councillor for Highways, Transport and IT formally endorses the Boston Transport Strategy 2016 – 2036.

Alternatives Considered:

To not update the 2006 Boston Transport Strategy, losing the opportunity to help further ease transport and travel issues and support the future development of the town.

Reasons for Recommendation:

The Strategy will help to address existing transport and travel issues in Boston and help support proposals for significant growth in the short, medium and long term.

1. Background

In recognition of the importance that transports plays, the County Council and Boston Borough Council commissioned a study for the Boston area considering all modes of transportation.

It has been recognised that the original Boston Transport Strategy is now 10 years old and while several highway improvement schemes have already been completed it is now time to reconsider the plan as a whole. Lincolnshire County Council has worked closely with Boston Borough Council to update the plan, consider the improvements already made and to identify any further benefits that could be achieved.

While the strategy refresh is somewhat data focussed the project team has also engaged with local stakeholders to understand potential issues from a local perspective. A briefing session for local councillors also provided the opportunity for further local engagement.

The updated strategy has been extended to 2036, in order to align to the proposed timings for the developing South East Lincolnshire Local Plan.

1.1 Strategy Development

The Boston Transport Strategy has been developed using a six stage process overseen by a Steering Group which consisted of representatives from Lincolnshire County Council, Boston Borough Council and the South East Lincolnshire Joint Policy Unit.

The stages of the Transport Strategy are shown on page 8 of the Boston Transport Strategy 2016 – 2036 Summary Document within Appendix A. This highlights the work undertaken, the outputs generated, and where input was provided by the steering group and wider stakeholders to help shape the Strategy.

This process has ensured that:

- Robust data has been collected to enable a thorough understanding of the current situation in Boston;
- Future land use developments and the potential impacts have been understood;
- Local needs have been understood as well as the influences of local and national policies;

- Options that will support growth, tackle current problems and help mitigate increased travel demands
- in the future have been identified and assessed.

A logic-based approach has been utilised in developing the Strategy to ensure that there are links between:

- the issues and opportunities to be addressed;
- what investments need to be made;
- what outputs will be delivered;
- the short to medium-term results; and,
- the overall impact of the Strategy.

A wide range of data, evidence and stakeholder views were collated and reviewed in order to identify the existing and potential future challenges and opportunities. These challenges and opportunities are listed on pages 10 and 11 within Boston Transport Strategy 2016 – 2036 Summary Document within Appendix A.

1.2 The Strategy Vision, Objectives and Key Themes

The Transport Strategy will support a prosperous town with an attractive and safe environment and a high quality of life for all helping to make Boston a great place to live, work and visit.

Sitting beneath the vision are objectives that the Strategy aims to deliver which emerged from the evidence gathering, challenge identification and stakeholder consultation.

The objectives are shaped around the key elements of the vision: supporting economic growth, protecting and enhancing the environment and improving quality of life for all. The new strategy objectives expand and enhance those in the current strategy, providing robust and measurable objectives to guide delivery.

The Boston Transport Strategy will form part of a hierarchy of policy documents, supporting policies and strategies at the national and county-wide levels.

The Key Themes for the Boston Transport Strategy are as below:

- Sustainable Development
- Carbon Emissions and Climate Change
- Accessibility
- Sustainable Transport
- Build and natural environment
- Efficient and convenient transport network
- Safety and Security
- Health and Wellbeing.

1.3 The Strategy

The Strategy encompasses all ways of travelling in Boston and addresses the possibilities of not travelling where access can be achieved without needing to undertake a journey. Beyond identifying where travel can be negated, the Strategy prioritises walking and cycling where they can meet local accessibility needs.

The important role of public transport is recognised in terms of how it is a vital provider of accessibility for large numbers of people for travelling to work, education, shopping or just for leisure.

Mitigating the impact of motor vehicle traffic will benefit the whole of Boston in terms of reduced delays, better air quality and increased safety. The Strategy recognises the continued importance of motor vehicles for many journeys and a more efficient highway network will support the growth of the economy, allowing people and goods to move more efficiently.

The combination of prioritising cycling and walking, promoting public transport and mitigating the negative impacts traffic can work together to increase choice, influence travel patterns and make all modes of transport work better for the town.

The long term nature of the Strategy means that the population of Boston is likely to change and grow considerably between now and the end of Strategy period in 2036. It is important to consider how the Strategy can improve accessibility for people who currently live and work in Boston but also to understand how the Strategy can support future residents, workers and visitors.

The significant planned growth of housing offers an opportunity to embed sustainable accessibility from the outset when residents move in to the new neighbourhoods. This is a vital part of mitigating the impact of growth so that it can have a positive social, economic and environmental impact on Boston, supporting the existing neighbourhoods, residents and businesses.

1.4 The Strategy Priorities

The Strategy features a wide range of measures that cover all the geographic themes and all levels of the accessibility hierarchy.

The range of measures identified shows a priority for facilitating active modes and public transport where a journey needs to be made whilst also reducing the need to travel in the first place. The Strategy also prioritises enhancing connections between neighbourhoods and wider Boston; this is primarily a result of many of the challenges identified being related to movements wholly within Boston rather than movements between Boston and other towns. Focussing on such local movements and accessibility steers the strategy towards measures that are predominantly at the top of the accessibility hierarchy and are often lower cost and promote sustainable methods of travel. The delivery of such local measures can be more directly influenced jointly by Lincolnshire County Council and Boston Borough Council.

Nearly half of travel to work journeys start and end within Boston and half of these journeys are made by driving a private motor vehicle even though Boston is approximately 4km across. This contributes towards the traffic issues around the town centre which have a negative effect on air quality at certain locations and impact the economy due to delays. The short nature of these journeys does present an opportunity for modal shift if alternative modes are improved.

School travel was also identified as a key contributor to traffic congestion during peak hours. All the secondary schools are east of the River Witham which means many pupils have to cross the town to access their school. The domination of the private motor vehicle in terms of mode share results in many of these school related journeys being made by car, again, despite the fact that they are over short distances. Improving the offer of alternative modes between neighbourhoods, particularly active modes, through infrastructure and non-infrastructure measures would help reduce the impact that school travel has on the overall transport network.

1.5 Pathways to Delivery

The Pathways to Delivery are intended to provide a basis for the implementation of each of the recommended measures.

The Pathways are fully presented within section 7 of the Boston Transport Strategy 2016 – 2036 Technical Appendix in Appendix B. There are summarised in the below table:

Measure Type	Measure	Lead Organisation
Influencing Travel Behaviour	Residential development	Boston Borough Council
	Town centre development	Boston Borough Council
	Educational development	Boston Borough Council
	Food Retail Provision	Boston Borough Council
	Targeted travel planning including personalised travel planning for residential properties, all major employers and education establishments	Lincolnshire County Council
	Develop a Business Travel Zone for Boston	Lincolnshire County Council
	Facilitate sustainable travel in new developments	Boston Borough Council
	Borough-wide sustainable travel events/promotions	Lincolnshire County Council
	All schools to have up to date and active Travel Plans	Lincolnshire County Council (Boston Borough Council – as part of the planning process for new schools)
Prioritise Active Modes	Equality Act Access Audit	Lincolnshire County Council
	Improve pedestrian and cycle user safety at key junctions	Lincolnshire County Council

Measure Type	Measure	Lead Organisation
	Cycle safety improvements as part of the 20mph zones	Lincolnshire County Council
	Trip end cycle facilities	Lincolnshire County Council
	Continued/Accelerated roll-out of Bikeability to schools	Lincolnshire County Council
	Adult cycle training	Lincolnshire County Council
	Introduce cycle route infrastructure on key radial routes	Lincolnshire County Council
	New cycle routes on waterways	Lincolnshire County Council
	New pedestrian and cycle bridges	Lincolnshire County Council
	Review links between leisure cycle routes and leisure/tourist destinations	Lincolnshire County Council
	Review existing shared footway/cycleways	Lincolnshire County Council
	Review/improve crossing facilities on John Adams Way	Lincolnshire County Council
	Improve signage	Boston Borough Council
	Cycle hire/cycle share scheme	Boston Borough Council or Lincolnshire County Council
	Town centre public realm improvements	Lincolnshire County Council
	Public realm improvements around John Adams Way	Lincolnshire County Council
	Cycle storage on buses	Lincolnshire County Council
Promote Public Transport	Bus station upgrade	Lincolnshire County Council
	Public transport hub	Lincolnshire County Council
	Improve bus waiting facilities	Boston Borough Council
	Bus priority measures	Lincolnshire County Council
	Improve signage	Lincolnshire County Council
	Circular bus routes in new developments	Boston Borough Council
	Review public transport links to key employment areas	Lincolnshire County Council
	Review community transport provision	Lincolnshire County Council
	Employer funded public transport	Lincolnshire County Council
	Improved bus services	Lincolnshire County Council
	'Try for Free' Public Transport Campaign	Lincolnshire County Council
	Increased Publicity Campaigns for Use of Public Transport	Lincolnshire County Council
	Flexible ticketing options	Lincolnshire County Council
	More direct rail services	Lincolnshire County Council/Boston Borough Council
	Rationalisation of rail timetables	Lincolnshire County Council/Boston Borough Council

Measure Type	Measure	Lead Organisation
Traffic Mitigation	Parking Strategy	Boston Borough Council
	Investigate improvements at collision cluster sites	Lincolnshire County Council
	20mph zones	Lincolnshire County Council
	Junction improvements	Lincolnshire County Council
	Review of town centre traffic management	Lincolnshire County Council
	Traffic calming and crossing facilities on Fyddell Street/Norfolk Street	Lincolnshire County Council
	Review on-street parking close to schools and the hospital.	Lincolnshire County Council
	Boston Distributor Road	Lincolnshire County Council
	Investigate potential for a Boston East-West Relief Road	Lincolnshire County Council
	Work with operators to increase the use of rail for freight	Lincolnshire County Council

1.6 A collaborative approach to delivery

The Strategy cannot be delivered by Lincolnshire County Council and Boston Borough Council alone. The success of the Strategy is dependent on buy-in, support, resources and funding from a range of stakeholders.

The Strategy Steering group will be utilised to consider funding opportunities and prioritise the above measures. In time it will bring together stakeholders from a range of disciplines to utilise experience and expertise in collaboratively delivering the Strategy. The Group will also consider existing and future funding opportunities and steer the short, medium and long term implementation of the Strategy measures.

The Group will encourage and facilitate its members to take a lead on responsibilities that fall within their remit but with a collaborative ethos whereby they can draw on the wider support of the Group.

Funding is currently a significant challenge and is likely to remain so into the future. Identifying, providing and securing funding will be a fundamental to the success of the Strategy. Collaborating to secure external funding and ascertaining possibilities of combining internal funding will be a key task in the delivery of Strategy measures.

Some measures do not rely on public sector funding and have the potential to deliver significant long term benefits, helping to save money by reducing the need for significant investment in the future.

The substantial plans for growth in Boston offers extensive opportunities to secure third-party funding and collaboration in embedding sustainable travel patterns into new developments through both capital and revenue funded measures. This may

only require relatively small budgetary contributions from the public purse but has the potential to contribute considerably towards the Strategy's vision and objectives.

2. Legal Issues

Equality Act 2010

Under section 149 of the Equality Act 2010, the Council must, in the exercise of its functions, have due regard to the need to:

- Eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct that is prohibited by or under the Act
- Advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it
- Foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it.

The relevant protected characteristics are age; disability; gender reassignment; pregnancy and maternity; race; religion or belief; sex; and sexual orientation
Having due regard to the need to advance equality of opportunity involves having due regard, in particular, to the need to:

- Remove or minimise disadvantages suffered by persons who share a relevant protected characteristic that are connected to that characteristic
- Take steps to meet the needs of persons who share a relevant protected characteristic that are different from the needs of persons who do not share it
- Encourage persons who share a relevant protected characteristic to participate in public life or in any other activity in which participation by such persons is disproportionately low

The steps involved in meeting the needs of disabled persons that are different from the needs of persons who are not disabled include, in particular, steps to take account of disabled persons' disabilities.

Having due regard to the need to foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it involves having due regard, in particular, to the need to tackle prejudice, and promote understanding.

Compliance with the duties in section 149 may involve treating some persons more favourably than others.

The duty cannot be delegated and must be discharged by the decision-maker. To discharge the statutory duty the decision-maker must analyse all the relevant material with the specific statutory obligations in mind. If a risk of adverse impact is identified consideration must be given to measures to avoid that impact as part of the decision making process

The Boston Transport Strategy 2016-2036 recommends a series of measures for future consideration. The strategy has considered all modes of transport along with their users and has specifically engaged with the local disability group as part of stakeholder engagement. Through this the strategy recommends that an Equality Act Access Audit is carried out to assess what improvements can be made for those who have difficulties travelling around the town centre. Separately, all measures that are taken forward will consider an Equality Impact Analysis at that time.

Joint Strategic Needs Analysis (JSNA) and the Joint Health and Wellbeing Strategy (JHWS)

The Council must have regard to the Joint Strategic Needs Assessment (JSNA) and the Joint Health & Well Being Strategy (JHWS) in coming to a decision.

The Boston Transport Strategy 2016-2036 recommends a series of measures for future consideration. The strategy has considered all modes of transport and specifically looks at influencing people to travel by more sustainable means. The Strategy also looks to prioritise active modes of transport, specifically that of walking and cycling. Further detailed consideration will be given to JSNA and SHWS matters for each measure that is developed further.

Crime and Disorder

Under section 17 of the Crime and Disorder Act 1998, the Council must exercise its various functions with due regard to the likely effect of the exercise of those functions on, and the need to do all that it reasonably can to prevent crime and disorder in its area (including anti-social and other behaviour adversely affecting the local environment), the misuse of drugs, alcohol and other substances in its area and re-offending in its area

The Boston Transport Strategy 2016-2036 recommends a series of measures for future consideration. In doing so due regard has been given in order to prevent, crime and disorder in accordance with Section 17 of the Crime and Disorder Act 1998. Further more detailed consideration will be given as each measure is developed further.

3. Conclusion

The endorsement of the Boston Transport Strategy 2016 – 2036 will assist Boston to be an example of sustainable growth, economic prosperity, low carbon emissions and safe, healthy and happy communities.

Given the growth aspirations for the town it will provide a strong evidence base for future funding decisions on how people travel in and around Boston.

4. Legal Comments:

The Council has the power to endorse the Boston Transport Strategy in pursuance of its function as Highways Authority for Lincolnshire.

The considerations to be taken into account by the decision maker are dealt with in the Report.

The recommendation is consistent with the Policy Framework and within the remit of the Executive if it is within budget.

5. Resource Comments:

Accepting the recommendation of this report to endorse the Boston Transport Strategy 2016-2036 should have no direct financial impact on the council. Any measures proposed for future consideration will need to be met from within existing budget or funding available, or be subject to the council's normal budget decision making process.

6. Consultation

a) Has Local Member Been Consulted?

Yes

b) Has the Executive Councillor Been Consulted?

Yes

c) Scrutiny Comments

The report will be considered by the Lincolnshire County Council Highways and Transport Scrutiny Committee at its meeting on 23 January 2017. It will also be considered by the Boston Borough Council Overview & Scrutiny - Corporate & Community Committee on 9 February 2017 and Cabinet Meeting on 22 February 2017. Any comments from these meetings will be presented to the Executive Councillor for Highways, Transport and IT.

d) Have Risks and Impact Analysis been carried out?

No

e) Risks and Impact Analysis

Risks and Impact Analysis will be considered at the point when each proposal within the strategy is considered for future development.

7. Appendices

These are listed below and attached at the back of the report	
Appendix A	Boston Transport Strategy 2016 - 2036 Summary Document
Appendix B	<p>Boston Transport Strategy 2016 - 2036 Technical Appendix</p> <p>A hard copy of this report is available from Democratic Services and online at –</p> <p>http://lincolnshire.moderngov.co.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=492&MId=4762&Ver=4</p>

8. Background Papers

Document title	Where the document can be viewed
2006 Boston Transport Strategy	https://www.lincolnshire.gov.uk/transport-and-roads/strategy-policy-and-licences/transport-strategies/boston-transport-strategy/52681.article

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