

NORTH SOMERSET COUNCIL DECISION

DECISION OF: COUNCILLOR STEVE HOGG. THE EXECUTIVE MEMBER FOR TRANSPORT AND HIGHWAYS



WITH ADVICE FROM: ASSISTANT DIRECTOR NEIGHBOURHOODS AND TRANSPORT

DECISION NO: 22/23 DP 447

SUBJECT: TO /APPROVE THE PLACE AND MOVEMENT FRAMEWORK AND ACTIVE TRAVEL ACTION PLANS

KEY DECISION: YES

REASON: COVERS MORE THAN ONE WARD

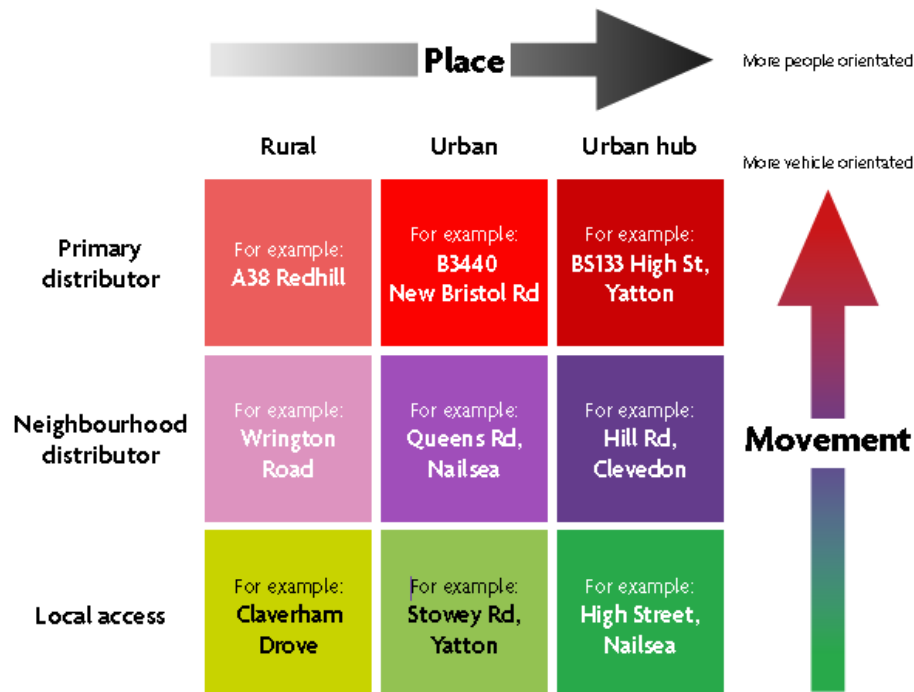
1. BACKGROUND:

- 1.1. In July 2021 North Somerset Council adopted the [Active Travel Strategy \(ATS\)](#). This key strategic document interacts with a wide range of policies in North Somerset and across the West of England and sets out our policy approach to supporting active travel.
- 1.2. The strategy aims to achieve a number of benefits locally including:
 - Deliver safe and frequent active travel to enable improved public health,
 - Tackle the climate emergency,
 - Help residents address the cost-of-living crisis,
 - Drive local economic development,
 - Create liveable neighbourhoods with our communities and through the planning system.
- 1.3. Through the ATS, we committed to a number of interventions (set out in Section 7 of the ATS), stating that we will (as a Council and alongside our partners) deliver on enhancing North Somerset as a cleaner, healthier and more active place to be.
- 1.4. In order to make the Active Travel Strategy commitments and interventions a reality, we have been developing a framework to set out the rationale for use and purpose of our transport network, and a series of Active Travel Action Plans (ATAPs).
- 1.5. Both the Place & Movement Framework and the 7 Active Travel Action Plans cover the time period of 2023-30. These documents will be reviewed annually, and amendments agreed by transport officers in consultation with the Exec Member for Transport.

Place & Movement Framework

- 1.6. The Place and Movement framework provides a defined, transparent, and consistent framework that helps set out the purpose of the North Somerset transport network for both Place and Movement. Combining the two independent functions of both Place and

Movement provides us with a simple matrix consisting of nine diverse classifications that can be applied to every section of highway in North Somerset, whether it's a dual carriageway or single-track lane in either a densely populated area or a rural setting.



1.7. The Framework:

- Sets out the rationale for use and purpose of our transport network, by categorising every road, street and lane with both a place and a movement classification;
- Provides a framework for an audit process to evaluate road space availability, user needs and priority functions to facilitate early-stage scheme feasibility and evaluation.
- Provides the basis to develop design codes to shape new and improved active travel infrastructure both for our existing transport network and new developments.
- Enables us to enhance the character of our places and to improve movement on our network, especially for active travel, on the most appropriate routes.

Active Travel Action Plans (ATAP's)

1.8. We committed to creating action plans to set out more specific actions for the council and our partners, to help make the aims of the ATS a reality, including a delivery plan for each of our Active Travel Action Plans and their improvement scheme proposals. The 7 Action Plans are:

- 20mph
- Active Travel Network
- First and Last Mile
- Livable Neighborhoods
- Rural Lanes
- Safer Active Routes to School
- Transport Behavior Change

1.9. This report and decision notice summarises the outcome of consultation and seeks the Executive Member's approval of the Place and Movement Framework and Active Travel Action Plans.

2. DECISION:

2.1 To approve the Place and Movement Framework and 7 Active Travel Action Plans.

3. REASONS:

3.1 The Place and Movement Framework and Active Travel Action Plans have been consulted upon and gained majority support and can now be approved by the Executive Member.

4. OPTIONS CONSIDERED:

4.1 If NSC doesn't have the Framework and Action Plans, we would not have a consistent methodology to implement improvements to active travel infrastructure across the district.

5. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS:

Costs

5.1 The Place and Movement Framework and 7 Active Travel Action Plans have no immediate direct financial impact. However, they will inform and shape our financial allocations from within existing resources and our bidding and project development priorities. The scheme development process helps us to allocate funding to most cost-effective areas.

Funding

5.2 The Place and Movement Framework and Active Travel Action Plans demonstrate the Council's ambitions and show a coherent approach which will put us in a strong position for funding opportunities such as Active Travel Fund 4 (ATF4).

5.3 The scheme development process outlines a consistent methodology for recording, scoring and prioritising scheme proposals to allocate funding (such as the Integrated Transport Block annual funding) and provides justification for attracting S106 funding from development.

6. LEGAL POWERS AND IMPLICATIONS

6.1 The development of the Place & Movement Framework, the development of Active Travel Action Plans and delivery of all subsequent schemes are undertaken by the Council acting as, and under the powers of, Local Highway Authority as defined by the Highways Act 1980.

7. CLIMATE CHANGE AND ENVIRONMENTAL IMPLICATIONS

7.1 The North Somerset Council Corporate Plan identifies 'to be a carbon neutral council and area by 2030' and to have 'a transport network which promotes active, accessible and

low carbon travel’ as key corporate priorities. The Place and Movement Framework and 7 Active Travel Action Plans help us make our Active Travel Strategy commitments and interventions a reality.

8. CONSULTATION

8.1 A public and stakeholder consultation on the Place & Movement Framework and our 7 Active Travel Action Plans took place between Monday 9th January until Monday 20th February 2023. The summary documents for each of the 7 active travel plans were used for the consultation to enable as many people as possible to take part. The full Active Travel Action Plans will be updated and published following the consultation.

8.2 The main method to collect feedback has been an online e-consult questionnaire which we used to consult on our 7 Active Travel Action Plans. The Place & Movement Framework was published on the Council website and publicised to Town & Parish Councils via email.

8.3 Widen My Path, an online mapping tool, was used alongside the consultation documents, which allowed consultees to suggest improvements to active travel in North Somerset. Consultees could plot these directly on a map.

8.4 The consultation was promoted widely, including

- North Somerset E-Life; Business Newsletter; North Somerset Together; Press/media release; Schools (The Noticeboard, Early Years newsletter, STARS Schools newsletter)
- Emails to: Town & Parish Councils; all NSC Members (plus Parish Digest); Stakeholders list (inc. equalities groups); e-consult automated mail to subscribers
- Social media (Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, LinkedIn)
- Posters in libraries
- Internal comms (The Knowledge, CEO email)

Decision pathway and timescales:

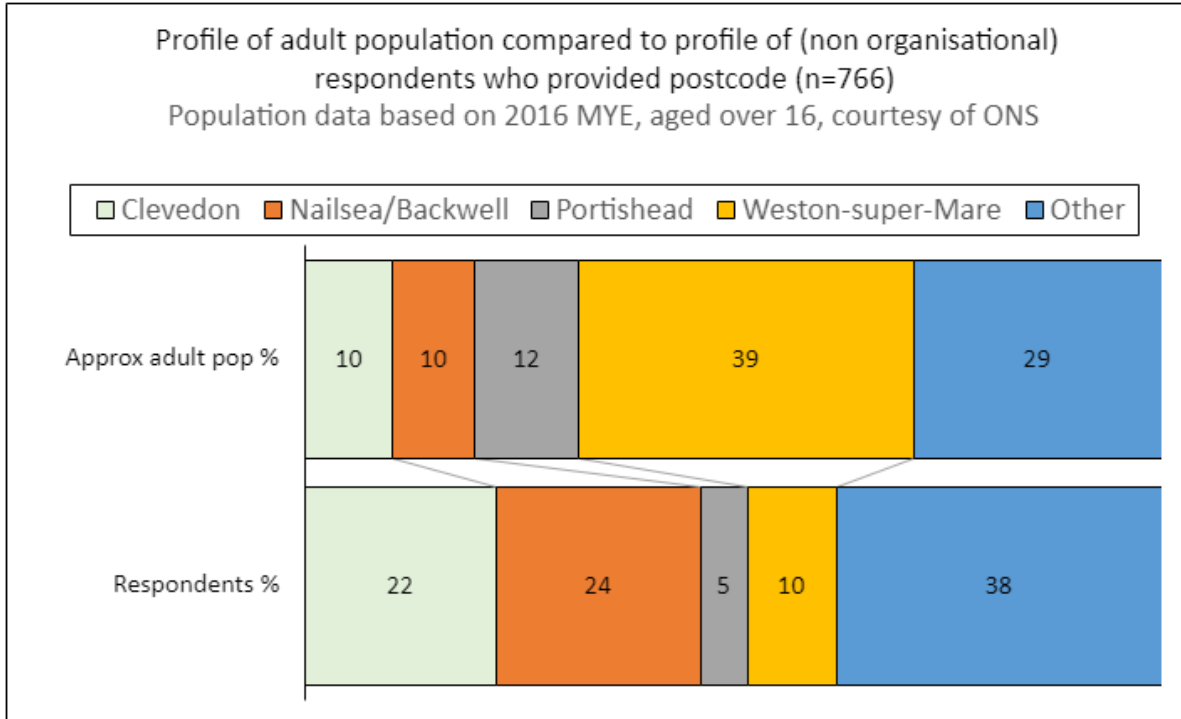
8.5 Member engagement was an important part of the consultation. Members engagement is set out in the table below:

Task / Milestone	Timescale
Exec Member briefings (x3) on ATAPs Cllr Hogg (Transport) & Cllr Petty (Engagement)	October/November 2022
‘You Said, We Did’ – changes made to ATAPs based on Exec Member feedback	Late November 2022
Informal Executive Briefing	6 December 2022
All-Member Briefing (via Place Policy & Scrutiny Panel)	7 December 2022
Consultation & engagement	9 January – 20 February 2023
Place & Policy scrutiny engagement	15 February 2023

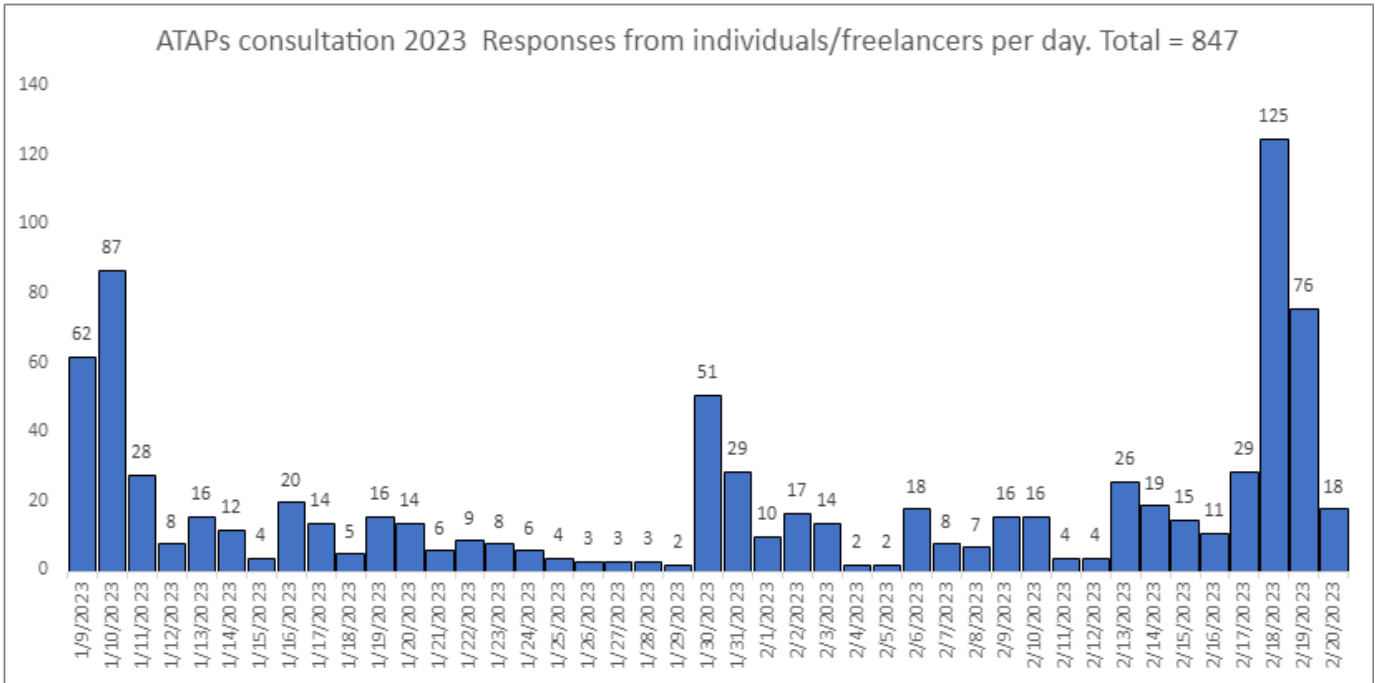
Responses

Active Travel Action Plans 2023-30

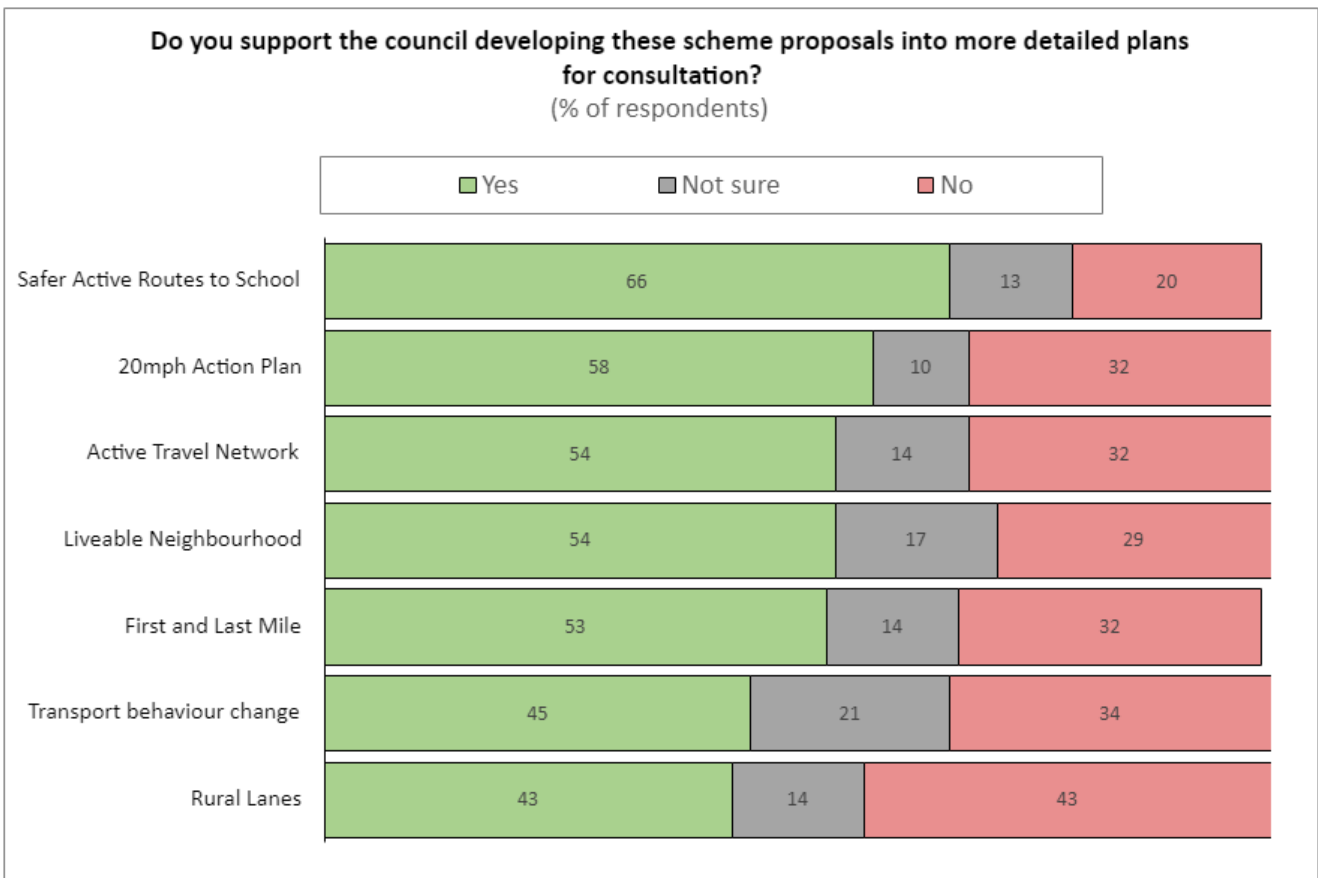
8.6 There were a total of **847** responses to the e-consult questionnaire and **22** emails. The figure below shows the areas of North Somerset where responses have come from, in relation to the population percentage.



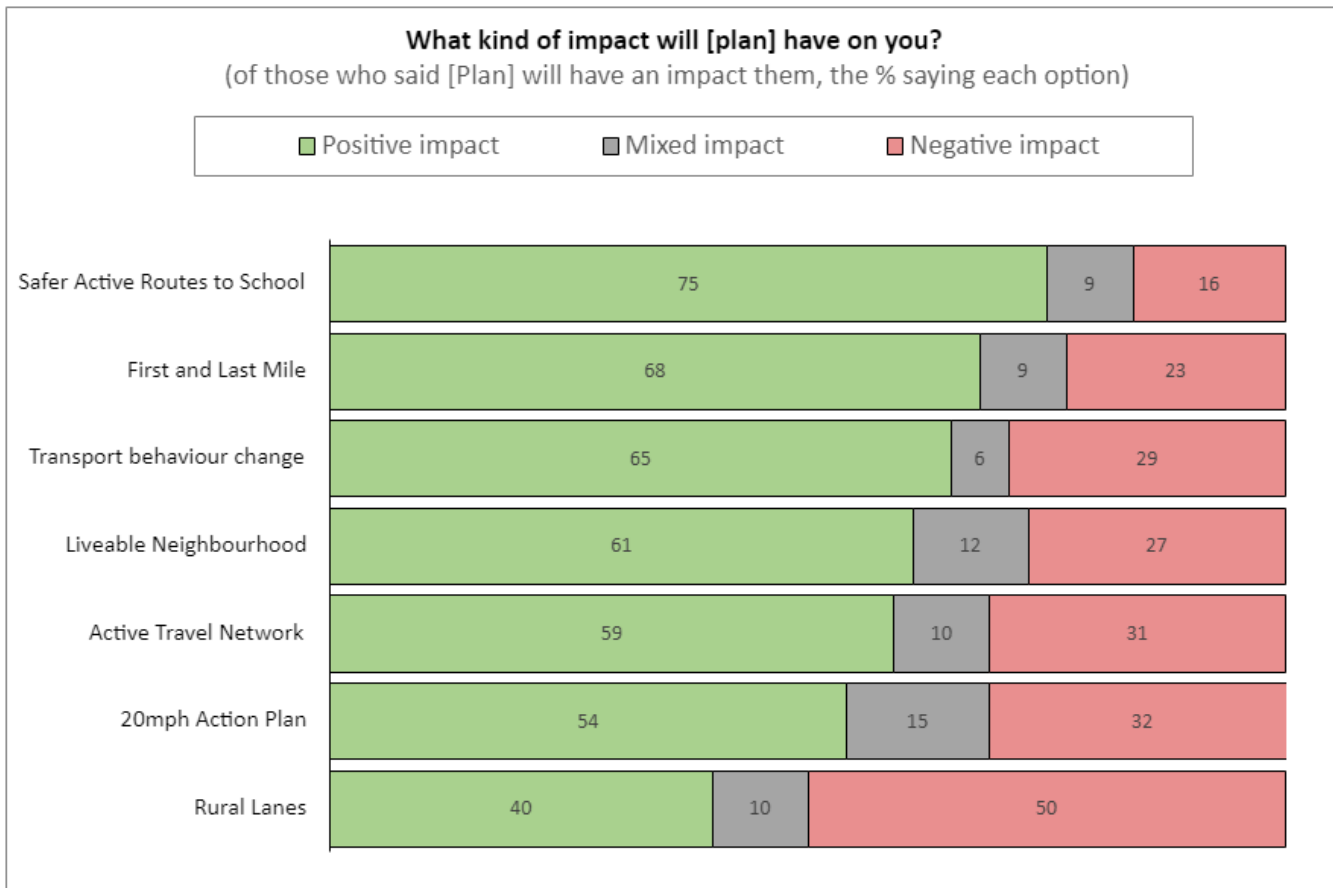
8.7 The engagement numbers varied throughout the 6-week consultation, as seen in the graph below. These are in line with the three main pushes on communications.



8.8 As seen in the figure below, there is **majority support** for all Active Travel Action Plans apart from 'Rural lanes', which has an even split between responses **for** it (43%) and responses **against** it (43%). The remaining 14% selected that they are 'not sure' if they support it at present.



8.9 The majority of respondents believe the impacts for each of the plans will be positive, as seen in the figure below. The exception was for the 'Rural Lanes' action plan which had 40% who felt the impact would be positive, 50% felt it would be negative and 10% were 'not sure':



Place & Movement Framework

8.10 In general, positive feedback was received to the Place and Movement Framework. However, there were some responses reflecting the limited information provided within the summary version. For example, there have been several requests to re-consider the classification of Rural Local Access roads in line with their current use rather than how we envisage the road to be used. When the full version of the Framework is published, it is expected to provide the clarification being sought by these comments. Scheme suggestions are generally in line with the Framework and Active Travel Action Plans and will be considered in line with our scheme development process.

Widen My Path

8.11 **423 contributions** were received and an additional **1022** likes for existing pins during the consultation period. Due to the volume of suggested improvements these are being reviewed and will be assessed in line with our scheme development process.

8.12 A full consultation report will be published on the council's consultation portal with full details of the consultation response.

9. RISK MANAGEMENT

9.1 The resulting interventions from the ATAP's will be risk managed in line with standard Council procedures, such as road safety audits and financial management.

10. EQUALITY IMPLICATIONS

10.1 Have you undertaken an Equality Impact Assessment? Yes

10.2 The ATAPs have been assessed to have both potential positive and negative impact on some protected characteristics which was highlighted in the consultation that was undertaken in Jan/Feb 2023. This has been taken into account and mitigations have been put in place to ensure that negative impacts are minimised and so that the overall impact is low-positive.

10.3 The consultation exercise which took place from 9th January to 20 February 2023 highlighted that there are some concerns about potential impacts on elderly and disabled groups. Whilst improvements such as wider footways and lower speeds may be a benefit to elderly and disabled groups, there are also concerns that if parking or access by car is reduced in order to facilitate such improvements, there would also be negative impacts. It was also pointed out in supportive consultation comments that not all disabled user groups have access to a car or would be able to use one (e.g. epilepsy) and such users would experience positive impacts from these action plans.

10.4 In order to mitigate the potential negative impacts on people with physical disabilities and older people, the following actions have already been undertaken or are planned to take place

- Engagement on the ATAPs with the disability access group to get input both at sign off and also during any future review process
- Ensuring detailed engagement is carried out on resulting infrastructure schemes, including EIAs where appropriate, so that any potential access impacts are assessed and mitigated

10.5 When these mitigations are taken into account to ensure that access is not negatively impacted by any resulting actions from the ATAPs, on balance the impact on elderly and disabled people is positive as the general improvement in road safety, reduction of traffic speeds and positive impacts on health and wellbeing including potential future improvements in air quality have an overall positive impact.

10.6 Consultation feedback also highlighted that many of the benefits could be felt by those in urban areas and that walking/cycling is a less attractive option for those living in rural areas. It will be important to ensure that investment is made across all areas with attention paid to connecting rural areas and making active travel a safe and viable option in these areas – this is an important outcome of the ATAPs and is reflected in the emerging plans.

10.7 The Active Travel Action Plans aim to directly address current transport inequalities as they focus on improvements for vulnerable road users such as pedestrians and cyclists,

including those with disabilities. Our activities are consistent with the Council's Corporate Plan vision of an Open, Fair and Green authority and our [Equalities Policy](#).

10.8 The Active Travel Action Plans are consistent with central government Levelling Up priorities by building capability to deliver an inclusive active travel network. The Action Plans are intended to improve travel choice for all our local residents and include provisions, such as more level pedestrian crossings, tactile paving and removing barriers to travel, particularly for the elderly, disabled, those with mobility issues or people who are visually impaired.

11. CORPORATE IMPLICATIONS

11.1 The 7 Active Travel Action Plans and the Place and Movement Framework support NSC policies (including strong alignment with the NSC Corporate Plan 2020-24).

12. APPENDICES

[Active Travel Strategy \(ATS\)](#)

[Active Travel Strategy Report to Full Council \(July 2021\)](#)

13. BACKGROUND PAPERS

Active Travel Action Plan Summaries (as consulted on):

[20MPH Action Plan - Summary](#)

[Active Travel Network Action Plan - Summary](#)

[First and Last Mile Action Plan - Summary](#)

[Liveable Neighbourhoods Action Plan - Summary](#)

[Rural Lanes Action Plan - Summary](#)

[Safer Active Routes to School Action Plan - Summary](#)

[Transport Behaviour Change Action Plan - Summary](#)

[Place and Movement Framework – Summary](#)


SIGNATORIES:

DECISION MAKER(S):

Signed:  Executive Member for Transport and Highways

Date: 9 March 2023

WITH ADVICE FROM:

Signed:  Assistant Director Neighbourhoods and Transport

Date: 9 March 2023