

# Transport and Environment Committee

10.00am, Thursday, 2 February 2023

## Public Transport Action Plan – Delivering the City Mobility Plan

Executive/routine Wards Council Commitments	Executive All
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### 1. Recommendations

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- 1.1 It is recommended that the Transport and Environment Committee:
  - 1.1.1 Approves the draft Public Transport Action Plan (Appendix 1) as a basis for public consultation;
  - 1.1.2 Agrees that officers can use the draft Plan's costings as a basis for engaging with funding bodies;
  - 1.1.3 Agrees to the development of a business case and delivery programme based on the draft Plan; and
  - 1.1.4 Notes the integral relationship between this draft plan, the Circulation Plan and the other City Mobility Plan Action Plans (Active Travel, Air Quality, Parking and Road Safety).

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Executive Director of Place

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## Public Transport Action Plan – Delivering the City Mobility Plan

### 2. Executive Summary

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- 2.1 This report presents a draft Public Transport Action Plan for Edinburgh. It also seeks approval to carry out consultation on the Plan.
- 2.2 The plan covers actions to improve public transport and, linking with walking, wheeling and cycling (or ‘active travel’), over the period to 2030 and beyond to encourage people to travel by more sustainable transport options in the future.

### 3. Background

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- 3.1 The Public Transport Action Plan (PTAP) is one of several action plans that set out proposals for implementing the Council’s [City Mobility Plan 2021-2030](#) (CMP).
- 3.2 The draft plan would replace the current Public and Accessible Transport Action Plan (PATAP), which covered the period 2013 to 2020.

#### **Council Business Plan 2023 - 2027**

- 3.3 The [Council Business Plan 2023 – 2027](#) sets out three strategic priorities for the Council:
  - 3.3.1 Create good places to live and work;
  - 3.3.2 End poverty in Edinburgh; and
  - 3.3.3 Become a net zero city by 2030.
- 3.4 Within the business plan, the Council commits to building affordable and sustainable homes in safe and social 20-minute neighbourhoods where streets are signed for people, essential services are easily accessible, and public transport and active travel are the best options for moving around.
- 3.5 Further, the business plan states that the Council will ensure that (7) people use decarbonised public transport and active travel as the first choice way to get around the city.

## 4. Main report

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### **Purpose of the Public Transport Action Plan**

- 4.1 The draft PTAP (Appendix 1) has been developed to build on the commitments within the Council business and in recognition that public transport moves more people around the city than any other mode of transport. It is also extremely efficient in terms of its use of road space and fuel and is an essential part of the city's sustainable travel network, connecting people to employment, health care, retail and leisure. If people are to be encouraged to travel more sustainably and contribute to reducing carbon emissions and congestion, public transport needs to be fast, affordable, reliable and convenient.
- 4.2 Recognising that many journeys require changes across travel modes and therefore interchanges between public transport, active travel and other modes must be conveniently placed, seamlessly integrated and easy to understand, interventions which support the use of sustainable modes of travel for the first and last miles of journeys are key to developing a truly integrated door-to-door network.
- 4.3 At the heart of the Plan is a commitment to working to develop and enhance the public transport system in Edinburgh, which includes expansion Mass Rapid Transit and bus priority measures.
- 4.4 The PTAP sets out draft key principles and associated actions to deliver an enhanced public transport system which contributes to achieving net zero carbon and supports sustainable economic growth in the city and wider region to 2030 and beyond.

### **Current Operating Climate**

- 4.5 The current operating climate for public transport operators is extremely challenging due to the changed travel behaviours since COVID-19 and also a severe shortage of bus drivers across the industry.
- 4.6 Journey time reduction and reliability improvements are required to assist patronage recovery from COVID-19 and encourage greater modal shift from general car usage.
- 4.7 Bus journey times have increased significantly in recent years. This has had an associated impact on bus services, as in order to deliver the same frequency of service, additional buses are required. This comes at an increased operational cost and operators cannot sustain this in the current challenging operating environment.
- 4.8 Therefore, it is important to ensure that there is continued monitoring of post-COVID travel patterns to understand any changes in travel behaviour and to ensure that PTAP actions need to reflect and integrate with the other action plans, outlined above.

### **Delivering the Public Transport Action Plan**

- 4.9 Beyond tram and bus, the plan does not at this stage seek to assess the relative merits or provide a weighted analysis of the key principles but sets out a series of

proposed actions which will each contribute to ensuring public transport remains the most popular sustainable mode of transport in the city.

- 4.10 Prioritisation of the principles will follow public consultation in order to reflect on any conflicts and challenges which are identified within the sustainable transport hierarchy.
- 4.11 Fundamentally the PTAP recognises that the public transport system is part of the integrated solution to address the movement of people and goods to, from and within the city.
- 4.12 Meeting the city's growth needs means the use of existing transport infrastructure can be maximised to support the viability, accessibility and expansion of public transport. This also means people will have less distance to travel to meet their daily needs (which is fundamental to the 20-minute neighbourhood concept).
- 4.13 Edinburgh is recognised as having two of the most successful and popular bus and tram services in the UK. Notwithstanding this, there are challenges in respect of bus domination and congestion in certain corridors in the city, with an associated impact on public realm.
- 4.14 To address the future needs in the city in a way that achieves a significant modal transfer to public transport, better alignment of strategic business planning and operational management of the Council-owned transport companies is considered necessary.
- 4.15 Future investment in public transport needs to recognise two core components if it is to deliver the growth required to meet zero carbon targets and deliver sustainable economic growth:
  - 4.15.1 High quality infrastructure to deliver competitive journey times to the right areas of the city; and
  - 4.15.2 A safe and efficient operating model to ensure that the system is accessible and affordable for those that wish to use it, when they want to use it.
- 4.16 The plan contains a balance of infrastructure, operational and behavioural measures and is presented under six themes:
  - Addressing the climate emergency;
  - Providing safe, affordable and accessible public transport;
  - Delivering a reliable and efficient network to support growth;
  - Enhancing regional connectivity;
  - Place - Reducing vehicular dominance; and
  - Improving Governance and Coordination.
- 4.17 Within each of the themes, the plan outlines the key challenge and the principles to address this, with a series of high level actions. A detailed actions table breaks this down further into individual actions.
- 4.18 The summary table also maps to the nine objectives in the CMP and other relevant policy measures.

- 4.19 Some of the actions cut across more than one theme and/or objective. A summary of the themes is outlined below, and specific actions are set out in Appendix A of the Appendix.

### **Addressing the Climate Emergency**

- 4.20 This section of the plan seeks to identify interventions which will be key to helping deliver Edinburgh's target to achieve a net zero carbon emissions by 2030. The plan also supports actions to improve air quality with a particular focus on the city's air quality management areas.

### **Providing safe, affordable and accessible public transport**

- 4.21 Edinburgh is a city of different cultures, needs, ages and abilities. The way that transport systems are provided to meet different needs and behaviours can have a significant impact on peoples' ability to find and sustain work, to look after children and relatives and to use health, education and other public services. The aim is to create a city where you don't need to own a car to move around by ensuring that public transport, walking, wheeling and cycling infrastructure is prioritised to support the choices available to reduce private car use.

### **Delivering a Reliable and Efficient Network to Support Growth**

- 4.22 With forecasts for Edinburgh's population pointing to a 15% increase by 2041, and the strength of Edinburgh's economy being based on the breadth of sectors, financial services, life sciences, higher education and tourism, public transport must adapt to cater for additional demand within the confines of a historic city and changing travel patterns.
- 4.23 To support growth, Edinburgh must deliver an efficient and attractive public transport system, competitive with peer cities. To achieve this, further investment in rail and tram networks is required. Bus has a key role to play and journey times need to be reduced, particularly from and around the periphery of the city. Investment in orbital bus connectivity will be key in creating new journey opportunities; build out of West Edinburgh will require services across rural West Edinburgh to be developed.

### **Enhancing Regional Connectivity**

- 4.24 Edinburgh is the hub of the subregional economy and therefore strengthening cross border public transport services will be key to delivering economic growth for the city, whilst addressing the environmental and social impacts of significant commuting into Edinburgh. Within this theme, the Council is currently developing a Strategic Business Case for a Mass Rapid Transit solution for the north/south route from Granton Waterfront to Edinburgh Bioquarter and beyond.
- 4.25 An update on this will be presented to the Council on 9 February 2023 and notes that a three month consultation on the primary findings of the work completed so far will be progressed.
- 4.26 The key area focus for consultation will be on the assessed route alignment options. Public consultees will be provided with a summary of the multi-criteria analysis and views will be sought.

4.27 At this stage, no decision has been taken on any alignments at this stage and feedback from the extensive consultation will be reported to Transport and Environment Committee.

#### **Place - Reducing vehicular dominance**

4.29 Edinburgh's streets and spaces in which people shop, work and socialise are also formed by the way people travel around. The more people that choose public transport, walking, wheeling and cycling the better the environment and the safer the streets. The aim is to create a city where it is not necessary to own a car in order to get around.

#### **Improving Governance and Coordination**

4.30 Parts of the city's transport network are highly congested. The cost of congestion to drivers is £764 per annum. The cost to the city is £177 million per annum. Congestion adds 41% travel time to each peak time journey. Goods and services stuck in traffic have a direct impact on the cost and productivity of businesses and public services. Congestion adversely affects the communities along these routes, making them more polluted, more dangerous and less pleasant places to be. This will be tackled by managing demand on roads and enhancing the efficiency of our public transport system.

4.31 Many journeys require changes across travel modes. Interchanges between public transport, active travel and other modes must be conveniently placed, seamlessly integrated and easy to understand. Interventions which support the use of sustainable modes of travel for the first and last miles of our journeys are key to developing a truly integrated door-to-door network.

## **5. Next Steps**

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5.1 Subject to approval of this report's recommendations, over the coming months it is proposed to carry out an extensive programme of engagement and consultation on the PTAP. This programme will be integrated with consultation on the Circulation Plan and other associated Action Plans (Active Travel, Public Transport, Parking, Road Safety and Air Quality).

5.2 The outcomes of the consultation will be reported to Committee in Autumn 2023.

5.3 As noted above, a report on the development of a Strategic Business Case for a Mass Rapid Transport solution from Granton Waterfront to Edinburgh Bioquarter and an update on Transport Scotland's Strategic Transport Projects Review (STPR2) report will be presented to the Council on 9 February 2023.

## **6. Financial impact**

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6.1 Full delivery of the Action Plan, even over a period of a decade or more, would require a substantial increase in funding and resources. Subject to Committee approval, it is proposed to develop a business case and delivery programme for the

PTAP and to seek funding from funding partners to support the delivery of the Action Plan.

## **7. Stakeholder/Community Impact**

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- 7.1 Over the coming months it is proposed to carry out an extensive programme of engagement and consultation on the PTAP.

## **8. Background reading/external references**

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- 8.1 Report to Transport and Environment Committee, [8 December 2022](#) - Circulation Plan
- 8.2 Report to Transport and Environment Committee, [6 October 2022](#) – Circulation Plan

## **9. Appendices**

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- 9.1 Appendix 1: Draft Public Transport Action Plan

# Public Transport Action Plan 2030

Draft

January 2023

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