

STAFFORD BOROUGH INTEGRATED TRANSPORT STRATEGY 2013-2031

1. Introduction

- 1.1 Integrated Transport Strategies have been developed for the eight District / Boroughs in Staffordshire to help prioritise the County Council's expenditure on transport improvements and secure potential resources including developer contributions and Government funds. They are also informing the District / Borough Council Local Plan process and take into account the new National Planning Policy Framework.
- 1.2 The Government has confirmed its commitment to devolving economic power to Local Enterprise Partnerships (LEPs) through the creation of a Single Local Growth Fund (SLGF) which will be formally allocated to the LEP through Growth Deals. European funds may also become available for transport, through Growth Deals.
- 1.3 A significant level of transport funding has been transferred to the SLGF as transport has been identified as central to local economic development. Staffordshire and Stoke-Trent's allocation of the Single Local Growth Fund and European funds will be determined through the LEP's Strategic Economic Plan for the period 2015/16 to 2020/21. Allocations will be based on the strength of the Strategic Economic Plan in terms of identifying effective and speedy delivery of transport schemes and robust value for money evidence. LEP Growth Deals are expected to be announced by July 2014. LEPs will be required to work with Local Transport Bodies to identify the priorities for transport spending for inclusion in the Economic Plan and this Integrated Transport Strategy will help to inform this work.
- 1.4 City Deals are also being introduced where bespoke deals are negotiated to help drive economic growth, including access improvements to development sites such as Meaford in Stafford Borough. The success of Staffordshire and Stoke-on-Trent's City Deal will be announced shortly.
- 1.5 The delivery of this Transport Strategy will help to achieve the following County Council Priority Outcome:

Staffordshire is a place where people can easily and safely access everyday facilities and activities through the highways and transport networks

Staffordshire's economy prospers and grows, together with the jobs, skills, qualifications and aspirations to support it

Staffordshire's communities proactively tackle climate change, gaining financial benefit and reducing carbon emissions

- 1.6 In 2011, we consulted communities and stakeholders on the Integrated Transport Strategies. Many useful comments and ideas were received which have helped to shape this Strategy for Stafford Borough. Our response to these representations is provided in: Report on the Outcome of the Consultation Process 2011/12 at: <http://www.staffordshire.gov.uk/transport/transportplanning/localtransportplan/districtintegratedtransportstrategies.aspx>.

- 1.7 Comments during the consultation process focused on congestion in Stafford town centre, on Lichfield Road, Stone Road, Beaconside and Blackheath Lane which increases when there are delays on the M6. There were particular concerns that congestion and delays to buses will get worse as a result of the proposed growth in housing and employment and the need for the Eastern Distributor Road was raised. It was highlighted that the strategy does not include the need for rail enhancements. Arriva advised that public transport proposals should be delivered in the short term and expressed their support for real time bus passenger information. They also requested engagement at an early stage in the planning of housing and employment sites.

2. Borough Profile

- 2.1 Stafford Borough is largely rural in character and Stafford is the main settlement that has a key role in providing services, facilities and employment opportunities. Although Stone Town and other larger villages provide additional local services, most settlements in the Borough and the rural hinterland are economically and functionally linked to Stafford. There are sub-urban areas in the north that have close links to the North Staffordshire conurbation. Development in the Borough is restricted by Green Belt between Stone and North Staffordshire and within the Cannock Chase Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) to the south east of Stafford.
- 2.2 Stafford Borough has a relatively low level of deprivation and unemployment, with levels of prosperity higher than national averages and just two wards in Stafford having concentrated deprivation. The Borough is relatively self-contained with 73% of the economically active population living and working within the Borough.
- 2.3 Stafford Borough has good connections to the national transport network including the M6 and the West Coast Main Line. The A51, A449 and A34 local routes also connect the Borough to the North Staffordshire and West Midlands conurbations and the A518, A513 and A519 provide links to the east and west.
- 2.4 An analysis of travelling conditions experienced by road users between September 2010 and August 2011 on key routes in Stafford has been completed for the 8-9 AM peak and 5-6 PM peak using 2010/11 Department for Transport GPS Trafficmaster data. This congestion data will be monitored annually and will help to justify and inform the Transport Strategy in Section 6.
- 2.5 Delays are calculated by comparing night-time to peak hour journey times. Normalised delay is defined as the delay in seconds expressed as a percentage of free flow travel time. Delays recorded above 100% represent journeys that are more than twice as long during the peak hour compared to free flow travel conditions. The reliability of individual routes has also been assessed and expressed as a % variability of the weekly average travel time in the peak hours. Basically the smaller the % value returned, the more 'reliable' the route is. A heavily congested route can have good journey time reliability if travellers queue consistently.
- 2.6 Overall, the radial routes in the East show the largest delays in both peaks and additionally during the AM peak delays are also heavy on the Newport Road. The analysis also concludes the following:

- Both the Cannock Road and Lichfield Road show consistently high average peak hour delays when compared to other routes in Stafford. The Cannock Road experiences the highest levels of delay during both the AM and PM peak periods; 213% and 155% respectively. The Lichfield Road is the least reliable route during the AM peak with a reliability value of 37%. The highest average delays in Stafford of 10 minutes were recorded along the Lichfield and Cannock Roads at these times.
- During the AM peak, delays are experienced along Beaconside travelling eastbound towards Weston Road with normalised delay up to 128%. Southbound journeys during the PM peak suffer from reliability issues.
- The Stone Road can experience delays of up to 104% in the AM peak towards Stafford town centre
- The Newport Road / Station Road corridor is under pressure in the peak hours. Traffic problems tend to be greatest during the AM peak travelling inbound on the Newport Road with delays of 176% during 0830 - 0845. Variability of travel times is also a concern along this route.
- Delays tend to be heaviest on Foregate Street during the PM peak travelling inbound with delays of 123% between 1715 and 1730.
- During the last two quarters of the AM peak, delays are consistently 140% travelling inbound. This direction of travel is the least reliable route during the PM peak (28%).

2.7 With regard to public transport, Stafford rail station is managed by Virgin Trains and is served by Cross Country, London Midland and Virgin Trains. There are frequent services to Liverpool, Manchester, Birmingham and London, and direct services to the south west and south coast. Stone rail station is managed by London Midland and is served by an hourly Crewe to London service operated by London Midland. This service has been speeded up since December 2012 with improvements to rolling stock. There are also connections available to the north west at Crewe and Stoke-on-Trent rail stations, and to the West Midlands at Stafford rail station.

2.8 The Borough is served by a core bus network of inter-urban and local routes, supported by community transport. Community Link Stafford and District operate a dial-a-ride service and two smaller scale voluntary car schemes operate for local residents in Gnosall and Colwich, including Little Haywood and Great Haywood.

2.9 On 28th January 2013 the Secretary of State for Transport published the initial preferred route for HS2 Phase Two. This announcement set out approximately 211 miles of new railway and extends the route from the West Midlands to Leeds and Manchester. In Staffordshire, the proposal sees a further 33 miles of new railway cutting through the centre of the County with Stafford Borough having approximately 18 miles. The proposed HS2 service pattern indicates an hourly high speed classic compatible train serving Stafford station every hour with indicative journey times to London at 64 minutes.

2.10 HS2 enters Stafford Borough from the south east in Colwich in a mixture of cuttings and embankments. It passes over the West Coast Main Line, A51 and River Trent flood plain as the route enters into the parish of Ingestre with Tixall. Through this parish, HS2 is on embankment as it travels through part of Ingestre golf course while dissecting prime farmland as it continues through a section of the County Showground while heading towards Hopton. Passing under the A518 the route

continues in cutting where a 510m cut and cover tunnel is proposed at the village of Hopton. As HS2 continues towards Yarlet it is in a series of embankments and cuttings that will see the loss of open countryside and prime farmland. HS2 passes under the A34 and continues towards M6 where it runs almost parallel to the motorway (south west of Stone) in a series of cuttings and embankments. With continued loss of open countryside and farmland HS2 passes over the M6, to the north east of Swynnerton and under the A51.

3. Recent Transport Achievements

- 3.1 In 2012/13 there was a considerable reduction in funding available for transport schemes throughout the County. Improvements were therefore focused on making the best use of the existing highway network, concentrating on maintaining its condition and ensuring that we continue to reduce road casualties. However successful bids made by the County Council have enhanced funding levels for Stafford between 2013 and 2015. Local Sustainable Transport Funds were awarded in 2012 to deliver a package of measures to improve access to employment, training and services in the eastern quadrant of Stafford. Local Pinch Point Funds were awarded in 2013 for a key junction improvement at Weston Road / Blackheath Lane providing access to the proposed Beacon Business Park.
- 3.2 In 2012/13, £2.5 million was spent by the County Council on delivering the bridge and highway maintenance programme throughout the Borough and £1.1 million on other highway safety and transport improvements. Progress has been made on delivering the National Cycle Network 5 between Barlaston and Stone along the Trent and Mersey Canal, jointly funded by the County Council, Stafford Borough Council and the Canal and River Trust. Parking and public realm improvements have been implemented along Castle Street in Eccleshall, jointly funded by the County Council, Borough Council, Parish Council and Stafford and Rural Homes. Parking provision and footpaths have also been improved at Pasturefields along the A51.
- 3.3 Targets to reduce road casualties are being achieved through education, enforcement and engineering measures. Safety in the Borough has been improved through anti-skid surfacing, vehicle actuated signs and 20mph speed limits outside schools. Safety schemes have been delivered at Brocton crossroads on the A34 near Stafford and at the Hough Retail Park A34, Stafford.
- 3.4 Public transport services have been maintained throughout 2011. Many urban residents in Stafford Borough now live within 350 metres of a bus stop with a better than half-hourly weekday service. This is achieved through the core commercial network and County Council subsidised services. Many bus stops now comply with the Disability Discrimination Act. Staffordshire County Council is also the national leader in discretionary travel allowance. A new travel scheme, adopted in April 2011, allows free 24/7 bus transport to people of pensionable age or with a disability, plus their carer, and under 20s can travel anywhere within Staffordshire for just £1 per journey.

4. The Plan for Stafford Borough

- 4.1 Stafford Borough Council's emerging Plan for Stafford Borough for the period 2011 to 2031 is planning for the delivery of:

- 10,000 new homes with the following distribution of new provision (excluding completions and commitments):
 - 5,560 in Stafford, including provision for Ministry of Defence personnel
 - 469 in Stone
 - 629 key service villages
 - 297 rest of rural area
- 160 hectares of employment land with new provision of around 36 hectares in Stafford, 20 hectares in Stone and 15 hectares in the rest of the Borough. This is in addition to sites with planning permission which includes 20 hectares (gross) at Beacon Business Park and 26 hectares (gross) at Redhill Business Park both at Stafford.

4.2 The 34 hectare (net) Meaford Power Station site to the north of Stone is a significant employment proposal in the Borough, together with extensions proposed at Ladfordfields industrial estate near Seighford and Raleigh Hall industrial estate near Eccleshall.

4.3 The Plan aims to strengthen Stone town centre's role as a Market Town by encouraging its development and expansion. There are proposals for a new extension to Stone Business Park, served from the A34, and the delivery of around 500 new homes within the area West and South of Stone, served off Eccleshall Road.

4.4 Most of the Borough's housing and employment growth will be concentrated on Stafford Town as it has the greatest level of services and facilities, jobs and transport links. During the Plan period to 2031 new homes are expected to be delivered at Strategic Development Locations adjacent to Stafford's urban area with approximately 3,100 proposed for the North of Stafford (including a committed housing site), 2,200 in the West and 600 in the East.

5. Transport Evidence to Support Directions of Growth Proposed for Stafford

5.1 A Transport Study was completed by Atkins Consultants during 2008 and 2009 to help identify the most sustainable locations, in transport terms, for new housing and employment development in Stafford and understand the potential implications on the transport network. The following scenarios were assessed as part of the study:

- Three options for delivering 7,000 houses focussed towards the 'North and West', 'North and East' or 'South and East'
- Three options for delivering 10,000 houses focussed towards the 'West, North and South', 'West, North and East' or 'West, South and East'
- The three options for delivering 10,000 houses were all tested with the following potential road scheme combinations:
 - Stafford Western Access Route and the Stafford Southern Bypass (A34 Cannock Road to A449 Wolverhampton Road)
 - Stafford Western Access Route and Stafford Eastern Distributor Road (A513 Beaconside to A34 Cannock Road)
 - Stafford Western Access Route, Stafford Southern Bypass and Stafford Eastern Distributor Road
- Further detailed delay and flow analysis of the following scenarios was completed:

- 10,000 houses in the North, West and South with the Western and Eastern road schemes
- 10,000 houses in the North, West and East with the Western and Eastern road schemes
- 10,000 houses in the North, West and East with the Western, Eastern and Southern road schemes

5.2 The Transport Study concludes that the most efficient way to deliver 7,000 households in Stafford is to focus greenfield development in the west and north of the town. If 10,000 homes were to be considered by the Borough Council the best scenario in transport terms would be to focus development in the North, West and South with additional highway capacity in the West and the East.

5.3 In 2012 and 2013, further assessments were carried out to identify in more detail the infrastructure requirements in the North, West and East of Stafford. This work concludes that the following schemes are a priority for delivering the Plan for Stafford Borough:

- Stafford Western Access Route between Castlefields and Foregate Street
- Stafford Eastern Distributor Road between Beaconside and Baswich Lane
- Stafford Northern Local Distributor Road between A34 and Sandon Road (north)

5.4 A final technical analysis has been completed using the SATURN Stafford Transport Model and Accession to confirm the overall impact in 2031 of providing these three road schemes. The evaluation compares key performance indicators between a scenario without the improvements and a scenario with the three improvements. The following conclusions can be drawn:

- All highway users are expected to experience shorter journey times and a general improvement in traffic flow. However the benefits are expected to be greater for trips from the new development sites rather than for existing users.
- There are routes in Stafford that will not benefit from the three schemes and further mitigation measures will be required at these locations as part of the Transport Strategy.
- There is expected to be a minimal overall impact on traffic flows on the M6. Existing congestion on the M6 is expected to be reduced by Highways Agency proposals for managed motorways.
- The three road schemes significantly improve the penetration of buses into the new developments.
- A general reduction in traffic congestion will have environmental benefits.

6. Transport Strategy

- 6.1 The Transport Strategy explains how we intend to deliver the following Economic Prosperity and Community priorities of Stafford Borough that will also help to achieve the Priority Outcomes of the County Council's Strategic Plan as detailed in paragraph 1.5. The Strategy will also guide the LEP Strategic Economic Plan. Delivery will be through a combination of countywide initiatives, connectivity proposals in the Borough, schemes identified in the Divisional Highway Programme and Local Transport Packages. The Strategy is summarised in Appendix 1 and illustrated in the Figures provided in Appendix 2.

ECONOMIC PROSPERITY

- Accommodate strategic employment and housing greenfield sites in Stafford, including new highway capacity
- Provide highway capacity and sustainable transport connectivity to support economic and retail growth in Stafford town centre
- Manage peak hour traffic levels and resulting carbon emissions on Stafford's radial routes
- Support sustainable development in Stone that does not undermine the regeneration of North Staffordshire

COMMUNITIES

- Maintain the current condition and safety of the highway network
- Improve public transport connectivity and quality of life for local communities
- Raise awareness of environmental issues and encourage people to lead more sustainable lifestyles, helping to reduce carbon emissions

Divisional Highway Programme

- 6.2 The Divisional Highway Programme for Stafford Borough gives County Councillors the opportunity to directly input into delivery programmes. Councillors work closely with Community Highway Managers, parish councils and other stakeholders to ensure local concerns and challenges are identified and priorities are established, taking into account financial constraints. The Divisional Highway Programme is reviewed twice a year and gives an overview of highway and transport concerns within the local area, such as pedestrian safety, speeding through residential areas, on-street parking and safety at junctions. The main issues in 2013/14 raised by Councillors are summarised in the Summary Table in Appendix 1.

Connectivity in the Borough

- 6.3 Throughout the Strategy period, bus improvements will focus on making use of technology to improve service information and journey time reliability. Existing bus routes will also be formally reviewed in terms of their efficiency, reliability and ease of use as part of a Transport Review.
- 6.4 With regard to the rail network, work is being carried out by Virgin Trains at Stafford station to improve access to platforms. Further improvements are included in the Department for Transport's delivery programme from 2013/14 to eliminate conflicts between different train services and increase line speeds, specifically in the vicinity of the railway station and the junction at Norton Bridge. Highway measures

required to deliver Network Rail's Norton Bridge railway junction improvement will be delivered by Network Rail, in consultation with local authorities and residents.

- 6.5 Connectivity, equality of access and a contribution to the health and wellbeing agenda will be achieved by improving facilities that encourage walking and cycling. The priority will be to deliver the Local Sustainable Transport Fund package for the eastern quadrant of Stafford, enhance pedestrian safety throughout the Borough and complete the National Cycle Network between Stone and Barlaston, and to the Shropshire border, as resources permit.

Stafford Western Access Improvements

- 6.6 The Stafford Western Access Improvements are indicated on Figure 1 in Appendix 2. Transport evidence concludes that the Stafford Western Access Route between Castlefields, Doxey Road and Foregate Street is required to deliver housing and employment growth in Stafford. Section A between Castlefields and Doxey Road will be required to access the proposed 2,200 dwellings in the west and will be funded by developers. The route between Doxey Road and Foregate Street is expected to be funded by a combination of public and private funds. A major scheme business case was produced for the route in 2010 and this will be reviewed during 2014 for the purpose of securing funding from the Single Local Growth Fund that has been devolved to Local Enterprise Partnerships. The aim is to deliver the road scheme by 2018.
- 6.7 The introduction of the Western Access Route will significantly reduce traffic levels on Chell Road, Station Road, Foregate Street and at Gaol Square. However there may continue to be traffic problems along the Newport Road and north of Foregate Street along the A34 as the increased capacity in the town centre encourages more traffic into the area. This is likely to be manageable through traffic management and sustainable transport measures.
- 6.8 The sustainable transport measures to be delivered in the west include new walking and cycling links to the town centre, bus services to new developments, real time bus passenger information, urban traffic control and potential bus priority on radial routes to the town centre, enhanced bus interchange and pedestrian priority in the town centre and potential traffic management following completion of the Western Access Route.
- 6.9 Further details are provided in the Transport Evidence to Support a Western Direction of Growth published in September 2012 by Staffordshire County Council.

Stafford Northern Access Improvements

- 6.10 The Stafford Northern Access Improvements are indicated on Figure 2 in Appendix 2. Transport evidence produced in 2013 concludes that significant transport investment would be required to deliver 3,100 new dwellings in the North of Stafford. The proposed package consists of the following:
- **Highway capacity improvements**
A Local Distributor Road provided through the development sites together with junction and link improvements along Beaconside required for enhancing safety and capacity. Minimising the number of new junctions required to access the

development sites is also essential. A Local Distributor Road would remove substantial levels of traffic from the A34 north of Redhill roundabout and along the northern section of Beaconside. However delays would still be expected, particularly along sections of the A34 Stone Road and southern sections of Beaconside that would require further mitigation through junction improvements and sustainable transport.

- **Bus connectivity**

A new bus service through the site will make use of the new local distributor and will be within easy walking distance for residents. Real time bus passenger information will be provided and bus priority on A34 Stone Road.

- **Enabling active travel**

Local facilities will be required that are appropriate to the scale of the housing development and will be conveniently accessed by walking and cycling to internalise trips. High permeability within the site and walking and cycling connectivity to existing local facilities is essential.

- **Sustainable travel promotion**

Workplace Travel Plans, sustainable travel initiatives targeted at local residents and implementation of School Travel Plans will be required to minimise car travel.

- 6.11 Further details are provided in the Transport Evidence to Support a Northern Direction of Growth published in May 2013 by Staffordshire County Council.

Stafford Eastern Access Improvements

- 6.12 The Stafford Eastern Access Improvements are indicated on Figure 3 in Appendix 2. Transport evidence concludes that an Eastern Distributor Road between Beaconside and St Thomas Lane is required to deliver the proposed housing growth and would deliver significant transport benefits, although it may add to traffic problems on Beaconside. An extension of the route crossing over Baswich Lane, the River Sow, the canal and West Coast Main Line could provide further significant benefits but at a very high cost. As an alternative, the Eastern Access improvements proposes to consider and potentially take forward a lower cost option for improving safety and capacity issues along Baswich Lane. The historical route of the Eastern Distributor Road between Baswich Lane, Milford Road and Cannock Road has few demonstrable transport benefits therefore is not included in the Stafford Eastern Access Improvements.
- 6.13 Highway capacity and safety will be improved at the A518 Weston Road / Blackheath junction, Stafford, which will help to accommodate the development of Beacon Business Park. This scheme is being funded through Local Pinch Point Funds and developer funds.
- 6.14 The sustainable transport package for the East will focus on providing walking, cycling and bus links to the proposed development sites that complement the following package of measures that are being delivered through Local Sustainable Transport Funds:

- **Enhanced bus travel**
Real time bus passenger information on radial routes to the town, Wi Fi on buses and hospital bus access improvements
- **Enhanced active travel network**
Completion of the missing links in the walking and cycling network and the Baswich Walking and Cycling Route that includes a new viaduct connecting Baswich Lane to Tixall Road.
- **Engagement and enabling**
Targeted community events will be held to showcase the new sustainable travel facilities and local schools are refreshing and implementing their Travel Plans. The Bike Bus is a new mobile bike centre that has been established which is forming the keystone of community events and cycle training in the area. Extensive bus marketing will also take place jointly by the bus operator and the County Council.
- **Travel support for business and training providers**
Initiatives include Stafford Wheels to Work and Training, sustainable travel initiatives for employees and students, electric vehicle charging points, co-ordinated travel planning activities through the setting up of a Business Travel Plan Network, a Workplace Travel Plan Support fund and town centre travel plans. The Chamber of Commerce has significant involvement in this area of work.

6.15 Further details are provided within the Stafford Eastern Distributor Road Indicative Economic Assessment produced by Atkins consultants in May 2013 and the Local Sustainable Transport Fund bid to the Department for Transport submitted in February 2011.

Stafford Town Centre Local Transport Package

6.16 The Stafford Town Centre Local Transport Package is indicated on Figure 4 in Appendix 2. Significant investment has already been made to improve the environment within the town centre. Going forward, the objective of the Town Centre Local Transport Package will be to help accommodate the residual traffic expected to be generated from housing, employment and retail growth proposed for Stafford, at the same time as providing further public realm enhancement and better quality bus provision. This will be complemented by sustainable travel initiative being promoted through the Local Sustainable Transport Fund package. The town centre package consists of the following three key elements:

- **Enhanced bus provision**
Bus stop locations around the town will be reviewed to improve journey time reliability and ease of use, taking into account the location of new development sites within the town. This will be complemented by real time bus passenger information at bus stops on radial routes and within the town centre.
- **Traffic management / junction improvements on town centre radial routes**
Transport evidence suggests that even with significant highway infrastructure delivered to the West, North and East of Stafford, peak hour congestion will remain at key points on radial routes into the town centre. Consideration will

therefore be given to traffic management measures and junction improvements along A449 Wolverhampton Road, A518 Newport Road, A34 Lichfield Road and A518 Weston Road

- **Town centre traffic management**

Traffic management measures within the town are proposed to discourage through traffic on Eastgate Street and reduce the impact of traffic generated by the Riverway and Kingsmead retail developments. In the longer term, the delivery of the Western Access Route will provide the opportunity to downgrade the A518 along Chell Road, Victoria Road and Station Road. As a result, the pedestrian environment, public realm and bus interchange facilities will be enhanced on Chell Road.

Stone Local Transport Package

6.17 The Stone Local Transport Package is indicated on Figure 5 in Appendix 2. Mitigation measures required to accommodate this new housing and employment growth in Stone includes the following:

- Deliver the access requirements at Meaford development site
- Improved accessibility to the town centre particularly by walking, cycling and public transport
- Ongoing consultations with the rail industry to maintain services at Stone rail station
- Delivery of NCN5 through Stone completing the link to North Staffordshire
- Review Stone town centre traffic management arrangements
- Potential junction improvements on the A34/A51 to increase safety and capacity
- Potential safety improvements along the A34 at The Fillybrooks
- Potential new junction on A34 to serve the extension to Stone Business Park

APPENDIX 1: STAFFORD BOROUGH TRANSPORT STRATEGY SUMMARY TABLE

PRIORITIES	PROPOSED STRATEGY	JUSTIFICATION / DELIVERY
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Accommodate strategic employment and housing greenfield sites in Stafford, including new highway capacity Provide highway capacity and sustainable transport connectivity to support economic and retail growth in Stafford town centre Manage peak hour traffic levels and resulting carbon emissions on Stafford's radial routes Support sustainable development in Stone that does not undermine the regeneration of North Staffordshire Maintain the current condition and safety of the highway network Improve public transport connectivity and quality of life for local communities Raise awareness of environmental issues and encourage people to lead more sustainable lifestyles, helping to reduce carbon emissions 	<p>ECONOMIC PROSPERITY</p> <p>SHORT TERM – 3 YEARS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Stafford Northern Access Improvements: Access to Redhill Business Park Stafford Eastern Access Improvements: A518 / Blackheath Lane junction improvement, Local Sustainable Transport Fund (LSTF) package delivering enhanced bus travel, enhanced active travel network, engagement and enabling and travel support for business and training providers. Stafford Town Centre Local Transport Package: Real time bus passenger information (RTPI) within the town centre, review of bus routes, traffic management and works to accommodate retail development and complementary LSTF sustainable travel initiatives. Stone Local Transport Package: Maintain services at Stone rail station, access provision at Meaford development site, A34 safety improvements at Whitemill Lane and Newcastle Road, The Fillybrooks <p>LONG TERM UP TO 2031</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Stafford Northern Access Improvements: Local Distributor Road between A34 and Sandon Road (N), Beaconside junction and link improvements, new bus service, A34 RTPI and bus priority, walking and cycling provision and sustainable travel promotion Stafford Western Access Improvements: Western Access Route, walking and cycling links between Castlefields and the town centre, new bus service, traffic management and urban traffic control identified through post scheme monitoring, downgrading of the A518 through the town to allow for improved bus interchange and pedestrian priority Stafford Eastern Access Improvements: Eastern Distributor Road between Beaconside and St Thomas Lane and safety and capacity improvements along Baswich Lane Stafford Town Centre Local Transport Package: Pedestrian and bus priority on the downgraded A518 through the town centre to complement the Western Access Route, RTPI on all radial routes and potential traffic management on Newport Road, Wolverhampton Road, Weston Road and Lichfield Road Stone Local Transport Package: Improve accessibility between development sites and town centre, complete NCN5 through Stone, review traffic management arrangements in town centre, A34 safety and capacity improvements Extension of RTPI to other settlements within the Borough Monitor congestion on radial routes in Stafford urban area and propose appropriate mitigation Completion of NCN55 to Shropshire and NCN5 across Cannock Chase Stafford Area Rail Improvement Project including Norton Bridge railway junction improvement Consultation with local communities and the Government on HS2 mitigation measures Potential Highways Agency managed motorway scheme between M6 junctions 13 to 15 <p>COUNTYWIDE INITIATIVES (2013/14)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Maintenance programme 20mph zones, speed limit review and parking and loading restrictions through Clear Streets Driver training and road safety education and training in schools Subsidised bus services, community transport, concessionary fares scheme and bus service information Promoting sustainable travel and school travel planning Careful consideration of any requests to restrict lorry movements in line with actions and priorities in the Local Transport Plan Freight Strategy (2011) Promotion of 'superfast' broadband <p>DIVISIONAL HIGHWAY PROGRAMME AND LOCAL SAFETY ISSUES (2013/14)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Pedestrian safety and verge parking within residential areas within the Borough Speeding through rural villages A519 traffic and speeding issues Speed Indication Device (SID) requests and 20's Plenty Initiative around schools A34 The Fillybrooks, Stone, gap closure, Whitemill Lane and junction improvement Newcastle Road Safety issues for cyclists on A34, Stafford, between Co-operative St and Glebe Ave 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Value for money will be achieved through delivering local transport packages by pooling public and private sector resources. Future public funding will be secured through LEP Growth Deals Transport Assessments will determine the final measures required to be delivered by developers and refusal is only likely on transport grounds where the impact of development is severe. Priorities will take into account the emerging Local Plan which will be examined by an independent Inspector and be in line with the National Planning Policy Framework. The Borough Council is expected to produce a S123 list of infrastructure accompanying the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) Charging Schedule. The S123 list cannot be funded by S106. Key highway infrastructure proposed for Stafford is required to deliver the Borough Council's Strategic Development Locations and town centre developments, funded through a combination of public and private resources. Mitigation measures have been approved for employment sites at Meaford, Redhill and Beacon Business Park. Access works for Meaford employment site has been included as proposals in the City Deal for Staffordshire and Stoke-on-Trent The Health and Wellbeing Agenda will be supported through capital investment in the walking and cycling network including the National Cycle Network and the Baswich Walking and Cycling Route and promotional activities delivered through Local Sustainable Transport Fund (LSTF). Congestion will be monitored annually with GPS Trafficmaster data Scheme delivery will acknowledge Manual for Streets and available guidance on the historic environment, habitats and the Urban Forest Priorities for rail enhancements will be confirmed in a Rail Strategy for Staffordshire. Accelerated delivery of M6 Managed Motorways is included in the City Deal <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Initiatives are generally expected to be funded by County Council capital and revenue funds as resources permit. The County Council and LEP will act as leaders in the development and the raising of funds to deliver super fast broadband. Maintenance will be the main area of County Council expenditure within the strategy period and works will be guided by the Transport Asset Management Plan (TAMP). Areas targeted for delivery will be influenced by community consultation and data that identifies need. Criteria will be set to determine which non-commercial bus services can be supported by the County Council. Travel planning and targeted sustainable transport marketing initiatives are particularly important in Stafford to help reduce forecast growth in traffic. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Each Councillor has a budget of £10,000 for delivery of local minor improvements promoted through the DHP. Feasibility studies will be completed on potential schemes that emerge through the DHP process to determine if they should be delivered and whether they should be funded through the Councillor's budget or require additional funding. Scheme costs will be closely monitored to ensure value for money. Value for money will be maximised when initiatives complement other proposals in the Strategy.