

	<p><b>REPORT TO Cabinet</b></p> <p><b>TO BE HELD ON 5 May 2009</b></p>
	<p><b>Key Decision</b>                      <b>YES</b></p> <p><b>Forward Plan Ref No</b>      <b>774/0209</b></p>
<p><b>Strategic Theme:</b>                      <b>Improving our Places</b></p>	<p><b>Portfolio</b>                                      <b>Regeneration Culture and Sport</b></p>

**REPORT OF: Andy Wallhead – Corporate Director of Regeneration, Culture and Sport.**

**WARDS AFFECTED: All Wards**

**1. SUBJECT: WAKEFIELD CITY HIGHWAYS IMPLEMENTATION PLAN (WCHIP)**

**2. PURPOSE OF REPORT**

2.1 To consider the proposed Wakefield City Highways Implementation Plan (see attached schedule and location plan, Appendices 1 and 2) and agree the principles and priorities contained within it.

2.2 To consider the proposed North Wakefield Gyratory Scheme (location plan, Appendix 3).

**3. RECOMMENDATION (S)**

3.1 To endorse the Wakefield City Highways Implementation Plan (WCHIP) as the basis for the delivery of highway schemes within the city centre over the next few years.

3.2 To approve, in principal the North Wakefield Gyratory Scheme.

3.3 To commence detailed consultation with Local Ward members on the North

**THIS REPORT AND BACKGROUND INFORMATION ARE OPEN TO INSPECTION BY MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC.**

Wakefield Gyratory scheme prior to undertaking a wider consultation exercise with the general public.

#### **4. REASON FOR RECOMMENDATION (S)**

4.1 The WCHIP used the adopted Wakefield Transport Strategy (2007) and the West Yorkshire Local Transport Plan 2006-2011 as its basis for developing the projects detailed in Appendix 1.

4.2 The purpose of the Transport Strategy is to provide a coherent framework for the development of transport improvements across Wakefield for the benefit of all residents and businesses.

The Local Transport Plan (LTP) is a partnership between the five West Yorkshire district councils and Metro. The LTP core strategy involves high public transport investment together with demand management measures. This core approach is delivered through a series of priorities to Deliver Accessibility, Tackle Congestion, produce Safer Roads, improve Air Quality and manage effectively the highway asset.

4.3 In order to bring forward capital schemes to improve the highway, it is necessary to determine how best to deliver individual schemes in the context of priorities, funding availability, technical resource availability, traffic and transportation constraints, private development timescales, and the need to ensure that the city centre continues to function effectively.

4.4 The WCHIP seeks to rationalise these factors to provide a guide to investment on the highway over the next few years.

4.5 The North Wakefield Gyratory is the single most important strategic highway scheme within the WCHIP as it provides the key highway linkage to connect Trinity Walk with Merchant Gate.

#### **5. BACKGROUND INFORMATION**

5.1 Within the Wakefield District, there are three distinct groups of communities: Wakefield City and West, Five Towns and South East Wakefield. The Transport Strategy ([www.wakefield.gov.uk/transportandtravel](http://www.wakefield.gov.uk/transportandtravel)) recognised that residents of each area have specific transport needs. The needs for each specific area were identified in Table 7.1 of the Transport Strategy which contained both existing and emerging issues, and their perceived causes.

The Wakefield Transport Strategy suggested highway interventions which focussed mainly on development of the Emerald Ring. This incorporated

highway provisions to support the three key development areas of Waterfront, Trinity Walk and Merchant Gate.

- 5.2 The WCHIP identifies individual highway schemes which have been further developed from the strategic schemes listed in the Transport Strategy.
- 5.3 The WCHIP also indicates a level of priority which informs the proposed timing of schemes. A high priority indicates a need to implement the scheme in the next 0 to 3 years, a medium priority indicates the need to deliver the scheme before year 5 and a low priority indicates the need to deliver the scheme before year 7.

When developing a timetable for delivery a number of factors will need to be taken into consideration which include:

- The priority attached to the scheme. As a general rule, higher priority schemes should be delivered earlier than lower priority schemes.
- The timing when an individual scheme needs to happen in relation to others.
- Changing circumstances i.e. developments coming forward earlier than planned
- The impact an individual scheme has on other scheme/s in the Plan.
- Funding availability. Funding has been identified and secured for specific projects already, and will need to be explored for other projects.
- The availability of specialised technical resources such as design, project management, and construction availability needs to be available to deliver projects.
- Traffic and Transport constraints. It is important that traffic disruption is minimised, and that scheme dependency is taken on board.

- 5.4 The North Wakefield Gyratory is essentially the highway element of the North Wakefield Gateway Scheme.

The Gyratory comprises of:

- One Way traffic in the inbound to Wakefield direction using Leeds Road and Northgate.
- A separated inbound bus lane.
- One Way traffic outbound from Wakefield using Bond Street, Wentworth Street and Bradford Road.
- The use of connecting Street (Wentworth Terrace, St Johns North and Andrew Street) to mitigate the diversions.
- Cycle lanes.
- Upgrading all existing and installing new pedestrian facilities along the whole route.
- A lay-over parking area for home to school transport.

- The Creation of a public open space in front of County Hall.

The Gateway scheme includes all the above plus a 450 space Park and Ride facility on the A650.

## **6. OPTIONS APPRAISAL**

- 6.1 The adoption of a considered WCHIP will help ensure that highway schemes to improve the city centre can come forward in a planned and considered manner to the greatest benefit to the city centre, strategic objectives and best consideration of the deployment of resources.
- 6.2 If the council were not to produce a plan to guide future highway investment this could lead to ad hoc decisions being taken on the delivery of individual schemes, and result in a less efficient use of resources, and ultimately poorer strategic decisions being made. Without an overall implementation plan, there is a much greater likelihood of conflicting scheme delivery and disruption to businesses and the public, which would be counterproductive to objectives to improve the image, profile and attraction of the city centre.

## **7. STRATEGIC IMPLICATIONS**

- 7.1 Creating a Dynamic Local Economy is the vision of the Wakefield District Economic Strategy. The WCHIP will positively contribute to this priority.
- 7.2 The WCHIP will improve the city centre environment so as to create an integrated highway network for all users. Through a planned programme, improvements can be delivered in a co-ordinated and considered manner which will help deliver an improved transport infrastructure, whilst taking on board issues of disruption to ensure that the city centre will continue to function effectively during the course of works.
- 7.3 In adopting the WCHIP the Council would be demonstrating a commitment to:
- Ensure development of a well-connected city.
  - Enable the people who live in the district of Wakefield and the Leeds City Region to access opportunities; be they employment, education, social or retail.
  - Reducing car use within the city.
  - Increasing public transport use.
  - Increasing Walking / Cycling.
  - Reducing greenhouse gases in an AQMA.
  - Promoting Road Safety.

## **8. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 8.1 Projects within the WCHIP will only proceed to implementation when specific funding has been attained to support implementation and once all necessary approvals have been gained (i.e. inclusion into the Capital programme and PSA have been obtained).

Specific funding may take the form of either internal/external resource allocations, grant awards and / or a mixture of all funding sources.

### Risk Management

- 8.2 Any individual project may have risks attached, (including financial and technical) however the delivery of individual projects as part of the WCHIP will be managed through proper project management techniques, with any design/project risks being managed throughout the process.
- 8.3 It is envisaged that the North Wakefield Gateway scheme, will be funded through a combination of the Local Transport Plan capital allocation, and the recently announced Regional Funding Allocation for capital schemes. Discussions are continuing with partner authorities and confirmation on funding is expected in the summer.

## **9. ENGAGEMENT**

- 9.1 The plan has been produced in conjunction with officers from Urban Centres Management (UCM). The plan has been drawn up with regard to the City Centre Public Realm Implementation Plan which was produced by UCM and was endorsed by Cabinet in June 2006
- 9.2 Consultation on both the WCHIP and the North Wakefield Gyrotory has also taken place with the Cabinet portfolio members.
- 9.3 Subject to cabinet approving in principal the North Wakefield Gyrotory scheme a detailed consultation exercise will commence.

## **10. CORPORATE IMPLICATIONS**

- 10.1 Implementation of the proposed WCHIP will help secure significant highway improvements with Wakefield City contributing to the vision of the Wakefield District Economic Strategy.

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**Background Papers:**

West Yorkshire Local Transport Plan

Wakefield Transport Strategy