APPENDIX 1

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 Purpose of this strategy

A safe, sustainable and reliable transport system is essential to the effective functioning of any community, and Coventry is no different. This strategy sets out Coventry City Council's plans to deliver a transport system that meets the need of the city's population, businesses and wider community, providing access to community facilities and supporting a thriving economy and a healthy population.

It sets out plans to bring about a fundamental change to the way that people and goods travel to, from and around the city in the future, and identifies how we will work with various partners to achieve this.

More specifically, it includes:

- the **case for change**. A summary of how our transport system is working currently and why it needs to change
- a **long-term vision**, including a set of objectives which we will aim to meet over the next 15 years
- a broad description of **what we will do** over the lifetime of the strategy (2022/23 – 2036/37) to achieve these objectives. Further detail is set out in an accompanying Implementation Plan
- a summary of **how we will measure our progress**, through annual reporting.

This strategy is fully integrated with the West Midlands Local Transport Plan, and the two documents together provide the transport policy framework for Coventry.

The strategy will be subject to regular review, to allow for response to changes in national or regional policies, the emergence of new technology such as autonomous vehicles, or to respond to changes in travel behaviour, such as those brought about during the COVID-19 pandemic.

An Annual Progress Report will also be prepared to outline progress in implementing the strategy, and to report any changes to the Implementation Plan.

1.2 Vision and key principles

The overall purpose of our strategy is **to offer a safe, sustainable, equitable and resilient transport system, which enables our residents, visitors and businesses to thrive**. In seeking to realise this vision, there are also some important principles that we will adhere to.

We will:

- engage with local residents and businesses and ensure that our plans reflect and incorporate their views
- strive to ensure that all parts of the transport system are accessible to everyone
- be flexible in how we achieve our objectives, recognising that we are entering a period of considerable uncertainty
- be innovative. Coventry already has a reputation as a leader in the field of transport innovation. We will seek to maintain and strengthen this over the lifetime of the strategy
- balance tackling local challenges with improving Coventry's regional, national and international connections
- balance detailed short and medium-term planning with longer-term thinking

- take a 'multi-modal' approach, recognising that no one form of transport can meet everybody's travel needs. This will include actively considering walking, cycling and any emerging modes of travel arising from new technology
- think holistically, combining physical improvements to the city's infrastructure with other measures, including for example measures that encourage and incentivise people to change their travel habits
- align our strategy with those of our neighbours and with other key partners working in the region, and work collaboratively with them to implement it.

1.3 Engagement with residents

As part of the work to develop this strategy, we carried out a survey of residents, using the Council's online consultation platform *Let's Talk*, over February and March 2021. In total more than 250 residents participated. The views of individual survey participants have been included throughout the strategy to illustrate key points. Further consultation will take place as the draft strategy evolves, and the annual reporting process will also provide a forum for people to comment on our progress in delivering the strategy.

1. STRATEGIC CONTEXT

This section summarises the current priorities of international, national, regional and local policymakers, which have influenced this strategy. It identifies the key strategies which support, or which are supported by, this document.

2.1 International priorities

There are a number of international agreements which are relevant to this strategy.

Tackling climate change

In 2015, the UK joined 196 other parties in signing the Paris Agreement on climate change. This was a major international commitment to a goal of keeping global temperature rise this century to well below 2 degrees Celsius (compared to pre-industrial levels) and to pursue efforts to limit this even further to 1.5 degrees. To deliver on this commitment, in 2019 the Government set itself a legally binding target to achieve 'net zero' greenhouse gas emissions by 2050.

Ensuring sustainable development

Also in 2015, the United Nations published its Sustainable Development Goals, described as 17 goals to transform our world. These aim to address major global challenges, including poverty and inequality, health and education and climate change, and should be a consideration in all nations' plans for the future.

The 17 goals are:

- No poverty
- Zero hunger
- Good health and wellbeing
- Quality education
- Gender equality
- Clean water and sanitation
- Affordable and clean energy
- Decent work and economic growth
- Industry, innovation and infrastructure
- Reduced inequalities
- Sustainable cities and communities
- Responsible consumption and production
- Climate action
- Life below water
- Life on land
- Peace, justice and strong institutions
- Partnerships for the goals

2.2 National priorities

The UK Government has also identified its own strategic priorities, several of which are directly relevant to this strategy.

Tackling climate change

As noted above, the UK Government is legally committed to achieving net zero greenhouse gas emissions by 2050. As transport is currently the largest source of emissions, Government is targeting a major shift in the way that people and goods travel in order to achieve this.

In July 2021 the Department for Transport (DfT) published *Decarbonising Transport: A Better, Greener Great Britain*, its strategy to achieve this. The strategy's priorities include encouraging a shift in travel behaviour away from car travel and towards both public and active transport,

replacing existing passenger and freight vehicles with zero emission alternatives and establishing the UK as a hub for green transport technology and innovation.

More detailed plans are set out in various further strategy documents focused on specific modes, including:

- *the Williams-Shapps Plan for Rail* – a White Paper which proposes substantial reforms of the rail industry. This will see major changes, including the creation of a new organisation, Great British Rail, and the publishing of a new 30-year strategy covering the rail industry as a whole
- *Bus Back Better* – a new National Bus Strategy aimed at reversing a long-term decline in levels of bus patronage (outside of London). It includes plans to make services more frequent and more reliable, to better integrate services that are operated by different bus companies and to accelerate the rollout of electric buses
- *Gear Change: A Bold Vision for Walking and Cycling* – a further strategy focused on bringing about a long-term shift towards active travel. Gear Change includes a specific commitment to ensure that by 2030 50 per cent of all journeys in towns and cities will be made by walking and cycling.

As well as enabling the UK to achieve its goal of being Net Zero by 2050, these changes also form a key part of the Government's economic strategy. In November 2020 the Government published *The Ten Point Plan for a Green Industrial Revolution*, which sets out plans to invest in order to both boost to country's economic recovery, following the Covid-19 pandemic, and to tackle climate change. The key transport priorities included in that plan are:

- accelerating the shift to zero emission vehicles
- green public transport, walking and cycling.

'Levelling up' across the UK

Government has also expressed a desire to address economic inequalities between different parts of the country. This includes reducing deprivation in parts of the Midlands and the North of England, which are perceived to have been 'left behind' economically over recent decades. Investment in transport infrastructure to improve connectivity across the Midlands and the North is a key component of this.

In the West Midlands, major planned investments include:

- HS2, a new high-speed rail line connecting London to the North of England. Two stations are being built in the West Midlands, in Solihull and central Birmingham
- the Midlands Rail Hub, a £2 billion package of further rail improvements
- improvements to the region's Strategic Road Network, via Highways England's current and future Road Investment Strategies, including the grade separation of the Binley and Walsgrave junctions on the A46 Coventry Eastern Bypass.

These investments are intended to support the region's recovery from the Covid-19 pandemic and to secure future economic growth.

Building more homes

The Government has set a target to significantly increase the number of new homes being built to 300,000 per year. One of the policy measures being introduced to achieve this is substantial reform of the planning system. This is expected to result in many Councils being set more challenging targets for the number of new homes that need to be built in their area in the future, creating further travel demand which will need to be met in a sustainable way.

2.3 Regional priorities

The picture with regards to regional priorities is more complex. There are several different bodies with an interest in improving transport across the Midlands, each of which has a different remit and, in many cases, covers a slightly different geographic area. Each of these organisations has its own strategic priorities.

However, of particular importance is Transport for West Midlands' (TfWM) regional transport strategy, *Movement for Growth*. This strategy is intended to align closely with Movement for Growth and to set out Coventry's local contribution to achieving the region's wider vision and objectives.

Movement for Growth is currently under review. A Green Paper published by TfWM in June 2021 makes clear that the refreshed strategy is expected focus on addressing five 'motivations for change'. These are tackling the climate emergency, reducing transport inequality, reducing physical inactivity, enhancing local communities & places and building a strong inclusive economy.

Also of particular significance is the West Midlands Combined Authority's (WMCA's) Climate Change Strategy, *#WM2041*. This sets a target for the region to achieve net zero status by 2041, nine years earlier than the current national target. In 2016 transport accounted for 39 per cent of the region's emissions.

Other key regional strategies, which are also supported by this document include:

- The West Midlands Local Industrial Strategy
- WMCA's Strategic Economic Plan, *Making our Mark*
- Coventry & Warwickshire Local Economic Partnership's (CWLEP) Updated Strategic Economic Plan
- CWLEP's Strategic Reset Framework
- Midlands Connect's *Powering the Midlands Engine*
- The Coventry & Warwickshire Health Protection Strategy.

As with the Government's Ten Point Plan for a Green Industrial Revolution at a national level, several of these documents set out the benefits of investing in green industries in order to create jobs and tackle climate change. There is a clear aspiration to make the West Midlands a focal point for research into, and for the manufacturing of, zero emission transport options, such as electric vehicles and Very Light Rail (a new form of battery powered mass transit, similar to existing tram systems but suitable for smaller cities).

2.4 Local priorities

At a local level, there are also several relevant plans and strategies. However, of particular importance is the Council's current Local Plan, which covers the period 2011-31 and which sets out plans to stimulate economic growth and to meet a growing housing need.

Coventry is a rapidly growing city, with a need for a large number of new homes. The current Local Plan makes provision for 25,000 new homes to be built. In addition, further commercial development is also planned. This includes, for example, the establishment of a new business district at Friargate, in the city centre, and the regeneration of City Centre South. These developments, which are described in more detail in section 4, will create a significant increase in

travel demand, which will need to be met in sustainable way, without worsening existing levels of congestion or the city's carbon footprint.

The Council is also currently working with various partners on establishing an Independent Commission for a Sustainable Coventry. Once established, the Commission will develop a new Climate Change Strategy and Action Plan. This will set out detailed plans to reduce Coventry's annual CO2 emissions to net zero by 2041, or earlier if possible.

Other key local strategies, which are also supported by this document include:

- The Coventry Health and Wellbeing Strategy, MARMOT Strategy and the Director of Public Health's Annual Report
- Coventry City Council's Local Air Quality Action Plan
- Coventry City Council's Economic Growth and Prosperity Strategy
- Coventry City Council's Electric Vehicle and Charging Infrastructure Strategy
- Coventry City Council's City Centre Area Action Plan
- The Coventry Partnership's Sustainable Community Strategy
- Coventry City Council's Highways Infrastructure Asset Management Strategy
- Coventry City Council's Flood Risk Management Strategy.

Several of these local strategies place a strong emphasis on ensuring that economic growth is inclusive and that it benefits those who are currently economically disadvantaged, as well as the need to rapidly reduce the city's carbon footprint and to improve health outcomes for local residents.

2.4 Summary

Considering all these national, regional and local strategies together, a clear set of priorities emerge. These suggest a need for this strategy to:

- reduce the level of greenhouse gas emissions from transport, ultimately to net zero
- support the city's economy to recover from the effects of the Covid-19 pandemic and secure future economic growth, including by investing in green industries such as zero emission transport
- ensure that future growth is inclusive and delivers benefits for those who are on lower incomes or who are currently excluded from the labour market
- capitalise on the potential benefits of HS2 and other planned improvements to regional, national and international connectivity
- deliver improved public health outcomes for residents
- enable new homes to be built to meet a growing housing need, and to meet the increased travel demand arising from this in a sustainable way.

These issues are explored in more detail in section 4.

2. CURRENT TRAVEL PATTERNS

This section provides a brief summary of recent travel patterns in and around Coventry, including the places that people most commonly travel to and form and the modes of transport that they most commonly use.

3.1 Travel demand

In 2018 there were 366,800 people living in Coventry, making it the 9th largest city in England. It is also a rapidly growing city, in the past ten years, its population has grown by a fifth, making it the second-fastest growing local authority outside of London.

This generates a significant level of travel demand, both within the city and to and from neighbouring areas. Demand is particularly high during peak commuting hours, when large numbers of people travel to and from places like Nuneaton and Bedworth, Warwick, Rugby and Birmingham. However, the largest group of commuters are those who both live and work within Coventry. In 2011 it was estimated that 78,000 residents regularly commuted within the city.

However, travel demand fell significantly during the Covid-19 pandemic and this particularly affected commuter journeys. For example, a TfWM survey showed that, across the West Midlands, more than half of all workers worked from home during the initial lockdown period from March 2020.

3.2 Current travel patterns by mode

Car travel

Coventry is a city that is largely dominated by car travel.

Both the total number of cars owned by Coventry residents and the number of cars per household have been increasing steadily over the long-term. In recent years, the Council has encouraged residents to switch from petrol and diesel to electric, and other zero emission, vehicles, including by installing more than 400 electric vehicle charge points – one of the largest public networks of charge points in the country.

Government statistics show that the number of electric vehicles in Coventry is increasing rapidly. However, they remain a small minority of the total. At the end of 2020 there were 613 battery electric vehicles registered to addresses in the city. When other forms of ultra-low emission vehicles, such as plug-in hybrids, are also included this figure rises to 1,017.

Regular counts of private and public transport trips into the centre of Coventry show that between 2007 and 2019 car travel consistently accounted for around 70 per cent of both in-bound and out-bound trips. This is particularly true of commuter journeys, with data from the Council's regular household survey suggesting that, both before and during the Covid-19 pandemic, around 70 per cent of commuter journeys made by Coventry residents were made by car (either as a driver or as a passenger).

The Council's household survey also shows that residents believe that car is the easiest way to travel, in 2021 85 per cent of respondents agreed that it was easy to get around Coventry that way. However, despite this, congestion is common on the parts of the city's road network, particularly during peak hours. Furthermore, the high volume of car trips also contributes heavily to the city's

carbon footprint, as well as creating air pollution and leading to around 600-700 casualties from road traffic accidents every year. These issues are discussed in more detail in section 4.

> *"The only convenient and safe way to travel is via a car"*
>
> *"When there are more cars back on the road again, the sheer volume of traffic is just too much"*
>
> *"Car traffic is terrible at peak times"*
>
> Let's Talk survey respondents

While there were substantial falls in the number of people travelling during the Covid-19 pandemic, car travel did not fall as sharply as other modes during lockdowns and was quicker to recover afterwards. By June 2021, the total number of cars on the city's roads had pre-Covid levels, albeit with less pronounced peaks during the morning and afternoon 'rush hours'.

Public transport

The city is served by four railway stations (Coventry, Tile Hill, Canley and Coventry Arena) and has good rail connections to London, with (prior to the emergency rail timetables introduced during the pandemic) 3 high speed trains per hour from Coventry, and Birmingham, with 6 trains per hour from Coventry. Prior to the Covid-19 pandemic, passenger numbers were increasing steadily, with the Office of Rail and Road estimating that there were more than 9 million entries and exits across the city's 4 stations in 2019/20.

However, there is significant scope to improve the city's rail connectivity. For example, local services to Leamington, Kenilworth and Nuneaton currently only run once per hour, while the city has no direct rail links to the East Midlands at all. As a result, Midlands Connect estimate that only 3 per cent of trips between Coventry and Leicester are made by rail. This compares to 30 per cent of trips between Coventry and Birmingham.

> *"Good railway links to London and Birmingham, and thus to the rest of the UK from these nodes"*
>
> *"The frequency of trains in and out of Coventry might be increased, for instance to Nuneaton and other places where people who live in Coventry… work"*
>
> *"Although rail services are much improved compared to 20-30 years ago, much still needs to be done in terms of providing services direct to more destinations"*
>
> Let's Talk survey respondents

The city also has an extensive network of bus services. This is largely based on a series of radial routes which connect the city centre to various residential and employment centres. Longer distance services also connect it to neighbouring conurbations including, for example, Nuneaton, Bedworth and Solihull.

However, there are some challenges regarding the reliability of services, which can be affected by congestion on the road network, and the frequency of services on some routes, particularly outside of peak hours. The radial nature of the city's bus network also means that many passengers need to travel into the city centre in order to change buses. This often leads to longer journey times that are not competitive, compared to travelling by car. Furthermore, disabled residents, particularly wheelchair users, have raised concerns about difficulties accessing services.

> *"Bus services are generally good, but need a more regular service outside peak times"*
>
> *"The bus network, whilst the coverage is good, doesn't always perform reliably"*
>
> *"Bus routes are generally good but certain journeys across the city are slow because of (the) need to go via (the) city centre and change"*
>
> *"Buses do not have enough seating for passengers that are wheelchair users"*
>
> Let's Talk survey respondents

Prior to Covid-19, levels of bus patronage had remained broadly consistent in recent years. However, during the pandemic, the sharpest falls in travel demand were seen on public transport. During the initial lockdown in March 2020 bus patronage dropped to around 10 per cent of pre-Covid levels and rail to around 2 per cent. At the time of publication, these still have not recovered to anything close to pre-pandemic levels.

Walking and cycling

Although Coventry is a relatively compact city, the number of people walking and cycling is not as high as it could be.

While data from the Council's household survey suggests that many residents walk when escorting children to school or travelling to their own place of education, in 2018 only 12 per cent of commuters travelled to work on foot. In 2021, during the Covid-19 pandemic, this fell even further to 9 per cent.

Levels of cycling are particularly low, accounting for only around 1 per cent of journeys into the centre of Coventry and between 1 and 4 per cent of residents' journeys when they are commuting, escorting children to school or traveling to their own place of education.

A lack of convenient and safe routes for cyclists is likely to be a barrier to higher levels of uptake. In 2021 only 52 per cent of residents agreed that it was easy to travel around Coventry by bike. This is significantly fewer than the number who felt it was easy to walk, drive and travel on public transport.

> *"Coventry is a city (where) you can cycle to most places quite quickly but the roads don't feel very safe for cyclists"*
>
> *"Getting around Coventry by bicycle is not a pleasant or safe feeling thing to do"*
>
> Let's Talk survey respondents

3. THE CASE FOR CHANGE

This section provides a summary of the key challenges that this strategy is intended to address. It is informed by national, regional and local priorities and by how the city's transport system is operating currently, as set out in sections 2 and 3.

In summary, we have identified seven specific challenges which this strategy is intended to address, and which are discussed below.

4.1 Tackling climate change

As noted in section 2, the UK Government has set itself a legally binding target to achieve net zero carbon emissions by 2050, while as a region the West Midlands is currently aiming to reach this milestone nine years earlier.

Coventry City Council is currently working on a new Climate Change Strategy and Action Plan, which will set out in detail our plans to achieve net zero by 2041, or earlier if possible. However, it is already clear that a major change in the way in which we travel will be required to achieve this. Midlands Connect estimate that in Coventry in 2019 376 million kgs of CO_2 (or equivalent amounts of other greenhouse gases) were generated from transport. This is equivalent to around 1,000 kgs of CO_2 for every person who lives in the city. By far the largest share of these emissions are generated by car travel.

> *"The overriding message of the strategy should be about climate change. Everything should be focused towards reducing the amount of carbon (and related) emissions in the city"*
>
> Let's Talk survey respondent

Current levels of car travel will simply not be sustainable in the future. This is true, even though a shift towards electric and other forms of zero emission vehicles are expected to make car travel more environmentally sustainable. Policymakers at both a national and regional level are clear that this alone will not be enough to meet current carbon reduction targets. In practice this will require both a significant reduction in the total number of vehicles on the city's roads and a shift towards zero emission vehicles for those journeys which are still made by car.

4.2 Improving health outcomes for local people

Life expectancy has been rising in Coventry over the long-term but remains below both national and regional averages. Furthermore, there are substantial variations between different parts of the city, with women in the 10 per cent most prosperous parts of the city living on average for 7.8 years longer than those in the 10 per cent most deprived. For men this rises to 10.1 years.

Health inequalities are strongly linked to both economic inequality and levels of physical inactivity. Higher levels of walking and cycling and improved public transport options, which enable those on the lowest incomes to easily access major employment centres and transport hubs, will be essential to address these issues.

Air pollution is also a significant concern. Diesel, and to a lesser extent petrol, vehicles are major producers of both NO_2 and $PM_{2.5}$. Prolonged exposure to high concentrations of these pollutants can be very serious and can include, for example, increased risk of asthma, heart disease, strokes,

lung disease and dementia. In 2014 Public Health England estimated that in Coventry 168 deaths per year could be attributed to exposure to PM2.5.

> *"(I am) hugely concerned about air quality as a result of congestion"*
>
> Let's Talk survey respondents

At present there are a number of air pollution hotspots across the city where average annual concentrations of NO2 currently exceed the legal limit (40µg/m3). A Ministerial Direction issued in May 2021 legally requires the Council to implement an Action Plan to reduce NO2 levels below this legal limit. The Council's approved Local Air Quality Action Plan sets out a package of measures to reduce concentrations of air pollution in these areas, and to bring them below the legal limit in the shortest possible time. However, achieving a more general, long-term improvement across the city as a whole will require further action.

4.3 Preventing road traffic accidents

As noted in section 3, at present around 600-700 casualties occur each year as a result of incidents on Coventry's roads. While this has reduced significantly over the longer-term, in recent years these numbers have remained more consistent, indicating a flattening of the previous downward trend. The number of serious and fatal incidents fluctuates from year to year, however in 2018 there were 114 serious incidents and 16 fatal incidents.

It is our ambition both to reduce the number of incidents overall and to reduce the number of fatal incidents to zero. We recognise that this is an ambitious target but every fatality has a significant impact on the local community, and we believe it is right to be ambitious in seeking to minimise the number of people who are killed or injured when using the city's transport network.

Initiatives such as the introduction of Average Speed Enforcement on main routes into the city have been highly successful in reducing casualties on these corridors and making further improvements to road safety will remain a high priority for this strategy.

4.4 Supporting the city's economic recovery and reducing levels of economic inequality

In 2018 there were around 113,000 private sector and 51,000 public sector jobs in Coventry. The Council has ambitious plans to increase this and, as noted in section 2, there is potential for investment in green businesses, including zero emission transport, to help support the city's economy to recover from Covid-19.

Current plans to create new jobs in the city include:

- delivering a major regeneration of the South side of the city centre. This will include improved leisure and retail facilities, as well as new homes
- creating a new business district at Friargate, where one new office building has already been constructed and where work is currently underway on a second and on a hotel
- a further expansion of Ansty Park
- plans to establish both a UK Battery Innovation Centre and a Gigafactory in the South of the city. The plans would make the city a centre for both research and development and manufacturing relating to battery technology for zero emission vehicles
- working with several major employers to facilitate their plans to expand, this includes Coventry University, the University of Warwick and Jaguar Land Rover.

While creating new jobs and supporting the city's recovery from Covid-19, these developments will also create additional travel demand, which will need to be met in a sustainable way. It is also vital that the benefits of these developments are inclusive and that residents in all parts of the city share in them.

At present there are substantial inequalities between different parts of the city. While some areas are affluent, there are also significant concentrations of deprivation. For example, according to the Government's Index of Multiple Deprivation, in 2019 there were 28 (out of 195) neighbourhoods in Coventry in the 10 per cent most deprived in the country. This rises to 50 amongst the most deprived 20 per cent.

It is therefore essential that, as well as providing the necessary infrastructure to help create new jobs, we also improve transport links to and from the most deprived parts of our city. Enabling a more general shift towards public transport and walking and cycling will also help to address this, given that car ownership and car travel is expensive, and that these are more affordable and inclusive forms of transport.

4.5 Maximising the benefits of HS2 (and other major investments in the region's infrastructure)

Following confirmation that HS2 will go ahead as planned, the first phase is currently due to complete by late 2028. It is expected to bring substantial economic benefits to the West Midlands.

As noted in section 2, the planned interchange in Solihull will bring HS2 close to Coventry. Although the first phase of the project connects London and Birmingham, two cities with which Coventry already has good transport links, later phases will extend it to the North East and North West of England which will provide real benefits to the city.

The planned interchange is also located close to Birmingham Airport and the National Exhibition Centre (NEC) and forms part of 'UK Central'. This is expected to become both a major transport hub, with national and international connections, and a significant employment centre in its own right. Connectivity between Coventry and UK Central is therefore a key consideration for this strategy.

HS2 is also significant because it is expected to alleviate some of the pressure on existing rail services. This will enable other improvements to be brought forward. At the same time, the Government is also continuing to invest in the region's Strategic Road Network through a series of planned improvements set out in Highways England's Road Investment Strategy, and these investments will also bring further benefits for Coventry.

4.6 Meeting travel demand arising from new homes

As noted in section 2, Coventry is a rapidly growing city, with plans to build 25,000 new homes to be built over the period 2011 – 2031. This figure was based on an Objectively Assessed Need of 42,400 new homes, with Warwickshire authorities providing those that cannot not be delivered within the city. Since the adoption of the current Local Plan, the Government has introduced a new way of calculating housing need (the Standard Methodology), which delivers a similar estimate for the number of new homes required.

Current plans include several large-scale developments, most notably Sustainable Urban Extensions (SUEs) in Keresley (allocated for 3,100 new homes) and Eastern Green (allocated for 2,250). A further planned SUE in Kings Hill (initially 2,500 homes) lies within Warwickshire but is located right

upon the boundary with Coventry and will therefore also have a significant impact on the city's transport network.

In many cases, these developments are directly dependent on new transport infrastructure being delivered. More generally, the increase in the city's population will generate additional travel demand. It is essential that this demand is met in a sustainable way, without exacerbating existing problems with congestion, air pollution and the city's carbon footprint.

4.7 Adapting to changes in the way that people live, work and travel

It is possible that we may be on the cusp of a fundamental change to people's travel habits. For more than half a century, fossil fuel powered cars have been the dominant form of travel in the UK and, as noted in section 3, these remain by far the most common form of transport in Coventry today.

However, new technology means that this may be beginning to change. Electric vehicles are already becoming a 'mainstream' technology and now account for around 3 per cent of the total new car market. This is highly likely to rise much further in the near future, but this may only be one part of a much more fundamental change to the way that people and goods travel.

Other emerging technologies, which could have a major impact include:

- Very Light Rail (VLR), a new form of urban mass transit, similar to existing tram systems but suitable for smaller cities such as Coventry, which is why the City Council has invested significantly in the development of this new innovative technology
- driverless cars, or Connected and Autonomous Vehicles (CAVs), which can be tested in real-life conditions within Coventry utilising the CAV Testbed being installed in partnership with TfWM
- the use of drones for deliveries and/or to transport passengers
- micromobility. This describes small, lightweight forms of transport like e-scooters, currently being piloted within the southern area of the city
- Mobility as a Service (Maas). This describes a change in the way that people travel, away from privately owned vehicles and towards a system where a variety of different travel options can be easily accessed on demand. In practice this would most likely see residents using a single integrated platform (such as a mobile phone app) to plan, book and pay for journeys across a range of different modes
- Demand Responsive Transit (DRT) services. These operate in a similar way to Internet-based taxi services, such as Uber, but with larger vehicles. They allow different passengers' journeys to be aggregated, essentially creating a bus service with no fixed route, with a pilot project underway based on the University of Warwick campus.

The precise impact of these emerging forms of transport is difficult to predict but it is highly likely that we will witness some dramatic changes in the ways in which people and goods travel over the next 15 or so years.

As described in section 2, Covid-19 has also brought about substantial changes to the way that people travel. However, its longer-term implications are difficult to predict. The trends that we observed over 2020 and 2021 may continue after the pandemic has passed completely. Alternatively, most people may revert to their previous travel habits, or there may be further changes which cannot yet be anticipated.

In response to this, we will seek to actively shape the future wherever possible, for example by proactively seeking to trial and to roll out new modes of transport. More generally, we will also

remain flexible and adapt our strategy to any changes in residents' travel habits, as these become clearer. When considering the benefits of individual schemes, we will also use sensitivity testing to understand how the scheme would perform in different future scenarios.

4. OUR OBJECTIVES AND OUR PLANS TO ACHIEVE THEM

This section sets out what we are aiming to achieve over the lifetime of this strategy and provides a summary of how we will do this.

5.1 Our objectives

In order to address the challenges, set out in section 4, we have identified four broad objectives for this strategy. These are:

1. **Supporting the city's economic recovery and enabling long-term growth**
2. **Delivering a sustainable, low carbon transport system**
3. **Ensuring equality of opportunity**
4. **Maximising health and wellbeing.**

In order to achieve these objectives, we need to bring about a fundamental change to the way in which people and goods travel to, from and around our city. In particular, current levels of car travel will simply not be sustainable in the future. It is therefore our aspiration to create a city where it easy, convenient and safe to walk, cycle and travel on public transport, and where most people do not need to use a car to access the services that they need for day-to-day life.

To achieve this, action will be required across a range of different areas and a summary of our plans is provided below. Further details are provided in a separate Implementation Plan.

In practice, not all the activity described in this section will be delivered directly by the Council. Some things will be delivered by, or in partnership with, our various partners in the region, with whom we will continue to work closely. This is also set out in more detail in the Implementation Plan.

5.2 Public transport (contributes to objectives 1, 2, 3 & 4)

Although the number of people using public transport has dropped considerably as a result of the Covid-19 pandemic, it remains a major part of our long-term plans to reduce car travel.

At this time, it is unclear for how long additional safety measures that have been introduced during the pandemic will be required for. However, we will work with partners to keep them in place for as long as necessary and will also integrate measures such as contactless ticketing, anti-microbial grab handles and optimised ventilation into our future plans. Furthermore, we will ensure that the city's public transport network is accessible to everyone and have recently published a Transport Charter for People with Disabilities aimed at achieving this. We will implement all the commitments set out in that Charter.

Over the next fifteen years, together with our partners, we will also deliver major improvements to the city's public transport network.

Very Light Rail (VLR)

VLR will be a new form of mass transit, similar to the tram systems seen in other major UK cities but with smaller, electric powered vehicles. The first VLR route will connect Coventry city centre to University Hospital. However, in the longer-term we will develop a complete network of routes to provide residents with a fast, frequent and affordable connection to various major employment centres and 'transport hubs', where people will be able to easily change between various different modes of transport.

> *"The lack of a tram system is a negative. We need one!"*
>
> Let's Talk survey respondent

Coventry's VLR network will be the first system of its kind in the world, and it is anticipated that many other small cities may eventually wish to develop their own networks. Therefore, by pioneering this technology and establishing a local supply chain for it, we anticipate that there will also be longer-term benefits for the local economy.

We will explore various funding options to introduce VLR. This could include applying for grant funding from central and regional Government, seeking investment from private sector partners and considering options to raise revenue locally.

Rail

We will also work with our partners to deliver major improvements to the city's existing railway infrastructure and services.

We are already investing over £82m to enhance capacity at Coventry Railway Station. Over the lifetime of this strategy, we will complement this with further improvements at Coventry, including the addition of a fifth platform, and at Tile Hill, where improvements will enhance the role of the station as a strategic park and ride site. We will also develop at least one new railway station, in the South of the city close to the University of Warwick, and we will explore options for several further potential new stations.

These improvements, and the opening of the new HS2 interchange in Solihull, will enable us to deliver significant improvements to the city's rail connectivity. Our priorities for this are to:

- maintain the current 3 intercity services per hour to London
- maintain 6 services per hour to Birmingham
- double the frequency of services to Nuneaton, Kenilworth and Leamington, to 2 trains per hour. Crucially, this will also improve onward connectivity from Leamington to Warwick
- double the frequency of services to Oxford, to 2 trains per hour
- introduce at least 2 direct trains per hour to Leicester and Nottingham. Research carried out by Midlands Connect suggests that this would cut journey times from 54 minutes to 38, and from 108 minutes to 70 respectively. At present, only 3% of journeys between Coventry and Leicester are made by rail, so enhanced connectivity is essential to ease pressure on the A46 / M69 corridor and to enable people to travel more sustainably between the two cities.
- improve connectivity with the North of England, via the new HS2 interchange in Solihull.

We will also seek to better integrate our major railway stations into the city's broader transport network, turning them into transport hubs where people can easily change between different modes of transport for both long and short distance travel. We have already begun this work at Coventry Railway Station by delivering improved pedestrian access to the city centre, while the current improvements will also deliver increased car and cycle parking and a new bus interchange. In the

longer-term, we will also add a further VLR interchange. We will seek to replicate this approach, on a smaller scale, with other new and existing stations.

Bus

Our plans to improve bus services in the city will be set out in a separate Bus Service Improvement Plan, which we will develop with TfWM and local bus operators.

In summary, that document will set out plans to:

- ensure that all buses operating in the city are electric buses by 2025 through the successful implementation of the All Electric Bus City, through which £50 million in grant support has been secured from Government
- ensure services continue to cover the whole city, with 'turn up and go' frequencies on key routes
- improve journey times on key routes by introducing bus priority measures, like bus gates and bus priority at signalised junctions
- make improvements to ticketing by expanding the use of contactless payments, multi-operator tickets and 'fare capping'
- improve bus stops and bus shelters, including providing more live information for passengers who are waiting
- improve the accessibility of vehicles by increasing the number of spaces available for wheelchair users and for passengers traveling with prams or pushchairs.

> *"More buses. Buses work very well but they are not so often. You can increase bus frequency"*
>
> *"Bus transport seems to work well. Ideally, buses would be electrified and run even more frequently and conveniently"*
>
> Let's Talk survey respondents

We are currently trialling the use of 'on demand' bus services (DRT) and the Bus Service Improvement Plan will also set out our longer-term plans to expand this and to integrate it into the wider network of bus services operating in the city.

5.3 <u>Walking, cycling and micromobility (objectives 1, 2, 3 & 4)</u>

To further reduce the city's reliance on car travel, we will also significantly improve conditions for those who walk and cycle, as well as introducing new forms of micromobility.

City centre pedestrianisation

We have already pedestrianised some sections of the city centre and have delivered public realm improvements to create a more pedestrian friendly environment. We will continue this process over the lifetime of the strategy, with the aim of making the whole area within the city centre ring road an area that is designed primarily for pedestrians.

To support this, we will remove five current city centre car parks and will ensure that those that remain will be easily accessible from the ring road, minimising the extent to which cars will need to drive around within the city centre. We will also improve pedestrian access in and out of the city centre by improving crossings at various points around the ring road and by re-modelling ring road junctions to provide better pedestrian and cycle access, building on the successful works already completed at Junction 6 (Friargate).

Dedicated cycleways

We will introduce dedicated cycleways across the city, to make cycling safer and to ensure that cyclists do not have to share road space with car users on busy routes. Work is already underway on the next generation of cycleways, which will initially connect the city centre to Coundon and to Binley. However, in the longer-term we will develop a complete network of cycleways spanning the city.

> *"I know that two cycle ways are being built, this network needs to be expanded to cover all areas of the city"*
>
> *"We have some good cycle routes. We need more of them and they need to join up"*
>
> Let's Talk survey respondents

This new cycle network will also include strategic cycleways linking Coventry to neighbouring areas. Our priorities for this are to create connections to Solihull, including UK Central, via Eastern Green and to Warwickshire, via Binley Woods, North on both the A444 corridor and via M6 Junction 2, and to Kenilworth in the South.

In addition, we will provide more secure cycle parking facilities, including at major transport hubs, such as our railway stations.

Low Traffic Neighbourhoods (LTNs) and School Streets

LTNs are residential areas where a variety of tools are used to significantly reduce traffic levels and to create a more comfortable environment for pedestrians and cyclists. This might include, for example, introducing 20mph speed limits, using bus gates to restrict the movement of private vehicles, creating more green space and installing cycle parking facilities for residents. School Streets are areas immediately surrounding schools where temporary road closures are introduced around opening and closing times.

We will seek to bring forward a community-led programme of both LTNs and School Streets. To do this, we will first identify areas where there is a strong appetite for these measures among local residents, and then design them collaboratively with those residents.

We will also seek to apply these principles to new developments, designing a low traffic approach in from the start.

Cycle hire and other forms of micromobility

In addition to the infrastructure improvements described above, TfWM have recently introduced a cycle hire scheme and we will work with them to increase the size and coverage of that scheme, and to extend it so that it also includes e-bikes.

Finally, TfWM are also piloting an e-scooter rental scheme on the University of Warwick campus and we may also seek to extend this to other parts of the city in due course. The current scheme is one of several national trials which are backed by central Government and which could lead to a change in the law to legalise the widespread use of e-scooters (currently, outside of the trial areas, e-

scooters are only legal on private property). Further progress is therefore dependent on the outcome of those trials.

5.4 Road network (objectives 1, 3 & 4)

New and improved roads

We intend to significantly reduce the volume of car journeys taking place on our roads. However, despite this, some investment in new and improved roads is still required. This is primarily in order to:

- enable new homes to be built
- enable major employers, such as the University of Warwick and Jaguar Land Rover, to expand
- remove through traffic from residential areas, making them more suitable for walking and cycling (by making improvements to more strategic routes in order to reduce 'rat running')
- reduce the impact of congestion on public transport journey times
- remove congestion in areas that have become air pollution hotspots.

Working with our partners, we will therefore focus improvements primarily on the Strategic and Key Route Network (busy roads which carry large volumes of traffic, such as the city's A-roads), on areas where significant development is planned and on local air pollution hotspots, as identified in our Local Air Quality Action Plan.

Furthermore, we will not design roads exclusively for cars and will ensure that where new roads are built, or existing roads are improved, that space for pedestrians, cyclists and/or public transport is also designed in.

Specific road improvements to be delivered over the lifetime of this strategy include:

- various junction improvements on both the A46 and A444
- a new strategic link road connecting the A46 at Stoneleigh Junction initially to the South of Coventry, and then ultimately to either Solihull or the West of Coventry
- a further new strategic link road through the planned SUE at Keresley
- new roads, and the improvement of some existing ones, in the vicinity of the ongoing developments at Friargate
- improvements to the London Road corridor including junction improvements, traffic management and cycle routes.

Further schemes may also be identified following a thorough review of the Strategic Route Network.

Highway maintenance

We will seek to maintain all of the city's highways, including roads, footpaths and cycleways, to a high standard. Our plans to do this are set out in a separate Highways Infrastructure Asset Management Strategy.

Traffic management and enforcement

We will work with TfWM to improve our management of the road network, including by introducing 5G monitoring, and to prepare our road network for the rollout of Connected Autonomous Vehicles (CAVs). This will include enabling testing to take place on a newly installed CAV testbed.

We will also ensure that we proactively enforce the rules of the road by using the powers available to us to take enforcement action against drivers who do not adhere to them. We have already begun this with the installation of new average speed cameras at key locations in the city and will seek to roll these out on all of the main radial routes into the city over the lifetime of this strategy.

In addition, we will also consider our approach to enforcing:

- moving traffic offences, such as drivers making banned turns, stopping in yellow boxes and passing through bus gates, subject to Government legislating to allow local authority to take on these enforcement powers
- on street parking offences, such as parking on double yellow lines
- 'pavement parking'. The Government has recently consulted on options to give Councils new powers to take action against drivers who cause an obstruction for pedestrians, and so our approach to this will depend on the outcome of that consultation.

5.5 Zero emission vehicles (objectives 2 & 4)

We recognise that a shift to zero emission vehicles will not, on its own, be sufficient for the city to achieve its carbon reduction targets and are therefore seeking to significantly reduce levels of car travel over the lifetime of this strategy. However, we also recognise that some journeys will continue to be made by car, and there will also still be significant demand for road travel from the freight industry and from public transport operators.

We will therefore seek to accelerate the switch from petrol and diesel vehicles to zero emission alternatives. The majority of our plans to do this will be set out in more detail in a separate Electric Vehicle and Charging Infrastructure Strategy. However, in summary, we will promote the take-up of electric and other zero emission vehicles by:

- substantially expanding the city's existing network of public electric vehicle charge points
- creating super charging hubs and a multi-fuel hub. These will be service station style facilities located on the Strategic Route Network which will provide rapid charging/refuelling facilities for owners of zero emission vehicles
- encouraging local businesses to switch to electric vehicles via our Try Before You Buy E-fleet scheme
- piloting innovative methods of electric vehicle charging, including static induction (wireless) charging and dynamic charging (charging of a moving vehicle). These technologies could help to support operators of different types of vehicles, including larger vehicles and vehicles with very high mileage, to switch to zero emission alternatives.

We would also like more of those journeys that are still made by car to be made using shared vehicles. Research shows that households who use shared vehicles tend to make fewer car journeys than those who own their own vehicle. As such, we will work with the private sector to expand the existing provision of 'car club' vehicles available for short-term hire, and to convert this an electric car club.

Finally, we will also electrify Coventry's public transport services. As well as replacing all buses with electric vehicles by 2025, we will also begin only granting taxi licenses to zero emission capable vehicles from 2024.

> *"Coventry taxis and local buses must become electric to show we are serious about tackling the climate emergency and air pollution"*
>
> Let's Talk survey respondent

All the above will create additional demands for electricity and so we will work with energy suppliers to ensure that the local grid has sufficient capacity to meet this growing need.

5.6 Freight (objectives 1 & 2)

As well as bringing about a substantial change in the way that people travel, we will also seek to reduce congestion and emissions from freight travel, such home deliveries.

In part, we will do this by encouraging and supporting companies to switch to zero emission vehicles through the actions described above. However, we will also explore further innovative alternatives including the use of drones to transport both passengers and goods.

Finally, we will also explore options to establish freight consolidation centres. These will be sites where goods travelling into and out of the city can be collected and transferred to a sustainable mode of transport for the first/last few miles of their journey. This could be, for example, a zero emission van, an e-cargo bike, VLR or a delivery drone.

5.8 Encouraging behaviour change (objectives 2 & 4)

In addition to the physical improvements to transport infrastructure and services described in the previous sections, we will also seek to reduce car travel by actively encouraging a change in residents' behaviour.

This will include providing better information to residents about the full range of travel options that are available. For example, we are currently holding Your Future Moves, a year-long event including an exhibition hosted by Coventry Transport Museum which will raise awareness of the various emerging travel options that are included in this strategy.

We will also work with TfWM to develop tools that help residents to easily plan their journeys across a range of modes and will explore ways to offer incentives to those who make more sustainable travel choices. For example, we are currently piloting an incentive scheme which rewards residents who scrap a heavily polluting vehicle with 'mobility credits', which can be spent on alternative travel options. Depending on the outcome of this trial, we will look to roll this out more widely over the lifetime of the strategy.

Finally, we will continue to engage with schools, businesses and local residents, including facilitating regular events and activities such as cycle training schemes and community cycle events.

5. MONITORING AND EVALUTION

An Annual Progress Report will be prepared to report on our progress in delivering our objectives. This will integrate with monitoring requirements at a regional level, and will be submitted annually to the Council's Cabinet.

6.1 Measures of success

The table below provides a set of indicators which we will monitor for each of our objectives. These are a mixture of indicators that:

- directly relate to the way that people and goods travel. For example, over time we expect to see increasing numbers of people walking, cycling and taking public transport and fewer people driving
- indicators that are influenced by many things, including transport. For example, we expect improvements to the city's transport system to lead to longer life expectancies and better employment rates among residents. However, there will be many other factors that will also affect these indicators.

We will report our progress against the following indicators on a regular basis.

Objective	Indicators
1. Supporting the city's economic recovery and enabling long-term growth	• Gross Value Added (GVA) and/or GVA per employee • Total number of jobs and/or new jobs created • Number of residents in employment • New commercial floorspace created • Number of new homes enabled • City Centre footfall and/or other indicators of busyness, such as car and bike parking and numbers of arrivals by public transport
2. Delivering a sustainable, low carbon transport system	• Total estimated annual CO2 emissions • Estimated annual CO2 emissions from transport • Overall levels of car ownership • Levels of ownership of zero emission vehicles • Usage of EV charging point infrastructure • Levels of car travel, compared to walking, cycling and public transport
3. Ensuring equality of opportunity	• Levels of walking, cycling and public transport (i.e. the most affordable travel options) • Number of neighbourhoods in the most deprived 10 & 20 per cent nationally • Levels of unemployment
4. Maximising health and wellbeing	• Average life expectancy and healthy life expectancy • The gap in life expectancy and healthy life expectancy between the most and least deprived parts of the city • Levels of walking and cycling • Resident perceptions of Coventry as a place where it is easy to walk and cycle • Air quality • The number of road traffic incidents overall, the number of serious incidents and the number of fatal incidents • Average vehicle speeds • National Road Condition Indicators