

## POLICY REVIEW AND DEVELOPMENT PANEL REPORT

REPORT TO:	Regeneration and Development Panel		
DATE:	4 <sup>th</sup> June 2025		
TITLE:	Report from the Transport Strategy Informal Working Group		
TYPE OF REPORT:	Informal Working Group Report to Panel		
PORTFOLIO(S):	Environment and Planning		
REPORT AUTHOR:	Rebecca Parker, Senior Democratic Services Officer		
OPEN/EXEMPT	Open	WILL BE SUBJECT TO A FUTURE CABINET REPORT:	Yes – if the Panel decide to make onward recommendations to Cabinet

### **REPORT SUMMARY/COVER PAGE**

<b>PURPOSE OF REPORT/SUMMARY:</b>
This report presents the recommendations from the Transport Strategy Informal Working Group for the Panel to consider.
<b>KEY ISSUES:</b>
At the Regeneration and Development Panel meeting on 16 <sup>th</sup> April 2024, the Panel agreed to establish an Informal Working Group. The Terms of Reference of the Group was to assist with the formation of high-level strategy and action plan for Transport and consider the existing and future uses and opportunities for transport over the next 30 years.
<b>RECOMMENDATIONS:</b>
<ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. The Panel are requested to consider the recommendations from the Informal Working Group as set out in Section 3 below for onward recommendation to Cabinet.</li><li>2. The Transport Informal Working Group has now concluded its work and can be disbanded.</li></ol>
<b>REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS:</b>
To fulfil the Terms of Reference of the Informal Working Group.

### **REPORT DETAIL**

#### **1. Introduction**

The Transport Strategy Informal Working Group was established by the Regeneration and Development Panel at its meeting on 16<sup>th</sup> April 2024. The Group's full Terms of Reference are set out below.

1. To assist with the formation of a high-level strategy and action plan for Transport in King's Lynn, including considering and inputting into:
  - a. King's Lynn Area Transport Strategy
  - b. Norfolk Rail Prospectus
  - c. Car Parking Strategy
  - d. Future plans for the Ferry Service

2. The Group will consider the existing and future issues and opportunities for transport in King's Lynn over the next 30 years.
3. The Informal Working Group will be provided with any and all such documents as it reasonably requires to support its work.
4. The Informal Working Group to comprise of 6 core members, be Chaired by the Chair of the Regeneration and Development Panel and draw in input from a range of Members and experts including representatives from external bodies/individuals and organisations as required.
5. The Informal Working Group will be supported by officers at the Borough and County Council.

## **2. Meetings Held and topics discussed.**

The Group met on ten separate occasions. Agendas and Minutes for the meetings are available for Councillors to view on Mod Gov and a summary of topics discussed at the meetings are set out below.

**22<sup>nd</sup> August 2024** – Setting the Work Programme, topics for discussion and agreeing the Terms of Reference.

**12<sup>th</sup> September 2024** – The Group received a presentation from the Planning Policy Manager on the emerging Local Plan, Government consultations on the National Planning Policy Framework and Wider Planning Reform.

**15<sup>th</sup> October 2024** – Representatives from Norfolk County Council and the County Council Portfolio Holder for Transport were present at the meeting and provided information and answered questions on the King's Lynn Transport Study, Rail Prospectus Consultation.

**7<sup>th</sup> November 2024** – The Group held a discussion on the Ferry.

**19<sup>th</sup> November 2024** – Ben Colson was present at the meeting and presented his thoughts and ideas on the future of bus services.

**2<sup>nd</sup> January 2025** – Representatives from Norfolk County Council were present at the meeting to discuss the further allocation of Bus Service Improvement Funding for the 25-26 Financial Year. The Group put forward their ideas for consideration. Following the meeting a survey was also sent to all Councillors to enable them to put forward ideas for funding opportunities.

**14<sup>th</sup> January 2025** – Representatives from Norfolk County Council were present at the meeting and provided an update on the Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan and STARS.

**4<sup>th</sup> March 2025** – Representatives from Norfolk County Council were present at the meeting and presented information on the Norfolk Rail Prospectus, New Rail Stations Feasibility Study. The Group also received information from Borough Council officers on King's Lynn and Hunstanton Parking Strategy including an update on the progress of the Draft King's Lynn Transport Study with a presentation of the findings and work carried out to date.

**11<sup>th</sup> March and 1<sup>st</sup> April 2025** – The Group discussed and formulated their recommendations back to the Panel.

### 3. Proposal

In considering the information presented by Officers from the Borough and County Council, the Informal Working Group propose the following recommendations to be considered by the Regeneration and Development Panel for onward consideration by Cabinet.

#### Recommendations relating to Rail

1. A viability study on a parkway station and transport hub near or on the Enterprise Zone, King's Lynn is carried out, considering timetabling constraints, proximity to provision of a travel hub and associated car parking.
2. The Group acknowledge the Rail Prospectus Report from Norfolk County Council and the issues it highlights, but feel that priority should be given to making improvements and providing additional provision to accommodate future growth in the area. Creation of new settlements and their needs to access railway stations, be it improvements to existing stations, or additional provision should be considered in the next Local Plan.
3. Watlington Station.
  - a. Improvements to the roads leading to the station.
  - b. Increase car parking provision to accommodate future growth
  - c. Explore opportunities to create a transport hub.
4. Downham Market Station
  - a. Investigate making this a 'travel hub' by connecting with other modes of transport i.e. better bus services.
  - b. Additional provision of CCTV covered cycle storage.
  - c. Improve walkways from nearby car parks to encourage users to park in other car parks and walk to the station.
  - d. Increase car parking provision
  - e. Improvements to the platform crossings.
  - f. Explore opportunities to create a transport hub.
5. King's Lynn Station
  - a. Consider expanding the car park provision into King's Lynn Station and creating a travel hub. Possible location for a multi storey car park.
6. Work with bus operators to explore opportunities to provide joint ticketing.
7. Recognise the importance of supporting growth and multi modal transport by investing in stations and increasing the frequency of service.

#### Recommendations relating to the Ferry

1. Ensure it is included in the new Local Plan and King's Lynn Masterplan as appropriate to support future growth in the area which could unlock access to funding opportunities.
2. Continue to work on feasibility studies and improvements as budgets allow. Acknowledging that the full scheme presented by WSP was unfeasible.
3. Clarify ownership and responsibility.
4. Continue to engage with the operator and provide signposting and support on how to access business support funding/grants.
5. Consider the former Delmote site as additional car parking for the Ferry, for inclusion within the King's Lynn Masterplan.
6. Promote 'Park and Sail' to commuters and tourists, consider this within the King's Lynn Parking Strategy.
7. West Lynn site for overnight campervan parking and leisure provision, for consideration of future land use within the King's Lynn Masterplan.
8. Later services to improve access to the nighttime economy.

#### Recommendations relating to Travel/Cycling.

1. Endorse that priority is being given to active travel at the West Winch Growth Area and support the work of the LCWIP in this area.
2. Improvements to crossings at Tennyson Road should continue to be a priority, working with Network Rail.
3. Endorse STARS and Southgates Regeneration as a priority.

#### Recommendations relating to Buses

1. Joint Ticketing opportunities to be explored – including with rail.
2. Consider opportunities in the Bus Services Act including Franchising. Encourage/lobby that this work is commenced now so that it can be progressed by the new Unitary/Strategic Authority.
3. Endorse the priority areas in the Bus Service Improvement Plan and continue to engage with NCC to ensure that funding is used to make improvements to services in West Norfolk which include:
  - a. Later services to support the night time economy and employment.
  - b. Investigate an 'orbital' service for King's Lynn which can assist with active travel/park and ride/parkway station access.
  - c. Upgrading to smart shelters across the Borough.
  - d. Bus service to complement the Ferry – e.g. later on in the evening a service to the Ferry Car Park etc.
  - e. Circular/town centre service in Downham Market, including access to the Leisure Centre now that car parking charges have been introduced in this area.
4. Investigate active travel hubs in Hunstanton to support the tourist offer/access to the coast etc and support cycle hire in this area.