**Q1 Past, current or future initiatives on sustainable transport/travel.**

**Clarification: - I am particularly interested in any initiatives undertaken in the past three years or planned to be undertaken in promoting environmentally friendly transport strategies.**

1. **Leicester‘s Local Sustainable Transport Fund, ‘Fit for Business’** is a project designed to work with businesses and communities. The project commenced in 2011. It aims to enable people to travel to work by low carbon and active transport choices by providing improved bus, walking and cycling information: working with existing employers and employees to remove barriers to sustainable commuting. These measures have also been used to compliment wider transport infrastructure investment in Leicester to encourage greater behavioural change.

These initiatives include:

* School and neighbourhood based cycle encouragement and training. To develop a culture of cycling in schools which ensures pupils have the correct training, facilities and incentives to want to travel to school actively;
* The ‘Ride Leicester Festival’, which commenced in 2007. This is a celebration of cycling aimed at new and returning cyclists; it includes the mass participation Skyride and the Leicester Castle Classic. The programme provides 35 local rides between May to September;
* The provision of adult cycle training;
* Walking and cycling route sign improvements;
* Improved cycle maps;
* Sustainable travel challenge – using online and mobile apps, participants can build up points for travelling sustainably which can be redeemed with national or local retailers;
* Proposing to deliver a Personalised Travel Planning to 4,000 households per annum in 2015/16;
* To deliver a Wheels to Work scheme. This is a moped hire scheme to help apprentices’ access employment. The scheme will use electric mopeds and cycles. The scheme will be launched in Spring 2015;
* A ‘Get Walking, Keep Walking’ programme – delivering a 12 week walking programme in discrete geographical areas. It is a community based project aimed to nudge positive travel behaviours in the community;
* LeicesterSHARE, which is a car sharing service – see <http://www.leicester.gov.uk/transport-and-streets/parking-in-leicester/car-sharing-and-car-clubs> and
* The ‘Choose How You Move’ website - We provide sustainable travel advice and support to businesses, schools and organisations in Leicester. This will be the main source of travel information for the 2015 Rugby World Cup. For further information on this website please see <http://www.choosehowyoumove.co.uk/>

1. Our **‘Connecting Leicester’** project aims to reduce the dominance of cars and create an attractive pedestrian and cycle friendly city for citizens and visitors. The next phase of works is currently being planned over the next four years. These improvements consist of complete reconstruction in pedestrianised areas, and footway widening on other streets to enable cycling to be accommodated on joint use footway / cycleways. Work is currently being progressed on the major redevelopment of the Haymarket Bus Station that is due to open by December 2015. The bus station will provide more capacity for local bus services as well as a number of other improvements to make the area more attractive.
2. **Cycling Action Plan**

Our Cycling Action Plan was launched in March 2015 and aims to double the number of everyday cyclists in Leicester by 2018. In addition to the cycling initiatives set out under the Local Sustainable Transport Fund above, the Cycling Action Plan aims to:

* Continue to develop a network of ongoing cycle and walking routes, including upgrading / implementing directional signage. Examples of recent projects implemented include cycle improvements to Southgates and Newarke Street which aims to reduce the road dangers and improve access for cyclists and pedestrians between the De Montfort University Campus and the City Centre. The National Cycle Network Improvements Project aims to improve and the increase the use of the existing National Cycle Network Routes. Recent work completed includes 5km of improved shared use path, formal adoption as Public Highway and 300+ new direction signs along 38km of National Cycle Network route and connecting links. The newly signed and adopted routes are marked on 20,000 new 2014 Leicester Cycling maps distributed last summer;
* Create a plan for strategic cycling infrastructure and address missing links, ‘pinchpoints’ and safer cycling with neighbourhoods;
* Review existing schemes and work with the Department for Transport and other partners to attract additional resources and skills;
* Build a mainstream, inclusive city wide cycling culture as well as project specific promotions;
* Implement workplace, residential and city centre parking options to reduce theft;
* Continue to offer adult cycle training as well as Bikeability cycle training to 1,800 primary school pupils each year; and
* Continue to offer cycle maintenance training.

Examples of cycling work completed in the last 24 months include:

* Guildhall Lane & Applegate refurbished with traffic calming and two way access for cyclists;
* Berridge Street refurbished with wider footpaths and two way access for cyclists;
* King Street pedestrianised retaining traffic free two way access for cyclists;
* The Railway Station Bike Hub has recently been completed with parking for 240 indoor and 150 outdoor; and
* The Town Hall Bike Hub now accepts the electronic ‘One Card’ system for Bike Park membership;

For further information on cycling and to view our Cycling Action Plan, please see <http://www.leicester.gov.uk/transport-and-streets/cycling-in-leicester>.

1. **Encouraging the use of public transport**. The initiatives include:

* Operating three Park & Ride services at Enderby, Birstall and Meynell’s Gorse which run every 10-15 minutes into the city centre.
* The introduction of bus lane enforcement in the city centre in 2012, as well as introducing bus gates to give priority access to bus services. We have the powers to fine motorists for using bus gates / bus lanes illegally;
* Successfully being awarded over £2m from the Department for Transport Better Bus Area Fund in 2012. The joint project between Leicestershire County Council, Leicester City Council and Arriva, aims to improve bus journey times and reliability in a bid to increase bus patronage and reduce congestion along the A426 Aylestone Road Corridor;
* The Leicester North West Transport project has secured over £16m from the Department for Transport in 2014. It is a five year programme designed to contribute towards meeting future transport needs which includes improving the existing network for public transport, walking and cycling. The project broadly covers an area bounded by the A50 Groby Road, A6 Loughborough Road and the A46 Western bypass;
* Delivering a highway ‘pinch point’ programme which will help to improve bus journey times by removing bottlenecks at key junctions;
* Delivering a SMART and integrated ticketing programme as a way of increasing the use of public transport through improving their customers’ experience; and
* A revamp of Humberstone Gate East was carried out in 2012. This included improved pedestrian environment with new bus shelters, high quality paving and street furniture. The project also improved the flow of buses and cut congestion, at the same time making it easier for pedestrians and cyclists to access other nearby destinations.

1. **Promoting the uptake of low emission vehicles**

Electric Vehicle Charging Points

* Leicester’s Climate Change Programme of Action has an end of 2015 target for 30 electric vehicle charge points to be installed in the Leicester area. Recent installations have brought the current total up to 24 charge points. These can be found at the Newarke Street and Dover Street car parks as well as the three park and ride sites. All these sites feature a ‘fast’ charger where a battery refill can be between 2 and 4 hours.

Our draft ‘Healthier Air for Leicester: Leicester’s Air Quality Action Plan (2015 -2025)' proposes a number of measures that will promote a shift towards sustainable travel and transport choices. These include:

* Proposing a Low Emission Zone initially for buses with the aim of removing the older more polluting vehicles from the bus fleets towards lower emission buses;
* A proposed long term action to introduce an Ultra Low Emission Zone. It is anticipated that this may stimulate the low emission vehicle market by increasing the proportion of low emission vehicles;
* To continue to encourage the introduction of replacement newer and cleaner bus fleets in Leicester. We have recently started to work with bus operators to introduce retrofit solutions to reduce emissions from older buses. It is predicted that this action will reduce nitrogen dioxide concentration;
* Securing funding from DEFRA (2014) to investigate the feasibility of introducing gas buses in Leicester. This would have significant air quality benefits. The intention is to work towards the introduction of gas buses in the next five years;
* Encouraging the use of alternative low emission fuels for taxis. We propose to work with taxi operators to identify future opportunities to encourage cleaner engine taxis;
* Encouraging fleet replacement of low emission vehicles of buses, taxis and freight operators. Also the Action Plan proposes to improve the efficiency of freight operators by the implementation of delivery and servicing plans, eco driving and exploring the potential of an urban freight consolidation centre;
* Developing a shared fuelling infrastructure. Establishing a shared fuelling infrastructure for HGVs and other modes of vehicular transport could create the right conditions for bus / HGV and other private sector companies to invest in new technologies and deliver a breakthrough in the uptake of gas powered vehicles and electric vehicles. We will investigate the possibilities of establishing shared use facilities;
* Installing more electric vehicle charging points, for example, through the land use planning system by requiring them to be installed on large developments; and
* Reducing emissions from the City Council vehicle fleet. We are currently reviewing the size, procurement, fleet composition and operation of our vehicle fleet. There are a number of technologies on the market that have lower emissions than petrol or diesel. We plan to halve emissions from our fleet over the Air Quality Action Plan period.

Consultation on our draft Air Quality Action Plan is now live and finishes on 26th May 2015. To access the document, please see <http://consultations.leicester.gov.uk/>