

Meeting:	Council
Meeting date:	20 May 2016
Title of report:	Local transport plan
Report by:	Cabinet member Infrastructure

Classification

Open

Key decision

This is not an executive decision

Wards affected

Countywide

Purpose

To adopt the local transport plan (2016-2031).

Recommendation

THAT:

- a) the local transport plan strategy (at appendix 1) and policy (at appendix 2) be adopted.

Alternative options

- 1 To not adopt the local transport plan (LTP). This is not recommended as adopting and maintaining an LTP is a statutory requirement.

Reasons for recommendations

- 2 To ensure the council complies with the statutory requirement to adopt and maintain an LTP.
- 3 The LTP forms part of the council's budget and policy framework and is recommended by cabinet for adoption by Council.

Key considerations

Overview

- 4 The LTP comprises countywide policy and transport strategy covering maintenance, safety, traffic management, sustainable and active travel. It sets out the council's approach to improving transport in a wider context, explaining the important role transport plays in respect of priorities such as economic growth, supporting healthier lifestyles and reducing environmental impacts.
- 5 The previous LTP provided the basis for delivery of a number of significant transport projects:
 - the Connect 2 bridge over the River Wye connecting the Hereford enterprise zone at Rotherwas with the city centre,
 - a £20m investment in maintenance of our road network, and
 - a successful bid for £43m from the Local Growth Fund to enable delivery of the Hereford city centre transport package and South Wye transport package.
- 6 The LTP strategy and policy (at appendices 1 and 2) cover the period 2016-31 aligning to the period covered by the core strategy. This is important as it acknowledges the very close linkage between the long term land use proposals set out in the adopted local plan and the supporting transport improvements required to enable that development. These linkages are also relevant to supporting the adopted health and wellbeing strategy and the emerging economic masterplan. A summary of the main elements of the LTP, which help support the council's priorities, include:
 - Proposals for the Hereford relief road, which will provide a bypass of the A49 through Hereford, and transport packages which will directly support Hereford's ability to accommodate 6,500 new homes and significant inward investment and new jobs at the Hereford enterprise zone;
 - Proposals to continue developing walking and cycling networks and to actively promote and support these modes and public transport which will enable healthier lifestyles and reduce the impacts of increasing travel;
 - Targeted safety measures to reduce the number of road traffic casualties
 - An asset management approach which will increase efficiency and value for money across an extensive transport network;
 - Prioritisation of a core bus network and further passenger transport integration to support viable rural access;
 - Parking policies and proposals which will support the important role parking plays in enabling access to jobs and services in the main settlements including approaches which will seek to manage demand for short trips which could be undertaken by more sustainable modes; and
 - Policies in support of innovative approaches to improving transport and minimising the impacts of travel including low emission vehicles and digital media.

Developing the LTP and finalisation for adoption

- 7 The LTP has been developed following consultation on a draft plan and the following is an outline of the key areas of change and improvement:

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- Expanding the vision statement and objectives within the LTP strategy to include the text “and reduce congestion and increase accessibility by less polluting and healthier forms of transport than private car”. This picks up the recommendation of the general overview and scrutiny committee and is line with our longstanding approach to supporting environmental and health benefits. General overview and scrutiny committee also recommended that the strategy be subject to review within 5 years. This is considered a reasonable timeframe for review and would relate to LTP funding allocation periods;
- Inclusion of the core strategy countywide map which sets out housing and employment proposals providing a clearer link between the LTP and support for the county’s growth proposals;
- Changes to the council’s strategic network map to reflect the importance of the trunk road network within Herefordshire and highlighting strategic connections to settlements and routes outside the county;
- In response to comments from external and internal stakeholders and in recognition of the significant role transport might play the LTP strategy now makes clearer reference to support for:
 - the new Hereford university;
 - rural diversification and businesses; and
 - the Hereford enterprise zone.
- A number of comments were made in respect of the proposals for buses seeking clarification on the LTPs proposals. The LTP strategy and policy documents have been amended to highlight the accessibility issues impacting the county, provide greater clarity on the process by which bus infrastructure will be identified and delivered, the purpose of the core bus network policy and the aims of the ongoing Total Transport fund review.

8 Cabinet considered the draft LTP strategy and policy documents on 14 April 2016, taking into account the consultation feedback and the recommendations by the GOSC. Cabinet agreed that the draft LTP be recommended to council for adoption.

Community impact

9 The LTP sets out how we will enable economic development, reduce environmental impacts and improve health in line with key elements of the corporate plan. In the light of evidence from the joint strategic needs assessment – understanding Herefordshire – and reflecting our priorities set out in the health and wellbeing strategy, the LTP also contains schemes and projects to reduce road traffic casualties, encourage active travel and maintain rural access which support the aims of the health and wellbeing strategy. Within the regional context the LTP is closely aligned with the Marches local enterprise partnership’s strategic economic plan (SEP), taking forward key transport packages prioritised in the SEP.

Equality duty

10 Increasing equality of opportunity and increasing access underpin the LTP. The LTP includes a policy commitment to equality and individual elements within the LTP delivery programmes will be subject to equality impact assessment as an integral part of their planning and delivery in compliance with the public sector equality duty.

Financial implications

- 11 The adoption of the LTP strategy will enable capital investment to be allocated as part of the public realm annual plan in accordance with council's priorities. The medium term financial strategy identifies a number of savings proposals in relation to transport related activities, the LTP strategy will not prejudice the delivery of these savings.

Legal implications

- 12 The council is responsible for producing and maintaining an up to date LTP, and may replace it as it thinks fit. This is a statutory responsibility under the provisions of section 108 Transport Act 2000, as amended by the Transport Act 2008.
- 13 The LTP is required to set out the council's overarching strategy for transport across the county, setting out policies for the promotion and encouragement of safe, integrated, efficient and economic transport and to carry out its functions so as to implement those policies.
- 14 In reviewing its LTP, the provisions of the said section 108 require the council to consult such persons as it thinks appropriate, including rail and bus operators, and any relevant transport user groups. The consultation process, adopted by the council, is detailed below.

Risk management

- 15 The LTP will be reviewed every five years to ensure it remains appropriate for the prevailing conditions. The annual plan process will also respond to any external 'unknowns'. Each major scheme, such as the Hereford relief road, is also supported by a risk management and mitigation process.

Consultees

- 16 The LTP has been subject to a full public consultation comprising draft strategy and policy documents and a report of strategic environmental assessment. The consultation, which ran from 23 November 2015 to 29 January 2016 was publicised on the council's website, through local media, social media and directly to key stakeholders. Hard copies of the consultation materials and survey forms have been available at all council information shops around the county.
- 17 Key issues which emerged from the consultation include:
- Economic growth, quality of transport network, and rural access have all been rated as top priority objectives
 - For capital spending maintenance was the top priority followed closely by walking and cycling
 - For revenue spending support for bus routes was identified as the top priority followed by routine maintenance
 - Agreement with the approach taken and results of the Strategic Environmental Assessment
 - there was a range of comments, some in favour and some against, new road infrastructure however the LTP needs to be consistent with the core strategy which does include key road infrastructure to support economic growth

- 18 Members have been directly engaged in helping finalise the local transport plan. An

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all member workshop was held 8 September 2015, hosted jointly by the chair of general overview and scrutiny committee and the cabinet members for infrastructure and transport and roads. The workshop comprised presentations on the local transport plan, parking strategy, asset management and passenger transport and included interactive sessions with surveys. Presentation materials were made available to all members. The outcomes of the workshop were:

- Economic growth was regarded as the greatest priority
- endorsement of a balanced approach to LTP capital spending across road maintenance, active modes, public transport and road safety
- support for the principle of prioritisation of a core bus network
- support for the introduction of on street parking charges in Hereford

19 The general overview and scrutiny committee was consulted on the local transport plan with a dedicated session 19 January 2016. Committee was provided with interim findings from the public consultation and was able to discuss a range of issues. Committee made two recommendations for cabinet to consider:

- That the Local Transport Plan (LTP) be subject to a review every five years in accordance with Department for Transport guidance
- That the vision for LTP be expanded to include the objective “and reduce congestion and increase accessibility by less polluting and healthier forms of transport than the private car.”

20 Feedback and support has been received from a wide range of partners and the Marches LEP has responded to consultation stating that it is pleased to support the LTP which it notes contains a number of schemes which will assist in the delivery of the strategic economic plan.

Appendices

- Appendix 1: Local transport plan 2016-31 strategy document
- Appendix 2: Local transport plan 2016-31 policy document
- Appendix 3: Local transport plan 2016-31 – report of consultation

Background papers

None