



Title of report: Herefordshire Travel Plan Strategy Framework

Meeting: Cabinet

Meeting date: Thursday 22 October 2026

Report by: Councillor Price, transport and infrastructure;

Report by: Director Economy and Environment

Report writer: Transport Planning Services Manager

Classification

Open

Decision type

Key

This is a key decision because it is likely to result in the council incurring expenditure which is, or the making of savings which are, significant having regard to the council's budget for the service or function concerned. A threshold of £500,000 is regarded as significant.

This is a key decision because it is likely to be significant having regard to: the strategic nature of the decision; and / or whether the outcome will have an impact, for better or worse, on the amenity of the community or quality of service provided by the authority to a significant number of people living or working in the locality (two or more wards) affected.

Notice has been served in accordance with Part 3, Section 9 (Publicity in Connection with Key Decisions) of the Local Authorities (Executive Arrangements) (Meetings and Access to Information) (England) Regulations 2012.

Wards affected

(All Wards);

Purpose

This report seeks approval to adopt the Herefordshire Travel Plans Framework and its supporting developer guidance. The framework establishes a consistent council-wide

approach to securing, delivering, monitoring and enforcing Travel Plans associated with new development. It will support sustainable growth, improve travel choices and ensure that development contributes towards the council's transport, environmental, health and Child Friendly Herefordshire objectives

Recommendation(s)

That:

- a) That the new Travel Plans Framework and supporting development guidance is adopted cabinet;
- b) delegates authority to the Chief Operating Officer for Economy and Environment, in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Transport and Infrastructure, to make non-material technical and operational updates required to reflect changes in legislation, national policy, planning guidance, indexation or administrative arrangements, provided that such updates do not alter the framework's strategic objectives or introduce a new financial commitment for the council.

Alternative options

1. Do not adopt the Travel Plan Strategy - This option is not recommended as it would leave the council without a consistent strategic framework for securing, monitoring and enforcing travel plans associated with new development. This could lead to a less coordinated approach to managing travel demand, increased reliance on private car travel, and reduced ability to support the council's objectives relating to congestion, air quality, public health and carbon reduction. It could also weaken the council's ability to secure and demonstrate travel plan compliance through the planning process.
2. Delay adoption pending further review - This option is not recommended as the strategy has already been informed by national guidance, local policy and stakeholder engagement. Delaying adoption would postpone the introduction of a consistent approach to travel plan delivery and monitoring, limit opportunities to improve travel behaviour associated with new developments, and create uncertainty for developers, planning officers and stakeholders. It may also result in missed opportunities to influence developments currently progressing through the planning system.
3. Continue with existing arrangements without adopting the Travel Plan Strategy - This option is not recommended as it would perpetuate a developer-led approach to travel planning whereby the council has limited control over delivery, monitoring and achievement of travel plan outcomes. The current approach also restricts opportunities to secure financial contributions that can be invested in countywide travel planning initiatives and sustainable transport measures. Without the strategy, the council would have less ability to influence travel behaviour, ensure consistent standards across developments and maximise the benefits of travel planning in reducing congestion, improving air quality and supporting active travel.

Key considerations

4. Herefordshire is forecast to accommodate significant housing and employment growth over the coming years. Without appropriate mitigation, this growth has the potential to increase traffic congestion, place additional pressure on the highway network and reduce opportunities for sustainable travel. Travel Plans provide an important mechanism to manage travel demand and promote behavioural change, ensuring that developments contribute positively to the wider transport network whilst supporting economic growth and accessibility

5. The Travel Plan Strategy introduces a more structured and transparent approach to funding, implementation and monitoring. Through the Council Managed Travel Plan approach, developer contributions can be secured to support the ongoing delivery of travel planning initiatives, behavioural change programmes and monitoring activities, reducing reliance on core council budgets and providing greater certainty of delivery
6. A significant benefit of the strategy is the introduction of a Council Managed Travel Plan option. This enables the council to coordinate implementation and monitoring across multiple developments, creating economies of scale, ensuring consistency of approach and reducing the risk of travel plans becoming ineffective following changes in ownership or management arrangements
7. The strategy establishes the Council's expectations for Travel Plans as a mechanism to mitigate the transport impacts of development and to support the delivery of sustainable growth across the county. It defines a Travel Plan as a long-term management strategy that seeks to deliver sustainable transport objectives and requires regular monitoring and review.
8. This strategy sets out how Herefordshire Council will apply those requirements in practice, ensuring a consistent, robust and effective approach to securing, implementing and monitoring Travel Plans through the planning process.
9. The makes clear that total reliance on private car travel will contribute to increased congestion, poorer air quality and wider environmental and health challenges across the county; however in a rural county such as Herefordshire removal of private car use is not possible therefore a proactive and hands-on approach is needed.
10. At a policy level, the strategy directly supports the Herefordshire Local Plan, particularly Policy TR1 (Sustainable Transport Networks), which seeks to enable a high-quality, integrated transport network that supports growth, and Policy TR2 (Transport and Development), which requires developments to reduce the need to travel and promote sustainable transport choices. Travel Plans are the primary mechanism through which these policy objectives are secured and monitored at the development level.
11. The adoption of a coordinated Travel Plan Strategy is therefore essential in ensuring that development contributes positively to addressing these issues.
12. The strategy establishes clear thresholds at which Travel Plans or Travel Plan Statements are required, ensuring that proposals likely to generate significant movement are supported by proportionate mitigation. These include, for example, residential developments of 50 dwellings or more, as well as a range of employment, retail and leisure uses defined by floorspace thresholds. The strategy provides the framework through which these requirements are applied consistently across planning applications.
13. A key component of the Herefordshire approach is the use of the Modeshift STARS platform, which enables Travel Plans to be developed, monitored and managed digitally. This aligns with the digital approach of the council and the platform is a nationally recognised system that a high number of councils use meaning we add a nationally used consistent approach to developments.
14. The strategy requires Travel Plans to remain active for a minimum of five years following full occupation, ensuring that they operate as live management tools rather than one-off submissions. The strategy supports this by embedding monitoring, reporting and performance management processes within the Council's ongoing service delivery.

15. The strategy also sets out two delivery options for Travel Plans.
 - a. Under Option One, Herefordshire Council assumes responsibility for implementation and monitoring in return for a financial contribution secured through a Section 106 agreement. This allows for a coordinated and strategic approach across multiple developments, delivering economies of scale and stronger integration with wider transport initiatives.
 - b. Under Option Two, developers retain responsibility for delivery but are required to provide funding, monitoring arrangements and a financial bond to ensure compliance with agreed targets.
16. The Travel Plan Strategy formalises how these options will be applied in practice, ensuring clarity for developers and consistency in decision-making across the Council.

Community impact

17. The strategy identifies Travel Plans as an important mechanism for delivering wider community benefits, including reducing congestion, improving accessibility and promoting healthier lifestyles. Within Herefordshire, where rurality and accessibility challenges can significantly impact residents' ability to access services and employment, Travel Plans play a critical role in improving connectivity.
18. The Travel Plans framework supports the council's Child Friendly Herefordshire ambitions by giving greater priority to the travel needs, safety and wellbeing of children and young people. The approach includes dedicated work with schools and educational settings to develop and maintain School Travel Plans, informed by pupils, parents, staff, governors and local communities. These plans will identify barriers to safer journeys and support practical initiatives that improve road safety and give children and families greater opportunities to walk, wheel, cycle, use public transport or share journeys where appropriate. This will ensure that children's experiences and needs are considered directly when travel initiatives are developed and monitored
19. School Travel Plans are a core part of the programme and will support safer journeys to education, healthier travel habits and the council's commitment to prioritising children and young people
20. By promoting walking, cycling, public transport and shared travel, the strategy supports improved access to employment, education and services, particularly for residents without access to a private car. In doing so, it contributes to reducing social exclusion and improving overall quality of life across the county.
21. The implementation of a consistent Travel Plan approach also ensures that new development contributes positively to existing communities, mitigating traffic impacts and supporting more sustainable patterns of movement.

Environmental impact

22. Transport remains a significant contributor to carbon emissions within Herefordshire, and the strategy highlights the importance of Travel Plans in reducing transport-related environmental impacts. By encouraging a shift away from single-occupancy car journeys and promoting sustainable modes of travel, Travel Plans directly support the Council's environmental and climate objectives.

23. The Travel Plan Strategy will contribute to reducing congestion, lowering emissions and improving air quality, particularly within urban areas such as Hereford where traffic pressures are most acute. It also supports increased levels of active travel, delivering associated health and wellbeing benefits alongside environmental improvements.
24. The strategic and consistent implementation of Travel Plans through this framework will therefore play a key role in supporting the Council's ambition to reduce carbon emissions and promote sustainable development.

Equality duty

25. Due to the potential impact of this decision being low, a full Equality Impact Assessment is not required.
26. The Travel Plan Strategy seeks to improve accessibility and travel choice for all residents by promoting walking, cycling, public transport and shared travel opportunities. The strategy is intended to support access to employment, education, healthcare and other services and may have positive benefits for people who do not have access to a private vehicle.
27. Implementation of travel plans will be undertaken on a site-by-site basis and any equality impacts arising from specific developments will continue to be assessed through the planning process. The strategy itself does not introduce restrictions on any protected group and is not anticipated to create adverse equality impacts.

Resource implications

28. Implementation of the Travel Plans framework will be supported initially through Local Transport Grant funding, which will fund the necessary staffing capacity while the new approach is established. As qualifying developments progress and Section 106 contributions are secured, the cost of administering, implementing and monitoring development-related Travel Plans will progressively transfer to developer contributions and away from Local Transport Grant subsidy.
29. The Council Managed Travel Plan service will operate on a full-cost-recovery basis, with contributions calculated to recover the reasonable costs of staff time, monitoring, administration, travel initiatives and associated delivery requirements. The model is therefore not expected to create an additional ongoing revenue pressure for the council. Income and expenditure will be monitored to ensure that charges remain proportionate and that the service continues to recover its delivery costs.
30. For residential schemes, a standard per-dwelling contribution is applied under Option One, while employment and commercial developments are subject to a per-square metre charge. These contributions are secured through Section 106 agreements and enable Herefordshire Council to deliver Travel Plans directly, ensuring consistency and efficiency across the county.
31. Under Option Two, developers are required to fund and deliver their own Travel Plans, alongside providing a monitoring fee and a financial bond. This bond enables the Council to intervene where necessary to ensure delivery of agreed outcomes and targets.
32. The strategy establishes a developer-funded model for travel plan delivery and monitoring. Subject to planning obligations being secured, the implementation of travel plans will be funded through developer contributions, monitoring fees and associated planning obligations. This reduces financial risk to the council and supports a sustainable long-term delivery model.

33. The strategy does not introduce new financial requirements but provides a structured and transparent approach to applying these mechanisms. This ensures that Travel Plans are adequately resourced without placing additional burden on the Council's core budgets.

Legal implications

34. The relevant legal provisions for this decision can be found in the council's constitution, www.herefordshire.gov.uk/constitution.

Risk management

Risk / opportunity	Mitigation
Developers do not engage with travel plan requirements resulting in poor compliance.	The strategy establishes clear procedures, monitoring requirements and enforcement mechanisms secured through planning obligations.
Insufficient resources to monitor Travel Plans.	Monitoring and administration costs will be secured through developer contributions in accordance with the strategy
Travel Plans fail to deliver expected behavioural change outcomes.	Annual monitoring, target setting and intervention measures will be used to identify underperformance and implement corrective actions.
Failure to adopt the strategy could lead to inconsistent application of travel planning requirements.	Adoption provides a clear countywide framework and consistent approach across all qualifying developments.
Opportunity to secure additional investment in sustainable travel initiatives.	Developer contributions can be used to support implementation, monitoring and sustainable travel promotion activities.

35. Risks associated with implementation will be managed through the Transport Planning Service and recorded within the service risk register where appropriate.

Consultees

36. The Travel Plan guidance has been developed to support implementation of the adopted Travel Plan strategy. The strategy has been informed by national guidance, existing council policies and discussions with relevant internal services including Planning, Development Management and Section 106 officers.
37. The strategy primarily establishes operational arrangements for the delivery of existing planning policy and therefore a separate public consultation has not been undertaken. The requirements that underpin the strategy have already been subject to consultation through the preparation and adoption of the Travel Plan.
38. A PGC has been arranged for 20th October at 10am and political group comments will be published as a supplement thereafter.

Appendices

39. Appendix 1 Travel Plan Strategy

Appendix 2 Travel Plans for development – Developer Guide