

Meeting:	General overview and scrutiny committee
Meeting date:	19 January 2016
Title of report:	Local transport plan
Report by:	Head of transportation and access

Classification

Open

Key decision

This is not an executive decision

Wards affected

Countywide

Purpose

To seek the views of the general overview and scrutiny committee on the council's local transport plan (2016-2031) in order to inform cabinet's recommendation to Council.

Recommendation(s)

THAT:

(a) The committee provides comments on the draft local transport plan (2016-2031).

Alternative options

- 1 Under the requirements of the Transport Act 2000, as amended, the council is required to maintain an adopted local transport plan (LTP). The committee may choose to recommend alternative priorities or proposals but in doing so any alternatives should be informed by the evidence base available and the prevailing financial and policy context.

Reasons for recommendations

- 2 The LTP forms part of the council's budget and policy framework. The council's budget and policy framework rules require that cabinet have regard to the views of overview and scrutiny in developing their recommendations to Council on budget and policy framework items.

Key considerations

- 3 The draft LTP covers the period from 2016 to 2031. It comprises a strategy and a policy document both of which are currently subject to final consultation prior to consideration by cabinet on 11 February 2016 and Council on 4 March 2016. The draft plan documents can be accessed at:

<https://www.herefordshire.gov.uk/planning-and-building-control/planning-policy/local-transport-plan-2016-2031>

- 4 Following the adoption of the Herefordshire local plan core strategy 2011 – 2031 by Council in October 2015, it is appropriate to update the local transport plan. The LTP sets out the long term transport strategy for the county to achieve transport objectives and support the delivery of the core strategy. The LTP is guided by the vision for:

A transport network that supports growth enabling the provision of new jobs and houses, whilst providing the conditions for safe and active travel

...and five key objectives:

- Enabling economic growth
 - Providing a good quality transport network for all users
 - Promoting healthy lifestyles
 - Making journeys easier and safer
 - Ensuring rural access
- 5 The LTP is a countywide policy document. Included within the plan are specific proposals for Hereford to meet the transport needs recognising that the city will be the main focus for housing and employment growth. The strategies for the market towns and rural areas focus on relevant issues in these areas where maintaining access and the safety of the network play a more significant role. In addition to setting the long term policy for transport improvements in the county, the LTP will guide the prioritisation of available capital funding for transport investment, revenue spending on routine maintenance and passenger transport services, and will support bids for any additional funds for transport projects.
- 6 The strategy is informed by an extensive evidence base much of which was developed in support of the core strategy. Key elements of the evidence base comprise:
- transport modelling which has identified major transport infrastructure and sustainable package measures to support growth proposals
 - passenger transport review which has confirmed priorities for public transport services
 - parking studies which have assessed public car parking capacity, distribution and charging proposals
 - rail studies which have identified strategic priorities for future investment and access and integration opportunities
 - transport asset management planning which informs our approach to prioritising investment in the overall highway asset and will be used to achieve better value for money
 - accident investigation and analysis which will target our approach to continuing the long term trends in reducing the most serious road traffic casualties
 - Understanding Herefordshire in particular the outcomes of the Joint Strategic Needs Assessment.

- 7 Whilst the new LTP continues many of the approaches contained in the current LTP

including support for sustainable transport, a significant area of change is the inclusion of schemes and packages required to support long term growth proposals adopted in the core strategy. This includes the Hereford Relief Road and transport package which will be critical to supporting the county's longer term housing and employment needs. The new LTP also develops the approach to transport asset management which will be important in guiding longer term investment in the maintenance of the transport network across the county.

Community impact

- 8 The LTP sets out how we propose to enable economic development, reduce environmental impacts and improve health in line with key elements of the corporate plan. 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.

Equality duty

- 9 Increasing equality of opportunity and increasing access underpin the draft LTP. Individual elements within the LTP delivery programmes will be subject to equality impact assessment as an integral part of their planning and implementation.

Financial implications

- 10 There are no direct financial implications arising from this report. The LTP, once adopted, will help inform the allocation of available resources to deliver our strategic priorities.

Legal implications

- 11 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.
- 12 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.
- 13 A duty to consult may arise at common law or by statute. In this case, under the provisions of the said section 108, in reviewing its LTP, the council must consult such persons as it thinks appropriate, including rail and bus operators, and any relevant transport user groups. There are no minimum time limits given for such consultation but such period should be reasonable. In a recent 2014 supreme court case of *Moseley v Haringey LBC*, it was decided that a five week consultation period was not unreasonable for a council tax reduction scheme and that any alternative options should be briefly mentioned where relevant, but only where this is necessary in order for the consultees to express meaningful views on the proposals.

Risk management

- 14 There is a risk that the LTP can become out of date. We have a duty to review the LTP from time to time which ensures that the strategy remains relevant, supports the

council's priorities and is subject to public consultation. The updating of the LTP as set out in this report will ensure that the council's transport strategy is up to date and reflects current priorities, will meet future needs and forms a sound basis for longer term financial investment. The council will need to review the frequency for updating this plan but it is envisaged that an update would take place by 2021.

- 15 There is a risk that the LTP programme needs to be amended after adoption. The programme for delivering the LTP is updated each year through the Annual Plan and significant capital schemes set out in the LTP are also prioritised through the medium term financial strategy. This provides regular governance review and opportunity to manage risks around investment and delivery against council priorities. Delivery against the LTPs longer term outcomes is managed through the public realm contract and key outcomes are included within corporate performance reporting ensuring that risks to the delivery of outcomes are identified and managed on a continuous basis.

Consultees

- 16 The draft LTP 2016-31 (strategy and policy documents) was published on the council's website 26 November 2015 and a survey has been included to coordinate feedback. The consultation will run until 29 January 2016. Consultation feedback will be analysed to inform finalisation and consideration by cabinet on 11 February prior to seeking council approval for adoption on 4 March 2016. An interim analysis of the consultation feedback will be provide to the committee members with an interim report of consultation by Friday 15 January, and in advance of the meeting.
- 17 Part of our programme to assist with finalising the draft LTP included a workshop session open to all members, 8 September 2015. This workshop was developed in consultation with the chair of this committee, who co-hosted the event with the cabinet members for infrastructure and transport and roads. The workshop comprised specific sessions on the draft LTP parking proposals, asset management and passenger transport. Surveys and discussion sessions captured member views on the LTP covering the LTP objectives, priorities for spending across programme areas, asset management priorities, public transport and support for active travel. The workshop provided valuable feedback on a range of issues and members confirmed the following priorities which have assisted in drafting of the LTP:
 - 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 a core bus network
 - support for the introduction of on street parking charges in Hereford

Appendices

None – An interim LTP 2016-31 consultation report will be circulated 15 January 2016

Background papers

None identified