

Meeting:	Cabinet
Meeting date:	3 December 2020
Title of report:	Hereford Transport Strategy Review
Report by:	Cabinet member for infrastructure and transport

Classification

Open

Decision type

Key

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.

Wards affected

Countywide with emphasis on Hereford City Wards

Purpose

To consider the findings of the Hereford Transport Strategy Review and the Peer Review of the South Wye Transport Package and Hereford Transport Package, recommendations made by the general scrutiny committee and determine any strategy proposals to be taken forward.

Recommendation(s)

That Cabinet:

- (a) notes and considers the review findings and the recommendations and comments of the general scrutiny committee;**
- (b) determine if there is a preferred strategic transport package or combination of packages which cabinet would like to take forward;**

- (c) agrees the recommendations A to M of the general scrutiny committee which are set out at Appendix E;
- (d) seeks a further report to set out the implications of taking forward the preferred package and to confirm authority for subsequent work to proceed; and
- (e) determine how it wishes to proceed with the regard to the two road schemes (the southern link road and western bypass) including:
 - i. stopping either or both schemes;
 - ii. continuing to pause either or both schemes;
 - iii. undertaking further review of either or both schemes; and
 - iv. progressing either or both schemes.

Alternative options

1. Six strategic transport packages, have been developed as part of the Hereford Transport Strategy Review. Their performance relative to key objectives, outcomes and deliverability criteria is set out in the technical report included at Appendix A. The packages are as follows:

Active Travel Package

- Package A (active travel): Walking and cycling, safer routes to school, low traffic neighbourhoods, behavioural change campaign, transport sharing schemes and mobility hubs

Active Travel and Bus Improvements Package

- Package A+B (buses): Active Travel **combined with** electrification of the urban bus fleet, school bus services, demand responsive bus services and bus priority measures

Active Travel and Bus Improvements and Demand Management Package

- Package A+B+C (demand management): Active Travel and Buses **combined with** demand management measures and intelligent transport systems

Active Travel and Demand Management and Road Link Packages

- Package A+C+D: Active Travel and Demand Management **combined with** western bypass (including southern link road)
- Package A+C+E: Active Travel and Demand Management **combined with** eastern link (Rotherwas to Ledbury Road)
- Package A+C+F: Active Travel and Demand Management **combined with** an eastern river crossing (Rotherwas to Hampton Park Road)

2. Package A+C+D includes both the southern link road and western bypass. These two major road schemes are included in the adopted local transport plan strategy and have been progressed as major transport schemes. In October 2019 the decision was taken to pause both of these road schemes pending the outcome of the strategy and peer reviews set out in this report. In considering which strategic package or combination of packages to take forward cabinet should also determine the next steps for the southern link road and western bypass. The alternative options are identified in the recommendation and include:
 - i. stopping either or both schemes
 - ii. continuing to pause either or both schemes
 - iii. undertaking further review of either or both schemes
 - iv. progressing either or both schemes

Key considerations

3. Herefordshire Council has declared a Climate Emergency and set a target of zero carbon emissions by 2030 at their meeting in Sept 2019. The decision was taken to pause and review the new road elements of Hereford and South Wye Transport packages on 22 October 2019 (report located [here](#)) and the purpose and scope of the review was confirmed in the cabinet member decision of 24 January 2020 (report located [here](#)):

Purpose of the review

- ensure that the council's decision making is fully informed by the latest information and best practice;
- ensure any major scheme has a positive impact on the county to address travel issues, such as congestion and air quality, as these schemes have a permanent impact upon the environment which last for generations to come; and
- understand how alternative options [to the southern link road and western bypass] address emerging local and national policy such as those resulting from the declared climate emergency, considering new solutions and approaches which have developed over the last twenty years and which are now being implemented in other urban areas.

Scope of the review

- A review of the transport strategy for Hereford City (the Hereford Transport Strategy Review – HTSR) including assessment of alternative options to the southern link road and western bypass. This review work would need to include public consultation and stakeholder engagement (Element 1); and
 - A peer assessment of the evidence base for the HTP and SWTP and consideration of the road schemes in the context of emerging policy and guidance on climate emergency (Element 2).
4. Whilst it was agreed that the review (comprising both the peer assessment and the transport strategy review) would conclude by 31 July 2020, the strategy review programme was affected by the covid pandemic resulting in the need to redesign and allow more time for stakeholder engagement. In addition, more time was required for briefings to confirm the combination of packages for assessment during the final stage of the review and to procure a critical friend assessment of the draft review report and for this to inform final reporting. As a result, the review has taken around 8 weeks longer than originally envisaged and this has impacted the original scrutiny timetable.

Element 1 - Hereford Transport Strategy Review (HTSR)

Context for the HTSR

5. In taking the decision to undertake the HTSR it was important to understand how a review of the transport strategy might inform alternative options to the southern link road and western bypass to address current and future transport demands. It was also important to understand how a review of the strategy might help address emerging issues such as those resulting from the declared climate emergency and to consider new solutions and approaches which were being implemented in other urban areas.
6. Since the decision was taken to undertake the HTSR, government has published its discussion paper 'Decarbonising Transport – setting the challenge' on 26 March 2020 which outlined its intention to:
 - work with others to develop a transport decarbonisation plan to be published later in 2020
 - set out the challenge we need to meet to reduce transport emissions and ensuring we reach net zero transport emissions by 2050
 - review existing climate policy in transport
 - reviews of existing forecasts of future transport emissions from each mode of transport and as a whole
7. The shift in government policy indicated in the discussion paper would appear to provide support for the aims agreed for the HTSR. Government states in the paper that it aims to:
 - help make public transport and active travel the natural first choice for daily activities
 - Support fewer car trips through a coherent, convenient and cost-effective public network; and explore how we might use cars differently in future
 - Encourage cycling and walking for short journeys
 - Explore how to best support the behaviour change required
8. The timing of this review is consistent with council's original intention when adopting the current Local Transport Plan (LTP). The Local Transport Plan 2016-31 (the current transport strategy covering Hereford city as well as the wider county) was adopted in May 2016 and, following a recommendation by the general scrutiny committee at its meeting of 19 January 2016, council resolved that that it would be reasonable to review the strategy within 5 years of its adoption which would be by 2021. Further, reviewing transport locally is in line with current national policy already referenced (Decarbonising Transport) and the statement issued by the Transport Secretary, Grant Shapps - ***"We want public transport and active travel to be the natural first choice for our daily activities. An important aspect of reducing emissions from transport will be to use our cars less and be able to rely on a convenient, cost-effective and coherent public transport network"***.

The strategy review process

9. As set out in the decision of January 2020, the Hereford Transport Strategy Review has been undertaken by WSP procured through the Balfour Beatty Living Places public realm contract. The decision confirming this commission was taken on 10 March 2020 committing part of the agreed budget with a subsequent decision 16 June 2020 committing the remaining budget.

These decisions have been published on the councils website:

<http://councillors.herefordshire.gov.uk/ieDecisionDetails.aspx?ID=6701>

<http://councillors.herefordshire.gov.uk/ieDecisionDetails.aspx?ID=6947>

10. The review has considered transport issues and solutions in Hereford from first principles and has followed established process for strategy development. A key component of this approach was to incorporate new public and stakeholder engagement and consultation so that problem identification, objectives, option development and identification of preferred options could be tested in respect of public acceptability. The process (summarised below) is in line with government guidance and best practice in relation to reviewing and future proofing a transport strategy and has comprised of the following steps:

- Defining the transport challenges
- Establishing a baseline of current conditions
- Setting objectives
- Identifying options
- Assessing options both in isolation and combined as packages
- Public consultation and stakeholder engagement
- Technical Reporting

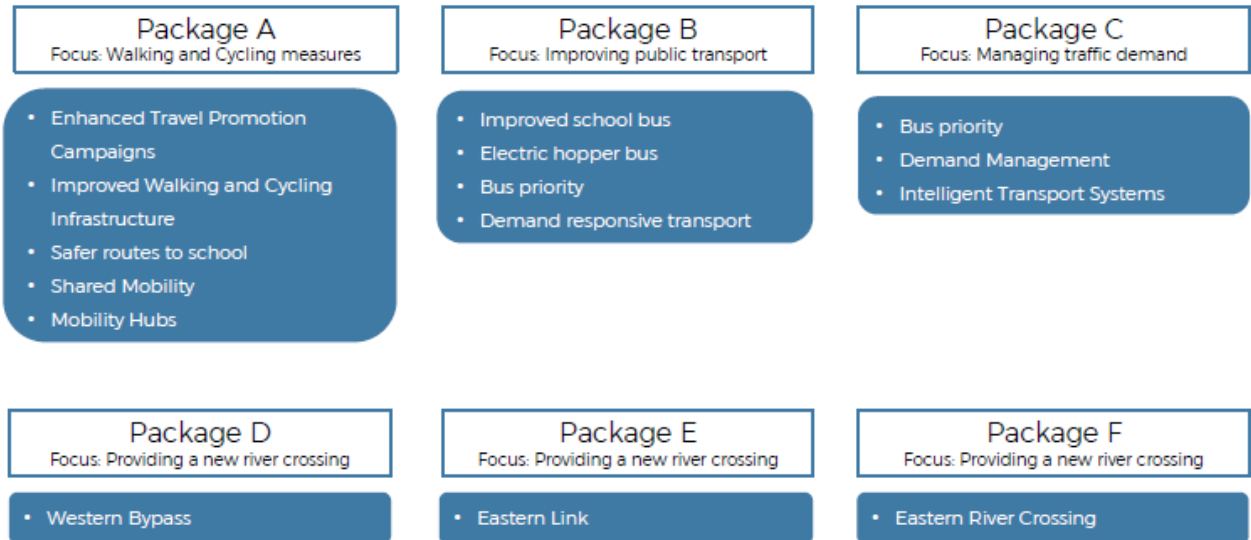
11. The key elements of the engagement programme have included:

- Public consultation on transport issues in Hereford (February to April 2020)
- Engagement and consultation with council members and stakeholders for feedback at the following stages:
 - i. Evidence base/challenges/objectives/options and appraisal framework (April 2020)
 - ii. Option Assessment and approach to packaging (June-July 2020)
- Transport seminar for all councillors to explore best practice transport solutions and innovations (August 2020)

12. The full technical report of the HTSR is included at Appendix A and provides detail on each component of the review from developing the evidence base, setting objectives, identifying objectives to assessing packages of interventions. It also sets out how consultation and engagement has informed the review as it has progressed. Whilst not part of the original scope of the review, cabinet requested that officers arrange for a critical friend to review the final draft technical report as an independent logic check of work which has been undertaken and to support interpretation of the review report. Additional time was added to the end of the review programme to allow for the critical friend findings to inform final revisions to the HTSR which are included in the report appendix A. A copy of the Summary Findings provided by the critical friend are included at Appendix B.

Review Findings

13. Following assessment of 18 individual transport options 14 were taken forward and these were grouped into the following themes:



14. The review then sought to develop combinations of these grouped interventions into strategic transport packages which could be assessed using the package assessment framework and help indicate the relative merits of different approaches to addressing the city's transport challenges:

- Package A: **Active travel** (focus on cycling and walking)
- Package A+B: Active travel + **investment in bus**
- Package A+B+C: Active travel + bus + **demand management**
- Package A+C+D: Active travel + demand management + **western bypass** (including southern link road);
- Package A+C+E: Active travel + demand management + **eastern link** (Rotherwas to Ledbury Road link); and
- Package A+C+F: Active travel + demand management + **eastern river crossing** (Rotherwas to Hampton Park Road link).

Active Travel

15. Package A has the highest value for money of all the packages and includes a range of transport interventions which government already supports through funding/bidding programmes and is likely to continue to support having regard to recent policy statements (Decarbonising Transport/Gear Change). It includes measures which have broad public, stakeholder and member support, and represents a group of measures which are already included in the adopted transport strategy albeit at a lower scale of investment. These are also measures which support low carbon travel and are relatively quick to implement with lower delivery risks and/or costs than the measures included in Packages B-F. As such cabinet

agreed that Package A should be considered both on its own and in combination with each of the other 5 themed packages.

Investment in buses

16. Combining Package A with the bus investment package (Package B) was considered sensible as investment in bus services was also universally supported in consultation and engagement and also represented a more significant low carbon option than Package A on its own. It also represents a more inclusive package noting that people with limited physical mobility may not be able to take up the improved opportunities for walking and cycling focused on in Package A.

Managing traffic demands/intelligent transport systems

17. The addition of demand management and intelligent transport systems (Package C) would enable assessment of the role which demand management might play in increasing modal shift in the context of greater investment in active travel and buses. It is also combined with the road scheme elements (D-F) recognising the importance of helping manage any induced traffic demand which can occur when additional highway capacity is provided.

New Road Schemes

18. Packages D-F relate to providing new road schemes to the west and east of the city. Whilst there was limited support for new roads amongst stakeholders there was significant support in public consultation. In addition, whilst the new administration wishes to consider the need for new roads it is also concerned about the resilience of the city's current transport network and the significant impacts of incidents on the river crossing and key radial routes and the increasing challenges presented by flooding and the resulting network disruption.
19. Package D includes both the southern link road and western bypass – the two major road schemes which have been paused pending this strategy review and the peer review set out in paragraphs 25 to 30. It was considered important to include this package alongside the other new road options (Packages E and F) in order to ensure that the consideration of future strategy could allow for comparison with the schemes currently paused and being reviewed.
20. It was considered sensible to combine each new road proposal (Packages D/E/F) with demand management alongside the active travel package as evidence indicates that creating additional highway capacity results in induced demand and hence limit the congestion relief which these schemes are intended to address. The HTSR report and critical friend summary of findings provide further details on induced demand.

Package assessment and review conclusions

21. The assessment of the packages followed a similar process to the individual transport option assessments. However, following feedback from members and stakeholders the assessment framework was refined to include consideration of embodied carbon as well as an assessment of operational carbon noting that this will provide a more comprehensive view on the carbon impacts of the package combinations and in anticipation that this will become an increasingly significant component of national policy guidance in respect of all new major infrastructure projects.

22. A summary of the performance of each package with key consideration and risks for each is set out in chapter 7 of the technical report and a comparison between the packages is included at chapter 8. High level costs for each of the packages are included also at chapter 8.
23. In finalising the review, technical feedback was provided by Mott MacDonald acting as a critical friend. The critical friend summary of findings, set out in full at Appendix B, included a number of comments which have informed final revisions to the review report (Appendix A). Whilst the critical friend has not found any significant issues relating to the robustness of the work undertaken for the review the technical feedback has enabled improvements to be made in the following areas:
- Balancing and clarity of reporting in relation to objectives
 - Clarifying how options have been packaged and signposting to the performance of individual elements to help clarify relative contributions to overall performance
 - Confirming the significant uncertainties resulting from covid and reducing the emphasis on modelled outputs
24. It should be noted that the general overview and scrutiny committee has considered the technical work undertaken for the review at its meeting of 9 November 2020 and has provided a range of recommendations for cabinet to consider and these are provided with comments at Appendix E.

Element 2

Peer Review of the Hereford Transport Package (HTP) and South Wye Transport Package (SWTP)

25. The Peer Review for the HTP and SWTP schemes has been undertaken by Mott MacDonald (Motts), transport consultants. Motts were awarded the contract for this work which followed a procurement process in accordance with the council's contract procedures rules and details of the decision to award the contract are set out at:

<http://councillors.herefordshire.gov.uk/ieDecisionDetails.aspx?ID=6757>

26. The Peer Review considered 4 technical aspects of each package:
- Have they been developed in accordance with Department for Transport (DfT) guidance in relation to major transport schemes?
 - Is the evidence base sound?
 - Have the decisions to progress the package been sound and justified?
 - How might changing national policy in relation to climate emergency impact the further development of these packages?
27. The Peer Review reports produced by Motts are included at Appendix C and D to this report and set out their findings in full and provide details of the process which was followed in reviewing the technical evidence and decision reports for both packages.

28. In summary, Motts findings in respect of their peer review of the HTP and SWTP are as follows:

Table 1: Peer Review Summary Findings: South Wye and Hereford Transport Packages

Peer Review Element	South Wye Transport Package	Hereford Transport Package
1. Has the package been developed in accordance with DfT guidance on major transport schemes?	Work undertaken since 2018 is in accordance to DfT Transport Appraisal Guidance (TAG) and its recommended Transport Appraisal Process	Work undertaken since 2018 is in accordance to DfT Transport Appraisal Guidance
2. Is the evidence base sound?	Technical evidence for the package is sound but if work is progressed there would be technical issues to address relating to the Economic Appraisal Report, Economic Case and Traffic Forecasting Report.	Technical evidence for the package is sound but if work is progressed there would be technical issues to address principally relating to the consideration of alternative options alongside, and for comparison with the preferred option. Alternatives should be included at Stage 2 of the DfT recommended Transport Appraisal Process set out in TAG
3. Were decisions to progress the packages sound and justified?	The decisions taken to progress the package have followed technical evidence and include good levels of stakeholder engagement and demonstrate support in terms of external challenge through core strategy Examination in Public and DfT oversight.	The decisions taken to progress the package have followed technical evidence and include good levels of stakeholder engagement and demonstrate support in terms of external challenge through core strategy Examination in Public. As the HTP had not progressed to the same extent as the SWTP there had been no detailed engagement with DfT to provide oversight of the evidence base.
4. How might changing national policy in relation to climate emergency impact the further development of these packages?	Whilst national policy commitments in relation to reduction in greenhouse gasses and net gain in relation to biodiversity have been set out these are still being incorporated within DfT technical guidance in relation to major transport schemes. Notwithstanding this lag in technical guidance catching up with national policy, Motts consider that the evidence base for the SWTP and HTP are likely to be deficient in these policy requirements and emerging technical guidance and have advised that these aspects would need to be	

	reviewed in respect of both packages were they to be progressed.
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29. In conclusion, the Peer Review of the SWTP and HTP has found that both packages have been developed with a sound evidence base which has followed DfT guidance and decisions taken by the council have been justified in terms of technical recommendations. Motts have identified technical issues which they consider would need to be addressed if either package is progressed which relate to the need for more up to date technical work to be undertaken in relation to both packages. In relation to the HTP, Motts considered that alternative options to the western bypass had been discarded too early in the appraisal process and suggest that alternative options (to the road scheme element) which could fulfil strategy objectives are reconsidered in the next stage of the Hereford Transport Package development if the council wish to pursue DfT funding through its major transport scheme business case process. It is important to note that a number of the more recent technical reports which were reviewed had not been finalised due to the decision to pause and review these projects and the advice provided could be addressed if either package is progressed.
30. In their broader conclusion relating to the possible impacts of national policy changes relating to greenhouse gasses and biodiversity Motts note that the DfT's technical guidance is not yet fully developed in relation to the national policy but consider that this is likely to impact the progression of both packages. On this basis Motts have advised that it is likely that both packages would need to be refreshed to more fully consider these important aspects in the event that the council wished to progress either.
31. Whilst the peer assessment work was also presented to and discussed by the general scrutiny committee (at its meeting of 9 November 2020), committee did not make any recommendations relating to this work.

Community impact

32. This review has been undertaken in the context of the County Plan 2020-24, adopted by council February 2020 which sets out that:
- “We know that in the future transport systems must, and will, change, so we need to rethink our investment now in transport infrastructure to tackle the 21st century challenges of climate emergency and to support the wellbeing of our population. This will be central to the review of the Hereford bypass and southern link road schemes and the urgent update of our Core Strategy and planning policies.”
33. Chapter 2 and 3 of the technical report at Appendix A provides details and the evidence base of the wider impacts of transport on local communities. The most significant impacts have been captured in the identification of 16 outcomes which relate to 4 overarching transport objectives:
- **Climate Emergency:** Reducing carbon emissions from the transport sector to meet 2030 local target for net zero emissions.
 - **Economy:** Creating a resilient transport system which allows reliable and efficient movement of people and goods and which supports more sustainable development and a thriving local economy.

- **Environment:** Reducing air pollutants to create attractive and high quality places to live, work and visit whilst also protecting, conserving and enhancing the natural environment and Herefordshire's built environment.
- **Society:** Providing an affordable, safe and secure transport system for all sectors of society which facilitates improved public health and has limited adverse impacts on communities.

34. These objectives and the 16 supporting outcomes align closely with the county plan's ambitions for environment, community and economy and have been used to form an assessment framework to understand how each of the 6 strategic transport packages perform, indicating potential impacts from large beneficial to large adverse. Chapter 7 of the technical report provides commentary on package performance in relation to each of the outcomes and chapter 8 provides a relative comparison between the packages.

Environmental Impact

35. The review has specifically identified key objectives in respect of environmental impacts and climate emergency which are expressed by 8 outcomes. These are identified in chapter 4 of the technical report. In summary, these outcomes assess package contributions to carbon reduction (operational and embodied carbon), reducing the need to travel by private motor vehicle, impacts on air quality, and impacts on natural and built environment.

36. In progressing the review each of the 18 original transport options was assessed in relation to these outcomes and then this was repeated for the assessment of the 6 strategic package combinations. At the package assessment stage an additional indicator was included to provide a qualitative assessment of embodied carbon in addition to operational carbon and this has informed the final performance outputs.

37. Commentary on the performance of each package in respect of these outcomes is included at chapter 7 of the technical report. Commentary on the initial 18 individual options assessed against these outcomes is included at appendix B of the technical report.

Equality duty

38. Under section 149 of the Equality Act 2010, the 'general duty' on public authorities is set out as follows:

A public authority must, in the exercise of its functions, have due regard to the need to -

- eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct that is prohibited by or under this Act;
- advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it;
- foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it.

39. An equality impact assessment will be undertaken of any preferred package or combination of packages which cabinet determines to take forward following this review.

40. In progressing the review the council established a stakeholder reference panel of representatives who could help inform development of proposals and feedback on how options had been assessed. This included local groups with a specialist understanding of disability. Details of the SRP are included at appendix A of the technical report.
41. The assessment of options and packages of options has taken into account a range of outcome indicators which provide an assessment of impacts on society and this includes the following outcome O14 and indicator 14.1 which considers those with protected characteristics.

O14: All sectors of society have easy and affordable access to the services and facilities they need	14.1 What impact does the option have on meeting the accessibility needs of all sectors of society, including those with protected characteristics or those without access to a car?
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42. All 18 long listed transport options were assessed in relation to this indicator and all but one of the options was considered to have neutral or beneficial impacts. The removal of traffic signals on the A49 was considered to have a large adverse impact on this indicator due to potential impacts on people with physical impairments, visual impairments and older people and this option was subsequently discarded during the course of the review.
43. In terms of the 14 options which were retained and formed the basis for the 6 strategic packages none result in adverse impacts in relation to indicator 14.1. As all package options include measures to improve pedestrian access disabled people will be directly supported. Package B focuses on improved public transport and this is considered to support older people and disabled people. The assessment notes that the detailed design of interventions can also be tailored to support people with protected characteristics and this would apply to the behavioural change campaign and demand management measures which might, for example, include exemptions/discounts for disabled people.
44. Whilst at this stage most options have not been subject to detailed design, the infrastructure measures which would change the physical characteristics of the transport network will be subject to the appropriate design standards and will follow the principles set out in the governments 'Inclusive Transport Strategy' 2018 if they are to be taken forward.

Resource implications

Review costs

45. The review costs to date include:
- Hereford Transport Strategy Review - £405K
 - Peer Assessment of the South Wye and Hereford Transport Packages - £78K
46. The costs of the Peer Assessment are within the agreed funding envelope of £91K set out in the January 2020 cabinet member report. Whilst the cost of the HTSR has exceeded the original funding envelope of £360K set out in the cabinet member in his decision of January 2020, a further decision was taken 9 October 2020 confirming additional budget of £45.5K to cover the increase costs resulting from the following additional work:
- Assessment of a greater number of transport packages than commissioned
 - Additional costs associated with stakeholder engagement resulting from covid impacts

- Engagement of an independent critical friend
- Retention of consultancy support after final report submission to provide expert input during the governance process

Strategic Transport Package Costs

47. Taking forward any of the packages will require revenue and capital resources. It is anticipated that external sources of funding will be required to deliver any of the packages alongside existing Economy and Place budgets and the Councils capital programme.
48. Determining the strategy for the longer term provides the basis for planning, allocation of local resources and bids for external funds. Local resources which the council determined to allocate to delivery of schemes could include base revenue budget, prudential borrowing, sale of capital assets or developer contributions.
49. The process of developing a preferred strategic transport package would provide the council with a greater opportunity to develop and submit funding bids should further opportunities arise. In progressing any preferred strategy it will be important to keep funding opportunities under review and to maintain flexibility such that bids might be submitted for individual interventions alongside packages of interventions.
50. The government is due to produce a National Bus Strategy for England and has promised to set out a long-term funding settlement alongside a review of existing bus funding. It is anticipated that further revenue funding for transport might also come forward from the government's development of its decarbonising transport proposals.
51. All packages would require additional capital funding for full delivery. The government has developed a number of programmes which provide capital funding for a range of different transport schemes and this could be a route for additional capital funds.
52. Government programmes which provide capital funding for transport schemes include:
- local growth deal programme managed by local enterprise partnerships (such as the Marches LEP),
 - large local major transport schemes programme which DfT seeks views on priorities from the regional transport partnerships (such as Midlands Connect).
 - the Housing Infrastructure Fund, MHCLG
 - Towns Deal, MHCLG
 - schemes on the strategic road network managed by Highways England are funded through the Route Strategies and Designated Funds
 - various programmes to accelerate the introduction of electrification of fleet and charging points.
53. In addition to these established programmes government has also indicated in its Gear Change publication £2b additional funds (for the next 5 years) for walking and cycling. It also identifies its intention to create:
- low traffic neighbourhoods
 - school streets
 - 12 'mini Hollands' outside of London
 - At least one zero emission city

Next steps - progressing a preferred package

54. Economy and Place directorate budgets incorporate an element for transport strategy development. Whilst the nature of additional technical work will be dependent on the cabinet's preferred transport package or combination of packages, officers will need to make a further report to confirm the budget required to develop a detailed plan and scope for the development and delivery of the preferred strategic transport package. Strategy development work would need to be funded from Economy and Place Directorate revenue budgets or external sources if required.

Resource implications in relation to the two paused road schemes

55. As cabinet will also be confirming how it wishes to proceed with the road schemes included in the South Wye Transport Package and Hereford Transport Package there are resource implications relating to those two projects which cabinet will need to take into account in reaching its decision. In summary this will include:
- Following the withdrawal of the growth deal funding for the SWTP by the Marches LEP in January 2020 there is currently no external funding in place to progress the South Wye Transport Package
 - Local capital funding secured through prudential borrowing has been allocated in the adopted capital programme for the current Hereford Transport Package with around £4m remaining. In the event that the western bypass is stopped it is considered that these funds could be either re-allocated to other capital programme priorities or withdrawn from the programme to repay debt subject to the normal governance process.
 - Both schemes have been progressed using capital funds and if either is stopped, incurred capital costs will need to be funded from revenue i.e. a transfer from an appropriate revenue reserve. The amount of capital costs in relation to each scheme for which revenue reserves would need to be allocated are:
 - i. SWTP - £7.3m
 - ii. HTP - £4.1m
 - The Marches LEP has terminated the grant agreement for the SWTP funding and demanded repayment of growth deal funds allocated to develop the South Wye Transport Package amounting to £3.8m. This decision has no bearing on the repayment request as the agreement has already been terminated.

Legal implications

56. This report to cabinet requires their consideration of the technical documentation on the Hereford Transport Strategy Review including the peer review of the HTP and SWTP schemes, to determine if there is a preferred strategic transport package or combination of packages to be taken forward and to determine how to proceed with the referred to schemes, taking into account the recommendations made by General Scrutiny committee.
57. In determining which, if any, package or packages, or scheme to proceed with, cabinet will need to take into account the financial implications and restrictions referred to in paragraphs 45-55 including any required uplift in budget for the schemes or for further technical work. Cabinet will also need to consider government guidance, best practice and the up to date information in this report and appended documentation.
58. This is a key decision because of the significant strategic nature of the decision. Should cabinet wish to consider recommendation e (i) this would be a decision contrary to the council's existing policy framework namely the Local Transport Plan and Core Strategy. This is a decision that only council can take and therefore Cabinet can only at this meeting make a

recommendation for consideration at a full council meeting. This may also apply to recommendation (b) depending on whether the preferred package or combination thereof is outside of the existing budget or policy framework.

Risk management

59. Risks associated with the recommendations set out in this report are summarised below.

Risk	Mitigation
Financial	
Financial implications in relation to not progressing the western bypass or southern link schemes are set out in the resource implications section.	Costs associated with decapitalising either or both of these schemes would need to be met from revenue reserves. An appropriate governance decision would be required to confirm the allocation of these funds and any changes to the adopted capital programme.
Potential requirement to repay £3.8m local growth deal funds allocated to the SWTP.	This decision has no bearing on the repayment request as the agreement has already been terminated.
<p>The development of strategic options considered within the review has been appropriate for consideration of strategic priorities. However, further revenue budget would be required to develop detailed scheme proposals to a point at which they could be funded through capital programme funds.</p> <p>This would need to take into account any additional works requested by cabinet including any further assessments recommended by general scrutiny committee which cabinet is minded to agree.</p>	A further report will be required following cabinet's determination of its preferred transport strategy which would set out the revenue costs and funding associated with further development of the strategy.
Policy and strategy	
<p>This decision could confirm the cabinet's intention to change transport policy as identified in the adopted local transport plan (LTP). It is likely that any substantive change to the LTP policy would require agreement of full council as the LTP forms part of the council's policy framework.</p> <p>Similarly, any decision which makes substantive changes to the local transport plan strategy could also impact policy in the core strategy.</p>	<p>If required cabinet may seek to agree changes to the LTP through a report for the consideration of the full council.</p> <p>The 5 year assessment of the core strategy to consider whether it is up to date or needs to be updated has been undertaken and concluded that it requires a full update. A detailed project plan setting out the timescale for the update of the core strategy is due to be considered by December 2020 and this will inform how any potential transport strategy changes</p>

	could be incorporated in a revised and updated core strategy.
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Consultees

60. The Hereford Transport Strategy Review has included communications, consultation and engagement with the public, council members and stakeholders.
61. People directly affected by the southern link road and western bypass and other individuals and organisations which have taken part in previous transport consultations and expressed an interest in strategy development have received direct communications to explain the purpose of the review and ability to feedback comments through online consultation.
62. Public consultation was undertaken via an online survey which enabled anyone wishing to take part to provide detailed comments on the city's transport network with an interactive map and separate questions to help inform specific aspects of the overall strategy. Key elements of the consultation were to capture the public's views on transport outcomes priorities and views on which types of transport interventions would be supported. The online consultation ran from February to April and resulted in 2163 responses from 1044 respondents. The outputs from the consultation were taken into account during the review and have informed assessing the key challenges, setting objectives and consideration of transport options.
63. A Stakeholder Reference Panel (SRP) was also established comprising a range of interests at local, regional and national level to help inform the review as it progressed. The SRP and all council members were consulted at two key stages of the review:
- i. Evidence base/challenges/objectives/options and appraisal framework (April)
 - ii. Option Assessment and approach to packaging (June-July)
64. This engagement comprised explanatory information about the review and the process being followed, updates on technical work and consultation to help inform next stages. Details of the consultation feedback are included in the main technical report. A list of the organisations invited to take part in the SRP is included in the technical report at Appendix A.
65. In addition to engaging members on the technical information being developed during the course of the review a transport webinar was held for all members in August. The webinar was arranged to explore best practice transport solutions and innovations and provide helpful context both for the challenges identified in the review and some innovative solutions. A recording of the video of the session was made and has been shared on the council's youtube channel:
- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5KQED0aujI4>
66. The review findings were reported to the General Scrutiny Committee meeting of 9 November 2020. Committee was requested to provide any comments and recommendations which it would like cabinet to take into account in its consideration of the review findings. A summary of the recommendations made by the General Scrutiny Committee is included at Appendix E to enable cabinet to confirm whether it accepts or rejects these recommendations.
67. Political groups have been consulted via email correspondence to all members on 30 October 2020 asking them to advise group leaders of their comments by 9 November 2020 for response by political groups by 13 November 2020. A summary of the consultation comments

and response for consideration by cabinet is included at Appendix F.

68. It is anticipated that further consultation will be undertaken following determination of any preferred strategy package.

Appendices

Appendix A: Hereford Transport Strategy Review – Technical Report

Appendix B: Hereford Transport Strategy Review - Critical Friend Summary of Findings

Appendix C: Peer Review South Wye Transport Package Technical Report

Appendix D: Peer Review Hereford Transport Package Technical Report

Appendix E: Recommendations made by General Scrutiny Committee following its meeting of 9 November 2020 and response.

Appendix F: Consultation response from Political Groups

Appendix G: Schedule of amendments/corrections to the Hereford Transport Strategy Review Technical Report considered by General Scrutiny Committee 9 November 2020.

Background papers

Hereford Transport Strategy Review (18 September 2020 Draft Version reviewed by the Critical Friend)

Please include a glossary of terms, abbreviations and acronyms used in this report.

HTP – Hereford Transport Package (which includes the western bypass)

SWTP – South Wye Transport Package (which includes the southern link road)

HTSR – Hereford Transport Strategy Review

DfT – Department for Transport

WEBTAG – web based transport appraisal guidance published by the Department for Transport

SRP – Stakeholder Reference Panel