



Title: Local Transport Plan 5 approval.

Meeting: Council

Meeting date: Friday 5 December 2025

Report by: Cabinet Member Transport and Infrastructure

Classification

Open

Decision types:

Budget and Policy Framework

Wards affected

(All Wards);

Purpose

The purpose of this report is to seek Council approval for the Local Transport Plan (LTP) 2025-2041.

Recommendation(s)

That:

- a) The Local Transport Plan 5 (LTP 5) 2025- 2041 for Herefordshire is adopted.**

Alternative options

1. Not to adopt the LTP 5: Lack of an up to date, relevant LTP 5 will significantly jeopardise our ability to secure future central government funding for major transport schemes such as a bypass and rail infrastructure.
2. Furthermore, absence of an updated plan will compound existing issues of congestion, air quality, and road safety, placing increasing strain on local infrastructure and emergency services
3. Delay adoption of the LTP 5. This is not recommended as this risks losing momentum and delaying implementation of priority schemes as well as impacting on funding deadlines from central Government and other transport agencies such as Great British Rail (GBR).

Key considerations

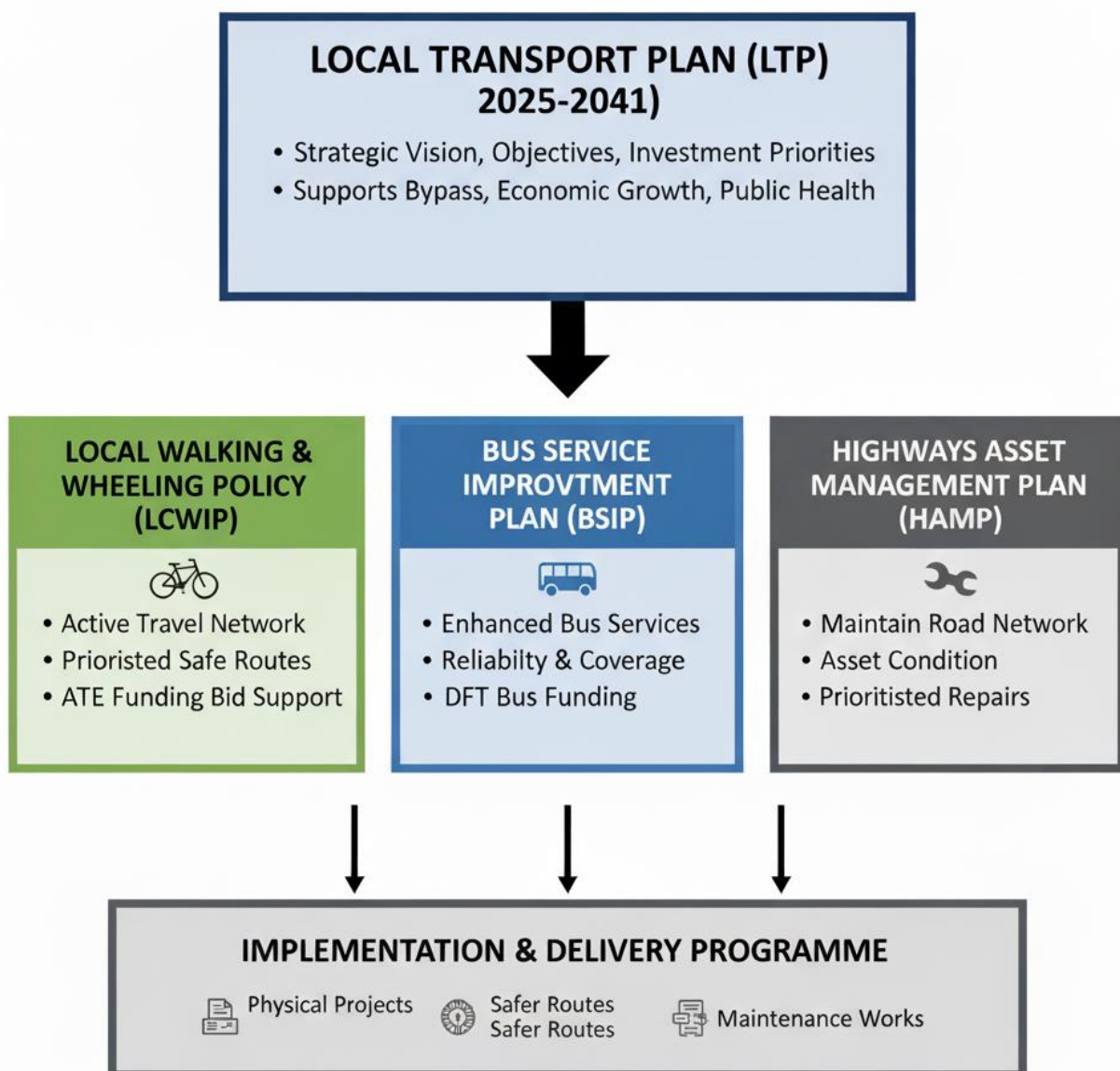
4. The new Local Transport Plan (LTP 5) is not merely a procedural step but a foundational strategic decision that underpins all future transport investment, economic growth, and sustainability commitments. The LTP provides the essential long-term, statutory framework for all transport investment and strategy, its adoption, is essential for ensuring compliance with Department for Transport (DfT) requirements, maximising the opportunity to secure external grant funding for future infrastructure schemes, and providing a robust evidence base to support the emerging Local Plan.
5. The existing transport strategy requires updating, having been adopted prior to the Council's current Net Zero commitment and the latest national policy shifts (e.g., 'Gear Change,' DfT Decarbonisation Plan). The previous administration had plans to revise the LTP however due to Covid this was delayed. Reliance on this outdated strategy means:
 - 5.1. Financial Constraint: We are currently not compliant with the funding prerequisites for many multi-year DfT capital grants, due to an out of date existing LTP which does not consider current transport data.
 - 5.2. Infrastructure Stress: Traffic volumes on key corridors continue to exceed capacity, leading to increasing congestion, unreliable journey times, and negative impacts on air quality in urban Air Quality Management Areas (AQMAS).
 - 5.3. Failed Alignment: The current strategy does not explicitly support the planned new homes and associated economic growth outlined in the emerging Local Plan, risking reduced lack of capacity on the network with existing roads
6. Council is asked approve the adoption of the new Local Transport Plan 5 (LTP 5) 2025-2041. This co-ordinated approach has been brought forward to ensure total strategic and policy alignment across the Council's transport planning documents.
7. The LTP is essential to deliver council priorities and objectives:
 - 7.1. Adopting the LTP ensures that the strategy for all transport modes is fully integrated to inform the Cabinet's developing proposals around the Local Plan and its associated housing and employment site allocations. It is anticipated that the Local Plan will be proposed for adoption in late 2028 to early 2029, however it is key to note that the LTP5 does align with the current Local Plan. Crucially, the proposed LTP provides the strategic context and justification for major projects like the Western Bypass in Hereford, ensuring that schemes of regional significance are not planned in isolation but are instead justified as part of a balanced, county-wide transport solution.
 - 7.2. The integrated approach ensures that transport strategy is correctly geared toward supporting the Council's overarching goals particularly
 - 7.2.1. Aligning to the current Local Plan whilst still enabling adaptation to ensure support and consistency to the next Local Plan.
 - 7.2.2. The Net Zero commitment – the Council declared a Climate Emergency in 8 March 2019 - and the focus on Public Health.
 - 7.2.3. Enabling economic growth by focusing on strategic infrastructure investment (such as the Hereford Transport Hub and Hereford Bypass) to reduce congestion, improve connectivity for key employment sites like the Hereford Enterprise Zone, and enable the delivery of new housing and jobs as outlined in the local plan and wider economic plans.

7.2.4. Addressing low productivity and improving services for residents, business and visitors

8. The Policy Hierarchy between the plans is as follows:

8.1. The LTP 5 and supplementary documents are a structured hierarchy, with the supplementary plans acting as supporting policies with detailed delivery plans for the overarching LTP 5 strategy.

8.1.1. The following illustration shows the relationship of the two documents; please note this shows a small number of plans and policies that link into the LTP 5 in the same way



9. Implications of Non-Adoption (Risk to Service Delivery)

9.1. Failing to adopt these policies would severely compromise the Council's ability to deliver on its strategic priorities; further detail on this has been expanded to in Section 16.

10. Performance, Benchmarking, and Expected Outcomes

10.1. Benchmarking and Trends

10.1.1. Current performance data shows a clear requirement for targeted intervention:

10.1.1.1. Congestion: Over the last three years (long-term trend), average peak-time journey speeds in the main urban area have declined by 8%, placing us in the bottom quartile when benchmarked against similar Shire Authorities.

10.1.1.1.1. The City's Road network has the greatest congestion in the county, which causes economic impact to stakeholders such as Freight and Public transport.

10.1.1.2. Active Travel Mode Share: The current walking and cycling mode share for trips to work and education is 7%, which is below the regional/rural average of 9%, (it is important to ensure any targets are relative to the uniqueness of each council;). The council is keen to allow its residents and visitors to choose their transport choice and that the network is suitable to accommodate their preferences

10.1.1.3. Air Quality: Specific corridors remain non-compliant with NO2 limits, a trend that will not reverse without the significant traffic reduction measures outlined in the LTP 5.

10.2. Expected Outcomes and Measurement

Benefit Category	Expected Outcome
Funding & Investment	Unlocks eligibility for competitive, strategic DfT funding (e.g., Active Travel, Bus Service Improvement Plan (BSIP) funding) and provides a strong business case for major infrastructure projects (e.g. Western Bypass). Additionally the government have been progressing with a new incentivised element to the Highways Maintenance Block with a proposed 25% funding uplift given if councils meet certain criteria such as best practice in sustainable transport and long term planning and asset management.
Sustainability	Provides a clear, measurable framework for reducing transport emissions by 40% (target), directly contributing to the Council's Net Zero objectives.
Public Health	Prioritises active travel infrastructure, supporting an increase in walking and cycling mode share, improving public health outcomes and reducing health inequalities.
Service Quality	Ensures infrastructure investment is targeted and evidence-based, improving the reliability and quality of bus services and reducing chronic road network delays.

11. Community Impact

The Council plan 2024 to 2028 commits Herefordshire Council to: Develop Herefordshire as a place for growth, prosperity and communities to thrive. This year The Delivery Plan has committed the Council to 'Deliver the Local Transport Plan to ensure places

can prosper and thrive with the right integrated transport networks and to seek Cabinet approval to recommend the adoption of the LTP 5 to Council for agreement and Cabinet implementation thereafter.

- 11.1. The adoption of the LTP 5 is a significant decision with direct and positive community impacts, aligning with core objectives of the Council's Corporate Plan and Health and Wellbeing Strategy. The proposal contributes to a thriving Herefordshire by:
- 11.2. Improving Public Health: By prioritising safe and accessible active travel routes, the policies directly support the Health and Wellbeing Strategy's objectives to increase physical activity and improve mental health. A direct link exists between reduced car dependency and lower rates of obesity and respiratory illness. Furthermore, the plan's focus on improving air quality in key urban areas will lead to long-term health benefits for all residents.
- 11.3. Enhancing Social Connectivity: The identified priority routes, including links to key service hubs, will improve access for all community members, including those without access to a private vehicle. This supports the Corporate Plan's objective to enable independent and healthy lives by facilitating access to education, employment, and essential services.
- 11.4. The recommendations within this report are underpinned by a robust, integrated evidence base and a comprehensive community engagement process.
- 11.5. Needs Assessment: The LTP 5 has been developed in direct response to the needs identified in the Understanding Herefordshire Needs Assessment, which highlights a clear community need for reduced congestion, improved air quality, and safer, more sustainable transport options.
- 11.6. Partnerships: The plan's priorities were collaboratively shaped through engagement with key partners, including Herefordshire Public Health, local NHS trusts, and a range of community organisations. This partnership approach ensures the plan is holistic and reflects the diverse needs of our community.
- 11.7. The Council, in its role as a corporate parent, is responsible for promoting the life chances and well-being of children in care and care leavers. While the LTP 5 does not directly target this specific group, the recommended decision will have a significant positive indirect effect on their lives by promoting the same outcomes any good parent would want for their own children.
- 11.8. By creating safer routes to schools, educational establishments, and youth centres, the plan directly addresses the safety and accessibility of daily journeys for children and young people. The improvements to public transport will enhance connectivity to training opportunities and healthcare services. These measures provide a safer, more reliable, and equitable transport network that helps to remove barriers to education, health, and social engagement for children in our care and care leavers, aligning with our collective corporate parenting responsibilities.

12. Environmental Impact

- 12.1. Herefordshire Council provides and purchases a wide range of services for the people of Herefordshire. Together with partner organisations in the private, public and voluntary sectors we share a strong commitment to improving our environmental sustainability, achieving carbon neutrality and to protect and enhance Herefordshire's outstanding natural environment.

- 12.2. The adoption of the LTP 5 is central to delivering the council's environmental policy commitments and achieving key success measures outlined in the County Plan. This is a direct intervention aimed at reducing our environmental footprint and improving the natural environment.
- 12.3. This proposal directly contributes to the following County Plan objectives:
- 12.4. Reduce county carbon emissions: The LTP 5 provides the strategic framework for decarbonising transport, which accounts for a significant portion of our total emissions. It sets out a pathway to shift travel from private vehicles to lower-carbon modes such as public transport, walking, and cycling. This includes a target to reduce transport emissions by 40% by 2040.
- 12.5. Improve the air quality within Herefordshire: By actively managing congestion and promoting sustainable travel, the plan is designed to reduce emissions of nitrogen oxides (NOx) and particulate matter (PM2.5) in our Air Quality Management Areas (AQMAs) and throughout the county.
- 12.6. Construction Impacts: For new infrastructure projects (e.g., cycle paths, road improvements) delivered under the plan, all designs will adhere to the Council's environmental standards. This includes measures to minimise waste, reduce material use, and source sustainable materials where possible.
- 12.7. Biodiversity: The design of new walking and cycling infrastructure will be subject to an ecological impact assessment. Where appropriate, opportunities will be taken to enhance biodiversity through the planting of native species and the creation of green corridors, particularly along new off-highway routes.
- 12.8. Flood Resilience & Phosphate Pollution: While not the primary focus, the plan's emphasis on integrated transport planning will indirectly support environmental protection. For example, the incorporation of Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS) in new road schemes will help to increase flood resilience and reduce surface water runoff into the river systems, which can contribute to phosphate pollution.
- 12.9. The environmental impact of all future projects within the LTP 5 will be a key consideration in their respective business cases, ensuring appropriate measures are taken to minimise negative effects and maximise environmental benefits. This will be overseen by the Transport team in collaboration with the Sustainability & Climate Change team.

13. Equality duty

- 13.1. The mandatory equality impact screening checklist has been completed for the adoption of the LTP 5 and it has been found to have moderate to high positive impact for equality. A full Equality Impact Assessment is included as appendix 3
- 13.2. The LTP 5 is considered to have a broadly positive impact as it's core aims are to deliver a more equitable, accessible, and inclusive transport network, particularly for those with limited access to private vehicles.
- 13.3. Accessibility and Disability
- 13.3.1. The existing transport network and policies often result in poor accessibility and exclusion for disabled people, particularly regarding fragmented footways and lack of suitable crossing points.

13.3.2. The LTP 5 commitment to enhancing public transport services (bus reliability and connectivity) will directly benefit individuals whose impairment prevents them from driving.

13.3.3. *Mitigation:* Ongoing detailed design of all new infrastructure will require rigorous Disability Impact Audits to ensure compliance with the Equality Act and best practice guidance on inclusive design.

13.4. Income and Affordability

13.4.1. The cost of private car travel disproportionately affects low-income households and young people.

13.4.2. The LTP 5 directly address this by promoting affordable and free-to-use modes of transport (walking and cycling) and improving the reliability and affordability of bus services. This enhances economic participation and access to essential services for those experiencing poverty.

13.5. Safety and Personal Security

13.5.1. Feelings of personal safety often deter women and girls from walking or cycling, especially during hours of darkness, and can affect their use of public transport.

13.6. Age and Connectivity

13.6.1. The policies recognise that older people and young people are more reliant on non-car travel modes.

13.6.2. The improved safety and quality of footways and the enhanced bus network will significantly improve the independence and social inclusion of older residents.

14. Resource implications

14.1. Financial Implications - The LTP 5 is a strategic planning document and does not, in itself, commit the Council to any immediate capital expenditure. Their purpose is to provide a clear framework for future investment. Funding to support the development and initial implementation of these policies is already included within the Council's medium-term financial strategy. All future infrastructure projects and major schemes identified in the LTP 5 will be subject to separate review and will require future funding bids, including capital program allocations and external grant opportunities. At this stage, no significant impact on revenue budgets is anticipated as the plans do not commit to specific capital expenditure, providing flexibility in how and when schemes are delivered.

14.2. Human Resources and Operational Impact - The adoption of the plans does not require an increase in staffing resources. The delivery of infrastructure schemes, however, will involve coordination between various council departments and with external partners. The LTP provides a clear basis for this inter-departmental collaboration, ensuring a consistent approach to project delivery..

14.3. ICT and Property Implications - The ICT and property implications of this proposal are considered minimal. The plans do not require a change to the Council's property portfolio. While digital mapping and data management tools will be used to support ongoing monitoring and reporting of the plans' progress, this is within the scope of existing ICT infrastructure.

15. Legal implications

- 15.1. The Council as a local transport authority is required to adopt a Local Transport Plan under section 108 to 113 of the Transport act 2000. The policies within the plan must promote 'safe, integrated, efficient and economic transport'. The Plan must review, replace or alter it when the Council considers it appropriate to do so. The act requires consultation and upon adoption of the plan it must be provided to the Secretary of State.

16. Risk management

- 16.1. The greatest risk is the non-adoption of these documents, which would immediately trigger the severe funding and strategic risks detailed in earlier sections of this report

- 16.2. The below table expands on the risks and opportunities these plans provide with mitigation for each identified

Risk / Opportunity	Impact if Unmitigated	Mitigation Strategy
Risk: Not adopt the LTP 5	The Council could be automatically excluded from all major active travel capital grants and de-prioritised for competitive road network funding. DfT have mandated LTP's as statutory documents and hence without the policy context of an LTP 5 funding for schemes such as a bypass would not be considered centrally.	Adopt the LTP 5
Risk: Lack of Funding for Implementation	Failure to deliver critical infrastructure, undermining the strategic goals of the LTP 5 and frustrating community expectations.	Prioritisation of schemes within the LTP 5 based on cost-effectiveness and impact. Proactive, coordinated bidding for all eligible external funding streams (DfT, ATE, regional pots, developer contributions).
Risk: Increased congestion and reduction in the efficiency of the infrastructure	Congestion will continue to worsen, and air quality will remain a concern, negatively affecting the daily lives of all 190,000+ residents who rely on the local transport network.	Adopt the LTP 5 and prioritise the delivery of projects identified in the Action Plan to address this risk such as the Hereford bypass
Risk: Equity for transport access	There would be no increase in choice for travel. This would not consider the needs of those residents that do not, for whatever reason, have access to private transport. The Equality Act 2010 ensured transport planning considers equitable access for all users, including disabled and vulnerable groups.	Ensure the priorities of the LTP 5 are consistently implemented and support the Pro-Choice objectives of the plan.
Risk: Public Opposition to Specific Schemes	Delay or cancellation of high-value schemes due to local objection, hindering progress and undermining the intended network benefits.	Continued engagement and transparent communication throughout the design and pre-delivery phases. Willingness to be flexible on minor scheme details where similar strategic outcomes (e.g., safety, connectivity) can still be delivered.
Risk: Failure to Meet Climate Targets	Inability to deliver the required carbon emissions reductions from the transport	Adoption of the LTP 5 establishes the essential policy mechanism for

	sector, resulting in failure to meet the Council's Net Zero commitments.	achieving modal shift and emissions reduction. Consistent monitoring and annual reporting on transport CO ₂ emissions.
Opportunity: Enhanced Travel Choice for Residents	Restrictive networks limit resident choice, often forcing reliance on private vehicles for short trips.	The LTP 5 focuses on creating an integrated, reliable network (bus, cycle, walk) that genuinely offers residents a viable, safe, and convenient travel choice beyond the private car.

16.3.

17. Consultees

- 17.1. The consultation process for the Local Transport Plan 5 (LTP 5 - 2025-2041) was highly inclusive, integrating extensive public feedback to shape the final strategic documents
- 17.2. Detailed information on the consultation undertaken can be found at the end of the LTP document – Appendix 1

Appendices

- Appendix 1 – Local Transport Plan 5 (please note that due to the size of the document appendix 1 has been split into three sections - a,b and c)
- Appendix 2 – Equality Impact Assessment
- Appendix 3 – Strategic Environment Assessment

Background papers

None identified

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