

AGENDA ITEM NO.

CABINET

10th JULY 2003

LOCAL TRANSPORT PLAN (Report by Director of Operational Services)

1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to inform Members of the progress being made in developing a new Local Transport Plan for Cambridgeshire (LTP), to consider the emerging transport programme, the District Council supporting statement and to seek Member approval to the current LTP draft.

2. BACKGROUND INFORMATION

- 2.1 Members will be aware that the County Council decided as part of last year's Annual Progress Report, that a new LTP would be prepared for submission to Government this year to cover the period 2004 to 2011.

- 2.2 The need for a new LTP revolves around a number of factors that have developed since the current plan was produced. These are:

- the revised draft Structure Plan, including a new spatial distribution and much greater emphasis on sustainability;
- the development and acceptance of the CHUMMS study by Government; and
- consideration of emerging Regional Planning Guidance (RPG 14) and the Regional Transport Strategy that will form part of it.

- 2.3 As a result of these factors, the new LTP will have some fundamental differences to the current plan. In particular, it will:

- provide a close link between land use and transport in terms of both the infrastructure to be provided and the delivery timescale;
- bid for significantly higher levels of funding to complement the challenges presented by planned development through the Structure Plan;
- identify potential mechanisms to successfully deliver a much enlarged programme;
- provide greater focus on issues such as accessibility and promoting social inclusion; and
- include additional policy areas such as on Rights of Way and Air Quality to reflect new Government guidance

- 2.4 Members will be aware that public consultation has taken place during May and June on the new LTP, which has included:

- Distribution of 300,000 consultations leaflets with over 5,000 responses received

- Held 18 staffed roadshows across the County, including 4 in Huntingdonshire utilising District Council staff, as well as unstaffed static displays
 - Held over 30 stakeholder/interest group workshops
 - District meetings including Member briefings
- 2.5 A Member briefing was held at Pathfinder House on 29th May, to which all members were invited, when the County Council presented an overview of the draft and shape that the LTP will be taking and the key issues contained within it.
- 2.6 In terms of the consultation responses, 63% of respondents supported the overall aims of the plan and a further 25% partially supported the aims. 1.5% did not support the aims with the remainder having no view or not responding on particular elements.

3. THE EMERGING LOCAL TRANSPORT PLAN

- 3.1 The key aims of the new plan are to:
- make travel safer
 - develop integrated transport
 - promote sustainable forms of transport such as public transport, walking and cycling
 - maintain and operate effective transport networks
 - create a transport system that is accessible to all
 - provide a transport system that meets the needs of the economy; and
 - protect and enhance the built and natural environment
- 3.2 The main thrust of the new LTP has been to refine the existing approach and to formulate a detailed programme of capital investment so that investment is made in a coordinated fashion to secure maximum benefit and that packages can correspond with the programme set down in the Structure Plan. A central theme of this work is to enhance accessibility by all modes of travel whilst recognising that different solutions are needed in different areas.
- 3.3 To deliver these elements, it is proposed that a package of transport schemes will be developed based on a series of key corridors and rural areas across the County. The purpose of this approach is to ensure that investment is focused on areas of need and that overall objectives can be met and that links with the development strategy can be achieved.
- 3.4 Key policy directions for the new LTP are therefore as follows;
- Public Transport – better services right across the County including the enhancement and integration of rail services. For buses, work will focus on a range of services most appropriate to the following broad areas:
 - High Quality Public Transport Corridors
 - Cambridge and its hinterland
 - Market Towns
 - Rural areas

- Cycling and Walking – increasing cycling and walking as a means of promoting unnecessary car use and promoting healthy lifestyles. Key aims will be to improve facilities in Cambridge and the market towns, on key corridors and improving links between Cambridge, surrounding villages and market towns
- Roads and Cars – recognition that the car remains a vital mode of transport for single and multiple-occupancy journeys and where a realistic alternative cannot be provided. The Plan therefore looks to balance the needs of the car user against the other LTP objectives
- Travel Awareness – this is seen as being at the heart of a successful strategy. Work will focus on campaigns synchronised with infrastructure developments, integration with other activities such as public transport service changes and health programmes and the further development of (green) travel plans
- Capital Programme – this is seen as needing to be much more ambitious than the current LTP due to the greater scale of planned development. While the programme is extensive and will need to include all areas of the new LTP, key elements include:
 - clearer linkages between capital and revenue funding and the management of the overall transport system to maximise benefits
 - the development of the Cambridge to Huntingdon Rapid Transit system (CHRT). The £75M bid has already been made and work is progressing on the Transport & Works Act Application for November 2003 to secure powers to implement the scheme in 2007
 - a new rail station at Chesterton, which also complements CHRT. Total estimated cost £18M
 - a new Ely southern by-pass emerging from the market town strategy
 - improvements to the A605 at Kings Dyke, Whittlesey linking to the Stanground by-pass scheme being undertaken by Peterborough
 - delivery of real time bus information across high quality public transport routes and the wider network over the plan period. The majority of work will be completed in the first two years starting with the Cambridge to St. Neots corridor
 - new Park & Ride sites connecting the market towns to Cambridge and linked to the high quality public transport routes
 - package schemes along key corridors combining bus, pedestrian and cycling improvements together with safety and tackling congestion measures
 - A10 – Foxton Level Crossing
 - East Cambridge Rapid Transit

3.5 The current draft of the new LTP is attached to the agenda for this meeting. It contains the following 10 Chapters:

- Chapter 1 – Introduction

- Chapter 2 – Policy and Legislation
- Chapter 3 – Problems and Opportunities
- Chapter 4 – Headline Objectives
- Chapter 5 – The LTP Strategy
- Chapter 6 – Putting our Policies into Practice
- Chapter 7 – Integrating Transport
- Chapter 8 – Past achievements
- Chapter 9 – Programme
- Chapter 10 - Conclusion

4. THE NEXT STEPS

- 4.1 The County Council is currently formulating the final draft for the new LTP and is seeking the formal approval of the four District Council's and Cambridge City Council to the new plan prior to its submission to Government at the end of July 2003.
- 4.2 As part of the new LTP, these partner authorities are requested to submit a District Statement for inclusion within the Plan demonstrating their commitment to its overall aims and objectives and to outline how each authority will integrate these into its own work. The draft statement is reproduced at Annex A.

5. RECOMMENDATION(S)

5.1 It is recommended that Cabinet:

- (i) **note the draft LTP and District Statement;**
- (ii) **authorise the Director of Operational Services, after consultation with the Executive Councillor for Planning Strategy, to approve any minor amendment to both the draft LTP and District Statement prior to its consideration by Council; and**
- (iii) **recommend Council at their meeting on 23 July 2003 to approve the draft Cambridgeshire Local Transport Plan 2004 – 2011 and the draft Huntingdonshire District statement for inclusion in the Plan.**

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Cambridgeshire Local Transport Plan 2001-2006
 Draft Cambridgeshire Local Transport Plan 2004-2011
 CCC Transport and Waste Service Development Group Report – 2nd May 2003

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ANNEX A: LOCAL TRANSPORT PLAN 2004-2011

HUNTINGDONSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL STATEMENT

Introduction

This is the second Cambridgeshire Local Transport Plan in which this Council has participated with both the County Council and the other local authorities of Cambridgeshire. During the 4 years of the first plan, the Council has been an active partner in both the formulation of the Annual Progress Report to Government but also, importantly, in terms of the delivery of the policies and action plans on the ground across Huntingdonshire.

This work has specifically led to the development of this Council's Medium Term Plan in respect of transport related projects. As a result of the headline aims and objectives of the LTP, our Capital Programme, based on a rolling 5-year programme, has been specifically developed to maximise scheme delivery on the ground, working with a range of partners. Over the life of the first LTP, the Council remained on course to deliver £5M of transport related expenditure for the benefit of Huntingdonshire and as part of this new LTP, we will look to deliver a similar programme in accordance with the aims and objectives of the plan.

Overview

Transport is a key driver of this Council and, in providing travel choice and in the consideration of issues around social exclusion, the environment and local economy, we continue to work with a range of partners to deliver our joint aims and objectives for the benefit of Huntingdonshire.

Huntingdonshire, by its location as part of the Cambridge Sub-Region, remains at the forefront of an area that is experiencing major growth in the local economy. While that brings significant opportunities and potential for growth, including better jobs, homes and transport infrastructure, these in themselves bring about the challenge for this to be achieved and delivered in a truly sustainable fashion.

We remain committed to working with an extensive range of partner organisations to deliver the local agenda and acknowledge with our work to date and in the future, that even greater involvement across the community will be increasingly vital to the success we enjoy locally.

As a result we welcome the delivery of a new Cambridgeshire Local Transport Plan that;

- recognises the issues emerging from the revised draft Structure Plan placing a much greater emphasis on sustainability
- the development and acceptance by Government of the CHUMMS study; and
- issues emerging from both Regional Planning Guidance (RPG 14) and the Regional Transport Strategy.

Key Issues

In terms of the work that we are undertaking to jointly deliver the LTP, reference should be made to our Huntingdonshire statement contained within the Annual Progress Reports.

However a number of major issues covering the period 2004-2011 are of direct relevance to our aim in delivering the LTP locally working in partnership and it is important to highlight these as follows;

CHRT – Cambridge to Huntingdon Rapid Transit

The District Council's Policy:-

- the Council supports the principle of a rapid transit system (RTS) from Huntingdon to Cambridge provided that it will deliver the benefits claimed for it in CHUMMS, and that it can be delivered in an economic and cost effective manner.
- in order of descending cost heavy rail would be the most expensive option, light rail would be cheaper, but still significantly more expensive than guided bus.
- if a satisfactory case cannot be made for guided bus it follows, therefore, that neither the light or heavy rail option could be supported.

What is the District Council doing?

- we have employed consultants with substantial experience of RTS schemes to give us an independent technical and financial evaluation of the County Council's proposals — the County Council are cooperating with our consultants
- notwithstanding that we have reserved our position on the overall scheme, we are working with the County Council to ensure that their proposals will provide the greatest benefit to Huntingdonshire residents and businesses — for example, the link to Huntingdon Railway Station and Hinchingsbrooke Hospital have been added after pressure from the District Council, as well as the open nature of the system whereby multiple operators will be able to access the system subject to quality thresholds being met
- Our Cabinet will begin taking an initial view on the County Council's proposals from June 2003 onwards.

Local Plan Review

This is currently underway in Huntingdonshire and a central theme is to address the relationship between land-use and transport to improve access and modal choice for all. This is of particular importance as we develop the Cambridge Sub-Regional Implementation study. Annual reporting of progress on the Local Plan review will take place via our yearly statement through the APR

Cambridge Sub-Regional Implementation Study

We are working closely with the County Council and the other local authorities that are part of the Cambridge Sub-Region in developing this work. A number of sub-groups, including one for Transport, have been set up to examine future development needs based on forecast growth and development across the region. Work within the transport group is currently focussed on a range of issues including the identification of the required transport programme to

support the study, the relationship between these schemes and the development strategy and the mechanisms required for simplifying and speeding up the implementation process.

Market Town Transport Strategies & Civic Trust Vision Projects

The District Council has given its full support to the aims and objectives of this work over the life of the current LTP and will continue to do so over the life of the new Plan. It has been a pro-active partner in the formulation of the strategies in St. Neots and Huntingdon & Godmanchester, including financial contributions to transport modelling work, and looks forward to developing these further for St. Ives and the Ramsey area.

In terms of delivery of action plans that support the strategies, the Council has developed its Capital programme such that we contribute financially to those strategies currently approved and have provided a forward commitment to contribute to St. Ives and Ramsey as these come on line. Additionally the Council's Projects team have been engaged to undertake the design and contract work on a number of schemes emerging from the St. Neots Action Plan and the Council will continue to provide that staffing commitment, subject to available resources, to all the strategies.

The Council also has on-going engagement with the Civic Trust to develop Vision projects for all the Huntingdonshire market towns. To date, the project for Huntingdon has been completed and has been used in a number of key areas to inform the transport strategy and, in particular, the integration of land-use and transport issues.

A Vision for St. Ives was published in March 2003 and this will be used to inform the future transport strategy for the town, particularly with regard to future development opportunities and the integration of CHRT through the town.

The Civic Trust are now undertaking work in Ramsey with St. Neots following on during 2004.

CHUMMS Outcomes

The Council supports the principle of the CHRT covered elsewhere in this statement and welcomes the Government announcement earlier in 2003 relating to the road-based outcomes of the scheme. This scheme remains crucial to Huntingdonshire as well as the wider region and the rest of the country given its strategic nature in national and European terms. We therefore keenly await details of this scheme to emerge to which we will provide input in relation to balancing local need against the strategic nature of the route leading to the completion of the scheme around 2010.

Other Key Strategies

Car Parking – During the first half of 2003, the Council appointed Consultants to undertake a review of our Car Parking strategy in order to provide further guidance following the last review in 1995. The primary reason for carrying out this work is to enable the Council to review its strategy to reflect national guidance issued by Government and in order to reflect local transport policies such as the LTP as well as the Council's current Medium Term Objectives.

The Council is in the process of reporting the results of this strategy review to Members and emerging issues and actions will be reported in the yearly APR statement.

Taxi Study – As with Car Parking above, the same Consultants have been appointed to undertake a dual study into our Taxi strategy as well as a Hackney Carriage Demand study. Again the primary reasons for carrying out this work is for the Council to assess whether there are any areas of unmet demand relating to Hackney Carriage provision as well reviewing our strategy to reflect both national and local policies such as the LTP and the Council's own Medium Term Objectives.

The review work is recommending a series of Short, Medium and Long-Term Actions to be considered by the Council and we are currently in the process of reporting the results of this strategy review to Members and emerging issues and actions will be reported in the yearly APR statement.

Local Strategic Partnerships

Under the Local Government Act 2000 Local Authorities and partner agencies have a duty to establish Local Strategic Partnerships and draw up a Community Plan to improve the economic, environmental and social well being of the local area.

In Huntingdonshire a Strategic Partnership has been established and the Community Plan is due to be published in Autumn 2003. Consultation with the public highlighted transport and access as a key concern. The Strategic Partnership established a sub- group to lead on this area and write a chapter for the Community Plan.

The Transport and Access chapter has been written with input from community groups and partner agencies and draws on the extensive public consultation. The 4 key objectives are:

- Comprehensive, affordable, safe public transport services
- Improved road safety
- Reduced congestion
- Improved access

The actions set out in the transport and access chapter are complementary to the countywide LTP and gives the added value of having a local Huntingdonshire perspective on this key public concern.

Concessionary Fares – Improving Rural Access

In accordance with the Council's Medium Term Objectives around reducing economic deprivation and supporting rural communities, the Council will shortly be undertaking a study to review the options available to the Council for supporting the use of public transport, including taxis, to enable people who are disadvantaged by location etc. to gain access to employment, leisure and other essential services. The purpose of the study is to give the Council access to a properly researched series of options that will allow it to consider where it should provide additional support and to allow the development of a financial bid in its Medium Term Plan to fund such subsidies.

Conclusion

As this Statement demonstrates, Huntingdonshire remains committed to supporting the transport and access agenda across the District and is active in both the strategic policy arena that sets the future agenda as well as delivery of initiatives on the ground, particularly through financial contributions via our Medium Term Plan.

In addition to those Key Issues outlined above and as our yearly statement within the LTP Annual Progress Report outlines in greater detail, the Council are financially supporting the transport and access agenda locally in the sum of £5.75M to the year 2007/08. We will continue to build on such commitment through the further development of our Medium Term Plan this Summer for the year 2008/09 and beyond.