

**CAMBRIDGESHIRE PROVISIONAL LOCAL TRANSPORT PLAN 2006-2011
AND ANNUAL PROGRESS REPORT 2005
(Report by Director of Operational Services)**

1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to (a) inform Members of the progress being made in developing the new Local Transport Plan for Cambridgeshire (LTP), (b) seek approval of the District Council supporting statement and (c) to seek Member approval to the current LTP draft. The Annual Progress Report is also discussed, which is based on the final year of the current LTP.

2. BACKGROUND INFORMATION

- 2.1 Members will recall that the County Council submitted a new LTP to Government two years ago to cover the period 2004-2011. The reasons for doing this in advance of national requirements was due to the implications of the revised Structure Plan, the acceptance by Government of the CHUMMS study and consideration of the then emerging Regional Planning Guidance (RPG 14) and the Regional Transport Strategy.
- 2.2 In responding to this submission, Government acknowledged the reasoning behind the submission of a revised LTP and that it was being used as 'a springboard for continuous improvement and achievement in delivering an integrated transport system for the County'. However, Government made clear their requirement for Cambridgeshire to reassess the plan now to take account of the developing Regional Transport Strategy and adopted Local Development Frameworks.
- 2.3 Nationally, previous LTP's were a combination of a county's transport strategy and programme. New national guidance now requires the development of a separate Long Term Transport Strategy covering the period through to 2021 with the LTP becoming a document that delivers the countywide programme. It is important that this integrates with other plans, programmes and proposals of Council's, or other bodies within Cambridgeshire, whether working at a national, regional or local level to bring about change in the County.
- 2.4 A future report on the development of the Long Term Transport Strategy will be submitted to Cabinet at a later date, which will also require approval of Full Council.

3. LOCAL TRANSPORT PLAN 2006-2011

3.1 The four key themes of the new LTP are:

- Accessibility
- Air Quality
- Congestion
- Road Safety

3.2 The relative priority taken by each of these issues varies across the County from universal issues to those that are more local in nature. The LTP therefore aims to recognise these and devise strategies and action plans that will tackle such issues thereby improving transport across Cambridgeshire as a whole.

3.3 The key areas of work for the new LTP to focus on are as follows:

- Accessibility – this is focused on making sure people have access to key services at reasonable cost, time and ease. For Cambridgeshire, the main issues are distance, cost and ease of use, particularly in the rural areas. A draft Accessibility Strategy has to be submitted to Government with this LTP in July 2005 with a full document complete by the end of March 2006. For Huntingdonshire, this work is being led by the Local Strategic Partnership
- Air Quality – this notes that road transport is one of the main sources of air pollution and that since 1990, the use of motorised transport across the County has increased at more than twice the national rate. As a result of transport emissions, several areas of the County are exceeding National Air Quality objectives levels for NO₂. For Huntingdonshire, this is likely to result in Air Quality Management Areas (AQMA's) being declared in both Huntingdon and St. Neots later in 2005. In that regard a recent report to the Licensing And Protection Panel is reproduced at Annex A for Members information.
- Congestion – traffic flows across the County continue to exceed the national average as follows;
 - 70% on trunk roads
 - 35% on principal roads
 - 74% on rural 'A' roads
 - 43% on rural principal roads

During the period of this LTP, traffic levels are likely to continue to increase, particularly as planned new development is built. A key thrust of this LTP is in the continued delivery of schemes, such as Market Town Transport strategies, that offer alternatives to the use of the private car

- Road Safety – increasing levels of traffic can have major implications for road safety. Traffic growth can lead to higher numbers of accidents, particularly at a local level, even if we see overall reductions in the rate of accidents when measured at a higher level. Despite a steady reduction in the number of deaths and serious injuries across the County, there are still a number of problem areas that need to be addressed;
 - The high proportion of cyclists and pedestrians involved in serious road traffic accidents
 - The high level of accidents resulting in slight injuries
 - The increasing number of accidents involving motorcyclists
 - The links between safety and social exclusion
 - The high proportion of deaths and serious injuries on rural roads

The LTP analyses and discusses the measures that will be implemented during the LTP period

- 3.4 As part of the new LTP process, partner authorities are requested to submit a District Statement for inclusion within the LTP 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 for Huntingdonshire is an updated version of that submitted in 2003 for the 2004-2011 Plan and is reproduced at Annex B.
- 3.5 In terms of LTP funding, provisional guidance issued by Government in December 2004, now requires this to tightly focus the programme on what can be achieved with known funding, which brings realism to both the programme and targets. It will no longer be acceptable to include elements within the programme where future funding is unclear. In growth areas such as ours, this will now require the new Long-Term Transport Strategy to formalise the policy with the LTP acting as the delivery mechanism with a definitive programme of works.
- 3.6 There are three elements to the programme to 2011, with the current estimated costs in brackets. It should be noted that at the time of writing this report, the figure for Major schemes may be subject to final revision to take into account final costing for Ely Southern link and Guided Bus schemes;
- (i) Integrated transport (£41,179M)
 - (ii) Maintenance (£69,066M)
 - (iii) Major schemes (£150m)
- 3.7 During 2005, Government intends to consult and issue revised guidance to all authorities, upon which the final Cambridgeshire programme of works will be based. This will be submitted in March 2006 and will include the full Accessibility Strategy.

4. ANNUAL PROGRESS REPORT

- 4.1 Government requires County authorities to submit annual reports on progress being made with the delivery of their LTP objectives and it is on this information, that annual financial settlements are made. Members will recall that in previous years, Cambridgeshire has rated above average with acknowledgement of good progress on the number of schemes being delivered as well as good progress towards achieving Government targets and core indicators.
- 4.2 This year's APR is the final version for the existing LTP and reports on continued good progress on scheme delivery and achieving set targets, including the continued upward trend on bus patronage.
- 4.3 In previous years, District authorities have provided supporting statements to outline the work they do to support the delivery of the LTP in their area and to demonstrate any financial commitment they provide. Guidance issued from Government this year does not require such statements to be submitted. Given the supporting statement provided with the LTP, this is acknowledged. However all Cambridgeshire authorities have agreed that a statement should be provided for the start of the new LTP process and first APR to be submitted in 2006.

5. RECOMMENDATION(s)

- 5.1 It is recommended that Cabinet:
- (i) note the draft provisional LTP 2006-2011, and draft APR 2005;
 - (ii) approve the district statement to the LTP attached as annex A;
 - (iii) authorise the Director of Operational Services, after consultation with the Executive Councillor for Environment & Transport, to approve any minor amendments to the draft provisional LTP, District Statement and draft APR prior to its formal submission to Government by 31st July 2005
 - (iv) To authorise the Executive Councillors for Environment & Transport and Planning Strategy to sign the provisional LTP on behalf of the Council
 - (v) To note that the final LTP will be submitted to full Council in September 2005 for approval.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Cambridgeshire Local Transport Plan 2004-2011
Cambridgeshire Annual Progress Report 2004
Draft Cambridgeshire Local Transport Plan 2006-2011
Draft Cambridgeshire Annual Progress Report 2005

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ANNEX A: REPORT TO THE LICENSING AND PROTECTION PANEL

LICENSING AND PROTECTION PANEL

21 JUNE 2005

AIR QUALITY REVIEW AND ASSESSMENT DETAILED ASSESSMENT OF NITROGEN DIOXIDE (A Report by the Head of Environmental Health Services)

1 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to advise members of the findings of the latest step in the statutory process known as 'Air Quality Review and Assessment' as required by Part IV of the Environment Act 1995. The process involves the measuring and/or modelling of ambient levels of certain air pollutants for comparison against a range of national air quality objectives.
- 1.2 Progress on the Air Quality Review and Assessment process has previously been reported in September 1998, June 2000 and February 2004. The latter report indicated that concentrations of nitrogen dioxide (a traffic pollutant) were close to the annual mean objective at relevant locations in parts of Huntingdon and St Neots. The Report also identified that industrial emissions from the Fenland town of Whittlesey may result in contravention of the fifteen-minute mean objective for sulphur dioxide in a small area in the north of the district.
- 1.3 Following completion of the annual progress report in April 2004 it became apparent that Huntingdonshire would have to proceed to a more 'Detailed Assessment' of nitrogen dioxide to ascertain if there was 'reasonable certainty' that the annual mean objective would be exceeded. This report sets out the findings of that Detailed Assessment.

2 FRAMEWORK FOR LOCAL AIR QUALITY MANAGEMENT

- 2.1 All district, borough and unitary authorities are obliged to undertake the process known as 'Air Quality Review and Assessment'. The process consists of assessing concentrations of seven air pollutants to ascertain whether any of the seventeen applicable national air quality objectives are likely to be exceeded, at relevant locations, by their due dates. This process is cyclic with submission to DEFRA required in the April of each year.
- 2.2 The assessment must follow technical guidance issued by DEFRA and involves monitoring ambient pollutant concentrations, reviewing industrial, transport and domestic emissions and modelling dispersion of pollutants. Where it appears, with reasonable certainty, that an air quality objective is unlikely to be met by its due date the local authority must declare an 'Air Quality Management Area'.
- 2.3 Following declaration of an Air Quality Management Area the local authority must carry out a further assessment that will, amongst other things, apportion sources of the pollutant(s). The local authority must also form an

'Air Quality Action Plan' detailing possible and proposed steps to be taken in pursuit of the national objectives.

3 REVIEW AND ASSESSMENT IN CAMBRIDGESHIRE

- 3.1 Since the inception of the Local Air Quality Management Regime the local authorities in Cambridgeshire, including the County Council, have worked in partnership producing joint reports where possible.
- 3.2 The Progress Report for the Cambridgeshire authorities, submitted in 2004, excluded Cambridge City Council as, due to high concentrations of nitrogen dioxide, they were already obliged to carry out a Detailed Assessment for this pollutant.
- 3.3 Since all of the Cambridgeshire authorities, except East Cambridgeshire, were required to carry out Detailed Assessments in 2005 reporting for this round has been on an individual authority basis, although the County group has continued to meet to coordinate a common approach.
- 3.4 Due to insufficient monitoring data to enable an assessment to be made with confidence, Fenland District Council will not be determining an Air Quality Management Area for sulphur dioxide in Whittlesey during this round of Review and Assessment. They will review this decision in April 2006 when they expect to have more detailed monitoring results available.

4 DETAILED ASSESSMENT IN HUNTINGDONSHIRE

- 4.1 The Detailed Assessment for Huntingdonshire has confirmed that the annual mean objective for nitrogen dioxide is unlikely to be met in parts of Huntingdon close to the A14, the inner Ring Road and Stukeley Road/St Peters Road and in a small area in the middle of St Neots. The assessment report can be viewed at <\\admin\Public\Council Papers\Cttees-17.5.00\environ> .
- 4.2 The Detailed Assessment also found that previously unidentified relevant locations close to the A1 and the A14 might also be exposed to nitrogen dioxide levels that exceed the annual mean objective. DEFRA received the preliminary report in draft, as required, at the end of April 2005. They have granted an additional three months for the further study of these newly identified areas near the trunk roads.
- 4.3 This additional work is scheduled for completion at the end of July 2005 and the results will then be combined with the preliminary report and a statutory consultation process will be undertaken as required by technical guidance.

5 CONCLUSIONS

- 5.1 The draft Detailed Assessment of local air quality has confirmed that the national annual mean objective for nitrogen dioxide is unlikely to be met at relevant locations in parts of Huntingdon and in a small area in the middle of St Neots.
- 5.2 By the end of November 2005, Air Quality Management Areas will have to be declared for all the areas where it has been confirmed that the national

annual objective for nitrogen dioxide is unlikely to be met. This involves significant parts of central Huntingdon (including the area close the inner ring round and some feeder roads) [see Figure 7 on page 17 of the attached report: "Air Quality Review and Assessment, detailed assessment of Nitrogen Dioxide 2005"]; possibly some areas close to the A1 and A14 and a small area in St Neots High Street [see Figure 10 on page 22 of the attached report: "Air Quality Review and Assessment, detailed assessment of Nitrogen Dioxide 2005"].

- 5.3 A Further Assessment of air quality, within the declared Air Quality Management Areas, will have to be conducted in 2006.
- 5.4 An Air Quality Action Plan will have to be made outlining possible and proposed actions in pursuit of the objective in relation to each Air Quality Management Area. This plan should be completed by April 2007 and must be a corporate document involving all the relevant Council Departments. Where the Air Quality Management Areas are outside the influence of the Council it will be necessary to work in partnership with external agencies such as the Highways Agency.

6 RECOMMENDATIONS

- 6.1 It is RECOMMENDED that
- Members note the findings of this Detailed Assessment of local air quality in Huntingdonshire.
 - Members authorise the Head of Environmental Health Services to publish the findings of the Detailed Assessment report and to proceed to make the necessary declarations of Air Quality Management Areas.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Source Documents:

Environment Act 1995, Part IV

Technical Guidance LAQM. TG(03)

Air Quality Review and Assessment, detailed assessment of Nitrogen Dioxide 2005

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ANNEX B: LOCAL TRANSPORT PLAN 2006-2011

HUNTINGDONSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL STATEMENT

Introduction

This is the third Cambridgeshire Local Transport Plan in which this Council has participated with both the County Council and the other local authorities of Cambridgeshire. During the 6 years of the first two plans, 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 LTP's, the Council has remained on course and delivered in excess of £5M of transport related expenditure for the benefit of Huntingdonshire and as part of this new LTP, we will continue 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 sustainable fashion.

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

As a result we welcome the emerging Long-Term Transport Strategy to cover the period to 2021 and 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 continued approach by Government on the A14 issues arising out of the CHUMMS study and the current public consultation on the delivery of the scheme; and

- issues continuing to emerge from both Regional Planning Guidance (RPG 14) and the Regional Transport Strategy.

Key Issues

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

However a number of major issues covering the period 2006-2011 are of direct relevance to our aim in delivering the LTP locally working in partnership and it is important to highlight these as follows;

Huntingdon to Cambridge Guided Bus

The District Council's originally approved Policy has been that:-

- the Council supports the principle of a guided bus system from Huntingdon to Cambridge provided that it will deliver the benefits claimed for it within the CHUMMS study, 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 involvement?

- we commissioned our own consultants to provide an independent assessment of the proposal at an early stage. Based on the outcome of this study the District Council indicated its 'in principle' support for the proposal. This was conditional upon –
 - the economic case for the scheme prepared by the County Council being accepted by the Government; and
 - appropriate mitigation being provided to minimise any adverse environmental impacts.
- we continue to work with the County Council to ensure that their proposals will provide the greatest benefit to Huntingdonshire residents and businesses — for example, the provision of bus lanes and priority measures between Hinchingsbrooke Hospital and St. Ives including the link to Huntingdon Railway Station and both town centres, were added after support 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 continue to be briefed on the development of the scheme as the proposals are progressed

Local Development Framework

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 Infrastructure partnership. Annual reporting of progress on the LDF will continue to take place via our yearly statement through the Annual Progress Report.

Cambridge Sub-Regional Implementation Study

We continue to work closely with the County Council, Cambridgeshire Horizons and the other local authorities that are part of the Cambridge Sub-Region in developing the necessary infrastructure to cope with existing problems and to cater for the growth envisaged across the County. A number of sub-groups continue to examine future development needs based on forecast growth and development across the region. These focus on a range of issues including the identification of the required transport programme and the relationship between this work 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 existing LTP's 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 taking the draft work for St. Ives to completion and the development of a similar strategy for 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 both the St. Neots and Huntingdon & Godmanchester Action Plans 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 completed project for Huntingdon has reached such a stage that it is now being re-visited and refreshed. To date, the work 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 2003 and for St. Neots in 2004 and these are being used to inform both revised and future transport strategies for the towns, particularly with regard to future development opportunities.

Within Ramsey, the Council and other partners have been developing a range of issues within the forum of the Ramsey Area Partnership. A number of these relate to transport and will be considered as part of any transport related strategy for the town in the future.

CHUMMS

The Council supports the principle of the Guided Bus scheme covered elsewhere in this statement and welcomes the continued Government support 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 following current public consultation on the delivery of the scheme, 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 towards the end of the life of this Plan.

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 was 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 approved the strategy during 2004 and the first actions will be implemented during Summer 2005. We will continue to report emerging issues and actions within the yearly Annual Progress Report statement.

Taxi Study – As with Car Parking, the same Consultants were 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 were for the Council to assess whether there are any areas of unmet demand relating to Hackney Carriage provision as well reviewing the strategy to reflect both national and local policies such as the LTP and the Council's own Medium Term Objectives.

The approved Strategy contains a series of Short, Medium and Long-Term Actions to be considered by the Council in the future, subject to funding. We

will continue to report the emerging issues and actions within the yearly Annual Progress Report statement.

Local Strategic Partnerships

Under the Local Government Act 2000 Local Authorities and partner agencies had 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, the Strategic Partnership was established and the Community Plan was published in 2004. Consultation with the public highlighted transport and access as a key concern. As a result, the Strategic Partnership established a sub- group to lead on this area and this is included within the adopted Plan.

The Transport and Access chapter was 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 LTP and give the added value of having a local Huntingdonshire perspective on this key public concern. A key area of work is for the group to lead on Accessibility Planning for Huntingdonshire and to inform the Framework Accessibility Strategy for Cambridgeshire by March 2006.

Improving Rural Access inc. Concessionary Fares

In accordance with the Council's Medium Term Objectives around reducing economic deprivation and supporting rural communities, the Council will shortly be considering the results of 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.

The work undertaken by Consultants has also looked at rural accessibility issues, the results of which will be used by the Local Strategic Partnership in developing the Accessibility Strategy.

Advance work relating to improving rural access and social inclusion has resulted in the Council providing resource input to community transport schemes across Huntingdonshire. We support four existing schemes in the

form of staff resources, professional advice and financial support in both revenue and capital terms to ensure that the continued social need that they give is continued to be met. For the period through to 2009/10, our current commitment is in excess of £310K.

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 statements within the previous LTP Annual Progress Reports outline in greater detail, the Council continues to financially support the transport and access agenda locally in the sum of just under £7M for the period 2005/06 to 2009/10.

While not an inclusive list of all transport related projects that we contribute to, projected Capital expenditure over this period includes;

- LTP scheme contributions - £399K
- Safe Cycle Routes - £454K
- St. Neots Pedestrian Bridges £524K
- Huntingdon Transport strategy - £296K
- St. Ives Transport strategy - £222K
- Ramsey Transport strategy - £126K
- Bus Shelters – extra provision - £140K
- AJC Small Scale improvements - £539K

We will continue to build on such commitment through the further development of our Medium Term Plan insofar that the transportation expenditure is discretionary, it is an area that will be under substantial pressure if the Council's expenditure is subject to capping.