

Comms190 – Local Transport Plan Second Round of Consultation

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Classification, resources and timescale

Service	Strategic Transport		Committee	Highways and Transport	
Corporate Plan Priority	Green – A great place for people to live, work and visit		Communications Strategy for Residents Priority	Promote corporate plan projects, programmes and priorities	
Subject	Planning transformation				
Comms lead	Chris Gibbs		Type	Strategic programme	
Budget	Tbc		Bloom	n/a	
Start	Summer 2025	Go-live	August 2025	End:	May 2026

Background/narrative

As the statutory Local Transport Authority, the council is required to maintain an up-to-date Local Transport Plan (LTP) that provides a strategic framework for planning and delivery of improvements in local transport provision. The previous LTP was adopted in 2019 for the period of 2019-2024.

The existing LTP 2019-2024 for Cheshire East was prepared pre-Covid, and prior to many recent changes in transport policy including, but not limited to: Gear Change (2020), The Transport Decarbonisation Plan (2021), Electric Vehicle Infrastructure Strategy (2022) and Bus Back Better (2021).

Numerous non-transport policies have also come forward which impact transport including for example the Levelling Up White Paper (2022) and Clear Air Strategy (2019). As a result, the

current LTP is no longer fit-for-purpose as a framework for local transport within Cheshire East. Therefore, it is now time for a new LTP document to ensure that the council maintains a plan that is robust and relevant to national, regional and local priorities.

Following development of an evidence base that identified challenges and opportunities, a vision, aims and priorities were drafted and consulted upon in February – April 2025. Since, the feedback has been analysed the LTP Strategy and Investment Framework have been drafted.

It is expected that the primary purpose of the consultation is to seek the views of stakeholders and residents on the draft LTP Strategy and Investment Framework, and the extent to which the public agree with these.

Key contacts

Transport Policy and Accessibility Manager (Cheshire East)
 Head of Strategic Transport and Parking Service (Cheshire East)
 Director of Transport and Infrastructure (Cheshire East)
 Stakeholder Engagement and Consultation Co-ordinator (Jacobs)
 Principal Transport Planner (Cheshire East)
 Project Manager (Jacobs)
 Research Officer (Cheshire East)
 Communications Officer (Cheshire East)

Communications objectives/outcomes

Communications activity tries to change what people:		
Know	→	Provide or clarify information and/or correct misinformation, misconception – in ways that are accessible and easy to understand
Think	→	Put information into context of other knowledge and values, helping people reflect on what information means to them
Feel	→	Nudge emotional response and personal relationship to knowledge
Do	→	Provoke or call to action

Communications-specific outcomes and objectives for this plan

- Clearly describe the draft LTP strategy and Investment Framework a in such a way that it encourages residents to engage with it.
- Set the context for why a new LTP is being undertaken and how work has been progressed to date – doing this effectively will then lead to increased engagement with the proposed plan.

Audiences and stakeholders

Communications activity can take people on an engagement journey:					
Unaware >>>>	Aware >>>>>	Informed >>>	Interested >>>	Involved >>>	Leadership
We must consider people's starting attitude and position in relation what we are doing:					
Advocate	Agnostic	Sceptical	Critical	Cynical	

Audience / stakeholder	Notes
Residents and visitors	Everyone at some point is impacted by the transport network whether as a pedestrian, motorist, commuter, student, parent, pensioner, etc. The transport network interacts with all our lives so there is a captive audience to appeal to.
Customers	We have customers who are already using the transport network who will understand the importance of a well-planned transport network and want to share their everyday experiences.
Children and young people	This group are also important to engage with as they often rely on public transport, walking, wheeling and cycling. School transport links with bus service provision.
Parents and carers	Notify via schools' newsletter and contacting specialist groups.
CEC Staff	As per 'residents and visitors' above.
Bus user groups	We have a very active bus user group in Crewe and an opportunity to engage with its equivalent in Macclesfield. Sharing the consultation with these groups has a very real prospect of increasing engagement levels.
Mid Cheshire Rail Users Association	We will connect with this group by email at appropriate times through established Cheshire East contacts
The Bus Enhanced Partnership Forum	The Forum itself only meets twice a year but we can share information with them by email - https://www.cheshireeast.gov.uk/public_transport/transport_strategies.aspx#enhancedPartnershipAgreement
Public transport member champion	The Cheshire East Council member champion can be a fantastic ambassador for increased engagement of the consultation.
Walking and cycling member champion	The Council's walking and cycling member champion can be a fantastic ambassador for increased engagement of the consultation.
Councillor Mark Goldsmith and Councillor Liz Braithwaite	As chair and vice chair of the highways and transport committee – they can be reasonably expected to champion the consultation to their committee and could also share details through their own channels.
Highways and transport committee	They are all invested in a positive and thriving transport network.
All CEC ward councillors/members	All CEC councillors can and should act as advocates for both the plan and the consultation.
Town and parish councillors	The consultation and the plan impact on every town and village in Cheshire East – they can also be advocates.
Businesses (local, regional and national)	Businesses across the borough have an interest in attracting and retaining talent and the efficient movement of goods to support their business. Transport supports business growth.

Audience / stakeholder	Notes
Service delivery partners	Would envisage the bus operators being more proactive in sharing our plans as they will be motivated to encourage people to use the services. Engagement with rail operators important too.
Schools, colleges, early years providers	Providing a smooth and efficient transport network is of particular importance to schools given the costs associated with private hire. Being able to access transport links to education in a rural economy remains a very important aspect of daily life. Walking, wheeling and cycling opportunities to access schools etc. is important.
Town and parish councils	A key stakeholder. Each of the town councils may have their own transport development plans to promote as was the case when the LTP 2019-2024 was agreed, and this provides incentive to encourage discussion. Would be helpful to develop links in each of the town councils if they don't exist already.
MPs	All MPs operating in Cheshire East will be monitoring engagement with the consultation closely. We could ask them to promote the consultation through their social media channels and perhaps have paper copies in their constituency offices.
Neighbouring Authorities	Could also be advocates especially in towns and villages sharing a border with Cheshire East.
Those with protected characteristics / organisations for people with specialist transport needs (age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnerships, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex, sexual orientation)	Important to gain feedback and input from those with protected characteristics to understand their views and any mitigation required in forthcoming stages of LTP development.

Tactics/approach

How we are going to achieve the communications objectives/outcomes

- Outline clearly why there is a new LTP, why the public are being engaged, what the LTP Strategy and Investment Framework is and what the next steps will be.
- Generate interest through referring back to work we have already completed this year with the initial consultation and refer to how we are building on that to deliver a robust plan.
- Keep stakeholders engaged stakeholders in advance of consultation going live and during the first week of consultation.
- Using politicians as spokespeople more prominently.

Products/types of activity

Examples of what we are going to do

- Briefings to key stakeholders
- Press releases prior to and during public consultation to encourage uptake

- Social media posts to encourage participation in the public consultation
- Video
- Questionnaire for people to respond to the consultation
- Webpage information and link to questionnaire for people to respond to the consultation.
- Pull up banners, poster and a brochure, all linking via QR code and short URL to webpage and questionnaire
- Information points at indoor market halls in Crewe and Macclesfield
- Conduct Community Partnerships/Groups engagement
- Potential to conduct engagement with umbrella organisations for people with specialist transport needs.
- Potential to conduct engagement with transport interest groups.
- Engage Enterprise Cheshire & Warrington, Chamber of Commerce and large business/major employer engagement in the consultation (in combination with CEC's Business Growth and Investment Team).
- Briefings with other key stakeholders enabling them through various different channels such as newsletters and member briefings
- Pull up banners, poster and a brochure
- Information points at local markets
- Secondary school/college engagement
- Community partnerships/groups engagement
- Engagement with umbrella organisations for people with specialist transport needs
- Engagement with transport interest groups

Key messages

The key messages and lines to take

- We have had a global pandemic since the last Local Transport Plan was adopted in 2019 and as well as the economy having to recover from that, there have been changes to national, regional and local policies. It is essential to produce a new LTP now
- Feedback from consultation on vision, aims and priorities has been considered and factored into LTP process where appropriate
- Opportunity for residents to have their say on the draft LTP Strategy and Investment Framework during the consultation
- Final chance to have their say on the LTP Strategy and Investment Framework ahead of these being finalised and adopted in 2026.

Action plan and timeline

#	Date	Time	Activity/Event	Comms lead	Audience(s)	Channel	Service	Ctte	Subject	Notes
1.	8 July	Tbc	Draft of initial report to go to committee in September	LP	RH/JM	Email	Transport	H=T	Report submitted for comments	Very early draft – expect changes
2.	Mid to late August	Tbc	Planning of video to support consultation	CG/JM/LP	Project team	Video	Transport	H+T	Video promoting consultation	This is to be very broad brush approach – must appeal to a wide audience so no jargon or technical language
3.	Early September	Tbc	Agree outline plan for video	CG/JM/LP	Project team	Video	Transport	H+T	Video promoting consultation	Script needs to be agreed before filming can start
4.	18 September		Highways and transport committee	JM	Committee members	Meeting	Transport	H+T	Gaining permission to go to consultation	
5.	Late September	Tbc	Pre-go live preparation of assets	TB	General public	Website	Transport	H+T	Pre-go live preparation	TB to lead from R&I
6.	Late September	Tbc	Provide first draft of printed materials	LP/JM	Project team	Physical materials	Transport	H+T	Developing the campaign	Roll banners, brochure, leaflet
7.	Late September	Tbc	Start producing video	tbc	Project team	Video	Transport	H+T	Setting the tone for the campaign	Video length to remain short to give best chance to keep viewers' attention
8.	Late September	Tbc	Comments back on first draft of printed materials	CG/JM/LP	Project team	Physical materials	Transport	H+T	Developing the campaign	May need to organise a meeting around this time to feedback any comments in a timely manner
9.	Late September	Tbc	Director/Exec Director to brief Leader/Deputy Leader on plans	JM	Political leadership	Face-to-face/email	Transport	H+T	Awareness of campaign	Project team to establish who will do this briefing
10.	Late September	Tbc	Director/Exec Director to brief committee Chair and Vice Chair	JM	Key committee members	Face-to-face/email	Transport	H+T	Awareness of campaign	Project team to establish who will do this briefing
11	Late September	Tbc	Preparation of second draft of printed materials implement all requested changes	CG/	Project team	Physical materials	Transport	H+T	Developing the campaign	No director sign off at this stage – design being overseen by Jacobs
12	Early October	Tbc	Initial cut of video	tbc	Project team	Video	Transport	H+T	Setting the tone for the campaign	
13	Mid-late September	Tbc	Present second draft of physical assets to project team	CG	Project team	Physical materials	Transport	H+T	Fine tuning the campaign	
14	Late September	Tbc	All comments on physical assets to be fed back to team for final tweaks to be made	CG	Project team	Physical materials	Transport	H+T	Fine tuning the campaign	
15	Early October	Tbc	Councillor briefings	JM	Committee members	Highways and transport committee	Transport	H+T	Approval to consult and information on consultation material	
16.	Early October	Tbc	Review of relevant pages on the website to ensure that information is ready to go live	CG	General public	Website	Transport	H+T	Connection of website to consultation	Will need to establish a named person in the web team to be ready to make page live when consultation is cleared for publication. Also need to know where on the website the consultation will be published.
17.	1 October	Tbc	Commit all assets to print	CG	General public	All physical assets	Transport	H+T	Preparation for campaign launch	
18.	Early October	Tbc	Physical assets and animation to be approved at director level	CG	RH/TM	Project team decision makers	Transport	H+T	Finalising the campaign	JM to confirm who needs to sign off on assets

#	Date	Time	Activity/Event	Comms lead	Audience(s)	Channel	Service	Ctte	Subject	Notes
19.	Early to mid October		Receipt of all physical assets for campaign	CG	General public	Physical assets	Transport	H+T	Campaign launch	Assets to be delivered to Delamere House, Crewe unless otherwise stated
20.	13 October		Start of 8-week consultation	JM	General public	Website	Transport	H+T	Make website live	
21.	13 October	Tbc	Press release to promote consultation start date	CG	General public	Press	Transport	H+T	What the consultation is about and how to participate	
22.	13 October	Tbc	Social media post regarding LTP and public consultation start date	CG	General public	Social Media platforms	Transport	H+T	What the consultation is about and how to participate	Naturally we will put out a social media post when the consultation goes live but we also need reminder posts once this has happened. Highways can also share posts from their X account
23.	Mid October		Final video ready	CG	Project team	Video	Transport	H+T	Setting the tone for the campaign	
24.	Mid-October	Tbc	Update via Members bulletin (opportunity every two weeks)	CG	Members	Members bulletin	Transport	H+T	What the consultation is about and how to participate	
25.	October	Tbc	Town and Parish Council newsletter (opportunity every month)	CG	Town and Parish Councils	Town and Parish Council newsletter	Transport	H+T	What the consultation is about and how to participate	
26.	Mid October	Tbc	Launch of LTP Public Consultation – 13 th October	CG	General public	Physical assets	Transport	H+T	Campaign launch	Assets to be distributed from Crewe to locations across Cheshire East prior to Mid-October
27.	Mid October	Tbc	Social media posts to announce launch of consultation	CG	General public	Social media platforms	Transport	H+T	Reminder that the consultation is open	This is complementing the messages that already exist with all the physical assets
28.	Mid to late October	Tbc	Public consultation has launched	CG/AG	Subscribers	Residents' newsletter	Transport	H+T		
29.	Mid-November	Tbc	Press Release at halfway stage to further encourage participation in public consultation	CG	General public	Press	Transport	H+T	How to participate and consultation end date	
30.	Mid-November	Tbc	Social media post at halfway stage to further encourage participation in public consultation	CG	General public	Social Media platforms	Transport	H+T	How to participate and consultation end date	
31.	Mid-November	Tbc	Online publication at halfway stage to further encourage participation in public consultation	CG	General public	Online (council webpage)	Transport	H+T	How to participate and consultation end date	
32.	Late November	Tbc	Last chance to engage with consultation – closes on 7 th December	CG	General public	Social media	Transport	H+T	How to participate and end consultation date	
33.	7 December	Tbc	Consultation has closed	CG	General public	Website	Transport	H+T	Explain next steps	Update the web page on this day
34.	December	Tbc	CEC-led analysis of questionnaire responses	TB	LP	Internal	Transport	H+T	Outcomes and next steps	
35.	December	Tbc	CEC-prepared report summarising consultation feedback and analysis	TB	General public and stakeholders	Internal	Transport.	H+T	Outcomes and next steps	
36.	March 26	Tbc	Media release/social media to promote outcome of the consultation	tbc	General public and stakeholders	Website, media release & social media	Transport	H+T	Outcomes and next steps	

#	Date	Time	Activity/Event	Comms lead	Audience(s)	Channel	Service	Ctte	Subject	Notes
37.	2 April 2026	Tbc	Report goes back to committee to recommend approval	CG	Committee members	Committee meeting	Transport	H+T	Adoption of recommendations	From here it would go forward to full council
38.	May or July 2026	Tbc	LTP goes to full council for adoption	JM/RH	Members	Live meeting	Transport	H+T	Adoption of recommendations	

Evaluation, performance, reporting

How are we going to demonstrate how well we have delivered the communications objectives and outcomes?

- Number of detailed email responses received (where respondents have added information that they felt they were unable to include within the survey).
- Report on media pickup indicating what audiences are being reached (this will be measured through media monitoring within the communications team).
- Number of visits to the scheme web page and the number of people linking through to the Smart Survey following on from that initial visit - any opening of the survey will contribute towards engagement figures (partial completion of the surveys is an example of this).

Appendix 1: Communications products

Record/link to final versions of media releases, statements and other products.

TBC

Appendix 2: Notable coverage

List press, online, broadcast and social coverage

TBC