

Appendix One

Local Transport Plan briefing note for Shadow Portfolio holders

Introduction

1 The requirement to produce a Local Transport Plan (LTP) was introduced as a result of the Transport Act (2000). This made it a statutory requirement for local authorities to prepare and implement five year integrated transport strategies to support the delivery of both national, regional and local objectives.

2 They are characterised by:-

- An emphasis that transport is not an end in itself. The LTP needs to demonstrate how it will help meet wider objectives including improving quality of life, supporting economic development and regeneration, tackling poverty and improving the environment;
- A detailed evidence base to inform strategy development;
- Five year funding allocations to provide improved certainty and forward planning for the preparation and implementation of delivery programmes;
- The need to consider the use of both capital and revenue funding to help meet objectives;
- An emphasis on developing integrated transport solutions to encourage more sustainable modes of transport;
- A more inclusive approach encouraging greater dialogue, consultation and joint working with partners and the wider community; and
- Greater emphasis on targets, performance indicators and monitoring.

3 The first round of LTPs covered the period between 2001 to 2006. These were subsequently replaced with new strategies in 2006 that cover the five years to 2011 (LTP2).

4 The Department for Transport (DfT) have now begun to plan the scope and format for the next round of LTPs (LTP3). It is expected that draft guidance will be issued shortly and this will be the subject of a consultation exercise during the first part of 2009. The final guidance is likely to be issued by mid 2009. This will help local authorities make a prompt start on preparing their new LTP strategies. At this stage, it is anticipated that the new LTP3 documents will need to be ready for submission to the DfT by the second half of 2010.

Cheshire's current LTP

5 Cheshire's current LTP was published in March 2006. It was prepared to:-

- Respond to a range of national, regional and local policy issues;
- Set out how Cheshire will address the national shared priority for transport (tackling congestion, improving road safety, delivering accessibility and better air quality);
- Respond to future development, regeneration and housing priorities that will impact on future travel patterns;
- Take into account the various trends, issues and characteristics that make Cheshire the place it is now and in the future;
- Take into account the foundation of Cheshire's first LTP and the lessons learnt from its delivery; and
- Take into account community concerns and the views of stakeholders.

6 Its objectives are to:-

- Enhance the quality of life of those who live in, work or visit Cheshire;
- Promote social inclusion and accessibility to everyday services, especially for those without a car;
- Improve safety for all travellers;
- Promote integration of all forms of transport and land-use planning, leading to a better, more efficient transport system;
- Contribute to an efficient economy and to support sustainable economic growth and regeneration in appropriate locations;
- Protect and enhance the built, natural and historic environment; and
- Manage a well maintained and efficient transport network.

7 These are being delivered by:-

- A series of integrated area programmes for each of the current District areas;
- Countywide programmes for local safety schemes, public transport, tackling congestion, cycling schemes, improving Public Rights of Way and addressing problems caused by the school run;
- A comprehensive programme of highway and bridge maintenance;
- Transport modelling and studies to support development and regeneration projects; and
- Developing and implementing major transport schemes such as Alderley Edge and Nether Alderley Bypass and the Crewe Gateway project.

8 The Department for Transport (DfT) have indicated that they expect to see the existing LTP strategy adopted in its current form by both unitary authorities until this is replaced by LTP3 in 2011. Some amendments will be necessary to disaggregate performance indicators. This issue is explored in more detail below.

Funding

9 Between 2001 and 2006 some £301 million was spent on transport and highway improvements in Cheshire. This included some £100 million secured through the LTP process, £181 million of revenue funding (largely spent on

supporting passenger transport services and highway maintenance) and the remainder secured from partnership funding, developer contributions and challenge bids.

10 During the current LTP2 period a further £35 million of capital funding has already been spent on delivering the LTP. An additional £58 million has been allocated to be spent between 2008/09 and 2010/11. Details are set out below.

Block	2008/09 £000s	2009/10 £000s	2010/11 £000s
Integrated Transport *	8,098	8,251	8,387
Maintenance	9,926	10,919	12,557

* The Integrated Block includes funding for a range of measures including local safety schemes, traffic management projects, bus infrastructure, safer routes to school projects, cycling schemes and local measures delivered through Integrated Area Programmes.

11 The level of capital funding is determined by Department for Transport (DfT) formulae. Provisional revised allocations for Cheshire East and Cheshire West and Chester have been calculated by the DfT and will be confirmed shortly.

12 As noted above, the strategies and policies set out in the LTP also act to inform the allocation and use of revenue expenditure to support the delivery of transport priorities. Between 2006 and 2008 £44 million of revenue funding was spent on highway maintenance and £98 million was used to support the provision of passenger transport services. It is anticipated that the revenue funding allocations for the two new unitary authorities will be confirmed as part of the current budget setting exercise.

Monitoring performance

13 Prior to 2006, performance was assessed on an annual basis by the Department for Transport (DfT). This included a strong emphasis on assessing the progress made towards achieving national and local performance targets which covered all aspects of the LTP strategy.

14 A detailed assessment of the impact and outcomes of the first LTP was published in July 2006. This can be viewed and downloaded from the County Council's LTP website. It concluded that Cheshire had made good progress towards meeting its objectives and targets with the level of resources that it had spent during this period.

15 The introduction of the new LTP (LTP2) has seen the introduction of a more informal process of assessment based on regular meetings and challenge sessions with representatives from the DfT and the regional Government Offices. This has coincided with a move towards a less rigorous examination of LTP delivery with DfT no longer officially marking or grading

individual progress reports. This is partly as a result of overall performance monitoring being incorporated into the new Local Area Agreements – see below.

16 Nevertheless, LTP performance has continued to be monitored by the County Council on a regular basis to ensure that work and expenditure is being undertaken as planned and objectives and targets remain on track to be met.

17 In line with DfT guidance, a detailed progress report covering the first two years of the current LTP period was produced in 2008 and this was formally presented to the Government Office for the North West (GONW) who will also share its contents with the DfT. This report:-

- Assesses overall progress in meeting objectives and targets;
- Considers both opportunities and risks to the continued delivery of the plan up to 2011; and
- Provided the opportunity for engagement with delivery partners and stakeholders and seek feedback on any emerging issues.

18 The preparation of this report has been timely. Its development has coincided with the transition towards the creation of the new Cheshire unitary authorities. It is considered that this report will provide a useful introduction to the LTP process and will help to support the smooth transfer of LTP activities to the new authorities leading up to vesting day and beyond.

19 A letter will be sent to the County Council in December from GONW which will set out their response to the progress report and outline what they consider to be the main challenges for the two new authorities for the remainder of the LTP period.

20 The progress report and a shorter summary document will also be shared with partners, stakeholders and the wider community.

Local Area Agreement

21 The LTP plays a crucial role in supporting the delivery of many of Cheshire's wider corporate objectives and the priorities set out in the Sustainable Community Strategy and the accompanying Local Area Agreement (LAA).

22 As part of the wider changes to monitoring performance, the new LAA includes a set of 198 indicators which are now the only measures used by Government to assess local authorities performance. From these, some 35 targets for improvement have been set based on the outcome of negotiations with partners and the Government.

23 The ongoing delivery of the LTP will have an impact on a total of four of the current top 35 priorities. These are:-

- NI 47 People killed or seriously injured in road traffic accidents;
- NI 168 Principal roads where maintenance should be considered;
- NI 169 Non-principal roads where maintenance should be considered; and
- NI 186 Per capita reduction in CO2 emissions in Local Authority Area.

24 The new unitary authorities will adopt the LAA on a transferable but severable basis with effect from 1 April 2009. However, it must be noted that the creation of new Local Strategic Partnerships and emerging corporate priorities may well lead to changes to the current set of priorities once the new authorities are established.

25 The new LAA data set supersedes all existing performance measures. A total of ten indicators now replace the thirteen mandatory and thirteen local indicators contained in LTP2. Nevertheless, the DfT have indicated that they expect local authorities to keep monitoring a number of the existing mandatory LTP indicators and, where appropriate, local indicators that can be used to assess progress towards objectives and priorities. Local Government Reorganisation has also led to the need to disaggregate and / or delete a number of the current LTP indicators. Options for new or revised indicators are currently being assessed and proposed amendments will be reported to Members of the Shadow Authorities in 2009.

Emerging issues for the future

26 The current LTP2 period comes to an end in 2011. With guidance for LTP3 expected to be published during 2009, it should be noted that there are a number of emerging issues which are likely to have a significant impact on how future transport priorities will be determined. These include:-

27 **Towards a Sustainable Transport Strategy (TaSTS)** – This will set out the Government's future thinking on transport and how it plans to respond to the recommendations of the Eddington and Stern reports relating to competitiveness and productivity and responding to the challenges of climate change. The DfT plan to publish a formal consultation in Autumn 2008 on proposed goals, challenges and the proposed approach to the remainder of the TaSTS process. The publication of a planned White Paper will be delayed until Spring 2009. This is to allow better alignment with the Climate Change Bill. For more details see - <http://www.dft.gov.uk/about/strategy/transportstrategy/tasts/>

28 **Review of Sub-National Economic Development and Regeneration (SNR)** – This will streamline regional responsibilities and give Regional Development Agencies the lead responsibility for regional planning including transport. It is unclear at this stage whether this goes further than the priorities already established in the current Regional Transport Strategy. 2010 is the earliest that work would begin. For more details see - http://www.hm-treasury.gov.uk/media/9/5/subnational_econ_review170707.pdf

29 **Regional Funding Allocation (RFA)** – This provides the basis for prioritising the region’s transport major scheme projects. 25 schemes with a combined budget of £1.35 billion are programmed for implementation between 2006/07 and 2015/16. This is currently being re-freshed. The remit of the RFA is also being expanded and from 2012 it will include the regional LTP funding allocations for the integrated and maintenance blocks. For more details see – <http://www.dft.gov.uk/pgr/regional/strategy/rfa/rfaround2/> and http://www.hm-treasury.gov.uk/consultations_and_legislation/devolving_decision_making/regional_funding_advice.cfm

30 **Local Transport Bill** – The Bill sets out measures that will transform transport at the local level. Apart from options that could act to improve local bus services, the draft Bill it also includes legislation to set up Integrated Transport Authorities and introduce boundary changes for the potential areas that could be covered. This is currently at the Committee Stage and it is expected to be enacted in early 2009. For more details see - <http://www.dft.gov.uk/pgr/regional/localtransportbill/>

31 **Northern Way** – This project aims to close the productivity gap between the three northern regions and the rest of England. Part of the work of the Northern Way is looking into transport needs. They advise on future investments and have fed into the RFA process on projects such as SEMMMS. They are currently undertaking a study, in association with the DfT, to identify problems and potential solutions for what is loosely defined as the Manchester Rail Hub. For more details see - <http://www.thenorthernway.co.uk/>

32 **Greater Manchester Transport Innovation Fund (TIF)** – Greater Manchester’s TIF project is seeking to deliver a potential £2.8 billion investment to improve transport in Manchester in conjunction with the introduction of road user charging from 2013. This was recently the subject of a public consultation exercise and local referendum on the proposals will take place in December 2008. The County Council and the Shadow Authorities made detailed responses as part of the consultation exercise. Further dialogue to ensure that the needs of Cheshire residents are taken into account will take place once the outcome of the referendum is known. For more details see - <http://www.gmfuturetransport.co.uk/>

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