

Appendix 1

Local Transport Plan Vision and Objectives Summary

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1. Introduction

1.1 Previous Local Transport Plan work


In 2019, Cheshire East Council (CEC) adopted a Local Transport Plan (LTP) for the period of 2019-2024. This strategy encompassed all forms of transport, providing a framework to support broader policies aimed at enhancing the economy, protecting the environment, and creating attractive places to live, work and play. With the current LTP set to expire at the end of 2024, it is now time to develop a new LTP. It is also needed to create a forward-looking plan, one that takes account of a changing landscape over the last five years, and likely ongoing advances in how and why we travel. The pandemic has changed the way we travel and go about our everyday lives, and developing a new LTP provides an excellent chance to address this and move towards an effective transport network in the borough.

To begin this process, a detailed evidence base has been produced covering a broad scope to ensure that issues and opportunities are thoroughly understood. This evidence base is the foundation of future tasks in developing the LTP, with key findings summarised within Section 2 of this report.

1.2 Overview of the Vision and Objectives Process

Following completion of the evidence base, the next stage in LTP development is defining the vision and objectives that will guide the development of an LTP. This has been designed with Triple Access Planning¹ in mind and adopting a vision-led approach, to ensure we are deciding what is needed to support our communities in their movement and travel choices, rather than predicting what might be required and providing to that. This vision-led, 'decide and provide' approach, means we have a greater chance of tackling challenges, both locally and nationally, and supporting wider policies such as the journey to becoming a carbon neutral borough.

Below shows the key activities within the development of a vision and objectives for the next LTP for Cheshire East.



Reviewing the Evidence Base	Determining key challenges and opportunities to consider for the next LTP
Workshop 1	To gather input from key internal stakeholders and consider the direction needed for the LTP
Developing Visions and Objectives	Taking the evidence and internal stakeholder input to develop initial visions and objectives
Workshop 2	Testing emerging vision and objective options and introducing scenario planning
Scenario Planning	Undertaking assessment of the vision and objectives across potential future changes
Defining Vision and Objectives	Refining the vision and objectives based on further internal stakeholder input and scenario planning
Workshop 3	Seeking feedback on the vision and objectives, followed by refinement and finalising for consultation
Consultation	Preparing to share and consult with wider external stakeholders and the public

¹ [Triple Access Planning](#) - future sustainable urban accessibility can be achieved through the transport system (physical mobility), the land-use system (spatial proximity) and the telecommunications system (digital connectivity); together constituting a Triple Access System (TAS).

2. Summary of the Evidence Base

2.1 Introduction

A detailed evidence base has been produced for Cheshire East, with data analysis covering a wide range of areas, such as travel, health and wellbeing, demographics, environment and the economy. Transport affects all these areas and so it is important to have undertaken a wide-ranging evidence base to build a picture of the challenges and opportunities for Cheshire East.

The evidence base draws information from a range of data sources and has been grouped under five key themes, as follows:

- **Our Community** which explored the demographics, health and digital connectivity profile of Cheshire East.
- **Improve Transport for All** which sets out the baseline position for all modes of travel, understanding the potential for mode shift and users experience.
- **Grow the Economy** which set out the key details of the economic profile of the borough and how jobs impact travel behaviour and connectivity requirements.
- **Reduce Environmental Impacts** which considers the relationship between transport and the environment within Cheshire East.
- **Trends** which set out some of the current transport trends and projections and forecasts for what the future of transport may look like for Cheshire East.

This section summarises the key findings from the evidence base, which have been used to support the development of a vision and objectives for Cheshire East.

2.2 Our Community

Key demographic findings included:

- Cheshire East is predominately rural in geography but predominately urban in population with 39% of residents living within rural areas and with 61% living within urban areas. Cheshire East's transport system needs to connect these more rural areas to services to ensure individuals have access to key amenities and life opportunities.
- Cheshire East has an increasingly ageing population with the age group of 65+ making up 22.3% of Cheshire East's population (89,225 individuals). This highlights a key demographic trend with a need to ensure older people have access to reliable and affordable public transport and are not excluded from the transport system.
- There are low levels of physical activity generally across the borough and large health inequalities. This can be seen especially in Crewe and Macclesfield where health and wellbeing scores are below the average in England. This shows that there needs to be targeted interventions unique to each area to address the disparities, whilst ensuring there is equitable access to healthcare services, education, employment, and income equality.

- There are key areas in Cheshire East in which residents are at high risk of Transport Related Social Exclusion (TRSE). This is the inability to access opportunities, key services, and community life; thereby, creating obstacles in everyday life. Some areas within Cheshire East, such as north of Crewe, Sandbach, Middlewich, Congleton, north of Macclesfield, Knutsford and Handforth are areas of high TRSE risk with a risk level more than 100% above the local average.

2.3 Improve Transport for All

Some of the key findings from the Transport for All section include:

- There is high reliance on car journeys in Cheshire East and this has become more entrenched in recent years with corresponding falls in sustainable modes pre-pandemic. More investment and support need to be given to increasing the number of public transport and active travel trips in the borough, as this will provide many benefits such as improved health and wellbeing and reduced congestion and carbon dioxide emissions.
- The bus network provides access for 86% of residents, however low frequencies and longer journey times for bus are generally not competitive against car. This means the next LTP needs to consider how improvements can be made to bus services within the borough in line with the Bus Service Improvement Plan (BSIP).
- Analysis of propensity to travel by bus indicates there are opportunities for patronage growth in some urban areas. Therefore, it is essential urban areas have good bus connections to ensure individuals can access their place of work, education, and key services.
- Accessibility to secondary schools and large employment sites by public transport in Cheshire East is lower than the average for the North of England. To ensure more of the Cheshire East population can access essential services via public transport, it is essential that these barriers to accessing public transport are addressed.
- Analysis of propensity to cycle shows there are opportunities for significant growth in some urban areas, particularly Crewe and Macclesfield.
- There are high and medium capacity areas for modal shift in urban areas of the borough where approximately 61% residents live.
- There is a lack of 5G connectivity throughout the borough. Nearly all the borough has 4G coverage, but 5G connectivity varies depending on the service provider. It is essential that there is sufficient provision of 4G and 5G across the borough, to ensure individuals can benefit from digital connectivity when away from broadband internet access.
- Overall Cheshire East does not face significant issues of digital exclusion; however, there are high levels of digital exclusion in the south east of Macclesfield, which correlates to a low level of deprivation. To bridge this gap, more investment needs to be made to ensure better access to social and economic opportunities online.

2.4 Grow the Economy

Key findings related to the economy and growth include:

- Cheshire East has a strong economy which consistently exceeds regional and national averages for metrics such as GVA per capita or percentage of population in employment. An accessible, convenient, and resilient transport network is an enabler of economic growth by providing access to employment and training and therefore this is essential in order to maintain Cheshire East's strong position and enable future economic growth.
- Cheshire East has a more qualified and higher skilled population compared to the North West and the rest of the UK. It is important that transport connectivity links residents to educational opportunities both inside and outside of the Borough to ensure that the Borough's residents remain highly skilled.

2.5 Reduce Environmental Impacts

Key findings related to environmental impacts include:

- Transport is responsible for 23% of all the Council's operational emissions and boroughwide 34% of all emissions are from transport. More needs to be done to reduce transport related emissions within the next LTP period, and therefore a shift is required by reducing demand, moving away from private vehicles to public transport, active travel options and electric vehicles etc.
- 11 Air Quality Management Areas (AQMA) were revoked on 1st January 2025. There is now one AQMA located in Disley. Travel in and around this area needs to be addressed to support a reduction in the annual mean concentration of nitrogen dioxide.
- Between 2011 and 2017, there have been 264 internal flood incidents recorded in Cheshire East. With the increasing risk and intensity of flooding events the transport system needs to be resilient to withstand flood impacts and ensure that infrastructure can recover quickly after floods to maintain connectivity and minimise economic losses for the borough due to delays to transport.

2.6 Trends

Key findings related to trends include:

- Cars and vans hold the largest proportion of yearly journey types by approximately 75% more journeys than any other modes. More needs to be done in terms of policy and investment to improve the attractiveness of alternative modes of transport to the car or van, for people to shift from driving to public transport or active travel.
- In Cheshire East, the 2021 census revealed home working is more prevalent among those living in rural areas than in urban areas, with Crewe having a significantly lower proportion of homeworkers (20.6%) than any other settlement. If the trends relating to hybrid working continue there will be an impact on transport networks and how the workforce utilises various modes.
- Extreme weather events such as heavy precipitation, flooding and heatwaves can cause damage and disruption and are likely to become more frequent. It is important the borough's transport infrastructure is adapted to be resilient to

climate change, be able to recover quickly, and reduce the impacts of extreme weather events on the transport network to maintain connectivity and minimise economic and social losses for the borough.

- Technology is changing how individuals travel in terms of modes and frequency, for example the improvements in remote working have allowed for hybrid working. Cheshire East must understand these changes in travel habits to be able to adapt policy and the transport offering.

2.7 Summary

These key findings have been used as discussion points with internal stakeholders and considered in the determination of a draft vision intended for public consultation.

3. Developing the Vision and Objectives

3.1 The approach to defining a vision and objectives

A Local Transport Plan's vision can inspire and motivate stakeholders, including residents, businesses, and policymakers, to work together towards a shared future. It creates a sense of purpose and supports development of specific objectives and strategies. It is important to portray the correct image and ideas through wording and putting the top priorities at the centre of the LTP's message.

The initial conception of working visions stemmed from the conclusions of the evidence base that highlighted Cheshire East's main challenges and opportunities and emerging themes that summarised the LTP's main focus points. From this foundation, the approach to developing and refining centred on collaboration and understanding the importance of transport in delivering priorities across the council.

3.2 Internal Engagement

To support the development of the vision, three workshops were held with officers from across Cheshire East Council. These sessions allowed the opportunity to consider, shape and refine the emerging vision and objectives. An overview of each workshop objective is shown below.

Workshop	Workshop Objectives
Workshop 1 – 22/08/2024	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• To share and discuss high level strategic aims for the LTP and feedback on draft vision statements.• To ensure the LTP links to existing and emerging strategic priorities and objectives across the borough.• To consider and develop hypothetical scenarios.
Workshop 2 – 05/09/2024	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• To share and gather feedback on draft vision statements.• To gather insights into potential future scenarios and drivers for change in Cheshire East.• To test the emerging LTP visions across future scenarios.
Workshop 3 – 16/10/2024	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• To share the draft vision statement and objectives and seek feedback on refinements needed.• To provide an overview of how scenario planning has been used in the development of the vision and objectives.• To share the next steps for the Cheshire East LTP.

3.3 Developing and Validating the Vision and Objectives

The collaborative discussion through internal engagement, supported a broad understanding of strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats which supplemented the data-led evidence base. Additional discussions also enabled the workshop group to explore potential external factors that might impact the future of travel within Cheshire East, such as political, economic, social, technology, legal and environment impacts. To validate the emerging vision and objectives, the defined Transport for the North (TfN) Future Travel Scenarios were used as part of a scenario planning exercise to explore uncertainty.

4. The Emerging Vision and Objectives

4.1 The Proposed Vision Statement for Cheshire East

The process undertaken to define the vision for transport in the future for Cheshire East has included internal stakeholder engagement, a detailed understanding of the challenges and opportunities and stress-testing of emerging themes. This has all supported the development of the following vision:

A connected, safe and sustainable transport network, accessible to all, that supports a healthy, prosperous Cheshire East.

To provide further detail, the vision statement has been 'unpacked' to show the key elements and where a sharp focus is required.

- **Connected** – Creation of a joined-up, integrated transport network that allows for end-to-end journeys that can rival people's use of private cars in terms of time, ease and efficiency.
- **Sustainable** – Supporting a move away from reliance on private cars to more sustainable modes of transport. This will help address the climate emergency and support a carbon neutral borough.
- **Safe** – Improving both the perception and actual safety on the transport network for any travel mode.
- **Accessible** – Ensuring an accessible and inclusive network, across all modes, to support individuals' travel choices. This will also address areas of social exclusion and support areas of deprivation.
- **Healthy** – Supporting the health and wellbeing of the borough's residents and visitors through increased activity levels and improved transport links to key services.
- **Prosperous** – Promote economic growth by supporting existing and future local businesses and major employers, providing efficient transport links and encouraging/retaining talent in the area.

4.2 Aims and Objectives

To deliver on the vision, a set of aims and objectives have been developed under four key theme titles: 1) Improve Connections, 2) Support the Wellbeing of Our Community, 3) Reduce Environmental Impacts, and 4) Grow the Economy. These four themes have been developed from the LTP evidence base following a data-driven approach to inform local transport needs in the context of recent and emerging changes in Cheshire East. These have been used for continuity within the process of formulating the LTP and they align with the needs of the borough.

Each theme's aim and objectives are set out below. These objectives set out specific desires for Cheshire East based on the evidence and feedback from workshops. They cover a broad range of topics within each theme and pinpoint the key issues and opportunities in Cheshire East.

4.2.1 Improve Connections

The overarching aim to improve connections is:

To provide transport choices for those who travel in and around Cheshire East and provide attractive alternatives to private cars.

This will be achieved by the following objectives:

- Provide active travel networks that make walking, wheeling and cycling the natural choice for short journeys.
- Improve the reliability, frequency and accessibility of public transport options, including local and on demand services and community transport.
- Support individuals with their personal travel choices, integrating trips and focusing on those areas with the highest travel demand.
- Maintain the existing transport asset, seeking opportunities for cost-effective, safe, sustainable improvements. Targeting investment in the safety and accessibility of the transport network to best achieve the outcomes of the LTP.

There are a number of challenges identified which these objectives will address, specifically:

- Ageing population with reduced active mobility.
- Frequency and reliability of public transport services.
- Transport connectivity, especially in urban centres.
- Sustainability of current services.

4.2.2 Support the Wellbeing of Our Community

The overarching aim to deliver for our community is:

To improve health, wellbeing and inclusion in Cheshire East by supporting people to get to where they need to.

This will be achieved by the following objectives:

- Improve accessibility to essential services such as healthcare, education, employment and leisure.
- Enhance safety and the sense of security for every journey, regardless of the mode of transport.
- Provide the infrastructure and support to increase levels of physical activity to improve wellbeing and reduce health inequalities.
- Support the delivery of affordable transport choices for all.

The challenges that will be addressed are:

- Isolation to key services such as employment, education and health.
- Lack of physical activity linked to limited active travel options.
- Cost of travel on public transport versus private car.

4.2.3 Reduce Environmental Impacts

The overarching aim to deliver reduced impacts on the environment is:

To reduce the impact of transport on the environment, managing the effect on climate change, air quality and biodiversity.

This will be delivered through the following objectives:

- Support more environmentally friendly forms of travel, providing local infrastructure and improvements to support decarbonisation.
- Reduce transport related emissions through a reduction in vehicle miles to respond to the climate emergency.
- Providing a resilient transport network to climate change and extreme weather.
- Mitigate the impact of transport improvements and infrastructure on the environment.

In delivering on the objectives, the following challenges will be addressed:

- Meeting climate goals and carbon zero targets.
- Reliance on private vehicles that output carbon emissions.
- Flooding incidents reducing transport infrastructure resilience.

4.2.4 Grow the Economy

An overarching aim to deliver growth in the economy is:

To support Cheshire East's economy by providing a resilient and accessible network that enables education, housing and business development.

The objectives that underpin this are:

- Provide transport networks that support sustainable development and business opportunities.
- Support and grow the local economy through improved physical and digital connectivity.
- Enable recruitment and skills retention through better transport links.
- Facilitate sustainable travel choices to residents of new developments from the day they move in.

The objectives will support the following challenges:

- Links to key businesses to ensure employment retention.
- Lack of fibre broadband in rural regions that reduces digital connectivity.
- New developments being isolated from main transport network to improve inwards attraction.

5. Outcomes for the Local Transport Plan (LTP) Development

5.1 How will the content shape the LTP

This summary document has detailed the process of reaching the draft vision and set of objectives. The importance of this process cannot be overstated in shaping the correct direction for Cheshire East's LTP. A clear vision and well-defined objectives are crucial for the success of a LTP by meeting the following key points:

- **Direction and Focus:** A vision statement provides a long-term direction for the transport system, outlining what the community aims to achieve. Objectives break down this vision into specific goals under each theme and helps to focus efforts on key priorities.
- **Building Relationships:** Developing a vision and objectives involves engaging with stakeholders, businesses and partners. This process helps build consensus and ensures that the transport plan reflects the community's needs and aspirations.
- **Strategic Planning:** Objectives guide the development of strategies and actions needed to achieve the vision. They help in identifying the necessary projects, policies, and investments, ensuring that all efforts are aligned towards the vision.
- **Adaptability:** Having a vision and objectives allows for flexibility in planning. As conditions change, the transport plan can be adjusted while still working towards the overarching vision.

By establishing a clear vision and objectives, Local Transport Plans can be more strategic, cohesive, and effective in meeting the community's current and future transport needs.

5.2 Next Steps

The vision and objectives will need to be consulted on, to ensure that they resonate and respond to those living, working and visiting the borough. The feedback received will be invaluable and support the future development of the Local Transport Plan, as well as supporting other Cheshire East policy and strategy development, such as the Local Plan.