

Cheshire East Council

Cabinet

Date of Meeting:	12 th September 2017
Report of:	Frank Jordan, Executive Director for Place
Subject/Title:	Local Transport Plan Refresh
Portfolio Holder:	Cllr David Brown, Highways and Infrastructure

1. Report Summary

- 1.1. The current Local Transport Plan (LTP), as published in 2011, was intended to be a framework for strategic transport planning in Cheshire East. The plan was prepared at a time when Government foresaw limited investment in local transport infrastructure, especially major projects, leading to the Cheshire East LTP being outdated. There is a need to update our LTP to reflect the Council's accelerated investment in the transport infrastructure across Cheshire East, in the context of a new Local Plan spatial strategy. This paper outlines the proposed approach to preparing an updated Local Transport Plan.
- 1.2. The Council has set out a clear vision and strategy for jobs-led economic growth in the new Local Plan. Successful delivery of this growth will require a comprehensive and integrated approach to improvements in local transport provision across the Borough, through development of both transport infrastructure and transport services. A new Local Transport Plan will bring together strategies for all modes of transport to ensure there is a coherent approach to meeting the Council's wider objectives for the economy, environment and society throughout Cheshire East.
- 1.3 Local transport provision needs to be considered in the context of a number of recent and emerging changes that have potential impacts on Cheshire East, including;
 - Cheshire East Council's refreshed corporate objectives and adoption of the principles of 'Quality of Place' as a key driver of strategy.
 - Further progress on the new Local Plan which defines a forward-looking spatial strategy for the Borough and has subject to a favourable Planning Inspectors report.
 - Development of a number of specific local transport strategies, including the new Cheshire East Cycling Strategy and Sustainable Modes of Travel to School Strategy.

- Development of new infrastructure programmes by Highways England and Network Rail.
- Emerging evidence and strategy at the sub national level under the auspices of both Transport for the North and Midlands Connect.
- On-going work at the regional level to develop the Strategic Economic Plan and support this through LEP-wide strategies for rail and strategic road investment in both infrastructure and services.
- Progress on neighbouring authorities spatial and economic strategies, notably the new Greater Manchester Spatial Framework, with implications for the north of the Borough and the need for an update to the South East Manchester Multi-modal Study.
- New legislation in the Buses Act 2017, which conveys new powers to Local Transport Authorities for Enhanced Quality Partnerships.
- Adoption of Neighbourhood Plans within Cheshire East, which help to define local expectations and concerns regarding transport provision, including local parking issues.
- The Council's Medium Term Financial Strategy requires the Council to increase revenue and increase value for money.
- Long term plan led programmes such as HS2 and the Constellation Partnership growth strategy.
- Government's new Clean Air Zones Framework.
- Impacts on travel behaviour resulting from the pervasive and disruptive impacts of technology on transport systems and infrastructure through the wider adoption of smart technologies.
- The requirements for active lifestyles, accessibility and wellbeing of an aging population.
- A need to support businesses in Cheshire East to promote sustainable transport and manage travel demands by car, thus reducing the pressures on parking.

1.4 All of these considerations raise potential implications and opportunities for local transport within Cheshire East. In order to ensure that the Council has a clear, evidence-based position on these matters there is a need for them to be considered as part of the LTP refresh.

2 Recommendation

Cabinet Members are recommended to:

- 2.1 Approve the proposed approach to updating the Local Transport Plan for Cheshire East.
- 2.2 Note that an All Member briefing was held on 17th July 2017 to update all Councillors on the process and that this briefing was based upon the material presented in Appendix 1. Locally-specific briefings are to be arranged with the parish and town councils as part of the LTP refresh programme.

- 2.3 Authorise the Executive Director of Place in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Highways and Infrastructure to make arrangements for preparation of an updated Local Transport Plan for 2018-2023.
- 2.4 Note that a draft of the updated LTP will be reported to Cabinet at the end of 2017, seeking approval for a period of public consultation.

3 Reasons for Recommendation

- 3.1 The existing Local Transport Plan 2011-2026 for Cheshire East was prepared at a time pre-dating the Council's current spatial planning vision. It also reflects a period when there were severe constraints on the Department for Transport's funding for major infrastructure projects and block funding allocations to local authorities. Hence a number of potential major projects within Cheshire East are inadequately profiled in the current document. In this regard, the current Local Transport Plan is no longer fit-for-purpose as a planning framework for local transport throughout Cheshire East. Therefore, the time is right for a review and refresh of this document to ensure that the Council maintains a document that is robust and relevant to local priorities.

4 Other Options Considered

- 4.1 As the LTP is a statutory document, no options other than to update it were considered.
- 4.2 The proposed approach is considered to be a timely and proportionate means of fulfilling this requirement. The option of a comprehensive re-write of the LTP was considered. This is expected to require at least 18 months to complete. Given the comprehensive body of evidence prepared to support the recent adoption of the new Local Plan, it is considered that a more streamlined approach may be adopted to prepare a robust but updated LTP.

5 Background

- 5.1 The project plan for refreshing the Local Transport Plan defines the following key stages:
 - 5.1.1 **Stage 1:** A robust evidence base has been developed to inform production of a new Local Transport Plan. This evidence base has identified key strategic challenges in respect of transport connectivity within Cheshire East and to key destinations outside the Borough.
 - 5.1.2 **Stage 2:** Following this, a vision document has been prepared (Appendix 2) which outlines how transport will contribute to the achievement of the Council's corporate outcomes and 'Quality of Place' principles through addressing key transport challenges:

- Providing connectivity that enables transformational economic change and supports a strong economy.
- Providing accessibility for residents and businesses (particularly in rural areas).
- Improving our environment.
- Addressing poor health and physical inactivity.
- Maximising the benefits from technical innovations including smart ticketing and new types of vehicles / fuels.
- Network management and asset maintenance.

5.1.3 **Stage 3:** The proposed approach to refreshing the Local Transport Plan is to develop a place-based strategy for transport that is responsive to the character, needs and opportunities arising across the Borough. The strategy will reflect detailed evidence on current and forecast travel demands in order to develop local and strategic responses that are truly multi-modal, making the best use of opportunities for walking, cycling, public transport and private car. The strategy will also complement our Network Management and Asset Management Strategies to ensure that we maximise the potential of existing infrastructure. The strategy will consider the transport needs of residents, businesses (including freight & distribution) and visitors so that it demonstrably contributes to the wider Corporate Objectives of the council. Appropriate officer groups will be established to ensure the strategy incorporates input from both Place and People directorates of the Council.

5.1.4 **Stage 4:** Public consultation on the refreshed Local Transport Plan and subsequent final drafting of document. Public consultation will take place on the basis of a draft Local Transport Plan update, and this is not anticipated before the start of 2018.

5.2 Following completion of the evidence base and drafting of a strategic Vision Document, it is proposed that work proceeds to prepare a whole Borough strategy plus a framework of 11 place-based sub-strategies. The 11 place-based strategies will cover the 9 key services centres and 2 principal towns identified in the Local Plan including surrounding rural areas to provide Borough-wide coverage. These are intended to define how the Council will seek to deliver transport improvements over the period 2018-23 to meet its wider corporate objectives and identify future needs up to and beyond 2030. The place-based strategies will ensure that the characteristics, opportunities and needs of towns, neighbourhoods and rural areas across Cheshire East are emphasised within the overall framework for transport. Much work is already progressing through the Local Plan's Infrastructure Plan, development management of planning applications (S106 agreements), Neighbourhood Plans, community work or related strategies such as the new Cycling Strategy and Rights of Way Improvement Plan (which combined with the refreshed LTP will provide a significant contribution to

maintaining and improving countryside access and in turn supporting 'Quality of Place'). This complementary work will be captured and supported in preparing the Local Transport Plan.

- 5.3 To enable members to understand the approach to updating the Local Transport Plan, an All Member briefing was held at Westfields on 17th July 2017, based upon the materials presented in the Appendices to this report.

6 Wards Affected and Local Ward Members

- 6.1 All Wards in Cheshire East.

7 Implications of Recommendation

7.1 Policy Implications

- 7.1.1 Updating the Local Transport Plan will ensure that the Council maintains a current statement of Local Transport Strategy in accordance with its responsibilities as the Local Transport Authority.
- 7.1.2 Development of the Local Transport Plan will be undertaken to ensure that there is a consistent policy-fit with all relevant adopted and emerging local policies especially the Local Plan, Rights of Way Improvement Plan, Travel-to-School Policies, Mode Specific Strategies (e.g. Cycling Strategy), Parking policies, the Network Management Plan and corporate Sustainability Policies.

7.2 Legal Implications

- 7.2.1 As the statutory Local Transport Authority the Council is required to maintain an up-to-date Local Transport Plan that provides a strategic framework for planning and delivery of improvements in local transport provision.
- 7.2.2 Development of the new Local Transport Plan will be in accordance with statutory requirements for Community Engagement, Equalities Impact Assessment and Strategic Environmental Appraisal.

7.3 Financial Implications

- 7.3.1 A costed programme for the necessary tasks has been prepared. The LTP Refresh is being delivered over 2 financial years 2016/17 and 2017/18. Funding for this expenditure is contained within the Councils MTFS, approved at Council on 23rd February 2017, as part of the budget for the Strategic Infrastructure in the Place Directorate. The costs for producing a new draft LTP are estimated to be approximately £100,000. This excludes any internal recharges

for staff time to support the process and the value of such recharges is still to be confirmed.

- 7.3.2 These costs are exclusive of locally-specific studies to support Town & Neighbourhood Plans, Public Consultation, Equalities Impact Assessment and Strategic Environmental Appraisal which will take place on completion of a new draft Local Transport Plan. The scope and resource requirements for these elements will be confirmed, in advance of any work proceeding, at the appropriate time.

7.4 Equality Implications

- 7.4.1 The LTP will be supported by an Equalities Impact Assessment to ensure that the needs and impacts on all residents are understood, especially individuals or groups at risk as a result of health, age, gender, race or lifestyle.

7.5 Rural Community Implications

- 7.5.1 57% of the Cheshire East highway network is classed as rural serving over half of our population. The quality and availability of the rural transport network is vital to the local economy, not just in rural areas. It needs to take account of the specific needs of rural residents and visitors as well as the impact on the character and connectivity of our rural areas. This in turn impacts on the Borough's 'Quality of Place'.
- 7.5.2 The LTP refresh will include consideration of transport issues in rural areas throughout the Borough. This is aided by the place-based approach to the planning process, so that the emphasis afforded to rural issues can reflect the diverse nature of different parts of Cheshire East.

7.6 Human Resources Implications

- 7.6.1 None.

7.7 Health and Wellbeing Implications

- 7.7.1 The Local Transport Plan will consider the impact of transport on issues affecting public health, most notably Air Quality and the contribution that Active Travel – walking and cycling – can make to health & wellbeing. The Plan will need to be coordinated with the Council's wider strategic approaches to addressing public health outcomes. Officers from the Public Health service will be engaged in production of the Local Transport Plan.

7.8 Implications for Children and Young People

7.8.1 Any specific transport issues relating to Children and Young People will be incorporated into the Local Transport Plan Refresh. Policy development will take full account of the Council's current work on a new Home to School Transport Policy and the emerging Sustainable Modes of Travel to Schools (SMOTS) strategy.

7.9 Overview and Scrutiny Committee Implications

7.9.1 Work of the Local Transport Plan will be reported to the Council's Environment and Regeneration Overview & Scrutiny Committee.

7.10 Other Implications (Please Specify)

7.10.1 None.

8 Risk Management

8.1A project board has been established, chaired by the Director of Infrastructure and Highways to ensure appropriate project governance and strategic direction. Monthly Highlight Reports will be prepared and reviewed at the Strategic Infrastructure Programme Board.

8.2A project risk register has been prepared and this will be maintained and updated throughout the project. Mitigation measures, monitoring and effective control will be exercised throughout the programme, under the direction of the Strategic Infrastructure Programme Board.

9 Access to Information

The background papers relating to this report can be inspected by contacting the report writer:

Documents are held on file at
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10 Contact Information

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