
Meeting: Executive
Date: 15 September 2009
Subject: Leighton Buzzard Station Travel Plan
Report of: Cllr Tom Nicols, Portfolio Holder for Sustainable Development
Summary: This report seeks Executive approval and support for the Leighton Buzzard Station Travel Plan, which will seek to reduce the transport impacts of Leighton Buzzard station by encouraging station users to travel to the station by non-car modes of transport. This will be done through extensive marketing of such modes of transport, as well as making significant improvements to transport infrastructure at the station. This programme of works will be achieved within the existing budgets of the council, plus an additional bid for Growth Area Funding. Leighton Buzzard is one of 31 stations nationwide taking part in a government-supported National Pilot Station Travel Plan Programme.

Advising Officer: Gary Alderson, Director of Sustainable Communities
Contact Officer: James Gleave, Planning and Transport Planner
Public/Exempt: Public
Wards Affected: Grovebury
Leighton Linlade Central
Plantation
Southcott
Function of: Executive
Key Decision Yes
**Reason for urgency/
exemption from call-in
(if appropriate)** Not applicable

RECOMMENDATIONS:

- 1. That the Executive approve and support the Leighton Buzzard Station Travel Plan, as set out in Appendix A.**
- 2. That the Executive authorises the Director of Sustainable Communities, in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Sustainable Development, to be given delegated authority to make appropriate changes to the Station Travel Plan Action Plan as deemed appropriate for achieving its aims and objectives until April 2012.**
- 3 To note that the funding is within the LTP programme and that the capital expenditure within this will follow the Capital Programme approvals process.**

Reason for Recommendations: To obtain the Executive's endorsement and support of the Leighton Buzzard Station Travel Plan, and to ensure that changes can be made to the Station Travel Plan Action Plan throughout its implementation.

Background to Station Travel Plans

1. Station Travel Plans is an initiative launched by Government in the Rail White Paper *Delivering a Sustainable Railway (2007)*. The concept builds upon practice that has long been established in Workplace and Residential Travel Planning. Station Travel Plans can best be described as means of managing travel between a railway station and the community it serves. This is with the aim of helping to tackle local transport-related issues such as congestion and on-street parking, reduce the environmental impacts of station travel, and to encourage greater use of the train. This is done by a variety of measures, most notably improving infrastructure and services for non-car modes (e.g. cycle parking), encouraging people to use these modes through promotion, and better car park management.
2. As a result of the White Paper, the Association of Train Operating Companies (ATOC), with the support of the Department for Transport, has set up the National Pilot Station Travel Plan Programme. The purpose of this 3-year programme is to test the Station Travel Plan idea across the country to see whether it can encourage rail passengers to travel to and from stations more sustainably. Local authorities nationwide were invited to submit potential stations for this programme in December 2007.
3. Leighton Buzzard station was submitted by Bedfordshire County Council as being a good potential pilot station, because of its location within the urban area, the status of Leighton Buzzard as a Cycling Town, and because of the strong local commitment to sustainable transport. Leighton Buzzard was accepted onto the National Pilot Station Travel Plan Programme, which consists of 31 stations in total. These stations range from small rural stations to major city interchanges. Examples of the stations in the programme include Milton Keynes Central, Hatfield, Digby & Sowton, Ashford International, and Leeds.

Background to the Leighton Buzzard Station Travel Plan

4. When accepted onto the National Pilot Station Travel Plan Programme, a Steering Group of stakeholders, Members and key officers was set up, for the purposes of taking key decisions relating to the development of the Station Travel Plan, and to secure the support of key stakeholders for the Station Travel Plan. The Steering Group currently consists of Cllr David McVicar and officer representatives from the following organisations:
 - Arriva the Shires and Essex (a local bus operator)
 - Buckinghamshire County Council
 - Central Bedfordshire Council (formerly Bedfordshire County Council and South Bedfordshire District Council)
 - Go-Cycle Leighton Linslade (the name of the Cycling Town)
 - Grant Palmer Passenger Services (a local bus operator)
 - Greensand Trust
 - Leighton-Linslade Cycle Forum
 - Leighton-Linslade Town Council
 - London Midland (a train operating company)
 - Network Rail

- Passenger Focus (the statutory rail passenger watchdog)
- South Bedfordshire Friends of the Earth
- Southern Railway (a train operating company)
- Wing Parish Council

It is now proposed that the Steering Group be widened to include up to four Central Bedfordshire Council Members. Consultation on this proposal, and on this Report, is currently taking place with Members for the affected wards.

5. As the Travel Plan has been formulated and developed a series of information Workshops has also been organised to facilitate Member involvement. The Portfolio Holder in post at the time, plus all Bedfordshire County and South Bedfordshire District Members for the Leighton Buzzard area and all Leighton-Linslade Town Council Members were invited to the March workshop, as were all prospective Central Bedfordshire Members. A further workshop is planned for early September.
6. Bedfordshire County Council was appointed by the Steering Group to be the lead authority on developing the Station Travel Plan. This work was supported by a Working Group of key stakeholders, set up by the Steering Group as a means of providing regular stakeholder input into the development of the Station Travel Plan. This work consisted of:
 - Agreeing the general aims and objectives of the Station Travel Plan with the Steering Group
 - Undertaking a comprehensive programme of research, including passenger surveys, interviews, audits of sustainable transport facilities, and a survey of current non-users of the station
 - A comprehensive review of funding sources, anticipated levels of funding, and any requirements associated with obtaining this funding
 - A review of infrastructure schemes that are already planned in Leighton Buzzard
 - Developing and agreeing with the Steering Group an Action Plan, and targets
7. This development work culminated in a Station Travel Plan being agreed by the Steering Group. This was submitted to ATOC in May as the final Station Travel Plan, on the condition that the Station Travel Plan was not yet fully adopted as Council policy. This was necessary in order to meet the final deadline of the National Pilot Station Travel Plan Programme.

Summary of the Station Travel Plan

8. A full copy of the Station Travel Plan can be found in Appendix A. The Station Travel Plan contains 11 objectives which seek to transform Leighton Buzzard station into an effective transport interchange with high quality sustainable transport facilities and services which are well used. These objectives include:
 - To achieve a modal shift away from single car occupancy travel as a means of travelling to and from Leighton Buzzard station
 - To achieve a significantly improved level of bus interchange at Leighton Buzzard station by improving both bus facilities and services
 - To work with Go-Cycle to achieve a significant increase in people cycling to and from Leighton Buzzard station, and to make the station a best practice example for catering for the needs of cyclists
 - To manage car travel to and from Leighton Buzzard station in a way that achieves a reduction in commuter parking on local roads, as well as increasing the use of vehicles with lower CO₂ emissions and increasing the number of station users car sharing

9. To achieve these objectives, the Station Travel Plan sets out a number of key actions which all stakeholders are committed to delivering, as set out in the Station Travel Plan Action Plan (Appendix B). The Action Plan focuses on co-ordinating and maximising opportunities from works that are already planned, some additional infrastructure, and a particular focus on promoting and marketing non-car modes of transport. The actions include:
 - Encouraging commuters to travel to the station by more sustainable modes of transport by providing them with information such as bus timetables, cycle maps, and through providing a Onward Travel Information Pack that outlines alternative travel options available to them
 - Increasing the amount of cycle parking at the station, and supporting the work of Go-Cycle to encourage more commuters to cycle to the station
 - Re-timing the bus services that currently serve the station so that they better meet busy trains, with a longer term aim to increase the number of bus services running to the station
 - Working with the Department for Transport, London Midland, and Network Rail to identify and deliver more significant improvements to the station forecourt and facilities, potentially to be delivered by Growth Area Funding and committed funding from the rail industry

10. These, and other actions in the Station Travel Plan, have been developed in close consultation with our key stakeholders, and taking account of the views of passengers. Based upon their advice, and a thorough assessment of what is affordable, the Action Plan not only represents a significant improvement to access and facilities at the station, but also is a deliverable. In its assessment of the Station Travel Plan, ATOC was very complimentary of the deliverability of the Station Travel Plan.

11. The Station Travel Plan also contains a number of targets and indicators by which the success of the Station Travel Plan will be measured. We worked closely with our stakeholders to ensure that these targets were achievable, and that they closely reflected similar targets in statutory documents such as the Local Area Agreement and Local Transport Plan. Some notable targets and indicators include:
 - Reduce the average CO₂ emissions per station access trip from 367g per trip to 327g per trip (similar to National Indicator 186 – Per capita Carbon Dioxide emissions in the local authority area)
 - Increasing the percentage of people who access the station by bus (similar to indicator BVPI 102 – Local bus patronage in the Local Transport Plan)
 - The number of bicycles parked at the station each day increasing from 55 to 150 (a Go-Cycle target)

12. Under guidance issued by ATOC to all pilots in the National Pilot Station Travel Plan Programme, the Station Travel Plan Action Plan and Targets are required to be kept as “active” documents. This means that the Action Plan and Targets are kept under continuous review, and any necessary changes to the Action Plan and Targets are made in the following events:
 - When actions or targets are likely to be achieved ahead of time, changes can be made to the Action Plan to set more challenging targets or to deliver additional actions;
 - When actions or targets are unlikely to be met, changes can be made to the Action Plan to reflect the reasons for this, following exploring all other options to tackle these reasons;
 - When new schemes currently not in the Action Plan are identified as being able to achieve the Station Travel Plan aims and objectives and deliverable, they can be added to the Action Plan.

13. As this is a requirement of the National Pilot Station Travel Plan Programme, it is recommended that the Executive authorises the Director of Sustainable Communities, in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Sustainable Development, to be given delegated authority to make appropriate changes to the Station Travel Plan Action Plan, as deemed appropriate for achieving its aims and objectives until April 2012. Any changes made will also be undertaken in consultation with the Station Travel Plan Steering Group.

Why a Station Travel Plan at Leighton Buzzard?

14. Implementing a Station Travel Plan at Leighton Buzzard offers significant potential for tackling a number of local transport issues in Leighton Buzzard. The Leighton Buzzard Big Plan identified an inaccessible railway station as a key local transport concern, particularly relating to the lack of integration between local buses and train services. The Leighton Buzzard Station Travel Plan contains a number of actions to deal with these concerns, such as re-timing existing bus services and an improved station forecourt.

15. A notable local issue is commuter parking on local streets in the Southcott ward. The Executive has already been made aware of this issue in its meeting on Tuesday 21st July, where a petition was received from residents of Southcourt Avenue requesting a resident's permit scheme, for the purpose of tackling commuter parking. The Station Travel Plan will help by encouraging commuters to use alternative modes of transport to get to the station, and to take advantage of discounted station car parking for cars with lower carbon emissions.
16. A successful Station Travel Plan will also help to make the door-to-door experience of using trains much easier and more enjoyable for our residents. By providing facilities and services that enable easy interchange between buses, bicycles, cars, walking, and the train, residents are more likely to be encouraged to use these modes of transport again in the future, helping to cut down on local and regional congestion. It also makes the experience of getting around our area much easier and more pleasant.
17. An effective Station Travel Plan also offers the opportunity to tackle issues associated with growth. Based upon population and passenger growth forecasts, it is estimated that assuming nothing is done to encourage the use of more sustainable modes, there will be an additional 80,000 car trips to and from the station each year within 3 years. By promoting alternative modes and improving facilities and services for these modes, we estimate that this growth could be significantly reduced.

Notable achievements to date

18. The Station Travel Plan was highly praised by the National Pilot Station Travel Plan Programme. The formal feedback from ATOC on the Leighton Buzzard Station Travel Plan stated that it is "*probably the best Station Travel Plan we have seen*" out of all of the 31 pilot stations. Also, Southern Railway, which is required to deliver 30 Station Travel Plans as part of its new franchise, has expressed that it is keen to learn how to develop a quality Station Travel Plan from the experience of Leighton Buzzard.

19. The process of developing the Station Travel Plan has already secured some significant additional benefits. By encouraging partnership working and establishing contacts between all organisations in the Steering Group, some additional schemes have already been (or are in the process of being) delivered at the station. These include:
- Additional cycle parking on Platform 1 facing onto Southcourt Avenue, due to be installed on September 28th
 - Additional motorcycle parking outside the entrance to the station car park
 - A new bus shelter at the station bus stop, to be installed soon
 - Supporting Go-Cycle events at the station, including it's current 'Cycle Friday's' promotion running until the end of October
 - Investigating options with Cycle England and Network Rail to improve access over the railway bridge immediately to the south of the station for cyclists
 - A bid for 'Kickstart' funding has been submitted to Government to financially support extending town bus services to the station during the morning and evening peak hours
 - Funding has been secured from ATOC to investigate the feasibility of a taxi / minibus share scheme at the station

Implications for Central Bedfordshire Council

Leading the Station Travel Plan

20. The intention is for Central Bedfordshire Council to act as the lead authority for the delivery of the Station Travel Plan. Being the lead authority for the delivery of the Station Travel Plan is considered to be particularly important for Central Bedfordshire Council because:
- As Station Travel Plans are a new initiative, there is the opportunity for Central Bedfordshire Council to be seen as a best practice authority in the delivery of improved local transport and rail integration through Station Travel Plans;
 - Being the highway authority for the Leighton Buzzard area, Central Bedfordshire Council maintains a general responsibility for local transport across all modes of transport in the area, including on trips to and from the station. The multi-modal nature of our responsibilities means that the Council is in the best position to promote modal change among station users;
 - The majority of local transport improvements and initiatives, such as infrastructure improvements, supported bus services, and local travel promotions, are the responsibility of Central Bedfordshire Council, therefore the Station Travel Plan fits in well with our own responsibilities;
 - We have close working relationships with a number of transport providers in Leighton Buzzard, including Go-Cycle, Buckinghamshire County Council, bus operators, train operators, and community transport. The Station Travel Plan offers the opportunity to utilise these relationships for the benefits of station users.

21. Based upon experience from Bedfordshire County Council, other Station Travel Plans, and advice from ATOC, the responsibilities of being the lead authority in the Station Travel Plan are likely to include:
- Ensuring that infrastructure improvements and promotional activities assigned to Central Bedfordshire Council are delivered in accordance with the Action Plan;
 - Ensure that other stakeholders tasked with delivering infrastructure improvements and promotional activities deliver those activities;
 - Maintain an overall responsibility for the monitoring of the targets and indicators, including undertaking our own monitoring and receiving data from others;
 - Producing Quarterly Progress Reports for the National Pilot Station Travel Plan Programme, as required by ATOC.
22. The establishment of the Steering Group and Working Group ensures that there are clear lines of communication with all stakeholders, who know exactly what actions and monitoring is required from them, and when. In the event that external stakeholders are unable to meet their commitments, the presence of the Working Group means that such issues can be identified as soon as they arise, and remedial actions can be taken as early as possible. The Quarterly Progress Reports to be provided to ATOC will also coincide with meetings of the Steering Group, when Progress Reports will be tabled in any case. These responsibilities can be met within existing staff levels.

Financial

23. The meeting of the Executive on 18th August 2008 highlighted a number of budgetary concerns for Central Bedfordshire Council, and it is understood that a review of the expenditure of the authority is currently being undertaken by officers. The Station Travel Plan will require financial commitment from Central Bedfordshire Council, as well as other stakeholders involved, for the delivery of schemes and continued monitoring, however, this would be of no additional cost to Central Bedfordshire Council.
24. Table 1 outlines a number of infrastructure schemes that are included in the Leighton Buzzard Station Travel Plan Action Plan (Appendix B). These capital schemes are being funded through two sources:
- Local Transport Plan (LTP) Integrated Transport Capital Programme
 - Growth Area Funding (GAF)
25. The Local Transport Plan Integrated Transport Capital Programme is fully-funded by an annual grant that is paid by Central Government to Central Bedfordshire Council through the Local Transport Plan process. All of the allocated Growth Area Funding outlined in the Action Plan is being spent on cycle improvement schemes in Leighton Buzzard as part of the Leighton-Linslade Cycle Demonstration Town Project. As a result, none of the schemes outlined in Table 1 require additional Central Bedfordshire Council funding. All of these existing commitments are subject to review of the Council's wider capital programme, due to be considered by the Executive on 13th October 2009.

Table 1 – Costs of schemes already committed to and funded in Central Bedfordshire Council's LTP Capital Programme

Funding Source	Purpose	Year		
		2009/10	2010/11	2011/12
Capital <i>Local Transport Plan Integrated Transport Capital Programme</i>	Station Road Pedestrian Improvements	£50,000		
	Soulbury Road Lighting Column Replacement	£5,000		
	Linslade Recreation Ground footway resurfacing	£50,000		
	Wing Road Pavement resurfacing	£67,000		
	20mph zone extension (carry over from 08/09)	£40,000		
	Wing Road Traffic Management and Pedestrian Improvements Study	£53,000		
	Southcourt Avenue Parking Restrictions	£20,000		
	Leighton-Linslade Parking Study (as part of Central Beds Parking Strategy)	£15,000		
	Wing Road Bus Stop Improvements		£10,000	
	Leighton-Linslade Transport Study		£80,000	
	Old Road Pedestrian Crossing			£47,000
	Southcourt Avenue Pedestrian Crossing (nr. Himley Green)			£47,000
	Capital <i>Growth Area Funding</i>	Cycle Route to Stephenson Close via Station Car Park	£60,000	
Bunkers Lane Cycle Routes		£13,000		
Cycle route from railway station to town centre		£50,000		
Review of traffic management in New Road and Church Road area		£5,000		
Wing Road Cycle Route (partly funded by secured developer contribution)		£106,000		
Soulbury Road Uphill Cycle Lane		£50,000		
Stoke Road and Old Linslade Road Speed Limit		£14,000		

26. The action plan also contains a number of actions that are being funded by Section 106 Developer Contributions. These are set out in Table 2, consisting of three infrastructure schemes, which Central Bedfordshire Council is delivering on behalf of the developers through the Bedfordshire Highways contract with Amey, and one service scheme, which is being delivered by the developer to specifications agreed with Central Bedfordshire Council. The full costs of all of these schemes are being met by the associated developers, meaning that no financial contribution is required from Central Bedfordshire Council to deliver any of these schemes. These schemes will not be committed to until the Section 106 agreements have been signed (if they have not already been), and the monies are received from the developer. This is in accordance with Council policy as agreed on 26th February 2009.

Table 2 – Leighton Buzzard Station Travel Plan Action Plan schemes that are being fully funded through Section 106 Developer Contributions

Scheme name	Scheme type	Year		
		2009/10	2010/11	2011/12
Vimy Road Cycleway	Infrastructure	£6,150		
Rosebury Avenue Traffic Calming	Infrastructure	£20,000		
Billington Road Civilisation	Infrastructure		£417,500	£417,500
Bus service to Town Centre and Southern Leighton Buzzard Exemplar site	Service	£500,000	£500,000	£500,000

27. In addition to the schemes set out in Tables 1 and 2, the Station Travel Plan will also require the delivery of new schemes which are currently not contained within existing service and capital plans and programmes. These schemes are set out in Table 3.

Table 3 –Additional schemes not currently contained within Central Bedfordshire Council transport programmes

Funding Source	Purpose	Year		
		2009/10	2010/11	2011/12
Revenue <i>Local Transport Plan</i>	Marketing and Promotion of non-car modes	£10,000	£15,000	£15,000
Capital <i>Local Transport Plan Integrated Transport Capital Programme</i>	Improved pedestrian access to the station	-	£30,000	-

28. The costs of these schemes will be met through the approved revenue and capital budgets for the Local Transport Plan, so no additional funding is requested for the delivery of these schemes. The revenue scheme will be funded from the approved revenue budget for the Local Transport Plan. If the Station Travel Plan were to be adopted by the Executive, then the capital scheme would be included in the 2010/11 LTP Integrated Transport Capital Programme recommended to Members for their approval in time for the forthcoming financial year. Both of the above schemes meet the aims and objectives of the current Local Transport Plan.
29. The Station Travel Plan is also looking at the possibility of bidding for Growth Area Funding during 2010/11 to deliver an improved station forecourt, which we estimate would require funding of £400,000. A successful bid for any funding available for this would be dependant upon having an agreed design, and all relevant permissions secured. For this purpose, Central Bedfordshire Council is funding development and design works during this financial year from the LTP Integrated Transport Capital Programme.

30. There is also the potential for funding to become available for the delivery of Station Travel Plan schemes because Leighton Buzzard is part of the National Pilot Station Travel Plan Programme. It should be noted that ATOC have yet to give a specific commitment to continued funding of Station Travel Plan projects throughout the 3-year life of the programme (and we have based our Action Plan on the assumption that no funding will be forthcoming from ATOC). However, ATOC have committed to fully funding and undertaking future year passenger surveys at all pilot stations, and are committed to inviting all pilots to register their interests for specific pots of funding as and when they become available. For example, Central Bedfordshire Council has already been successful in registering its interest to be part of a national pilot station taxi sharing scheme, which ATOC is currently developing.

Delivery of the Station Travel Plan

31. Experience from other Travel Plans has also highlighted that the most successful Travel Plans consist of deliverable actions and targets, supported by an effective monitoring mechanism. ATOC have also informed us that, should there be evidence of consistent underperformance in the delivery of the Station Travel Plan, then Leighton Buzzard could be excluded from the National Pilot Station Travel Plan Programme.
32. By reviewing best practice, and working closely with all stakeholders, the Station Travel Plan contains both actions and targets that are deliverable and achievable. The Steering Group / Working Group structure currently in place has already proved to be very effective in monitoring the development of the Station Travel Plan, so there is already an excellent, proven basis on which to monitor the delivery of the Station Travel Plan. Therefore, we feel very confident that our plans are achievable, and form the basis of a successful Station Travel Plan. It should also be remembered that the Station Travel Plan is an 'active' document, as outlined in paragraphs 11 and 12.
33. Of particular importance to the success of the Station Travel Plan will be work on the promotion and marketing of non-car modes of transport. This is an area which can often be overlooked, but the Department for Transport estimates that traffic volumes can be cut by up to 11% through an effective programme of promoting non-car modes of transport. Initial discussions have taken place with the Communications Team to develop a marketing programme for this purpose.

Conclusion and Next Steps

34. The Leighton Buzzard Station Travel Plan offers good opportunity to tackle a number of railway station-related issues affecting residents in Leighton Buzzard, including parking on local streets, traffic congestion, and a lack of bus/rail integrations. As well as tackling these issues, the Station Travel Plan offers the opportunity to improve access to the station from all areas of Leighton Buzzard and surrounding villages, and also gives Central Bedfordshire Council the opportunity to be seen as a best practice authority within a national pilot scheme.

35. The Station Travel Plan Action Plan is an active document, and as a result some flexibility to make alterations to the Action Plan in response to changing circumstances is required. It is therefore proposed that the Director of Sustainable Communities, in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Sustainable Development, be given the authority to make changes to the Station Travel Plan Action Plan, so long as they are consistent with the aims and objectives of the Station Travel Plan.
36. Overall, the Leighton Buzzard Station Travel Plan will make a positive contribution to the authority and local residents, and it should be supported.

CORPORATE IMPLICATIONS

Council Priorities:

The Station Travel Plan will make a significant contribution to **managing growth effectively**. By encouraging more people to use non-car modes of transport, the impacts of growth in rail travel brought about by population growth on traffic congestion in Leighton Buzzard will be significantly minimised. Station facilities will be upgraded so that they are able to tackle the demands of future growth in the town, and the Station Travel Plan will also help to minimise the impacts of the railway station on climate change.

The Station Travel Plan will also help to **promote healthier lifestyles**. By encouraging people to walk and cycle to the station, exercise can be built into a person's daily routine, with knock-on health benefits from a more active lifestyle. The Station Travel Plan will also support Go-Cycle's plans to increase the number of people cycling in Leighton Buzzard. Also, by helping to reduce the number of cars on Leighton Buzzard roads, there will be a reduction in local air pollution, with associated health benefits such as a reduction in the number and severity of respiratory illnesses.

The Station Travel Plan will also help to achieve **Value for Money**. By co-ordinating the work of a number of local organisations, schemes and initiatives can be delivered in a more co-ordinated manner, maximising the value and minimising the costs to stakeholders. The Council may also achieve greater value for money from the Council-supported local bus network by increasing the use of local buses, thus decreasing the subsidy required. Also, by being part of the National Pilot Station Travel Plan Programme, this gives the opportunity to access funds for the development and implementation of planned schemes.

Financial:

The majority of schemes in the Action Plan already have committed funding. Below are the costs of additional schemes, all of which have been deemed to be affordable within existing budgets. Therefore, no additional funding for Station Travel Plan schemes is requested.

Cost of additional schemes to Central Bedfordshire Council budgets

Funding Source	Purpose	Year		
		2009/10	2010/11	2011/12
Revenue	Marketing and Promotion of non-car modes	£10,000	£15,000	£15,000
Capital (LTP)	Improved pedestrian access to the station	-	£30,000	-
Capital (GAF)	Contribution towards enhanced station forecourt	-	£400,000	-

Legal:

None.

Risk Management:

The Action Plan in Appendix B identifies a number of actions which are considered to be at high risk of not being delivered. The primary risk associated with many of these items is that the Council may be spending funds to support schemes which may not be delivered. We have already worked with our stakeholders to identify the key risks associated with these actions, and take appropriate action. This has resulted in a Station Travel Plan which is deemed to be deliverable.

There is also a risk should the Station Travel Plan not be delivered. If this were the case, it is estimated that there would be an additional 80,000 vehicles heading to and from the station on the roads in Leighton Buzzard within 3 years. This will significantly impact upon the Council's ability to manage the highway network in the town effectively, and also upon the effect operation of Council-subsidised bus services.

Staffing (including Trades Unions):

There are no staffing implications from this proposal.

Equalities/Human Rights:

As part of the survey of passengers, as well as the survey of current non-users of the station, members of the public who are disabled, are in a minority group, and young people, along with others, were invited to submit their comments on potential improvements to accessing the station. These comments were considered when developing the Station Travel Plan. However, representatives from these groups have not previously been involved in the Steering Group. Therefore, the much greater involvement of these groups in the Station Travel Plan the future, by being represented on the Steering Group or by other means, will need to occur.

The Station Travel Plan contains plans to improve disabled access to and at the station. In particular, the Station Travel Plan supports proposals to install lifts at the station (planned for 2012 to 2016), and provide tactile paving at the edge of each platform. The needs of young people, minority groups, and the disabled will also need to be considered in the development and implementation of specific schemes and initiatives. For example, publicity material will need to be available in a variety of languages and in Braille. The use of the station by young people, minority groups, and the disabled will also be monitored through the Passenger Survey to be undertaken by ATOC.

An Equalities Impact Assessment has been completed for the Station Travel Plan, which is included in Appendix C.

Community Safety:

No significant impacts.

Sustainability:

The Station Travel Plan will have a number of positive sustainability impacts. Encouraging greater use of non-car modes in particular will have many positive impacts, including less congestion in the town centre, lower CO₂ emissions, reduced air pollution, and an improved quality of life through greater up-take of more active modes of travel such as walking and cycling.

Improving access to and from the station will have a number of economic and social development impacts. Improving access to the station by non-car modes of transport will improve access to facilities and greater journey opportunities for those without access to a car. Improving access to the station could lead to greater out-commuting by train, impacting upon Central Bedfordshire Council plans to encourage local employment. However, better transport links between the station, the town centre and employment areas could encourage greater trade for shops, and improve links for businesses to places such as London and Milton Keynes by train

Appendices:

Appendix A – Leighton Buzzard Station Travel Plan

Appendix B – Leighton Buzzard Station Travel Plan Action Plan

Appendix C – Leighton Buzzard Station Travel Plan Equality Impact Assessment