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**Meeting:** Sustainable Communities Overview & Scrutiny committee  
**Date:** 7 September, 2010  
**Subject:** 2011 / 12 Programme Proposals – Local Improvement Schemes, Highway Maintenance and Safety Partnership Schemes  
**Report of:** Cllr David McVicar, Portfolio Holder for Safer and Stronger Communities and Healthier Lifestyles  
**Summary:** The third Local transport Plan (LTP) for Central Bedfordshire will seek to contribute towards the objectives of the Sustainable Communities Strategy for the Authority. It will detail the role of transport provision in delivering these overarching priorities within the context of current and emerging Government policy, with a specific focus on potential growth areas. This report outlines the consultation process for developing highways schemes in the context of the emerging Local Transport Plan (LTP).

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**Advising Officer:** Gary Alderson, Director of Sustainable Communities  
**Contact Officer:** Basil Jackson, Assistant Director Highways & Transport  
Paul Cook, Head of Transport Strategy  
**Public/Exempt:** Public  
**Wards Affected:** All  
**Function of:** Executive  
**Key Decision** Yes  
**Reason for urgency/  
exemption from call-  
in  
(if appropriate)** N/A

<b>CORPORATE IMPLICATIONS</b>
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<b>Council Priorities:</b>
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The issues discussed in this report will affect all five council priorities and the schemes when delivered will help to contribute to making Central Bedfordshire an economic powerhouse.
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**Financial:**

Consultation activities identified in this paper will be managed within existing resources.

Consultation activities identified in this paper will be funded by ear marked reserves approved in 2009/10. In future years, the cost of conducting the LTP exercises will be budgeted for through the MTFP similar to other strategy work rather than through the use of ear marked reserves. This brings greater clarity to the operating needs of the service

**Legal:**

The Highways Act 1980 requires highway authorities to maintain public highways to keep them open for public access and to remove obstructions which may affect the use and safety of the highway.

A failure by the highway authority to maintain a public highway can be subject to legal action for enforcement and, if the state of repair of a highway is a contributory factor in a road traffic crash, this can result in a claim for damages against the highway authority. It is therefore important for the Council to have effective arrangements in place to maintain the highway network for which it is responsible.

The three year highway programme will be contained within the Local Transport Plan, which is a statutory document.

**Risk Management:**

The programme of work coming out of the consultation process detailed in this paper will be managed through our framework contractor, Amey. The company has large staff resources both within this contract, as well as resources that can be called upon from outside of this contract to manage our programme to budget and delivery tolerances set by the Council.

**Staffing (including Trades Unions):**

n/a

**Equalities/Human Rights:**

The Local Transport Plan will include an Equalities Impact Assessment. Central Bedfordshire Council has a duty to promote race, gender and disability equality and to tackle discrimination experienced by other vulnerable groups. When developing the highways programme, consideration is given to developing well designed and well managed streets that don't act as barriers to movement. The needs of different street users, must be carefully balanced including the needs of disabled and visually impaired people in particular.

### **Community Safety:**

The consideration of road safety issues will form a key element of the Local Transport Plan. Under Section 17 of the Crime and Disorder Act the Council has a statutory duty to do all that it reasonably can to prevent crime and disorder in its area. The LTP will be developed to ensure that this statutory duty is met, and will also consult with key community safety partners with regard to links with and impact on any on-going work in localities.

### **Sustainability:**

The effective maintenance of our highway network is a key part of accommodating Central Bedfordshire's growth agenda and ensuring that we are "open for business".

## **RECOMMENDATIONS:**

### **That Sustainable Communities Overview and Scrutiny Committee:**

- (a) Considers and comments on the proposed consultation process for highways works in the coming year.**

## **Introduction**

1. The third Local Transport Plan (LTP) for Central Bedfordshire will seek to contribute towards the objectives of the Sustainable Communities Strategy for the Authority. It will detail the role of transport provision in delivering these overarching priority areas within the context of current and emerging Government policy, with a specific focus on potential growth areas.
2. Following an Executive decision in autumn 2009, funds for improvement schemes will be directed primarily to the four growth areas so as to maximise the potential for sustainable transport. The four areas are:
  - Dunstable / Houghton Regis
  - Leighton Linlade
  - Arlesey / Stotfold
  - Sandy / Biggleswade
3. The exceptions to this are safety and maintenance schemes, which will continue to be developed based upon greatest need.

## **Local Improvement Schemes**

4. In order to develop the programme of works that will deliver LTP3, two meetings will be held with the elected members for each of the four areas over the summer. The first meeting will allow members to consider their overall vision for the area, prior to a second meeting to consider officer proposals and put forward their own suggestions for specific schemes that would contribute to delivering the vision. Consultation with the public, key stakeholders and business and the local town and parish councils will then take place.

5. Following the first meeting, in each area, Amey designers will work with officers to develop potential schemes and produce “ballpark” estimates for the cost of implementing each proposal.
6. At their second meeting, members will be asked to prioritise the costed proposals for implementation over the LTP’s first three-year delivery period – 2011/12- 2013/14. Once local members have agreed the relative priority of schemes in their areas, these will then be brought together and amalgamated into a coherent programme for the whole of the Authority.
7. Following this, the programme will be included in the Local Transport Plan, which will be considered by Full Council in early 2011.
8. The first year of the programme will be approved in detail by Full Council as part of the LTP and it is expected, subject to financial considerations, that this is what will be delivered. Although the LTP will contain in outline the programme for years two and three, consideration will be given by the 3 portfolio holders for Sustainable Communities, taking into account future funding settlements for transport and developing council policies. The Portfolio Holders will agree or amend the proposed programme as appropriate, and present this to the Executive for approval. In the third year of the programme, more detailed consultation in line with that set out in paragraphs 5 and 6 above will be carried out to establish a new three year programme.

### **Maintenance Schemes**

9. As mentioned above, maintenance and safety scheme programmes will continue to be developed based upon greatest need. A 3-Year Programme will be prepared for maintenance schemes for roads and footways, highway bridges and culverts, street lighting improvements and replacements and drainage schemes based upon objectives as set out in the new Local Transport Plan. Prioritised lists of schemes will be developed and these will be used to determine the definitive list of schemes that will form the Annual Programme of works to be carried out in 2011/12. These programmes are developed based upon the greatest need throughout Central Bedfordshire.
10. Amey’s structures team discharges Central Bedfordshire’s obligations for the passage and re-passage of the travelling public across bridge, culvert and other types of highway structures. Through the course of each year structures are inspected, remedial works undertaken and new projects designed and delivered. The programme reduces the risk of structural failure for the Authority.
11. An annual programme of street lighting improvement and replacement is carried out that contributes towards Council objectives. In 2009/10 a full asset register was completed and the residual life of all the Council’s street lights assessed. This means that future programmes can be developed on the basis of greatest need.

12. A database of known flooding sites is maintained and the drainage schemes programme will be developed annually based on the sites where the risk of flooding is highest. The consultation timetable in Appendix A details how members will be engaged in the consultation process.

**Appendices:**

**Appendix A - LTP3 Engagement & Consultation Timetable**

**Background Papers** (open to public inspection):

n/a