
Meeting: Sustainable Communities Overview and Scrutiny Committee

Date: 18 January 2011

Subject: Local Transport Plan 3

Report of: Cllr Tom Nicols , Portfolio Holder for Sustainable Development; Cllr David McVicar, Portfolio Holder for Safer Communities and Healthier Lifestyles

Summary: The report summarises the content of the third Local Transport Plan for Central Bedfordshire.

Advising Officer: Gary Alderson, Director of Sustainable Communities

Contact Officer: Paul Cook, Head of Transport Strategy
(paul.cook@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk)

Public/Exempt: Public

Wards Affected: All

Function of: Council

CORPORATE IMPLICATIONS

Council Priorities:

The Local Transport Plan (referred to as the LTP) is an important tool in helping to deliver the priorities contained within the Sustainable Community Strategy. Transport is a means to an end and the LTP will help assist in providing the capacity for economic growth, cater for an increase in demand to travel, help improve the health and well being of the population, increase access to education and other local services, and address general quality of life issues.

Financial:

The authority receives an annual capital settlement from Central Government through the LTP, split between funding to be spent on integrated transport measures and maintenance of the network. In addition, the LTP forms a framework through which to secure additional investment in transport through developer contributions, bidding for other pots of funding and a basis upon which to lobby for investment from transport operators.

Legal:

It is a statutory requirement for the authority to produce the Local Transport Plan.

Risk Management:

No direct implications.

Staffing (including Trades Unions):

No direct implications.

Equalities/Human Rights:

An Equalities Impact Assessment will accompany the final LTP.

Community Safety:

The LTP will help improve community safety in two respects. Firstly in terms of road safety and the number of people killed or seriously injured on the authority's roads. Alongside this the Plan will seek to address perceptions of road safety which are often a barrier to encouraging more people to walk or cycle. And secondly, the Plan addresses personal security issues, through the identification of measures that will make residents feel more secure when they travel – better lit bus stops, pre-paid ticketing, and general measures to encourage more people to walk and cycle, and so provide more natural surveillance of streets for example.

Sustainability:

It is a requirement to undertake a Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) of the LTP. This is to ensure that sustainability and environmental considerations are integral to the preparation and implementation of the Plan.

RECOMMENDATION(S):

- 1. Members endorse the vision, objectives, priorities and Implementation Plan of the LTP.**
- 2. Members endorse the areas of intervention through which these will be achieved.**

Background

1. This Report focuses upon the Local Transport Plan (LTP) for Central Bedfordshire which is set to be adopted in April 2011. It will cover the 15 year period up until March 2026 and provide a framework for investment in transport locally.

The Plan forms an important tool through which the authority sets out its transport related objectives and wider priorities, and contains a shorter term, Implementation Plan which will be updated on an annual basis, and which includes a programme of schemes to be delivered on the ground over a three year period.

Structure of the Plan

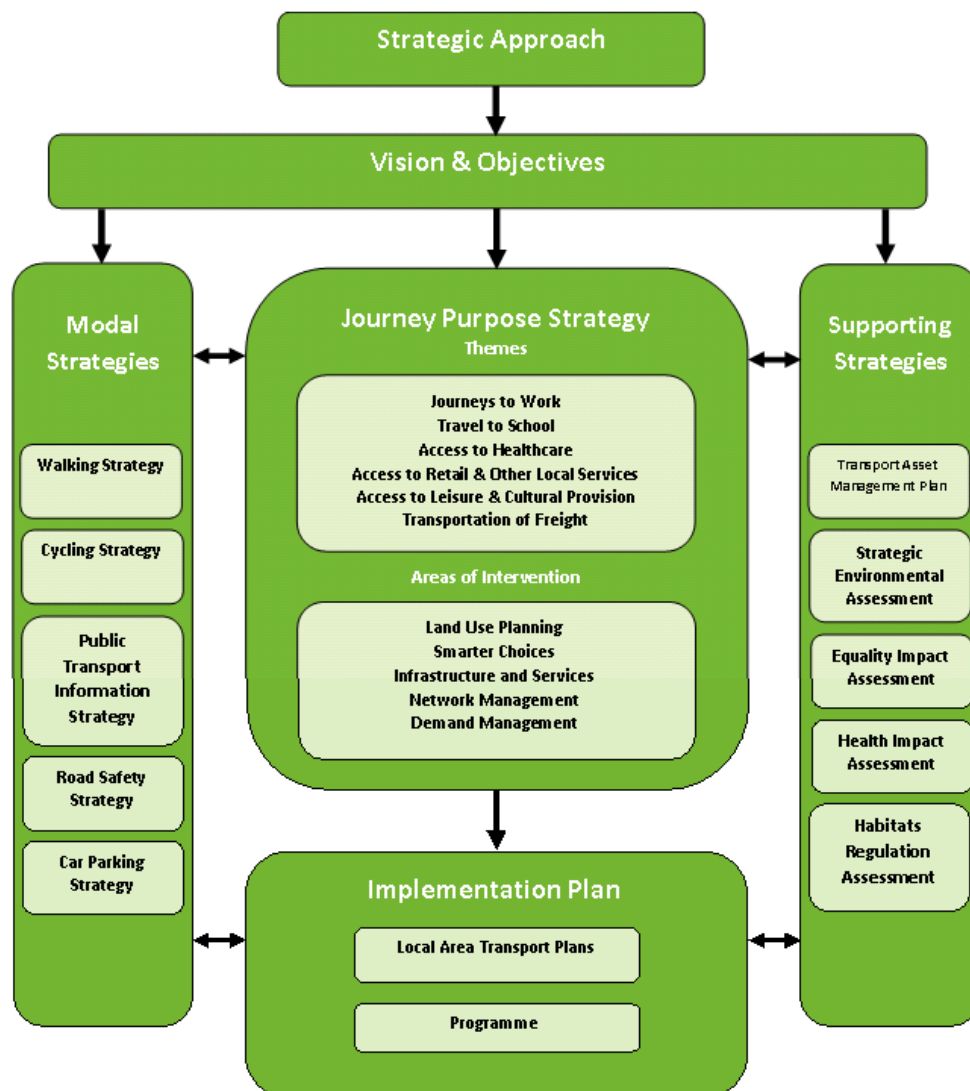
2. The LTP establishes a strategic approach to investment in transport locally. In line with these principles it contains a series of objectives and priorities that have been established based upon the reasons people travel.

The Plan is structured around the reasons people travel, 'journey purposes', to reinforce the concept that transport is a means to an end, and ensure a targeted and integrated approach to these objectives being achieved.

3. The structure of the LTP is set out in Figure 1. Due to the volume and detail of information which is contained within the LTP, including the evidence bases underpinning the journey purpose themes, the modal strategies, supporting strategies, and Local Area Transport Plans all referred to within the structure diagram below, a series of separate appendices have been produced.

The main LTP document and the appendices of the LTP itself are available upon request from officers. The main LTP document is also available on line from 7 January, on the Council's website.

Figure 1: Structure of the Local Transport Plan



Vision & Objectives

4. The vision of the LTP is to:

'Improve the quality of life for all in Central Bedfordshire, and enhance the unique character of our communities and environment by creating an integrated transport system that is safe, sustainable and accessible for all'.

The vision reflects the wider aspirations of the authority as a whole, and the role transport provides to achieve these aspirations.

5. In seeking to deliver the vision, a set of overarching principles have been established that form a strategic approach to govern the direction of investment in transport and ensure efficiency and value for money in work undertaken. These principles comprise:

- The need for a long term vision.
- The need to provide the capacity for growth.
- The need to work in partnership.
- A focus on localism in terms of scheme identification and delivery.
- A focus on the purpose of individual journeys.
- The establishment of a preference hierarchy in terms of how people travel.

6. A series of 10 objectives, and associated targets and indicators against which progress towards their achievement can be ascertained are also included within the Plan. The objectives seek to:

- a. Increase the ease of access to employment by sustainable modes
- b. Reduce the impact of commuting trips on local communities.
- c. Increase the number of children travelling to school by sustainable modes of transport.
- d. Improve access to healthcare provision by the core health service (hospitals and GPs).
- e. Ensure access to food stores and other local services particularly in local and district centres.
- f. Enable access to a range of leisure, cultural and tourism facilities for residents and visitors.
- g. Enable the efficient and reliable transportation of freight.
- h. Encourage the movement of freight by sustainable modes.
- i. Minimise the negative impacts of freight trips on local communities.

j. Reduce the risk of people being killed or seriously injured.

7. The objectives relate to the journey purpose themes which provide the structure, and focus of the Plan, notably in terms of addressing:

- Journeys to work,
- Travel to schools,
- Access to healthcare,
- Access to food stores and local services,
- Access to leisure, culture and tourism, and the
- Transportation of freight.

Within these themes, the LTP also establishes a series of priority areas focusing upon:

- Journeys to Work:
 - Maximising the number of sustainable short trips
 - The ease of interchange between services
 - Reducing the volume of through traffic
 - Addressing carbon dioxide emissions
 - Improving road safety
 - Securing modal shift within new developments
- Travel to Schools:
 - Improving the walking and cycling environment
 - Prioritising supported travel for pupils
 - Raising awareness of active travel
- Access to Healthcare:
 - Enabling access to healthcare services
 - Reducing physical restrictions to access
 - Promoting the links between travel and health
 - Working in partnership with the NHS
- Access to Food Stores and Local Services:
 - Support the delivery of town centre masterplans

- Promote access to online Council services
- Location of development in accessible locations
- Access to Leisure, Culture and Tourism:
 - Improve access to the countryside
 - Improve access to leisure centres
 - Improve access to town centres at the evening and weekends
- Transportation of Freight:
 - Manage carbon dioxide emissions
 - Tackle air pollution
 - Address noise and vibration issues
 - Improve road safety
 - Mitigate other physical effects of freight movements
 - Improve accessibility by non-road modes
 - Direct growth into accessible locations

These themes and related priorities will form the basis to the direction of investment in new transport schemes.

Areas of Intervention

8. To achieve the objectives of the LTP, areas of intervention have been identified which address both the demand and supply side of transport – the actual demand to travel and so the number of trips on the network, and the supply of provision, and so the ability to undertaken these trips by different modes.

These focus on the areas of:

- Land use planning
- Smarter choices
- Infrastructure provision / service provision
- Network management
- Demand management

These interventions are in no particular priority order and embrace all forms of trip, regardless of the mode of travel in question, and are summarised below.

9. **Land Use Planning** incorporates proposals to encourage:

- **Mixed use development:** The location of sites identified through the Local Development Framework for housing and employment growth provide an opportunity for the local authority to reduce the need for current and future residents to travel long distances to access job opportunities.
- **Links to existing transport networks:** Travel demand generated by new housing or employment provision may enable more marginal public transport services to become more viable, provide a basis for more commercial services to increase the frequency of operation and enable funding for subsidised services to be concentrated in the areas within which public transport provision is most required.
- **Embedded sustainable transport provision:** Integrating sustainable transport provision within new developments through the inclusion of wide footways, a cycle lane, or the use of shared space, helps to create more pedestrian friendly, 'humanised' environments. It forms a cheaper approach to the 'retro-fitting' of schemes and helps to develop sustainable travel patterns from the first occupation of estates, as opposed to the more difficult task of changing entrenched travel behaviour.

10. The LTP proposes the use of **Smarter Choices** measures to help influence the way people travel through:

- **Travel Plans:** Travel Plans seek to reduce the number of people driving to work by encouraging employees to use public transport, to walk, cycle or car share, through various incentives offered by organisations, and publicity of the benefits of sustainable travel.
- **Car Sharing:** Helps to reduce the number of cars on the road whilst also enabling people to still benefit from the convenience of a car, through the establishment of an on line car sharing network.
- **Car Clubs:** Car clubs allow members to hire a car from a fleet of available vehicles, for a day, part of a day or for a number of days. Such schemes help to reduce the need for members to own a car themselves whilst providing ready access to one when required.
- **Ticketing:** Reviewing the types of ticketing available for public transport across Central Bedfordshire will provide the opportunity to increase the attractiveness of using buses through reducing costs for passengers, improving interchange opportunities between services and different modes of travel, speeding up the journey times of buses themselves, and by addressing security concerns through reducing the need to carry money for tickets.
- **Information & Marketing:** The provision of information is important in ensuring that members of the public are aware of existing transport infrastructure and service provision. It can result in a greater take up of services and increased attractiveness of alternatives to the car for example, without the need for more resource intensive infrastructure schemes.

11. In terms of **infrastructure and service provision** the strategy proposes to focus upon the issues of:

- **Connectivity:** The connectivity of networks and between networks is an important consideration in the identification of new infrastructure or services to be provided. Connected, comprehensive and coherent networks are essential in maximising the attraction of all modes of travel, whilst the ability to interchange between different modes further adds to increased accessibility, which is essential to growth and encouraging modal change.
- **Accessibility:** Accessibility plays a vital role in ensuring that infrastructure and services in place are available to everyone, maximising the opportunities to utilise sustainable transport provision and reduce the reliance on the car. It involves addressing all forms of barriers related to accessibility including physical barriers to access, financial barriers and information barriers preventing access to provision.
- **Reallocation of Road Space:** The reallocation of road space from the private car to more sustainable forms of travel is important in seeking to readdress the dominance of the car, particularly in town centres. It helps to increase the attraction of walking, cycling or using public transport, particularly through the use of bus lanes, cycle lanes, and shared space.

12. The **Network Management** responsibility of the authority will contribute towards the objectives of the Strategy through:

- **Partnership Working:** Working closely with neighbouring authorities to more effectively manage the movement of strategic trips, and the delivery of integrated infrastructure and service improvements.
- **Enforcement:** Enforcement of access restrictions, parking restrictions and other highway regulations to ensure the efficient operation of the network.
- **Management of Works and Incidents:** The co-ordination of road and utilities works to minimise disruption to travellers, together with identifying and applying diversions following major incidents.
- **Maintenance:** Maintenance of the road network in terms of resurfacing and gritting, together with footways and cycle lanes for pedestrians and cyclists respectively.
- **Signage:** Well signed routes enables the bulk of trips to be concentrated upon the most appropriate routes, minimises the impact on local communities of through trips and reduces the number of vehicles on the network which are in effect, lost. Signage is particularly relevant in the management of freight movement, non-local traffic and for diversions.
- **Intelligent Transport Systems:** Intelligent Transport Systems (ITS) provide local authorities with the ability to use information they possess on the network to control and influence traffic movements, through adjustments to traffic signals, and enforcement of access and speed restrictions for example.

13. **Demand Management** will contribute to the objectives through:

- **Car Parking:** Car parking is an important tool in encouraging economic growth and curbing demand to travel by car. The amount, location and pricing of provision all help to influence the travel choices made by commuters. Due to the important impacts of car parking provision, a dedicated strategy to consider all of the specific issues will be produced as part of the Local Transport Plan.
- **Access Restrictions:** These are effective in reducing the impact of through traffic on town centres and communities, and improving the safety of more vulnerable road users, whilst maintaining access.

Although access restrictions can result in the displacement of traffic elsewhere on the network, where more appropriate routes exist for general traffic, such restrictions can form an effective tool in not just reducing the impact of traffic, but increasing the attractiveness of more sustainable modes of travel.

- **Tele-Working:** Tele Working, or working from home as it is often known, reduces the actual need to travel. This is particularly effective in terms of reducing demand to use the network at peak periods when congestion is at its greatest.

Around 10% of Central Bedfordshire residents work from home, and this is something the authority will actively encourage through ensuring access to the internet in all new developments and the inclusion of company policy on tele-working within Travel Plans.

Implementation

14. The LTP is based upon around an area based approach to investment as opposed to a scheme led approach. Such an approach ensures that priority areas can be targeted for investment where need is greatest, and that the most appropriate interventions are delivered in each location.

It also enables a more co-ordinated approach to the implementation of different types of scheme at a local level.

On this basis a series of **Local Area Transport Plans** (LATPs) have been produced. These detail the key issues and schemes to be delivered over the course of the LTP in specific areas.

They contain detail as to the level of growth each area is set to accommodate and a full list of schemes which will be required to facilitate such growth in a sustainable manner, funded through not just the LTP but other sources of investment such as developer contributions for example.

The LATPs have initially been produced for the parts of the authority anticipated to be subject to the greatest levels of growth of the timeframe of the Plan, notably Arlesey and Stotfold, Biggleswade and Sandy, Dunstable and Houghton Regis, and Leighton Linlade.

15. The LATPs will be rolled out to cover the whole of the authority as detailed below:

<p>2011/12</p> <p>Biggleswade & Sandy</p> <p>Arlesey & Stotfold</p> <p>Dunstable & Houghton Regis</p> <p>Leighton Linlade</p>	<p>2013/14</p> <p>Toddington</p> <p>Chiltern Downs</p> <p>Wixhams</p> <p>North Bedfordshire Rural Area</p> <p>East Bedfordshire Rural Area</p>
<p>2012/13</p> <p>Marston Vale</p> <p>Flitwick & Ampthill</p> <p>South Bedfordshire Rural Area</p> <p>Shefford</p>	

16. The schemes identified and prioritised within the LATPs will be brought together to form a three year programme. This will be updated on an annual basis and set out how the authority will spend the settlement received from Central Government.

Monitoring

17. The success of these initiatives and progress towards the objectives of the Plan will be assessed through a series of targets and indicators. The indicators utilise a number of existing data sources where possible.

Targets are still to be established following only the recent announcement of actual levels of funding the authority will receive through the LTP process. National trends, past performance, and comparisons with other authorities will be taken into account in this process to ensure that they are both ambitious and achievable in the 15 year period of the Plan.

Conclusion and Next Steps

18. The LTP once finalised, will be considered by the Executive Committee in February 2011 in time for the adoption date of the Plan at the start of April 2011.

Appendices:

None

Background Papers: (open to public inspection)

Local Transport Plan 3: Central Bedfordshire Transport Strategy 2011 – 2026 (Draft)

Location of papers: Priory House, Chicksands