
Meeting: Executive
Date: 27 March 2012
Subject: Local Area Transport Plans and Scheme Prioritisation Framework
Report of: Cllr Ken Matthews, Executive Member for Sustainable Communities – Strategic Planning and Economic Development
Summary: The report proposes the endorsement of the second round of Local Area Transport Plans, together with the adoption of a scheme prioritisation framework through which to determine the transport funding priorities for the authority.

Advising Officer: Gary Alderson, Director of Sustainable Communities
Contact Officer: Ben King, Principal Transport Planner
Public/Exempt: Public
Wards Affected: All
Function of: Executive
Key Decision Yes

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 wellbeing of the population, increase access to education and other local services, and address general quality of life issues.

Financial:

1. The authority receives an annual capital settlement from Central Government through the Local Transport Plan split between funding to be spent on integrated transport measures and maintenance of the network.
2. The LTP also forms a framework through which to secure additional investment in transport as an evidence base upon which to secure developer contributions, bid for other pots of funding and as a basis upon which to lobby for investment from transport operators.

3. The Local Area Transport Plans (LATPs) provide the local detail and basis upon which the funding decisions made on local transport provision are made, supported by a scheme prioritisation framework to help determine the allocation of the funding available to the authority.

Legal:

4. No direct implications.

Risk Management:

5. The following risks have been identified:

- Failure to discharge statutory requirements.
- Reputational damage through not addressing community/local needs.

These risks will be monitored and mitigating action taken.

Staffing (including Trades Unions):

6. No direct implications.

Equalities/Human Rights:

7. An Equalities Impact Assessment (EIA) was carried out in conjunction with the production of the Local Transport Plan, and both the LATPs and the Scheme Prioritisation Framework sit within the LTP suite of documents.
8. The EIA concluded that the LTP's focus on providing realistic travel options and alternatives to car based travel to increase accessibility especially to employment and training opportunities, education, healthcare provision and leisure facilities, would have positive impacts across all groups, particularly disabled people and those in deprived areas without access to a car.
9. In addition the LTP also addresses the worst impacts of traffic, namely pedestrian accidents, air and noise pollution and busy roads cutting through communities which disproportionately affect deprived areas and people facing social exclusion.
10. As part of the development of each LATP, detailed consideration is given to these issues at a local level and further public consultation will be undertaken to ensure that all relevant issues are identified. In addition, the Scheme Prioritisation Framework reflects these requirements and helps to ensure that priority is given to proposals which will have the most beneficial impact.

Public Health:

11. Local transport schemes can help influence the travel choices of local residents, including through the encouragement of more active travel modes. This has the potential for positive impacts on public health.

Community Safety:

12. In developing Local Transport Plans, the Councils statutory duty to consider and act on community safety implications has been considered. Concerns such as the number of people killed and seriously injured on our roads and personal safety whilst accessing and using local transport have been considered in developing the plans. As schemes are implemented further the Council will need to continue to consider community safety issues and identify opportunities to mitigate any potential risks in terms of crime and disorder.

Sustainability:

13. A Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) was produced for the LTP, whilst a number of the schemes included within the LTP programme will promote less reliance on use of the car and increase use of sustainable transport modes, which in turn reduce congestion, air pollution, and CO2 emissions.

Procurement:

14. Not applicable.

Overview and Scrutiny:

15. The Scheme Prioritisation Framework was considered by Overview and Scrutiny. The recommendations to Executive are:
- a. That the Scheme Prioritisation Framework be approved as a tool for determining the shape of the Local Transport programme.
 - b. That the Executive Member consider the weight and prioritisation of road safety within the Scheme Prioritisation Framework.

The Local Area Transport Plans have been informed by discussions with local Members but not by the Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

RECOMMENDATION:**The Executive is asked to:**

1. **endorse the second round of Local Area Transport Plans for the areas of Ampthill and Flitwick, Marston Vale, Shefford, Silsoe and Shillington, Toddington, Heath and Reach and Barton le Clay; and**
2. **endorse the Scheme Prioritisation Framework as a tool for determining the content of the Local Area Transport Plan programmes.**

Reason for Recommendation(s): To enable the delivery of the second year of Local Transport Plan funding through the implementation of the Local Area Transport Plans for Ampthill and Flitwick, Marston Vale, Shefford, Silsoe and Shillington, and Toddington, Heath and Heath, and Barton le Clay.

Executive Summary

16. It is a statutory requirement for Central Bedfordshire Council to produce a Local Transport Plan (LTP). The current LTP for the authority was adopted in April 2011 and provides a framework for investment in local transport schemes.
17. It details areas of interventions through which the authority will meet local transport objectives, and targets and indicators against which the success of this investment in local transport infrastructure can be evaluated.
18. The identification of the schemes relating to these broads areas of intervention at the local level is through the production of a series of Local Area Transport Plans (LATPs). The first four LATPs were produced alongside the LTP and approved by the authority in April 2011 and covered the main growth areas.
19. The second round of LATPs have now been produced and are attached to this report for approval, covering Ampthill and Flitwick, Marston Vale, Shefford, Silsoe and Shillington, Toddington, Heath and Reach and Barton le Clay. The final round of Plans covering the remainder of the authority will be brought to Executive in April 2013.
20. Examination of the transport issues in each of the Plan areas and the responses generated by consultation on the documents has indicated the need for a robust process through which to prioritise schemes for delivery.
21. As such a Scheme Prioritisation Framework has been developed to ensure that those schemes which demonstrate the greatest degree of compliance with the LTP's transport objectives, those which are most feasible to be delivered on the ground and those that provide the greatest value for money are the first to be implemented through the LTP process.

Local Transport Plan

22. The Central Bedfordshire Local Transport Plan (LTP) was adopted by the authority on 1 April 2011. It covers the 15 year period up until March 2026 and contains a series of objectives and related targets and indicators against which to determine the success of the authority in improving transport infrastructure and service provision.
23. The LTP details strategic areas of intervention which form a framework for investment, to not just achieve the objectives of the Plan but also ensure that transport contributes towards the wider priorities of the authority.
24. The authority is awarded an annual settlement from the Government through which to deliver the Local Transport Plan. This is split between Integrated Transport Block funding and funding for maintenance schemes, as detailed in the table below:

	2011/12	2012/13	2013/14
Integrated Transport	£1.26m	£1.34m	£1.34m
Maintenance	£3.86m	£3.92m	£4.00m

25. This Integrated Transport funding has been allocated to Local Area Transport Plans (LATPs) within Central Bedfordshire which form the implementation plans for the strategic aspirations established within the LTP itself.

Local Area Transport Plans

26. The series of Local Area Transport Plans which sit underneath the LTP, apply the principles established within the LTP at the local level, taking into account specific modal issues and travel patterns. The LATPs and the timetable for them to be produced are included in the table below:

2011/12	2012/13	2013/14
Arlesey & Stotfold, Biggleswade & Sandy, Dunstable & Houghton Regis, and Leighton Linlade.	Ampthill and Flitwick, Marston Vale, Shefford, Silsoe & Shillington, and Heath and Reach, Toddington, and Barton-le-Clay.	Chiltern, Potton, and Haynes & Old Warden.

27. The second round of LATPs to have been produced cover the areas Ampthill and Flitwick, Marston Vale, Shefford, Silsoe & Shillington, Heath and Reach, Toddington and Barton-le-Clay.

Each contain information on issues associated with different modes of travel, the actual method of travelling for different journey purposes, priority areas which need to be addressed in this context, and a programme of measures through which to resolve such concerns.

28. Extensive consultation has been undertaken on the LATPs (to supplement that undertaken on the development of the Local Transport Plan itself) with local residents, stakeholders, town and parish councils, as well as Central Bedfordshire Council Members all targeted. Details of this process are included in Appendix A.

Funding

29. A total of some £304,000 of integrated transport funding is available to the second round of LATPs areas in 2012/13. The funding split has been based upon the population size of each area, as detailed below:

Area	2012/13	2013/14	Total
Ampthill and Flitwick	£115,779	£85,293	£201,072
Toddington, Heath and Reach, Barton-le-Clay	£70,986	£52,294	£123,280
Marston Vale	£64,045	£47,181	£111,226
Shefford, Silsoe, Shillington	£53,690	£39,553	£93,243
Total	£304,500	£224,321	£528,821

30. The allocation of funding through this process was considered to be the most equitable and reflect the more pressing transport concerns and demand to travel in the larger urban areas. The reduction in funding between 2012/13 and 2013/14 is due to the final round of LATPs which will also be funded during this period.
31. Each LATP contains a programme of schemes upon which these funding allocations will be spent during 2012/13 and 2013/14. The content of the programmes has been derived identifying schemes to address the problems and issues in the Plan areas, highlighted through the analysis and consultation process undertaken.
32. These schemes have subsequently been ranked in the order in which they will be delivered through the applying the Scheme Prioritisation Framework developed in conjunction with the LATPs and detailed below.

Scheme Prioritisation relating to the Integrated Transport Funding

33. The production of each Local Area Transport Plan has highlighted a number of issues which need to be addressed in each locality and a number of schemes through which the authority may do so. However due to the financial constraints on the authority it is not possible to deliver all of these schemes through the LTP budget. As a consequence of this it is necessary to prioritise certain schemes for delivery.
34. In order to prioritise schemes in the fairest and most transparent manner, a Scheme Prioritisation Framework has been developed against which every scheme put forward by officers, Members or the general public will be assessed. It will form a sound evidence base upon which to make informed decisions on future investment.
35. Each scheme put forward will be incorporated into a “long list” of schemes for each LATP area. Scores will then be awarded against a set of criteria within the Framework to determine the relative ranking of the schemes.
36. Those which appear at the top of the rankings would be funded through the LTP itself, whilst those further down the list would be funded by other sources of funding as and when it becomes available from S106 contributions, a Community Infrastructure Levy or any other pots the authority may utilise.
37. A number of schemes will be exempt from the Prioritisation Framework. The initiatives considered must be capital schemes relating to the provision of actual infrastructure, as opposed to revenue schemes, which involve ongoing costs and relate to maintenance and the operation of services for example. Specific road safety improvements are also omitted as these are funded separately.

The Scoring Framework

38. The scoring framework is based upon best practice and Government Guidance on scheme prioritisation, with scores awarded in the three main areas of policy compliance, deliverability and value for money.

39. • **Policy compliance:** Focuses on each schemes' ability to help deliver the objectives of the Local Transport Plan, and if they are referred to in other adopted Plans such the Town and Parish Council Plans or Town Centre Masterplans for example.

The inclusion of these scoring criteria ensure that those schemes which best adhere to the direction of the authority in transport terms are prioritised, whilst there is integration between Plan making at difference levels of governance.

40. • **Deliverability:** Incorporates the areas of affordability, risk and support for particular schemes to reflect the ability of the authority to implement the scheme both financial and in engineering terms, in the context of the public and political desire for specific interventions.

The criteria enable the authority to rule out those measures which are unfeasible to deliver whilst showing a direct correlation between feedback on consultation and the prioritisation of schemes.

41. • **Value for Money:** Contains criteria concerning the integration of schemes, the coverage of schemes and the revenue implications of providing each scheme.

Such criteria reward those initiatives which will maximise the benefits of their implementation through integration with other initiatives, encouraging travel by various different modes of travel and which do not place a cost burden on the authority in terms of future maintenance requirements.

Conclusion and Next Steps

42. Following the adoption of the second round of Local Area Transport Plans the authority will commence delivery of the programme of schemes they contain from April 2012.
43. The development of the programme through the application of the Scheme Prioritisation Framework will improve the authority's transparency and accountability of investment in local transport schemes.
44. The authority will extend the use of the Framework in developing the third round of Local Area Transport Plans and in the review of those already in place. However the authority will not be bound by the prioritisation the tool generates, albeit, in cases it is suggested that the authority should deviate away from the results, sound justification would be required to ensure that each scheme is judged on an equitable basis.
45. The "Long List" of schemes included within the LATPs and derived from the scheme prioritisation process will be refreshed on an annual basis to enable new schemes to be considered and a ready made list of prioritises to be available to the authority as and when additional funding becomes available.

Appendices:

Appendix A – Local Area Transport Plans Consultation Process

Appendix B – Ampthill and Flitwick Local Area Transport Plan

Appendix C – Marston Vale Local Area Transport Plan

Appendix D – Shefford, Silsoe and Shillington Local Area Transport Plan

Appendix E – Toddington, Heath and Reach and Barton le Clay Local Area Transport Plan

Appendix F – Scheme Prioritisation Framework

Background Papers: None

Appendix A – Local Area Transport Plans Consultation Process

Overview of Process

As part of the development of the Local Area Transport Plans, a comprehensive programme of engagement with a range of local stakeholders and the public was undertaken by Central Bedfordshire Council.

The outcomes of these activities have provided evidence to inform the development of the Plans. This appendix outlines the methods of engagement used and how these have been addressed in the development of the LATPs.

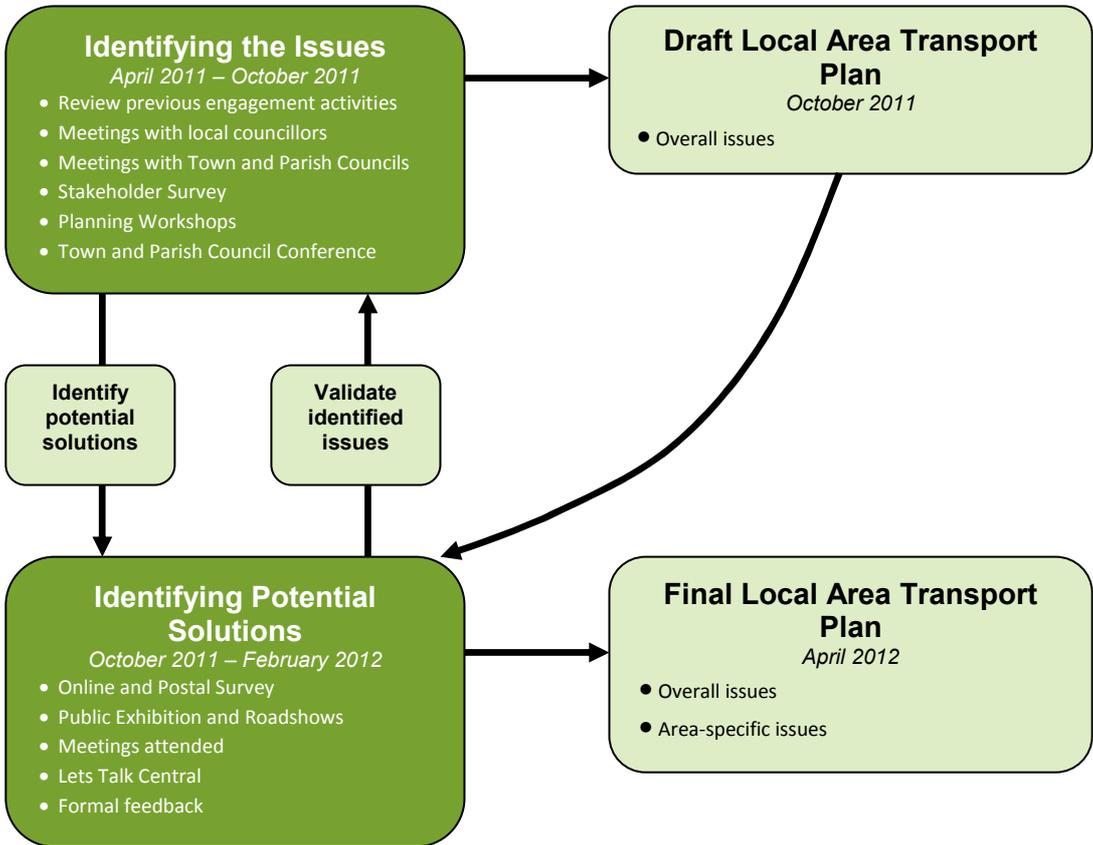
Engagement on the LATPs was split into two key phases:

- Identifying the Issues, and
- Identifying Potential Solutions.

As the figure below shows, “Identifying the Issues” influenced the development of the Draft Local Area Transport Plans, and “Identifying Potential Solutions” influenced the development of the Final Local Area Transport Plans.

In practice, issues and solutions were identified at both stages by many stakeholders and members of the public, all of which have informed the development of the documents.

Process of engagement in the Local Area Transport Plans



Identifying the Issues

The methods used through which to identify the main issues of importance to local stakeholders are detailed below:

- **Review of Previous Engagement Activities:** A review was undertaken of responses to previous engagement activities to identify the local transport issues that had been raised historically in each LATP area. This included reviewing responses to the consultation on the Local Transport Plan, and reviewing Town and Parish Plans where they had been developed.
- **Meeting with Local Councillors:** A meeting with local Central Bedfordshire Councillors to brief them on the LATPs and identify their key issues relating to all transport modes and journey purposes.
- **Meeting Town and Parish Councils:** A meeting was held with Town and Parish Councils to brief them on the Plans, and provide an opportunity to discuss issues relating to all transport modes and journey purposes. Individual meetings were held with specific Town and Parish Councils upon request.
- **Stakeholder Survey:** The authority sent out a survey form to key local stakeholders including bus and rail operators, requesting their input on identifying local issues in the area.
- **Planning Workshops:** The Central Bedfordshire Transport Strategy Team attended two planning workshops held for the local community at Priory House, Chicksands. This gave the team the opportunity to discuss issues related to planning and transport with local stakeholders.
- **Town and Parish Council Conference:** An LATP stand was manned at the Town and Parish Council Conference at Priory House, Chicksands on. This gave the team the chance to discuss transport issues with representatives of Town and Parish Councils from across Central Bedfordshire.
- **Other correspondence:** The Transport Strategy Team also received correspondence from local stakeholders and local people on transport issues in their area.
- **Identifying Potential Solutions Stage:** Comments were also received on local transport issues as part of the identifying potential solutions stage. These comments were used to validate issues identified in the Draft Local Area Transport Plan, as well as identifying new issues to be included.

Identifying Potential Solutions

The methods used through which to identify the potential solutions to the issues identified in the LATPs are detailed below:

- **Online and Postal Survey:** An online and postal survey was undertaken to give additional opportunities to identify local transport issues, and also to identify what solutions would enable these issues to be resolved. These included general improvements, as well as more specific schemes the respondents would like to see delivered.

The online survey was available during the formal consultation period on the Draft LATP between 24 October 2011 and 3 February 2012. Postal surveys were made available at local libraries and Town and Parish Council offices.

- **Public Exhibitions and Roadshows:** A series of public exhibitions and roadshows were held throughout the Plan areas, so that members of the public could come and talk to members of the Transport Strategy Team about the LATP, and identify the improvements that they would like to see. Exhibitions and roadshows that took place in this area were:
- **Meetings Attended:** Members of the Transport Strategy Team also attended meetings with a number of stakeholders to discuss potential solutions that they would like to see in the LATP.
- **Let's Talk Central:** Central Bedfordshire Council's discussion website, Let's Talk Together, was available for people to leave their comments on transport improvements that they would like to see in their area. This was available during the formal consultation period on the Draft LATP between 24 October 2011 and 3 February 2012.
- **Formal Feedback:** Members of the public and stakeholders also had the opportunity to email, write, and telephone their comments on the Draft LATP, and what transport improvements they would like to see, as part of the consultation into the Draft LATP. This was available during the formal consultation period on the Draft LATP between 24 October 2011 and 3 February 2012.
- **Identifying the Issues Stage:** Some comments were also received on local transport issues as part of the identifying the issues stage. These comments were used to inform the development of the Final Local Area Transport Plans, including the programme.