

REGENERATION, COMMUNITY AND CULTURE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

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LOCAL TRANSPORT PLAN

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Summary

This report seeks to inform the committee on the formal guidance for the production and the timescale of the third Local Transport Plan (LTP3), and seeks support for the development of the plan.

1. Budget and Policy Framework

- 1.1 The recommendations of this report are within council's policy and budget framework.
- 1.2 The Local Transport Plan forms part of the Council's policy framework, as set out in the Constitution, which sets out the process by which the policy framework shall be developed (Chapter 4 Rules, Part 3, paragraph 2.2.) This report is the initial stage of that process.
- 1.3 The LTP has direct impact on three transport National indicators through the Local Area Agreement (LAA) and indirectly a number of health indicators. The three transport indicators are:

LAA Target NI 47 Road Safety

To reduce the number of people killed or seriously injured in road traffic accidents by 3% from a base line figure of 80 in 2006.

LAA Target NI 167 Congestion

No increase in the average journey time measured in minutes per mile using a combination of 6 key strategic routes into Chatham town centre between 7.30 am and 9.30 am, Monday to Friday (baseline measured using the Dft CJAM data base).

LAA Target NI 175 Access to services and facilities

The percentage of new residential units within developments of 50 units or more accessible by a public transport service (located within 500 metres of the development) that provide links with a frequency of 30 minutes or better to a town centre in Medway during the morning and evening peak periods, Monday to Friday.

2. Background

- 2.1 Production of Local Transport Plans is a statutory function and applies to local transport authorities in England outside London under the Transport Act 2000, as amended by the Local Transport Act 2008.

The first and second round of Local Transport Plans (LTPs) cover 2001-06 and 2006-11. The new Guidance applies to LTPs after these rounds.

This committee is requested to provide views on the production of LTP3 so that these comments can be taken into account by Cabinet on 3 November 2009.

- 2.2 Requirement to produce an LTP

Authorities with a 'four star' Comprehensive Performance Assessment (CPA) rating are currently exempt from producing an LTP, although all such authorities have chosen to produce a Plan. CPA is replaced by Comprehensive Area Assessment (CAA) from 2009, which no longer includes star ratings. Under CAA, there will be no exemptions from the requirement to produce an LTP. All LTP's will be examined as part of the local public service inspectorates CAA, with performance continuously assessed.

- 2.3 Separate strategy and implementation plans

The Local Transport Act 2008 requires that LTPs contain policies and implementation plans. This will involve the production of two separate documents covering:

- Long term Transport Strategy
- Short term Implementation Plan

3. Details of the Guidance

- 3.1 Formal Guidance for the production of LTP3 was issued by Government on Thursday 16 July 2009. There are a number of changes from the guidance issued for LTP2 and these are reproduced in the following paragraphs.

- 3.2 Department for Transport (DfT) - Goals

The DfT expects authorities to consider their contribution to national transport goals as over-arching priorities for their LTPs. The Department published a set of five key goals and related challenges for development of the UK's future transport policy and infrastructure. The five goals replace the shared priorities of LTP2 guidance. The guidance advises that local authorities need to be aware of all the challenges listed in the DfT document "*Delivering a Sustainable Transport System*" (DaSTS) (November 2008).

The five DfT goals are:

- Supporting economic growth
- Tackle climate change

- Promote equality of opportunity
- Contribute to better safety, security and health
- Improve quality of life

3.3 The guidance advises that local authorities need to consider the relative importance of the five national goals for their area or for different parts of their area, and have the opportunity to refine them, or include local, additional objectives relative for the area. For Medway, it is suggested that the LTP3 five goals are linked to the Regeneration and Health agenda as identified as local priorities for LTP2, together with the developing sub-regional objectives in the draft MAA North Kent Transport Strategy.

3.4 Climate change

The Climate Change Act 2008 commits central Government to reducing greenhouse gas emissions across the UK economy by at least 80% on 1990 levels by 2050. The Act requires Government to set five-yearly carbon budgets with a view to meeting long-term targets. The contribution which will be needed from transport will depend on the cost of action to reduce emissions from the transport sector compared to the cost of taking action elsewhere in the non-traded sector. The guidance advises that the challenging nature of the target means that transport will need to make a significant contribution.

3.5 LTP Funding

The guidance advises that Transport Strategies and Implementation Plans should be based on realistic estimates of the funding likely to be available. The Government has put in place three year local government settlements and an indicative ten year regional funding allocation. Whilst the Department does not currently intend to link any national performance funding to the quality or delivery of new Local Transport Plans, the guidance advises that authorities are required to consider alternative sources of funding for both capital and revenue initiatives.

3.6 Alignment with regional strategies

LTP3s are required to be prepared in the context of the broader policies and objectives contained in relevant Regional Strategies. In particular, it is critical that transport and land-use planning are closely integrated. Both need to be considered from the outset in decisions on the location of key land uses such as housing, hospitals, schools and businesses. It will be essential for LTPs to be closely aligned with the Local Development Framework. The guidance states that individual local authorities should aim for consistency between the suite of documents applying to their area. In particular, there is an opportunity for authorities to develop plans that link transport with an area's wider agenda, such as education, employment, health, equality and social exclusion, crime and the environment, together with close engagement with the Local Strategic Partnership. The Council will be producing a Infrastructure Plan, from the plan it may then wish to identify priority strategic major infrastructure investments to form the basis of an Infrastructure levy.

3.7 National and Regional proposals

During the period of the plan if transport or infrastructure proposals of a significant nature are taken forward by Government such as a new Lower Thames Crossing, a revision to the plan will need to be considered. It is understood that the Department of Transport (DfT) will be shortly commencing a national study on the Lower Thames Crossing but at present there are no agreed proposals for the location of a Lower Thames Crossing. Cabinet considered a report at a meeting on the 2 June 2009 concerning a number of possible options for the Lower Thames Crossing which were proposed by Consultants employed by the DfT. Two options that directly affected Medway (option D1 and D2) were not supported by the Consultants. Options D1 (Cliffe lies within the boundaries of Basildon, Thurrock, Medway and Gravesham Councils) and D2 (Canvey lies within the boundaries of Basildon, Castle Point, Thurrock, Medway and Gravesham Councils). Both options commence north of the Thames at an improved A13/A130 junction and link south of the Thames at a revised A289 / M2 junction.

The decision of Cabinet agreed the following:

The Cabinet instructed the Director of Regeneration, Community and Culture to write to the Department for Transport to:

- a) seek agreement for Medway Council to actively participate in any project group set up to influence the study brief for the detailed assessment of the proposed crossing options;
- b) Support the Study recommendation that options D1 and D2 should not be taken forward for future examination for the reasons given in the report;
- c) Provide early feedback on factual inaccuracies in the report.

3.8 National Indicators

The National Indicator Set contains ten specific transport indicators. Local Transport Implementation Plans should set out the expected impact of the Plan on these indicators. The guidance suggests that LTPs should also describe and where possible estimate impacts on indicators which are not transport-specific, but where transport is a key ingredient in successful delivery. Authorities should ensure that their Implementation Plans are fully consistent with plans to achieve the targets set in the Local Area Agreement.

3.9 LTPs and Multi Area Agreements (MAAs)

Much of transport is suited to planning at a sub-regional level, to take into account the economic area which transport serves. Where authorities have prepared a Multi Area Agreement consideration can also be given to a joint Local Transport Plan. Through the North Kent MAA process a sub-regional Transport Strategy covering the Kent area of the Thames Gateway is being developed. The content of Medway's LTP will need to take account of this document, in particular the overarching sub-regional objectives. However, it is recommended that a joint LTP with Kent County Council not be pursued.

3.10 Bus strategy

The Local Transport Act 2008 removes the requirement to produce a separate bus strategy. However, the guidance expects that buses will be a key element in LTP3, continuing past emphasis on bus travel as a fundamental tool in achieving the five DfT goals and especially those related to supporting economic growth (regeneration) and climate change (reducing transport emissions). The Council has been successful in winning Community Infrastructure Fund (CIF) and Home Community Agency (HCA) funding for bus improvements. It will be essential for the credibility of LTP3 and success in securing future funding for transport initiatives that the current major transport projects are delivered.

3.11 DfT relationship

The DfT will no longer formally assess Local Transport Plans, impose mandatory targets or require submission of formal monitoring reports separate from the LAA Framework. This places responsibility firmly on individual authorities to consider how to use the Local Transport Planning framework in the way which works best for them. The guidance states that authorities are accountable to their communities rather than to the Department for both the quality of the transport strategies and effective delivery.

3.12 Delivering high quality LTPs

The LTP should cover all of an authority's policies and delivery plans relating to transport, explaining how these contribute to the wider local agenda. It should consider the transport needs both of people and of freight, not only possible enhancements to transport services but the maintenance, management and best use of the assets necessary for transport delivery. Local Transport Act 2008 requires all local transport authorities to produce an LTP relating to transport to, from and within their area. The guidance recommends that authorities should bear in mind that patterns of transport use are not necessarily restricted by local authority boundaries and therefore it is important to work in partnership with neighbouring authorities, particularly in the context of the North Kent MAA.

3.13 Timescale for the Plans

Authorities can make the strategy element of their Plan look forward 10 to 20 years, in order to align it with the relevant regional strategy or Sustainable Communities Strategy. The implementation plan element of the LTP could span a shorter time period than the strategy. Implementation plans could, for example, be three years in length, to align with local government funding settlements and LAA timescales. At a recent regional meeting of the South East Authorities Service Improvement Group (SEASIG) involving officers who have responsibilities for producing LTP3, the consensus was that officers would be recommending in the region of a 20 year Transport Strategy to link closely with the LDF programme. It is recommended that Medway's LTP spans a period up to 2026 to coincide with the LDF timescale. Implementation Plan time periods across the SEASIG group ranged from 3 to 5 years. For the Medway area, as LTP3 also links into the Local Area Agreement (LAA) programme, it is recommended that the LTP Implementation Plans are based on a three year period,

particularly as this also links to government financial settlements as seen with LTP2.

3.14 Developing the Plan

The guidance recognises that the transport agenda covers wider priorities – for example transport will be vital in ensuring that people have access to key services. Authorities need to identify problems and priorities on the basis of clear evidence and data, for example on:

- demographic trends
- environmental issues
- economic circumstances
- existing transport infrastructure capacity
- travel patterns and trip rates
- connectivity of existing networks
- stakeholder views.

The priorities within the Regeneration Framework are town centres, transport and benefits for all. Delivery of Investment in transport infrastructure is a major plank of regeneration of the area. A current review of the Regeneration Framework will ensure priorities are met and the need to promote greater connectivity and access as part of transformational place making will be promoted as essential for regeneration of Medway

4. Programme for production of LTP3 Key milestones

- 4.1 The following table sets out the key milestones required for the production of LTP3. As part of this programme it is suggested that consideration be given to setting up of an Cabinet Advisory Group for the production of LTP3.

Date	Event	Comment
16 July 2009	LTP3 Guidance issued by DfT	
27 July 2009	LDF Advisory Group	Discussed the basis for the LDF Transport Strategy
13 August 2009	Directorate Management Team (DMT)	Recommendations supported
26 August 2009	Corporate Management Team (CMT)	Recommendations supported
21 October 2009	O&S Committee	Seeking comments for Cabinet
3 November 2009	Cabinet	
October – December 2009	Meeting key stakeholders	
November – February 2010	Write draft provisional LTP3 Strategy	
January – June 2010	Write draft Implementation Plan based on agreed	

	Strategy	
February 2010	Internal officer consultation	
March 2010	DMT / CMT / O&S / Cabinet	Sign off for LTP3 Strategy
July – Sept 2010	Public consultation	Provisional LTP3 Strategy and Implementation Plan
September 2010	Finalise document	
October 2010	DMT	
November 2010	CMT	
December 2010	Cabinet	
January 2011	Full Council sign off	
April 2011	Commencement of LTP3	

5. Diversity Impact Assessment

- 5.1 In developing LTP3, the process will be subject to a Diversity Impact Assessment (DIA). A scoping meeting took place in September 2009 to agree the methodology and the DIA will be completed during the course of the plan's development.

6. Risk Management

- 6.1 Risk management is an integral part of good governance. The Council has a responsibility to identify and manage threats and risks to achieve its strategic objectives and enhance the value of services it provides to the community. The following table considers any significant risks arising.

Risk	Description	Action to avoid or mitigate risk
The new LTP is not adopted by 31 March 2011, when the current plan expires	<p>The adoption and delivery of the LTP is a statutory responsibility. In preparing a new LTP, the consequences if these risks are realised are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Government assesses delivery as below an acceptable standard; - poor assessment could impact on CAA; and reduced capital funding 	<p>The mitigation measures that will be required to put in place include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Robust project management processes; b) Close working with members, GOSE and the South East England Partnership Board during the development of the plan; c) Service Manager to closely oversee the plan preparation; and Close partnership working with both internal and external partners, including linking to the North Kent Transport Strategy developed as part of the North Kent
LTP not prepared in accordance with guidance provided by government or the plan is not challenging enough.		
	Description of risk	

	<p><u>Likelihood</u></p> <p>A Very high B High C Significant D Low E Very low F Almost impossible</p>	<p><u>Impact:</u></p> <p>1 Catastrophic (Showstopper) 2 Critical 3 Marginal 4 Negligible</p>	
	<p>This risk is rated - D2</p>		

7. Consultation

- 7.1 Between October and December 2009 meetings with key stakeholders are taking place, to help shape the provisional plan. This is being achieved through one to one meetings and various Local Strategic Partnership (LSP) forums.
- 7.2 Between July and September 2010 public consultation will be undertaken on the provisional plan including Strategy and Implementation Plan. Details of the nature and extent of the consultation are being developed and link in with Local Development Framework (LDF) processes.

8. Cabinet Advisory Group

- 8.1 Due to the importance of the LTP it is suggested that a Cabinet Advisory Group is created. Membership to be nominated by the group whips.

9. Financial and legal implications

- 9.1 The Transport Act 2000 requires all authorities to develop policies for the promotion and encouragement of safe, integrated, efficient and economic transport to, from and within their area, to produce a plan containing those policies, and to keep that plan under review.
- 9.2 The LTP is an important bidding document to Government for capital funds and competition for future funding will be high. The quality of the new LTP is likely to influence the level of funding allocation, which is split into three categories:
- Integrated transport block - funding accident reduction measures, traffic management, public transport infrastructure improvements, cycling and walking schemes, and safer routes to schools projects.
 - Capital maintenance allocation - funding the maintenance of carriageways, footways, bridges, highway drainage and traffic signals.
 - Major schemes, relating to projects valued above £5m.
- 9.3 The financial bid will take account of any indicative financial allocation provided by government.

10. Recommendations

The Committee is asked to consider and recommend to Cabinet the following:

- a) the production of a Medway Transport Strategy to cover the period 2011 to 2026, together with supporting Implementation Plans covering successive 3 year periods;
- b) the national Transport Goals to be refined to incorporate sub-regional and local objectives;
- c) the formation of an LTP3 Cabinet Advisory Group;
- d) the LTP3 programme for the production and consultation as detailed in the report;
- e) delegated authority for the consultation of the draft Implementation Plan to be granted to the Director of Regeneration, Community and Culture in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Frontline Services.

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Background papers

- a) Local Transport Plan guidance (final) – published July 2009