

## **Cabinet**

**26 August 2025**

### **Local Transport Plan – Consultation and Engagement Management Plan**

Portfolio Holder: Councillor Alex Paterson, Portfolio Holder for Community Safety, Highways and Enforcement

Report from: Ruth Du-Lieu, Deputy Director of Place

Author: Michael Edwards, Head of Transport & Parking

#### **Summary**

This report sets out the proposed approach for engaging residents, stakeholders and partners in the development of a new Local Transport Plan for Medway and seeks approval to commence the first phase of engagement in the Autumn.

#### **1. Recommendations**

- 1.1. The Cabinet is requested to approve the Communications and Engagement Management Plan as the basis for stakeholder engagement in the development of Medway's new Local Transport Plan.
- 1.2. The Cabinet is requested to agree to commence engagement in the Autumn of 2025.
- 1.3. The Cabinet is requested to delegate authority to the Director of Place, in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Community Safety, Highways and Enforcement, to make any minor amendments to the Plan as required during the engagement process.

#### **2. Suggested reasons for decisions**

- 2.1. To ensure that the development of a new Local Transport Plan for Medway is informed by a structured and inclusive engagement process with residents and stakeholders.

#### **3. Budget and policy framework**

- 3.1. The recommendations in this report are within the Council's existing policy and budget framework. The Local Transport Plan is a statutory document forming part of the Council's policy framework, as defined in the Constitution.

Approval of the Communications and Engagement Management Plan and commencement of consultation activities fall within Cabinet's decision-making powers.

## 4. Background

- 4.1. Medway's current Local Transport Plan (LTP), adopted in 2011, runs to the end of 2026. To comply with the Council's statutory duty under the Transport Act 2000, a new LTP will be prepared for the 15-year period that follows. This will set out a long-term strategy for transport in Medway, incorporating existing transport plans and strategies and supporting wider policies and strategic objectives around economic growth, health, climate change, and social inclusion.
- 4.2. The Department for Transport encourages local authorities to adopt a 'vision and validate' model. This approach begins with establishing a clear vision for the type of places a community aspires to create, followed by identifying the transport interventions required to support that vision. The new LTP will therefore need to be forward-looking, evidence-based, and resilient to future uncertainties such as changes in travel behaviour, technological developments, and climate impacts.
- 4.3. To support the development of the new LTP, a Communications and Engagement Management Plan (CEMP) has been prepared. It outlines a structured approach to engaging residents, businesses, partners and community groups that is intended to capture the needs, aspirations and lived experiences of Medway's communities. The CEMP proposes a three-stage engagement process and includes targeted outreach to underrepresented groups, young people and those with protected characteristics. It is designed to meet statutory consultation requirements and embed co-design principles throughout the process.
- 4.4. The Stage 1 consultation will focus on identifying current transport challenges and opportunities across Medway. It will include an online questionnaire, promoted through Council channels and community venues, and three targeted online workshops. These workshops will engage young people, groups with protected characteristics and internal and external stakeholders.
- 4.5. The consultation period for Stage 1 will run for four weeks. The aim is to ensure that a wide range of voices are heard early in the process, particularly those who may be underrepresented in traditional consultation exercises. The findings will be analysed by theme, geography and demographic group, and will inform the development of strategic themes and investment priorities. A Stage 1 Consultation Report will be produced and presented to the Regeneration, Culture and Environment Overview and Scrutiny Committee later in the year.
- 4.6. The Stage 2 consultation will support the development of a shared vision for transport in Medway and explore future scenarios that may affect delivery. A half-day stakeholder workshop will be held using the nationally recognised

FUTURES toolkit, developed by the University of the West of England. This structured process will help participants:

- Identify key drivers of change (e.g. climate, technology, demographics).
- Develop a vision statement and strategic objectives.
- Explore up to four future scenarios to test the robustness of potential interventions.

- 4.7. The workshop will include representatives from Council teams, transport operators, neighbouring authorities, youth and community groups. The outputs will be used to shape the long list of options and guide future investment decisions.
- 4.8. The Scenario Planning and Visioning Workshop will be held in the winter of 2025/6, depending on attendees' availability, with the results of the workshop presented in a Vision Narrative and Scenario Note and circulated to attendees for feedback.
- 4.9. Once the draft LTP has been prepared, the Stage 3 consultation will comprise a final round of engagement to test the proposed policies, schemes and interventions. This will include a second online consultation and a repeat of the three targeted workshops from Stage 1. Participants from earlier phases will be re-invited to ensure continuity and co-creation. A clear feedback loop will be maintained throughout, with accessible summaries of how input has influenced the Plan.
- 4.10. The Stage 3 consultation will be held in the Summer of 2026, following which the final Plan will be prepared for consideration by Cabinet and Council.

## 5. Options

- 5.1. Option 1 – To approve the Communications and Engagement Management Plan and commence a structured, inclusive and evidence-based engagement process to support the development of Medway's new Local Transport Plan. This is the recommended option.
- 5.2. Option 2 – To not approve the Communications and Engagement Management Plan and proceed without a formal engagement framework. This option is not recommended; whilst it may reduce short-term resource requirements, it would risk producing a strategy that lacks transparency, inclusivity and public support.

## 6. Advice and analysis

- 6.1. The CEMP provides the strategic framework for how the Council will engage with residents, businesses, partners and community groups in shaping the new LTP. Developed in line with national best practice, including guidance from the Department for Transport and the Local Government Association, the CEMP adopts a co-design approach that ensures stakeholders are involved from the outset and throughout the Plan's development. This approach

enables stakeholders to shape the vision, objectives, and priorities of the Plan, rather than simply responding to pre-determined proposals. The engagement process is designed to be inclusive, evidence-based and responsive to local priorities.

- 6.2. The CEMP is structured around three distinct phases of engagement—issues and opportunities, visioning and scenario planning, and consultation on the draft LTP—each aligned with key project milestones. This phased approach ensures that engagement is timely, purposeful, and iterative. A wide range of inclusive and accessible engagement methods are proposed, including online surveys, targeted workshops, and community outreach through both digital and traditional channels. The Plan places an emphasis on engaging underrepresented groups and those with protected characteristics. There will also be a specific focus on the views of young people, and particular effort will be made to engage with schools, including those providing for young people with special educational needs. Engagement activities will be coordinated through a Marketing Activity Plan developed in conjunction with the Council's Communications Team.
- 6.3. The consultation and engagement exercises will be designed to ensure that all groups can contribute throughout the Plan's development. As part of the online consultation, monitoring information will be collected to understand the characteristics of respondents. Due to the self-selecting nature of the survey, it will not be possible to ensure that results are representative of all groups; however, response rates and types will be monitored and, at regular points throughout the consultation period, any steps to further promote the survey will be considered.
- 6.4. Engagement with internal stakeholders will play an important role in shaping the development of the Local Transport Plan. Collaboration with the People Directorate—Children's Services, Adult Social Care, Education, and Public Health—will ensure that the Plan reflects the diverse needs of Medway's communities and supports wider Council objectives around health, inclusion, and access. Insights from these teams will inform the design of engagement activities, help identify priority groups for outreach, and ensure that transport interventions align with service delivery needs. This internal engagement will strengthen the evidence base and support meaningful, joined-up conversations with residents and community partners throughout the consultation process.
- 6.5. The CEMP also incorporates scenario planning, which will ensure that the LTP remains resilient to future changes in travel behaviour, economic conditions, and environmental challenges. The Plan will also consider the emerging position in relation to Local Government Reorganisation and reflect the need to engage with neighbouring authorities on common transport themes, plans and policies. A strong emphasis is placed on transparency and accountability, with clear feedback loops ("you said – we did") and regular updates to participants. Monitoring and evaluation mechanisms are embedded throughout to assess the effectiveness of engagement and adapt approaches as needed. Taken together, these measures ensure that the

CEMP meets statutory requirements and reflects best practice for inclusive, evidence-based, and future-focused transport planning.

## 7. Risk management

7.1. The following table considers risks arising from this report:

Risk	Description	Action to avoid or mitigate risk	Risk rating
Low participation rates	Low response to consultation or participation in workshops which impacts on the richness of data gathered	Flexible approaches to promotion and scheduling of workshops.  Respondents to the online consultation will be eligible to win a gift voucher as an incentive to participate  Ongoing review and rapid response to emerging barriers.	CIII
Barriers to participation	Groups are not able to participate in consultation	Consultation will comprise a range of different engagement methods to maximise the opportunity to engage  Clear, easy to understand messaging that avoids jargon, and rapid myth busting if confusion arises  Targeted engagement – promotion via different community groups to publicise the survey and amplify messages	CIII
Sharing of personal data	Personal data collected during consultation leaks or is missing	Follow GDPR processes including development of privacy notices and DPIA if appropriate	DII
Misinformation	Misinterpretation of narratives regarding the consultation or the LTP are circulated	Messaging will be tested in advance, including with Council internal teams, and any misinformation proactively responded to	CII
Low awareness	Low levels of awareness regarding the consultation	Flexible approaches to promotion and scheduling of workshops	CIII

Risk	Description	Action to avoid or mitigate risk	Risk rating
	amongst potential consultees	Targeted engagement – promotion via different community groups to publicise the survey and amplify messages	
Stakeholder fatigue	Key stakeholders may be over-consulted due to multiple concurrent engagement exercises across the Council, reducing their willingness to participate meaningfully	Coordinate with other departments to streamline engagement efforts and clearly communicate the distinct purpose and value of the LTP consultation	CIII

7.2 For risk rating, please refer to the following table:

Likelihood	Impact:
A Very likely B Likely C Unlikely D Rare	I Catastrophic II Major III Moderate IV Minor

## 8. Consultation

- 8.1. The first phase of consultation and engagement is scheduled to begin in September 2025 and will run for approximately four weeks. This initial stage will focus on gathering views from residents and stakeholders on current transport challenges and opportunities in Medway. The timing has been selected to allow sufficient lead-in for promotion and to ensure that findings can be analysed and reported to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee in December. Subsequent phases of engagement are planned for early 2026 and mid-2026, aligned with key milestones in the development of the LTP.

## 9. Climate change implications

- 9.1. [The Council declared a climate change emergency in April 2019](#) - item 1038D refers and has set a target for Medway to become carbon neutral by 2050.
- 9.2. The new LTP will play a key role in supporting Medway's climate change objectives. The CEMP ensures that climate-related themes—such as sustainable travel, decarbonisation, and air quality—are embedded in the engagement process. The plan includes engagement with groups who are either disproportionately impacted by environmental and transport-related decisions or have a significant stake in the outcomes, such as low-income households, older adults, disabled people, and those reliant on public or

active travel. The outcomes will inform the development of a carbon reduction strategy within the LTP.

## 10. Financial implications

- 10.1. The cost of developing the new LTP, including the CEMP, will be met through grant funding from the Department for Transport. No additional funding is required.

## 11. Legal implications

- 11.1 The requirement to produce a Local Transport Plan is set out in the Transport Act 2000, which places a statutory duty on local transport authorities to develop policies for safe, integrated, and efficient transport facilities and services to, from and within their area. The engagement process outlined in this report will be delivered in accordance with the Council's duties under the Equality Act 2010, and all consultation activities will comply with relevant data protection legislation, including the UK GDPR and the Data Protection Act 2018.

### Lead officer contact

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### Appendices

Appendix A – LTP Communications and Engagement Management Plan

### Background papers

None