

Regeneration, Culture and Environment

Overview and Scrutiny Committee

20 January 2026

Local Transport Plan Consultation Report

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Summary

This report provides an overview of the baseline consultation undertaken to inform the development of Medway's new Local Transport Plan.

1. Recommendation

- 1.1. The Committee is recommended to note the Baseline Consultation Report at Appendix One and endorse the emerging themes that will guide the development of Medway's new Local Transport Plan.

2. Budget and policy framework

- 2.1. The Local Transport Plan is a statutory document forming part of the Council's policy framework, as defined in the Constitution.

3. Background

- 3.1. Medway's current Local Transport Plan, adopted in 2011, runs to the end of 2026. To comply with the Council's statutory duty under the Transport Act 2000, a new plan will be prepared for the 15-year period that follows.
- 3.2. In August 2025, Cabinet approved a Consultation and Engagement Management Plan that set out a structured, inclusive engagement process, with a strong emphasis on reaching underrepresented groups and young people. The first stage, baseline consultation, sought views from residents, stakeholders, and community groups on current transport challenges and opportunities. Activities comprised:
 - An online survey (15 September–12 October 2025) promoted via Council channels and community venues.

- Four online stakeholder workshops (for protected characteristics groups, transport operators, Parish Councils, and businesses).
 - Three in-person youth workshops (SEND young people, care leavers, and young people in rural areas).
- 3.3. Full details of the consultation process, including methodology, respondent profiles, and key findings are provided in the Baseline Consultation Report at Appendix One.
4. Advice and analysis

Online Survey outcomes

- 4.1. The survey gathered 251 valid responses, predominantly from Medway residents, with strong representation from older adults and people with disabilities, alongside a mix of ages, genders, and backgrounds.
- Walking was the most frequent mode (92% walked at least monthly), but car use dominated overall, with 74% driving alone and 80% owning a car. Cycling uptake was low, though younger respondents expressed interest in improvements to cycling infrastructure.
 - Half of respondents found it difficult to travel around Medway, and 79% said peak periods were challenging, while 41% reported that environmental concerns influenced their travel choices.
 - Cars are widely used for shopping, commuting, and leisure, and many respondents expressed a preference for the flexibility and convenience of private vehicles. However, concerns were raised about congestion, particularly during peak periods and school runs, and about the condition of roads, with calls for better maintenance and more coordinated roadworks. Parking availability and cost were also recurring issues, especially in town centres and near rail stations.
- 4.2. The main barriers identified for walking and cycling included safety concerns, poor-quality pavements, lack of bike ownership, and unsafe traffic conditions. For buses, respondents highlighted issues such as unreliability, infrequency, high cost, and limited coverage.
- 4.3. Rail travel was generally considered easier, but cost remained the most significant obstacle, alongside challenges with station access and parking. When asked about improvements, real-time bus information emerged as the most requested measure, followed by better maintenance and integrated ticketing.

Stakeholder workshops

- 4.4. Stakeholder workshops revealed several common themes across groups.
- Disabled and older residents emphasised the importance of concessionary travel, reliable bus services, and improved lighting to enhance accessibility and safety.

- Transport operators and businesses highlighted the need for greater reliability, better coordination of roadworks, and integrated ticketing to support seamless journeys.
- Parish councils raised concerns about rural isolation, particularly on the Hoo Peninsula, and stressed the need for dedicated school transport.
- Young people voiced issues around bus affordability and safety at stops, while also expressing support for greener options such as electric buses.
- There was strong backing for safer, well-maintained walking and cycling routes to encourage active travel.

Conclusions and emerging themes

- 4.5. The baseline consultation has provided a clear picture of the challenges and opportunities shaping transport in Medway. While responses highlighted significant concerns, particularly around public transport reliability, affordability, and road congestion, there was also strong support for improving sustainable travel options and creating a more inclusive, integrated transport system. Feedback from both the survey and the workshops points to a need for a balanced strategy: addressing immediate issues such as road maintenance and bus service reliability, while planning for long-term priorities like active travel infrastructure, environmental sustainability, and better connectivity across all communities.
- 4.6. The themes below summarise the most consistent messages emerging from this engagement and will support the development of the vision, objectives, and option appraisal framework for Medway's new Local Transport Plan. They are presented in priority order based on the strength of evidence from survey responses and workshop discussions.
 - Public transport — improve coverage, frequency, reliability, and affordability.
 - Traffic congestion and road maintenance — address bottlenecks and improve coordination of roadworks
 - Integrated transport planning — improve connections between modes, integrated ticketing, and real-time information.
 - Sustainable and active travel — provide safe, connected infrastructure for walking and cycling that is well maintained
 - Inclusivity and Equality — ensure transport provision meets the needs of disabled people, older adults, and low-income groups through accessible infrastructure, concessionary travel, and better rural connectivity.
 - Environment and safety — support carbon reduction through cleaner vehicles and reduced emissions and improve safety for all road users.

5. Risk management

- 5.1. There are no significant risks arising from this report, as its purpose is to invite Members to consider the outcomes of consultation and engagement activity as part of on-going work to develop a new Local Transport Plan for Medway.

6. Consultation

- 6.1. In line with the Communications and Engagement Management Plan, the next phase of work will engage stakeholders in shaping a shared vision for transport in Medway and explore future scenarios to ensure the plan is resilient to change. This will guide the longlisting of options and investment priorities, ensuring that the issues and aspirations identified through the baseline consultation are carried forward into the strategy development process. A final round of engagement on the draft Local Transport Plan will follow, providing further opportunity for public and stakeholder input before the plan is finalised.

7. Climate change implications

- 7.1. [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.
- 7.2. The consultation outcomes strongly reinforce the importance of aligning transport planning with climate change objectives. Feedback from residents and stakeholders highlighted support for measures to reduce emissions and expand sustainable travel, including improved walking and cycling infrastructure, investment in public transport, and the introduction of cleaner vehicles such as electric buses. Environmental considerations influenced travel choices for around 41% of survey respondents, indicating a clear appetite for greener transport and better integration of active travel. These insights will inform the development of a carbon reduction strategy within the new Local Transport Plan and ensure that priorities such as decarbonisation, air quality, and modal shift are embedded in the next phase of work, including visioning and scenario planning.

8. Financial implications

- 8.1. The cost of developing the new LTP will be met through grant funding from the Department for Transport. No further funding is required.

9. Legal implications

- 9.1. 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. This report summarises the outcomes of the baseline consultation, which was undertaken in accordance with the Council's duties under the Equality Act 2010 to ensure inclusive engagement. All consultation activities were delivered in compliance with relevant data protection legislation, including the UK GDPR and the Data Protection Act 2018. These principles will continue to underpin subsequent phases of engagement and the development of the new Local Transport Plan.

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Appendices

Appendix 1: Baseline Consultation Report

Background papers

None