

AGENDA MANAGEMENT SHEET

Name of Committee	Council		
Date of Committee	14 March 2006		
Report Title	Warwickshire Local Transport Plan 2006		
Summary	<p>The County Council has a statutory responsibility to produce a Local Transport Plan (LTP). The LTP sets out the County's Transport Strategy, and provides the framework for how transport and accessibility will be improved across Warwickshire over the next five years. The County Council submitted a Provisional LTP to the Department for Transport in July 2005. A Final version of the Plan has been prepared following a public consultation held during Autumn 2005.</p> <p>The Cabinet considered this report on the 23rd February and endorsed the proposed response of the Council to the concerns and issues raised by consultees.</p> <p>The Cabinet also recommended that the Plan be formally adopted by the Council.</p>		
For further information please contact	<table border="0"> <tr> <td>Adrian Hart Transport Planning Tel. 01926 735667 adrianhart@warwickshire.gov.uk</td> <td>Pete Keeley Principal Committee Administrator Tel: 01926 412450 petekeeley@warwickshire.gov.uk warwickshire.gov.uk</td> </tr> </table>	Adrian Hart Transport Planning Tel. 01926 735667 adrianhart@warwickshire.gov.uk	Pete Keeley Principal Committee Administrator Tel: 01926 412450 petekeeley@warwickshire.gov.uk warwickshire.gov.uk
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Would the recommended decision be contrary to the Budget and Policy Framework?	Yes/No		
Background Papers	Warwickshire Provisional Local Transport Plan 2005.		

CONSULTATION ALREADY UNDERTAKEN:-

Details to be specified

- | | | |
|---|-------------------------------------|---|
| Other Committees | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | Environment Overview and Scrutiny Committee, 17th January 2006.
Rugby Area Committee, 9th November 2005.
North Warwickshire Area Committee, 16th November 2005.
Warwick Area Committee, 22nd November 2005.
Stratford on Avon Area Committee, 23rd November 2005.
Nuneaton and Bedworth Area Committee, 30th November 2005.
Cabinet, 23 rd February 2006 |
| Local Member(s)
(With brief comments, if appropriate) | <input type="checkbox"/> | |
| Other Elected Members | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | Councillor K Browne
Councillor Mrs E Goode
Councillor Mrs J Lea } for information |
| Cabinet Member
(Reports to The Cabinet, to be cleared with appropriate Cabinet Member) | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | Councillor M Heatley – commends the plan to the Council |
| Chief Executive | <input type="checkbox"/> | |
| Legal | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | I Marriott – comments incorporated |
| Finance | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | C Holden – comments incorporated |
| Other Chief Officers | <input type="checkbox"/> | |
| District Councils | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | Nuneaton and Bedworth Borough Council Cabinet, 19th October 2005.
Stratford on Avon District Council Executive, 31st October 2005.
Rugby Borough Council Cabinet, 14th November 2005.
North Warwickshire Borough Council Executive, 12th December 2005.
Warwick District Council Executive, 12th December 2005. |
| Health Authority | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | Health and Well-Being Local Strategic Partnership |
| Police | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | Chief Inspector G Beston |
| Other Bodies/Individuals | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | |

FINAL DECISION

YES/NO

(If 'No' complete Suggested Next Steps)

SUGGESTED NEXT STEPS :

Details to be specified

- Further consideration by this Committee
- To Council
- To Cabinet
- To an O & S Committee
- To an Area Committee
- Further Consultation

Council – 14 March 2006

Warwickshire Local Transport Plan 2006

**Report of the Strategic Director of
Environment and Economy**

Recommendation from the Cabinet

That Council adopts the Final LTP (including any minor modifications proposed to them by the Strategic Director of Environment and Economy).

1. Introduction

1.1 As Highway Authority, the County Council has a statutory responsibility to produce a Local Transport Plan (LTP). The LTP sets out the County's Transport Strategy, and provides the framework for how transport and accessibility will be improved across Warwickshire over the next five years. The quality of the LTP has a direct influence on the capital funding allocated by Government for a range of transport improvements, including public transport, walking, cycling, traffic management, safer routes to school, casualty reduction and road/bridge maintenance.

1.2 The Council is recommended by the Cabinet to adopt the LTP 2006. Owing to the size of the Final LTP document it has been made available in the Group Rooms and on the Committee Administration System and Warwickshire Web - under committee papers. A copy is also available on request from Member Services.

2. LTP Guidance

2.1 In December 2004, Department for Transport (DfT) issued guidance to all Highway Authorities on their requirements for the preparation of the second LTP, to cover the period from 2006/7 to 2010/11. DfT invited a Provisional LTP submission to be made by July 2005, with a Final LTP to be produced by the end of March 2006.

2.2 At the meeting of Cabinet on June 30th 2005, Members:-

- (i) Approved the Provisional LTP for submission to DfT;
- (ii) Approved the proposal to undertake a public consultation on the Provisional LTP to inform the development of the Final LTP.

- (iii) Requested that the results of the public consultation be reported to Environment Overview and Scrutiny Committee prior to being brought before Cabinet.
- 2.3 Paragraph 5.16 of the LTP Guidance states that authorities should include evidence in their LTP that consultation processes have allowed timely and effective opportunity for local communities and interested parties to contribute and influence the development of the Final Plan.
- 2.4 Details of the consultation undertaken following the submission of the Provisional LTP are set out in section 3 of this report. The key issues arising from the consultation are set out in section 4 of the report.

3. Consultation Undertaken Following Submission of the Provisional LTP

- 3.1 The following consultation has been undertaken since the Provisional LTP was submitted to DfT in July 2005:-
- (i) The Provisional LTP was made available and publicised on the Warwickshire website, including the supporting Appendices.
 - (ii) An on-line questionnaire was made available alongside the Provisional LTP on the website to seek feedback and support on the Plan.
 - (iii) A DVD was produced and distributed to promote the achievements of the first LTP and the proposals contained in the new Plan.
 - (iv) Week-long exhibitions were held at various locations across the County to publicise the LTP and encourage feedback.
 - (v) Press releases were issued, and a number of radio interviews and photo shoots were undertaken.
 - (vi) A meeting of the County Council's Local Strategic Partnership (LSP) Transport Theme Group was held in November 2005.
 - (vii) Each of the County Council's Area Committees have had an opportunity to comment on the Provisional LTP through the Committee process. The points raised by each of them can be found in **Appendix A** of this report (which is available in the Group Rooms and on the Committee Administration System/Warwickshire Web) under the following responses:-
 - (a) Rugby Area Committee (response R066).
 - (b) North Warwickshire Area Committee (response R067).
 - (c) Warwick Area Committee (response R068).
 - (d) Stratford on Avon Area Committee (response R069).

- (e) Nuneaton and Bedworth Area Committee (response R070).
 - (viii) All five District/Borough Council's have brought the Provisional LTP before their Cabinet or Executive Committee. Their comments can also be found in **Appendix A**.
 - (ix) Further meetings with targeted stakeholders have been held, including the Highways Agency, Government Office and DfT. At the meeting with the Government Office and DfT, preliminary feedback was provided to the County Council on the Provisional LTP. This feedback was subsequently formalised in the LTP Settlement Letter, which the Authority received from DfT in December 2005 (see paragraph 5.1).
- 3.2 Consultation on the Provisional LTP has been undertaken in parallel with consultation on:-
- (i) The LTP Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) Report, which was produced by Arup on behalf of the County Council;
 - (ii) The draft Countryside Access and Rights of Way Improvement Plan (CAROWIP), which is a daughter document of the LTP.
- 3.3 The organisations listed in **Appendix B** of this report (available in the Group Rooms and on the Committee Administration System/Warwickshire Web) have been involved throughout the development and preparation of both the Provisional and the Final LTP.

4. Results of the Consultation

- 4.1 Analysis of the consultation feedback has focused primarily on the results of the on-line questionnaire and the individual submissions made by consultees. A short discussion of the key issues arising from the consultation are set out below.

Summary

- 4.2 The total number of responses received, and the nature of the comments contained therein is broadly in line with previous consultations on the LTP. Those responding tend to fall into one of two groups, either a body or organisation with an interest in transport, or a private individual who has a single issue or concern.

On-line Questionnaire

- 4.3 Overall there was a disappointing response rate to the on-line questionnaire, with a total of 32 respondents. On reflection, this may be due to a combination of reasons.

- (i) The new LTP is very much a development of the first LTP, and as such represents a rolling forward of proposals rather than a fundamental shift in emphasis or approach.
 - (ii) In order to be able to complete the questionnaire, respondents ideally required an understanding of the whole of the LTP. Given the size of the LTP (including the supporting Annexes), this was perhaps an unrealistic expectation to have.
 - (iii) Those with a single issue or concern to raise will probably choose to make an individual response rather than completing the more wide-ranging questionnaire.
 - (iv) The problem of consultation 'fatigue', arising from the levels of consultation which are undertaken these days as a matter of course by Local Government and other similar organisations.
- 4.4 It is not considered that the design of the questionnaire was a contributory factor to the low response rate. The questionnaire was very similar in design to other on-line events that have been successfully used in previous consultations undertaken by the County Council.
- 4.5 Due to the low response rate, it would not be statistically reliable to place much weight on the overall trends that emerge from the analysis of the on-line questionnaire. However, individual observations on specific matters are of value, and therefore have been considered.

Individual Responses

- 4.6 Overall there was a total of 76 individual responses on the LTP, including feedback from the five Area Committees and each of the District/Borough Councils. A summary of the key issues raised by each respondent is set out in **Appendix A** which is available in the Group Rooms and on the Committee Administration System/Warwickshire Web. The schedule includes a suggested response to each of the points raised by the consultees.
- 4.7 As scrutiny of the schedule shows, there were a number of recurring issues raised by individuals in their consultation responses. The reference in the list of issues below refers to where in the schedule the principal response to this issue can be found. Where appropriate, subsequent references in the schedule to the same issue are referred back to the principal response.
- (i) Restoration of the Stratford – Honeybourne – Cheltenham railway line (response R002);
 - (ii) Kenilworth Railway Station (response R014);
 - (iii) Provision of a cycle route between Kenilworth and Leamington Spa (response R019);
 - (iv) Stratford Parkway Railway Station (response R022);

- (v) Rugby East Parkway Railway Station (response R041);
- (vi) Stratford Western Relief Road (response R043).

Comments of the Environment Overview and Scrutiny Committee

- 4.8 The results of the public consultation were presented to the County Council's Environment Overview and Scrutiny Committee on 17th January 2006. The Committee endorsed the proposed response of the County Council to the consultation comments, particularly in terms of the suggested response to the issue of the Kenilworth to Leamington Spa cycle route.

Cabinet

- 4.9 The Cabinet on 23 February noted the results of the public consultation and approved the response to the issues raised in the consultation.

5. DfT Response to the LTP – The 2005 LTP Settlement Letter

- 5.1 The County Council received the 2005 LTP settlement letter in December 2005. In the letter, DfT has assessed the LTP as 'promising'. The letter states that the LTP is of a good quality, is generally consistent with national, regional and local policy, and takes account of the 'shared priorities' for transport. The settlement letter sets out a number of other strengths of the Plan, as well as areas that DfT would like to see improvements made in the Final LTP submission. These issues have been addressed in finalising the Plan over the last two months.

6. The LTP Delivery Strategy

- 6.1 Part four of the Final LTP sets out the proposed Delivery Strategy for the next five years (2006/07 to 2010/11). The Strategy is based on the financial 'planning guideline' figures provided to the County Council by DfT in 2005. The views of Cabinet on the Delivery Strategy are sought, including the proposed five-year LTP resource allocation plan (see Table 4.5 in Part Four of the Final LTP).
- 6.2 Part Four of the Final LTP also sets out the proposed Major Scheme bids that will be promoted by the County Council during the forthcoming five-year LTP period. This includes the SPARK public transport major scheme in Warwick and Leamington Spa, which was submitted with the Provisional LTP in July 2005.
- 6.3 As Members will be aware, Decriminalisation of Parking Enforcement (DPE) in the Stratford on Avon District became operational in October 2004. As set out in the LTP Delivery Strategy, it is planned to introduce DPE in the remaining areas of Warwickshire in stages between 2006 and 2008. No capital funding from the LTP settlement has been allocated to this work during the LTP period. It is proposed to fund all further DPE schemes from either Virtual Bank borrowing against County Council reserves, or Prudential borrowing. This borrowing would be supported by any surpluses made from existing DPE schemes, and from subsequent areas once they become operational.

6.4 Whilst the Government has maintained the level of transport capital expenditure it is supporting through the LTP, the level of revenue grant to support any borrowing costs has not been maintained. In the 2006/07 formula grant announcement the level of that support has shown a marked fall. This has increased the proportion of costs which need to be met by the council tax payer. The full year cost of the 2006/07 supported borrowing for capital investment across all County Council services is £3.378 million. However, the total uplift in our grant for the running costs of all County Council services (excluding schools) in 2006/07 is only £1.461 million, significantly less than this. Therefore, there is little or no Government grant support for supported borrowing in 2006/07. With a grant increase of only £1.397 million for 2007/08 already announced compared to the full year cost of the 2007/08 supported borrowing announcement of £2.375 million, the trend is set to continue.

6.5 In light of the reduced level of Government support for revenue spending and future funding uncertainty, it may be necessary in the future to reconsider the extent to which the authority can afford to borrow to fund capital expenditure. It is suggested that this concern is reflected in the LTP by adding the following statement to the Delivery strategy:-
“The ability of the County Council to allocate resources as set out in Table 4.5 is dependent on the extent to which it can fund borrowing costs incurred in delivering investment in transport infrastructure at these levels. We therefore reserve the right to vary the level of investment to take into account the potential financial impact on our council taxpayers.”

(This addition was supported by Cabinet on 23 February).

7. Formal Adoption of the Final LTP

7.1 The Transport Act 2000 requires local transport authorities in England to produce and maintain an LTP. As a statutory document, Local Government regulations state that the Plan must be formally adopted by the County Council. It is recommended therefore that Cabinet recommends the LTP for formal adoption by the Council, prior to it being submitted to the Department for Transport (DfT) (a full copy of the Draft Final LTP can be found in **Appendix C** – which is available in the Group Rooms and on the Committee Administration System/Warwickshire Web).

8. Decisions and Recommendation from Cabinet

The Cabinet agreed:

- (1) That the results of the public consultation on the Provisional Local Transport Plan be noted and the proposed response of the County Council to the issues and comments raised in the consultation be approved.
- (2) That the Council adopts the Final LTP (including any minor modifications proposed to them by the Strategic Director of Environment and Economy).

- (3) That Cabinet supports the inclusion of Virtual Bank and Prudential borrowing within the LTP Delivery Strategy as the proposed method of funding the introduction of Decriminalisation of Parking Enforcement in Nuneaton and Bedworth, Rugby, Warwick and North Warwickshire Areas.

- (4) That Cabinet supports the draft allocation of resources in the LTP Delivery Strategy subject to the inclusion in it of the additional statement in paragraph 6.5 of the report.

JOHN DEEGAN
Strategic Director of Environment and Economy
Shire Hall, Warwick
February 2006