



WEST OXFORDSHIRE  
DISTRICT COUNCIL

## WEST OXFORDSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

Name and date of Committee	<b>CABINET – 16 MARCH 2022</b>
Report Number	<b>Agenda Item 7</b>
Subject	<b>RESPONSE TO OXFORDSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL'S DRAFT LOCAL TRANSPORT AND CONNECTIVITY PLAN (LTCP)</b>
Wards affected	ALL
Accountable member	Cllr Jeff Haine Cabinet Member for Strategic Planning Email: <a href="mailto:jeff.haine@westoxon.gov.uk">jeff.haine@westoxon.gov.uk</a>
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Summary/Purpose	To agree a formal response to Oxfordshire County Council's Draft Local Transport and Connectivity Plan (LTCP) which is the subject of public consultation from 5 January – 16 March 2022.
Annexes	Annex A – Draft WODC response
Recommendation/s	<i>a) To note the report; and b) To agree that the draft response attached at Annex A be submitted as West Oxfordshire District Council's formal representation to the draft Local Transport and Connectivity Plan (LTCP).</i>
Corporate priorities	The draft LTCP relates directly to a number of priorities set out in the West Oxfordshire Council Plan (2020 – 2024) including climate action, healthy towns and villages, a vibrant economy and strong local communities.
Key Decision	NO
Exempt	NO
Consultees/ Consultation	The draft LTCP is the subject of public consultation from 5 January – 16 March 2022.

## **1. BACKGROUND**

- 1.1.** The Local Transport and Connectivity Plan (LTCP) outlines Oxfordshire County Council's long-term vision for transport in the county and the policies required to deliver this. The Plan covers the time period up to 2050.
- 1.2.** The local and regional policy context has changed significantly since the publication of the previous Local Transport Plan (LTP4) in 2016. The LTCP is an opportunity to develop a transport policy framework that reflects these changes.
- 1.3.** The LTCP also represents an opportunity to adopt and implement a new way of thinking which considers people first and seeks to create healthy places whilst improving biodiversity and air quality.
- 1.4.** The draft vision and policies contained within will be used to influence and inform how the County Council manage transport and the types of schemes which are implemented.
- 1.5.** The LTCP has been consulted on in three stages, commencing in March 2020. This consultation is the final third stage before the Plan is finalised later in the year.
- 1.6.** In support of the LTCP, the County Council commissioned consultants to conduct an Integrated Sustainability Appraisal (ISA) to ensure that the LTCP protects the environment, human health and allows equal access for all residents.
- 1.7.** The LTCP will be supported by a set of more detailed place based area and corridor strategies which will be developed as a 'part 2' of the LTCP in 2022. Further engagement with stakeholders will be carried out as these are developed.

## **2. SUMMARY OVERVIEW**

- 2.1.** The LTCP sets out the key future transport challenges facing the county including the need to decarbonise the network, to reduce reliance on the private car, increase capacity for future growth, improve connectivity and a number of other wider challenges facing the county.
- 2.2.** The Plan is underpinned by a vision that outlines a long-term strategy for transport in the county and supports the policies in the document. In support of this vision, five proposed key themes are proposed which include Environment, Healthy Place-Shaping, Productivity and Connectivity. In order to achieve and track delivery of the vision and key themes, the County Council have also identified a set of targets outlined in the document.
- 2.3.** Stemming from the vision and key themes, a number of policies are included in the document to make the vision and targets achievable. The policy areas include:
  - Walking and cycling
  - Healthy place shaping
  - Public transport
  - Road safety
  - Digital connectivity
  - Data
  - Environment, carbon and air quality
  - Network, parking and congestion management
  - Innovation

- Freight and logistics
- Regional connectivity; and,
- Local Connectivity

**2.4.** Alongside the main LTCP document, the County Council have also published supporting strategies for freight and logistics, active and healthy travel and innovation, which provide more detail about these particular topics.

### **3. WEST OXFORDSHIRE RESPONSE TO DRAFT LTCP**

- 3.1.** The District Council's suggested draft response to the consultation is attached at Annex A. As can be seen, the response is largely very supportive including in relation to the overall vision and objectives of the document as well as the general structure and presentation.
- 3.2.** Given the predominantly rural nature of the County, specific observations were made in relation to the need for stronger recognition of the challenges faced in rural areas.
- 3.3.** We suggested that the vision should have an urban and rural focus and explain how the two will effectively be brought together through improved connectivity whether digital or physical.
- 3.4.** We consider improved multi-modal travel and connections to be vital to reduce the number of miles travelled within the County by car. As an example of this, where a change from train to bus may be required, the logistics should be in place to ensure any such trip is as simple and convenient as possible.
- 3.5.** Notwithstanding these initiatives, private transport will remain a key mode of transport in rural areas as it allows many residents in West Oxfordshire and other parts of the county to access employment, leisure and appointments, which would otherwise not be possible. Therefore, we advised that the focus should be on encouraging cleaner electric vehicles in these areas, alongside other measures.
- 3.6.** Under the walking and cycling policy area, we raised the importance of future policies strengthening the need for new developments to provide attractive active travel linkages to key facilities to facilitate sustainable travel and avoid car dependency.
- 3.7.** We agree with the proposed 'transport user hierarchy' in principle which prioritises walking and cycling above other modes of transport but felt that there should be more flexibility to allow for certain circumstances where it is necessary to prioritise another modes.
- 3.8.** Under the healthy place shaping policy area, we confirmed our support for the 20-minute neighbourhood concept although raised the need for this to be applied with a level of flexibility and discretion. It is not always appropriate to apply a strict 20 minute neighbourhood concept to more rural areas where average densities are lower.
- 3.9.** Within the transport corridor strategies section, we considered that more information should be included concerning the A40 works which are extensive and subject to a live planning application. The scheme will transform the function of this corridor and the dominant mode of transport and therefore is particularly relevant.
- 3.10.** A number of other observations were made which can be read in full within the draft response.

#### **4. NEXT STEPS**

- 4.1.** Subject to the approval of Cabinet, the draft consultation response attached at Annex A will be formally submitted to Oxfordshire County Council who will then consider all responses received with a view to finalising and adopting the LTCP and supporting strategies in summer 2022.

#### **5. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 5.1.** The report raises no direct financial implications.

#### **6. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 6.1.** The report raises no direct legal implications.

#### **7. RISK ASSESSMENT**

- 7.1.** The report raises no specific risks.

#### **8. EQUALITIES IMPACT**

- 8.1.** The LTCP is accompanied by an Integrated Sustainability Appraisal (ISA) that incorporates a Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA), Equality Impact Assessment (EqIA), Health Impact Assessment (HIA) and Community Safety Assessment.

#### **9. CLIMATE CHANGE IMPLICATIONS**

- 9.1.** Sustainable communities that are resilient to climate change is one of the key themes that underpin the LTCP. Decarbonisation of the transport system is a central tenet of the strategy part of the vision of which is 'for a zero-carbon Oxfordshire transport system that enables all parts of the county to thrive'.

#### **10. ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS**

- 10.1.** The LTCP is accompanied by an Integrated Sustainability Appraisal (ISA) which considers a number of 'reasonable alternatives' to inform the development of the final draft plan.

#### **11. BACKGROUND PAPERS**

- 11.1.** None.