

Divisions Affected – All

CABINET

19 November 2024

LTCP Monitoring Report Report of Place Overview & Scrutiny Committee

RECOMMENDATION

1. The Cabinet is **RECOMMENDED** to —
 - a) Note the recommendations contained in the body of this report and to consider and determine its response to the Place Overview and Scrutiny Committee, and
 - b) Agree that, once Cabinet has responded, relevant officers will continue to provide each meeting of the Place Overview and Scrutiny Committee with a brief written update on progress made against actions committed to in response to the recommendations, for 12 months or until they are completed (if earlier).

REQUIREMENT TO RESPOND

2. In accordance with section 9FE of the Local Government Act 2000, the Place Overview & Scrutiny Committee requires that, within two months of the consideration of this report, the Cabinet publish a response to this report and any recommendations.

INTRODUCTION AND OVERVIEW

3. The Place Overview and Scrutiny Committee considered a report on the progress made on delivering the Local Transport and Connectivity Plan (LTCP) to date at its meeting on 25 September 2024. The report provided the Committee with an overview of the annual monitoring report and provided a summary of proposed changes to the LTCP.
4. The Committee was grateful to Cllr Andrew Gant and Cllr Judy Roberts, Cabinet members for Transport Management and for Infrastructure and Development Strategy respectively, for attending the Committee to present the report. The Committee was grateful, too, for the attendance of Paul Fermer,

Director of Environment and Highways, Joseph Kay, Oxfordshire Transport Strategy Team Leader, and Ben Smith, Strategic Transport Manager.

SUMMARY

5. The LTCP progress report was introduced as having marked a major shift aimed at changing travel behaviours in the county. Despite difficulties in setting a relevant baseline due to COVID-19's impact on travel, there were positive trends like increased cycle trips, bus, and rail usage, along with fewer road traffic casualties. However, vehicle miles and road emissions rose slightly and cycle trips, bus and rail usage remain lower than the 2019 baseline.
6. The Committee suggested that greater granularity in the data would be useful. The Committee recognised that the adoption of plans and strategies were examples of policy delivery. However, it considered that a greater distinction should be made in the monitoring report, and when reporting on progress generally, between the policies themselves and the physical infrastructure delivered as outputs of those policies. For instance, whilst multiple policies had been implemented, the relatively slow pace of the resultant infrastructure was of concern to members.
7. The Committee was clear that aligning budget allocations with policy priorities was crucial to ensure that financial resources effectively supported LTCP goals.
8. The monitoring report itself was scrutinised by the Committee before its submission to Cabinet and a number of requests were made of the Director before he submitted it. These were to provide greater clarity so that monitoring was easier.
9. In addition, one formal recommendation was made to Cabinet which was about changing the headline LTCP target on car use reduction. Rather than relating to car trips, the Committee was of the view that it should relate to car mileage.

RECOMMENDATION

10. The Committee highlighted that, whilst the number of car trips had decreased, there had been an increase in vehicle miles. This is not unique to Oxfordshire and aligns with national trends, with both Oxfordshire and England seeing a three percent increase.
11. The Council's target is to replace or remove one out of every four current car trips in Oxfordshire. However, a journey by private car to a railway station or to a Park and Ride where the motorist then switches to public transport to travel into the urban centre, for example, is preferable to that whole journey, from home to the urban centre, being undertaken by private car. Residents seeking to reduce their car use might well choose to do this with the best of

intentions (and with beneficial outcomes) but are counted as equally problematic as if they had undertaken their whole journey by car.

12. The Committee is aware that the Welsh Government's aim is to reduce the number of car miles travelled per person by 10% by 2030; the Scottish Government's is to reduce car kilometres by 20% by 2030.
13. As well as aligning with the approach of the Welsh and Scottish Governments, a change of target from a reduction in the number of car trips to reduction in car mileage might also provide a better correlation with carbon emissions. It would also be useful given that there are difficulties in measuring the number of car trips accurately.
14. The Committee considers that there would be considerable merit in amending the target to a reduction in the number of car miles travelled per person and recommends that the Council makes arrangements for such an amendment. If necessary, the Council could contact representatives of the Welsh and/or Scottish governments to learn from them with regard to their data collection and metrics for reporting on this measure.

Recommendation: That the Council, for the headline LTCP targets on car use reduction, should move from a car trip to car mileage reduction measure.

FURTHER CONSIDERATION

15. The Committee will be considering aspects of the LTCP in a working group, and subsequently in Committee, during the course of the Council year.

LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

16. Under Part 6.2 (13) (a) of the Constitution Scrutiny has the following power: 'Once a Scrutiny Committee has completed its deliberations on any matter a formal report may be prepared on behalf of the Committee and when agreed by them the Proper Officer will normally refer it to the Cabinet for consideration.
17. Under Part 4.2 of the Constitution, the Cabinet Procedure Rules, s 2 (3) iv) the Cabinet will consider any reports from Scrutiny Committees.

Anita Bradley
Director of Law and Governance

Annex: Pro-forma Response Template

Background papers: None

Other Documents: None

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