

# **REPORT OF THE PLACE OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY COMMITTEE: SCRUTINY OF LESSONS LEARNT FROM LTCP 4**

Cllr Kieron Mallon  
Chair of the Place Overview & Scrutiny Committee  
December 2022

## **RECOMMENDATION**

1. The Cabinet is **RECOMMENDED** to —
  - a) Agree to respond to the recommendations contained in the body of this report, and
  - b) Agree that relevant officers will continue to update Scrutiny for 12 months on progress made against actions committed to in response to the recommendations, 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 hereby requires that, within two months of the consideration of this report, the Cabinet publish a response to this report and its recommendations.

## **INTRODUCTION AND OVERVIEW**

3. At its meeting on 16 November 2022, the People Overview and Scrutiny Committee considered a previously-requested review on learning from the Council's previous LTCP, LTCP 4. The report from Scrutiny for this item was not submitted to Cabinet at its 29 November 2022 meeting as it did not form part of the issues under discussion at that extraordinary meeting.
4. The Committee would like to thank John Disley, Head of Transport Policy, for authoring the report and supporting the meeting.

## **SUMMARY**

5. Whilst highly praised by the Committee as an excellent report, the timings of other items on the agenda meant little time was able to be dedicated to presentation or discussion on this item. As a consequence, the Committee moved almost immediately towards consideration of potential recommendations, of which two were made. These relate to KPI-development

for the current LTCP and application of the learning from the previous LTCP to current policies.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

6. Rather than Scrutiny putting forward its own arguments over the importance of developing KPIs for the current iteration, it is worthwhile simply recounting at some length what was presented to Scrutiny in the report it received.
7. "LTP4 did not contain targets or a set of Key Performance Indicators (KPIs). This was in part due to Local Transport Plan Guidance, as amended in the Local Transport Act 2008, which made updating of LTPs optional and did not place any requirements on Local Authorities to monitor or report on progress. LTP guidance is currently being updated by the Department for Transport and was due to be consulted on in Autumn 2022. This will strengthen the role of LTPs and set a requirement for updated LTPs to be in place by Spring 2024. We are awaiting publication of the guidance for further detail about monitoring and reporting requirements. The lack of monitoring framework was a key lesson learnt following the review of LTP4 conducted by officers. The LTCP therefore includes both a set of targets and KPIs. Work is ongoing to develop a monitoring tool to assist with annual review of the LTCP."
8. Mostly, the Committee wishes simply to state its agreement on the importance of developing KPIs, and welcomes the inclusion of KPIs within the current LTCP. One of the learning points cited by the report later on specifically references the importance not only of having KPIs, but SMART KPIs. The Committee is keen to underline this element as being of particular importance as a matter of public transparency and accountability, and also as a tool for understanding whether current policies are sufficient to underpin the delivery of the LTCPs ambitions.

### **Recommendation 1: That the Council develops SMART KPIs to monitor the progress of LTCP 5 in meeting its objectives**

9. The report presented to Scrutiny summarised the key lessons learned from LTCP4 as follows:

#### Objectives and policies

- Need for a clear vision to guide the document and supporting strategies.
- Need to ensure alignment between policy goals.
- Need for strong policy wording and more specific policies.
- Need to improve internal processes, understanding of the LTCP and consistent application of policies.
- Need for SMART (specific, measurable, achievable, relevant and time-bound) targets / objectives.
- Need to establish a monitoring framework and improve the reporting of progress.
- Consider language used and how policies / schemes are explained, including why they are needed and how they will benefit residents.

#### Area strategies

- Need for a consistent countywide approach that aligns with LTCP policy.
- Need to move away from 'predict and provide' transport planning approach.
- Need for more ambitious measures to support the overarching objectives and move away from highways infrastructure improvements.
- Need for a greater focus on activation, healthy place shaping and measures to support infrastructure improvements.
- Need for robust consultation and engagement.

10. As referenced, despite a time pressure the Committee particularly welcomed this report, and one of the reasons for this was the candidness and sensibleness of the lessons learnt from LTCP4 detailed above. It is of the view that there is much value in what has been learnt which would benefit not only LTCP5, but the broader work of the Environment and Place directorate.
11. Having particularly stressed the importance of SMART targets for the LTCP5, the Committee does wish to see all the lessons around targets and objectives implemented in LTCP5, and would also highlight that the monitoring and reporting element is also of importance. SMART targets are an important part of transparency and accountability, but they must be easily accessible to the public if they are to function in this way. The Council should take steps to ensure that the public, and particularly key stakeholders, know where they can find up to date information on performance.
12. Another of the core learning points the Committee endorses is the recognition that there must be consistent countywide alignment with LTCP policy, meaning the LTCP cannot operate on its own, but other parts of the Council's activity must be tied in to support it. However, it does wish to raise an important point of clarification. In a county as diverse as Oxfordshire, which has extensive rural parts, one medieval city and a number of mid-sized towns it is important that any consistency in policy should mean consistency in policy outcomes, rather than policy approaches. The Committee wishes to see an overall commitment to the outcomes of the LTCP to be supported by other areas of Council work, but for the Council to retain the flexibility to ensure that the most appropriate ways of doing so are implemented in each locality. Indeed, it sees such flexibility as being fundamental. The Committee has identified the following areas where this integration will prove particularly influential for outworking the objectives of the LTCP: the Oxfordshire Infrastructure Strategy, the development of Environment and Place KPIs, and the new capital governance framework.
13. The learning about the need to change the Council's approach is of relevance. Overall, though not uniformly, the Committee agrees that it is necessary to go further than 'predict and provide' but proactively to try and shape transport behaviour through policy, and that this requires more than simply making infrastructure improvements. This is a departure from the antecedent approaches locally and nationally and the Committee would endorse it being fully applied in the Infrastructure Policy and capital governance framework particularly.

14. Finally, the LTCP4 learning highlights the issues of communication and engagement. The Committee concurs with the learning highlighted, that consultation and engagement cannot be cursory and must seek out hard to reach but highly impacted groups to hear their views, but that the Council must also be clear from the outset what the expected benefits are and frame any changes accordingly. The Council has learnt much about consultation and engagement for major travel scheme changes already, and it is expected that this is not novel advice, but its importance bears reiterating.

**Recommendation 2: That the Council applies the lessons learnt from its review of LTCP 4 to the broader work of the Environment and Place directorate, particularly in relation to: the LTCP5 KPIs, the Oxfordshire Infrastructure Strategy, the development of Environment and Place KPIs, and integrating with the new capital governance framework.**

## **NEXT STEPS**

15. The Place Overview & Scrutiny Committee intends to have discussions over the development of suitable Environment and Place KPIs as an informal briefing in early February. It does not anticipate looking at the LTCP again, particularly the previous iteration of it, within the current civic year.

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Addendum: Pro forma Scrutiny response sheet