

## **Divisions Affected - All**

# **PLACE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE – 24 NOVEMBER 2021**

## **LOCAL TRANSPORT AND CONNECTIVITY PLAN CONSULTATION**

### **Report by Corporate Director for Environment and Place**

### **RECOMMENDATION**

The Place Overview and Scrutiny Committee members are **RECOMMENDED** to provide any comments on the Local Transport and Connectivity Plan Part 1 consultation proposals and draft questionnaires, prior to public consultation.

### **Executive Summary**

1. This report updates the Place Overview and Scrutiny Committee on the Local Transport and Connectivity Plan (LTCP) consultation plan and the draft questionnaires, as requested at the 13<sup>th</sup> October 2021 meeting. It is proposed that these documents form the basis of the LTCP public consultation commencing in January 2022. The committee are asked to provide any comments on the consultation plan or draft questionnaires (Annexes 1-4).

### **Background**

2. Local Transport Plans are statutory documents, required under the Transport Act 2008. We are calling the new Oxfordshire document the Local Transport and Connectivity Plan (LTCP), to better reflect our strategy both for digital infrastructure and for connecting the whole county.
3. We have developed and consulted upon the LTCP in 3 stages. This process has allowed for ongoing public engagement at each stage of the project. We have therefore been able to refine proposals before final inclusion in the LTCP.
4. The stages of development that we have conducted are:
  - Stage 1 – Topic Paper Engagement
  - Stage 2 – Development of Vision Document
  - Stage 3 – Development of LTCP and supporting strategies
5. The draft LTCP document including the vision, themes and policies was shared with the Place Overview and Scrutiny Committee on the 13<sup>th</sup> October. Following

this, the LTCP was endorsed for public consultation by Cabinet on the 19<sup>th</sup> October.

6. In support of the LTCP we have developed supporting strategies for Freight and Logistics, Active and Healthy Travel and Innovation. These strategies build upon the high level policies in the LTCP but provide more detail about our proposals and how they will be delivered. These documents, as well as an Integrated Sustainability Appraisal (ISA) were shared alongside the LTCP and were also endorsed by cabinet for public consultation.

## **LTCP consultation**

7. The LTCP cabinet paper (Annex 5) proposed commencing public consultation in November. However, the Place Overview and Scrutiny Committee requested to review the consultation questions. We have therefore altered the original consultation plan and are sharing details of the consultation with the Committee for feedback. In order to avoid clashes with the budget consultation and Christmas the LTCP consultation is now proposed to commence on 5<sup>th</sup> January and run for 10 weeks.
8. The LTCP consultation will be hosted on the council's Let's Talk Oxfordshire webpage. It is proposed that there will be 4 separate surveys on the webpage, one each for the LTCP (Annex 1), Active and Healthy Travel Strategy (Annex 2), Freight and Logistics Strategy (Annex 3) and Innovation Framework (Annex 4). A question on the ISA will be within the LTCP questionnaire (Annex 1, question 23). This will help to make the surveys more focused on the respective topics and as a result they will be shorter and more accessible for respondents.
9. Due to the broad range of topics covered in the LTCP and supporting documents it is proposed that each questionnaire is structured in a way that enables respondents to select the topics they are interested in. The 'Skip logic' on the Let's Talk Oxfordshire webpage will then display the relevant questions and skip over those that are not relevant. This aims to make questionnaires more tailored to respondent's interests and maximise complete responses by reducing the need to answer unnecessary questions.
10. It is proposed that each questionnaire contains summary information about the topic or policy in question. This is to help respondents understand the question and make an informed choice, without having to open the corresponding document. A link will be provided to the relevant chapter for those that do wish to read further information.
11. We will also be utilising the 'idea boards' function on Let's Talk Oxfordshire. These enable respondents to provide free text responses to questions on key topics. This is different to the traditional survey format and will allow respondents to engage with the consultation in an alternative way. We have the option to rotate themes and pose different questions throughout the consultation.

12. To ensure that all residents can take part in this consultation, we will offer the option to request a hard copy or give comments over the phone by contacting the council's helpline.

### **LTCP consultation engagement**

13. The LTCP consultation will be promoted via our existing stakeholder contact list. This includes key stakeholders, hard to reach groups, parish councils, neighbouring local authorities and respondents to the LTCP vision consultation that gave consent to be contacted again.
14. Our corporate communications and marketing team will also be promoting the consultation in a range of ways such as through the council's social media channels. A first draft of the communications plan has been produced to outline what activity this might involve. Further work is currently ongoing to refine the communications plan.
15. In order to promote the LTCP consultation as widely as possible we will also be asking if local members could share details of the consultation with stakeholders in their local areas. We will discuss this with local members at the January locality meetings and will provide some sample text to assist.

### **Corporate Policies and Priorities**

16. The County Council's corporate plan, 2020-24 includes a vision based on the 3 elements of 'Thriving People,' 'Thriving Communities,' and 'Thriving Economy.' The broader work on the LTCP will help to deliver the council's vision for all of these elements, as outlined in the LTCP cabinet paper.
17. In order to deliver the corporate plan vision, it is stated that we will "listen to our diverse residents so we can continuously improve our services and provide value for money". The LTCP consultation proposals summarised in this paper will directly contribute towards this by seeking to capture the views of a diverse range of residents.

### **Financial Implications**

18. The LTCP consultation work is being conducted by staff from the Environment and Place and Customers and Organisational Development directorates, covered by the staffing budget. In addition, revenue costs of £2,000 are required to support the communications plan funded from existing team budget.

Comments checked by:

Rob Finlayson, Finance Business Partner (Environment & Place),  
[rob.finlayson@oxfordshire.gov.uk](mailto:rob.finlayson@oxfordshire.gov.uk) (Finance)

### **Legal Implications**

19. As noted in the LTCP cabinet paper, the LTCP will become the county's statutory Local Transport Plan. The requirement for local transport authorities to produce a Local Transport Plan is set out in the Transport Act 2000, as amended by the Local Transport Act 2008.
20. The Local Transport Acts require local transport authorities to undertake a certain level of consultation when developing policies and plans. It is considered that this will be met by the Vision Document consultation conducted in February-March 2021, as well as the planned consultation set out in this paper.

Comments checked by:

Jennifer Crouch, Principal Solicitor (Environment Team),  
[Jennifer.Crouch@Oxfordshire.gov.uk](mailto:Jennifer.Crouch@Oxfordshire.gov.uk) (Legal)

### **Staff Implications**

21. Development of the LTCP questionnaire and communication plan has been undertaken by officer resource in the Infrastructure Strategy Team, Engagement and Consultation team and Marketing and Campaigns team.
22. Management and promotion of the LTCP consultation will be undertaken by officer resource in the same teams.

### **Equality & Inclusion Implications**

23. We have undertaken engagement and consultation exercises during development of the LTCP to help shape its content and understand the needs of different residents. This has included engagement with the Oxford City Council Inclusive Transport and Movement focus group. The LTCP consultation is a further opportunity to engage with a wide range of stakeholders, understand their needs and shape the content of the LTCP accordingly.
24. As noted in the LTCP cabinet paper, we have conducted an Integrated Sustainability Appraisal (ISA) and Equalities and Climate Impact Assessment (ECIA) to ensure that any equality matters have been identified and acted upon during development of the LTCP.
25. In terms of the LTCP consultation, we have sought to ensure all residents will be able to take part in the survey. This includes the option to have a hard copy posted and the ability to conduct the survey via the telephone.
26. We will also be contacting of a range of hard to reach stakeholders to notify them of the consultation and asking stakeholders to promote the consultation via their communication channels. As work to develop the communications plan progresses, we will continue to explore the potential for other ways to engage with hard to reach groups.

## Sustainability Implications

27. As identified in the LTCP cabinet paper, the LTCP will be an important part of delivering the County Council's Climate Action Framework. The LTCP consultation does not have any additional sustainability implications.

## Risk Management

28. A comprehensive risk register has been kept as part of the LTCP project. Key risks associated with the LTCP consultation have been summarised below.
29. **Risk:** The LTCP does not have wider stakeholder, Councillor or public input  
**Mitigation:** The engagement process will give time for stakeholders to feedback and develop a relationship with LTCP team. A stakeholder engagement plan has been developed and delivery is ongoing at relevant stages of public consultation. There have also been regular meetings with the LTCP Steering Group and the Transport Cabinet Advisory Group (CAG) throughout LTCP development. Local County members have been engaged with through member locality meetings. We have also engaged with district council colleagues and plan to conduct further engagement prior to public consultation.
30. **Risk:** The LTCP does not receive high levels of engagement / public consultation  
**Mitigation:** Owing to the number of major consultations being conducted in November and December 2021 by the County Council there is a risk that there are lower levels of engagement with the LTCP, with a risk of 'consultation fatigue' among residents and lower levels of engagement. OCC channels will also have less capacity to promote each consultation and encourage engagement. In order to mitigate this risk it was agreed to move the consultation to early 2022. In addition, the documents will be published on our LTCP webpages in December and stakeholders will be given advance notice of the consultation timeframes, to assist with their forward planning.

## Consultations

### Public consultation

31. There have been 2 rounds of public engagement on the LTCP to date. An engagement exercise was undertaken in Spring 2020, with the public and stakeholders asked to comment on a series of topic papers focused on different transport and connectivity topics. A report on this engagement was published alongside the LTCP Vision Document.
32. Following this, public consultation was conducted on the vision document in February-March 2021. This included seeking feedback on the draft vision, key themes and proposed policies. Feedback from this consultation has been used to refine the vision, key themes and policies in the LTCP.

33. We are proposing to undertake a further 10 week public consultation on the LTCP and supporting strategies. Amendments will then be made to take into account feedback received before the final versions are presented for approval by Cabinet and adoption at Full Council.

### **County councillor and stakeholder engagement**

34. The LTCP cabinet paper outlines the ways in which we have engaged with county councillors and stakeholders during development of the LTCP. It will be important that we continue to engage with these stakeholders to promote the LTCP consultation and seek support in promoting it. This will be conducted via the existing engagement mechanisms of Transport Strategy Cabinet Advisory Group, member localities meetings and the LTCP Steering Group.

### **Future engagement and timeline / next steps**

35. The key dates for further development of the LTCP and supporting strategies are set out below. These will be reviewed and finalised as the project develops, and aligned with timescales for the Oxfordshire Plan 2050 and associated Oxfordshire Infrastructure Strategy:
- November – December 2021: Finalisation of plans for LTCP public consultation.
  - December 2021 - Publish LTCP on OCC website (using either Cabinet Word docs or final designed copies if ready). *Contact stakeholders to provide advanced notice so they can book it into their meeting cycles*
  - January 2022 – March 2022: Public consultation on LTCP and supporting strategies.
  - Spring 2022: Finalisation of LTCP and supporting strategies, including review by Place Overview and Scrutiny Committee, approval by Cabinet and adoption by Council.
  - Spring/Summer 2022: Development of area and corridor strategies, bus and rail strategies, walking & cycling design guidance, with further engagement with local councillors and stakeholders.
  - Autumn – Winter 2022: Consultation on supporting strategies.
  - Early 2023: Final approval and adoption of complete Plan.

**BILL COTTON,**  
**Corporate Director for Environment and Place**

Annexes:                   **Annex 1:** LTCP questionnaire  
                                  **Annex 2:** Active and Healthy Travel Strategy questionnaire  
                                  **Annex 3:** Freight Strategy questionnaire  
                                  **Annex 4:** Innovation Framework questionnaire  
                                  **Annex 5:** LTCP cabinet report (Item 10 - [Agenda for Cabinet on Tuesday, 19 October 2021, 2.00 pm - Oxfordshire County Council](#))

Background papers:       Nil

POSC7

Contact Officer: John Disley, Infrastructure Strategy & Policy Manager,  
07767 006742

November 2021