

## **Divisions Affected - All**

# **CABINET MEMBER FOR TRAVEL AND DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY– 7<sup>TH</sup> SEPTEMBER 2023**

## **CENTRAL OXFORDSHIRE TRAVEL PLAN (COTP) FINAL VERSION**

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

## **RECOMMENDATION**

1. **The Cabinet Member is RECOMMENDED to approve the final version of the Central Oxfordshire Travel Plan.**

## **Executive Summary**

2. A Cabinet meeting on 29 November 2022 approved the Central Oxfordshire Travel Plan (COTP). Approval incorporated several recommended changes. These amendments together with subsequent factual updates have been incorporated into a final version of COTP.
3. In its decisions from the November 2022 meeting, Cabinet agreed to delegate a decision on the final version of the COTP to the Corporate Director for Environment and Place in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Travel and Development Strategy. This final version of COTP is therefore presented to the Cabinet Member for Travel and Development Strategy for approval.
4. Approval of the document would allow Oxfordshire County Council (OCC) officers and partners to develop and implement the actions outlined in the COTP.

## **Background**

5. Building on the policies of the adopted Local Transport and Connectivity Plan (LTCP), the COTP sets out the transport strategy for the central Oxfordshire area (Oxford, the immediate movement and connectivity corridors to and from the city and the villages that lie on those corridors - Kidlington, Eynsham, Botley, Cumnor and Wheatley) from 2023 to 2050.
6. Public consultation on the draft COTP was undertaken between 22 August 2022 and 13 October 2022. A total of 2,329 responses were received from the consultation. Based on the feedback received from the consultation and

developments since the original publication of the draft plan, several changes to the plan have been made. These were summarised and agreed at a cabinet meeting on 29 November 2022.

7. The only recommendation for amendment which was not approved by the Cabinet was that the plan has “Wider commitment to/ a better balance on 20mph speed limits”.

## Amendments to COTP

8. The most significant changes to the COTP are;
  - **Further detail on how the plan will support walking and wheeling**
    - A new text section within the active travel subsection has been added, focussing on walking and wheeling. An additional ‘action’ has also been added to the plan - “*Working to the principles of the Healthy Streets design approach, create public streets that are inclusive for all*”. There are subsequently 23 actions in the COTP plan compared to the previous 22. Additional content has also been added into a section on active travel severance and junctions to acknowledge the opportunities and comfort well designed bridges/ underpasses offer as well as greater priority and timings for active travel users at signal crossings.
  - **Greater aspirations for public transport and mobility hubs including improving the affordability of public transport**
    - Various text amends have been inserted into the plan reflecting feedback received from local bus operators and for consistency with the subsequently published Bus Service Improvement Plan (BSIP). Updates to the plan acknowledge that the county council’s bus strategy is still in development.
  - **Amend details on the delivery of a zero-emission bus fleet**
    - It is recognised that whilst desirable current technology does not support timescales stated in the previous draft version of the plan for a fully zero emission bus fleet by 2030. Instead the plan now states an action that “*Alongside partners, deliver a zero-emission local bus fleet across the Oxford Smartzone area by 2024/25 and deliver a fully zero emission bus fleet across the COTP area at the earliest possible opportunity thereafter*”.
  - **Greater recognition that a balanced approach to transport provision is needed and that for some use of a car will continue to remain important**
    - Content at the front of the plan (Transport user hierarchy section) has been inserted and updated to be consistent with the LTCP. Updated text acknowledges that the transport user hierarchy presented in COTP is a simplification and that different modes will be more appropriate in certain contexts. That implementing measures will also require a considered balance which considers

all users and appropriately responds to a context. There is also greater reference that for some use of the car will continue to remain important.

- **Further detail on how the plan will support disability and accessibility groups, the elderly and younger generations**
  - Consistent with the approach adopted in the LTCP, no bespoke text section has been added to the plan, however a review and updating of content throughout the document has been undertaken to ensure greater recognition is provided on challenges and requirements. This will also ensure that the transport experience and plan proposals are accessible and responsive to needs for all users regardless of age, experience or any impairment.
- **Greater commitment to measures to enhance resident cycle parking provision**
  - Content has been inserted to reference the opportunity to deliver measures including on-street cycle hanger storage. Action 12 of the plan has been amended to include reference that the plan will deliver “*a network of on-street residential cycle hangers across the area*”. It should be noted that complementary documents like the Oxford Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan (LCWIP), and the council’s Street Design Guide also provide more specific details on measures like this.
- **That a focus on freight consolidation does not acknowledge other opportunities for reducing both volume and carbon impacts of freight movement**
  - Additional content has been inserted into the freight section to focus on the opportunities afforded by low emission vehicles and cargo bikes.
- **Factual amends including;**
  - That the ‘City Centre Movement Framework’ will now be a ‘Central Oxfordshire Movement and Place Framework’
  - Reference to the county council’s subsequently adopted parking standards
- **Minor factual, presentational amends and greater clarification on terminology throughout the document**
  - These include clarifying details around enforcement and management of schemes – for example a public hire e-scooter scheme.

## Corporate Policies and Priorities

9. The County Council's strategic plan, 2022-25, sets out a vision to lead positive change by working in partnership to make Oxfordshire a greener, fairer and healthier county. The COTP will help to deliver all aspects of this vision.
10. Consistent with Part 1 of the LTCP, the COTP is grounded in the strategic priorities set out in the County Council's strategic plan, 2022-25. There is specific relevance to delivering on the following four priority areas:
  1. Put action to address the climate emergency at the heart of our work
  2. Tackle inequalities in Oxfordshire
  3. Prioritise the health and wellbeing of residents
  4. Invest in an inclusive, integrated and sustainable transport network.
11. The COTP will help to make central Oxfordshire greener, fairer and healthier due the relationship between transport, quality of life, health and the environment. Set within the wider LTCP framework, the COTP seeks to reduce carbon emissions and aims for a net-zero transport system by 2040. It also has a strong focus on healthy place shaping and encouraging active lives. This will help to improve health and wellbeing by providing safer walking and cycling routes to schools and improving air quality.
12. The COTP will also help to tackle inequalities and improve health and wellbeing because transport can play a significant role in enabling older and disabled people to live independently. The COTP seeks to improve connectivity for all residents and there are policies that will specifically help to achieve this.
13. The COTP aims to reduce private car use and encourage modal shift to walking, cycling, public and shared transport. This will be central to addressing the climate emergency and improving health and wellbeing.

## Financial Implications

14. The COTP will provide the basis of a strategic case for any future funding bids or future transport investment made across the central Oxfordshire area. Implementing the measures outlined within the COTP would be expected to require further resource and incur additional financial cost.
15. The COTP has been produced by staff from across the council's Environment and Place directorate. It has been financially resourced by staffing budgets within this area. In addition, the following revenue costs were attributed to the production and consultation of the document;
  - *Internal and external marketing and graphic design costs – £9,883.50.*
  - *External video animation - £2,734.00*
  - *External data research and analysis - £17,043.00*
  - *Consultation event - £2,370.60.*

Comments checked by: Rob Finlayson,  
Finance Business Partner,

rob.finlayson@oxfordshire.gov.uk

## Legal Implications

16. The COTP will form part of the county's Local Transport and Connectivity Plan which itself is a statutory document, required under the Transport Act 2000.
17. Whilst there is a statutory requirement for the county's local transport plan to be consulted upon, there is no such requirement for the subsequent area plans to be consulted upon.
18. It should be noted that previous consultation on the COTP document is not intended to constitute the statutory or other necessary consultation that is required or is otherwise carried out at the time that any of the actions in this report are proposed to be implemented.

Comments checked by: Jennifer Crouch  
Principle Solicitor (Environment Team) (Legal Services)  
Law & Governance Jennifer.Crouch@Oxfordshire.gov.uk

## Staff Implications

19. Development of the COTP has been undertaken by officer resource from within the Environment and Place teams, with input from officers across the Environment and Place and Public Health directorates.
20. Once adopted, implementing the measures outlined within the COTP would be expected to require further resource and incur financial implications subject to their own business cases.

## Local Transport and Connectivity Plan Implications

21. The COTP is an area travel plan that is part of a suite of documents that sit beneath and are directly informed by the overarching policies of the LTCP. Alongside other documents, COTP represent a 'Part 2' phase of the LTCP process, setting out how the vision and key outcomes of the LTCP are to be delivered and achieved across specific geographic areas. COTP specifically focuses on delivering against the LTCP vision and outcomes for the central Oxfordshire area, through a set of 23 actions. As set out in the COTP document (appendix 1) these actions directly map to the overarching policies of LTCP. This includes the local realisation of policies to prioritise active travel and public transport (i.e. actions 9 -15 inclusive) and on targets a vision zero approach (action 11).
22. Approval of the COTP document would allow OCC officers and partners to develop and implement the vision and objectives of the LTCP across the Central Oxfordshire area.

## Equality & Inclusion Implications

23. To ensure that we have assessed equalities implications in a fair and thorough manner an Equalities Impact Assessment was conducted (see annex 2). This has ensured that any equality matters have been identified and acted upon during development of the COTP.

## Sustainability Implications

24. A Climate Impact Assessment has been undertaken (see annex 3) to ensure that matters with climate implications are identified and where required acted upon during development of the COTP.
25. Transport produces the majority of emissions in the county. Both COTP and the broader LTCP recognises this and sets out the target for a net-zero transport network by 2040. The COTP outlines the policies and actions which will help to achieve this, focusing on reducing the need to travel, reducing journeys by car and the promotion of walking, cycling, public and shared transport.
26. The COTP also recognises the need to improve biodiversity and protect the natural environment. An Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) will be undertaken in the development of schemes and policies set out in COTP where appropriate.

## Risk Management

27. A comprehensive risk register has been kept as part of the COTP project. Key risks associated with the COTP moving forward are summarised below.

Risk - That the COTP does not deliver on its targets or intended outcomes

*Mitigation* – That the COTP should be monitored on an annual basis as part of a wider LTCP monitoring programme and that it should be reviewed within 5 years of approval to ensure that the plan is fit for purpose.

Risk - That subsequent strategy and/or area plan will lead to minor amendment of the details of COTP

*Mitigation* - Work is ongoing to develop other area travel plans including an understanding of resource requirements. Once overlapping area and supporting strategies have been prepared and approved it is expected that COTP will be updated as necessary to reflect any updated context.

Risk – That upon further development and engagement on individual key components of the plan, measures are either delayed or cancelled.

*Mitigation* - That there should be early engagement with key stakeholders and partners on components of the plan. That a review of the plan within its first 5

years of approval, should be undertaken to ensure that proposed measures remain relevant and suitably move towards addressing plan targets.

## **Consultations**

### **Public consultation**

28. Public consultation on the draft COTP was undertaken between August and October 2022. The outcomes from this process have informed this report.

### **County councillor engagement**

29. The plan has been considered by Cabinet (November '22) and the Place Overview and Scrutiny Committee (November '22)

### **Bill Cotton, Corporate Director for Environment and Place**

Annex 1 – Central Oxfordshire Travel Plan (Final Version)

Annex 2 – Equalities Impact Assessment

Annex 3 – Climate Impact Assessment

Background papers: Nil

Contact Officer: Rob Freshwater, August 2023