

<b>TITLE</b>	<b>Local Transport Plan 4 - draft for consultation</b>
<b>FOR CONSIDERATION BY</b>	The Executive on Thursday, 30 November 2023
<b>WARD</b>	(All Wards);
<b>LEAD OFFICER</b>	Director, Place and Growth - Giorgio Framaliccio
<b>LEAD MEMBER</b>	Executive Member for Active Travel, Transport and Highways - Paul Fishwick

---

**PURPOSE OF REPORT (INC STRATEGIC OUTCOMES)**

The Local Transport Plan 4 (LTP) details the implementation of transport schemes and promotions as part of a considered strategic plan for transport reflecting changing travel trends and a greater focus on the climate emergency, which the Borough Council declared in 2019.

**RECOMMENDATION**

That the Executive agrees to publish the draft Local Transport Plan 4 for public consultation with the intention, and subject to approval of full Council, for the Council to adopt the plan in summer 2024 as the Council’s strategic plan for transport over the next 10-15 years.

**EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

The Local Transport Plan (LTP) is a statutory requirement of the council deriving from the Transport Act 2000. The current Local Transport Plan (LTP3) 2011-2026 has provided many improvements including the Wokingham Greenways, enhancements to Wokingham town centre, the Arborfield Cross Relief Road, the North Wokingham Distributor Road, upgrades to railway stations and more. With a significant part of the current LTP having been delivered, changing technology and government policy, a better understanding of travel habits and with climate change, there is a need to refresh the transport strategy to address current priorities and the needs of our communities. The updated LTP will be an important part of the authority's goal of making Wokingham Borough a net-zero carbon producer.

The draft LTP4 is attached to this report as Appendix 1. It is intended to be a high-level document which will be supported in future by daughter strategies which give further detail on our approach to different elements of transport planning (such as cycling and walking, public transport and future mobility). The draft document includes an action plan, outlining some of the key interventions that we intend to deliver throughout the plan period. In addition to this, a summary of the evidence informing the Plan and information following initial stakeholder engagement (completed in spring 2023) is provided as background papers (Appendices 4 and 5).

The LTP Sustainability Appraisal is included as Appendix 2. This document would be included in the LTP public consultation. Draft public consultation questions are included in Appendix 3. Executive approval is sought to put the draft LTP4 out to public consultation. The LTP4 will support our local priorities, including a prosperous economy, improving the quality of life for residents, reducing the environmental impact of transport, and the first stages in the transition of the transport sector towards lower carbon emissions and Net Zero. It should be noted that for the last three years the Department for Transport has intended to release detailed guidance as to the recommended content of an LTP. This has delayed the completion of this plan to date and although the guidance has still to be released, the current document has been developed using best practice and our best knowledge of the likely content of this guidance. WBC is aware that there will be additional guidance around carbon assessment which will need to follow the plan once this guidance is finalised.

## **BACKGROUND**

The Wokingham Local Transport Plan (LTP) is a strategic document that sets out the approach for all aspects of transport across our borough. The LTP identifies and supports future transport interventions for funding and ensures that we are addressing the priorities of our residents whilst ensuring we meet the requirements of national and local objectives.

The LTP is supported by 'daughter documents' that provide greater detail in the numerous topic areas. Two such documents have already been adopted by the Council, these being the Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan (LCWIP) and the Local Bus Service Improvement Plan (BSIP).

Our last LTP (termed LTP3) was written in 2011. With a significant part of the strategy having been delivered and changes in technology, policy and demographics, there is a need to produce a new transport strategy.

This draft transport strategy, referred to as LTP4, looks back at what has happened since 2011 and considers the views of our residents and their changing and current travel habits and trends. It also takes account of changes in national and regional policy, and the council's own updated goals and objectives from its various strategies and the emerging Local Plan.

There are two background documents to LTP4 that provide more detail on the data used in developing the new Plan. Appendix 4 is the LTP4 Evidence Base, which includes an overview of empirical data and changes in the borough since the last Plan in 2011.

Appendix 5 is the LTP4 Engagement Report which summarises the results of our early engagement with residents in March 2023.

An analysis of travel patterns and socio-economic data suggests four geographic areas around which LTP4 policies can be determined and directed. These are:

□ Earley, Woodley and Shinfield which includes the most urban areas of these towns where travel is largely directed towards Reading;

- North Wokingham, which includes Twyford and is mainly rural with high car dependency;
- South Wokingham, also generally rural and which also has relatively high car dependency; and
- Wokingham and Winnersh, the central area of the Borough which has the highest levels of “self-containment” and active travel.

The characteristics of these four areas have been used to develop place-specific solutions where we know that specific interventions will benefit certain travel types; it also means that, although the Local Plan will have a transport hierarchy and promotes active and sustainable travel, we must accept and support our residents who are dependent on their private car.

The Local Transport Plan supports our local priorities. The LTP Vision has three key themes:

#### □ **Create Healthy and Safe Places**

The LTP will help to build and maintain healthy communities, attractive environments and work towards reducing negative impacts associated with road transport such as injuries from traffic collisions, noise and emissions. Targets include a 50% reduction in those harmed on our roads which aligns with the national objective for 50% of trips in towns to be made by walking and cycling. For rural areas this theme includes measures to improve the vitality of rural service centres and access to active travel routes, in part with a network of lower traffic routes.

#### □ **Reduce Environmental Impacts**

Consistent with local, regional and national targets, the LTP will support the transition of the transport sector to carbon neutrality. Achieving this will require improved travel choice and changes in travel behaviour to reduce travel and congestion. This includes promoting low emission vehicles, developing a core network of attractive bus and cycle routes across the Borough, and the removal of all air quality exceedances in the Borough.

#### □ **Grow the Economy**

We will work with our partners and stakeholders to protect and enhance our strategic road and rail connectivity. We will work with and encourage rail operators to improve services at our railway stations and measures to decarbonise the railway, and complement these with improvements to station interchange and access. Maximising our existing assets is vital in keeping the borough moving, and a well maintained transport system is a priority.

The Draft LTP4 in Appendix 1 is supported by an Action Plan which identifies some of the actions proposed to help deliver the objectives of the Plan. Appendices 4 and 5 are the Evidence Base and spring 2023 Engagement Reports which have been used in the development of the plan and are included here as background papers.

The draft LTP4 is supported with a Sustainability Appraisal included at Appendix 2 which ensures that sustainability aspects are incorporated into the LTP4. It combines the Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA), Equalities Impact Assessment

(EqIA) and Habitats Regulations Assessment (HRA). This document will form part of the LTP4 consultation in winter 2023/spring 2024.

Draft consultation questions are included in Appendix 3.

### Next Steps

Following the public consultation, feedback will be reviewed and the plan amended accordingly in conjunction with the Member Working Group and other stakeholders. This will result in a Final LTP which we would seek approval from full Council to adopt in summer 2024.

### FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS OF THE RECOMMENDATION

***The Council faces unprecedented financial pressures as a result of; the longer term impact of the COVID-19 crisis, Brexit, the war in Ukraine and the general economic climate of rising prices and the increasing cost of debt. It is therefore imperative that Council resources are optimised and are focused on the vulnerable and on its highest priorities.***

	How much will it Cost/ (Save)	Is there sufficient funding – if not quantify the Shortfall	Revenue or Capital?
Current Financial Year (Year 1)	See below	Yes	Revenue and capital
Next Financial Year (Year 2)	See below	Yes	Revenue and capital
Following Financial Year (Year 3)	See below	Yes	Revenue and capital

### Other Financial Information

The LTP development has been funded using existing revenue budgets. The LTP will be delivered from several funding sources including LTP integrated block, developer/Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) contributions and external grant funding. The speed of delivery is dependent on funding, and our only currently guaranteed source of funding is from the LTP integrated block.

The Council has a good record in securing external funding and central to this has been developing infrastructure schemes and integrating infrastructure plans with new development. An updated LTP will enable the council to be opportunistic when funding becomes available.

Recent Government announcements for bus services and walking and cycling improvements are well aligned with priorities set out in the LTP. Opportunities to align the delivery of the plan with planned maintenance and/or renewals will also be identified. Such integration will ensure better value for money and reduce disruption for users of the transport network.

Proposed annual programmes for LTP promoted measures will be included in the capital programme.

## **Legal Implications arising from the Recommendation(s)**

None

## **Stakeholder Considerations and Consultation**

Managed internal and external consultation has been completed with Member, officer and external stakeholder meetings completed to seek content for the LTP. In addition, a principles engagement was completed in spring 2023 to gauge opinion and understand initial views on transport initiatives. The consultation feedback was used to inform the draft LTP Action Plan, themes and objectives. This stage of the LTP programme is seeking approval to consult on the draft LTP in winter 2023/spring 2024. When the plan is adopted, any decision to develop schemes in future will be considered as and when funding becomes available. When schemes are taken forward, there may be a requirement for full public consultation to ensure that the local population can have their say on any proposals.

## **Public Sector Equality Duty**

An initial impact assessment has been completed. This identified that draft LTP4 strategy themes were expected to have a neutral or positive impact overall on those with a protected characteristic. When schemes are taken forward, there may be a requirement for full scheme-specific Equalities Impact Assessment to be completed.

## **Climate Emergency – *This Council has declared a climate emergency and is committed to playing as full a role as possible – leading by example as well as by exhortation – in achieving a carbon neutral Wokingham Borough by 2030***

National guidance on quantifying carbon impacts from transport strategies that was originally expected in summer 2022, is still awaited. However, the LTP has been developed mindful of, and in line with, the anticipated guidance and has reducing environmental impacts as one of its three themes supported by several objectives. The LTP acknowledges the importance of the Climate Emergency Action Plan and includes measures throughout to address climate change to help reduce the impact of road transport on carbon emissions.

## **Reasons for considering the report in Closed Session**

N/A

## **List of Background Papers**

**Enc 1** - LTP4 Draft Strategy and Action Plan. The main document which is the subject of the consultation, and schemes which are proposed to be delivered in the plan period.

**Enc 2** – LTP4 Sustainability Report and EQIA. The Sustainability Appraisal Report ensures that sustainability aspects are incorporated into the LTP4. It combines the Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA), Equalities Impact Assessment (EqIA) and Habitats Regulations Assessment (HRA). This document will form part of the LTP4 consultation in autumn 2023.

**Enc 3** – Proposed questions for consultation.

**Enc 4** - LTP4 Background paper: Evidence Base. Details of evidence used in the development of the strategy.

**Enc 5** - LTP4 Background Paper: Spring 2023 Engagement Report. An overview of the initial engagement exercise carried out in March 2023.

**Contact** Robert Curtis  
**Telephone** Tel: 0118 974 6489

**Service Place**  
**Email** robert.curtis@wokingham.gov.uk