

Environment, Economic Growth and Transport Scrutiny Committee
Meeting to be held on Thursday, 12 September 2024

Electoral Division affected:
(All Divisions);

Corporate Priorities:
Delivering better services;

Preparation of the Local Transport Plan 4

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Brief Summary

The three Local Transport Authorities in Lancashire are working together to develop a new joint Local Transport Plan for the area covered by Blackburn with Darwen Council, Blackpool Council and Lancashire County Council. The preparation of a Local Transport Plan is a statutory requirement for the authorities and is a key enabler of economic development and housing growth, and to supporting wider agendas to do with the environment and climate, and public health.

This is the start of the process to prepare a new Local Transport Plan. At this formative stage many of the issues under consideration are high level and strategic.

Recommendation

The Environment, Economic Growth and Transport Scrutiny Committee is asked to consider the report with a view to formulating any recommendations to the Cabinet Member for Economic Development and Growth.

Detail

What is a Local Transport Plan?

A Local Transport Plan (LTP) is a statutory requirement of the Local Transport Act 2000, as amended by the Local Transport Act 2008, and is a key mechanism for delivering integrated transport at a local level. Its production by Local Transport Authorities (upper tier local authorities) helps to promote transport as an enabler to deliver on economic, environment and social objectives by planning for infrastructure and initiatives to help people and goods travel around.



This will be the fourth LTP produced in Lancashire, hence it will be known as 'LTP4'. The Strategy to the LTP will set out the appropriate policies to deliver our strategic ambitions and objectives. Separately, an implementation plan or multiple implementation plans will elaborate on how those policies will be implemented, i.e. specific detail around interventions, delivery partners, timescales for delivery, costs, etc.

LTPs are also an integral part of the spatial planning system and support the production and implementation of Local Plans by district local planning authorities in Lancashire. They are a key enabler of economic development and housing growth, and also support wider agendas to do with the environment and climate, and public health.

Why do we need one?

It is time to refresh Lancashire's LTP to help address new and emerging needs. An updated LTP will enable the council to deliver transport solutions to support economic development, and meet environmental goals and public health ambitions, to benefit residents and communities, visitors, and businesses through the county.

We are preparing an LTP jointly with our neighbouring upper tier local authorities, Blackburn with Darwen and Blackpool. A jointly prepared LTP will deliver a shared vision and take account of our common spatial geography, and better coordinate our activities and our collective responsibilities. It will strengthen Lancashire's voice and our strategic case to securing transport interventions locally, such as through District Councils, and through transport providers, such as National Highways and Network Rail, and to accessing Government funding streams for local transport funding, active travel, bus service improvements and others.

How is it developed?

The process of developing an LTP typically involves consultation with a variety of groups, including the public, businesses, district authorities, statutory bodies, and transport user groups. The LTP will also be informed by robust evidence and data. As an enabler to delivering broader economic, social and environmental objectives, it will be influenced by strategies and priorities developed nationally and locally under these headings.

There is no current guidance from government on how to prepare LTPs. The Department for Transport's guidance on the preparation of this next generation of LTPs was due to be issued in 2023 but was delayed. The lack of guidance doesn't prevent us from proceeding, but we do need to be mindful to existing or emerging national and regional policy relevant to our transport decisions.

What are the opportunities and challenges for transport in Lancashire?

With a strong economic narrative – as the third largest economy in the north of England - and a focus on areas of growth, Lancashire has succeeded in attracting substantial transport investment over the last decade and more to improving strategic connectivity across its road, bus and rail networks. The county lies within the nationally important north-south transport spine for motorway and main rail line



links, offering excellent connections to regional employment centres. However, connectivity and the quality of transport provision varies significantly between our strategic north-south and east-west corridors, impacting travel opportunities and choice locally. In addition to this, Lancashire faces challenges including:

- a productivity gap - in common with many areas of northern England, there is a productivity gap between our economy and the national average, equivalent to almost £10 billion per annum, influenced by our population structure, business performance, skills levels, ill-health, housing supply and also transport connectivity.
- social challenges - like many other areas in England, Lancashire has pockets of health inequalities and social exclusion, with inter-related factors linked to education, income, housing conditions, and travel choices.
- the importance of transitioning Lancashire's economy away from harmful carbon emissions and reducing other pollutants - recognising transport's contribution to people's health and climate issues.

What might our transport objectives look like?

At the outset to preparing a Lancashire-specific strategy, the following ideas grouped under several themes represent generic objectives to a transport strategy:

Theme	Objective
Connectivity & accessibility	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Better public transport connections between key centres. • Transport networks that are accessible and inclusive for all.
Mode shift & carbon efficiency	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Quicker and more convenient public transport journeys in our cities, towns and rural areas • Walking and cycling as a more attractive choice for shorter journeys. • Fewer car, van and HGV miles travelled. • Much greater use of low-carbon vehicles
People & places	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fewer people killed or injured on our local roads. • Less noise and emissions from traffic. • Improved quality and attractiveness of places. • High quality and sustainable design of transport assets.



Theme	Objective
Assets & efficiency	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Transport assets that are properly maintained. • New infrastructure delivering environmental net gains. • Transport networks that are more resilient to extreme weather events. • Less traffic congestion on our local roads

Next steps to preparing a Local Transport Plan

The preparation of a new LTP at this point in time is particularly timely to follow and support a new economic strategy for Lancashire which is currently in production. A timetable for preparation of the LTP is still to be agreed, and as mentioned already national guidance outlining the government's expectations for LTPs is awaited. Evidence gathering to inform its production will continue with the expectation that a draft LTP, presenting the issues, draft policies and priorities, will be prepared for early 2025, in readiness for formal stakeholder and public engagement, and publication of a final LTP during 2025.

The Environment, Economic Growth and Transport Scrutiny Committee is asked to consider the report with a view to formulating any recommendations to the Cabinet Member for Economic Development and Growth.

Appendices

None

Consultations

N/A

Implications:

This item has the following implications, as indicated:

Legal

The preparation of a Local Transport Plan by the local transport authority for an area (the upper tier authority in a two-tier area) is a statutory requirement of the Local Transport Act 2000, as amended by the Local Transport Act 2008. There are no significant legal implications detailed in the report, however, due regard should be had to the production of a Local Transport Plan, to the evidence it relies on and to the manner of engagement and public consultation, to ensure proper weight can be given to its final content.



Financial

There are no significant financial implications detailed in the report. Any schemes to be developed to support or deliver the Local Transport Plan will be dependent on the funding available at the time, including any developer contributions, and the level of interventions able to be delivered are at this time uncertain. The Strategy to the Local Transport Plan does not commit to the delivery of any schemes but provides a framework for future decisions to be taken, and programmes and projects to be developed.

Risk management

An up to date Local Transport Plan is an expectation of government funded transport programmes. The Government has previously indicated that the absence of a new Local Transport Plan in 2025 could impact future funding levels granted or awarded to local transport authorities.

Failure to publish and maintain an up to date Local Transport Plan can impact the weight to be given the authority's comments, as a material planning consideration, in the preparation of Local Plans and in the determination of individual planning applications.

Local Government (Access to Information) Act 1985 List of Background Papers

Paper	Date	Contact/Tel
None		
Reason for inclusion in Part II, if appropriate		
N/A		

