



<u>Committee and Date</u>	<u>Item</u>	<u>Paper</u>
Shropshire Local Access Forum	3	A
21 October 2010		
10.00 am	Public	

Shropshire Local Transport Plan

Introduction

1. The purpose of the Local Transport Plan (LTP) is to set out transport objectives policies and programmes for the County. The plan covers all aspects of transport and highways with a specific emphasis on provision determined at a local authority level, including walking, cycling, public transport, car based travel and freight together with the management and maintenance of highways.
2. Transport decisions and actions impact on a wide number of issues including safety, the economy, the environment, health and quality of life. A key role of the Local Transport Plan is to set out how we plan to develop, manage and maintain our transport networks in a way which will also contribute to Shropshire's wider economic, environmental, health and social objectives.
3. The current Shropshire Local Transport Plan covers the period April 2006 to March 2011. A new Local Transport Plan is currently being prepared to cover the next 15 year period to 2026.
4. The legal and governmental requirements for local transport plans have recently been relaxed. While there is still a legal requirement for local authorities to maintain a Plan, the content and format can now be determined at local level in order to meet local requirements.

Format of the new Shropshire Local Transport Plan

5. The new Shropshire Local Transport Plan will be made up of the following documents:
 - **Core Transport Strategy.** This framework document will set out the transport objectives, policies and priorities for the period 2011 to 2026
 - **LTP Implementation Plan.** This delivery plan will be updated annually and will set out the projects and schemes to be delivered over the next 3 year period, as well as reporting on the progress made against indicators and targets.
 - A series of **supplementary documents** containing more details on the way in which policies and priorities set out in the core strategy will be pursued. Supplementary documents will include those covering a specific policy area e.g. Bus Strategy, Parking Strategy, Cycle Strategy; those

covering specific geographic areas e.g. Shrewsbury Integrated Transport Strategy; and those covering LTP processes e.g. LTP evidence base, Highway Design Guide, LTP Scheme Appraisal Guide. Supplementary documents will be prepared and revised as necessary during the LTP period.

Local Transport Plan Funding

6. Shropshire Council is the principle source of funding for delivering the schemes and projects set out in the Local Transport Plan. Capital Funding is allocated by the Department for Transport and passed to Shropshire Council as part of the Single Capital Pot. Revenue funding to support transport services comes from Shropshire Council revenue funding, as well as some additional direct DfT grants. The transport funding that will be available in the next five years is currently unknown, but it is expected to be significantly less than has been available in recent years.
7. **Capital funding:** In 2010/11 (before some funding was clawed back) Shropshire had nearly £19M of capital funds available to deliver LTP objectives. £15M of this was for Highways Maintenance and nearly £4M for Integrated Transport schemes, such as those to enhance safety and improve walking, cycling and public transport opportunities. In future years this funding is expected to significantly decrease due to a reduction in the overall funding available to the DfT, a change in the distribution formula and the loss of reward grant.
8. The scale of the reduction in DfT capital funding will be known following the spending review on 20th October 2010, however cuts of up to 50% are anticipated. The precise implications of the cuts in terms of the actual local authority allocations are not expected to be known until December 2010.
9. In addition to cuts in the base budget Shropshire's allocations are expected to further reduce due to a review in the formula used to distribute funds between local authorities. Shropshire will also lose the reward based element of our grant (an additional 25% for Integrated Transport) which was previously allocated for developing an excellent quality Local Transport Plan, and for making excellent progress in delivering against the stated objectives and targets. There will be no reward grant in future.
10. The combination of these changes means that capital funding could be reduced to as little as 50% of what we have received in recent years. This will have very significant implications on what can be delivered. It will mean that we will need to carefully consider what our transport priorities are and also focus on lower cost solutions.
11. **Revenue Funding:** Similarly, there are significant pressures on revenue funding, both due to reductions in the council's budget and removal of additional grants currently received from the DfT. The key element of the LTP which requires revenue funding is subsidy for public transport services.

12. **Major scheme funding:** The DfT fund large transport schemes (those costing over £5M) from a major scheme funding pot previously accessed through the Regional Funding Allocation bidding process. The Shrewsbury North West Relief Road (SNWRR) was progressing through this process. However, the criteria for scheme selection is currently being revised, and it is expected that there will also be significantly less major scheme funding available in future years. As a result of these changes the likelihood of the SNWRR gaining funding in the short to medium term is very small.
13. **Local Sustainable Transport Fund:** The DfT have recently announced the creation of a new bidding fund to help deliver sustainable transport schemes, such as those to increase walking, cycling and bus use and enhance road safety. There are no details yet but this might provide the chance of an alternative way to deliver Local Transport Plan aspirations which can't be delivered with the level of base funding available.

Development of the Local Transport Strategy

14. The work to date to develop the LTP has focused on the development of the core Transport Strategy and the development of two key supplementary strategies – the Parking Strategy and the Bus Strategy. Development of the first three year implementation plan will start once levels of government funding are known later in 2010.
15. **Development of Objectives** –The Shropshire Community Plan sets out the agreed high level economic, social and environmental priorities for Shropshire. We have reviewed this plan and considered what transport outcomes are required to help us to achieve the Community Plan aims. We have then translated these outcome aspirations into a set of draft LTP objectives which are listed in Appendix A, which shows how the draft LTP objectives and outline policies relate to the Community Plan aims.
16. **Analysis of issues and opportunities** – A draft Evidence Base report has been prepared which reviews a range of data used to help inform the development of the Local Transport Plan. This looks at current transport provision and patterns of use, customer opinions and views and the effectiveness of recent interventions. The Evidence Base also includes an analysis of the current strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats in relation to the identified LTP objectives. This information is been used to help determine the policies and priorities for the new Local Transport Plan. The draft evidence base is available online at: <http://www.shropshire.gov.uk/traveltransport.nsf/open/2A79133CD32676E98025709E002EEF2B> (Search for Local Transport Plan.)
17. **Consultation** – As part of the Evidence Base we have reviewed recent public consultation that provides an insight into customer opinions and thoughts on transport provision in Shropshire. Two key recent pieces of consultation evidence are:
18. The 2009 National Highways and Transport (NHT) Public Satisfaction Survey helps us to understand the views of local people about a wide range of highways and transport issues, and enables comparisons with

other similar authority areas. The data from over 1,000 Shropshire residents shows that the aspects of highways and transport considered to be most important to local people are safer roads, highway condition and pavements, followed by local buses. The aspect for which satisfaction levels were lowest was highway condition.

19. The 'Spotlight on Shropshire' Consultation Event in March 2010 when 60 Shropshire businesses debated the key issues that affect the county's economy. A workgroup focused specifically on business concerns around Transport & Infrastructure. This identified demand for trunk road improvements, improved rail access and reliability, public transport for shift workers, and more available and cheaper parking.
20. We have also hosted an LTP Stakeholder Consultation Event in September 2010 with 114 delegates from Shropshire Council, parish and town councils, local organisations and charities, transport providers and other public sector partners. The aim of the event was to prioritise the draft LTP objectives and to identify and appraise possible transport interventions. Improved public transport was considered the highest priority, particularly better co-ordination of services, provision in evenings and a greater role for community transport. Highways maintenance to maintain a good road surface was also identified as a top priority. Delegates also gave a lot of support to reducing carbon and enabling more walking and cycling. Surprisingly road safety measures were identified as a lower priority.
21. To complete this consultation phase we are also seeking to consult young people in a similar way to help identify their views on transport priorities.
22. **Supplementary Strategies-** In parallel with development of the LTP strategy we are currently developing two of the key supplementary strategies that will form part of the LTP package. A draft Parking Strategy has been open to public consultation over the past 3 months. A Bus Strategy is being prepared to the same timescale as the LTP strategy document, and will be considered in a separate report by your committee.

Next steps

23. The draft LTP to be considered by Cabinet on 10th November 2010.
24. The next stage will be for a draft LTP Transport Strategy, based around the draft objectives and policies in Appendix A, to be prepared and subject to public consultation between December 2010 and February 2011. The Consultation results will then be reviewed with a view to adoption of the new strategy in March 2011.
25. A draft LTP implementation plan for the period April 2011-March 2014 will be prepared once the funding situation is clarified in December. This will be subject to scrutiny in February 2011 prior to Cabinet consideration.