

By: Nick Chard, Cabinet Member for Environment Highways & Waste
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To: Environment, Highways & Waste Policy Overview & Scrutiny Committee – 18 January 2011

Subject: Local Transport Plan for Kent 2011-16

Classification: Unrestricted

Summary: This report provides the initial results of recent consultation on the draft Local Transport Plan 2011-16 and presents a proposed structure for the LTP3 Implementation Plan based on the Local Transport Settlement in December 2010. Delegated authority is requested for editorial purposes to prepare a final LTP3 Strategy and Implementation Plan for final approval by Full Council on 6th April 2011.

1. Introduction

- 1.1 The Local Transport Act 2008 places a statutory duty on local authorities to prepare a Local Transport Plan (LTP), which must be in place by 1st April 2011. The LTP should contain a 'strategy', setting out the authority's key transport objectives, and an 'implementation plan', containing details of the Integrated Transport schemes it intends to deliver in order to meet those objectives.
- 1.2 During the summer, KCC's Transport Policy Team prepared a draft Local Transport Plan 2011-16 (LTP3) to form the basis for public consultation. The draft LTP3 was structured around five themes:
- Growth Without Gridlock;
 - A Safer and Healthier County;
 - Supporting Independence;
 - Tackling a Changing Climate; and,
 - Enjoying Life in Kent.
- 1.3 When the draft LTP3 was prepared, the Coalition Government had yet to agree future funding levels for the five year period of LTP3 but it was clear that funding levels would be reduced. In response, the Cabinet Member for Environment, Highways and Waste asked for a system of prioritising the Integrated Transport block funding to those measures which will make the greatest contribution to local and national objectives and represent the best value for money. Different ways of doing this were considered and a preferred option was chosen which splits funding between the five LTP3 Themes (budget allocation) and then focuses the investment under each

Theme to those areas and locations where the challenges are most acute (spatial distribution). This approach was subsequently supported by the POSC on 14th September 2010 and formed the basis of the draft LTP3 that went out for consultation on 4th October 2010. Maintenance funding will continue to be prioritised using the formulae set out in KCC's Transport Asset Management Plan.

2. Responses Received from Draft LTP3 Consultation

- 2.1 The draft LTP3 was posted on KCC's website on 4th October 2010 and a letter was sent to over 200 stakeholders, informing them of this and asking them to submit their comments. A 12 week consultation period was specified with a closing date of 31st December 2010.
- 2.2 When consultation closed, 60 responses had been received. The majority of comments related to specific points of emphasis and a clearer reference to certain initiatives being pursued by others. There was also a recognition that the local transport planning landscape has shifted significantly in the interim, particularly as *Growth without gridlock - A transport delivery plan for Kent* was launched on 1st December 2010 and that a significant level of updating for the final LTP3 is required.
- 2.3 The main concern raised was the priority given to the Growth Areas and Growth Points under the LTP3 theme of Growth Without Gridlock to which 45% of Integrated Transport funding is allocated, which does not recognise the high levels of development planned elsewhere in the County. There was a high level of support from those areas that would benefit from this allocation. Also, the proposed spatial distribution for Supporting Independence to the coastal urban areas of East Kent precludes deprived areas in rural areas and in Mid and West Kent. Other comments related to the inclusion of major transport infrastructure which though not funded by LTP funding, would conflict with many of the aims of the LTP relating to reducing carbon emissions and reliance on the private car and the detrimental impact on protected environmental areas.
- 2.4 We also received representations from Essex County Council and Thurrock Council, objecting to the route shown on page 74, linking the proposed Lower Thames Crossing East of Gravesend to the M11. This line, which was for indicative purposes only, will be removed from the final LTP3 document.

3. Local Transport Settlement (2011/12 – 2012/13)

- 3.1 On 13th December 2010, the Government announced the final transport capital block settlement for 2011/12 to 2012/13. This announcement covered the Highways Maintenance Block and the Integrated Transport Block, both of which are calculated using differing needs-based formulae and will be provided as capital grant (not supported borrowing). Indicative funding allocations were also given for 2013-15 and may be subject to change. The allocations for the Kent area are shown below:

	Final Allocation £000s		Indicative Allocation £000s	
	2011-12	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15
Integrated Transport	8,199	8,746	8,746	12,299
Highways Capital Maintenance	25,272	23,986	22,473	21,328

- 3.2 In previous years, integrated transport funding has been transferred across to maintenance and given the continuing need to maintain Kent's roads plus the impact of recent winter weather, it is planned for 2011/12 that £2.351m will be transferred, leaving £5.848m for integrated transport schemes.

4. LTP3 Implementation Plan

- 4.1 The Local Transport Act 2008 requires that LTPs contain a strategy and implementation plan(s). The strategy is effectively the prioritisation system set out in section 1.3 which determines the priority LTP3 Themes and the areas and locations where funding will be focused. The Implementation Plan(s) sets out the proposals for delivery of the objectives contained in the strategy. Given the lack of funding allocations when the draft LTP3 was written, no specific measures were included in this consultation document though reference was made to the types of schemes that would be considered. The Cabinet Member for Environment, Highways and Waste has decided to continue with the Members Highway Fund, which will be funded from the LTP3 Integrated Transport allocation and he is also keen that Crash Remedial Measures continue to be funded. Therefore, the following priority and structure for the LTP3 Implementation Plan is proposed:

4.2 Integrated Transport Funding

Members Highway Fund – £2.2 million per year with £25,000 allocated to each of the 84 County Councillors to fund schemes which solve local transport issues plus £0.1m to administer the fund.

Crash Remedial Measures - measures at sites with a history of injuries due to vehicle crashes

Integrated Transport Measures – remaining funding allocated to local transport improvements using the budget allocation/spatial distribution approach outlined in section 1.3.

4.3 Highways Capital Maintenance Funding

Highways Capital Maintenance – funding allocated to meet the priorities and objectives of KCC's Transport Asset Management Plan.

5. Local Sustainable Transport Fund

- 5.1 In late September 2010, the Coalition Government announced the launch of a new transport fund called the Local Sustainable Transport Fund. This fund of £560 million replaces a range of previous grants for sustainable forms of

travel and will include a mix of £350m revenue and £210m capital funding over the next four years. The fund will be an opportunity for local authorities to take forward sustainable travel measures through their LTPs and to develop packages of measures that support economic growth and reduce carbon. Schemes could include integration between travel modes, walking and cycling measures, better public transport and traffic management schemes. The DfT has yet to publish its guidance and timescales for potential applicants but it is recommended that the County Council submits a bid to this fund and LTP3 will be written in a way that would support this bid, highlighting potential packages of measures that could be put forward. It is therefore important that a robust and high quality LTP3 is adopted to support future bidding opportunities and attract investment for local transport to the County.

6. Recommendations

Members of the Policy Overview and Scrutiny Committee are asked to:

1. Note the summary of responses received to the LTP3 consultation
2. Comment on the proposed structure of the LTP3 Implementation Plan(s)
3. Support a future bid to the Local Sustainable Transport Fund
4. Delegate authority for editorial changes and production of the final LTP3 to the Cabinet Member for Environment, Highways and Waste for approval at Cabinet and Full Council.

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Background Documents:

Department for Transport, *Guidance on Local Transport Plans*, 2009