

WHITTLESEY MARKET TOWN TRANSPORT STRATEGY

To: Cabinet

Date: 27 November 2012

From: Executive Director: Economy, Transport & Environment Services

Electoral division(s): Whittlesey North, Whittlesey South

Forward Plan ref: N/A **Key decision:** No

Purpose: To inform Members of progress on the preparation of the Whittlesey Market Town Transport Strategy and to seek approval for the adoption of the finalised Strategy.

Recommendation: Cabinet is asked to:

- a) Note the progress made in developing the Whittlesey Market Town Transport Strategy;
- b) Approve the adoption of the Whittlesey Market Town Transport Strategy as part of the Third Cambridgeshire Local Transport Plan 2011-2026.

<i>Officer contact:</i>		<i>Member contact:</i>	
Name:	Dearbhla Lawson	Name:	Ian Bates
Post:	Head of Transport, Infrastructure Policy & Funding	Portfolio:	Cabinet Member for Growth and Planning
Email:	dearbhla.lawson@cambridgeshire.gov.uk	Email:	ian.bates@cambridgeshire.gov.uk
Tel:	01223 699974	Tel:	01223 699173

1. BACKGROUND

- 1.1 Market Town Transport Strategies are an integral part of Cambridgeshire's Third Local Transport Plan (LTP3). They also take account of development sites allocated and proposed under current and emerging Local Plans. Whittlesey is the ninth town in Cambridgeshire for which such a strategy has been developed.
- 1.2 LTP3 reflects the policy framework and objectives of national government and the County Council. As part of LTP3, the Whittlesey Market Town Transport Strategy will contribute to the County Council's objectives of:
- Developing the local economy for the benefit of all
 - Helping people live healthy and independent lives
 - Supporting and protecting vulnerable people

2. DEVELOPMENT OF THE WHITTLESEY MARKET TOWN TRANSPORT STRATEGY

- 2.1 The process of preparing the Whittlesey Market Town Transport Strategy involved an analysis of transport provision in the town, including links with education, health, economic development and future development proposals. This included surveys of local residents and stakeholders, and consulting with Fenland District Council and Members and the public to identify key concerns in relation to transport in the study area. A range of transport measures were then formulated with the aim of addressing these concerns. A Member Steering Group appointed by the Fenland Environment and Transport Area Joint Committee (AJC) guided this process, and on 19th October 2012 the Fenland AJC endorsed the strategy for adoption by the County Council's Cabinet as part of LTP3.
- 2.2 The Strategy includes an Action Plan which includes a range of short, medium and long term measures to help improve accessibility to services and employment. A number of schemes are aimed at improving junctions, crossings, cycling and walking facilities as well as improvements to the rail station and access to this. The schemes proposed in the Whittlesey Market Town Transport Strategy contribute towards the achievement of the LTP3 objectives.
- 2.3 The need to improve accessibility on the A605 and reduce delays caused by the frequency with which the level crossing barriers on the A605 are lowered was highlighted during the Strategy work. This is particularly the case given the plans by the rail industry to significantly increase traffic along this route over the coming years, which will exacerbate current problems. A number of options were scoped, including a bypass scheme and there was recognition that such a scheme would be very costly and unlikely to demonstrate a sufficiently strong business case to be eligible for Government funding. However, the Strategy acknowledges the aspiration for improvements, and that the County Council will continue to work with Fenland District Council to consider opportunities for addressing the issues.
- 2.4 Early discussions regarding the potential for replacing the King's Dyke level crossing with a bridge have begun between the Councils and Network Rail. While such a scheme would still be very expensive, the closure of the crossing would bring about safety and operational / cost benefits for the railway and improve accessibility locally although it would not remove any traffic from the town centre. Further investigation is needed to scope the potential and discussions are underway to progress consideration of this matter.

3. IMPLEMENTING THE STRATEGY

- 3.1 If approved by Cabinet, the strategy will be formally adopted in late 2012, with implementation of the strategy commencing in the 2012/13 financial year.
- 3.2 Funding for the strategy will need to come from various sources. These include the Local Transport Plan, developer contributions and other sources as appropriate. The pace at which this strategy can be delivered will depend on the availability of funding. However, by providing a clear statement of the transport needs of the town, and one which has been endorsed by local stakeholders, this strategy will provide a clear platform for securing resources from a wide range of sources.

4. ALIGNMENT WITH PRIORITIES AND WAYS OF WORKING

4.1 Supporting and protecting vulnerable people when they need it most

The Whittlesey Market Town Transport Strategy contains measures to improve access and therefore will enable people more readily to access facilities that they need and jobs.

4.2 Helping people live healthy and independent lives in their communities

The Whittlesey Market Town Transport Strategy includes measures to support 'active travel' modes such as walking and cycling, which can contribute to healthy lifestyles.

4.3 Developing the local economy for the benefit of all

The Whittlesey Market Town Transport Strategy includes measures to improve access to services and employment both within and beyond the Whittlesey area.

4.4 Ways of Working

There are no significant implications for the Council's ways of working. More context on Working Together is provided in paragraph 5.4.

5. SIGNIFICANT IMPLICATIONS

5.1 Resource and Performance Implications

The Whittlesey Market Town Transport Strategy sets out a clear statement of the transport needs of the town, which will provide a platform for securing resources from a wide range of sources.

5.2 Statutory, Risk and Legal Implications

There are no significant implications.

5.3 Equality and Diversity Implications

The measures proposed in Whittlesey Market Town Transport Strategy will have a positive impact on transport and accessibility when they are delivered.

5.4 Engagement and Consultation

Officers have also worked closely with Fenland District Council in developing the Strategy and have undertaken consultation with Members, stakeholders and local residents in relation to the Strategy. A Member Steering Group comprising representatives from Cambridgeshire County Council, Fenland District Council, Whittlesey Town Council, and Cambridge and Peterborough Association of Local Councils (CPALC) guided the development of the Strategy.

Source Documents	Location
Whittlesey Market Town Transport Strategy (see Appendix A)	Transport and Infrastructure Policy and Funding, 2 nd Floor A Wing, Castle Court, Shire Hall, Cambridge