

Huntingdonshire Transport Strategy

To: Highways and Transport Committee

Meeting Date: 7th March 2023

From: Executive Director: Place & Sustainability

Electoral division(s): Alconbury and Kimbolton, Brampton and Buckden, Godmanchester and Huntingdon South, Huntingdon North and Hartford, Huntingdon West, Ramsey and Bury, Sawtry and Stilton, Somersham and Earith, St Ives North and Wyton, St Ives South and Needingworth, St Neots East and Gransden, St Neots Eynesbury, St Neots Priory Park and Little Paxton, The Hemingfords & Fenstanton, Warboys & the Stukeleys, Yaxley and Farcet

Key decision: Yes

Forward Plan ref: 2023/039

Outcome: To update the Committee on the development of a district-based transport strategy for Huntingdonshire

Recommendation: Members are requested to:

- a) Note the feedback from stakeholder and public consultation on the draft Huntingdonshire Transport Strategy;
- b) Note progress to date and the next steps for the development and prioritisation of schemes contained in the Huntingdonshire Transport Strategy; and
- c) Adopt the Huntingdonshire Transport Strategy

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1 Background

- 1.1 The Future Transport Priorities paper to this committee on 7th December 2021 summarised seven year 1 actions of the Joint Administration relating to the work of the Council's Transport Strategy team. Action T.4 refers to the continued development of transport strategies for Huntingdonshire and Fenland to include support for modal shift. An update was provided to this committee on 12th July 2022.
- 1.2 District-based transport strategies for Huntingdonshire and Fenland will be adopted as 'child documents' of the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Combined Authority's (CPCA) Local Transport & Connectivity Plan (LTCP) when it is finalised later this year. Huntingdonshire Transport Strategy is one of a suite of strategic transport documents, as set out in Figure 1.

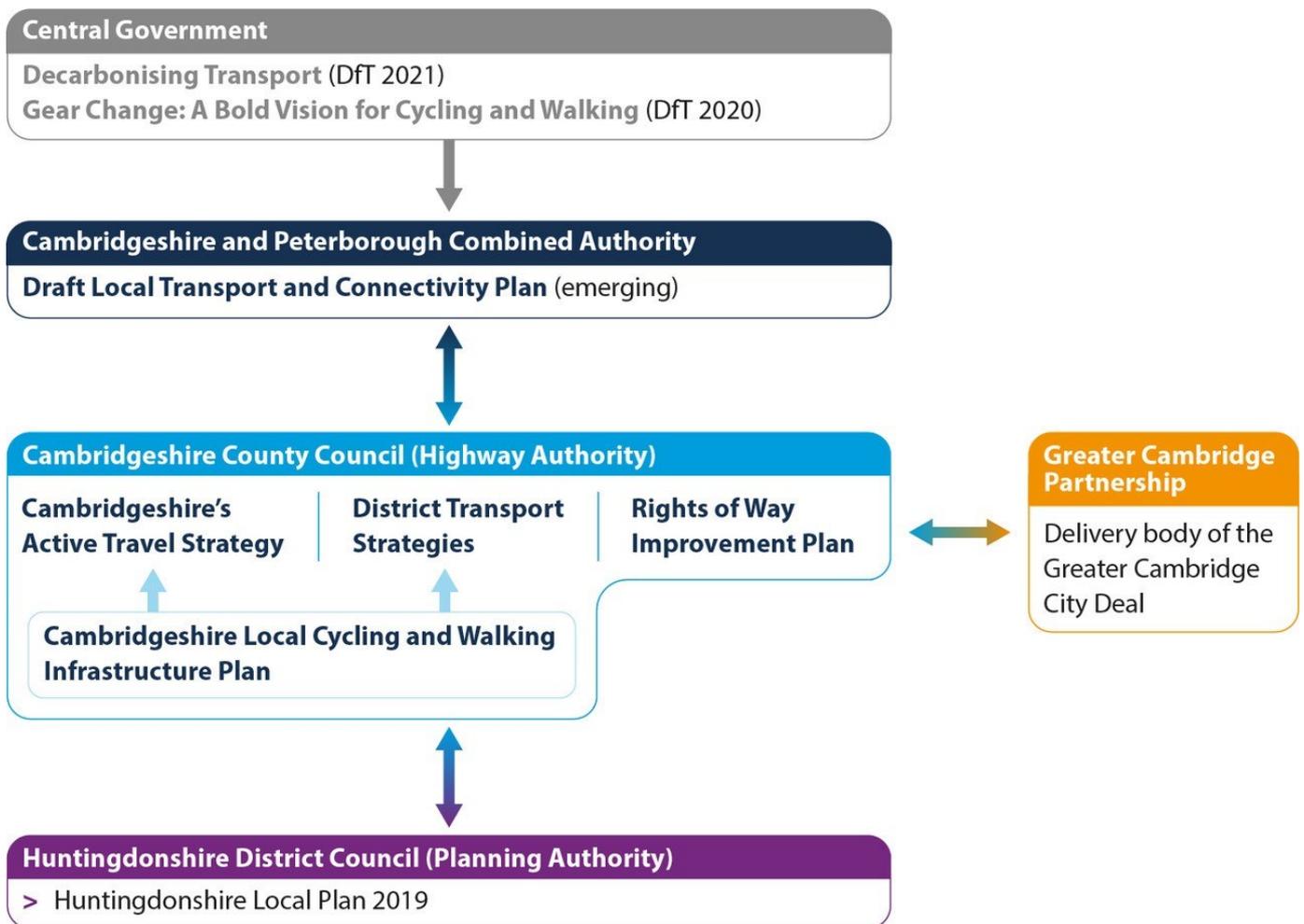


Figure 1: Strategy Relationships

- 1.3 This report provides an update on transport strategy work for Huntingdonshire, summarising the outcomes from public consultation on the draft strategy and presenting an updated strategy for approval by this committee.

2 Transport Strategy for Huntingdonshire

- 2.1 District-based transport strategies set out detailed policies and a 'live' emerging action plan for transport investment in each district. The emerging action plan presented in the Huntingdonshire Transport Strategy is in draft, while further work to develop and prioritise schemes is undertaken. Once finalised, schemes contained in the action plans are then eligible for LTCP Integrated Transport Block funding from the CPCA. Funding bids can also be submitted to the CPCA, Government and other bodies for delivery of schemes, and contributions from developers can be secured against schemes where they relate to development. It should be noted that active travel schemes for all districts are set out in the Active Travel Strategy rather than in the individual district-based strategies.
- 2.2 The work on the Huntingdonshire Transport Strategy has been co-ordinated with that of the Active Travel Strategy for Cambridgeshire, as well as the CPCA's LTCP.
- 2.3 The Active Travel Strategy (discussed under Agenda item xx) will provide a comprehensive set of policies that will enable quality provision of active travel infrastructure across Cambridgeshire, with a focus on achieving mode shift from private car journeys that will contribute to the County Council's target to achieve Net Zero Carbon by 2045 and support the Joint Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Health and Wellbeing Integrated Care Strategy.
- 2.4 The Huntingdonshire Transport Strategy has been developed with officers from Huntingdonshire District Council and under guidance of a Member Steering Group. The Strategy focuses on tackling existing transport issues and supporting the Huntingdonshire Local Plan to 2036. The Huntingdonshire Transport Strategy replaces the Market Town Transport Strategies for Huntingdon & Godmanchester, Ramsey, St Ives and St Neots. The draft Huntingdonshire Transport Strategy can be found in Appendix 1.

Vision and Objectives

- 2.5 The Vision for the Huntingdonshire Transport Strategy is:

To help tackle climate change and support sustainable growth within Huntingdonshire, connecting rural communities and allowing the economy to thrive, while promoting and enhancing active travel and tackling existing highway congestion

- 2.6 The objectives of the Huntingdonshire Transport Strategy are:

- **Objective 1**
Enhancing the natural environment, tackling the challenges of climate change by meeting Cambridgeshire County Council's carbon targets and supporting Huntingdonshire District Council's commitment of net zero carbon by 2040
- **Objective 2**
Enabling residents, workers and visitors to access employment, education, leisure and all the services they need to enjoy a good quality of life
- **Objective 3**
Enabling **all** residents to live a safe, fit and active lifestyle by supporting and investing in active travel infrastructure

- **Objective 4**

Supporting the needs of the local economy, potential growth and tackling existing traffic congestion.

Stakeholder engagement and public consultation

2.7 A focussed stakeholder engagement exercise was carried out between 9th May and 19th June 2022. A survey was sent to key stakeholders including County and District Councillors, Parish Councils, voluntary organisations and key interest groups seeking feedback on key transport issues, priorities and views on the draft vision and objectives of the strategy. The stakeholder engagement report can be viewed here: <https://www.cambridgeshire.gov.uk/asset-library/Transport-Strategies-Stakeholder-Engagement-Report-Final-2022.pdf> Changes have been made to both strategies based on feedback received.

2.8 Public consultation took place between 26th September (the start of the consultation was delayed by two weeks due to the death of Her Majesty The Queen) and 7th November 2023 to seek views on and input into the draft strategy and emerging action plan. The consultation ran in tandem with consultation on the Active Travel Strategy and Fenland Transport Strategy and consisted of:

- In person events around the county (mainly held at markets, supermarkets and shopping centres)
- Consultation material online
- An online survey
- Emails to County Councillors, District Councillors, Parish Councils and stakeholders
- Social media advertising campaign
- Strategy documents and paper copies of the questionnaires being available in libraries across the county.

2.9 Figure 2 shows the approximate number of attendees at the public consultation events

Location	~No. of people
Huntingdonshire	100
Rest of Cambridgeshire (events focused on Active Travel Strategy, with information about Huntingdonshire and Fenland available)	100

Figure 2 Number of attendees at events

Survey responses

2.10 The online survey was open for six weeks, with regular advertising by press release and social media. Posters were also displayed in community facilities. In total there were 84 individual respondents and 24 stakeholder responses regarding the Huntingdonshire Transport Strategy. The number of completed online surveys may have been impacted by some members of the public providing their feedback directly at the consultation events. In summary:

- Half of respondents strongly agreed or agreed with the draft vision (a quarter of respondents neither agreed or disagreed)
- The majority of respondents agreed or strongly agreed with the proposed objectives

- The three most important transport issues identified by respondents were:
 - Lack of public transport
 - Lack of connectivity and accessibility
 - Lack of cycling infrastructure
- 2.11 The public consultation report, summarising responses to the online survey, can be found here: <https://www.cambridgeshire.gov.uk/asset-library/Transport-Strategy-for-Huntingdonshire-Consultation-Report-Final-2023.pdf>
- 2.12 Feedback received at the public consultation events has been collated, with the key themes summarised below. It should be noted that the events took place in the period when Stagecoach announced the withdrawal of some of its rural bus services and before the CPCA process for replacing the services was complete and had been announced.
- Numerous strong concerns about the withdrawal of bus services by Stagecoach, and poor public transport accessibility more generally in rural areas. People highlighted the significant impact on their lives in terms of accessing employment, education, health and other vital services, such as shopping and leisure facilities.
 - Concerns about the level of development in Huntingdonshire, particularly in Ramsey, without investment in the necessary supporting infrastructure
 - Lack of connectivity for active travel modes between market towns and transport hubs
 - Feedback was also received regarding the Greater Cambridge Partnership (GCP) Making Connections proposals. This has been recorded to be shared with the GCP.
- 2.13 The consultation has provided useful feedback that has informed the development of the strategy and resulted in a range of changes.
- Amendments to the Vision to strengthen the focus on rural communities
 - Changes to Objectives to cover everyone travelling in Huntingdonshire
 - Strengthening links with health, well-being and active travel
 - Additional policies providing a basis for the reallocation of road space and additional focus on active travel

Action Planning process

- 2.14 The strategy includes an emerging action plan of schemes. Officers are developing a prioritisation process, based around the Council's Strategic Framework and emerging CPCA LTCP objectives using an EAST (Early Assessment and Sifting Tool) methodology.
- 2.15 The Joint Administration agreed priorities should be focused on road safety, active travel, public transport, and climate objectives at Highways and Transport Committee on 7 December 2021. The Committee on the 8 March 2022 agreed the use of the emerging CPCA LTCP objectives for undertaking scheme prioritisation.
- 2.16 Scheme prioritisation work will be completed in consultation with the Strategy Member Steering Group and Highways and Transport Committee and will be in place for prioritisation of schemes for funding from 2024-25.
- 2.17 Tier 2 (route-based schemes) Active Travel schemes will be prioritised in accordance with the methodology set by central government for the LCWIP. Localised Active Travel schemes will use the district-based methodology.

2.18 The next steps for the Huntingdonshire strategy development work are set out below:

Huntingdonshire Strategic Transport Study – evidence base	Complete
Stakeholder engagement	Complete
Agree Objectives	Complete
Draft Strategy and progress update	Complete
Public consultation	Complete
Adoption of Strategy	March 2023
Prioritisation of schemes	Report back to H & T committee in summer / autumn 2023
Annual review of action plans / scheme prioritisation	Report to H&T Committee annually

3 Alignment with corporate priorities

3.1 Environment and Sustainability

The following bullet points set out details of implications identified by officers:

- The strategy aims to contribute towards the achievement of net zero carbon in Huntingdonshire
- One of the four main strategy objectives is to enhance the natural environment
- The strategy has been developed to support sustainable growth in Huntingdonshire as set out in the Huntingdonshire Local Plan to 2036.

3.2 Health and Care

The following bullet points set out details of implications identified by officers:

- The strategy will help to expand travel choices and health by improving safety, active travel, and air quality.
- As identified by the Cambridgeshire Joint Strategic Needs Assessment, the percentage of adults with excess weight (18+) is statistically similar to the England average for Cambridgeshire. At the district level, the percentages are statistically significantly worse than the national average in Huntingdonshire.
- The percentage of physically active adults (19+) is statistically significantly better than the England average for Cambridgeshire.
- The recorded prevalence of asthma is statistically significantly higher than the national average across Cambridgeshire and in each district except for Cambridge, where it is statistically significantly lower.
- One of the four objectives of the strategy is to enable all residents to live a safe, fit and active lifestyle by supporting and investing in active travel. Associated enhancements to air quality will also bring about health improvements.

- The Strategy supports the delivery of the Joint Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Health and Wellbeing Integrated Care Strategy

3.3 Places and Communities

The following bullet points set out details of implications identified by officers:

- Transport strategy development is informed by public engagement and is guided by the objectives and priorities of the council.
- Public consultation and stakeholder engagement has been undertaken to inform the objectives, policies and schemes
- The LTP Integrated Transport Block generally delivers small or medium sized schemes that have been developed to address local issues as part of transport strategies informed by engagement with local communities and local councillors

3.4 Children and Young People

The following bullet points set out details of implications identified by officers:

- A focus on active travel should bring wider benefits to children and young people through improved health and fitness, better air quality and independence.
- The Strategy has been developed to improve access to key services including education which should have benefit to children and young people

3.5 Transport

The following bullet points set out details of implications identified by officers:

- The Strategy will support a range of policies and interventions aimed at improving travel and transport across the district, specifically focusing on supporting sustainable growth and active travel, technological solutions, improved integration of modes, management of environmental impacts and road safety and traffic management.
- The Strategy contains an emerging action plan of schemes, interventions and studies to improve road safety, active travel, public transport supporting infrastructure and carbon objectives.

4 Significant Implications

4.1 Resource Implications

The following bullet point sets out details of significant implications identified by officers:

- Funding for the district strategy work will come from the Integrated Transport Block Strategy Development budget.

4.2 Procurement / Contractual / Council Contract Procedure Rules Implications

All procurement activity will be undertaken in accordance with the Council's Contract Procedure Rules.

4.3 Statutory, Legal and Risk Implications

There are no significant implications for this priority.

4.4 Equality and Diversity Implications

The following bullet point sets out details of significant implications identified by officers:

- An Equality Impact Assessment accompanies the Huntingdonshire Transport Strategy.

4.5 Engagement and Communications Implications

The following bullet point sets out details of significant implications identified by officers:

- Stakeholder engagement was carried out in May and public consultation on the strategy took place between September and November. This included an online survey, in person drop in events and social media advertising. Feedback from the events and survey has been used to make amendments to the strategy.

4.6 Localism and Local Member Involvement

The following bullet point sets out details of significant implications identified by officers:

- Transport Strategy development work is supported by Member Steering Groups made up of County Members, and where appropriate, District, Town or Parish Councillors. Local County Councillors are generally offered the opportunity to feed into work as stakeholders and through consultations on the emerging or draft strategy.

4.7 Public Health Implications

The following bullet point sets out details of significant implications identified by officers:

- The Strategy supports the delivery of the Joint Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Health and Wellbeing Integrated Care Strategy
- Public health is identified as being at the core of the vision set out by the CPCA for their refreshed Local Transport Plan.
- *"Health: improved health and wellbeing enabled through better connectivity, greater access to healthier journeys and lifestyles and delivering stronger, fairer and more resilient communities"* is one of the six objectives of the refresh of the CPCA's Local Transport Plan and is fundamental to the Council's transport strategies.

4.8 Climate Change and Environment Implications on Priority Areas:

5.8.1 Implication 1: Energy efficient, low carbon buildings.

Status: Neutral

Explanation: There are no implications in this area.

- 5.8.2 Implication 2: Low carbon transport.
Status: Positive
Explanation: The strategy objectives include tackling the challenges of climate change and meeting Cambridgeshire County Council's carbon targets.
- 5.8.3 Implication 3: Green spaces, peatland, afforestation, habitats and land management.
Status: Neutral
Explanation: Any direct implications arising from scheme development work will be addressed in future reports to this Committee.
- 5.8.4 Implication 4: Waste Management and Tackling Plastic Pollution.
Status: Neutral
Explanation: There are no implications in this area.
- 5.8.5 Implication 5: Water use, availability and management:
Status: Neutral
Explanation: There are no implications in this area.
- 5.8.6 Implication 6: Air Pollution.
Status: Neutral / potentially positive
Explanation: Small scale transport interventions such as those implemented using Integrated Transport Block funding through district-based strategies do not generally lead to quantifiable improvements to air quality on their own. Policy / strategy approaches that focus on reducing traffic and a cleaner vehicular fleet have potential to improve air quality in areas where transport is the dominant generator of pollutants but need commitment to interventions that will enable or drive significant changes in travel behaviour if they are to be most effective.
- 5.8.7 Implication 7: Resilience of our services and infrastructure and supporting vulnerable people to cope with climate change.
Status: Positive
Explanation: The strategy objectives include tackling the challenges of climate change and meeting Cambridgeshire County Council's carbon targets.

5 Source documents

- Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Combined Authority's Local Transport and Connectivity Plan:
<https://mk0cpcamainsitehdbtm.kinstacdn.com/wp-content/uploads/documents/transport/local-transport-plan/LTP.pdf>
- Future Transport Priorities paper to Highways and transport Committee 7th December 2021: [Council and committee meetings - Cambridgeshire County Council > Meetings \(cmis.uk.com\)](https://www.cambridgeshire.gov.uk/cmis.uk.com)
- Huntingdonshire Strategic Transport Study: [Huntingdonshire Strategic Transport Study: Baseline Report \(May 2017\)](https://www.cambridgeshire.gov.uk/asset-library/Transport-Strategies-Stakeholder-Engagement-Report-Final-2022.pdf)
- Stakeholder engagement report: <https://www.cambridgeshire.gov.uk/asset-library/Transport-Strategies-Stakeholder-Engagement-Report-Final-2022.pdf>
- Public consultation report: <https://www.cambridgeshire.gov.uk/asset-library/Transport-Strategy-for-Huntingdonshire-Consultation-Report-Final-2023.pdf>

- Equality Impact Assessment: <https://www.cambridgeshire.gov.uk/asset-library/Equality-Impact-Assessment-Huntingdonshire.pdf>

Implications sign off

Have the resource implications been cleared by Finance? Yes

Name of Financial Officer: Sarah Heywood

Have the procurement / contractual / Council Contract Procedure Rules implications been cleared by the Head of Procurement and Commercial? Yes

Name of Officer: Clare Ellis

Has the impact on statutory, legal and risk implications been cleared by the Council's Monitoring Officer or Pathfinder Law? Yes

Name of Legal Officer: Linda Walker

Have the equality and diversity implications been cleared by your Service Contact? Yes

Name of Officer: David Allatt

Have any engagement and communication implications been cleared by Communications? Yes

Name of Officer: Sarah Silk

Have any localism and Local Member involvement issues been cleared by your Service Contact? Yes

Name of Officer: David Allatt

Have any Public Health implications been cleared by Public Health? Yes

Name of Officer: Iain Green

If a Key decision, have any Climate Change and Environment implications been cleared by the Climate Change Officer? Yes

Name of Officer: Emily Bolton