

Transport Strategies for Fenland and Huntingdonshire

To: Highways and Transport Committee

Meeting Date: 08 March 2022

From: Steve Cox, Executive Director Place and Economy

Electoral division(s): Roman Bank & Peckover, Wisbech East, Wisbech West, March North & Waldersley, Whittlesey North, Whittlesey South, March South & Rural, Chatteris, Yaxley & Farcet, Sawtry & Stilton, Ramsey & Bury, Warboys & The Stukeleys, Somersham & Earith, Huntingdon North & Hartford, Huntingdon West, Alconbury & Kimbolton, Brampton & Buckden, Godmanchester & Huntingdon South, St Ives North & Wyton, St Ives South & Needingworth, The Hemingfords & Fenstanton, St Neots Priory Park & Little Paxton, St Neots The Eatons, St Neots Eynesbury, St Neots East & Gransden

Key decision: No

Forward Plan ref:

Outcome: To update the Committee on the development of district-based transport strategies for Fenland and Huntingdonshire.

Recommendation: Members are requested to:

- a) Note progress to date and the next steps for the development of both strategies
- b) Approve the draft objectives (Figure1) and policies (Appendix 2) for the Fenland Transport Strategy
- c) Approve proposed stakeholder and public engagement approach as outlined in the report

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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. Progress towards this action and a future programme of work for completion of the two strategies is set out in this paper.

2 Transport Strategy Development

- 2.1 Prior to 2017, the County Council produced an LTP (Local Transport Plan) in its role as Local Transport Authority. Since 2017, the responsibility for production of the LTP has passed to the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Combined Authority (CPCA). The CPCA is now developing a Local Transport and Connectivity Plan (LTCP) which covers the requirements of the LTP, *“‘Connectivity’ has been added to the title of the plan to recognise how important the internet is now on transport. With greater trends towards working and learning from home, as well as social and leisure activities, shopping and accessing services, quality and accessibility of digital infrastructure has an impact on the amount of travel taking place”*¹. The County Council is supporting this work.
- 2.2 The Council, as the Local Highway Authority, continues to produce transport strategy documents which are aligned with the emerging vision and objectives of the CPCA's Local Transport and Connectivity Plan refresh (as shown in Appendix 1), and reflect the Council's investment priorities and future aspirations. Strategy work is also carried out to support and complement Local Plans and to review and propose transport improvement schemes for investment.

3 District-based Transport Strategies

- 3.1 District-based transport strategies set out detailed policies and an action plan for transport investment in each district. Schemes contained in the action plans are then eligible for LTP Integrated Transport Block funding. 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.
- 3.2 Work to refresh district-based transport strategies for Fenland and Huntingdonshire commenced in late 2019. However, work was largely paused during 2021 due to the pandemic, the subsequent redeployment of staff and reduced capacity in the transport strategy team. The delay to the projects was understood and accepted by the chair of the Highways and Transport Committee at the time.
- 3.3 Member Steering Groups (MSG) for both strategies were established early on in the development process to guide the work and provide local input and expertise. The Huntingdonshire MSG met five times prior to the pause, with the last meeting in February 2021. The Fenland MSG has met twice prior to the pause, and since the relaunch in 2022 has met twice. During this time work on the Accessibility Report was carried out and Member and key stakeholders were engaged via email in this process.

¹ <https://cambridgeshirepeterborough-ca.gov.uk/news/still-time-for-public-to-have-say-on-regions-transport-future/>

3.4 The Fenland Strategy MSG has two Members from both CCC and Fenland District Council. The Huntingdonshire Strategy MSG has four Members from both CCC and Huntingdonshire District Council. Both Groups are supported by officers from CCC, the relevant district council and the CPCA.

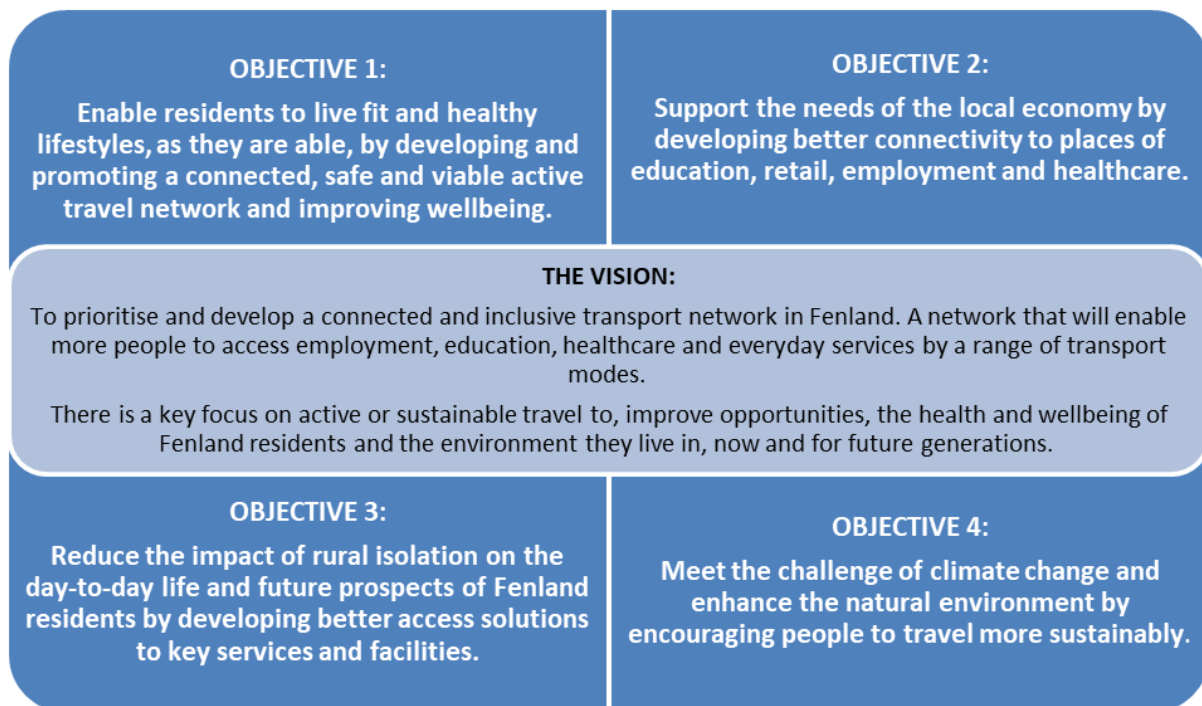
3.5 Each area has its own unique challenges and opportunities that need to be considered as the strategies are developed. Work on both strategies is being co-ordinated. The work on the two district strategies is also being co-ordinated with the Active Travel Strategy for Cambridgeshire discussed under agenda item 8 as well as the CPCA’s update to the LTCP.

Transport Strategy for Fenland – progress to date

3.6 Work to date has concentrated on developing an evidence base for the development of the strategy. In the early Member Steering Groups access to key services was identified as the major transport challenge in Fenland. Therefore, there has been a particular focus on the production of an Accessibility Report to help inform the identification of future schemes and interventions.

3.7 Alongside this, County Council officers have worked closely with district council officers and the Member Steering Group to develop a set of draft objectives for the strategy as shown in Figure 1. A draft transport strategy for Fenland has also been developed and is attached in Appendix 2. The Accessibility Report is appended to the draft strategy.

Figure 1 Draft objectives and Vision for the Transport Strategy for Fenland



3.8 The MSG met on 18 January 2022 to provide up to date feedback on the objectives that had been drafted and to shape the development of strategy work going forward. The MSG

also met on 1 February to agree the updated vision and draft policies for the Fenland Transport Strategy.

- 3.9 The committee is asked to agree the overarching vision, objectives and policies for the Fenland Transport Strategy and note that work is ongoing to further prepare the strategy and action plan for public engagement.

Transport Strategy for Huntingdonshire – progress to date

- 3.10 A draft vision and set of objectives were developed during 2020 with the MSG. County Council officers are working with district council officers and the local MSG to update and confirm the vision and objectives for the Huntingdonshire strategy given the time that has now passed, and to ensure close alignment with the existing Local Plan. The CPCA has also undertaken considerable study work in the district since that time, particularly for Huntingdon and St Ives. It is essential that the outcomes of these studies are fully reflected and incorporated into the transport strategy for Huntingdonshire.
- 3.11 The Huntingdonshire Transport Strategy will replace existing Market Town Transport Strategies and present a clear direction for transport across the district, informed by the evidence base from these wider route based and strategic/growth studies
- 3.12 The Huntingdonshire Strategic Transport Study (2017) is the evidence base that supports the Huntingdonshire Local Plan (to 2036) and it also provides key information and data for the development of the Huntingdonshire Transport Strategy. Comprehensive transport modelling was undertaken to identify pressures on the transport network and a series of interventions identified to address these issues.
- 3.13 The MSG has now been re-established and met on 1st February 2022 to discuss the development and purpose of the strategy. Members from Cambridgeshire County Council and Huntingdonshire District Council welcomed the recommencement of work on the strategy and agreed their role in its development. The vision, purpose and objectives are being updated based on feedback from the MSG.
- 3.14 The committee is asked to note the progress to date and that work is ongoing to prepare a draft strategy and action plan. A draft vision and set of objectives for the Huntingdonshire Transport Strategy will be brought back to committee for approval in July 2022.

Future work

- 3.15 Member Steering Groups will be held regularly and throughout the process to ensure the continued involvement and input of local Members. Furthermore, we will ensure that all opportunities are taken to align this work with the development of the Active Travel Strategy for Cambridgeshire and the CPCA's LTCP. This may include joint public engagement events and sharing of data and information.

Stakeholder Engagement and preparation of action plans

- 3.16 Stakeholder engagement will take place to inform the further development of the strategies and a draft action plan.
- 3.17 Given the ongoing situation with Covid-19, it is anticipated that stakeholder engagement will take place largely online with the option of telephone contact where online access is not possible or available. Each Member Steering Group, district council colleagues and partners will input into the arrangements for stakeholder engagement over the coming months.
- 3.18 As far as possible, stakeholder engagement activities will be co-ordinated with those for the Active Travel Strategy to reduce consultation fatigue. Further discussions with the CPCA are required to align engagement activities with those being planned for the LTCP.
- 3.19 Public consultation is planned to take place later in the year to seek views on and input into the draft strategies and action plans for each district.

Next Steps

- 3.20 The next steps for the strategy development work are set out below:

FENLAND	
Accessibility Report / evidence base	Complete
Agree Objectives	January 2022
Draft Strategy	January 2022
Stakeholder engagement	Summer 2022
Progress update	H and T Committee July 2022
Public consultation	Autumn/Winter 2022
Adoption	2023

HUNTINGDONSHIRE	
Huntingdonshire Strategic Transport Study – evidence base	Complete
Stakeholder engagement	Summer/Autumn 2022
Agree Objectives	July 2022
Draft Strategy and progress update	H and T Committee July 2022
Public consultation	Autumn/Winter 2022
Adoption	2023

- 3.21 A further update and work programme for both strategies will be brought to this committee on 12th July 2022.

4 Alignment with corporate priorities

4.1 Communities at the heart of everything we do

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.
- 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.

4.2 A good quality of life for everyone

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

- Transport strategy documents typically identify policies and interventions that seek to improve accessibility and connectivity, and minimise the negative impacts of travel and transport on communities and the environment

4.3 Helping our children learn, develop and live life to the full

There are no significant implications for this priority.

4.4 Cambridgeshire: a well-connected, safe, clean, green environment

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

- Transport strategy documents typically identify policies and interventions that seek to improve accessibility and connectivity, and minimise the negative impacts of travel and transport on communities and the environment

4.5 Protecting and caring for those who need us

There are no significant implications for this priority.

5 Significant Implications

5.1 Resource Implications

The following bullet points 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.

5.2 Procurement / Contractual / Council Contract Procedure Rules Implications

There are no significant implications for this priority.

5.3 Statutory, Legal and Risk Implications

There are no significant implications for this priority.

5.4 Equality and Diversity Implications

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

- Equality Impact Assessments are being undertaken for both strategies.

5.5 Engagement and Communications Implications

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

- The transport strategy work will involve public and stakeholder engagement work at the appropriate points in their programmes.

5.6 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 strategies.

5.7 Public Health Implications

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

- Public health is identified as being at the core of the vision set out by the CPCA for their refreshed Local Transport Plan, as detailed in Appendix 2.
- *“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, which are proposed to be adopted as the objectives of the Council’s transport strategies.

5.8 Environment and Climate Change 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: *“Climate: Successfully and fairly reducing emissions to Net Zero by 2050”*, is one of the six objectives of the refresh of the CPCA’s Local Transport Plan, which are proposed to be adopted as the objectives of the Council’s transport strategies. The draft

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 strategy or scheme development work will be addressed in future reports to this Committee. However, it is also noted that "*Environment: Protecting and improving our green spaces and improving nature with a well-planned and good quality transport network*" is one of the six objectives of the refresh of the CPCA's Local Transport Plan, which are proposed to be adopted as the objectives of the Council's transport strategies and are reflected in the draft objectives for the two transport strategies.

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: "*Climate: Successfully and fairly reducing emissions to Net Zero by 2050*", is one of the six objectives of the refresh of the CPCA's Local Transport Plan, which are proposed to be adopted as the objectives of the Council's transport strategies. It is expected that the Council's strategy work will reflect this objective in the interventions that they propose, including consideration of the resilience of those interventions in the context of climate change.

6 Source documents

- Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Combined Authority's Local Transport 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/committees/transport/transport-priorities)
- Huntingdonshire Strategic Transport Study [Huntingdonshire Strategic Transport Study: Baseline Report \(May 2017\)](https://www.huntingdonshire.gov.uk/transport/Huntingdonshire-Strategic-Transport-Study-Baseline-Report)

- Fenland Accessibility Report – this is an appendix of the Fenland Transport Strategy- see appendix 2 of this report

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 LGSS Head of Procurement? YES

Name of Officer: Clare Ellis

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

Name of Legal Officer: Fiona McMillan

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

Name of Officer: Elsa Evans

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: Jeremy Smith

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

Name of Officer: Iain Green

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

Name of Officer: Emily Bolton

Appendix 1 Refreshed Vision and Objectives from the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough LTCP

Refreshed Vision



A transport network which secures a future in which the region and its people can thrive.

It must put improved public health at its core, it must help create a fairer society, it must respond to climate change targets, it must protect our environment and clean up our air, and it must be the backbone of sustainable economic growth in which everyone can prosper.

And it must bring a region of cities, market towns and very rural areas closer together.

It will be achieved by investing in a properly joined-up, net zero carbon transport system, which is high quality, reliable, convenient, affordable, and accessible to everyone. Better, cleaner public transport will reduce private car use, and more cycling and walking will support both healthier lives and a greener region. Comprehensive connectivity, including digital improvements, will support a sustainable future for our region's nationally important and innovative economy.



Refreshed Objectives



Productivity

Giving both employers and people the means to achieve more of their potential, making them more efficient and more innovative to create more prosperity



Connectivity

People and communities are brought closer together, giving more opportunities for work, education, leisure and pleasure



Climate

Successfully and fairly reducing emissions to Net Zero by 2050



Environment

Protecting and improving our green spaces and improving nature with a well-planned and good quality transport network.



Health

Improved health and wellbeing enabled through better connectivity, greater access to healthier journeys and lifestyles and delivering stronger, fairer, more resilient communities.



Safety

To prevent all harm by reducing risk and enabling people to use the transport system with confidence.

Appendix 2: Draft Fenland Transport Strategy for Highways and Transport Committee March 2022