

Transport Infrastructure Plan and Cycle Strategy

Report of the Head of Planning, Transportation and Environment

Please note that the following recommendations are subject to consideration and determination by the Cabinet (and confirmation under the provisions of the Council's Constitution) before taking effect.

Recommendations:

- (a) that the final Transportation Infrastructure Plan be approved;**
- (b) that final Cycling and Multi-Use Trail Network Strategy be approved.**

1. Summary

The approach to funding transport infrastructure has changed substantially over the last couple of years, with the aim of enabling greater decision making as part of the Local Enterprise Partnership governance. These changes, along with substantially reducing budgets and the introduction of Community Infrastructure Levy have significant implications for the future delivery of transport schemes. The Transport Infrastructure Plan sets out how the County Council is responding to these changes and details the infrastructure priorities for the period 2014-2030. The Cycling and Multi-Use Trail Network Strategy is a supporting document, which prioritises future plans and proposals for developing the cycle and leisure route network, recognising the future financial challenges.

2. Background/Introduction

The Transport Infrastructure Plan (TIP) and the Cycling and Multi-Use Trail Network Strategy have been produced in response to changes to the way in which funding is allocated to local authorities for transport infrastructure projects. Effective from 2015/16, the amount of Local Transport Plan integrated block funding will be cut from £10m in 2010 to £6.2m in 2012-15 and to £3.6m in 2015/16 and for the next 3 years. In addition, all non-maintenance capital funding from Government for transport schemes will be delivered through the Growth Deal process (managed by Local Enterprise Partnerships). This means there will be fewer funds directly available to the County Council and what limited funds do exist will be used to develop and support bids for schemes through the Growth Deal process. The County Council will therefore need to prioritise schemes that align well with the aims and objectives of the Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP). This is likely to include schemes that can demonstrate good value for money and show clear links to delivering development or economic growth.

The Transport Infrastructure Plan will help the County Council prioritise its infrastructure needs and plan its resources effectively to get schemes designed and 'shovel-ready'. This will position the authority well for taking advantage of future funding opportunities. Likely funding sources of schemes are set out in the Transport Infrastructure Plan, including identifying where match funding may be needed. This will help delivery the growth in the Local Plans and inform Local Planning Authority of likely timescales for needing to secure developer contributions (i.e. Section 106 (S106)/Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL)). Finally, the report demonstrates to the LEP, the Department for Transport and the public that

Devon County Council has a plan in place to support future delivery of transport infrastructure.

3. Proposal

Transport Infrastructure Plan

The Transport Infrastructure Plan sets out planned investment in transport infrastructure across Devon covering the period 2014 to 2030. It complements the Local Transport Plan 2011-2026 which sets out the transport strategy for the county and the detailed infrastructure delivery plans, which have been produced to support development as set out in Local Plans/Core Strategies.

The key purpose of the document is to set out planned delivery of infrastructure over the next fifteen years, concentrating on those schemes that deliver economic growth. The plan will guide the focus and prioritisation of resources within the authority and provide longer term clarity on the county's future transport infrastructure delivery. It is recognised that new funding initiatives and opportunities are likely to be created by changes in Government policy in the period to 2030. This will influence how schemes will be funded and when they will be delivered. There will also be a need to add new schemes to the TIP, for instance, improvement works that come out of the A30/A303 and A361 studies. In order to be responsive to these changes, the TIP will be a 'living document' and will need updating periodically. It is recommended that this occurs as necessary and is reported to a future Cabinet meeting.

The document explains the financial and policy context, including the changes that have occurred in recent years. The report is structured by geographic area, focused around the major growth areas around the county, as detailed below.

- Exeter and East Devon Growth Point
- Barnstaple and Bideford Area
- Newton Abbot Area
- Plymouth Area
- Tiverton and Cullompton Area
- Rest of County

It also includes infrastructure schemes considered vital to connect the county to key markets in London and the rest of the UK. A copy of the recommended Transport Infrastructure Plan is included at Appendix I. This document was discussed at Place Scrutiny in January 2015.

Cycling and Multi-Use Trail Network Strategy

Given the changes to the government funding detailed above, it will be increasingly difficult for local authorities to secure or make a strong case for smaller scale schemes, including walking and cycling projects. The exception may be cycle schemes that relate well to specific developments, and are able to evidence that they are necessary in delivering sustainable housing and jobs or growth to the economy. These would be delivered as part of the development management process.

The County Council will continue to be proactive in its pursuit of cycle infrastructure; however, it will need to be more targeted and selective about which projects it invests its design resources in. The lack of funding directly available to the County Council means that it will need to identify a range of funding sources that will help deliver the county's strategic priorities. This will include preparing bids through the LEP Growth Deal process, other

government funded bids and ensuring that cycle schemes are included in Local Planning Authority infrastructure delivery plans so that developer contributions (S106/CIL) can be secured.

The following aims and objectives have been proposed, which reflect the changing financial context and the pressures it will put on future funding of cycle schemes across the county:

- Showcase Exeter, Newton Abbot and Barnstaple as premier cycling towns
- to provide a healthy, more efficient alternative to travelling by car for a proportion of journeys – cyclists will be able to avoid congestion and benefit from a number of traffic-free cycle routes in the urban areas.
- Invest in Devon's leisure routes and trails
- to secure transitional economic and health benefits in rural Devon by increasing peoples' access to Devon's impressive countryside and heritage, and providing linkages with rural towns and villages.
- Influence the planning process to enable cycle aspirations in market and coastal towns to be delivered
- to ensure that cycle schemes are included in Local Plan infrastructure delivery plans so that developer contributions can be secured and new developments designed to create attractive walking and cycling environments.

A copy of the draft Cycling and Multi-Use Trail Network Strategy is included within Appendix II. This document was discussed at Place Scrutiny Committee in September 2014.

4. Consultations/Representations/Technical Data

Schemes have been subject to consultation through either the Local Planning Authority Local Plan or County Council Local Transport Plan process. Where schemes are in early design stages they will be subject to future consultation.

5. Financial Considerations

For the purpose of this report, there are no commitments or financial considerations to report.

6. Environmental Impact Considerations

Individual schemes will have been, or will be subject to, environmental surveys and mitigation (if appropriate) through the design and planning process. Cycle and Multi-Use Trail schemes are aimed at encouraging people to seek more active, healthier pursuits and rely less on the private car for travel, which may have slight carbon benefits.

7. Equality Considerations

Where relevant to the decision, the Equality Act 2010 Public Sector Equality Duty requires decision makers to give due regard to the need to:

- eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other prohibited conduct;
- advance equality by encouraging participation, removing disadvantage, taking account of disabilities and meeting people's needs; and
- foster good relations between people by tackling prejudice and promoting understanding.

The equality impacts of the documents are covered by the Local Transport Plan and each scheme will be subject to an individual impact assessment.

8. Legal Considerations

There are no specific legal considerations arising from this report. Specific considerations arising from individual schemes will be reported as part of the scheme approval process.

9. Risk Management Considerations

This policy/proposal has been assessed and all necessary safeguards or actions have been taken/included to safeguard the Council's position.

Financial and project management systems are in place to manage programme management risks within and across financial years. Proposals for external funding are assessed for risks associated with match funding requirements and increases in scheme costs.

Risks associated with individual schemes will be considered in more detail within the relevant Cabinet or HATOC reports at the appropriate time.

10. Public Health Impact

The documents support economic growth, including new housing and employment which are important contributors to public health. A number of schemes involve supporting active, healthier modes of travel, which help achieve public health outcomes.

11. Reason for Recommendation/Conclusion

The Transport Infrastructure Plan and Cycling and Multi-Use Trail Network Strategy have been prepared in response to the changing financial landscape. They show a commitment to Government that Devon County Council has a plan that is complementary to the Local Transport Plan, Local Planning Authority Local Plans and the LEP Strategic Economic Plan. By having a clear forward pipeline of schemes, it allows internal resources to be prioritised and workloads better managed and it allows Local Planning Authority to understand when local contributions (CIL/S106) may be required. Importantly, it can explain to our customers the changing financial context and give clarity on the County Council's future transport infrastructure priorities.

Dave Black
Head of Planning, Transportation and Environment

Electoral Divisions: All

Cabinet Member for Economy, Growth and Cabinet Liaison for Exeter: Councillor Andrew Leadbetter

Cabinet Member for Highway Management and Flood Prevention: Councillor Stuart Hughes

Strategic Director, Place: Heather Barnes

Local Government Act 1972: List of Background Papers

Contact for enquiries: Jamie Hlland

Room No. Lucombe House, County Hall, Exeter, EX2 4QD

Tel No: (01392) 383000

Background Paper	Date	File Reference
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Nil

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