

Surrey County Council's Draft Surrey Transport Plan 2022-2032 consultation

Summary

The report sets out the response to Surrey County Council's consultation on the Draft Surrey Transport Plan 2022-2032. The consultation began on Monday 5th July and ends on Sunday 24th October 2021.

The Surrey Transport Plan 2022-2032 (also referred to as LTP4) has significant implications for existing and future transport infrastructure within Surrey Heath and for carbon emissions associated with transport in Surrey. The LTP4 sets out bold measures to tackle key transport issues such as carbon emissions, improving public transport, road safety and pollution for all modes of transport. The consultation document and supporting information is available online at: <https://surreyltp4.commonplace.is/over view>

Portfolio: Planning & People

Date Portfolio Holder signed off report: 7 October 2021

Wards Affected

ALL

Recommendation

The Executive is advised to RESOLVE that the response set out at Annex 1 of this report be agreed as the Council's formal response to Surrey County Council's consultation on the Draft Surrey Transport Plan 2022-2032.

1. Resource Implications

- 1.1 There are no resource implications beyond that provided for within the agreed budget for 2021/22.

2. Key Issues

Summary of the LTP4

- 2.1 Surrey County Council is consulting on the Draft Surrey Transport Plan 2022-2032. The current plan, adopted in 2011, needs to be updated to reflect changes to national and local policy, such as the Government's legally-binding commitment to achieve net zero carbon emissions by 2050.
- 2.2 The draft fourth Local Transport Plan (LTP4) Plan sets out an ambitious roadmap for rethinking and transforming Surrey's transport system to 2032 and beyond. It aims to significantly reduce transport carbon emissions to meet the net zero challenge and to support delivery of Surrey's other priority objectives of enhancing the county's

economy and communities, as well as the health and quality of life of our residents. The plan sets out the bold measures to tackle key transport issues such as carbon emissions, improving public transport, road safety and pollution for all modes of transport. It identifies that achieving net zero will mean a step change in how Surrey thinks about, plans, delivers and maintains transport.

- 2.3 The primary aim of the LTP4 is to improve Surrey's transport system to provide better accessibility and meet other objectives, but it also recognises that accessibility can be improved by place making and digital connectivity. As such, the Plan has a greater scope than previous Surrey transport plans. The vision of the LTP4 is:

'A future-ready transport system that allows Surrey to lead the UK in achieving a low-carbon, economically prosperous, healthy and inclusive county with excellent quality of life for all residents, whilst seeking to enhance the built and natural environments'.

- 2.4 The Plan has four overarching objectives, which are as follows:
- To rapidly reduce carbon emissions, ensuring Surrey is on track for net zero emission by 2050 (prioritised in the Plan as the most important objective).
 - To support Surrey's growth ambitions and enable business and people to prosper sustainably.
 - To provide connected communities that encourage social mobility and ensure no-one is left behind.
 - To create thriving communities with clean air, excellent health, wellbeing and quality of life.

- 2.5 It is identified that to achieving the vision and objectives, a broad mix of policies and measures are required. The LTP4 groups these measures under nine Policy Areas (see paragraphs 2.10 to 2.20 of this report). All nine policy areas have the common goal to reduce carbon emissions by reducing the amount of travel by motorised vehicles and the emissions produced by every kilometre travelled. This is on the basis that prioritising the convenience of car use has had negative impacts for Surrey in terms of carbon emissions, local air quality, quality of public spaces, physical fitness and equality of access to opportunities and amenities for those without a car.

- 2.6 Following the close of the consultation, it is set out in the consultation materials that Surrey County Council will review feedback and amend the Plan with a view to adopt in February 2022.

Summary of consultation response (Annex 1)

- 2.7 Annex 1 sets out the Council's proposed detailed formal response to the LTP4 consultation. The response is structured on the nine Policy Areas identified in the Plan, with an introductory section that sets out overarching general comments. The LTP4 was discussed at the Local Plan Working Group on 11 August and the key issues raised in that

discussion are reflected in this response. The response also reflects feedback the Council has received from residents relating to transport in the Borough, including feedback from the Five Year Strategy consultation.

2.8 Overall, the LTP4 vision and four overarching objectives are welcomed and supported and align with Surrey Heath's Five Year Strategy and the objectives of the Surrey Heath Climate Change Action Plan. The complexity of the challenges and the importance of joint working to deliver the ambitions of the LTP4 are noted.

2.9 The following general comments are also raised in this section of the response:

- The Plan is very ambitious reflecting the need for a radical step change in approach to reduce carbon emissions and address climate change and it is noted that its scope goes far beyond 'transport' and relies significantly on partners to deliver its aspirations.
- Greater emphasis needs to be given to the role of partners in delivering the Plan.
- A significant issue for the deliverability of LTP4 is funding. More detailed information is required on how it will be funded, in particular the role of grant funding.
- More detailed evidence is required at a Borough and District scale in the evidence base that has been produced and suggestion that Surrey County Council procures its own research to support LTP4.
- It is noted that delivering the measures outlined in the Plan will be particularly challenging due to the high levels of car dependency coupled with limited public transport and cycle infrastructure compared to other areas in Surrey. As a result, it is identified that in Surrey Heath specifically, detailed work is required to deliver the step change set out in LTP4, taking account of the complex local context.

2.10 The remainder of the response focuses on the nine Policy Areas of LTP4 and the proposed measures within each of these. Within this section of the response, Surrey Heath suggests that the LTP4 maximises opportunities to:

- Support for Climate Change mitigation.
- Improve accessibility for all, particularly to public transport.
- Reduce traffic congestion.
- Support improvements to public transport, particularly to improve public transport to the villages and other communities in the Borough.
- Support faster and more direct rail services to London.
- Improve cycle routes across the Borough, especially to village communities, and create where possible dedicated cycle routes where users do not have to compete with other vehicles.
- Deliver improvements to air quality.

- 2.11 With regard to Planning for Place Policy Area, the benefits of delivering 20-minute neighbourhoods are supported, such as improved air quality, but it is noted that further detail is required to set out how this can be implemented in practice given the complexity of redesigning neighbourhoods and the reliance on partners for delivery. Support is expressed for improvements to cycle and walking routes and these improvements should cover all areas of the Borough. It is also noted that further detail is required on the introduction of 20mph zones to understand the implications for areas where it will be applied.
- 2.12 For the Digital Connectivity Policy Area, the principles of improving connectivity and access to online opportunities, activities and services to maximise their use and reduce the need to travel is welcomed. However, it is noted that those who need to access services through more conventional means are none the less able to do so.
- 2.13 In respect of the Active Travel and Personal Mobility Policy Area, the general principles of improving cycle routes and facilities are welcomed. It is noted that there should be a greater emphasis on implementing improvements to cycle infrastructure in areas of Surrey with limited coverage, such as in Surrey Heath. Improving cycle infrastructure within the villages of Surrey Heath is identified as a key priority in the response, with improvements to cycle links from the Borough's eastern villages to Woking highlighted as an example of an opportunity to significantly improve cycle infrastructure.
- 2.14 Likewise, for the Public and Shared Transport Policy Area, it is noted that the general principles are welcomed but significant improvements would be required in Surrey Heath to make this deliverable in the Borough. The response recognises that, for bus travel, any new or additional services will need to be viable, but it is also important to note that promoting behavioural change through improving the experience of bus travel, including the costs per journey, are key factors for residents to make the choice to travel by bus. Furthermore, in respect of rail services, the response highlights that there is limited reference to improving access to stations in periphery locations, such as across county or local authority borders, which are afforded more frequent services than other proximal stations.
- 2.15 With regards to the Demand Management for Cars, the benefits of the proposals are recognised and the suggestion that the Policy Area will be tailored to specific locations and applied in conjunction with other Policy Area measures is welcomed. It is noted that residents and businesses will benefit from the reduced congestion and improved reliability due to reduced traffic levels associated with demand management for cars.
- 2.16 However, it is noted that the Council will not be able to support specific measures in this Policy Area for Surrey Heath until genuinely reliable and accessible alternatives are in place prior to implementation of measures to deter and impede car usage. As such it is identified that

great care needs to be taken in the implementation of this policy area, ensuring high quality alternatives are available before measures such as reduced parking in urban locations is implemented. An area of concern identified is the potential adverse impact of the proposals on the viability and vitality of retail centres, as well as the local economy, given the emphasis on reducing access for private vehicles and the potential that other areas outside Surrey may be taking a different approach. As such, it is noted that detailed and evidenced business cases would need to be produced for introduction of measures that could have a significant impact on local retail centres and the local economy.

- 2.17 Moreover, the suggestion is made that, to ensure equitability and make other forms of transport more attractive in the short term, the short-term focus should be on reducing the costs of public transport and access to active travel networks, rather than increasing the costs of car travel. This is on the basis that, in Surrey Heath, implementing measures such as reduced parking without the appropriate alternatives in place could increase local inequalities and decrease access to services. As well as this, it is noted that thought needs to be given to how demand management measures relate to the use of low emission vehicles and car sharing schemes to ensure that such users are not adversely affected by demand management schemes for private vehicles.
- 2.18 The proposed approach for Demand management for goods vehicles Policy Area is generally welcomed. It is noted that emphasis should be applied to the potential for urban consolidation centres¹ for local deliveries.
- 2.19 In respect of the Efficient Network Management Policy Area, LTP4 identifies that, in most cases, there will not be a case for investing in new road capacity as experience shows this to actually increase traffic levels and emissions. As such, it is noted that further detail is required as to how this relates to planning for new homes in terms of transport infrastructure, given that certain areas of Surrey and Surrey Heath have limited access to more active modes of transport. The response also highlights that greater focus should be given to applying environmentally friendly practices for network management and more focused efforts on areas that have poorer air quality. The commitment for taking opportunities to integrate green infrastructure into network maintenance, such as tree planting, is welcomed.
- 2.20 For the Promoting Zero Emission Vehicles Policy Area, whilst the proposals are generally supported, it is highlighted that a primary short-term focus should be the expansion of electric vehicle charging on-street in Surrey. It is noted that, given the high rates of car dependency in Surrey Heath, provision of adequate electric charge point infrastructure in the Borough will be a key element of achieving carbon reduction objectives.

¹ This would enable last mile deliveries to be made from a central hub using electric freight vehicles (including e-bikes) rather than diesel-powered HGVs.

2.21 With regard to the Supporting Behaviour Change Policy Area, it is noted that this Policy Area will be critical to delivering LTP4 and the current measures included in the Plan are too vague to deliver the significant step change in behaviour that will be required. Moreover, it is noted that it will be essential for the successful delivery of behavioural change measures that genuinely reliable and accessible active travel and public transport alternatives are in place prior to implementing measures to support reduced car usage. Further work is required, working with partners, to develop a detailed strategy for behavioural change in Surrey that takes account of local specificities.

3. Options

3.1 The options for the Executive to consider are:-

- (i) To **AGREE** the response to Surrey County Council's consultation on the Draft Surrey Transport Plan 2022-2032 as set out in Annex 1 of this report.
- (ii) To **AGREE** the response to Surrey County Council's consultation on the Draft Surrey Transport Plan 2022-2032 as set out in Annex 1 of this report and any additional comments which the Executive may wish to make.
- (iii) To **NOT AGREE** the response to Surrey County Council's consultation on the Draft Surrey Transport Plan 2022-2032 as set out in Annex 1 of this report.

4. Proposals

4.1 It is proposed to submit the consultation response attached at Annex 1 by the 24th October 2021 deadline.

5. Corporate Objectives and Key Priorities

5.1 Overall, the LTP4 aligns with the Council's corporate objectives and key priorities, in particular the Five-Year Strategy and implementation of the Climate Change Action Plan.

6. Policy Framework

6.1 LTP4 will provide an overarching policy framework for the delivery

7. Environmental Impact

7.1 The delivery of LTP4 has the potential to have a significant impact upon the reduction of carbon emissions and helping to address Climate Change.

8. Other Matters

- 8.1 In relation to legal issues, governance, risk management, equalities impact, human rights, community safety, PR and Marketing there are no matters arising from this consultation by Surrey County Council

9. Consultation

- 9.1 The Surrey Transport Plan 2022-2032 consultation runs between 5th July 2021 and 24th October 2021.

Annexes	Annex 1 - letter to SCC
Background Papers	Consultation document and supporting information is available online at: https://surreyltp4.commonplace.is/over view
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