



Scrutiny Update

Transport Strategy



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1 Introduction

This document provides an update on a number of ongoing projects that are linked to our emerging Transport Strategy.

1.1 Local Transport Plan

The Transport Act 2000 requires all Highway Authorities to produce a Local Transport Plan (LTP) that sets out a strategy and action plan for improving local transport. The third LTP (LTP3) for Telford and Wrekin sets out how we plan to manage, maintain and develop the borough's transport network over the period 2011 to 2026, and covers all forms of travel including car and motorcycle based travel, public transport, walking and cycling.

LTP3 comprises an overarching core strategy, which provides the guiding principles for the management and improvement of the transport network, and a series of individual strategies that will be developed in order to tackle specific topics. Examples of individual strategies include the Rights of Way Improvement Plan, Asset Management Plan and Road Safety Strategy.

As the LTP is nearing the end of its life, combined with the need to evolve our planning in line with considerations such as the Climate Emergency and the National Bus Strategy, we are now reviewing the LTP to ensure it is fit for the future. This review will create the LTP4 and will underpin how we manage our transport network in the short, medium and long term.

Work has commenced on the initial project planning stages of the LTP4, which suggests that the review will likely continue into summer 2022 before final documentation is taken through our internal governance procedures. During this period, a number of workshops will be undertaken both internally and externally in order to share the strategy, before a public consultation on the document, potentially in early 2022.

1.2 Electric Vehicle Strategy

As we know, the take-up of electric vehicles is increasing as the government moves towards the phasing out of petrol and diesel vehicles in the coming decades. This will require charging infrastructure to be readily available going forward. Currently, there are 10 charge points available for residents in Telford and Wrekin, according to the National Charge Point Registry – However, we know that there are a number of new sites that are not listed, so the number is actually closer to 24.

There are currently 773 EVs registered in Telford and Wrekin, which is equivalent to approximately 1% of all registered cars in the area. With the number of EVs increasing, one estimate provided by a charge point operator is that we will need 100 charge points by 2023.

However, we are also aware that with an increase in vehicle range as technology improves that many users will be able to charge an electric vehicle at home without relying on a public charging point. However, it is also clear that this will be a viable option for all users.



As such, we are working to develop strategies and proposals to support both home and public charging in the Borough. To that end, we have recently commissioned a project that will deliver the following key outputs:

- Public EV Strategy
- Council EV Charging Strategy & Corporate Travel Plan
- Funding, procurement & delivery

In delivering the above project we will be well placed to implement a data led public charging network to support our sustainable aims set out in our emerging LTP, but also best support our residents. It is anticipated that we will commence procurement on the deliverables from this project in the first half of 2022.

1.3 National Bus Strategy

In March 2021, the Government launched a new, long-term National Bus Strategy for England, backed by £3 billion in investment. To help achieve this strategy, there is a requirement for all local transport authorities to work with local bus operators to come up with ambitious plans for improving their local bus services and encouraging more people to use them. This arrangement is referred to as an 'Enhanced Partnership'. The Enhanced Partnership will bring together the important skillsets and contributions of both parties, critical to a strong bus network within the Borough.

An Enhanced Partnership is a formal agreement, the agreement will include a clear vision of the improvements that the Enhanced Partnership is aiming for (known as an Enhanced Partnership Plan) and accompanying actions to achieve them (set out in one of more Enhanced Partnership schemes).

As part of this process, we are required to publish a notice of our Intent to Prepare an Enhanced Partnership Plan and Schemes – this notice was published on the 24th June 2021.

Going forward, we are required to undertake the following key actions:

- By end October 2021 - publish a local Bus Service Improvement Plan (BSIP), detailing how we propose to use their powers to improve services. This will be a living, transparent document, with targets. Local Authorities will need to routinely publish six-monthly progress reports against these targets and be required to update them annually
- By April 2022 (or before) – Enhanced Partnerships must be up and running – or we will not receive government funding, including non-bus local transport money. i.e. we cannot miss this deadline;



Particularly with the challenging timescales set out by the Department for Transport, we are already progressing the required Bus Service Improvement Plan. In developing this Bus Service Improvement Plan, we will consider plans in the following key areas:

- Increasing patronage;
- Wider route coverage;
- Fares;
- Improved quality and accessibility of infrastructure;
- Improved fleet;
- Marketing and branding;

In order to educate the above areas we currently planning high-level public engagement during this summer. This engagement will look to draw out opinions to educate our improvement plans ahead of more detailed public engagement as we move into the implementation phase.

While the timescales are challenging, there is opportunity for the Council to improve bus service provision and quality across the borough.

In order to meet these timescales we have engaged external support in undertaking elements of this work due to the specialist nature of it.

1.4 Local Cycling & Walking Investment Plan

In 2017, the council adopted a Cycling & Walking Strategy that aimed to increase use of these modes in order to promote sustainable travel as well as increase health and wellbeing in the Borough. Whilst this strategy is recent, national policy around cycling and walking has changed significantly since 2017, particularly since the launch of the 'Gear Change' policy document and associated guidance in 2020.

In light of the new guidance and the increase in active travel across the borough during 2020, we are updating this strategy in order to maximise opportunity to promote more active modes of travel, but also ensure that our LCWIP is fit for the future. As such, we have recently embarked on a strategy refresh, which will include a comprehensive Local Cycling & Walking Investment Plan (LCWIP). This strategy and associated LCWIP will set out our investment plans both using our own funding and to support future funding bids.

As part of this refresh, we have recently completed a wide-ranging survey into active travel in the borough, the results of which are currently being collated. This data will form an integral part of our LCWIP development going forward.