

# North Yorkshire Council

## Transport, Economy, Environment and Enterprise Overview & Scrutiny Committee

01 February 2024

### Update on the Development of the New Local Transport Plan

#### Report of the Assistant Director – Highways and Transportation, Parking Services, Street Scene, Parks and Grounds.

#### **1.0 PURPOSE OF THE REPORT**

- 1.1 To update the Transport, Economy, Environment and Enterprise Overview & Scrutiny Committee on progress on developing a new Local Transport Plan

#### **2.0 SUMMARY**

- 2.1 This report provides an update on the development of the new Local Transport Plan and sets out the headline findings from the Let's Talk Transport public engagement.

#### **3.0 BACKGROUND**

- 3.1 In 2022, the Department for Transport (DfT) announced that they expected all local transport authorities to have in place a fit-for-purpose, and up-to-date Local Transport Plan (LTP), which sets out a strategic vision and case for investment in transport in their area. The DfT reported that the previously relaxed requirements for 5 yearly updates to LTPs had led to a reduced understanding of the strategic requirements for transport both nationally and locally, and therefore, all local transport authorities should ensure they had a suitable LTP in place by the end of the current parliamentary period (late 2024). This report provides an update on progress so far on the development of a new LTP for North Yorkshire, particularly with regards to the findings of the Let's Talk Transport public engagement.

#### **4.0 LTP PROGRESS UPDATE**

- 4.1 Since 2022, transport planning officers have been working towards developing a new LTP, initially recommending several options for updating the plan and ultimately being instructed to undertake a full redevelopment of the existing LTP (adopted in 2016). Since then, officers have been working on undertaking the data gathering and evidence required.
- 4.2 Whilst official guidance from the DfT has yet to be published, officers have been working on developing the LTP to the best of their knowledge, based on the limited advice coming out of government, and insight from within the transport planning sector.
- 4.3 In view of the imminent formation of a Mayoral Combined Authority for North Yorkshire and York, officers are working closely with counterparts at City of York Council, to ensure consistency of approach and to work towards the formulation of a joint strategic transport prospectus, to be ready in draft format for the incoming Mayor. Delays to the publication of the guidance have meant that the time available to write the full LTP in advance of the

mayoral elections is insufficient, but development of a headline strategic transport prospectus will be achievable and is making good progress.

- 4.4 To ensure that the views of people living and working in North Yorkshire are taken into consideration in developing the new LTP, in summer last year (2023), with support from the corporate communications unit, a full public engagement was undertaken using the 'Let's Talk Transport' branding on the Commonplace online platform. This engagement took the form of an online survey, where people could give their views on transport and travel in the county, using both a series of stated preference questions and free text boxes. In addition to the online survey, officers attended numerous public events and meetings, to raise awareness of the engagement, and help people to complete surveys, either online, or on a paper survey form. Paper surveys were issued to libraries and council offices and were also made available at public meeting places. Almost 5,000 people participated in the public engagement, making it the highest level of response of all the 'Let's Talk' activities so far.
- 4.5 Subsequent to the public engagement, a stakeholder questionnaire, which asked broadly the same questions, but in manner more suited to organisations, was issued to over 700 groups, including parish councils, businesses, charities, and interest groups. 100 responses were received to this. Officers are now in the process of meeting with a number of stakeholders who have advised that they would like to have a further discussion to discuss their ideas and views. Officers are also contacting some of the organisations who did not respond, but from whom we would like to hear comments. By the end of January, officers will have held an hour-long discussion session with around 30 stakeholder organisations.
- 4.6 In August a new LTP governance structure was approved and put into place, allowing for regular LTP Board update meetings for officers (North Yorkshire Council, City of York Council, and partners such as the National Park Authorities), and an agreed approvals process through the Environment Executive Members and Corporate Director meeting. In addition to this, the role of existing North Yorkshire council committees, including this committee have been built into the engagement and approvals structure for the new LTP.
- 4.7 Two rounds of elected member briefings have been delivered on an Area, Constituency Committee basis, with informal online discussions being held with each ACC. Similarly, staff engagement sessions have been held (one in person, one virtual), and a further staff update briefing session was run in December.
- 4.8 Our framework consultants WSP have been commissioned to develop the North Yorkshire (and York) databook, and also a two-stage Quantifiable Carbon Reduction Plan (QCR). The databook will provide a variety of relevant datasets for the county, including demographic, economic and transport information. Those commissions are underway, with outputs being passed to officers as they become available. A more detailed report on the QCR plan will be brought to this committee in due course.

## **5.0 PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT HEADLINE RESULTS AND FEEDBACK REPORT**

- 5.1 Appended to this report at Appendix A is a report prepared jointly by the Transport Planning and Corporate Communications team setting out the headline results of the Let's Talk Transport campaign, and also the stakeholder engagement.
- 5.2 The report sets out the key headlines of the engagement which are namely that;
- There are low levels of satisfaction with the current transport system in North Yorkshire

- Availability and reliability of travel, affordability, road safety and impact of transport on climate changes are of most concern
- Measures to encourage more use of public transport and more walking and cycling, and traffic and highway infrastructure are seen as being most effective in tackling transport issues
- There are differences in results for individual Area Constituency Committee areas, and also by a number of different criteria, such as age, gender, type of community and whether or not the person responding has a disability.

5.3 People's changing travel patterns, both in the past, and potential changes in the future are explored, as are people's levels of support for investment in different types of intervention.

5.4 Whilst it is clear that there are variations in the data based on a number of different characteristics, there are some clear trends in terms of satisfaction with the transport network in the county. In particular, one of the themes that has become apparent is the 'lack of transport choice' for some people responding to the engagement.

5.5 Whilst the headline results provide a very broad level of detail, there is a great deal more information provided in the appended report, and further to that, the consultation appendix developed by WSP on our behalf. The consultation appendix, plus further bespoke data analysis, is available from the Transport Planning team on request.

## **6.0 NEXT STEPS**

6.1 Officers will continue to develop the LTP in line with the actions set out above. In addition to this, officers will in the spring begin work on policy and strategy formulation based on the findings from the engagement thus far, the evidence gathered, and the findings of the Quantifiable Carbon Reduction Plan.

6.2 Officers are also working to develop a draft strategic transport prospectus, setting out high level aims and objectives, ready for the election of the new Combined Authority Mayor in May 2024.

## **7.0 CONTRIBUTION TO COUNCIL PRIORITIES**

7.1 The Local Transport Plan is a statutory requirement, and part of the Council's policy framework.

## **8.0 ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED**

8.1 The Council, as local transport and highway authority for North Yorkshire, is required to have an up-to-date Local Transport Plan in place, and Government in 2022 requested that all authorities ensure this be in place by the end of this Parliament. The ongoing development of the new LTP will allow the council to meet that requirement. It will also help to bring the LTP in line with other key strategic plans and policies. Alternative options in terms of developing a new plan were considered at the outset of this process, but it was agreed that development of a new plan was the most appropriate option in the case of our LTP, which was published in 2016.

## **9.0 IMPACT ON OTHER SERVICES/ORGANISATIONS**

9.1 Officers continue to work with partners, both internal and external, to ensure that LTP is aware of, and where appropriate, aligned to other key policy and strategy documents, and programmes.

## **10.0 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

10.1 Development of the LTP is a core function of the Council and a statutory duty. Where additional funding is required beyond existing budgets, it will be reported through the appropriate channels. In 2022, the DfT granted capacity funding of £178,570 to the council to support development of a new LTP by the end of this parliament. Currently no additional funding is expected to be required. This is being delivered within existing staffing resource with the capacity funding being used to fund consultant support and necessary expenditure such as consultation costs.

## **11.0 LEGAL IMPLICATIONS**

11.1 There are no specific legal implications arising from this report.

## **12.0 EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS**

12.1 There are no equalities implication arising from this particular report. A full EIA will be undertaken as part of the Local Transport Plan itself. See Appendix B

## **13.0 CLIMATE CHANGE IMPLICATIONS**

13.1 There are no climate change implications arising from this particular report. However, the LTP itself will have a focus on climate change and the environment, including a quantifiable carbon reduction plan, and officers from Transport Planning are liaising with relevant colleagues as part of the development of the new plan. A full strategic environmental impact assessment will also be undertaken as part of the new LTP. See Appendix C

## **14.0 POLICY IMPLICATIONS**

14.1 The Local Transport Plan is a statutory requirement, and part of the Council's policy framework.

## **15.0 RISK MANAGEMENT IMPLICATIONS**

15.1 A full risk register will be developed as part of the new Local Transport Plan.

## **16.0 REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS**

16.1 So that the Transport, Economy, Environment and Enterprise Overview & Scrutiny Committee are aware of the latest progress on the development of the LTP.

## **17.0 RECOMMENDATION**

17.1 That the Transport, Economy, Environment and Enterprise Overview & Scrutiny Committee note the progress report on developing a new Local Transport Plan

### **APPENDICES:**

Appendix A – Let's Talk Transport Feedback report

Appendix B – Equalities impact assessment

Appendix C – Climate Change impact assessment

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Note: Members are invited to contact the author in advance of the meeting with any detailed queries or questions.