

**REPORT TO:** Executive Board

**DATE:** 17 March 2011

**REPORTING OFFICER:** Strategic Director – Environment and Economy

**SUBJECT:** Halton’s Local Transport Plan (LTP3)

**WARDS:** Borough Wide

## **1.0 PURPOSE OF THE REPORT**

1.1 This report seeks to gain the approval of the Executive Board for the content of Halton’s Third Local Transport Plan (LTP3) which needs to be submitted to Government by 31<sup>st</sup> March 2011 and comes into effect on the 1<sup>st</sup> April 2011.

## **2.0 RECOMMENDATION: That**

- 1) Final approval be given to the draft Third Local Transport Plan (LTP 3) for Halton incorporating a long term strategy for transport and a shorter term Implementation Plan. A copy of LTP3 is attached; and**
- 2) Further editorial and technical amendments that do not materially affect the LTP3 be agreed by the Operational Director – Highways, Transportation and Logistics in consultation with the Executive Board Member for Transportation, as necessary, before the document is published.**

## **3.0 SUPPORTING INFORMATION**

### **Local Transport Plan**

- 3.1 Local Transport Plans (LTPs) were initially introduced by the Transport Act 2000, which set a statutory requirement for local transport authorities to produce a LTP every five years and keep it under review. Since then, the Local Transport Act 2008 has been introduced, which retained the statutory requirement to produce and review LTPs and supporting policies, but changed aspects of the statutory framework including giving local authorities the flexibility to review and update the LTP as they consider to be appropriate.
- 3.2 Halton Borough Council, as a Unitary Authority, is the transport authority for the area of Halton and as such is required to produce a LTP. The current LTP (LTP2) runs until March 2011, with the third LTP (LTP3) due to commence in April 2011.

- 3.3 As required by the 2008 Act, LTP3 is in two parts; the first sets out a long term strategy to 2026 and the second consists of a short term implementation plan, setting out in detail how the strategy will be delivered. Separating strategy and implementation allows the two parts of the LTP to be renewed (when necessary) on different timescales. For instance there may be less need to renew the overarching long term strategy, yet the short term implementation plan, may require more regular renewal. The renewal interval of either part of LTP3 can be determined at the discretion of the local authority.
- 3.4 Although Halton has produced an individual LTP3, it has been recognised that working in partnership with the Merseyside Integrated Transport Authority (Merseytravel) or ITA, which is statutorily obliged to produce the LTP on behalf of itself and the Merseyside Districts, would be beneficial for the sub-region. As a result Halton and Merseyside synchronised the preparation of their evidence bases and there is impetus of a similar long term vision and strategy across the sub-region. However, it should be acknowledged that the Halton's rolling implementation plan is separate from Merseyside's, based on Halton specific characteristics.
- 3.5 Although the LTP will be submitted to the Government by the end of March 2011, the Department for Transport (DfT) will no longer formally assess the Plan, impose mandatory targets or require submission of formal monitoring reports. However, the DfT will continue to take account of the overall quality of a LTP, especially where this is relevant to its decisions, for example in relation to funding.

### **The Policy Framework**

- 3.6 LTP3 takes account of the wider policy framework at national, regional and local level.
- 3.7 At the national level goals set out in the Delivering a Sustainable Transport System (DaSTS) document (2008) are as follows:
- **Addressing climate change, by reducing carbon emissions from transport.**
  - **Supporting economic regeneration by helping competitiveness and productivity**
  - **Ensuring equality of opportunity**
  - **Protecting Health, Safety and Security**
  - **Promoting quality of life and the natural environment**

In November 2010 the DfT produced its business plan for 2011 to 2015. With regards to local transport, the plan seeks to encourage sustainable local travel and economic growth by making public transport and cycling and walking more attractive and effective, promoting lower carbon transport and tackling local road congestion.

In December 2010 the Localism Bill was published. Of particular relevance to transport the Bill gives communities the right to challenge and bid for local services such as community transport.

In January 2011 the DfT launched its White Paper, 'Creating Growth, Cutting Carbon – Making Sustainable Local Transport Happen'. The White Paper focuses on the Government's transport priorities of economic growth and carbon reduction. Whilst longer distance trips are acknowledged the Paper concentrates on shorter distance trips where action at a local level is emphasised. Bidding guidance for the Local Sustainable Transport Fund (LSTF) was published alongside the White Paper.

In January 2011 the DfT and the Department of Health produced a paper, 'Delivering Healthy Local Transport Plans' and provides advice on the benefits of more health conscious transport.

These recent Government publications do not affect Halton's transport priorities; however, the wider policy part of LTP3 has been redrafted to recognise them.

- 3.8 LTP3 has been prepared in the context of the broader policies and objectives contained in the relevant Regional Strategies, for Halton this is the Northwest of England Plan – Regional Spatial Strategy to 2021 (RSS). The RSS is no longer to be a statutory document but the LTP3 has been guided by it.
- 3.9 LTP3 has been prepared with regard to local strategic objectives as identified in the Sustainable Community Strategy (SCS) and reflects and supports policies within the Local Development Framework (LDF).

### **3.10 Preparation of LTP3**

In developing LTP3 the following statutory assessments have been undertaken:

- Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA)
- Health Impact Assessment (HIA)
- Equality Impact Assessment (EqIA)
- Habitats Regulation Assessment (HRA)

- 3.11 In preparing Halton's LTP3, it was important to ensure that the views of a wide range of stakeholders, the public and other interested parties were reflected. This was done through a two stage consultation process which was offered in various formats. In total 350 formal responses were received to this exercise, with 133 responses being received for Stage 2. This is considered to be a good response rate, especially when compared with other authorities. The general outcome of the second stage was that the public acknowledged that finance

would be tight, but they would particularly like to see enhanced travel information, our highways/cycle ways and footpaths being maintained to a good condition and the bus network continuing to be developed. They also confirmed again the high priority attached to securing the Mersey Gateway.

#### **4.0 POLICY IMPLICATIONS**

4.1 The LTP is the central transport document for Halton Borough Council. The overarching strategy, which forms the first part of Halton's LTP3, has important links and implications for the development of other Council policy documents including the LDF, Core Strategy and the SCS. The Implementation Plan, (the second part of the LTP3), also has important implications for a variety of Council functions, most notably Highways and Planning.

#### **5.0 OTHER IMPLICATIONS**

5.1 The LTP will have financial and resource implications and its implementation will be dependent on funding made available by the Government and by other agencies working in partnership with the Council. It is already recognised that funding, especially for the Integrated Transport Block, will be significantly reduced when compared to previous years (by approximately two thirds) whilst road maintenance funding will also be reduced. Grants for Road Safety, School Travel Plans and Rural Bus Services will no longer be available. It follows that LTP funding alone will not sustain the level of investment in our transport and highway networks that previous years have seen. This will, therefore, limit the degree to which Halton can deliver its transport strategy, at least for the next four years. Details of funding and proposed implementation of work programmes are 'listed' in Appendix 1 of the attached draft LTP3.

#### **6.0 IMPLICATIONS FOR THE COUNCIL'S PRIORITIES**

##### **6.1 Children and Young People in Halton**

The LTP3 offers an opportunity to contribute to improving access for children and young people to a range of community facilities, including those for sport and leisure. This will encourage them to live active and healthy lifestyles. Additionally, LTP3 contributes to raising the aspirations of younger people by ensuring they can access higher education and employment opportunities.

##### **6.2 Employment, Learning and Skills in Halton**

An important component of LTP3 is to support the maintenance and enhancement of the Borough's economy through an effective and responsive transport system and network. This allows Halton's

communities to connect sustainably to employment opportunities across the borough and the wider sub-region. Access to lifelong learning and skill development, especially through the Borough's educational establishments and workplaces, is an essential part of LTP3.

### **6.3 A Healthy Halton**

LTP 3 generates significant opportunity to promote and enable improved health and well-being across the Borough. The use of sustainable transport modes such as walking and cycling have a positive impact on people's health. This has been identified as a key goal of LTP3 supporting the priority of healthy lifestyles and healthy environments and ensuring that good quality health care facilities are accessible to all of the borough's communities.

### **6.4 A Safer Halton**

LTP 3 contributes to a safer Halton through promotion and delivery of a safe transport network, by reducing the number of transport related accidents in the Borough. In addition, LTP3 will assist to ensure that all of Halton's communities enjoy access to safe and sustainable environments across the Borough and the wider sub-region.

### **6.5 Halton's Urban Renewal**

LTP3 is fundamental in creating a highly accessible and well connected Borough, matching opportunity to need. This is vital in order to support sustainable and vibrant places and spaces where people are proud to live and see a promising future.

## **7.0 RISK ANALYSIS**

The levels of funding for transport have been substantially reduced, at least in the short and medium term. This lower level of funding will mean that delivery of many projects may take longer than in the past two LTPs. It also means that fewer schemes can be developed and delivered and this needs to be recognised. There are, as a result, potentially adverse implications for users of the highway and transport systems, although attempts will obviously be made to minimise these impacts.

## **8.0 EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY ISSUES**

Efforts have been made to ensure that all members of Halton's communities could engage with the preparation of LTP3. An Equality Impact Assessment (EqIA) has also been undertaken to ensure that any significant implications for Halton's communities are mitigated and positive effects are enhanced.

## **9.0 REASON(S) FOR DECISION**

9.1 LTP3 is the key policy document for transport in Halton.

## **10.0 ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED AND REJECTED**

10.1 The strategy element is of LTP3 is aligned with national, regional and local policies. In section 11 of the LTP various proposals have been described that could be delivered during the 15 year life of the strategy. These have been prioritised for delivery in the Implementation Plan taking into account affordability, timescale for delivery, value for money and effectiveness of achieving the LTP3 goals.

## **11.0 IMPLEMENTATION DATE**

11.1 LTP3 becomes effective from 1<sup>st</sup> April 2011.

## 12.0 LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS UNDER SECTION 100D OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 1972

Document	Place of Inspection	Contact Officer
HBC Local Transport Plan 2001/2002 – 2005/2006	Planning, Economy and Transport Team 2 <sup>nd</sup> Floor Rutland House	Steve Eccles
HBC Final Local Transport Plan 2006/2007 to 2010/2011	Planning, Economy and Transport Team 2 <sup>nd</sup> Floor Rutland House	Steve Eccles
HBC Final Local Transport Plan 2006/2007 to 2010/2011 Appendix 1	Planning, Economy and Transport Team 2 <sup>nd</sup> Floor Rutland House	Steve Eccles
HBC LTP1 Delivery Report April 2001 to March 2006	Planning, Economy and Transport Team 2 <sup>nd</sup> Floor Rutland House	Steve Eccles
HBC Local Transport Plan 2006/07 to 2010/11 – Mid Term Review September 2008	Planning, Economy and Transport Team 2 <sup>nd</sup> Floor Rutland House	Steve Eccles
Implementing DaSTS and the North West Regional Strategy	Planning, Economy and Transport Team 2 <sup>nd</sup> Floor Rutland House	Steve Eccles
Delivering a Sustainable Transport System Nov 2008	Planning, Economy and Transport Team 2 <sup>nd</sup> Floor Rutland House	Steve Eccles
Guidance on Local Transport Plans, July 2009	Planning, Economy and Transport Team 2 <sup>nd</sup> Floor Rutland House	Steve Eccles
The Future of Urban Transport November 2009	Planning, Economy and Transport Team 2 <sup>nd</sup> Floor Rutland House	Steve Eccles
RS2010 – Regional Strategy for England's Northwest Part : The High Level strategic framework Consultation Document – January 2010	Planning, Economy and Transport Team 2 <sup>nd</sup> Floor Rutland House	Steve Eccles