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BACKGROUND

1.1 The Government's Transport White Paper, July 1998, sets out the proposals for an integrated transport system to tackle the problems of congestion and pollution. The White Paper introduced Local Transport Plans (LTPs) at the core of its proposals, for local highway authorities to deliver integrated transport locally. The White Paper shifts the emphasis in transport provision to favour public transport, walking and cycling. This Local Transport Plan (LTP) seeks real improvements in the quality of all of these to offer people a genuine and sustainable choice of transport.

1.2 The Government recognised that there would be insufficient time for authorities to complete a comprehensive review of local transport provision by the submission date for the first LTPs in July 1999. The first LTPs were, therefore, provisional. Accordingly this document, published in July 2000, is the County Council's first full LTP which sets out the integrated transport strategy and programme for the next five years until 2005/06. It replaces the provisional LTP submitted to Government in July 1999.

1.3 There are two LTPs that cover the Leicestershire County Council administrative area (see Figure 1.1):

- *The Central Leicestershire LTP* - This has been prepared jointly with Leicester City Council, and is based on the successful Central Leicestershire Package which was prepared by the two authorities under the Transport Policies and Programmes (TPP) system. The area covered by this LTP has been increased to include those settlements within Leicestershire that rely mainly on Leicester for many of their employment and service opportunities. This area is also being used for the Deposit Draft Structure Plan land use policies for Leicester and Central Leicestershire. This has enabled the integration of land use and transport within the central area to be more explicitly addressed in the development of the two documents.

- *The Leicestershire County LTP* - This document covers the majority of the county that lies outside of the Central Leicestershire LTP area.

1.4 The LTP has two aims. Firstly, it sets out the vision for the plan area, and the transport proposals to achieve that vision. Secondly, it is the Authority's bid to central Government to fund the capital programme for transport improvements and maintenance.

1.5 In developing this LTP, a review of local transport provision has been undertaken, and the changes that have resulted are included in the Plan. However, in many instances existing Strategies are largely consistent with Government's integrated transport policies, particularly those in transport packages under the previous TPP system.

1.6 In recognition of the importance of improving and providing integrated local transport, the County Council employed the Babbie Group as Consultant to assist in the review of local transport provision and in the production of this LTP.

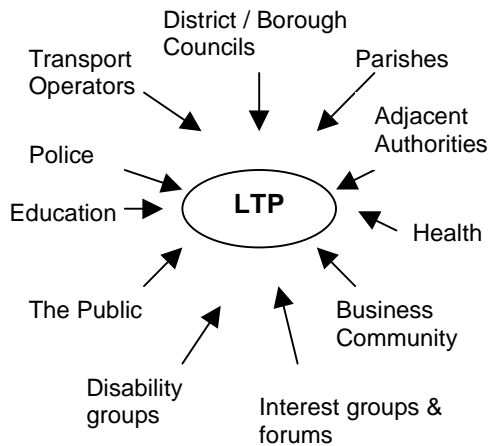
PARTICIPATION

1.7 Effective public participation and consultation is an essential part of LTP development and implementation. An inclusive approach to public involvement is essential if the LTP is to have the widespread local support required to deliver the necessary change to achieve a more balanced and sustainable transport system.

1.8 Even though the timescale for the provisional LTP was constrained, a notable amount of consultation was undertaken. However, for the development of the full LTP the County Council carried out a full and comprehensive participation exercise, and worked with a wide range of people, groups and organisations. Figure 1.2 shows the participation input into the LTP.

1.9 The participation exercise for the full LTP equipped the County Council with a clear sense of local priorities in order to produce an informed LTP commanding general and widespread support, and containing Strategies and Action Plans to tackle the problems causing local people and organisations the most concern.

Fig 1.2 Participation input into LTP



1.10 The participation exercise enabled the public and local organisations to review the proposals included in the provisional LTP, ascertain the level of support for those proposals, and offer the opportunity for them to influence the development of the Area Strategies and Implementation Programmes to be included in the full LTP.

1.11 Appendix B provides a full summary of the participation process from prior to the provisional LTP, through to the present. The appendix also details the results of the participation exercise for the full LTP, and an indication of ongoing participation following publication of the Plan.

1.12 The participation exercise showed quite widespread and general support for the proposals contained in the provisional LTP.

1.13 There was, however, little support for the introduction of new charges on motorists, even though there was an acceptance that more money was needed to fund transport improvements. Concerns were expressed about the role of parking management in a rural county like Leicestershire. In particular there was a widespread view that parking restraint policies could adversely affect the vitality of Town Centres, and that they should only be implemented after significant transport improvements had taken place.

1.14 The main changes in emphasis in the LTP Strategy following participation are:

- ❑ a greater focus on Town Centre improvements to maintain and enhance the vitality and viability of Town Centres;
- ❑ an increased emphasis on Quality Bus Partnerships to address concerns about the quality of bus services;
- ❑ greater priority on tackling the problems caused by the journey to school;
- ❑ the strengthening of partnership working with the District Councils to further develop and implement the parking strategies.

1.15 The District Councils, as key stakeholders and active participants in the LTP, have been fully involved in all the stages of the LTP process, from the development of the provisional LTP through to the full LTP. They also assisted greatly in the participation process.

FUNDING

1.16 The Government's three year comprehensive spending review in 1998 provided for a significant increase in local transport expenditure, particularly by 2001/02 when funds are expected to be about 60% higher than in 1999/2000. The LTP has been prepared on the basis that a significant proportion of that increase will be allocated by central Government to Shire counties like Leicestershire, where there has been severe under-funding of transport improvements over recent years.

STRUCTURE OF THE LTP

1.17 An in-depth review has been undertaken to ensure there is a clear link between the Aim, Objectives, Action Plans contained in the Strategy and Monitoring of the LTP. The framework of these links are shown in Figure 1.3.

1.18 Following this introductory chapter, the following chapters and appendices are as indicated below:

- ❑ **Chapter 2, Primary Transport Objectives:** sets out the national, regional and county context, and the process of identifying the LTP's Aim and Overarching Objectives.

- **Chapter 3, Identifying Issues and Specific Objectives:** sets out the issues and opportunities that face the county, and identifies a series of Specific Objectives for the LTP.
- **Chapter 4, Strategy Development:** the core of the LTP, which develops an Overarching Strategy that will enable the Specific Objectives to be achieved through a series of Action Plans. The discussion in Chapter 4 demonstrates the cross-cutting nature of the Specific Objectives and the Action Plans.
- **Chapter 5, Development of Area Strategies:** a number of Area Strategies that will provide the means of delivery for the majority of the Action Plans.
- **Chapter 6, Costed Implementation Programme:** sets out the budgetary needs of the Plan and, if additional funds were to become available, where the priorities would lie.
- **Chapter 7, Performance Indicators, Targets and Monitoring:** in order to monitor the progress of the Plan over the five-year period, and provide a consistent basis for the annual progress reports, a series of Performance Indicators and Targets have been derived.
- **Chapter 8, Local Transport Plan Appraisal:** contains the Appraisal Summary Table for the Plan area.
- **Appendix A, District Council Supporting Statements:** an important input into the LTP which sets out the District Councils support and current plans and actions that will assist in ensuring effective implementation of the LTP.
- **Appendix B, Participation:** sets out the participation process from prior to the provisional LTP, through to the present, and an indication of the process for the life of the full LTP. The appendix also summaries the results of the participation exercise for the full LTP.
- **Appendix C, Road Traffic Reduction Act 1997 Report:** as required under the legislation.
- **Appendix D, Principal Road and Bridge Maintenance**
- **Appendix E, Casualty Reduction Programme**