

Revamped Local Transport Plan to consider improvement to digital infrastructure

September 10, 2021



A bold plan that aims to bring together Cambridgeshire and Peterborough's transport and digital infrastructure, to provide for better connectivity in a clean and green refresh of the Local Transport Plan, has been approved.

Making explicit the Combined Authority's commitment to deliver truly integrated connectivity to all communities with a drive towards a net zero carbon future, the Transport and Infrastructure Committee on Wednesday (September 8) agreed to include greater emphasis on digital improvements and a renaming of the document to the Local Transport & Connectivity Plan (LTCP).

True connectivity is becoming more and more dependent on digital infrastructure, including in working, conferencing, and meeting remotely. Improved connectivity allows people to consult with their doctors, solicitors and teachers whilst in other professions it is possible to use virtual reality to operate simple or complex workplace machinery from home. In many cases, digital connectivity is a substitute for physical journeys, which in turn reduces both the need to travel and the associated impacts on the environment.

Integrating improvements between public transport, cycling, walking and other modes, with better global

connectivity via a more digitally connected world', can help create a greener and more agile transport network that will benefit communities and help to cut carbon emissions.

Historically, the Local Transport Plan, or LTP, describes how transport schemes and initiatives can answer current and future opportunities for the region. It sets out strategies that guide investment in transport improvements and ensures that challenges and opportunities posed by future growth is planned and sustainable.

Under the Transport Act 2000, LTPs are statutory documents. They must include: promotion of safe, integrated, efficient and economic transport to, from and within the area, include facilities for pedestrians, and take into account government guidance on environmental protection and climate change.

As the Local Transport Authority, the Combined Authority, led by Mayor Dr Nik Johnson, is obliged to keep the Local Transport Plan under review, and to update it to ensure it is flexible and responsive to the changing needs of communities in the Cambridgeshire & Peterborough region.

A key change has been the recommendations of the [Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Independent Commission on Climate](#), and the pathway to a net zero carbon future, which the refreshed LTCP will recognise.

Over recent years, there has also been significant progress to large schemes in the region, including the A428 dualling, East West Rail, Peterborough Station Quarter and the Greater Cambridge Local Plan. The acceleration of these projects together with the changes in government policy, particularly on decarbonising transport, has increased the need for a refreshed LTCP.

The Transport and Infrastructure Committee today received an update as to how work is progressing on reviewing and updating the Local Transport Plan.

Following feedback from the leaders of its constituent councils, the Combined Authority plans to begin public engagement on the LTCP later this autumn; responses from which will help to shape the final document that will be consulted on in early 2022.

The LTCP is planned to be delivered in spring 2022.

Mayor Dr Johnson said: "When we talk about transport, we are really talking about connectivity and the movement of people and goods. There is no doubt that digital infrastructure now plays a fundamental part in the aims and aspirations for a better-connected future for Cambridgeshire and Peterborough.

"So I'm glad we are now considering digital as part of this strategic plan that will help to guide specific investments to improve transport and connectivity for every community in our region.

"A key reason for revamping this LTCP is of course the global challenge of climate change. Our region's Independent Commission on Climate, as well as new national targets and plans to decarbonise transport mean we have to recalibrate our strategy to tackle what is the greatest threat of our age.

“As this document continues to develop, the feedback from the public will be vital in shaping what a good connectivity and transport strategy looks like for our region.

“That’s why I want as many people, groups, businesses and other organisations to take part in this process when we engage later in the year.

“Whether its buses, road, rail, cycling, walking, or indeed how you connect digitally, we want to listen and act.”

Photo credit: Cambridgeshire & Peterborough Combined Authority