

Meeting:	Planning Policy Sub-Committee	Date:	26 March 2015
Subject:	Gloucestershire Local Transport Plan 2015-31 Consultation and Protocol for Highways Modelling Suite Consultation		
Report Of:	Cabinet Member for Regeneration and Culture		
Wards Affected:	All		
Key Decision:	No	Budget/Policy Framework:	No
Contact Officers:	Anthony Wilson, Head of Planning Louise Follett, Senior Planning Officer Adam Gooch, Senior Planning Officer		
Appendices:	1 – LTP – Letter of Representation 2 – Highways Modelling – Letter of Representation		

1.0 Purpose of Report

- 1.1 To provide an overview of the key issues officers have identified in relation to the Gloucestershire Local Transport Plan 2015-31 public consultation and endorsement of Appendix 1 as the Council's formal response to this consultation.
- 1.2 To provide an overview of the Gloucestershire protocol for third party access to the highways modelling suite consultation and endorsement of Appendix 2 as the Council's formal response to this consultation.

2.0 Recommendations

- 2.1 Planning Policy Sub-Committee is asked to **RECOMMEND** that:
 - (1) the proposed response to the Gloucestershire Local Transport Plan 2015-31 public consultation at Appendix 1 be endorsed; and
 - (2) the proposed response to the Gloucestershire third party access protocol for using the highways modelling suite consultation at Appendix 2 be endorsed.

3.0 Background and Key Issues

- 3.1 Gloucestershire County Council has recently prepared and published for consultation 'Gloucestershire's Local Transport Plan 2015 – 31' (GLTP). This represents the first formal review of the Local Transport Plan (LTP) since it was adopted in 2011 and sets out a long term strategy for transport delivery within Gloucestershire up to 2031.

- 3.2 The GLTP has big implications for transport delivery in the City and officers have therefore reviewed its content. Appendix 1 sets out the draft response and a summary of the key issues is provided below.
- 3.3 The review of the GLTP is taking a different perspective in that it is no longer focused around the consideration of districts, but advocates a 'link and place' approach, based on the nature of travel and connections. To this end the GLTP includes seven 'Connecting Places Strategies' (CPS), which cover the whole of the County and, where appropriate, areas outside of the County. Gloucester City is included within the 'Central Severn Vale' (CSV) CPS, which effectively includes Gloucester, Cheltenham and the immediately surrounding areas in Tewkesbury Borough and Stroud District.
- 3.4 In addition to this, the GLTP includes four 'objectives'; Sustainable Economic Growth; Connectivity; Environment; and Community. For each of these a range of challenges and intended future outcomes is provided. These are linked to eight overarching LTP policy areas relating to matters such as the operation of highways, investment and enabling new development, accompanied with a number of related delivery policies underneath.
- 3.5 The County are also consulting on a revised charging schedule protocol for third parties using the County Council's updated highways modelling suites. Of particular relevance to the City are the revised charging schedules relating to the strategic 2013 Central Severn Vale SATURN model and Gloucester Paramics micro-simulation model as these will be required to be used by consultants providing evidence on the impact and mitigation required for site allocations in the City Plan.
- 3.6 The County is proposing to introduce charges to use the models, together with an administrative charge and a software maintenance charge.

4.0 Draft City Council Response

- 4.1 Officers have reviewed the content of the GLTP and are broadly content that it provides a good starting point for considering and managing a long term strategy for transport within Gloucester and the wider area up to 2031.
- 4.2 However, there are a range of concerns and comments and these are summarised briefly below.
- As a general comment, the plan is considered to be a little vague in places, lacking the 'teeth' required to ensure effective delivery and, equally it is unclear how certain elements of the plan will be delivered. It is recommended that both of these issues are addressed.
 - The plan includes an 'Advisory Freight Route Map', which indicates the main highway routes through which freight transport will be directed. It is noted that one of the routes through Gloucester is the A38 Cole Avenue / Eastern Avenue, utilising St. Barnabas roundabout. Members will be aware that this roundabout is already operating beyond capacity and is a concern for the City Council. The response therefore recommends that, if this map is to be adopted, the St. Barnabas

roundabout would require significant improvements in order to facilitate the additional freight traffic.

- Generally it is considered that the plan is too focused on provision for private cars, with not enough consideration being given to sustainable modes such as public transport, walking and cycling and, in particular, aspirations to drive a modal shift from cars to other modes and the positive impacts of sustainable travel on health. The response recommends this should be addressed.

4.3 With regard to the consultation on the use of the highways modelling tools, Members' attention is drawn to the fact that increased charges will impact on the cost of evidence preparation for both the Joint Core Strategy and City Plan as the County Council is suggesting blanket charges for all users, with no differentiation between developers or local authority partners.

4.4 It is suggested that, as a requirement of the 'Duty to Co-operate' with regard to development plan preparation contained in Section 33A of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004, the County Council considers either abolishing the proposed charges or introducing a substantially reduced rate for access to the highway models for local authority partners and their consultants for the purposes of development plan preparation. A response to the County Council to that effect is attached at Appendix 2.

4.5 While it is appreciated that there are costs related to owning, running and updating such models, it is the officers' view that the County Council should not be charging local authority partners and their consultants the same commercial rate as developers to access the models. Development Plan preparation is a statutory requirement that has to be funded by district councils with input from other statutory partners and stakeholders and the County Council is bound to co-operate in this process as stated above.

5.0 Reasons for Recommendations

5.1 Officers have undertaken a review of the GLTP consultation and the third party access protocol for using the County Council's highways modelling suite consultation and consider Appendices 1 and 2 represent the most appropriate responses to Gloucestershire County Council to these consultations.

6.0 Future Work and Conclusions

6.1 After the end of the consultation period, (27th March 2015), the County Council is intending to review the responses and finalise the GLTP by June 2015, with a view to it being adopted in September 2015. It is proposed that the third party access protocol would be adopted earlier, in July 2015.

7.0 Financial Implications

7.1 There are potential financial implications for the recently approved City Plan budget if highways modelling costs substantially increase as part of the Transport Assessment evidence base quote.

8.0 Legal Implications

- 8.1 The Council's response to the LTP is provided as part of a statutory consultation process. The Council's access to transport modelling services and the associated costs would be secured by an appropriate agreement.

9.0 Risk & Opportunity Management Implications

- 9.1 Risks to the recently approved City Plan budget of increased highways modelling costs.

10.0 People Impact Assessment (PIA):

- 10.1 N/A

11.0 Other Corporate Implications

Community Safety

- 11.1 N/A

Sustainability

- 11.2 The GLTP has a responsibility to plan for all forms of transport within Gloucestershire and, working with neighbouring authorities (where appropriate), issues of a cross-boundary nature through the Duty to Cooperate. To this end the Council's draft response makes comments regarding the proposed policy direction for journeys made by both the private car and sustainable modes such as public transport, walking and cycling.

Staffing & Trade Union

- 11.3 N/A

Background Documents:

Gloucestershire Local Transport Plan Consultation (2015 – 2031)
<http://www.gloucestershire.gov.uk/ltp3>

Third party access protocol for using Gloucestershire's highway modelling suite

www.gloucestershire.gov.uk/modelaccessprotocol