

AGENDA ITEM:

Report For:	High Wycombe Town Committee
Meeting Date:	15 January 2019
Part:	Part 1 - Open
If Part 2, reason:	N/A



SUMMARY

Title of Report:	Regeneration and Transport Strategies for High Wycombe town and urban area.
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Ward(s) affected:	Abbey, Booker and Cressex, Bowerdean, Disraeli, Micklefield, Oakridge and Castlefield, Ryemead, Sands, Terriers and Amersham Hill, Totteridge (High Wycombe Unparished Wards), Tylers Green and Loudwater.
Reason for the Decision:	<p>As the members representing the main area of focus for this project, the HWTC is asked to note the preparation of this work.</p> <p>High Wycombe town and surrounding urban area is already under a considerable degree of traffic pressure, which is expected to increase over the lifetime of the new Local Plan. It is necessary to develop a vision that encompasses the ambitions for High Wycombe town and urban area in the long term that includes transportation. This is being developed in partnership with Buckinghamshire County Council in their role as Highway Authority.</p>

	HWTC are a key stakeholder and as the project progresses your input into the vision and the ambitions will be invited to help shape the vision.
Proposed Decision	That: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (i) The HWTC note the preparation of this work. (ii) The HWTC consider the best way to have their say in the development of the vision and resulting strategies.
Sustainable Community Strategy/Council Priorities - Implications	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Place: lessen the impact of traffic and support sustainable transport • People: enable people to be healthy and active through the provision of high quality open spaces and active travel • Prosperity: make physical (and digital) connectivity easier, through achieving improved transport connections <p>Risk: Low risk at this time. This will be revisited and monitored as the project develops.</p> <p>Equalities: There will be a number of equalities aspects to the work, which will be considered through its development.</p> <p>Health & Safety: Not applicable at this time.</p>
Monitoring Officer/ S.151 Officer Comments	<p>Monitoring Officer: There are no apparent legal implications for the subject matter of the report.</p> <p>S.151 Officer: Finance implications are set out within the body of the report</p>
Consultees:	An engagement strategy is being prepared as part of this work. This will be shared in due course.
Options:	The options are to proceed with the projects, or to not

	<p>proceed (do nothing).</p> <p>Do nothing is not considered to be a reasonable option as the regeneration of the town and accompanying transport strategy are key to the long term prospects of the town.</p> <p>HWTC are being asked to decide how they wish to be kept involved in the development of the vision and the subsequent projects which will help to achieve the ambition.</p>
Next Steps:	<p>The main steps moving forward are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To continue with the development of the project scope, programme and engagement strategy in partnership with Buckinghamshire County Council. • To carry out a consultation and engagement exercise to inform the development of the strategy. This is planned to take place in early 2019.
Background Papers:	None
Abbreviations:	

Appendices to this report are as follows:

None

Detailed report

1. Summary

1.1 This note sets out a high-level overview of visioning work that is being planned for 2019 to help inform the creation of a new Transport Strategy for High Wycombe Urban Area. It also provides context for this work in relation to its strategic fit with other strategies.

2. Context

2.1 The new Local Plan is currently undergoing Examination. The Council has an Economic Development Strategy and is currently starting work to develop a Regeneration Strategy for the key settlement areas in the district. This will include High Wycombe. This document will draw on the Local Plan and the Transport Strategy will be a supporting strategy to this – with both collectively providing guiding direction for future investment and development opportunities and transport needs going forward.

2.2 A transport strategy for High Wycombe urban area will align to both of these, delivering against the following council corporate plan priorities:

- Place: lessen the impact of traffic and support sustainable transport
- People: enable people to be healthy and active through the provision of high quality open spaces and active travel
- Prosperity: make physical (and digital) connectivity easier, through achieving improved transport connections

2.3 The first task for the Transport and Regeneration Strategies is to produce a vision document. In the case of the Regeneration Strategy this will consist of a series of visions for our key settlement areas - one of which would be for the town of High Wycombe.

2.4 A place-based vision – or possibly, ‘**ambition**’ – for the High Wycombe urban area involves deciding what kind of place we would like High Wycombe to be in 2050 – how we want High Wycombe to look and feel. This vision, or ambition, can feed into a number of projects in the short, medium and long term, including a Transport Strategy for the town.

2.5 There is a unique opportunity to align the transport strategy with the regeneration strategy, to provide a strong corporate framework.

3. Outline

3.1 We are working in collaboration with Buckinghamshire County Council to develop the Transport Strategy. It is important to develop a shared vision so that plans and strategies can work together to achieve the overarching vision for High Wycombe (see attached diagram for our understanding of how the vision might influence our plans and projects).

3.2 We are focusing on the High Wycombe urban area for this work because:

- It is expected to accommodate a high degree of planned growth over the next 25 years;
- It is the primary settlement in the District;
- Transport issues are most significant here.

3.3 It is important that the work should encompass the whole of the built up area, including the suburbs, and not just the urban core of the town centre due to the wider scope of some of the issues we expect to engage with.

3.4 Working together, the regeneration and investment team, planning policy and BCC colleagues would like to jointly engage on gathering views to feed into the vision / ambition:

- Member focus group and the High Wycombe Town Committee
- Internal workshops with relevant services within WDC and BCC – public transport, air quality, health and wellbeing, etc;
- Workshops with ‘specific interest’ stakeholders such as business, retail, and bus operating companies;
- Engagement with the public and other stakeholders, such as young people, people with mobility and sensory difficulties, High Wycombe Society etc.

3.5 Funding of £25,000 for the visioning work is being provided by Buckinghamshire County Council in the 2018/19 financial year with further funding of £60,000 potentially available in future years. We are proposing to support this with funding being sought for the Wycombe Transport Strategy and subsequent feasibility work for the 2019/20 financial year at February 2019’s meeting of the WDC Cabinet. The intention is to fund consultants to assist in the development of the vision and in the gathering of views to feed into the vision / ambition.

4. A new approach to strategy development and next steps

4.1 High Wycombe has very specific transport issues and difficulties and we have been struggling with the way forward for many years. We would like to take a new approach which acknowledges we can’t predict the future, but explores a range of possible scenarios. These scenarios would be developed in response to two key drivers in transport behaviour. Work elsewhere, for example, has used ‘cost of energy’ (high/low) and ‘accessibility preference’ (physical/virtual) in developing scenarios. Policies and initiatives could then be shaped around what we see as the consequence of these scenarios.

4.2 Once an initial vision (ambition) has been developed, it is proposed to test a range of possible driver options and also introduce the idea of decision trees in developing strategy – asking the question ‘what if... we follow a particular policy approach, does it lead ultimately to the ambition we are seeking?’.

4.3 The detailed timelines for the Transport and Regeneration Strategy are still being defined. HWTC will be kept informed through 2019 and invited to contribute to the relevant workstreams.