

Local Transport Strategy

Report by Kevin Anderson, Executive Director - Place

Report for Decision

1 Recommendations

It is recommended that Council:

- i) notes the current development of key local, regional and national strategies relating to the economic, environmental, transportation and land-use sectors and the need accordingly to review Midlothian's Local Transport Strategy; and
- ii) approve the financial resources required for the development of the Local Transport Strategy for Midlothian.

2 Purpose of Report

The purpose of this report is to provide Council with context to review the Local Transport Strategy for Midlothian and the proposed timescale and measures to do so.

Date: 14 June 2022
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3 Background

- 3.1 The published Local Transport Strategy for Midlothian is significantly outdated and requires review.
- 3.2 Recently, there has been significant change and development across the economic, environmental, transportation and land-use sectors, notwithstanding the pandemic, climate change, the financial crisis and technology. These changes call for transformational change and revised strategies, despite tightened resources available to deliver and maintain existing services.
- 3.3 There is an opportunity to integrate with recent and ongoing policy development in transport and land-use at a local, regional, and national level. Strategies and initiatives including: (i) Midlothian Local Development Plan, (ii) Midlothian Economic Strategy, (iii) SEStran Regional Transport Strategy and (iv) National Transport Strategy 2, together with climate change strategies and actions, will affect the Local Transport Strategy and can be influenced by its outcomes.
- 3.4 Midlothian Council must ensure that its transport system is fit for purpose and in line with the needs of our communities.

4 Local Transport Strategy Review

- 4.1 A new Local Transport Strategy will consider the entire transport system, including walking, cycling, wheeling, public transport, private vehicles, placemaking, technology and behaviour change. It will critically review the operational needs and maintenance of the existing transport system to ensure that it is suitably funded and fit for purpose as well as the opportunity for evolving change in line with policy and strategy.
- 4.2 A key element of the review will be to identify initiatives and measures for early implementation which will help to deliver Midlothian Council's goals for economic recovery post-COVID-19. As transportation is a critical aspect in connecting people, businesses and communities, the identification of measures which will help support short and long term regeneration and recovery are critical.
- 4.3 Engagement with local communities, stakeholders, partners, and transport providers will be through a range of measures. Town centre, enterprise and business organisations will help to provide critical input to direct the Strategy.
- 4.4 The Strategy will be crucial in supporting bids for external funding in areas of transformational change. It will provide a key linkage to the climate change agenda; promote active travel and other sectors attracting high levels of investment and regeneration.

5 Local Transport Strategy Development

5.1 A consultant will require to be appointed to undertake this project. As required by Transport Scotland, the overall approach and development will follow the sequence of steps set out in the Scottish Transport Appraisal Guidance (STAG):

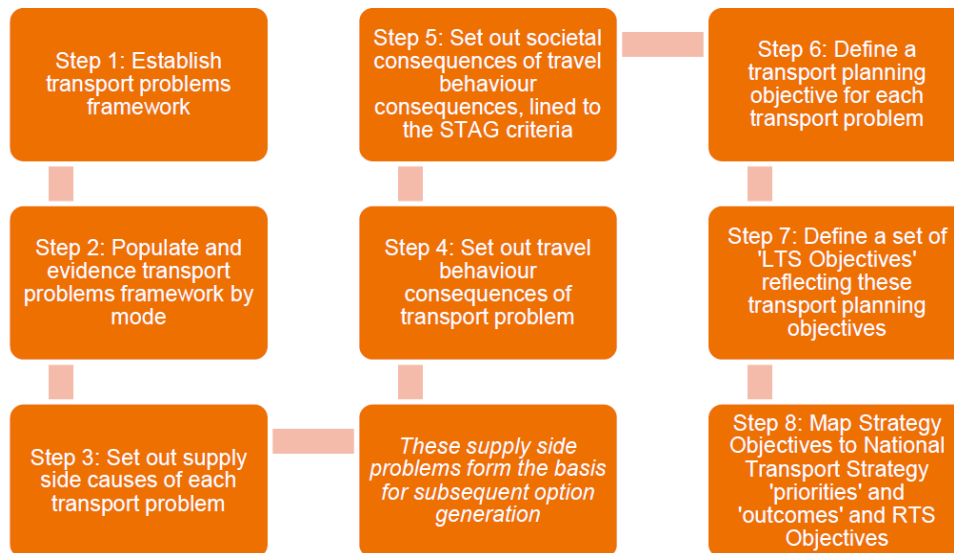
- * Case for change (CfC)
- * Option development and appraisal
- * Strategy drafting

5.2 The Case for Change will:

- Consider all of the significant settlements in the Midlothian area and establish a broad local hierarchy, reflective of e.g., service provision and employment patterns
- Develop a high-level analysis of the demographics and economy of the area, reflecting the hierarchy developed above
- Set out the factual position with respect to the transport supply side in the context of this hierarchy and transport connectivity both internally and externally with Edinburgh a key focus – this supply side analysis will include the current delivery mechanisms for transport services across the region. Develop a range of spatially detailed connectivity indicators to illustrate the current transport supply side.
- Set out the transport demand side considering transport and travel volumes and patterns by mode for both people and freight relating to travel to / from and through Midlothian.
- Outline the main societal and technological changes which the LTS will have to be developed in the context of – this will include the most recent understanding of the evidence concerning post-COVID-19 travel behaviours.

5.3 Establishing the policy and local context, the transport supply and demand side as well as how this may evolve in response to societal and behavioural change, a process to identify transport problems and link these through to strategy objectives will also be undertaken. An LTS has a potentially wide range of issues to address. Adopting a structure to organise and make sense of these issues is essential to create order, avoid fragmentation and omissions in the process.

5.4 The chart below outlines eight steps that will be followed in developing this as an effective method to systematically identify problems and find a resolution within the overall framework as the process progresses.



- 5.5 In Step 1, all the aspects which define any trip are considered, including:
- All modes of travel: awareness of travel options; cost of travel; fuel / power issues; integration of travel between modes; journey information; journey quality; journey times; personal security (fear of crime); personal accessibility – being able to access transport networks and services specifically from a disability / protected group perspective; reliability of journey times (including public transport service punctuality); safety (transport); environmental concerns
 - Public transport services specifically: capacity; comfort; connectivity (availability of services); ease of use / convenience; integration between services (within mode, e.g., bus to bus); service reliability (cancellations); timetables (first and last / frequency)
- 5.6 In Step 2, the problems are evidenced existing sources, drawing on the SEStran RTS and the STPR2 Regional Report. As a local strategy, these problems will be identified spatially, where possible.
- 5.7 Step 3 considers the supply side causes of the transport problems identified and this will again be populated with geographical detail where possible. This step is important as it also provides a structured approach to the later generation of options stage.
- 5.8 Steps 4 and 5 consider what these problems mean for travel behaviour and also society more generally (economy, environment, health etc).
- 5.9 Steps 6-8 develop TPOs specific to each problem; collated within a set of LTS objectives, mapped to the RTS and NTS2 to ensure policy consistency.
- 5.10 A key part of STAG and the CfC process is engagement, both with the public and stakeholders. STAG advises that 'the local community should be consulted alongside key stakeholders unless there is a specific reason why this is unnecessary' at the CfC stage.

- 5.11 At the conclusion of the CfC, a number of 'strategy themes' will be proposed, where each theme will form a chapter of the Draft LTS – potentially reflecting the regional mobility themes developed in the SEStran RTS. These themes will represent the main issues to which the LTS will set out a response, incorporating responses to the supply side problems identified here, and also responses to the opportunities provided by the new policy context, and new transport technologies and societal change.
- 5.12 The CfC Report itself will then be consulted upon for a period and an appropriate online platform will be utilised where the draft can be viewed (in full and in summary) and where feedback can be provided via a respondent survey. This feedback will be focused on whether people agree or disagree with the range of problems identified and the resulting strategy vision and objectives
- 5.13 The feedback from the consultation process will be used to finalise the CfC report.

6 Phase 2 Option development and appraisal

- 6.1 Included within the scope of the LTS will be reference and scoping of capital / infrastructure projects, revenue funded projects, Strategies, Policies and Plans, including NTS, STPR2 and SeStran RTS.

7 Phase 3 Draft LTS, Consultation and Final LTS

- 7.1 The Draft LTS will be subject to a consultation period. This will be published on an electronic platform to provide a visually attractive and accessible environment in which people can view and comment on the Draft. This consultation will include all statutory impact assessments. Comments will be reviewed and incorporated where appropriate in the Final LTS.

8 Proposed Programme

- 8.1 The process of developing a new LTS will typically take 8-12 months, in three parts broadly as follows:

- * Case for Change: 4-5 months
- * Option development and appraisal: 2-3 months
- * Draft RTS: 4-5 months

9 Project Budget

- 9.1 It is anticipated that a budget of £92,500 will be required to have the LTS developed and implemented for Midlothian.

10 Performance Reporting

- 10.1 Robust scrutiny to the project management can be undertaken at Cabinet by way of Quarterly reporting.

11 Report Implications

11.1 Resource

A budget of £92,500 requires to be allocated to this project.

11.2 Digital

All digital requirements will be undertaken and hosted by the consultant.

11.3 Risk

The risk of not reviewing the Local Transport Strategy is that Midlothian's current goals and policies for economic, social and environmental delivery are not achieved and potential external funding and development opportunities are missed. The lack of a contemporary Local Transport Strategy may also harm Midlothian Council's local and national reputation.

11.4 Ensuring Equalities

The process of impact assessment runs throughout the strategy development process and is focussed on the Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) and the Equality Impact Assessment (EqIA). The objectives of the EqIA are to integrate the consideration of relevant equalities issues and impacts into the development of the LTS and to demonstrate compliance with the Public Sector Equality Duty, the Fairer Scotland Duty, Child Rights and Wellbeing duties. This EqIA will also address the Fairer Scotland and Child Rights and Wellbeing duties as these relate to issues affecting the transport system and apply on a statutory basis to local authorities.

The main steps in the process are as follows:

- SEA and Equalities Scoping Case for Change Report - SEA Environmental Report and Equalities Duties Report
- Preliminary Appraisal and STAG and Equalities Appraisal
- Draft RTS (SEA Environmental Report and Equalities Report)
- Final RTS
- Post Adoption Statement

12.5 Additional Report Implications

See Appendix A

APPENDIX A – Report Implications

A.1 Key Priorities within the Single Midlothian Plan

The route map outlines the phases of service recovery and transformation which will underpin the Single Midlothian Plan.

A.2 Key Drivers for Change

Key drivers addressed in this report:

- Holistic Working
- Hub and Spoke
- Modern
- Sustainable
- Transformational
- Preventative
- Asset-based
- Continuous Improvement
- One size fits one
- None of the above

A.3 Key Delivery Streams

Key delivery streams addressed in this report:

- One Council Working with you, for you
- Preventative and Sustainable
- Efficient and Modern
- Innovative and Ambitious
- None of the above

A.4 Delivering Best Value

The report aims to deliver best value.

A.5 Involving Communities and Other Stakeholders

Extensive consultation is imperative.

A.6 Impact on Performance and Outcomes

The report aims to measure progress through outcomes.

A.7 Adopting a Preventative Approach

The report is based on the creation of a wellbeing economy which prioritises prevention, fairness for people, the economy and the environment.

A.8 Supporting Sustainable Development

The improvement and enhancement of our environment.