

5 SUPPORTING STATEMENTS

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5.1 Aylesbury Vale District Council supporting statement

I am very pleased to confirm Aylesbury Vale District Council's support for the Second Local Transport Plan. Our two Councils have a long and successful history of joint working on land use and transport issues. The current expansion plans for Aylesbury now being implemented are



based on the joint Aylesbury Land Use Transport Strategy produced in the mid-1990's, which proposed major urban expansions served by high quality public transport, pedestrian and cycling links. These developments and their accompanying transport infrastructure works are being recognised in best national planning/transport practice. In addition, we are jointly implementing a developer transport contributions policy and SPG. This is generating significant developer funds from brownfield sites to supplement LTP funding for essential transport schemes in the Aylesbury area.

There are a number of other joint transport projects, which our Councils are currently working on:

- The introduction of a Special Parking Area covering the whole District combining both authorities parking powers and managed by joint agreement by the District Council,
- Preparing an Action Plan for the recently identified Air Quality Management Area,
- Working with ODPM and other partner authorities on the East West Transport Corridor Study,
- Working with ODPM and rail companies on the Aylesbury Vale Parkway Study which includes the first Park and Ride site for Aylesbury,
- Jointly preparing and promoting the Aylesbury Public Transport Hub CIF bid,
- Supporting BCC in preparing the A418 Route Improvements.

This very substantial amount of joint working is co-ordinated through regular programmed meetings of cabinet Members and Senior Officers, backed by the Aylesbury Vale Transport Strategy Group, which includes a wider Member membership. These have helped ensure our policies and priorities are aligned whenever possible. It has also been seen in the joint commissioning of key projects such as the Aylesbury Parking and Access Study and the Aylesbury Multi-Modal Transport Study, both of which will be key in informing the emerging growth plans for the town. Our authorities also have a crucial role to play in supporting the Local Delivery Vehicle (Aylesbury Vale Advantage) charged with delivering the very substantial growth confirmed in ODPM's Milton Keynes and South Midlands Sub-Regional Strategy.

Preparation of the Second Local Transport Plan has demonstrated a welcome continuation of this close joint working. The District Council see the Second Local Transport Plan proposals as essential in delivering in a sustainable manner both currently planned growth for Aylesbury, and that identified in MKSM. We are committed to the Multi-Modal Transport Study, which will inform the spatial/transport strategy for the town to be taken forward in the first LDF plans.

We also welcome working jointly on the Area Action Plans for our other towns and the Rural Areas, which have particular transport issues to address including how to significantly enhance the accessibility of those parts of the District away from Aylesbury.

5.2 Chiltern District Council supporting statement

Chiltern District Council welcomes the opportunity to be involved in the production of the second Local Transport Plan as a strategic framework for transport needs. The process brings further opportunities for integration of policies and closer working between the three tiers of local government and external partners in Buckinghamshire.



Chiltern has a commitment to sustainable development and its principles. The Council wishes to see an emphasis on projects including walking, cycling and demand responsive transport solutions such as taxi sharing, with further innovative ways of providing different travel options wherever practicable. It is recognised that providing alternative options to the car such as walking and cycling, will also have benefits to health, and thereby support one of the Council's key objectives of 'Promoting a Vibrant, Safe and Healthy Community'.

Rail services form an important link for some Chiltern residents, and therefore we look to maintain and improve the services offered where possible. The Council supports joint working on this aspect - a recent example being the discussions about the proposal from London Underground to withdraw the peak through Metropolitan trains to/from Chesham to improve general train reliability. The Council is fully committed to working with the County Council, London Underground and Chiltern Railways on alternative methods of improving train reliability, whilst preserving and enhancing our current services. London Underground have decided not to withdraw the peak through trains and look at alternative solutions to improve train reliability.

Chiltern is fully aware that with the demise of the County Structure Plan and the emerging Local Development Frameworks during the life span of the second LTP, that the LTP and LDF will form the basis for transport outcomes and welcomes opportunities for close working.

The formulation of the Chesham and Amersham Transport Strategy (CATS) is fully supported. Although the draft report is still imminent, it is anticipated that its conclusions will provide added

opportunities for improving access, reducing congestion, tackling air pollution hotspots and assisting with this Council's planning of town and village revitalisation. It will also contribute to meeting the District Council's objective of providing a vibrant community and ensuring local provision of services. We actively work to retain local services like shops and Post Offices as if removed they can result in the need for extended travel with its consequential impact on the environment and road network.

The Council has worked in partnership with the County Council to introduce a Special Parking Area (SPA) throughout Chiltern, which came into force on the 1st September 2005. This has enabled for the first time, the opportunity to manage both on and off-street parking in a common manner. The enforcement of on-street restrictions will help improve safety, reduce congestion and improve the reliability of buses – key themes of the second LTP.

Chiltern has good rail links to London with both the Metropolitan Line and Chiltern Railways. However, the Council is also aware of some of the less positive aspects that large numbers of commuters can also bring, such as all day on street parking in inappropriate locations. The Council, working with Buckinghamshire County Council, can therefore use its car parking tariff policies to address problems caused by large numbers of commuters as well as using its SPA powers to minimise the effects on local communities.

It is anticipated that during the life of the second LTP the Council, working with the County Council, will be in a position to extend on-street restrictions where they are found to be justified, including the introduction of Residents' parking schemes, further assisting the community.

Another example of how this Council is working with the County Council on its shared priorities, is school travel planning. Both Councils have developed a scheme whereby schools engaging with the County Council on School Travel Planning who are in the proximity of one of this Council's off-street car parks can use the car park free of charge to drop off and pick up children. This has obvious benefits to the community in improving safety and reducing congestion, again key themes of the second LTP.

Both Councils have been striving to work more

closely even though there is already a long standing arrangement for joint working and funding of projects. The use of Local Committees helps communication at all three tiers of local authority in the area.

The recent relocation of the County Council's local Area Based Highway-Transportation staff into Chiltern District Council offices has brought new opportunities to integrate and co-ordinate works and services as envisaged in the Traffic Management Act. Examples that have been concluded more speedily so far include: co-ordinating grass cutting and litter picking, street cleansing and highway maintenance and the joint working arrangements for grass cutting in urban areas as well as joint funded highway and environmental improvements.

The inclusion of air quality as one of the key themes of the second LTP is thoroughly endorsed and it is hoped that this will allow the subject to become even more tightly integrated into all aspect of transport planning, especially important since the two subjects are so closely linked. At an early stage it was realised that it is not possible or viable to deal with air pollution in isolation and as such we welcome the continued support of the County as a key member of the Bucks Air Quality Management Group. Work on the new Bucks & Milton Keynes Regional Air Quality Strategy has already highlighted further common areas where real improvements can be achieved by working together.

In the semi rural areas of the District, bus service provision, especially outside the main towns, is more limited than we would like. Even though we have one of the highest car ownership levels in the country, it does mean that for some people, especially the younger and older sections of the community, they have no effective provision. As a major contributor to funding of community transport, this Council supports opportunities to work with the County Council on new and innovative measures to work on community based transport solutions.

As the Licensing Authority for Taxis and Private Hire Vehicles, this Council sees these forms of

transport as having a great potential to fill an important gap in transport provision. It therefore welcomes further opportunities to develop quality Taxi partnerships and make adequate provision for taxis in the highway infrastructure.

Recent legislative changes to the Concessionary Fares system operated by District Councils will allow for a more effective communication between travel providers, the County Council and ourselves. We fully support the development of technologies that will allow the provision of these services in a cost effective and measurable way. We are disappointed that it has not been possible to roll out a Buckinghamshire-wide Smartcard that could contribute to this and other transport initiatives across the County.

As a local provider of services, Chiltern has supported the introduction of the Disability Discrimination Act and its objective of providing services equally to all in the community. Given the extended timescale for DDA compliance for Public Transport vehicles this Council would like to see an agreed programme for DDA compliance on transport provision such as buses and trains at the very earliest opportunity. This would more fully integrate the physical changes in buildings and the environment and transport vehicles. One area where greater emphasis on the use of resources is felt to be beneficial is in the increased provision of dropped crossing facilities. This would improve facilities for many people in the community in addition to those people with disabilities and help visually to demonstrate the County Council's commitment to walking as a preferred mode of travel.

5.3 South Bucks District Council supporting statement

Overview

There is a fundamental need to ensure that local government services at all tiers are linked up to achieve common aims. The Local Transport Plan will have an important role to play in assisting the implementation of the Community Plan for South Bucks. One of the five key partnership objectives of the Plan is to secure a pleasant and healthy environment, with a number of related actions centred around increasing green travel and reducing congestion, reducing car journeys, and the introduction of new bus services.



Future spatial policy for Buckinghamshire will be set out in the emerging South East Plan, and in the case of southern Buckinghamshire this will be set out in that part addressing the Western Corridor and Blackwater Valley sub region, of which South Bucks District is a part. Whilst regional and sub regional policy is presently in its formulative stages, it is clear that southern Buckinghamshire will not have the same growth status as will parts of northern Buckinghamshire centred around the Milton Keynes and Aylesbury areas. Accordingly, it will be essential that the Local Transport Plan reflects this difference in the different parts of the county.

The Council has been consulted on the preparation of the Local Transport Plan and supports the main priorities in the Plan. We consider that the action plans need to be developed further, and we look forward to this taking place in the future.

The Local Transport Plan is broadly consistent with land use policy set out in the adopted Local Plan. The new Local Development Framework is being prepared with input from key stakeholders including the County Council, which should ensure a consistent approach between spatial planning in the Framework and the Local Transport Plan. The Council is pleased to note that the LTP acknowledges the issues around intensification in towns, and that it wishes to address this.

Tackling Congestion

It will be important for the LTP to acknowledge that congestion is a considerable issue in South Bucks, partly arising from its location in the Thames Valley close to other major urban areas which immediately adjoin it, such as Slough, west London and Maidenhead; but also due to the knock on impacts from the M25, M4 and M40 motorways.

In preparing the Local Development Framework, the Council has identified several objectives that are centred around improving accessibility to services and facilities and encouraging the use of sustainable methods of transport, as well as improving the efficiency of land through the re-use of existing buildings and previously developed land. Such an approach will be consistent with the objective of reducing congestion. Indeed, existing policy in the adopted Local Plan seeks to focus development within the settlements excluded from the Green Belt, and as such helps to reduce the need to travel, thereby reducing the opportunity for congestion.

The District Council has been actively engaged with the County Council in the preparation of a number of strategies, including the A355 strategy, which seeks to manage traffic congestion on this road which dissects the communities of Farnham Common and Farnham Royal. The Council fully supports the longer-term aim of seeking the further development of the A404 link between the M40 and the M4 motorways, which would then reduce congestion and other problems on the A355.

There is a substantial problem in Iver with very heavy flows of HGVs through parts of the locality, most particularly through the centre of Iver village, part of which is also a Conservation Area. Many of these vehicles are travelling to and from the four industrial sites in the locality, although the problem is accentuated by restrictions on several routes to the east just outside the county. These heavy flows of large goods vehicles are having a serious detrimental impact on the lives of local people. This is a matter where action must be taken, including through the Local Transport Plan, in order to seek to reduce these problems. We welcomed the implementation of weight restrictions in Iver village in 2004 and saw this as an important step forward. We look forward to working with Buckinghamshire County Council in the development of the Area Action plans for

South Bucks villages and towns to ensure the detrimental impact heavy flows of large goods vehicles and parking problems are having on the lives of local people are addressed. Iver village is suffering from traffic congestion not only as a result of the HGV issue, but also due to the fact that it only has on street parking in this locality. It will be essential that the more detailed Action Plan to be developed for this area incorporates a concerted approach to addressing these issues and finding solutions that enhance its sustainability.

The District Council manages off street parking places - one of the aims is to support the sustainability of local town / village centres. As such we aim to dissuade commuter parking in the Council off-street parking places in order to accommodate users of our towns and villages especially in Beaconsfield and Gerrards Cross. The District Council will be considering the issues around Special Parking Areas further in due course in light of the experiences of the other District Councils.

The District Council works closely with the County Council and the other Districts through the Waste Committee for Bucks. As part of this joined up working the Waste Strategy for Buckinghamshire is being reviewed and future disposal of waste within the county is being considered. The transport implications of any future disposal contracts will be considered in terms of minimising traffic movements where appropriate.

Infrastructure Management and Maintenance

The District Council carries out some grass cutting within the District on Council owned property. In addition in town and village centres grass cutting is carried out on behalf of the County Council to assist with enhancing the environment for our residents.

Maintaining and Managing this Asset

The District Council is disappointed in the Maintenance Block allocation awarded to Buckinghamshire County Council this year which has seen a significant reduction over previous years. Maintenance remains a high priority for the District Council and our customers; hence we are pleased to note the County Council has recognised this by including a fifth strategy for this subject area.

Air Quality/Environment

The District Council is pleased to note that the Local Transport Plan acknowledges the need to address traffic related air quality emissions and that it will provide for financial support for the monitoring of air quality. The District Council is continually reviewing the current air quality monitoring network to ensure that air quality information is available for the most sensitive locations. The Council supports the development of buffer zones, where air quality is close to exceeding National Air Quality Strategy Objectives, as this will provide a tool for prioritising areas where action is required in order to reduce traffic emissions.

The District Council has worked closely with the County Council and other District Councils in the development of a Buckinghamshire and Milton Keynes Air Quality Strategy. The Strategy links directly with the LTP and addresses the need to take action to reduce emissions from road traffic. The Council has also worked closely with the County Council on the development of an Air Quality Action Plan for South Bucks and supports the need for partnership working in the revision of both of these plans.

The District Council is pleased to note that the Local Transport Plan recognises the issues related to transport noise. It should be noted that the nature of the problem varies across the County; South Bucks tends to suffer due to the proximity of the motorway network, whilst other districts may have more local issues relating to trunk roads. Whilst recognizing that there may be adverse effects of traffic management, the fact is that traffic management can significantly influence the noise climate beneficially, and the Local Transport Plan should include a commitment to including noise as a key element in all network developments and improvements.

The south of the county suffers from relatively high flows of HGVs. HGV movements can have a considerable impact on the environment and amenities of residential areas and rural villages, and it will be important for the Plan to address these matters. In addressing the impacts of HGVs, it will be essential that there is close working with the District Council and local authorities in adjacent areas.

Improving Safety

The South Bucks Community Safety Partnership, in its 2005-2008 Community Safety Strategy, identifies dangerous driving, especially that linked to alcohol to be considered as anti-social behaviour, and as such should be tackled together. Enforcement, treatment and awareness raising are key to tackling this behaviour. The Council, although not the Highways Authority, co-ordinates the Community Safety Partnership and is an active member of the Buckinghamshire Drug Action Team. Through these multi-agency partnerships a series of initiatives exists with new ones planned to tackle road safety. Most recently motorbikes on footways and trespassing on privately owned land have become a significant issue and as such need regulating through a problem solving approach which the Council endorses.

Accessibility

The Council is pleased to see that accessibility to facilities and services features prominently in the Local Transport Plan, since this is clearly a fundamental issue and reflects the objectives that the District Council has already set in the preparation of the Local Development Framework. The District Council will continue to work with the County Council in order to achieve accessible services and facilities for residents and others.

The District Council has recently launched a new Dial A Ride service in partnership with Chiltern Dial A Ride to increase the capacity of the service. It will continue to work with the County Council to develop community transport services in the district.

The District Council will continue to work with local taxi/private hire companies to increase the availability of taxi and private hires vehicles in the district. They will use the licensing system to ensure that all such vehicles and their drivers are

of the required standard to ensure a safe and reliable service.

Specific schemes etc.

The Council takes a sustainable approach to its area, and supports proposals that enhance the sustainability of the District. In particular, the Council supports:

- Crossrail – which will bring important benefits to the southern parts of the District. The Council is, however, concerned about some aspects of the Crossrail proposals, including the lack of sustainable forms of access to the stations in the District, and will be petitioning on these matters. The LTP needs to be more positive about the benefits of Crossrail.
- Proposals arising from the A355 strategy that will seek to ameliorate the impact of this heavily used route on the local communities.
- Proposals in the Beaconsfield Transportation Study that will enhance its sustainability.

Finally, should Wilton Park ever be declared surplus to Ministry of Defence requirements, and confirm that it will be released, then the Council would work jointly with the County Council as highway authority, to explore the options for the site. However, it is anticipated that any such option for its future is likely to be dependent upon closing the existing access and the creation of a new access to the Pyebush roundabout.

5.4 Wycombe District Council supporting statement

The Wycombe District Community Plan focuses a partnership of organisations and communities on the well-being of the district and on creating sustainable communities. It is built around a vision for Wycombe District in 2026 that includes thriving rural and urban economies... a population living healthy active lifestyles, that feels safer and lives longer, with an improved quality of life in communities that have retained and enhanced their local distinctiveness... improved transport links and a transformation of High Wycombe town centre... more and better quality housing...and rural areas whose natural beauty is preserved alongside urban areas that are positively managed, enabling people to enjoy their benefits.



This vision and the new Community Plan was confirmed by the Wycombe Partnership (including the County Council) on 23 June 2005; it is consistent with that of the draft South East Plan which seeks a sustained improvement in quality of life in the South East by 2026, measured in terms of social well-being, the economy, environment and the management of the region's natural resources.

Achieving a step change in travel choices whilst reducing the impact of traffic – is critical to achieving this vision. For instance the highway as a whole forms an important public space which has a significant impact on many aspects of the life of the community. The LTP has a full role to play in helping realise this vision, through the delivery of the five priorities in a way that gives a central place to environmental quality and makes it easier and more attractive to make trips that do not rely on a car, i.e. that reinforce sustainable travel patterns. Integrating the land use strategy to be set out in the Wycombe Development Framework (WDF) with the transport strategy is key to delivering sustainable development and accessibility of jobs and services to people.

High Wycombe is the largest town in Buckinghamshire, with limited scope for outward expansion and hence an emphasis on making better use of brownfield sites. It poses particular challenges to which transport are central:

The WDF and town masterplan process is investigating the potential to transform the town centre environment for pedestrians and cyclists by reducing the present over-dominance of traffic and the road network. This will call for an integrated approach to traffic and demand management across the town.

The A4010 provides the **north-south link between the Milton Keynes/Aylesbury growth area and the Thames Valley**. Congestion - primarily on the approaches to High Wycombe and at Handy Cross - is a chronic problem that will be exacerbated by planned growth and which in turn will fuel further traffic displacement in the TRANQUIL project area, unless action is taken. Tackling rising traffic levels in quiet rural areas will be an important task of the second LTP. Proposals for a coachway/parking facility at Handy Cross serving an enhanced inter urban coach network are welcome and should be reinforced by more frequent through rail services between Aylesbury and High Wycombe. In the longer term development of these services may help make the case for a high quality public transport system segregated from the road network.

Some of the sites with the most potential for development are located within the **“High Wycombe South/ M40 corridor”**. Finding ways to develop these within the environmental constraints and without unacceptably worsening problems at Handy Cross (J4 of the M40) poses major challenges, in response to which a strategy solution must be found.

Increasing traffic levels and indiscriminate car parking are already eroding living environments in many areas. Urban intensification may protect our green fields but risks exacerbating these problems. Our approach must be to secure **higher quality environments and improvements in the public realm** in parallel with sustainable urban developments, and recognising the linkage with the overall transport strategy. Joint working by the two Councils towards a district wide Special Parking Area and on maintenance and improvement of the public realm will be vital.

High Wycombe sits within the Chilterns AONB but in many ways the town is disconnected from this beautiful hinterland. Opportunities exist to **reconnect High Wycombe with the Chilterns** and nearby settlements, for example

by creating and reinforcing green corridors that encourage more healthy, active travel choices and improve accessibility. The Rights of Way Improvement Plan has a critical role to play here.

The District Council is committed to meeting these challenges with the County Council in a “joined up” way to make progress towards achieving our shared vision. It will be possible to further progress joint approaches during the period of the second LTP.

The increased focus of the County Council on delivery of major schemes has been very welcome and is being coordinated with the work of the District Council, for example in launching the interim park and ride service and constructing the Cressex link road. These are helping to underpin the regeneration of the town centre and the Cressex Business Park – the largest in Buckinghamshire. The District Council in its role as Authority with responsibility for Local Planning, Car Parks, taxi licensing and air quality and its role with community transport will continue to work closely with the County Council to achieve the aims of the LTP and of the Community Plan.

