

REPORT TO:	FINANCE AND MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE	AGENDA ITEM: //
DATE OF MEETING:	28 APRIL 2005	CATEGORY: DELEGATED
REPORT FROM:	DEPUTY CHIEF EXECUTIVE	OPEN
MEMBERS' CONTACT POINT:	RICHARD GROVES (EXTN. 5738)	DOC:
SUBJECT:	BURTON AND SWADLINCOTE AREA TRANSPORT STRATEGY: OBJECTIVES AND PRIORITIES	REF: u:/richard/committees/FM11
WARDS AFFECTED:	CHURCH GRESLEY, HARTSHORNE AND TICKNALL, HATTON, LINTON, MIDWAY, NEWHALL AND STANTON, REPTON, SEALES, SWADLINCOTE	TERMS OF REFERENCE: FM14

1.0 Recommendations

1.1 It is recommended that general support be expressed for the objectives and priorities to be included in the Joint Transport Strategy but that amendments be requested as set out in Section 3.0 of this report.

2.0 Purpose of Report

2.1 To obtain a Committee resolution on the objectives and priorities proposed for inclusion in the Burton and Swadlincote Area Transport Strategy.

3.0 Detail

3.1 The Burton and Swadlincote Area Transport Strategy is being revised to take account of changes that have taken place since the first version was published in 2000. Objectives and priorities proposed for inclusion in the Strategy are attached at Annexe A. Members may recall that the previous version of the Strategy was considered by Planning and Economic Development Committee on 22nd April 1999 (minute PED/81 refers).

3.2 The Strategy is being prepared by officers representing Derbyshire and Staffordshire County Councils following consultation with officers from South Derbyshire District Council, East Staffordshire Borough Council and the National Forest Company and will inform the respective County Councils' second Local Transport Plans, which will cover the period 2006-11. It should be emphasised that the proposed objectives and priorities do not at this stage represent the policy of either of the two County Councils as they have not yet been presented for member approval.

3.3 Although Leicestershire County Council and North West Leicestershire District Council are not formally part of the Joint Strategy partnership account has been taken of cross boundary transport issues relating to Ashby de la Zouch and the Ashby Wolds.

3.4 In addition to presenting the objectives and priorities attached at Annexe A it is intended that the Strategy in its final form should set out details of progress toward meeting the objectives of the first Joint Transport Strategy, identify the transport issues of cross-border relevance and set out the national, regional and local policy background. It will be made generally available with the Provisional Derbyshire Local Transport Plan for public consultation later this year.

3.5 Among those listed the priorities that are of particular importance to South Derbyshire are as follows:

- enhanced bus services between Burton, Swadlincote and Ashby
- cross-border cycle routes
- the proposed National Forest Line passenger rail service
- the proposed Swadlincote Regeneration Route
- increasing the role of rail freight
- enhanced Burton-Leicester bus services via Swadlincote
- investigation of a potential link road between the A38 and A511
- improving access to existing centres and facilities throughout the Strategy Area, including Rosliston Forestry Centre, by non-car modes
- the review of existing car parking policies
- the improvement of safety and reduction of the environmental impact of transport

3.6 Members may already be familiar with many of the objectives and priorities including those referred to in documents such as the South Derbyshire Cycling Strategy, the Swadlincote Walking Strategy, the Burton and Swadlincote Bus Quality Partnership Agreement and various regional transport studies. Others have been introduced in response to government guidance on the preparation and content of the second round of Local Transport Plans.

3.7 Whilst it is recommended that the objectives and priorities be generally supported, it is considered that a number of amendments should be requested. Under the heading "Improving the links between Burton, Swadlincote and Ashby" (page 2) it is considered that the wording of the reference to the Swadlincote Regeneration Route should be amended to reflect the fact that provision has already been made for the development of Phase 1 in the form of planning consent for the Woodville Woodlands project and to indicate the high priority given by this authority to the implementation of Phase 2 as follows:

"completion of the feasibility study and subsequent implementation of Phase 2 of the Swadlincote Regeneration Route"

3.8 Under the same heading this Council has consistently supported the proposal to reintroduce a passenger rail service on the Burton to Leicester railway line and it is important that the opportunity to do so be kept open by seeking to protect the existing rail infrastructure. The following form of words is therefore proposed:

"further investigations into the practicalities of establishing a National Forest Line passenger service on the Burton-Leicester railway, either wholly or in part, and the protection of the existing rail infrastructure."

3.9 Under the heading "Improving the links to neighbouring areas" (page 2) it is considered that the reference to a potential A38 to A511 should be amended to more accurately reflect the wording of the reference contained in the East to West Midlands Multi-Modal Study, considered by this Council at its meeting of 25

September 2003 (minute CL/63 refers), which suggested that the proposal should be the subject of a feasibility study. Proposed amended wording is as follows:

"investigation into the feasibility of a link road between the A38 at Drakelow and the Ashby Bypass, including strategic cross-boundary, funding and environmental implications."

- 3.10 With regard to the proposal included under the heading "Reducing the Environmental Impact of Transport" (page 5) to re-examine parking policies the issue was previously considered by this Council in the context of the Swadlincote Town Centre Vision and Strategy document, published in February 2001, which concluded that plentiful free parking was a strength of the town centre and necessary in view of poor public transport to and from outlying villages in the district. Any re-evaluation of parking policies in Swadlincote should therefore be considered in relation to the need to maintain the viability and vitality of the town centre, which in itself contributes toward sustainable transport objectives by minimising the need to travel to more distant destinations. The following amended wording is therefore proposed:

"existing parking policies will be reviewed with a view to reducing car usage whilst recognising the need to maintain the vitality and viability of town centres"

4.0 Financial Implications

- 4.1 The measures proposed for inclusion in the Strategy will in large part be funded from the Local Transport Plan settlement administered by the County Council. However it is likely that funding from other sources will also be sought including developer contributions and, where necessary, contributions from the District Council toward specifically identified proposals. Any such funding will be sought in the form of revenue growth items.

5.0 Corporate and Community Implications

- 5.1 The Strategy will have implications relating to the following key corporate aims:

- Safeguard and enhance a sustainable environment
- Develop a vibrant and sustainable economy
- Support the development of the National Forest and its enjoyment by residents and visitors
- Improve access to leisure and cultural facilities for all sections of the community.

- 5.2 It will also link into other relevant strategic documents such as Local Development Frameworks, Air Quality Management strategies and The National Forest Strategy.

6.0 Conclusions

- 6.1 Evidence of cross-boundary working has been identified by the government as being of importance in assessing the quality of Local Transport Plans (LTPs). The review and inclusion of this and other Joint Transport Strategies in the second Derbyshire LTP should therefore assist in securing a favourable settlement for government funding of transport initiatives in the County over the period 2006 - 2011.

7.0 Background Papers

"Burton and Swadlincote Area Transport Strategy"

Derbyshire County Council,
Staffordshire County Council,
South Derbyshire District Council,
East Staffordshire Borough Council,
The National Forest, 2000

