

EAST AYRSHIRE COUNCIL

NORTHERN AREA LOCAL COMMITTEE – 6 SEPTEMBER 2000

LOCAL TRANSPORT STRATEGY

Report By Director of Development Services

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

1.1 The purpose of this report is to:-

- (a) advise the Committee about the outcome of public consultations on the East Ayrshire Interim Local Transportation Strategy: Consultative Draft; and
- (b) consult the Committee on draft programmes and targets for inclusion in the Full Local Transport Strategy.

2. BACKGROUND

2.1 East Ayrshire Council submitted its Interim Local Transport Strategy (LTS) to the Scottish Executive on 30 July 1999 in accordance with the required timescale. The Interim Strategy was adopted by the Council as a basis for further consultation, but without commitment to the objectives and strategies contained therein.

2.2 The Scottish Executive has issued guidance on the preparation of Local Transport Strategies. This indicates that the Full Local Transport Strategy should include costed implementation programmes and targets, against which the future effects of the strategy can be assessed.

2.3 Local Transport Strategies are a prerequisite for bids for capital allocations from the Public Transport Fund (PTF). The Council made a successful application to the PTF last year for funding to upgrade the Kilmarnock and Cumnock bus stations on the basis of the Interim Strategy.

2.4 The Scottish Executive has indicated that the full Local Transport Strategy should be submitted to them by 31 October 2000.

3. CONSULTATION PROCESS

3.1 At its meeting on 3 February 2000, the Committee was invited to comment on the Interim Local Transport Strategy.

3.2 The Interim Strategy was circulated to the general public, representative groups and Council Members in East Ayrshire. Interest groups, neighbouring local

authorities and Central Government were also consulted. Copies of the Interim Strategy were placed in all libraries and Council offices in East Ayrshire.

3.3 A summary leaflet was produced to accompany the public consultation which included a short questionnaire.

3.4 In order to obtain a widespread response to the transportation issues the summary leaflet and questionnaire was sent to a random selection of 2500 households throughout East Ayrshire, with a prepaid envelope. In total, 462 questionnaires were returned. Formal responses were also received from 16 individuals and organisations.

4. THE QUESTIONNAIRE

4.1 The questionnaire was divided into three parts:-

- (a) eight questions on current transport initiatives, many of which were contained in the Government White Paper "Travel Choices for Scotland";
- (b) twelve policy measures which the consultees were asked to prioritise in order of importance; and
- (c) space for written comments on transport issues.

5. TRANSPORT INITIATIVES

5.1 The responses to questions on the eight initiatives are summarised below:-

- Q1 72% of all respondents thought that we should be aiming to reduce traffic in our urban areas. Support for this was greater amongst public transport users (82%) than car users (69%).
- Q2 61% thought that we should be setting targets to reduce traffic on the main routes. Again, support was greater amongst public transport users (77%) than car users (55%).
- Q3 67% thought that, if more resources were available, they should be used to improve road safety rather than reducing congestion. Support for this was again greater amongst public transport users (76%) than car users (65%).
- Q4 50% of all respondents thought that parking controls should be used in larger towns to cater for shoppers and business users and deter commuting.
- Q5 Only 18% thought that workplace parking charges should be introduced to fund transport investment.

- Q6 There was significant opposition to the introduction of road tolls to fund transport investment with 85% of responses against.
- Q7 67% thought that there should be better provision for walking and cycling, even if it may slow down other road traffic.
- Q8 Overall, 41% of replies supported investment to increase bus and train usage above investment in roads while 48% felt that it should not. Opinion was split however with public transport users indicating strong support (67% for and 26% against) and car users opposing the concept (35% for and 55% against).

6. POLICY MEASURES

6.1 The responses to the questionnaire on the various policy measures are summarised below:

- (a) Road safety measures received the greatest level of support from both car users and public transport users. 33% of all the people who replied identified road safety measures as their highest priority.
- (b) By-passes for communities on busy through routes was ranked second amongst car users, third amongst public transport users and was second overall.
- (c) Road maintenance was ranked third amongst car users, fourth amongst public transport users and third overall.
- (d) The transfer of freight to rail was ranked fourth.
- (e) More frequent buses was voted fifth overall, but was the second highest priority for public transport users.

6.2 Other measures received less support. However, some of these, such as improved parking and cycling, extended parking controls, catering for service vehicles and improved public transport facilities will be necessary components of any future strategy to reduce traffic in urban areas which 72% of consultees supported.

7. DEVELOPMENT OF THE FULL LOCAL TRANSPORT STRATEGY

7.1 Elements which have to be addressed in the Full Local Transport Strategy are:-

- (a) a costed implementation programme of measures; and
- (b) a set of performance indicators and targets which can be used to assess whether or not the plan is achieving the desired goals.

8. DRAFT PROGRAMME

- 8.1** The Strategy should contain implementation programmes for a 3-year period: 2001/2 to 2003/4. In addition, the strategy has also to set out the Council's longer-term transport vision looking 10-20 years into the future and key practical measures to deliver the strategy.
- 8.2** At the Development Services Committee of 15 March 2000, £125,000 of the approved capital expenditure was allocated to traffic improvements and safety schemes. The capital plan also includes indicative allocations of £110,000 and £240,000 for 2001/02 and 2002/03 respectively.
- 8.3** It is proposed that the approach to be taken in the LTS will be to set out a "minimum programme" of essential measures, and a "priority" programme of works which are required, but which can only be provided if additional funding is made available. Where possible, programmes are being developed to reflect the priorities identified by the public during the consultation process.
- 8.4** It is proposed that the minimum programme shall be based on the programme of road safety schemes which was approved by the Development Services Committee on 6 June 2000 for 2000/01 and subsequent years; appendix 1.
- 8.5** All of the schemes which have been identified show significant economic benefits in the first year. In many cases, the benefits in the first year will exceed the costs of implementation. These schemes are signified where the First Year Rate of Return (FYRR) exceeds 100%.
- 8.6** In addition to the minimum programme, a "priority programme" is being formulated to reflect the priorities identified in the public consultation and will include: -
- further public transport improvements
 - walking and cycling schemes
 - by-passes
- 8.7** A high priority was attached to by-passes in the consultation process. However, the Scottish Executive Public Transport Fund cannot be used for new road construction. It is proposed that by-passes will be identified as part of the long term vision.
- 8.8** A Public Transport Fund Bid has recently been submitted for a series of walking and cycling measures in Kilmarnock. Where possible, partnership contributions and other sources of funding will be sought to help deliver the priority programme.
- 8.9** Public transport schemes are primarily the responsibility of Strathclyde Passenger Transport and Railtrack. The Strategy will reflect programmed improvements such as the upgrading of the Kilmarnock-Barrhead railway line to allow a half hourly service.

- 8.10** The Strategy will also contain trunk road schemes such as the M77 Fenwick to Malletsheugh and A76 Crossroads improvement which are the responsibility of the Scottish Executive.

9. PERFORMANCE INDICATORS & TARGETS

- 9.1** Strategies should include a set of performance indicators, targets and planned outcomes which can be used to assess whether the strategy is delivering the stated objectives.

- 9.2** It is proposed to introduce targets relating to policy objectives such as the following: -

- reducing road casualty numbers
- increasing cycling & walking
- improving public transport
- meeting the need for short stay parking in town centres
- speed reduction measures
- lighting & road maintenance repairs

- 9.4** The Committee members are asked to consider what targets they feel should be included in the strategy.

10. DEVELOPMENT TIMETABLE

- 10.1** The following timetable is proposed for the development of East Ayrshire's Transport Strategy within the allotted timescale: -

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| (a) | preparation of draft programmes, targets and necessary revisions to the text of the Interim Strategy | - | July/
August 2000 |
| (b) | Final consultation on policy issues with Local Committees, interest groups and those who have given a formal response to the Initial - Local Transport Strategy | - | Sept. 2000 |
| (c) | Issues Seminar for all Council members | - | late Sept. 2000 |
| (d) | Draft Full Local Transport Strategy considered By Development Services Committee | - | October 2000 |
| (e) | Submission to Scottish Executive | - | 31 Oct. 2000 |

11. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

11.1 The cost of developing the Full Local Transport Strategy and associated consultations will be met from existing budgets.

12. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

12.1 None

13. RECOMMENDATIONS

13.1 It is recommended that the Committee:-

- (a) notes the findings of the public consultation; and
- (b) comments on the draft implementation programmes and targets.

Stephen Chorley
Director of Development Services

23 August 2000

For further information please contact Keith Orton on 01563 5555714

AGENDA