

HAMPSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

Decision Report

Decision Maker:	Executive Member - Environment
Date:	5 April 2011
Title:	Town Access Plans and District Statements – Agreed Process and direction
Reference:	2826
Report From:	Director of Environment

Contact name: Keith Willcox

Tel: 01962 846997

Email: keith.willcox@hants.gov.uk

1 Executive Summary

1.1 The purpose of this paper is to give an update on progress on development of Town Access Plans (TAPS), and seek agreement to the process for their further development, adoption and review. The paper outlines the future direction of local transport policy across Hampshire, taking account of changes in strategic transport policy outlined in the new Local Transport Plan (LTP) and funding streams.

1.2 This paper seeks to:

- provide contextual information on the policy context and TAP development to date;
- set out the process for further development of TAPs and local transport policy, particularly in relation to planning and agreement to public consultation as reviewing the TAP programme;
- set out the process for adoption and further review of TAPs.
- Outline future direction of local transport policy across Hampshire.

2 Contextual information

2.1. The policy context for development of TAPs was set out in the 2nd Local Transport Plan (2006-11). This proposed that key settlements in Hampshire develop TAPs to identify and tackle issues of access to and within key urban areas. TAPs recognise the diverse nature of the county and its settlements by not assuming that a single solution will suit all locations. However each TAP seeks to improve accessibility to a wide range of destinations and

services, including but not limited to, health, education, employment, retail, places of worship, cultural facilities, leisure facilities, and access to open spaces.

- 2.2. Table 1 sets out the Hampshire County Council TAP programme, showing the definitive list of TAPs that are adopted or in development.

Table 1: TAPs Completed/ in development	
TAP	Status
Andover	Adopted
Segensworth*	Adopted
Ringwood	Adoption April 2011
Romsey	Adoption April 2011
Eastleigh	Adoption April 2011
Fleet	Adoption April 2011
Winchester	Adoption TBC
Basingstoke	Consultation Draft
Aldershot	Consultation Draft
Farnborough	Consultation Draft
Whitehill & Bordon	Consultation Draft
Havant	Pre public consultation
Fareham	Pre public consultation

* The Action Plan for Segensworth was not a formal TAP but was developed in partnership with the local business community using similar principles.

- 2.3. Table 2 lists future TAPs that have not yet commenced. It is proposed that work on these TAPs is taken forward as part of the proposed District Statements process outlined below

Table 2: TAPs not yet commenced	
TAP	Status
Alton	Not started
Petersfield	Not started
Totton	Not started

- 2.4. Although the process and development of each TAP has been carried out in the context of local circumstances, there have been a number of common themes arising in their development, namely:

- review of current local transport access issues and evidence through appropriate desk-based analysis and site work has been used to help identify relevant transport access concerns;

- engagement of local members and stakeholders has been important to help identify local access issues and potential solutions to address these issues;
- partnership working with District Council Members and Officers has been crucial to ensure tie up with relevant planning policy and process;
- public consultation has been seen as needed to ensure that full community engagement is carried out on any proposed measures for the area; and
- resulting packages of transport access measures have been seen as needing to be 'balanced' and covering all ways of accessing services and facilities, including walking, cycling, public transport and vehicle access options.

2.5. It is important that these aspects are retained whilst developing the new District statements outlined below.

3. Future direction - District Statements

3.1. The third Local Transport Plan (2011-31), gives a high level strategic vision for transport in Hampshire. It also provides the context for the delivery of more detailed transport policies. TAPs will remain an important mechanism for helping to secure and prioritise transport improvements at the local level, but also need to be developed to encompass the whole of the County in the form of District Statements. This will help to meet a number of the policy objectives outlined in the LTP.

Policy Objective 4: Work with bus and coach operators to grow bus travel, seek to remove barriers that prevent some people using buses where affordable and practical, and reduce dependence on the private car for journeys on inter- and intra-urban corridors.

Policy Objective 8: Improve co-ordination and integration between transport modes through better local interchanges, for example at rail stations.

Policy Objective 10: Contribute to achieving local targets for improving air quality and national carbon targets through transport measures, where possible and affordable.

Policy Objective 12: Invest in sustainable transport measures, including walking and cycling infrastructure, principally in urban areas, to provide a healthy alternative to the car for local short journeys to work, local services or schools; and work with health authorities to ensure that transport policy supports local ambitions for health and well-being.

3.2. In light of reductions in central Government funding, there is greater reliance on funding local transport improvements from Section 106 developer contributions. The Hampshire County Council Transport Contributions Policy

(TCP) calculates transport contributions across the County and defines the level of contribution which new development should contribute. The TAPs provide a vital evidence base and policy bridge between the high level transport strategy of LTP3 and the schemes proposed as part of the TCP, which are used to justify the tariffs being set for Section 106 contributions.

- 3.3. However, outside of the TAP areas there is not the same degree of robust local transport policy to evidence the TCP and justify the tariffs being set, which increases the risk of challenges from developers when contributions are being sought. To address this policy void in the non-TAP areas it is proposed that District Statements are developed, which will cover whole districts, encompassing the TAP and non-TAP areas. District Statements will be vital in encompassing the TAPs but also addressing the lack of detailed local transport policy outside of the TAP areas.
- 3.4. The District Statements will provide a policy and evidence base to inform and justify the TCP and ensure there is countywide coverage. Adopted TAPs, or TAPs in development, do not need to be superseded by District Statements, but instead be incorporated into them. However, the development of District Statements will forgo the need to develop the TAPs listed in Table 2, independently, as they can be fully incorporated into the new District Statements.
- 3.5. There will be a strong focus on planning and engaging at a more local level. In order to ensure that they are given appropriate status in policy it is important that, where possible, District Statements or TAPs are adopted and/or fed into other relevant policy documents at a County and District level. This is seen as particularly important in relation to ensuring of future funding for measures, such as through securing of developer contributions, or input to central government funding bids.
- 3.6. At a District level, the most appropriate input to policy is seen as through the planning policy framework, but how District Statements and TAPs are incorporated in this process, or any relevant documents is a decision for individual councils. Whilst some councils have seen the benefit of adoption of TAPs as full Supplementary Planning Documents (SPDs), as was done for Andover in Test Valley, others have decided that it would more appropriate to input to Local Development Framework Infrastructure Plans, or SPDs on developer contributions.
- 3.7. Given the varied approach to TAPs taken at the district level, it is seen as important to ensure a consistent, efficient and effective approach is taken to development and adoption of District Statements at a County level. It is also recognised that this will provide a better basis for ensuring tie-in with other policy initiatives, such as the County Council Transport Contribution Policy. The District Statements also have the potential to be developed in partnership with businesses and the Local Enterprise Partnerships, building on the model used in Segensworth; this is currently being considered at Portsdown Hill.

4. Resources and Finance

- 4.1. Given the current financial constraints, strong emphasis on member, stakeholder and public engagement in TAP development, and relevant expertise available at the County Council, it is considered that work in this area be carried out internally by staff within the Strategic Transport area teams, with input from other county and district officers as needed.
- 4.2. Monies for development and delivery of TAPs and District Statements are likely to be constrained in the short-term due to the current financial situation. Up to 2014 funding will continue to come forward from Section 106 contributions associated with development within Hampshire. TAPs, and the future District Statements, help provide a robust evidence base alongside the Hampshire County Council Transport Contributions Policy and a means of prioritising these funds within their areas. There are also some limited LTP capital available and other opportunities for scheme funding coming forward, such as the Local Sustainable Transport Fund.
- 4.3. Apportionment of any funds to TAP and District Statement schemes is managed through the capital programme process, which is subject to a separate approval process. The latest capital programme approved by the Executive Member for Environment on 26 January and Cabinet on 11 February includes £2.8 million towards emerging TAP priorities in the 2012/13, 2013/14 and 2014/15 financial years, and specific funding for measures within the emerging Fleet, Farnborough and Basingstoke TAPs.
- 4.4. In 2014, the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) will be introduced and as a result, Section 106 planning obligations will no longer be used as the basis for a tariff to fund transport infrastructure. The levy will be used as the mechanism for pooling contributions from a variety of new developments to fund infrastructure and this will undertaken by, and at the discretion of, the Local Planning Authorities (LPA).
- 4.5. The application of Section 106 planning obligations will then be limited to the provision of works such as highways improvements or landscaping without reference to their wider impact on services, which should be picked up through the CIL. However, as the prioritising and allocation of CIL funds will be the responsibility of the LPA, the County Council will engage and work closely with district councils in Hampshire to set out infrastructure requirements in each authority area and ensure that the necessary funding secured is spent on transport infrastructure or services.
- 4.6. Working in partnership with the LPAs in the development of District Statements will ensure a coordinated approach to the development of robust transport policy that will be essential to informing the Districts LDFs and associated Infrastructure Plans required as part of the forthcoming CIL.

5. Existing TAP Development Process

- 5.1. For reasons outlined above it is considered appropriate for all TAPs listed in Table 1, which are yet to be adopted to continue to be developed at a local level, with appropriate input from district councils and full engagement with local members and relevant stakeholders. Project management of TAPs should be carried by relevant County officers, with any issues or concerns regarding their development to be raised via Departmental Management Team, for discussion with the Director of Environment and/ or Executive Member for Environment if required. The TAPs listed in Table 2 will be incorporated into the District Statement process.
- 5.2. Once a draft TAP has been developed, it is necessary to ensure that appropriate corporate approval is given before public consultation is carried out. This approval has previously been given at Environment Member Decision Days, and draft TAPs for Winchester, Eastleigh, Ringwood and Romsey have come forward and been approved for consultation under this process. However, with a number of TAPs now coming forward for consultation, and in consideration of other issues for review by the Executive Member Decision Days, it is now deemed more appropriate that TAPs for consultation should be considered and agreed by the Director for Environment under delegated authority. Any issues in relation to TAP development could be raised and discussed as needed at Executive Member/Departmental Management Team meetings.
- 5.3. Following public consultation on a draft TAP, there is then still a need for consideration and formal adoption of TAPs to ensure they have policy status. It is therefore proposed that TAPs continue to be considered for adoption at the appropriate Executive Member for Environment Decision Day.
- 5.4. Due to the nature of TAPs, it is recognised that there is a need to continually review and if necessary update any proposals to take account of changing local circumstances, such as planned new development, planning policy changes or changes in funding and deliverability of schemes. It is acknowledged that the timing and exact process for review will depend upon local circumstance, but that this is likely to need consideration with relevant local members and district councils. It is also proposed that this review and update be carried out as part of the development of the new District Statements and that any changes to the TAP following review are agreed by the Director of Environment in consultation with the Executive Member for Environment as required.

6. Recommendations

6.1. That the process for development and endorsement of Town Access Plans and the future direction of local transport policy across Hampshire be approved as set out in this report, namely:

- (i) That authority be delegated to the Director for Environment to agree any consultation on draft Town Access Plan Documents.
- (ii) That Town Access Plans be reported to Executive Member Decision Days for adoption as County Council Policy within the framework of the approved Local Transport Plan.
- (iii) That authority be delegated to the Director for Environment, in consultation with the Executive Member for Environment, to periodically review the specific projects of the Town Access Plans and District Statements.
- (iv) That, alongside the development of the remaining Town Access Plans, District Statements be developed to provide total coverage of local transport policy in Hampshire ensuring a robust mechanism to deliver the third Local Transport Plan strategy, and to secure developer funding contributions where appropriate to ensure that transport infrastructure can support new development.

CORPORATE OR LEGAL INFORMATION:

Links to the Corporate Strategy

Hampshire safer and more secure for all:	yes/no
Corporate Improvement plan link number (if appropriate):	
Maximising well-being:	yes/no
Corporate Improvement plan link number (if appropriate):	
Enhancing our quality of place:	yes/no
Corporate Improvement plan link number (if appropriate):	

Section 100 D - Local Government Act 1972 - background documents

The following documents discuss facts or matters on which this report, or an important part of it, is based and have been relied upon to a material extent in the preparation of this report. (NB: the list excludes published works and any documents which disclose exempt or confidential information as defined in the Act.)

Document

Location

None

IMPACT ASSESSMENTS:

1. Equalities Impact Assessment:

1.1. Statement one: The short term minimum required to meet this action:

In development of TAPs there is a duty to ensure that proposals help to provide fair and equal access within their areas regardless of age, race, ethnicity, religion, disability, gender, sexual orientation, mobility and social and geographic inclusion (eg people on low income and those living in areas with the poorest transport links). TAP evidence base review includes assessment of the local population and understanding of the varied access needs.

1.2. Statement two: Longer term minimum required to meet this action:

TAPs have a duty to ensure that they reflects the access needs of the local community. In developing TAPs, community engagement is carried out with local members and stakeholders to identify their varied access needs. The results from these audits and information form a range of strategies (roads and traffic, walking and cycling, public transport, and smarter choices) and help to produce proposals for the schemes included in the TAPs. TAP measures aim to provide fair and equal access to services and facilities regardless of age, race, ethnicity. Religion, disability, gender sexual orientation, mobility and social and geographic inclusion (eg people on low income and those living in areas with the poorest transport links).

2. Impact on Crime and Disorder:

2.1. Negligible impact.

3. Climate Change:

a) How does what is being proposed impact on our carbon footprint / energy consumption?

TAPs seek to improve accessibility and therefore increase the opportunities for use of more sustainable modes of transport than the motorised vehicle.

b) How does what is being proposed consider the need to adapt to climate change, and be resilient to its longer term impacts?

TAPs support the need to adapt to climate change by looking to promote and support a move towards more sustainable modes of transport, in particular by improving walking and cycle routes, and looking to further improve public transport facilities.