



## Portfolio Holder for Waste, Environment and Transportation

Item

7 December 2020

Report of	Assistant Director of Place and Client Services	Author	Jane Thompson ☎ 508642
Title	ECC Consultation - Colchester Future Transport Strategy		
Wards affected	All		

### 1.0 Executive Summary

- 1.1. Essex County Council (ECC) is inviting responses their Colchester Future Transport Strategy (CFTS).
- 1.2. Colchester's Future Transport Strategy aims to shape Colchester's future transport network and achieve the vision of prioritising active and safe sustainable travel to bring about health, environmental and economic benefits. The strategy looks to positively address the different challenges and reasons why people travel, setting out zones that recognise the need to support those making short journeys through the town and those living in the surrounding areas making longer journeys. The strategy will provide a framework that will then enable potential schemes to be identified and proposals to be assessed against.

### 2.0 Recommended Decision

- 2.1 To respond positively to the CFTS consultation and suggest areas where the Borough Council wishes to work with the County Council to strengthen and enhance the objectives, focus areas for schemes and delivery timescales to help take them forward to enable the vision to be realised.

- 2.2 These focus areas are:

#### **Integrated interchange hubs**

- Integrating transport schemes including creating interchange hubs at bus stops and rail stations with access to e-bikes, e-scooters or quality walking routes, or cycle parking for onward travel to the town centre or other destinations. Also integrated booking and payment systems for easy access to move between transport modes.

#### **Travel Change Initiatives**

- Enabling and promoting travel change initiatives for example shared mobility and easy access to bikes/e-bikes, cargo bikes/e-cargo bikes; e-scooters e-car clubs; car sharing; travel planning and electric vehicle charging network, all available for the use of residents, businesses and visitors.
- Links to workplace travel planning and schools travel with 'park and stride' and other transport initiatives.
- Secure cycle parking provision in the town centre to ensure the safety of bikes which are parked while visitors are working or shopping.

### **Public Transport Improvements**

- Considering options for expanding the public transport offer to allow faster, seamless access and connectivity to destinations. Examples are closer integration with the park and ride service, rapid transit and demand responsive transport. As well as looking at prioritising public transport to allow better, inclusive and faster access to destinations, considering smarter ticketing and integration with other transport modes, and working with commercial transport providers to encourage costs effective and family friendly pricing.

### **Eco Parking (Park and Choose)**

- Park Active at car parks on the edge of town where people are encouraged to walk, cycle or scoot to their onward destination.
- The recently adopted Positive Parking Strategy includes environmental charging, which seeks to move away from charging for parking and instead focus on the environmental impact of vehicles driving into the town, and the looking at the possibility of a workplace levy on parking spaces.
- Closer integration of the park and ride offer with the newly adopted Colchester Positive Parking Strategy to ensure park and ride is favoured over town centre car parks for those working or visiting Colchester.

### **Edge of town freight interchange hubs**

- Investigation and implementation of edge of town freight interchange hubs where e-vehicles or e-cargo bikes can then complete the 'last mile' deliveries.

### **Air Quality**

- Improvements in Air Quality is a priority for Colchester Borough Council and we would like to see the ten-year target broken down to include those improvements that can be carried out within the next five years.

### **Further Travel Change Initiatives**

- Initiatives such as Liveable Neighbourhoods, School Streets, designated 20 mph zones, protected cycling and walking routes as well as the Town Deal bid for improved walking and cycling environment, can offer a significant start to working towards the vision particularly in Zone 1 and provide opportunity to

build on and expand in the future. All schemes and traffic management measures need to be supported by suitable enforcement and measures to ensure traffic and speed restrictions are adhered to.

### **3.0 Reason for Recommended Decision**

3.1 To influence the content of the CFTS.

### **4.0 Alternative Options**

4.1 To not respond to the consultation. This would mean losing the opportunity to influence ECC on transportation policy work.

### **5.0 Background Information**

5.1 The Borough Council worked with the Essex County Council (ECC) in developing the Colchester Future Transport Strategy (CFTS).

5.2 The strategy is produced by the County Council as the Highway Authority and will greatly assist in their bids for funding for transport projects in the borough, as well as assisting the Borough Council for example with the Town Deal travel elements.

5.3 The strategy sets out the approach ECC wish to take – it is deliberately pitched at a strategic level and does not contain details of schemes which will follow the strategy.

5.4 **The vision is** to ‘*To transform Colchester into a place which prioritises active and safe sustainable travel to bring about health, environmental and economic benefits.*’

5.5 **The objectives**, to achieve the vision and improve the health and wellbeing of people in Colchester, will be used to measure all potential future transport schemes against. They are:

- Providing attractive and healthy environments: protect, enhance and improve the quality of the natural, built and historic environment and reduce air pollution, to enhance residents’, workers’ and visitors’ quality of life.
- Improving sustainable transport modes: offer an attractive and effective choice in the provision of sustainable travel (bus, cycling, walking) to encourage increased use and reduce pressure on the road network.
- Supporting economic growth and connectivity: provide high quality transport improvements to enhance network connectivity. Support housing and

economic growth in Colchester by linking communities together and enabling access to key services, transport hubs, jobs and education.

- Providing a safer transport environment: Improve safety and the perception of safety within Colchester to promote a safe travelling environment for all road users.
- Managing demand: manage traffic levels across Colchester's road network and limit levels of traffic in the town centre to reduce delays and improve journey time reliability, maximising the effective capacity through innovative solutions.
- Managing highways assets: secure and maintain all transport assets to an appropriate standard and ensure that the network is available for use with sufficient resilience to cope with incidents.
- Improved air quality across the town: the proposed strategy highlights expected improvements over the next ten years.

## 5.6 Creating zones

5.6.1 The future transport strategy will focus on the type of journey – short, medium and long distance. This will be achieved through creating zones.

- ZONE 1 (TOWN CENTRE) Would focus primarily on walking, the quality of the public realm and experience of Colchester as a high-quality place. It will also support passenger transport access in to the town centre.
- ZONE 2 (WIDER TOWN AREA) Would see walking and cycling prioritised, along with passenger transport access into the town.
- ZONE 3 (BOROUGH BOUNDARY) Is a wider urban area zone where passenger transport is prioritised e.g. the Park and Ride route. This also recognises the importance of enabling commuters from Tendring to access passenger transport.
- ZONE 4 (STRATEGIC CORRIDORS) Represents key strategic corridors. Over time these would look to move people from highway to passenger transport.

5.7 To reduce car use, improve air quality and improve health across the town centre and wider Colchester area, schemes will focus on:

- **The improvement of green links** (cycling/walking): Including flagship routes, route improvements, missing links, lighting/ crossings
- **Public transport improvements:** i.e rapid transit, Park and Ride, bus lane enforcement, smart ticketing and travel information

- **Park and Choose:** A new innovative concept allowing residents, workers and visitors to park their vehicles and choose a sustainable alternative mode
- **Access improvements:** i.e improved access and parking at rail stations and parking strategies
- **The creation of quality partnerships:** i.e. inter-urban coach partnerships and freight partnerships
- **Travel change initiatives:** i.e car clubs, personal and business travel planning and car sharing.

5.8 The Council supports the CFTS consultation and would like to suggest areas where the Council wishes to work with the County Council to strengthen and enhance the objectives focus areas for schemes and delivery timescales to help take them forward to enable the vision to be realised.

5.9 These focus areas are:

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5.10 The Borough Council looks forward to the strategy being used as one of the tools to help determine future developments and complement the Local Plan, the County Council's development policies as well as aligning with other policy initiatives, for example, the Park and Ride strategy and the Colchester Positive Parking Strategy.

5.11 The Borough Council understands that the role of the town centre is changing, along with people's working and shopping habits, and would expect the strategy to be reviewed periodically to enable it to remain relevant and continue to push for the right transport solutions for Colchester.

## **6.0 Policy**

- 6.1 The CFTS aligns with local policies, listed as follows:
- Colchester's emerging Local Plan
  - The Council's new Strategic Plan

- The Council's Environment and Sustainability Strategy
- Colchester Positive Parking Strategy
- Air Quality Action Plan – Healthier Air 2016 – 21
- Climate Emergency Declaration (2019) and Climate Emergency Action Plan (2020)

## 7.0 Standard References

There are no particular references to equality, diversity and human rights, consultation or publicity considerations or financial; community safety; health and safety or risk management implications.

## 8.0 Strategic Plan References

- 8.1 The Colchester Future Transport Strategy closely match the Borough Council's [five strategic imperatives](#) of:
- Tackling the climate challenge and leading sustainability (including air quality improvements)
  - Creating safe, healthy and active communities (Health & Wellbeing)
  - Delivering homes for people who need them (Quality of life)
  - Growing a fair economy so everyone benefits (Economic growth)
  - Celebrating our heritage and culture (Health & Wellbeing)

## 9.0 Environmental and Sustainability Implications

- 9.1 This Strategy includes aims to reduce carbon emissions from travel encouraging more sustainable modes of travel. These actions also aim to tackle congestion, reducing air pollution from cars stuck in traffic. These aims align with the third theme of the Borough Council's [Climate Emergency Action Plan](#) (Planning, Development & Sustainable Travel).

## 10.0 Background Papers

The Colchester Future Transport Strategy can be found [here](#).

The virtual event space for the Colchester Future Transport Strategy consultation: <https://colchester.virtualeventspace.io/>.

Supporting videos:

<https://youtu.be/DMizBmgT72g>  
<https://youtu.be/5ZMBEaB3igo>