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Dear Herts County Council

Local Transport Plan (LTP4) consultation

Railfuture is the UK's leading independent organisation campaigning for better services for passengers and freight. A voluntary organisation to which many rail user groups are affiliated, the organisation is independent both politically and commercially.

Q1 – This consultation response is made on behalf of Railfuture with the full support of its London & South East regional branch. The comments made are not confidential and we would be happy for them to appear on your website. We would also be happy to enlarge on any of the points made below if that would be helpful.

LTP4 Strategic Approach

Q2 – We strongly agree with the overall approach to encourage a change in behaviour and reduce car use.

Q3 – We strongly agree with the approach to reducing car use by including a combination of physical transport improvements, measures to promote and encourage changes in travel behaviour, and traffic demand management. However, whilst the aim to have reduced car parking provision is laudable, care needs to be taken to ensure that it does not have unintended consequences – eg an inability to park a car at a railway station leads to the entire journey (or a greater proportion of it) being undertaken by car. It is therefore important to have both 'carrot' and 'stick' in the approach.

Q4 – We strongly agree with the approach that new highway capacity be considered only after other options to reduce demand, encourage travel by non-car modes, and ways to make better use of existing road space have been considered.

Drivers of Change and Hertfordshire Futures

Q5 – We strongly agree that the County Council should do more to encourage shared mobility. With regard to getting to and from railway stations, differing approaches should be contemplated for the morning and evening peak periods. In the morning the peak is more concentrated, travel times are often more predictable, and so pre-organised sharing is more of a possibility; also buses are more likely to be operating as there is local demand. In the evening the peak period is more spread, and return times are less predictable – work demands, social events etc – therefore pre-organised sharing is less effective and on-demand arrangements are more needed – eg bus services, shared taxis.

www.railfuture.org.uk www.railfuturescotland.org.uk www.railfuturewales.org.uk
www.railwatch.org.uk

Q6 – We strongly agree that the County Council should do more to encourage the installation and adoption of Ultra Low Emission Vehicles eg buses, taxis.

Q7 – We have no specific comments on how the LTP4 can be made more adaptable and resilient to future change.

Policies and Activities

Q8

1 – Transport User Hierarchy: in addition to reducing demand and the need to travel, the hierarchy should formally recognise the need to address time-shifting travel – eg allowing/encouraging some current peak hour travel to migrate to non-peak hours. Specifically, attention should also be paid to reducing the frequency of journeys – eg targeting commuters with encouragement to ‘Work from Home’ some days.

2 – Influencing Land Use Planning: we strongly agree that new development should be encouraged to locate in areas served by, or with the potential to be served by, high quality passenger transport facilities.

3 – Travel Plans and Behaviour Change: we strongly agree that the County Council should encourage the widespread adoption of travel plans.

4 – Demand Management: we strongly agree that greater traffic demand management is essential in the county’s urban areas in the next five years to achieve modal shift and improve sustainable transport provision.

5 – Development Management: we strongly agree with the County Council’s work in this policy area.

6 – Accessibility: we strongly agree with the intention of the County Council to increase the ease with which people, particularly disadvantaged groups, can access key services.

7 – Active Travel – Walking: we strongly agree with the intention of the County Council to encourage and promote walking. It is especially important for rail passengers to have safe, secure, and convenient walking routes to and from rail stations.

8 – Active Travel – Cycling: we strongly agree with the intention of the County Council to deliver a step change in cycling. It is especially important for rail passengers to have safe and convenient cycling routes to and from rail stations, and an adequate supply of safe and secure cycle parking at all rail stations.

9 – Buses: we strongly agree with the intention of the County Council to promote and support bus services to encourage reduced car use. It is especially important for rail passengers to have attractive and convenient bus services to and from rail stations.

10 – Rail: we strongly agree with the intention of the County Council to support and promote rail use in the county, especially in order to reduce car use. We believe that the four sub-headings reflect sound activities and look forward to continuing to work with the County Council on improvements along all of its radial and local rail corridors. We especially look forward to collaboration in producing the county Rail Strategy, and firmly believe in the importance of engaging the Community Rail Partnerships and local Rail User Groups, many of which are affiliated to Railfuture.

In particular we encourage the County Council to engage with all parts of the rail industry in order to:

- a) secure maximum capacity on all Thameslink services (12-car trains);
- b) secure the infrastructure and rolling stock necessary for new, high-speed, high-capacity, limited-stop (Bedford/Luton/Luton Airport Parkway/St.Albans-only) regular half-hourly electric East Midlands St.Pancras-Corby services with journey times essentially the same as current EMT services;
- c) secure continued development of the Abbey line in order to maximise use of its potential as a rail corridor linking two of the county's principal urban centres;
- d) secure availability of the Rickmansworth-Croxley connection (Watford North Curve) in time for an Aylesbury passenger service to be incorporated in the specification for the next Chiltern franchise, serving Watford station if the Metropolitan Line Extension to Watford Junction is not available for any reason;
- e) secure opening of the County Council's proposed three new stations, with developer contributions, to support local economic growth and housing provision. We recognise that there needs to be a balance between providing sufficient station car parking to make them attractive to potential users and thereby encourage use of rail for the greater part of whole journeys while not creating unacceptable levels of additional traffic on adjoining roads.

11 – Airports: we strongly agree with the intention of the County Council to promote and where possible facilitate a modal shift of both airport passengers and employees towards sustainable modes of transport.

12 – Network Management: we strongly agree with the intention of the County Council to manage, and where feasible reduce traffic congestion, prioritising strategic routes, including activity which will focus on making more efficient use of highway network capacity. This is of vital importance for improving the attractiveness of bus services and safety for cycling, especially where on-street parking contributes to congestion and delays and increases safety hazards, where those modes are to be encouraged over car use and to increase their role as feeders to rail-based journeys.

13 – New Roads and Junctions: we have no specific comments.

14 – Climate Change Network Resilience: we have no specific comments.

15 – Speed Management: we have no specific comments.

16 – Freight and Logistics: we strongly agree with the intentions of the County Council to manage freight and logistics traffic.

17 – Road Safety: we strongly agree with the intentions of the County Council to continually improve safety on the county's roads, working towards an ultimate vision of zero fatalities and serious injuries. This is especially important for the most vulnerable yet sustainable and healthy road users – pedestrians and cyclists – on their journeys to and from rail stations.

18 – Transport Safety and Security: we strongly agree with the intentions of the County Council to improve the perception of safety and security on Hertfordshire's transport system where this could deter people from travelling, particularly by active modes and passenger transport.

19 – Emissions reduction: we strongly agree with the intentions of the County Council to reduce levels of harmful emissions.



20 – Air quality: we strongly agree with the intentions of the County Council to reduce the impact of poor Air Quality on human health.

21 – Environment: we strongly agree with the intentions of the County Council concerning the environment.

22 – Asset Management: we strongly agree with the intentions of the County Council concerning asset management.

23 – Growth and Transport Plans: we strongly agree with the intentions of the County Council to produce and maintain a series of Growth and Transport Plans (GTPs) covering different sub areas of Hertfordshire.

Major Schemes and Corridor Commentary

Q9 – We agree with the principle of Cycle Infrastructure Improvement Towns and Sustainable Travel Towns.

We have no specific comments on Passenger Transport Hubs/Coachway at M1 and A1(M) junctions, the A414 Bus Rapid Transit, the Hertford Bypass, and New M1 Junction.

We strongly agree with the County Council's intention to investigate three New Rail Stations, per Q8 10 e) above.

Q10 – We have no specific further comments on either the Transport Proposals Map or the strategic corridor commentary.

Q11 – We have no specific further comments on the draft Local Transport Plan.

Q12 – We have no specific comments on the LTP Strategic Environmental Assessment, Habitats Regulation Assessment or Equalities Impact Assessment.

Yours sincerely

Roger Blake
Railfuture
Board Director and Vice-Chair, London & South East regional branch