Hertfordshire's New Local Transport Plan – The Railfuture response

The response was submitted as response via an online form. Below we have the question followed by our response.

We are preparing Hertfordshire's new Local Transport Plan (LTP), which will guide transport decisions and investment from 2027 to 2050.

The plan sets out:

- A vision for transport in Hertfordshire
- Objectives we want to achieve
- Policies that will guide future decisions

We would like to hear your views on our proposed priorities and policies for improving transport in Hertfordshire. In particular, do you think we have identified the right priorities, and do you support the overall Vision?

Section 1: Objectives

The draft Local Transport Plan contains 16 objectives which show the focus for transport improvements which are needed in the short and medium term to improve transport in Hertfordshire. These objectives were developed through public engagement.

These objectives are:

- Increase walking, wheeling and cycling
- Increase public transport use and reliability
- Reduce deaths and serious injuries on the transport network
- Improve infrastructure condition and resilience
- Better integrate transport services
- Expand Electric Vehicle charging
- Ensure the right speeds in the right places
- Protect communities from inappropriate through traffic
- Improve rail accessibility
- Enhance nature through transport schemes
- Apply “Healthy Streets” principles

- Improve east-west public transport links
- Support economic growth in appropriate locations
- Ensure development supports sustainable transport
- Support sustainable freight and deliveries
- Improve accessibility for all users

Details of the types of measures that will be used to deliver these objectives are set out in Section 5 of the draft Local Transport Plan.

Are there any other objectives that need to be added to the list?
(Maximum 400 words)

During the life of the plan most of the railways in the County will undergo significant change:
- The West Coast Mainline will lose a good portion of fast services as they move to HS2, freeing up capacity for local services and freight.
- The Midland Mainline will evolve to meet significant expansions in demand outside the County, most notably Luton Airport expansion, the opening of Universal Studios and the second runway at Gatwick.
- The East Coast Mainline will see a station at Tempsford (outside the County) – and there are likely to be pressures to increase capacity on services to Cambridge due to increased demand in the locality.

And more generally East West Rail will impact flows – for instance train journeys such as St Albans – Cambridge will become much more feasible.

Thus we think a specific objective such as "Ensure wider rail changes benefit the local community" to be sensible.
On Objective 1 'People walk, wheel, cycle, or use public transport for most local trips', we note no objective for longer trips and we think one should be set. Our suggestion is a proportional increase for longer trips.

We think parts of Objective 2 should specifically recognise the need to work with neighbouring authorities. This is particularly relevant to rail as many important services such as fast services from Harpenden and St Albans to London are also important to other authorities (in this case, Bedford BC, Central Beds and Luton BC.

On Objective 5 referring to 'deliver integrated ticketing for bus services and PlusBus for rail integration', we think the ambition needs to be for more than PlusBus. In particular, options for integration for single journeys, where the PlusBus cost may be more than the cost of an individual journey. For instance, travel from Harpenden to London and return the same day, PlusBus is an effective way to pay for the bus to Harpenden station. But travel long distance (and return on another a day), then PlusBus is not cost effective.

We also think objective 5 should mention TfL in the same way it mentions GBR – both for stations it already manages and for stations it might manage if other service clusters move to TfL.

Section 2: Policies

The Local Transport Plan contains 21 policies which set out the rules by which the county council's transport decisions are made. These policies are set out in Section 8 of the draft Local Transport Plan.

The policies cover a number of transport topics such as walking, cycling, buses, rail, accessibility, road safety, development, climate change and economic growth. All transport measures delivered by the county council must follow these policy statements.

Are there any other policies that need to be added?
(Maximum 400 words)

No

Do you have any comments on any of the policies listed?
(Maximum 400 words)

Updating the Rail Strategy (last update 2019) is an urgent task. To give structure to this update we believe that the Council should include reaffirmation of the Council's support for long running public transport improvements including@

- investment in Watford Junction station to improve accessibility and interchange,

- the Metropolitan Line extension and

- the "northern curve" at Croxley towards Rickmansworth & Aylesbury,

- a passing loop on the Abbey Line to increase services.

On Accessibility, we note text that makes it clear that this is not just for those with physical mobility challenges but also mental ones as well. We see it essential that both these challenges are recognised and resolved.

Section 3: The Vision

The vision sets out how we want the transport network in Hertfordshire to work for residents and visitors by 2050.

This vision is:

"Deliver a safe, accessible and sustainable transport system for our communities."

The vision is supported by three key themes and nine vision statements:

Safe

- Our transport network is safe, secure and promotes physical and mental wellbeing
- Everyone feels safe when travelling
- Harm to people and communities from transport is minimised

Accessible

- Transport is reliable, inclusive and easy to use
- Everyone can connect to communities, employment and services
- Transport supports our economy

Sustainable

- People walk, wheel, cycle, or use public transport for most local trips
- The impacts of transport on the environment are as low as reasonably possible
- Our transport system provides a network of green corridors for nature

Do you support the vision and vision statements for the new Local Transport Plan? - required

Yes/No choice: Yes

To support the delivery of the Local Transport Plan Vision, what would encourage you to use alternatives to the car more often?
(select all that apply) - required

- **More reliable bus services**
- Better walking routes
- **Safer cycling infrastructure**
- **Lower cost public transport**
- Improved journey information
- Reduced journey times
- Nothing would change my travel choice
- Other (please specify):

- More secure bicycle storage at stations

- Better east west public transport options

What is the one change that would most improve transport for you?
(Maximum 400 words)

More reliable trains

Do you have any other comments on the Local Transport Plan?
(Maximum 400 words)

We are unconvinced by the inclusion of the A10 improvement plan. It is currently unfunded and inclusion of a single scheme from many potential candidates seems 'peculiar'. It possibly also detracts from the importance of HERT – which is seeking a step change in east west connectivity in introducing a via public transport option.

Section 4: About You

Who are you? - required

- Resident
- Visitor to Hertfordshire
- **Organisation**

What is the name of your organisation? (please do not provide any personal information) - required

Railfuture Limited, Hertfordshire & Bedfordshire

What is the postcode of your organisation? (please do not provide any personal information) - required

(Hertfordshire)