

**Strategic Planning,
Sustainability & Transportation
Committee**

**13 September
2016**

Is the final decision on the recommendations in this report to be made at this meeting?

Yes

Integrated Transport Strategy, and Walking & Cycling Strategy

Final Decision-Maker	Strategic Planning, Sustainability and Transportation Committee
Lead Head of Service	Rob Jarman, Head of Planning & Development
Lead Officer and Report Author	Paul Goodenough, Transport Planner, Spatial Policy
Classification	Public
Wards affected	All Wards

This report makes the following recommendations to this Committee:

1. That the Committee approves the recommendations of the Maidstone Joint Transportation Board of 13 July 2016;
2. That the Committee adopt the Integrated Transport Strategy (as appended to this report); and
3. That the Committee adopt the Walking & Cycling Strategy (as appended to this report)

This report relates to the following corporate priorities:

- Keeping Maidstone Borough an attractive place for all -
- Securing a successful economy for Maidstone Borough -

The Integrated Transport Strategy and the Walking and Cycling Strategy play a key role in delivering a package of sustainable transport measures in support of the allocations set out in the Maidstone Borough Local Plan and the need to mitigate the transport impact of planned development and deliver modal shift away from reliance on the use of the private car with other potential benefits such as improved public transport networks and improved air quality.

Timetable

Meeting	Date
Strategic Planning, Sustainability and Transportation Committee	13 September 2016

Integrated Transport Strategy, and Walking & Cycling Strategy

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT AND EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 1.1 This report considers revised versions of the Maidstone Integrated Transport Strategy (ITS) 2011-2031 and the Maidstone Walking and Cycling Strategy (WCS) 2011-2031. These versions reflect minor changes agreed by Maidstone Borough Council's SPS&T Committee on 6 July 2016. Copies of the documents are attached to this report at Appendices One and Two respectively.
- 1.2 Members are recommended to:
- Approve the recommendations made by the Maidstone Joint Transportation Board on 13 July 2016;
 - Adopt the Integrated Transport Strategy (as appended to this report); and
 - Adopt the Walking & Cycling Strategy (as appended to this report).

2. INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

- 2.1 Section 80 of the Local Transport Act 2008 gives local authorities, acting jointly, the power to review the effectiveness and efficiency of transport within their area and to propose their own arrangements to support more coherent planning and delivery of local transport. Kent County Council and Maidstone Borough Council cooperated to prepare a joint document for public consultation for local transport provision in 2012.
- 2.2 This joint Maidstone Integrated Transport Strategy (ITS) was first published for public consultation in August 2012. It aimed to set out the future for transport in Maidstone until 2026, identifying objectives for transport provision and a proposed action plan to address the requirements for the new development proposed by the Maidstone Core Strategy at that stage.
- 2.3 The draft ITS has evolved alongside the emerging Maidstone Borough Local Plan and covers the same period to 2031. It has been presented at various SPS&T and JTB meetings and Appendices One and Two are consistent with the most recent recommendations of the 13 July 2016 JTB. The Strategy was also considered by the Maidstone Joint Transportation Board (JTB) and approved for consultation by Maidstone Borough Council's SPS&T Committee. The public consultation took place between 5 February 2016 and 18 March 2016.
- 2.4 The draft ITS sets out a package of sustainable transport interventions, comprising highway capacity, public transport and walking and cycling improvements, which provide appropriate mitigation in support and as part

of the evidence base for allocations in the emerging Maidstone Borough Local Plan which was submitted for examination on 20 May 2016.

- 2.5 As a result of continuing discussions with KCC, the principal change from the consultation version was that the draft ITS and the draft Walking and Cycling Strategy were split into two separate documents. Appropriate amendments were made to each document to reflect the consultation responses and the other discussions that had taken place. At this time there are a significant number of interventions in the ITS that are agreed by both MBC and KCC, however there are similarly issues and matters which remain in disagreement notably regarding mitigation for the period post-2022. For the period between 2022 and 2031 KCC officers have recommended further modelling, strategic Environmental Assessment and Sustainability appraisals.
- 2.6 These revised documents were reported to and considered by Maidstone Borough Council's SPS&T Committee on 6 July 2016. Furthermore, the SPS&T Committee was recommended to approve the revised documents for consideration by the JTB on 13 July 2016. This was agreed subject to minor changes. Revised documents reflecting these further changes are attached at Appendices One and Two to this report respectively.
- 2.7 However, as a result of continuing discussions with KCC the latest revised documents were not subsequently reviewed by the JTB on 13 July 2016 as envisaged. Instead a joint report was presented by the KCC Head of Transportation and the MBC Head of Planning and Development which updated Members with respect to the 7 December 2015 resolution, and proposed a joint Integrated Transport Strategy which could be submitted to the Secretary of State in time for examination in public. The document is attached at Appendix Three to this report.
- 2.8 Paragraphs 2.4 and 2.5 of that document identified transport interventions from the draft ITS. These are also referred to in Appendix B to that document (appended to this report as Appendix Four). These included a package of highway improvement schemes agreed by the JTB at its meeting on 7 December 2015, and largely aligned with those agreed by the SPS&T Committee. The Local Plan submitted for examination included a number of those junctions, and there is £8.9m allocated through the Local Growth Fund (LGF) to deliver junction improvements. Furthermore, paragraph 4.2 of Appendix Three identified the potential ITS adjustments which had been discussed.
- 2.9 The document recommended that the JTB approve the transport interventions in paragraphs 2.4 and 2.5, together with the firmer commitment to work together in relation to paragraph 4.2, as forming the basis of the transport strategy. This was resolved subject to the amendment to the wording of recommendation 5.1, that it be changed from 'with a firmer commitment to work together in relation to paragraph 4.2', to read 'with a firm commitment to the items identified in paragraph 4.2'.
- 2.10 It was also resolved by the JTB that the matter be referred to both the KCC Cabinet Member for Transport and MBC's SPS&T Committee for approval,

with this report being the mechanism for the seeking of an approval by the SPS&T Committee.

- 2.11 Without a coherent strategy for the delivery of the identified mitigation measures, the level of impact of Local Plan growth on the transport network is likely to be unacceptably adverse and the Examination Inspector may find the Local Plan to be unsound as a consequence. The draft ITS is therefore an important piece of evidence for the Local Plan.
- 2.12 It is therefore essential that the ITS is adopted, as a single MBC document in the first instance but, further to the JTB resolution of 13 July 2016, MBC will continue to work with KCC towards its joint adoption. It is also essential that the Walking and Cycling Strategy is adopted by the Council, as this provides the evidence base for the walking and cycling actions within the ITS and will be a material consideration in development management and spatial planning decisions.

3. AVAILABLE OPTIONS

- 3.1 Members could choose to 'do nothing', i.e. not to approve the recommendation of the Joint Transportation Board nor to approve the adoption of the ITS and the Walking and Cycling Strategy. The resulting outcome would in effect be a decision to not proceed to publish a final version of the ITS. If this was the case, there would not be a supporting document to the Maidstone Borough Local Plan setting out the Council's approach to sustainable transport interventions providing appropriate mitigation in support of and as part of the evidence base for the allocations in the Local Plan.
- 3.2 Members could choose to note the recommendation of the Joint Transportation Board but choose not to accept the consequentially recommended modifications to the ITS. Members could then approve the adoption of the ITS and Walking and Cycling Strategy as per the versions presented in Appendices One and Two. However, the unilateral adoption of these document versions may preclude the joint adoption of the ITS by the Borough Council and County Council at a later date.
- 3.3 The final option is for Members to approve the recommendation of the Joint Transportation Board, agree the consequentially recommended modifications to the ITS and adopt it and the Walking and Cycling Strategy (as modified from Appendices One and Two to this report). This will ensure that the ITS is sufficiently robust with its fundamental elements jointly approved by the Borough Council and County Council, facilitating the joint adoption of the ITS at a later date. The ITS will then provide strong supporting evidence of appropriate mitigation and sustainable transport interventions in support of the Maidstone Borough Local Plan.
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4. PREFERRED OPTION AND REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

- 4.1 The final option set out in paragraph 3.3 above is the one recommended to Members as this will ensure that the ITS and Walking and Cycling Strategy are robust and will assist in the delivery of appropriate mitigation and sustainable transport interventions in support of the Maidstone Borough Local Plan.

5. NEXT STEPS: COMMUNICATION AND IMPLEMENTATION OF THE DECISION

- 5.1 If Members approve the JTB recommendation and adopt the ITS and Walking and Cycling Strategy, the next step will be to publish these documents as part of the evidence base supporting the Local Plan.
- 5.2 The final MBC adopted versions of both documents will then be reported to a future meeting of the Maidstone Joint Transportation Board recommending that the relevant KCC Cabinet Member also approves the documents for adoption.

6. CROSS-CUTTING ISSUES AND IMPLICATIONS

Issue	Implications	Sign-off
Impact on Corporate Priorities	The Integrated Transport Strategy and the Walking & Cycling Strategy play a key role in delivering a package of sustainable transport measures in support of the allocations set out in the Maidstone Borough Local Plan and the need to mitigate the transport impact of planned development and deliver modal shift away from reliance on the use of the private car with other potential benefits such as improved public transport networks and improved air quality.	Rob Jarman: Head of Planning & Development
Risk Management	The ITS and Walking and Cycling Strategy are part of the evidence base supporting the Maidstone Borough Local Plan, showing a package of sustainable transport alongside other infrastructure	Rob Jarman: Head of Planning & Development

	interventions in support of the allocations in the Local Plan and to support planned growth.	
Financial	No specific financial implications arise from the consideration of this report.	Head of Finance and Resources & Finance Team
Staffing	Specialist transport consultants have been engaged to assist in the delivery of the strategies, funded though the existing agreed budget.	Rob Jarman: Head of Planning & Development
Legal	No specific implications arise from the consideration of this report. The ITS and Walking and Cycling Strategy have been produced as part of the robust evidence base for the Local Plan.	Kate Jardine Team Leader Planning Mid Kent Legal Services
Equality Impact Needs Assessment	An ITS and Walking and Cycling Strategy that tackle transport challenges through a combination of modes will take into account the needs of all groups including those without access to a car. An alternative strategy reliant on highway improvements will not promote equal access to employment, services and social opportunities and is likely to lead to increased social exclusion amongst lower income groups in particular.	Anna Collier Policy & Information Manager
Environmental/Sustainable Development	The promotion of the ITS and the Walking and Cycling Strategy to promote sustainable travel where possible will encourage a reduction in single occupancy car travel and in turn a reduction in congestion and carbon emissions relative to a 'do minimum' situation. An alternative strategy reliant solely on highway interventions is likely to generate more traffic than the additional capacity provided increasing carbon and congestion.	Rob Jarman: Head of Planning & Development
Community Safety	No specific implications arise from the consideration of this	Rob Jarman: Head of

	report.	Planning & Development
Human Rights Act	No specific implications arise from the consideration of this report.	Rob Jarman: Head of Planning & Development
Procurement	Consultants are used to prepare specialist or technical evidence to support the Local Plan and are appointed in accordance with the Council's procurement procedures.	Rob Jarman: Head of Planning & Development & Head of Finance and Resources
Asset Management	No specific implications arise from the consideration of this report.	Rob Jarman: Head of Planning & Development

7. REPORT APPENDICES

The following documents are to be published with this report and form part of the report:

- Appendix 1: Maidstone Integrated Transport Strategy 2011-2031
- Appendix 2: Maidstone Walking & Cycling Strategy 2011-2031
- Appendix 3: Maidstone Joint Transportation Board 13 July 2016: Report of the KCC Head of Transportation and MBC Head of Planning and Development – Integrated Transport Strategy
- Appendix 4: ITS Interventions Table