



## Transport & Infrastructure Committee

**4 November 2024**

Title:	Greater Cambridge Transport Strategy (GCTS)
Report of:	Emma White, Acting Transport Strategy and Policy Manager
Lead Member:	Cllr Anna Smith, Lead Member for Transport
Public Report:	Yes
Key Decision:	No
Voting Arrangements:	A. No vote B. Vote by consensus otherwise a vote in favour by at least two thirds of the members present including the Cambridgeshire County Council and Peterborough City Council members or their substitutes

### Recommendations:

A	Note the update on the Greater Cambridge Transport Strategy (GCTS).
B	Recommend to the Combined Authority Board to delegate authority to the Assistant Director - Transport in consultation with the Chief Finance Officer and Monitoring Officer to enter into one or more contracts or Grant Funding Agreements with the relevant delivery body (consultancy or Cambridgeshire County Council), as needed to continue the development of the GCTS.

### Strategic Objective(s):

The proposals within this report fit under the following strategic objective(s):

x	Achieving ambitious skills and employment opportunities <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Bringing together people, employers, providers, and place leaders to guide and drive an integrated approach to skills and employment in our region.</li><li>- Attracting more businesses to grow or relocate to Cambridgeshire and Peterborough.</li><li>- Improved community connection.</li></ul>
x	Achieving good growth <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Further development of long-term strategies that integrate our local transport and highway connectivity priorities.</li></ul>
x	Increased connectivity <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Digital and physical connection to communities, professional networks, health services, leisure, nature and to places of employment and education. Reducing the need for travel with more services located within communities.</li><li>- Deliverables: - Reduced rural isolation - Improved Highway connectivity - Sustainable and reliable public transport.</li></ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Outcomes - (1) Increasing share of public transport usage and sustainable travel as a proportion of all travel (2) Reduction in numbers of people killed or seriously injured on region's roads (3) Reduced congestion on major roads (4) Measurable improvements in connectivity for 'left behind'.</li> </ul>
x	<p>Enabling resilient communities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Providing the infrastructure and support to enable communities across the region to be adaptable to environmental and climate, financial and social crises and be well placed to extend cultural opportunities for Cambridgeshire and Peterborough to be a great place to live and work.</li> <li>- Have the infrastructure – power and water especially - needed to achieve sustainable growth - Reduced accidents on region's roads.</li> <li>- Deliverables: Environmental and Climate actions - Infrastructure – sufficiency, preservation, and safety.</li> <li>- Outcomes - (1) Reduction in CO2 emissions for Cambridgeshire and Peterborough (2) Increase in biodiversity with improvements in both common and red-list species.</li> </ul>

	<p>This paper provides an update on the Greater Cambridge Transport Strategy (GCTS) and next steps. The GCTS will be developed as a sub-strategy to the Cambridgeshire &amp; Peterborough Local Transport &amp; Connectivity Plan (LTCP).</p>
1.1	<p>The Combined Authority is the Strategic Transport Authority for Cambridgeshire and Peterborough and the purpose of a LTCP is to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Outline the current baseline regarding transport, accessibility, and pollution;</li> <li>• Set out challenging, but achievable, objectives; and</li> <li>• Set out the timeline for achieving these objectives.</li> </ul> <p>The LTCP received formal approval on 29<sup>th</sup> November 2023 during the Combined Authority Board meeting. Subsequently, the Transport and Infrastructure Committee (TIC) was last briefed on the progress of the LTCP, along with its associated sub-strategies, during on meeting held on 13 March 2024 – the link to which can be found <a href="#">here</a></p>

## 1. Proposal

### Scope and objectives

2.1	<p>The Greater Cambridge Transport Strategy (GCTS) will take the principles set out in the LTCP and translate them into specific proposals for the Greater Cambridge area.</p>
2.2	<p>The GCTS will consider how to support transport into, and around, Greater Cambridge (the area covered by Cambridge City and South Cambridgeshire). This includes travel into Greater Cambridge from across the whole CPCA and travel-to-work areas, as well as supporting rural trips in Greater Cambridge. The GCTS will aim to address congestion in Cambridge and the need for sustainable alternatives to enable people to access jobs and services to support economic growth.</p>

### Workstreams

2.3	<p>Work is progressing steadily on the scoping and baselining phase, with key activities including the development of a comprehensive work programme. This phase also involves the collation and in-depth analysis of the existing evidence base to ensure a thorough understanding of current conditions. Additionally, efforts are underway to identify any gaps in the evidence that may need to be addressed. By meticulously laying this foundation, the project will be better positioned to move forward with informed decision-making and a clear roadmap for future stages of development.</p>
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Approach	
2.4	The strategy will be led by the Combined Authority as the Strategic Transport Authority in partnership with the relevant Local Planning and Highways Authorities, as well as the Greater Cambridge Partnership (GCP).
2.5	The GCTS will be produced in step with a series of other LTCP sub-strategies as set out in papers brought to this committee on 18 <sup>th</sup> September 2024, as well as the continued development of proposals arising from the bus reform workstream and Local Growth Plan.
2.6	A critical aspect of this work will involve close coordination with the development of the emerging Greater Cambridge Local Plan, which must address and overcome key barriers to growth such as transport infrastructure. This collaboration will be essential in ensuring that the region's ambitious development goals are not hindered by logistical constraints. By identifying innovative solutions to these challenges, the plan can unlock sustainable development opportunities, support population growth, and enhance regional connectivity and improving the resilience of the transport network.
2.7	The objective is to establish a unified evidence base that supports an integrated approach to land use and transport planning across Greater Cambridge. This comprehensive approach will ensure that development strategies are aligned, supporting sustainable growth and connectivity. While the plan will outline immediate actions to address current challenges, it will also present forward-looking proposals designed to meet the region's evolving needs well beyond the current Local Plan period, extending through 2041 and beyond. By adopting this long-term perspective, the strategy will provide a robust framework for addressing future demands in housing, infrastructure, and transportation, ensuring the continued vitality and resilience of Greater Cambridge.
2.8	Consideration may need to be given to how best the GCTS can reflect conversations between the local area and the Cambridge Delivery Group on longer term growth aspirations for the area, and the development of the Local Growth Plan for Cambridgeshire & Peterborough in support of the Shared Ambition.
Engagement	
2.9	There will be engagement with all constituent Councils, as well as Authorities beyond the Combined Authority boundary but within the Greater Cambridge travel-to-work area.
2.10	It is anticipated that a draft strategy will be brought to TIC for approval before a period of public consultation alongside a draft Greater Cambridge Local Plan, given the close interaction between the two. The programme will need to be flexible to reflect the statutory Local Plan development process (see below). This will be during mid 2025.
Governance and working arrangements	
2.11	Progress updates and, in the fullness of time, decisions on the GCTS will come to future meetings of TIC, which will make recommendations to the Combined Authority Board in the usual way.
2.12	The technical team tasked with developing the strategy will engage in a collaborative effort with officers from the Combined Authority, Highways and Planning Authorities, as well as the Greater Cambridge Partnership. This aims to foster a cohesive approach, leveraging the expertise and insights of all stakeholders involved. By working together, the team will ensure that the strategy is not only technically sound but also aligned with the overarching goals of regional development, sustainability, and community engagement. This collaborative framework will facilitate the sharing of resources, knowledge, and best practices, ultimately leading to a more effective and comprehensive strategy that addresses the diverse needs of the Greater Cambridge area.

2.13	<p>The Chair of the Transport and Infrastructure Committee (TIC) has established a Member Steering Group to provide oversight of the process and programme. This group will comprise representatives from the County Council, the City of Cambridge, South Cambridgeshire District Council, and the Greater Cambridge Partnership. The inaugural meeting took place in September, where members discussed initial suggestions for the scope and program. A follow-up meeting is scheduled for November to finalise a comprehensive scoping document and take advice on the planning process. It is important to note that the Member Steering Group will serve an advisory role and will not have decision-making authority.</p>
Timescales	
2.14	<p>The timescale for developing the GCTS will align closely with that of the Local Plan, reflecting the significant interaction between the two initiatives. This synchronisation is essential to ensure that transport planning is effectively integrated with land use and development strategies, allowing for a cohesive approach that addresses the needs of the community while supporting sustainable growth. By coordinating these timelines, the GCTS can better respond to emerging challenges and opportunities, ensuring that both transport and land use objectives are met harmoniously.</p>
2.15	<p>The Planning Authorities' latest position regarding the future timetable for the Greater Cambridge Local Plan (GCLP) was published in March 2024 <a href="https://www.greatercambridgeplanning.org/emerging-plans-and-guidance/local-development-scheme/">https://www.greatercambridgeplanning.org/emerging-plans-and-guidance/local-development-scheme/</a>. The timetable update noted a that a number of external factors had delayed the progression of the plan and as a result identified an indicative timetable to submission.</p>
2.16	<p>An update on the timetable for the Greater Cambridge Local Plan will be presented to committees in November 2024. One of the key considerations influencing the future schedule is the government's proposal to amend the previously established cut-off date for submitting Local Plans for examination under the current system.</p> <p>This proposed change would extend the deadline to the end of December 2026, prior to the implementation of the new plan-making framework. It is important to note that this will be a draft timetable, subject to confirmation once the proposed changes to the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) are formalised following the government's consultation process. This update aims to ensure all stakeholders are informed of potential shifts in planning timelines and can adapt accordingly.</p>
2.17	<p>If the Councils were to set a timetable enabling submission by the end of 2026 this would likely include rounds of consultation on a draft plan in the second half of 2025 and proposed submission plan in 2026, with Examination to follow submission.</p>
2.18	<p>Based on this context, the proposed timelines for developing the GCTS are as follows, though they will be adjusted as needed to ensure alignment with the progression of the Greater Cambridge Local Plan. In line with an indicative Local Plan submission date set for winter 2026, the GCTS will focus on evidence gathering and strategy development from late 2024 through the first half of 2025. Following this phase, consultation on an emerging draft strategy will take place in late 2025. This flexible approach allows for responsiveness to any changes in the Local Plan timeline while ensuring a thorough and collaborative process in shaping the future of transport in Greater Cambridge.</p>
Issues to consider	
2.19	<p>The GCTS will carefully evaluate the additional transport infrastructure and service developments required beyond what is currently outlined, including the GCP existing delivery programme funded by the Greater Cambridge City Deal. This comprehensive assessment will encompass connectivity across all transport modes, ensuring a holistic approach that addresses the diverse needs of the community. By identifying gaps and opportunities for enhancement, the GCTS aims to create a more integrated and efficient transport network that supports sustainable growth, improves accessibility, and fosters greater mobility for all residents.</p>

2.20	This strategy will incorporate measures aimed at alleviating congestion, especially within the city centre of Cambridge. The First Proposals 2021 consultation for the emerging Local Plan anticipated the construction of approximately 48,000 new homes. Beyond this, in 2023 updated Local Plan evidence identified a higher housing figure of nearly 52,000 homes. More widely the government via the Cambridge 2050 initiative has tasked the Cambridge Delivery Group with exploring the feasibility of accommodating growth that may significantly exceed these figures. The Cambridge 2050 initiative seeks to maximise the potential of the nationally significant life sciences and technology cluster in Greater Cambridge, ensuring that the region can sustainably support its burgeoning population and economic development while maintaining high quality of life for its residents.
2.21	Without intervention on transport infrastructure or demand management, there will be more negative impacts resulting from growth, relating to climate, air quality, equity of access to affordable local housing, and experience of the city, including its attractiveness to business. This will make it harder to meet objectives relating to sustainable and inclusive growth.
2.22	The GCTS will need to explore options for building upon the existing GCP City Deal schemes enabling a fully integrated and high-quality public transport network. This exploration could include evaluating innovative solutions for cross-centre and orbital connectivity, ensuring seamless travel across the region. By prioritising these connections, the GCTS aims to improve accessibility, reduce congestion, and promote the use of sustainable transport options, ultimately fostering a more efficient and user-friendly transport system that meets the diverse needs of the community.
2.23	It will also need to incorporate continued work on key workstreams being developed by the Greater Cambridge Partnership: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Options for bus, cycle and pedestrian priority in a holistic way through continued review of the Greater Cambridge Road Network Hierarchy;</li> <li>• The appropriate role for parking strategy in delivering overall GCTS objectives through continued work on the Greater Cambridge Integrated Parking Strategy; and</li> <li>• What is desirable and feasible in terms of freight, deliveries and servicing consolidation or rationalisation.</li> </ul>

## 2. Background

3.1	In March 2024, the Transport and Infrastructure Committee and Combined Authority approved the reprofiling of the Medium-Term Financial Plan (MTFP) funding.
3.2	Also, in March 2024 the Transport and Infrastructure Committee and Combined Authority took note of the proposed strategies, importance, and programme. In September 2024 TIC and the CA Board were update on a number of LTCP sub strategies scopes including Active Travel Strategy, Micromobility, Freight Strategy, Rail and Connectivity to Network Strategy and Mobility Hub Strategy. All of these can be found <a href="#">here</a> .
3.3	The government has outlined five strategic priorities that position transport as a central element of a mission-driven approach to governance. These priorities are designed to create a more efficient, inclusive, and environmentally responsible transport network across the UK, while addressing regional disparities. These priorities align closely with the goals and objectives of the Combined Authority's LTCP and the scopes of these sub-strategies, ensuring a coordinated approach to building a more connected, sustainable, and equitable transport system.

## 3. Appendices

4.1	None
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## 4. Implications

### Financial Implications

5.1	Funding the LTCP sub strategies is included in the existing MTFP and approved at the March 2024 Combined Authority Board. It will also draw on technical work already underway or soon to be commissioned and funded by the Greater Cambridge Partnership through the Greater Cambridge City Deal. Funding of capital investment would be subject to further business case development and negotiation and application to Government and other investors.
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### Legal Implications

6.1	<p>A standard Combined Authority contract will be issued as required for the consultancy work. A standard Grant Funding Agreement will be issued as required for work with constituent Councils.</p> <p>As per Chapter 4 of the CPCA Constitution, para 4.3.1 Strategy and Policy which sets out matters reserved to the Combined Authority Board including, 'The adoption of, and any amendment to or withdrawal of any major strategy or policy including the mayor's growth ambition statement, Corporate Plan, Local Industrial Strategy, Local Transport Connectivity Plan, Skills Strategy and others'.</p>
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### Public Health Implications

7.1	The report recommendations have a positive implication for public health. One of the objectives of the LTCP is improved health and well-being enabled through better connectivity, greater access to healthier journeys and lifestyles and delivering stronger, fairer, more resilient communities. The new strategies endeavour to work towards this.
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### Environmental & Climate Change Implications

8.1	The report recommendations have a positive implication for the environment and climate change. Both Climate and Environment are objectives of the Plan including successfully and fairly reducing emissions to net zero by 2050 and protecting and improving our green spaces and improving nature with a well-planned and good quality transport network. The new strategies endeavour to work towards this.
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### Other Significant Implications

9.1	N/A.
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### Background Papers

10.1	<a href="#">Combined Authority Board March 2024</a>
10.2	<a href="#">Transport &amp; Infrastructure Committee September 2024</a>