

TO: ENVIRONMENT AND TRANSPORT

ON: 22 JANUARY 2002

Agenda Item No: 4

Title: London to South Midlands Multi Modal Study

Author: Roger Harborough (01799) 510457

Summary

- 1 This report recommends that Members comment on the three draft strategies identified by the consultants responsible for the study, and indicate which measures the Council would wish to see included in a fourth strategy and which measures it would definitely wish to see excluded.

Background

- 2 This study is one of the largest recent transport studies commissioned by the Government. It covers a zone from the London - Rugby West Coast Main Line in the west, to the A14 in the north and the M11 in the east and the M25 in the south and therefore includes Uttlesford. It was outlined in its Transport 2010 – Ten Year Plan document. The consultant team have prepared three strategies.
 - The first strategy (A) is based on increasing capacity to meet the existing level of demand and that generated by possible development scenarios over the next 30 years. It has a strong emphasis on increasing road capacity but also addresses the major bottlenecks in the passenger transport network.
 - The second (B) prioritises public transport investment, particularly rail. Increased road capacity where provided would be for buses and vehicles with two or more occupants.
 - The third (C) has strong emphasis on reducing demand for travel with road user charging, and, for example, removing certain motorway junctions which encourage local trips rather than provide strategic access to the motorway network, or restricting their use to coaches and lorries only.
- 3 The consultants are currently carrying out consultation with a range of interests to identify a balanced strategy for the study region with some increased road capacity, public transport infrastructure improvements and demand restraint measures. The consultants are seeking views on the respective emphasis to be placed on the three themes. These views will help the consultants to suggest a preferred strategy.

Significance in Uttlesford and nearby

- 4 Under Option A – Increasing capacity, the main road proposals locally are:
 - Widen the M11 to dual four lane between the M25 and A14

- New east-west route between the M11 at Stansted and the M1 near Luton
- Improvement of other east west routes: A505 Duxford to Luton including full dualling and Hitchin bypass; A414 Harlow to M11 including a northern bypass of Harlow and a new junction with the M11 at Sheering
The main rail proposals locally are:
- Local improvements to West Anglia line to increase capacity.

5 Under Option B – Prioritising Investment in Public Transport, the main rail proposals locally are:

- Local improvements to West Anglia line (as Option A).

The main road proposals locally are:

- M11 widening north of Junction 8 to dual three lane motorway with the whole length of the M11 incorporating a dedicated lane for bus and high occupancy vehicles
- Improved east west routes (as Option A).

6 Under Option C – Restraining Demand, the main road proposals include:

- M11 - rationalisation of junctions in the Cambridge area with possible closure of some, bus and freight gates at all M11 junctions with access charges (varying by time of day and location) for private users;
- Fiscal and charging measures to dampen demand for travel including road user charging within all urban areas of 25,000 populations.
- Modest east west road improvements, primarily for safety reasons.

7 The consultant’s summary of the respective impacts of the Options A to C, looking at the measures across the full study area and not just locally, is indicated in the following table.

Effect of each option on:	Option A Increasing capacity	Option B Prioritising Investment in Public Transport	Option C Restraining Demand
Accessibility	Positive effect	Positive effect, and better than Option A for non car users	Positive, particularly for urban areas, and probably better than with either Options A or B
Accident reduction	Positive effect	Positive effect but not as high as with Option A	Better than existing commitments, not as good as Option A, similar to Option B
Economic efficiency	Positive effect	Positive effect	Positive, but not as good as Options A or B

Environmental impacts	Negative – new infrastructure results in land take	Negative effects, but not as great as Option A	Neutral/ positive in terms of air quality and green house gases
Reliability	Positive effect	Not stated	Not stated
More comfortable travel	Positive effect	Not stated	Positive effect

Comment

- 8 Officers agree with the following consultants’ comments on the likely outcomes:
- i. Widening the M11 to dual 4 lane and the A14 to dual three lane would be likely to attract some current M1 traffic, especially from the M25 east of the M11 to the Midlands.
 - ii. A new Stansted to Luton route would deliver dramatic local journey time improvements, but east west strategic movements will be affected if it draws too much traffic from the A14 and M25.
 - iii. Rat running would be reduced with Option A as strategic traffic stays on appropriate routes.
 - iv. Despite the strategic improvements in rail under Option B, there would not be a commensurate reduction in road congestion, which would become progressively worse towards 2031 compared to the current day.
 - v. Improving E- W rail is concerned with improved rail accessibility rather than reduction in road and rail network congestion.
 - vi. The net result of Option C Restraining Demand would be a deterioration of operating conditions on the road and rail networks as traffic continued to grow albeit at a slower rate with measures like local road user charging and motorway access charging to discourage short trips in place. In effect, restraining demand on its own will not be successful.
- 9 These study proposals are very significant and no doubt Members will wish to comment even at this stage in the study.
- 10 The Council is invited to say if any of the strategy options needs to have additional components included. Officers’ view is that, in terms of strategic measures, the identification of measures seems comprehensive, subject to confirmation that they include the Stansted second rail tunnel bore to increase the capacity of the airport spur.
- 11 The Council is asked to indicate in principle which measures must be included in the fourth, balanced, option. To assist in the process officers have identified the most relevant measures to Uttlesford and have suggested initial comments. It follows logically that if Members confirm that a particular measure should be included in a fourth option the converse, that the measure must not be included, does not apply. This leaves a limited number of measures on which Members guidance is sought. The options are that it

must be included, it must not be included, or that no comment is offered on a particular measure.

Measures most relevant to Uttlesford:	Must <u>be</u> included in 4 th Option	Must <u>not be</u> included in 4 th Option
1. Widen M11 to dual 4 lanes M25 to A14		
2. New route M11 Stansted to M1 Luton		
3. Improve existing east west road corridors	Yes	Not applicable
4. West Anglia line local improvements	Yes (WARM enhancements)	Not applicable
5. Rail freight : transfer some to Felixstowe – Nuneaton line	Yes	Not applicable
6. East west rail: build link between Bedford and Sandy, improve the E - W connection to the north of Hitchin	Yes	Not applicable
7. Widen M11 north of J8 to dual three lane motorway standard	Yes	Not applicable
8. Dedicated lane for bus and high occupancy vehicles along whole of M11		
9. Overcome existing rail bottlenecks	Yes	Not applicable
10. Road user charging varied by time and location in all urban areas over 25,000 population eg Bishop's Stortford, Cambridge and Harlow.		
11. Park and ride for all urban areas, free to local users	Yes	Not applicable
12. Reduce road capacity for private car users within urban areas.		
13. Additional component 1	Stansted Airport 2 nd rail tunnel (may be included in WARM enhancements)	Not applicable
14. Additional component 2		

Next Stages in the Study

- 12 The consultants will identify a preferred strategy for the overall study area and work up and appraise detailed options for specific areas. Following further consultation over the next few months up to July 2002 a final set of recommendations will be made at the strategic and area levels. The Government Office will then take a set of proposals forward to the Regional Planning Body, which will make recommendations to the Secretary of State. Approved schemes and policies will then be taken forward through the formal planning process.

RECOMMENDED that Members determine the Council's response to the LSM MMS Strategy Consultation.

Background Papers: LSM MMS Strategy Consultation Autumn 2001
Consultation Briefing Paper GO East

Agenda Item No: 5

Title: Season Tickets for Car Parks

Author: Alex Stewart (01799) 510555

Summary

- 1 This report provides Members with details of the current way Season Tickets are managed and recommends that Season Tickets be offered to local residents at the same price as residents of Residents' Parking Schemes in both Saffron Walden and Stansted Mountfitchet.

Background

- 2 Season Tickets are offered to people working in the three largest towns, i.e., Saffron Walden, Great Dunmow and Stansted Mountfitchet. It provides people who work in the towns the opportunity to purchase tickets at a reduced rate. At the Lower Street car park, Season Tickets are made available for commuters but they are expected to pay the same price as the Season Tickets that are sold by WAGN at the railway station car park.
- 3 The table below sets out the availability and take up of Season Tickets for each car park and their cost.

Car Park	<u>No. of Season Tickets Available per Car Park</u>	<u>No. of Season Tickets Sold (at time of writing report)</u>	<u>Cost of Season Ticket (p.a. incl. VAT)</u>
Swan Meadow	120	97	£232
Chequers Lane	10	6	£172
White Street	40	32	£172
Crafton Green	20	9	£120
Lower Street	48	32	£120

Current Payment Methods

- 4 Season Ticket holders currently pay by cheque, in advance, on a quarterly, six monthly or annual basis in Saffron Walden and on a six monthly or annual basis in Great Dunmow and Stansted Mountfitchet. Saffron Walden Season Ticket Holders are offered more favourable payment options due to the higher price.
- 5 Discounts are offered to companies if they purchase a quantity of Season Tickets in advance, on an annual basis, as follows -
 - 2.5% discount for between 2-10 Season Tickets
 - 5% discount for 10-20 Season Tickets
 - 20% discount for over 20 Season Tickets

Whilst several companies take advantage of the discounted scheme, only Consignia receive the maximum discount.

Future Payment Methods

- 6 It is proposed to introduce credit card payments for Council services later this year. It is hoped that this facility would also be made available to people purchasing Season Tickets.

Other Potential Season Ticket Users

- 7 Officers frequently receive requests from residents in Saffron Walden who live on a street that is not included in the Residents' Parking Scheme, have no off-street/on-street parking facilities and wish to purchase a Season Ticket to help alleviate their parking problems. Examples include Church Street, the High Street and Hill Street.
- 8 Similarly, some residents in Stansted Mountfitchet are experiencing parking problems. To date, there have been no requests for Season Tickets from residents of Great Dunmow, although concerns have been raised about the increasing pressures on parking for residents in the town.
- 9 Given the problems in Saffron Walden and Stansted Mountfitchet, and considering that there is currently an under use of Season Tickets in these towns, for which demand is unlikely to change in the foreseeable future, the Council could offer residents who have no available on or off street parking the option to purchase a Season Ticket. This could be at a charge paid by Residents' Parking Scheme Permit Holders (currently £52 p.a.). If, however, some Members may feel that this would discriminate against existing Season Ticket holders, Members could agree to make a different/higher charge or allow purchase at the price currently paid by existing Season Ticket Holders.
- 10 For Great Dunmow, however, given the increasing levels of demand for car parking and Season Tickets, it is recommended that this option is not available to residents of Great Dunmow at present.

Conclusions

- 11 By offering Season Tickets to residents who currently have no on or off street parking facilities, the Council would help alleviate certain problems that are apparent in Saffron Walden and Stansted Mountfitchet. In addition, a small amount of revenue would be generated.

RECOMMENDED that

- 1 residents in Saffron Walden and Stansted Mountfitchet that do not have appropriate, available parking be offered a Season Ticket for use on an appropriate car park subject to availability, and
- 2 Members determine the charges to be made for such Season Tickets.

Background Papers: Season Ticket file

Agenda Item No: 6

Title: CONSULTATION PAPER – TOWARDS A NATIONAL AMBIENT NOISE STRATEGY

Author: Will Cockerell (01799) 510581

Summary

- 1 This report advises Members of a recent Government consultation paper inviting comments on its proposals for developing a National Ambient Noise Strategy for England.

Introduction

- 2 The proposal is in three phases, the first phase aims to establish information on the ambient noise climate in the country, identify methods to assess the effects of noise including tranquillity and to identify techniques for improving or preserving the situation. The second phase would aim to evaluate and prioritise the alternatives identified in the first phase, and the final phase would be for the Government to agree policies that would bring about a National Ambient Noise Strategy.

Consultation Response

- 3 The Consultation Paper requires a response by the 15th March 2002 and asks specific questions about its proposals under various headings and some comments suggested by officers are shown in italics.

Overall Approach

- 4 The Consultation Paper asks whether the three phase approach is broadly correct and the content of each phase is right.

The five-year timetable envisaged is rather long, but the size of the task is considerable. The production of a “noise map” for England is to be welcomed, but authorities like Uttlesford with the experience of Stansted Airport noise contour maps know that “annoyance” and the disruption to rural tranquillity are not accurately reflected by the current methodology.

Local Neighbour Noise

- 5 The national strategy explicitly excludes neighbour noise, but asks whether more needs to be done to tackle local neighbourhood noise more effectively.

The Government has recently announced that it has completed a review of Noise Act 1996 and will legislate to make it easier for authorities to utilise the night time noise provisions without the need to introduce a comprehensive night time call out service. The introduction of any additional powers may have resource implications for the Council.

Adverse Effects of Noise

- 6 The Consultation Paper acknowledges that there is no consensus in assessing the impact of noise on quality of life and asks for views on taking the matter forward, particularly in assessing annoyance and defining tranquillity. It suggests the setting up of an expert panel to advise the Government.

Whether people are annoyed by noise is not just a function of the absolute level of noise, but also whether they feel it has been imposed unfairly, and whether adequate compensation has been offered. This is particularly true for transport related noise which frequently has no direct benefit to those affected. Levels of compensation are related to a nominal devaluation in property prices, rather than the degradation in quality of life.

The Consultation Paper includes a Council for the Protection of Rural England definition of a tranquil area based on distance to various sources such as major roads and airports. The proposed noise maps may provide a more accurate picture of where these areas are situated and a method of predicting the adverse effects of development proposals upon them. With Stansted Airport described “an airport in the countryside”; a working definition of tranquillity and a strategy to protect such areas will have a particular local significance.

Action Against Ambient Noise

- 7 The Consultation Paper includes an overview of what is already being done to reduce, abate and mitigate noise, and lists what is planned for the four major sources, road, rail, air traffic and industry. The paper asks how the balance between economic and social priorities and environmental concerns should be made.

The section on railway noise omits any reference to our current problems with whistle boards introduced on footpath crossings to improve safety standards.

The section on aircraft noise acknowledges that future progress in reducing noise will be more difficult as no new technological breakthroughs in air frame or engine design are anticipated. It expects that operational methods such as continuous descent approach and the introduction of area precision navigation, known as RNAV, will bring about some improvement. There is no reference to the significant contribution from ground noise from engine testing and general airport activities to local ambient noise levels.

Collection of Information on the Noise Environment

- 8 Views are sought on who should be responsible for maintaining and updating the noise maps;- local authorities, transport sectors or central government. If local authorities are to take on this role, should it be county or district councils?

The Government has already indicated that it will co-ordinate the initial round of mapping and is looking for views on subsequent rounds at five yearly intervals. It is envisaged that the maps will be produced by computer models and will be dependant on high quality input data, particularly road traffic statistics. This data is also required by district councils to carry out reviews and assessments of air quality where again, road traffic is the major contributor. Within Essex there is a countywide Air Quality Consortium which co-ordinates the approach of district councils and is currently looking at a joint approach to the second round of reviews. A similar approach could be adopted for the noise map. This would enable district councils to maintain control of the production of the noise maps and also benefit from economies of scale.

Analysis of Costs and Benefits

- 9 The Consultation paper has a chapter on current research in this area which attempts to put a monetary value on noise by assessing how much individuals will be willing to pay for similar property in noisier and quieter environments. The paper asks whether there are other areas for research.

The over reliance on notional residential property values ignores the effects on schools, hospitals and recreational facilities. The effects on those with no direct interest in the capital cost of their living accommodation are also ignored.

RECOMMENDED that the above comments together with the views of the Committee be made to the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs.

Background Papers: Towards a National Ambient Noise Strategy.

Agenda Item No: 7

Title: BUDGET AND SERVICE PLANS 2002/03

A report on this item is to follow.

Agenda Item No: 8

Title: Community Transport Partnership Agreement

Author: Sarah McLagan (01799) 510560

Summary

- 1 This report provides Members with details of a Community Transport Partnership Agreement proposed by Essex County Council. It recommends agreement in principle.

Background

- 2 Essex County Council (ECC) wishes to establish a Community Transport Partnership (CTP) Agreement to meet the objectives of its agreed and published Road Passenger Transport Strategy.
- 3 ECC is seeking to develop a Community Transport Partnership in Uttlesford to include the Council and the local Community Transport provider – Uttlesford Community Travel.

Agreement Principles

- 4 The objective of the CTP Agreement is

“To form a partnership to include Community Transport service providers and funding bodies in order to secure and co-ordinate an effective accessible and safe passenger transport service for those members of the local community who are unable to access conventional public transport by virtue of disability, age or social exclusion.”

- 5 The period of the CTP Agreement is between XX Month 2002 and 31 March 2005 but may be terminated by the mutual agreement of all parties at the end of any given financial year within this period.
- 6 The CTP Agreement sets out the commitment to be met by ECC – finance for the Community Transport Scheme, securing grants, developing relationships, provide professional transport advice and service audits; the Service Provider - meet performance targets, undertake customer satisfaction surveys, keep records and accounts - and the Council. In the case of the Council, it is required to provide funding and/or support in kind for the scheme for the

duration of the agreement, subject to the Council's service requirements and aims.

- 7 All partners would be required to review the Agreement annually.

Implications of the CTP Agreement

- 8 Members are aware that the Council has entered a three year Service Level Agreement (SLA) with Uttlesford Community Travel (UCT) for the provision of a Hospital Transport Service. It makes a grant of £30K p.a. to enable UCT to provide the service. The SLA has two further years to run from 1 March 2002.
- 9 Officers have spoken to ECC about its existing SLA and how it could be accommodated within the proposed CTP Agreement. ECC has suggested that if the Council were to agree to the principle of the CTP Agreement Council officers could then discuss with ECC the detail of how the SLA could be incorporated into the Agreement.
- 10 Officers consider that this arrangement is satisfactory, subject to ECC agreeing that the Council's existing financial commitment is specifically towards the provision of the Hospital Transport Service, that the existing financial commitment is for financial years 2002/03 & 2003/04 and subject to budgetary provision, and that any further financial commitment beyond 2003/04 is subject to the Council making resources available.

RECOMMENDED that

- 1 the Council agree to the principle of a Community Transport Partnership Agreement, subject to Essex County Council's agreement to the caveats stated in paragraph 10 of the report.
- 2 the Director of Community Services be authorised to execute the Community Transport Partnership Agreement, in consultation with the Chairman of the Committee, subject to satisfactory detailed arrangements.

Background Papers: Letter and draft Community Transport Partnership Agreement, dated 21 December 2001