

Report to	Lead Cabinet Member for Transport and Environment
Date	27 June 2005
Report By	Director of Transport and Environment
Title of Report	Local Transport Plan Annual Progress Report 2004-05
Purpose of Report	To seek approval of the draft Local Transport Plan Annual Progress Report for 2004-05

RECOMMENDATIONS:

- 1. to approve the draft Local Transport Plan Annual Progress Report for 2004/05 for submission to the Government Office for the South East; and**
 - 2. to authorise the Director of Transport & Environment, in consultation with the Lead Member for Transport & Environment, to make any appropriate detailed amendments to the Annual Progress Report prior to its submission.**
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1. Financial Appraisal

1.1 The Local Transport Plan (LTP) established the framework for a five year investment programme for transport covering the period 2001/02 to 2005/06. It has led to significantly enhanced supported borrowing approvals from Government to finance the delivery of that programme. The Council's performance on transport is rated annually by Government, which informs the level of supported borrowing approvals allocated for the subsequent year.

1.2 The assessment of last year's Annual Progress Report (APR) as "well above average" has contributed to a CPA assessment of 4/4 in the environment block and reinforced the Audit Commission's whole service review assessment of the transport service as "good with promising prospects for improvement".

1.3 Future supported borrowing approvals secured through the second generation of Local Transport Plans (LTP2) will be allocated on a formulaic basis, with the integrated transport element adjusted by up to 25% to reflect the Authority's policy framework and performance against targets. The indicative level of supported borrowing for 2006/07 is £3.297m for integrated transport and £7.248m for maintenance. This excludes major schemes for which finance is bid for separately. GOSE's assessment of last year's APR should help support the case for an uplift in the formulaic allocation for future years of up to £750,000 annually.

2. APR Development

2.1 This year's report, a draft of which is available in the members room simply reports progress against targets and scheme delivery profiles, and explains the reasons for any significant (defined as + or - 25%) divergence. This reflects Central Government guidance for this year's APR, which seeks slimmer more focused reports, recognising the demands on authorities to develop provisional LTP2s for submission in July 2005.

2.2 GOSE has sought an early submission of this year's APR in June rather than July, in order to help streamline the workflow associated with assessing both the APRs and LTP2s. Although this is not a requirement, GOSE has indicated that it will be able to explore points of clarification with authorities which submit their reports in June, although they will not have that scope for reports submitted in July. In previous years the ability to help resolve points of clarification has been particularly valuable. Therefore, the programme for production of this APR has been brought forward to allow submission in June.

2.3 Good progress has been made towards meeting LTP targets 66% (6 out of the 9) core indicators and 85% (23 out of 27) of the local targets are on track to be achieved. Progress

towards road accident reduction targets is particularly encouraging, with the Council on track to meet the national targets 2 years early.

2.4 Of all the targets, only two core indicators cannot at this stage be supported by evidence. One, relating to cycling, relies on comparable survey data for the month of June, which will not be available until July. GOSE has agreed that this data may follow the formal report. The other, relating to road condition, requires survey assessment by an accredited machine which we have not been able to commission, because few of these are available in the UK. This is a difficulty being experienced by a number of Authorities and the Department for Transport (DfT) has indicated that, as a consequence, they will not qualify the results of this indicator in APR assessments this year.

2.5 Only one core indicator and four local targets are not on track to be achieved:

- two of these relate to the proportion of different road categories with a short residual life or where structural maintenance should be considered. Achievement of both of these targets has been hampered by the extensive damage during the long dry summer of 2003. In consideration of this, a bid was submitted to the DfT for £5.566m and an allocation of £4.594m was received to repair this damage. It is anticipated that these targets will show recovery in the 2005/06 survey.
- whilst showing continual growth year on year, the rate of increase in bus patronage in Hastings, has fallen behind the target, although the countywide target is on track. The target to increase passenger numbers by 5% year on year where a quality bus partnership exists is deliberately challenging. Patronage increased last year by 3.9% compared with 5.2% in the previous year. A programme of roadside real time passenger information is being implemented in Hastings over the next two years which, combined with the proposals for post 16 education are anticipated to build patronage further.
- one local target is dependent upon support from the rail industry to establish two new stations. It is now recognised that this target has become unrealistic in the LTP timeframe, given the constraints on railway industry funding, in particular the suspension of rail passenger partnership funding. This was subsequent to the publication of the LTP and therefore could not have been predicted.
- air quality pollutant levels have been exceeded in Lewes town and there is likely to be a need for Lewes District Council to declare an Air Quality Management Area, despite traffic levels falling following the introduction of a decriminalised parking regime. The air quality survey information does, in part, predate the introduction of new parking controls and improved enforcement. It is possible that when the air quality survey is repeated, the reduction in traffic volumes will have resolved this difficulty, although at the moment this target must be reported as not on track.

3. Conclusion and Reason for Recommendation

3.1 The draft APR accurately reflects the performance of the transport service in 2004/05, which has largely maintained the high level of performance established in 2003/04. In the few cases where targets have not been achieved, the reasons for this are explained in a cogent way, together with actions to address these where appropriate.

3.2 The programme for production of the APR has been brought forward to allow submission in June rather than July, to help GOSE streamline their workflow and as a consequence will give an opportunity to address to resolve points of clarification during the assessment period.

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Local members: All

BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS

Guidance on LTP Annual Progress Reports – Fourth Edition – DfT March 2004;
ESCC Local Transport Plan – July 2000.