

INTEGRATED TRANSPORT POLICY

Report by the Director of Environmental Services
Executive Member for Transportation and Sustainable Development

Purpose

To advise the Executive of plans to pursue an Integrated Transport Strategy covering all forms of transport and linking to other Council priorities and objectives. The strategy would include a proactive approach at the sub-regional level to advance medium/long term public transport priorities. To advise on the outcome of the Halcrow rapid transit study.

Action proposed by the Executive Member for Transportation and Sustainable Development**The Executive is requested to:**

1. support the Integrated Transport Strategy (ITS) initiative which includes pursuing rapid transit aspirations within the ITS;
2. support the recommendation to conclude the Halcrow rapid transit study;
3. recognise that the Local Implementation Plan (LIP) for the Mayor's Transport Strategy provides the vehicle for completion of the ITS by summer 2005; and
4. ask the Transport and Infrastructure Overview Panel to participate in development of the LIP in order to assist in the ITS policy formulation.

Reason for action proposed

This initiative will develop a coherent Integrated Transport Strategy, driven by the needs and aspirations of those who live and work in the Borough, which also enables the Council to deal with obligations arising from the Mayor's Transport Strategy and the Local Implementation Plan.

BACKGROUND

1. Various events have identified the need for an Integrated Transport Strategy that properly represents the diverse strands of RBK's transport policies and the relationship between them. Following the re-election of the Mayor of London all London Boroughs have received confirmation that a Local Implementation Plan for the Mayor's Transport Strategy is required in or soon after July 2005. During the recent Transport Inspection the Audit Commission inspectors also pointed to the lack of an integrated strategy that would link the various policies and initiatives in hand. The final justification is the local imperative of progressing Community Plan objectives and keeping the public and stakeholders informed. Their comments on

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specific transport policies often include the question “ How does this fit into the bigger picture?” The strategy will demonstrate how the policies combine, and obvious inconsistencies will need to be resolved during its formulation.

2. In addition to the points above, the Policy Programme includes transportation objectives which need to be put in the context of an overall Integrated Transport Strategy to provide the framework and clarity for their delivery. Work undertaken in the last two years on rapid transit, Park and Ride, town centre parking strategy and the transport aspects of redevelopment has all verified the need for an overarching strategy. This will take account of the national, regional and sub-regional agenda but will be driven by the needs and aspirations of those who live and work in the Borough.
3. Seeking to regain its ‘excellent’ status RBK invited the Audit Commission to carry out an inspection of its transport service. The inspection took place between 11-18 June 2004, during the course of which the following issues were discussed:
 - ◆ Evidence about modal shift and congestion and whether the Council is making progress in these priority areas;
 - ◆ Judgements about the net impact of Neighbourhoods and how far their value in promoting better local engagement and responsiveness to residents leads to conflict with overall strategic objectives.
 - ◆ Analysis of aspects of the current performance of the service on the basis of the latest PI data.
4. These discussions helped us to gain a better appreciation of where the transport service is strong and where improvement is needed. Where issues were easily addressable these are being tackled. The ITS and preparation of the Council's LIP will provide the foundation for developing the strategic approach and work is already being undertaken. Once the Inspectors' final report is received it will be submitted to the Executive and then to the Transport and Infrastructure Overview Panel for consideration.

Local Implementation Plan Requirement and Timetable

5. The title of the document relates to its ‘local’ role in implementing the Mayor's Transport Strategy. The exercise is more fundamental than that in 2001 when an Interim Local Implementation Plan was written. This time all transport expenditure plans and proposals, capital and revenue, need to be considered and shown to be acting in a coherent, cost effective way to deliver the Mayor's Transport objectives and any additional Borough objectives. The Plan is a statutory document under section 145 of the GLA Act 1999 and is due to be submitted to Transport for London (TfL) next summer.
6. Extensive consultation is an obligatory element of LIP preparation under another section of the Act and is programmed for February and March 2005. A production timetable is to be agreed with TfL in September. The provisional timetable is to complete the final LIP around the end of July 2005 and submit it during August. TfL have offered each Borough an extra £50,000 during 2003/04 to help with preparation costs. Environmental Services aim to use part of this to strengthen the team preparing the Local Implementation Plan. It will also cover consultation costs.

The Community Plan

7. The Integrated Transport Strategy should be consistent with, and create the delivery mechanisms for, the transport aspirations contained in the Community Plan. The Community Plan vision includes the theme 'A Sustainable Transport System that is Accessible to All'. Council transport policies, including those in the new UDP, are broadly consistent with that objective, as are the wider London policies set out by the Mayor in his Transport Strategy. Strategic Policy 13 in the UDP lays down the Sustainable Transport Strategy and starts with the sentence "The council will seek to reduce the need for travel, especially that by private car, and to limit the length of journeys to be made, through appropriate land use policies." It goes on to stress the key role public transport, cycling, walking and rail/water freight can make to an improved environment, reduced traffic congestion and accessibility for all. The word sustainable is of course open to interpretation and the main area of contention is how best to make the transition to such a system.

PROPOSAL

Overall vision of the Integrated Transport Strategy

8. The Strategy will describe a sustainable, safety based and value for money approach that maximises the Council's ability to bring the transport system up to the standard required. The philosophy is to comprehensively reduce the need to travel and selectively increase the opportunity to travel where this is needed to provide adequate accessibility. The overall expectation is that the economic and social needs of the Borough can be supported without any increase in traffic because of greater reliance on non-car modes.

Demand for transport

9. The ITS will need to be based on a clear analysis of the Borough's role within the wider region, including the region beyond the London boundary. An important consideration is trends in transport demand over the London Plan period (to 2016), and especially public transport capacity and demand. South London as a whole has the lowest population growth forecast and second lowest employment growth forecast among the five sub-regions identified in the London Plan. Between 2001 and 2019 population should grow by 51,000 (3.4% p.a.) and employment by 36,000 (2.4% p.a.). Such growth translates into demand for transport but other factors are equally important such as changes in average trip length, mode selected and even propensity to make trips. The National Travel Survey shows that the average number of trips made in 2003 was 1,000 per person per year, a fall of 6% in the last 10 years. However on average, Great Britain residents travelled 6,800 miles in 2003, an increase of 6% in the 10 years since 1992/1994. This reflects a 13% increase in the average length of trip from 6.1 miles to 6.9 miles.
10. Estimated population and employment growth in RBK will be lower than the South London average. A small rise in population will peak in 2006/07 before dropping back below 150,000 by around 2012. Similar estimates are unavailable for employment but the Borough lacks large scale opportunities for intensification so only modest growth is likely. However the Borough also needs to consider the transport implications of growth beyond the London Boundary and in particular the northern parts of Surrey which generate many trips into and out of the Borough.

Responding to demand

11. The ITS will need to recognise upward pressures on transport demand but should not assume a 'predict and provide' response. An important first approach is to follow planning policies which put countervailing pressure on transport demand. The London Plan encourages patterns and forms of development that reduce the need to travel, especially by car. It also supports high trip generating development only at locations with both high levels of public transport accessibility and capacity sufficient to meet the transport requirement of the development.
12. These land use approaches are already largely stated in the UDP and will be embodied even more firmly in the Local Development Framework. A second strand is influencing total demand and mode choice through Green Travel Plans, travel awareness initiatives and individual journey planning (as piloted in Surbiton).
13. It is probable that the full application of demand restraint measures will not be sufficient to counter all the upward pressure on demand. The strategy must then tackle how best to meet this demand. New road building is neither desirable nor practical so the central objective will be modal shift. The consultation draft LIP will propose modal share targets that increase accessibility yet decrease absolute levels of car use in the Borough's town centres and hold it steady in the remainder of the Borough.
14. This will require a major increase in public transport capacity, and walking and cycling measures effective enough to promote much greater use of these modes. It will also require a co-ordinated approach to capital and revenue spending on all the issues that influence peoples willingness to use these modes e.g.
 - Security, lighting and CCTV
 - Accessibility to bus stops, bus and train stations
 - Public transport information about routes, frequencies, fares, interchange etc
 - Maintenance, winter de-icing and cleanliness of footpaths, pavements and cycle paths
 - Signing of walk and cycle routes

Public Transport

15. The London Plan promotes increases of up to 50 percent in the capacity of public transport in London over the plan period (to 2016). This appears very ambitious and there is an East London weighting to the plans so the ITS will assume a significantly lower out-turn in this part of London. For this Borough heavy rail and bus are the key elements of the public transport system. Bus capacity can be expanded relatively quickly and there are opportunities to benefit from the virtuous circle which has seen London bus patronage rise 31% over the course of five years. London Buses envisage 30% more buses serving the town centre in the foreseeable future and discussion between Hammersons, London Buses and RBK is leading towards plans for a new bus station within the relief road to replace Eden Street.
16. This would be an important scheme and, along with the relatively tight constraint in parking capacity in the town, help make it possible to cater for retail growth through modal shift rather than increased car traffic. It should be seen as a key planning

gain from any approved re-development of the town centre. Elsewhere in the Borough the strategy will propose much greater bus priority on strategically important bus routes. Where bus lanes are proposed, the scope for dual use by other priority vehicles will be considered.

17. Prospects for rail have been enhanced by the new powers TfL are gaining. They plan to bring rail fares within the TfL zonal fare structure, extend Oystercard to the trains, simplify service patterns and contract rail services in the same way they contract buses. The ITS will examine ways to increase use of Surbiton station as a gateway to Kingston town centre by ensuring easier and better publicised interchange to the 30 or so bus services running between the two points each hour.

Parking and Park and Ride

18. The potential contribution of Park and Ride operating in tandem with reduced town centre parking will be covered. Additional Park and Ride scenarios will be examined, looking for opportunities to combine with bus priority measures on strategic corridors. The parking strategy for Kingston town centre will be summarised to illustrate the way it contributes to mode shift and allows growth of retail, leisure etc without increasing traffic congestion or environmental negatives.
19. Opportunities to improve the efficiency of parking provision in Kingston town centre associated with redevelopment will be set out. A Parking and Enforcement Plan for the entire Borough will be an element of the ITS and form one chapter in the Local Implementation Plan, updating a plan that was last revised in 1993. That will include freight issues, notably the Council's role in easing servicing and delivery for businesses.

Private road users: safety and convenience

20. Just over half the trips made in the Borough are by car so there will be an important strand of the Integrated Transport Strategy concerned with ensuring that these trips can be made in acceptable conditions. There is no incompatibility in a strategy that seeks to encourage modal shift away from car use but to ensure necessary car trips can be made in a safe and efficient manner. Safety for all road users will be covered as an underlying objective and one chapter in the Local Implementation Plan will consist of the RBK road safety plan. Another will lay out the Council's school travel plan strategy.
21. Highway maintenance and bridge assessment and strengthening consume a large proportion of capital and revenue budgets. They accounted for 40% of the £5m capital award in 2004/05 and in the next three years highway maintenance and street lighting will average £8.45m revenue expenditure each year. During the Transport Inspection there was comment on the lack of a detailed highway maintenance plan and high levels of reactive maintenance. The ITS will need to include a clear maintenance plan that is driven by the overall objectives of the Strategy.

Monitoring

22. An important aspect of the Integrated Transport Strategy and the Local Implementation Plan is monitoring progress. We require reliable performance indicators that can be monitored annually and used as a feedback loop to the strategy. This will ensure that where outcomes are falling behind target, measures in the strategy can be amended or intensified as necessary. The LIP guidance has defined up to 8 Borough level targets and a further 13 performance indicators that

are expected. This should be more than enough to cover RBK monitoring requirements.

Equalities and Consultation

23. To ensure equality impacts are properly considered TfL require an 'Equalities Impact Assessment' in the LIP. This should be modest in length and a rounded ITS should anyway take proper account of these issues, so meeting this requirement will be beneficial. Consultation on the ITS will take place as part of the obligatory LIP consultation programmed for February and March 2005. The outcome will be summarised in a 'Consultation results' chapter in the LIP.

Partnership and sub-regional issues

24. Where desirable projects exceed the powers or boundaries of the Council the Strategy will describe liaison and lobbying through regional channels, notably the London Plan sub-regional development frameworks, SWELTRAC and the South London Partnership (SLP) plus its tram task group. That approach will include pursuing RBK rapid transit aspirations within a context of the need for substantial long-term transport investment in South London. Another priority is public transport access to Heathrow given that construction of Terminal 5 is proceeding apace.
25. Strong backing for the Airtrack scheme is needed. The scheme has a strong benefit cost ratio of 2.7 and would allow anyone in South London who can access the rail network to reach Heathrow by rail with at most one interchange. The interchange options would be Clapham Junction or Twickenham for residents of this Borough.
26. The ITS can only ensure good integration and planning through a series of partnership and liaison relationships. Many already exist and must be made as productive as possible. Where necessary new relationships will be formed. Full use of Section 106 agreements to obtain physical transport improvements or financial contributions will support the Strategy.
27. The ITS will draw out linkages between transport policies and other parts of the Council's policy responsibilities such as education, leisure, social services and economic development. As an example, policies on location and size of schools, catchment areas and parent's freedom to choose all affect how far pupils travel and which mode is chosen. A further level of linkage is to local health service policies, police priorities and so on. The ITS will aim for consistency with Community Plan objectives, especially those stated in it's transport chapter.

Policy input by Members

28. The Transport and Infrastructure Overview Panel has indicated that it will need to be involved in formulation of the LIP and has set up a Task and Finish Group to concentrate on two of the Mayor's eight priorities. These are: -

Priority III. Relieving traffic congestion and improving journey time reliability including through the use of travel demand measures. Plans should have regard to the particular traffic conditions in different parts of London.

Priority V. Improving accessibility and social inclusion on the transport network. Plans should have regard to safety and security for women and vulnerable users.

Outcome of Rapid Transit Study

29. Halcrow were commissioned in May 2003 to assess the potential for rapid transit in the Borough. They began by assessing which transport corridors had sufficient patronage potential to meet the minimum necessary for any form of rapid transit; tram or bus-based. The corridors were also assessed for their physical characteristics e.g. road widths, requirement for use of green belt, Metropolitan Open Land etc. This acted as a screening process and led on to a second stage where all the potential expenditure and consequences (both positive and negative) were quantified. From this, benefit cost ratios (BCRs) were estimated for each of the short listed corridors.
30. BCR calculation is a complex process but the results were unequivocal so this report does not go into the finer detail of these calculations. The following table summarises the outcome.

TABLE 1 RESULTS OF ECONOMIC EVALUATION
£ million, Present values, discounted to 2003

Option	Implementation cost £ million	Benefit Cost ratio
Tram Route Originating from:		
Raynes Park	79	0.2
Worcester Park	83	0.3
Tolworth	70	0.1
Bus Route Originating from:		
Wimbledon	4	0.9
Sutton	4	0.9
Epsom	2	0.6
M25 J9	10	0.3
West Molesey	1	0.9
Heathrow *	Not practical	

* The scale of possible improvement on the Heathrow corridor is minimal.

31. The benefit cost ratios were unpromising on all corridors for the tram variant of rapid transit. Bus-based variants performed better but even the best three corridors only delivered around 90 pence of benefit for each pound of costs using the appraisal method the Department of Transport (DfT) require. Although DfT and TfL consider factors other than the BCR they do take a rule of thumb view that no scheme with a BCR below 1.5 can expect to attract public funding.
32. In view of the above, the Executive Members for Transportation and Sustainable Development and Economic Development and Regeneration met Halcrow on 28 May 2004 to discuss the way forward, along with the Chief Executive and other
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officers from Environmental Services. The outcome was a decision that asking Halcrow to re-examine tram potential, or proceed to more detailed third phase study of bus based rapid transit corridors, would not provide good value. Instead the Borough should focus on pursuing rapid transit aspirations within a coherent Integrated Transport Strategy (ITS). The Halcrow reports will be a valuable resource for the Integrated Transport Strategy and sub-regional efforts to improve public transport capacity.

Conclusion

33. The Integrated Transport Strategy will provide the overarching framework needed to deliver the Council's transport objectives. A clear and consistent set of policies will ensure that funds are directed in the most effective way and result in measures that deliver the outcomes required.

TIMESCALE

34. As per Local Implementation Plan timetable.

ENVIRONMENTAL IMPLICATIONS

35. The Integrated Transport Strategy will influence many of the important environmental problems facing the Borough. From July 2004 the UK has begun applying the European Union directive on Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) and all Local Implementation Plans must contain such an assessment. Royal Borough of Kingston's Plan will set demanding targets on traffic volumes and modal shift; targets which strongly support the Air Quality Action Plan and contribute to environmental objectives on noise, safety, ambience and consumption of fossil fuels. The latter point is critical to global warming and the Strategy must meet our obligation, as a rich community in a rich country, to modify some of our travel patterns and habits that have such detrimental consequences.
36. The increased walking and cycling envisaged contributes to public health, directly through exercise and indirectly through better air quality. The Strategy will also contribute to a more socially inclusive society because it has above average benefits for women, ethnic minorities and all those who, by necessity or choice, do not have access to a car.

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Mayor's Transport Strategy Local Implementation Plan Guidance July 2004
Transport Strategy Implementation Targets July 2004