# Local transport plans - policy evaluation: Part 1 - Final Report

**Contents**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Section</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Front cover</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Acknowledgements</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Glossary of Terms</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Executive Summary</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. Introduction to the Study</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Situation Analysis</td>
<td>31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Overview of the Evidence</td>
<td>39</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Inclusivity</td>
<td>48</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Funding and Long-Term Planning</td>
<td>66</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Breadth of Initiatives</td>
<td>84</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Integration</td>
<td>97</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. Delivery</td>
<td>110</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. Technical Robustness</td>
<td>128</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10. Understanding Progress</td>
<td>142</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11. Change Management</td>
<td>151</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12. Documentation</td>
<td>165</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13. Conclusions and Recommendations</td>
<td>176</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Local transport plans - policy evaluation: Part 1 - Final Report

### Front cover

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Revision</th>
<th>Purpose</th>
<th>Description</th>
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<tbody>
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<td>Final Report</td>
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**JOB NUMBER:** 501 1388  **DOCUMENT REF:** Part 1 Final
Acknowledgements

In undertaking this Study, we are extremely grateful for the contributions of local authorities, at both Officer and Member level, in providing their views on the LTP process. We are particularly grateful to the twelve case study authorities for providing access to their staff and documentation and the open and honest views put forward.

We are also grateful to the Government Offices for their views on the LTP process and for their assistance in organising the series of regional workshops with LTP practitioners in April and May 2002.

A full set of references and bibliography is included in Appendix A of this Report.

Addendum

The research for this Study was undertaken in 2002 before the Audit Office published its Comprehensive Performance Assessment (CPA) for all local authorities in England, scoring their efficiency in delivering a range of local public services. Following the publication of the CPA results in December 2002, the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister (ODPM) ruled that those authorities scored as "excellent," would not be required to prepare an Annual Progress Report or potentially a Local Transport Plan for 2006-2011. This affects LTP reporting for Cornwall, Cheshire, Derbyshire, Dorset, Hampshire, Hertfordshire, Hartlepool, Kent, Blackburn with Darwen and West Sussex.

At the time of finalising this report, the implications of these developments for the LTP process are still under discussion by ODPM, DfT and the Local Government Association. The resulting revisions in APR Guidance and subsequent LTP Guidance for 2006-2011 are not therefore covered in this Report.
**Glossary of Terms**

APR - Annual Progress Report  
BCA - Basic Credit Approval  
BSP - Borough Spending Plan (London Only)  
BV - Best Value  
CfIT - Commission for Integrated Transport  
CPA - Comprehensive Performance Assessment  
CSS - County Surveyors Society  
DfT - Department for Transport  
DTLR (DETR) - Department for Transport, Local Government and the Regions (now DfT)  
GLA - Greater London Authority  
GO - Government Office  
HA - Highways Agency  
ICE - Institution of Civil Engineers  
ILT - Institution for Logistics and Transportation  
LSP - Local Strategic Partnership  
LTP - Local Transport Plan  
LTT - Local Transport Today  
PLTP - Provisional Local Transport Plan  
PTA/PTE - Passenger Transport Authority/Executive  
QBP - Quality Bus Partnership  
RPG - Regional Planning Guidance  
RSG - Revenue Support Grant  
RSS - Regional Spatial Strategy  
RTS - Regional Transport Strategy  
RPP - Rail Passenger Partnership  
SCA - Supplementary Credit Approval  
SRA - Strategic Rail Authority  
SSA - Standard Spending Assessment  
TPSI - Transport Planning Skills Initiative  
TfL - Transport for London  
TPP - Transport Policies and Programme
Executive Summary

Introduction and Summary of Conclusions

Atkins Transport Planning was commissioned in December 2001 by the Department for Transport (DfT) to undertake a Study to evaluate the process of introducing Local Transport Plans (LTPs) for English local authorities.

The Study is divided into two parts. This Report covers Part 1 - Process Evaluation. Part 1 addresses the key issues associated with introducing the LTP framework, its perceived strengths and weaknesses and authorities' experience of LTPs since their introduction.

The overall conclusions of the Part 1 Study are:

- the introduction of LTPs has been strongly supported by local authorities in England as a major step forward from the previous Transport Policies and Programme (TPP) process. The strengths are seen as outweighing the weaknesses;
- where weaknesses are identified, these relate to how the process is administered and financed rather than fundamentally related to the principles of the process itself;
- whilst authorities are making good progress in delivering their LTP programmes, there is increasing realism over the challenges of delivery relative to high expectations when LTPs were first introduced;
- the extent of change between the TPP and LTP varies between authorities with the shift being especially marked for new unitary authorities set up in the late 1990s;
- performance of the first LTPs against the Department's Guidance is mixed and reflects wider issues of organisational capacity and political leadership. Staff and skills shortages are major barriers to LTP development and delivery for almost all authorities.
- the LTP remains a bidding document for capital funding and there are concerns over the extent to which revenue budgets have been brought into the process;
- supplementary guidance and advice is required in some key areas of the process, such as stakeholder consultation, target setting and analytical processes;
- solutions to many of the challenges identified may lie outside the scope of the LTP process itself; and
- there seems relatively little need - and few authorities desire - further fundamental change to the LTP process beyond some streamlining of reporting requirements and incremental adjustments. A number of years are now required for the LTP process to bed down and for authorities to develop good practice in delivery.

Scope of the Part 1 Study (Chapters 1 and 2)

LTPs are landmark documents. They require authorities in England to plan and deliver five-year programmes for managing and enhancing transport services within a comprehensive multi-modal strategy for the achievement of local and national objectives. Authorities are required to consult widely and work in partnership in developing their LTP strategies and integrate transport investment

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1 Formerly, the Department of Transport, Local Government and the Regions (DTLR)
2 Part 2A – a Scoping Study for an Impact Evaluation – is reported elsewhere.
into wider policy objectives whilst having discretion to switch funding between spending areas according to local priorities and programming requirements.

There are clear differences between LTPs and the preceding TPP framework in terms of process, content and objectives. The introduction of the LTP framework has been also been paralleled by a substantial increase in capital funding and, for some authorities, the transition to unitary status.

There is a need to evaluate the success of the LTP framework to date in comparison to the TPP format it replaced. The objectives of the Part 1 Study are therefore:

- to set out the key differences between the LTP and TPP frameworks;
- to evaluate how well the LTP process is meeting its original aims;
- to establish the success of the process in overall terms;
- to identify, and critically evaluate, strengths and weaknesses, enablers and obstacles of the process;
- to identify examples of good practice from which DfT and authorities may learn; and
- to recommend changes to the process, and associated Guidance, which may assist DfT and authorities in progressing LTPs in the second round for 2006-2011.

We are conscious that such an evaluation also represents effectively a mid-term "health check" on how well the process is working, whether change is required and the extent and form that this should take.

We have chosen to evaluate the LTP process in terms of nine generic themes as follows:

- inclusivity in terms of consultation and partnership working;
- funding and long-term planning;
- breadth of initiatives;
- integration with wider policy agendas and planning frameworks;
- extent and effectiveness of delivery;
- technical robustness of analytical processes;
- understanding progress, including target setting and monitoring;
- change management of managerial and political processes; and
- documentation.

Our evidence on these themes is drawn from a number of sources offering a range of perspectives and data. These include:

- a review of professional literature, Government Office Assessments of LTPs and APRs;
- our own assessment of 20 selected LTPs;
- a series of eight regional workshops with LTP practitioners; and
- twelve case studies of local authorities across England, randomly selected by authority type, region and performance against the Single Capital Pot scores.

These sources have been combined to produce a large body of evidence on the LTP process, structured under each of the generic themes, drawing on each source as appropriate depending on the topic and the strength of evidence required. By necessity, the focus of the evidence has been on LTP practitioners themselves and the LTP documentation. This has yielded a wide range of viewpoints and
perspectives which we have corroborated through parallel contacts with Government Offices, the Department itself and external stakeholders.

Overview of the Evidence (Chapter 3)

The impression we receive from LTP practitioners, Members, academic experts and, to a lesser extent, external stakeholders, is positive. LTPs are seen as an improvement from the TPP system and authorities believe that after years of narrowly-based allocations, they are in a position, as one LTP Practitioner put it, to "do something about transport."

As such, LTPs offer increased scope to deliver the Government's transport objectives and agenda locally on the ground. It is encouraging that where there are concerns or criticisms, these are often of the way in which the process is being administered, financed or monitored, rather than of the principles underlying the process itself. Not surprisingly, these concerns are expressed by those performing less strongly against the process requirements, but are also shared to a degree by the leading authorities who feel some of the process requirements could be streamlined.

Particular concern is expressed at the challenges raised by the substantial increase in capital funding from a low base over a very short time period. For many LTP practitioners, Government Offices and external stakeholders, delivery and the means to ensure delivery has become the focus of debate and the key reason why the actual experience of LTPs is falling below expectations.

On this issue, different authorities are inevitably at varying stages in adapting to the new process and delivering their programmes. Many of the key issues relate to political will and administrative and technical capability at the local level. For some aspects of (and stakeholders in) the process, it is therefore a question of "keep up the good work" whilst for others there is an implication of "could do better" or even "must do better."

The overall positive reaction to the LTP is reflected by the fact that most LTP practitioners, Government Offices and stakeholders are pressing for limited change to the process. Indeed, a widespread view from LTP practitioners is a desire for continuity which will allow authorities to "bed down" and deliver the LTP programmes with certainty and a minimum of new requirements. Proposals for radically different planning and resource allocation frameworks such as those based on demographic and economic formulas or a single land use planning and transport programming document find relatively little favour from those we spoke to.

Given the greater flexibility associated with the LTP process, the skills shortage, the level of change authorities have had to accommodate, and the greater member involvement in the process which creates uncertainty over delivery of schemes on the ground, it is not surprising that some authorities are progressing more successfully than others. A key issue for DfT is thus how best to assist the poorer performing authorities without bringing in radical changes to the process or imposing substantial amounts of additional guidance on authorities. This could be achieved through specialist support and advisory teams seconded from DfT to improving authorities for limited periods, or by encouraging greater use of external resources.

Strengths and Weaknesses

There is broad consensus that the key strengths of the LTP process include:

- the objective/target (rather than scheme) led approach;
- the five-year timescale allowing longer-term planning;
- greater flexibility and discretion in switching funding between schemes;
- integration of key policy areas within the wider strategy;
- statutory status;
- value added by public and stakeholder consultation; and
There is also support for the increase in capital resources and this is seen as allowing the process to deliver more and for authorities to meet their local transport objectives and targets. Key weaknesses noted are less related to the overall principles of the LTP, but more to its administration and detailed application:

- the extent of change and logistical requirements of the process in such a short time;
- the "one size fits all" approach, with the same requirements falling on small unitary authorities and rural counties as the largest metropolitan areas;
- a limited consideration of revenue funding;
- the cost and time-consuming nature of consultation;
- a lack of clear linkage between LTP and other funding regimes impacting on transport infrastructure and services;
- the potential return of annual spending through the introduction of the Single Capital Pot, with potential for authorities to re-allocate transport capital funding to other areas;
- an excessive focus on targets and "ticks in boxes", potentially encouraging short-term decision-making and investment;
- lack of integration with the Highways Agency and the Strategic Rail Authority; and
- limited integration with the evolving regional planning frameworks and uncertainty over the implications of the Government's regional planning proposals.

These strengths and weaknesses are consistent between authorities and generally between Officers and Members, and between authorities and other organisations. External stakeholders are more likely to point to lack of rapid and effective delivery following from the "good intentions" of the LTP policies, although they are also less likely to understand the details of the process itself.

The remainder of this Executive Summary explores these conclusions under each of the generic themes, including answers to specific questions raised in the Study Brief.
Inclusivity (Chapter 4)

Have the main elements of Government Guidance on participation/stakeholder consultation been followed?

The principal elements of the Government's Guidance on LTP consultation have been followed. Evidence from the Government Office LTP Assessments shows that most authorities describe the extent to which local communities/partners have been involved in formulating LTP objectives. However, evidence suggests that authorities are often failing to keep the public fully involved; they are not always feeding the results of the consultation back into the process and are not redefining the aims and objectives of the plan as a result.

Carrying out effective consultation is still very much of a learning process for authorities, many not having undertaken widespread consultation exercises before the LTP. There are a number of problems and issues of concern:

- consultation can be costly, time consuming and with the potential to raise expectations which are then difficult to satisfy;
- "Consultation fatigue" amongst the public, and increasingly stakeholder organisations, is a serious concern;
- broadly-based impersonal methods of consultation, such as travelling roadshows, tend to attract little public interest or response rates compared to more targeted exercises based on citizens' panels, focus groups and community/residents' fora;
- the majority of the public are difficult to engage at the strategic level of the LTP, and tend to be only interested in their own local issues;
- consultation can be hijacked or dominated by small vocal interest groups, usually opposed to the authority, rather than the "silent majority";
- LTP practitioners have concerns that the public may raise transport priorities or proposals which conflict with the Government's national objectives, raising questions over the validity of consultation if it can not genuinely feed through into the LTP.

Much of the criticism over consultation relates to widespread "blanket" exercises at strategic level which were undertaken in advance of the first LTP and many authorities would not necessarily repeat for the second LTP, preferring a more targeted approach at specific interest or community groups.

There is potential for future consultation exercises on the LTP to be undertaken under the umbrella of Local Strategic Partnerships (LSPs).

Is there evidence of more partnership working in development/delivery of LTPs?

The extent of successful partnership working varies widely with new stakeholders such as the Countryside Commission, Freight Transport Association and Sustrans involved. Partnerships with district councils and bus operators have also generally improved. However, initiatives may be confined to broad statements rather than practical collaboration on the ground. This often reflects differing commercial or political objectives of the organisations concerned. Nevertheless, this is an area where authorities believe they are improving markedly compared to the TPP.

Joint working with bus operators is patchy, being generally better in the PTE and large urban areas. There are many examples of good practice; however, barriers appear to be the risk adverse nature of many operators and commercial interests taking precedence over LTP policies. From the local authority side, constraints derive from lack of professional staff to design and deliver schemes and delays resulting from consultation requirements.
Joint working with the rail industry is seen as slow, frustrating and unproductive. Apart recent national events affecting the rail industry, this situation is partly a result of the Strategic Rail Authority's focus on national objectives and targets and the fact that it sees its sphere for local engagement at the regional level rather than through individual LTPs.

Whilst partnership between county and district councils, and between metropolitan districts has improved, joint working between neighbouring authorities is a potential area of weakness, and in some cases this may result in LTP strategies which are inconsistent with wider travel to work areas. Often the barrier to closer strategic planning and programming is at political level rather than through Officers and the case studies include instances where co-operation is far less than optimal even where the Government Office is urging closer partnership.

The LTP process has forced (enabled) local authorities to develop partnerships with local education authorities/NHS trusts and businesses. However, the relationships are still under development and less is actually happening in practical terms. As with consultation, the setting up of cross-cutting LSPs may assist in closer integration with other policy areas and public agencies.

**Funding/Long Term Planning (Chapter 5)**

*Is there any evidence there has been an improvement in long-term strategic and investment planning within local authorities? Is there any evidence to suggest that local authorities are able to make ‘active’ use of the greater certainty provided? How is this affecting their investment plans?*

The increase in capital funding under the LTP is welcomed by almost all authorities and stakeholders. The five-year timescale is allowing longer-term planning to take place, for example with regards to developing multi-year programmes and progress on Major Schemes which annual TPP bids deterred.

However, the speed of funding increase, unmatched in the early years of the LTP by an increase in professional staff and fully developed and "ready to go" schemes, is resulting in underspends for many LTP programmes. Major enhancements in authorities' delivery are required to address this.

There are concerns that the flexibility associated with the five-year timescale has the potential to be undermined by the introduction of the Single Capital Pot and the effective return of year-by-year spending. It is too early to form a definitive view of the effect of the Pot, and authorities' experience of managing it, but the implications for transport capital spending should be kept under review by the Department.

*Does greater certainty affect the partnerships local authorities are able to make, e.g. with the private sector?*

The greater certainty of funding is enhancing authorities' capacity to enter into partnerships, although not without limits. The case studies provide evidence of a wide range of funding sources and organisations which are matching LTP expenditure.

Government Office Assessments suggest that involvement of the private sector appears to be a weakness in a number of LTPs. While mention of private sector contribution may be made, this has often not been 'maximised.' In the case of developer contributions, the separation of LTP and Development Control Departments and staff often means relatively weak linkages between the two functions.

*Do authorities feel that the LTP process provides a genuine increase in flexibility and freedom to manage their spending? If not, why not? If so, do they feel this has real benefits? What are they?*

Authorities are able to use the flexibility of LTP funding to switch resources between spending areas to reflect differing rates of progress, for example by switching funds for integrated transport into road and bridge maintenance which can be implemented more quickly and easily in the early years of the LTP programme. The flexibility is particularly valued by well established authorities which have schemes "on the shelf" which can now be bought forward for implementation if other schemes are running behind schedule.
We find limited evidence that authorities so far have chosen to re-allocate their core transport capital budgets under the Single Capital Pot, although there is mixed evidence of the discretionary element of the Pot being allocated to transport investment. One view is that the so-called flexibility within the Pot is more theoretical than actual and few authorities will reduce their core transport allocations for fear of attracting reduced capital awards in future years. However, the situation should be kept under review.

There is some evidence that greater discretion in allocating funds to specific schemes has led to greater Member involvement and associated politics. The case studies provide some evidence of schemes being delayed or dropped entirely following Member intervention, although strong Member support can also assist scheme delivery.

Authorities believe that the benefits of the increase in capital funding under the LTP is being threatened by continued shortages in revenue budgets. Views differ as to the cause of this and a detailed analysis is beyond the remit of this Part 1 Study. However, we believe that the issue arises from the coverage of the LTP within the Government's Standard Spending Assessment, combined with Members' reluctance to allocate increased revenue budgets to transport functions in favour of spending areas perceived as more pressing. Our view is that an adjustment of the SSA to take account of LTP capital expenditure, combined with a stronger emphasis to Members of the importance of revenue allocations, offers a potential solution to this problem.

Is there evidence that different funding streams (e.g. Objective 1 and 2; SRB; RDA funding) are better co-ordinated with transport capital funding?

The case studies provide a range of evidence of funding streams which are contributing to local transport enhancements alongside the LTP. There are instances where authorities are building packages of funding to deliver schemes of which the LTP is one element or where private or developer funding has been used to substitute entirely expenditure under the LTP.

Views on continuing to invite Challenge funding along side the LTP vary between authorities, with those receiving relatively little funding via this mechanism being unsurprisingly less supportive. Whilst Challenge bids are seen as time consuming and favouring the already good authorities, they also provide combinations of capital and revenue and are ringfenced outside the remit of the Single Capital Pot.

Breadth of Initiatives (Chapter 6)

Is there evidence that all forms of transport are being factored into the LTP Process?

The evidence suggests shows that authorities believe that they are considering a wider range of issues and initiatives. Feedback from Government Offices generally confirms this. Many authorities were moving in this direction, or even leading policy development, under the Package Approach, but the LTP process has given greater impetus to Officers working with Members previously reluctant to promote walking, cycling and public transport schemes.

Authorities are generally better at covering bus, rail and cycling strategies, but less competent in their coverage of walking, taxi/private hire vehicles, travel planning, sustainable distribution and rural issues. This may be due to lack of familiarity with the concepts underlying these topic areas and possibly to lack or shortage of appropriately qualified staff and in-house skills.

There are mixed views on the degree of success that authorities have had in actually delivering the wider agenda in programming terms with some arguing that authorities have to work through the "backlog" of schemes inherited from the TPP before generating more innovative schemes, fully reflective of the changed priorities.

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3 For example, Rural and Urban Bus Challenge, or the Countryside Agency’s Rural Transport Partnership scheme.
Lack of progress in some key areas is also due to:

- some initiatives (e.g. travel awareness tend to be more revenue than capital intensive;
- limited control or leverage over external stakeholders;
- political will in progressing demand management initiatives.

*What evidence is there that different authorities have adopted varying approaches and processes in the development of their LTP aims, objectives and strategies?*

Evidence from the regional workshops suggests that a wider range of strategies are being considered by authorities; however, their implementation will take time. In part, this is down to the culture of local authority transport departments with transport planners and traffic engineers focusing on "more of the same" in the sense of schemes they know and understand well. Newer types of scheme will take time to develop better understanding and good practice.

Authorities have used a variety of methods in identifying problems and developing strategies. These include:

- assessments related to overall objectives;
- technical analyses including comparisons of local transport performance with other places (benchmarking) and modelling of a future scenario based on do-minimum or do-something cases;
- consultation with communities, user groups, stakeholders and partners; and
- analysis based around key themes identified in LTP Guidance.

Many unitary authorities have had to develop their strategies from scratch. Other authorities have either built on the former TPP approach or taken the opportunity to undertake a fundamental review. Most authorities have produced the prescribed Appraisal Summary Tables for their LTP strategies and some of the more comprehensive LTPs include an assessment against the specific Annex D criteria.

**Integration (Chapter 7)**

*How consistent are LTPs with national policy? How do LTPs compare with TPPs in relation to national policies in existence then?*

The case studies, our review of LTPs and Government Office LTP assessments show a good level of consistency with national policies. However, in many cases this is due to the prescription of the LTP Guidance rather than the aspirations of local Members, who may see electoral advantage in appealing more to car users and whose rhetoric may be odds with the principles set out in the LTP.

It is felt that LTPs are more consistent with national policy compared to the TPP on account of the latter's role as a bidding document rather than a strategic framework and its lack of a statutory basis.

*Is there evidence that transport's contribution to broader objectives (e.g. regeneration) is taken into account in the transport planning process?*

There is evidence from the case studies and workshops that transport professionals are liasing more closely with the health and education sectors, social services, economic planning and regeneration and disability groups. However, whilst there was clearly much thinking and consultation at the time the LTP was drawn up, evidence of active collaboration leading to solutions since is more limited. The development of Community Plans and Local Strategic Partnerships may assist in creating greater cross-sectoral integration.

Integration of LTPs with Regional Development Agencies, Regional Planning Guidance and their associated Regional Transport Strategies is at a very early stage. The RDAs are seen as focusing on job creation and regeneration with very little understanding of transport impacts or integrated transport policy whilst most LTPs have been prepared within a very loose regional context. The
Government's proposals for changing the regional planning system may bring about better integration and consistency but the full implications for LTPs need to be carefully thought through.

**Delivery (Chapter 8)**

It is widely acknowledged by LTP practitioners that authorities have larger expenditure programmes than they did under the TPP. There is also a perception amongst practitioners that LTPs are delivering more and a wider range of schemes on the ground. However, frequent concerns raised about the rising costs of staff, consultants, contractors and materials suggests that the increase in outputs on the ground may not be as great as the increase in expenditure, and in the case of some authorities, increases in outputs are likely to be marginal. There is also a view that it is more difficult to justify road schemes and over time, the balance of major and minor schemes ought to swing firmly towards alternative modes.

Nevertheless, as noted above, authorities are experiencing substantial underspends in some of their LTP budgets and lack of delivery is a major concern for Government Offices, DfT and external stakeholders as well as authorities themselves. The key barriers to effective delivery of the LTP programmes are noted as follows:

- staff and skill shortages;
- shortage of revenue funding;
- public/political will;
- the need to consult on the LTP strategy and individual schemes within it;
- actual, or the risk of, hostile press coverage, which can sway member support;
- increases in tender prices/construction costs;
- shortages of contractors;
- cross-boundary issues (for schemes such as park and ride);
- weak inter-departmental working;
- lack of support from external stakeholders;
- the return of potential annualisation of funding through Single Capital Pot;
- late issue of LTP/APR Guidance; and
- "excessive" Government focus on monitoring and reporting on targets.

Of these barriers, staff shortages and the lack of revenue funding are seen as the most pressing, as reflected across all of the regional workshops and case study authorities.

The case studies show that authorities are tackling these problems in a variety of ways, including the extensive use of contract workers and partnering agreements with consultants and construction companies. The latter frameworks are designed to assist authorities in delivering LTP programmes for which authorities simply do not have the in-house staff and skills to deliver on their own.

There are corresponding enablers to LTP programme delivery. These include:

- greater certainty of funding over a five year period;
- the flexibility of switching funds between spending areas;
- the statutory nature of the LTP;
- political will and leadership.
Technical Robustness and Understanding Progress (Chapters 9 and 10)

Is more analysis of transport problems and possible solutions occurring? Is the assessment of these problems and solutions in line with Integrated Transport White Paper principles?

The evidence from our own assessment of selected LTPs and discussions with LTP practitioners suggests that more technical analysis is being undertaken to inform the strategies and programmes set out in the LTP and reported in the APR. This is felt to be a reflection of the Full LTP and APR Guidance, the greater breadth of initiatives and greater use of external consultants. Much of the additional analysis being undertaken is based on the results of public consultation. Multi-modal models and similar approaches tend to be used for Major Schemes and for specific studies rather than across the board.

The prescriptiveness of the LTP Guidance means that the Major Scheme assessments are carried out using the Appraisal Summary Table (AST) framework. However, the inclusion of variant ASTs for difference Major Scheme options is mixed. Our LTP assessments also suggest that the quality of the AST themselves also varies, particularly in terms of quantification and description of impacts.

Post-scheme evaluation and the comparison of actual impacts with forecasts appears to be an area of weakness, despite the higher level of resources now given over to monitoring.

How are possible solutions appraised? What are the determining factors in choice of preferred solution, and how do these relate to the five over-arching national objectives for transport?

Strategy development is generally well handled by authorities, the majority of LTPs being rated as "good" against the Annex D assessment criteria for this topic. Authorities generally use the Appraisal Summary table to appraise their strategies.

Appraisal techniques include public consultation, the results of modelling and spreadsheet analysis and various prioritisation and appraisal frameworks. A wide range of approaches to Strategy Development are adopted by authorities, although all are objective-led:

- a common approach is to develop a set of measures directly aimed at addressing each of the objectives/themes in turn. Such approaches often lead to the development of a single overall strategy, with no alternative strategies considered;
- development of alternative overall strategies is generally only undertaken by large urban authorities, and limited information is generally given about the alternative options considered;
- authorities which do not identify alternative overall strategies, tend to develop a 'menu' based approach, which identifies a suitable range of measures, which can then be scaled up or down in response to consultation results or the different needs of different areas of the authority;
- some authorities are restricted to certain overall approaches, due to an existing commitment to major schemes;
- in a few cases, authorities have benchmarked themselves against similar sized settlements to determine the areas on which the strategy should focus and the level of improvement which is required.

What evidence is there that more monitoring of performance is taking place than in the pre-LTP era?

Most authorities appear to be carrying out more monitoring of performance than they did under the TPP. Indeed, many authorities feel that too much emphasis is being put on monitoring and achieving targets, and that monitoring was becoming too onerous. It is suggested that some regional monitoring should be introduced since the impacts of some initiatives were only going to be seen at a regional level. This would take pressure off the local authorities while ensuring consistency between areas and quality of data.
Practitioners feel they are reasonably good at monitoring inputs and outputs, but monitoring the impacts on outcomes will take many years and there is a feeling that Government is unreasonable to expect rapid results.

*To what extent have outcome, output and process targets and indicators been established? What is the degree of quantification for the targets/indicators established?*

Most authorities have identified a clear set of targets and performance indicators for measuring progress against objectives. In general, the level of target quantification is reasonably high, although there are still examples of authorities which have yet to quantify the majority of their targets. However, few LTPs provide evidence to demonstrate that targets are realistic and challenging.

Targets tend to be output and outcome targets, with input targets being less common. The better performing authorities have adopted a hierarchy approach to target setting, focusing mainly on high level outcome targets, but also including secondary topic and local based targets. However, a number of the less comprehensive LTPs concentrate on output rather than outcome indicators. In these cases, targets may fail to monitor real change in travel behaviour on the ground. There is also a general lack of area based targets throughout the LTPs.

Other authorities are relying heavily on the need to monitor Best Value indicators, which can result in a set of targets poorly suited to monitoring LTP outcomes.

**Change Management (Chapter 11)**

*What evidence is there that LTPs/Annual Progress Reports (APRs) have reduced or increased administrative burdens upon authorities and on DFT and Government Office staff? Is it possible to say yet whether this burden is likely to change as the LTP process beds in and as authorities move further into the five year LTP period?*

Almost all authorities we spoke to agree that preparation of the LTP has been a lengthy, resource-intensive and onerous task. However, this is partly due to the novelty of the process, and it is thought that preparation of the second LTP will be less intensive. Larger authorities have found the resource issues less pressing than smaller ones, where the task of steering the LTP may fall on only 1-2 people working under considerable pressure.

The need to deliver programmes which are two to three times larger than under the TPP, has placed an additional burden on authorities. Authorities which had a clear strategy and delivery capability under the previous framework appear to have been in a better position to ramp it up under the LTP, recruiting additional staff and employing consultants as necessary. Conversely, authorities which had a far narrower TPP, or no TPP at all (i.e. the unitary authorities) have experienced more difficulty in (i) developing the detailed schemes and programmes (ii) staffing up for implementation. They may also have less capability to manage risk (political, cost overruns, consultation) than others.

Part of the administrative burden is recognised as the need to drive consultation and work in partnership with external stakeholders, other local authority departments and members. Whilst this is seen as a strength of the final product, it is regarded as very difficult to co-ordinate in the interim.

There is more disagreement on the administrative burden of preparing APRs with some authorities seeing them as simple updates and others regarding them with the potential to become as burdensome as TPPs and further Guidance from the Department may be useful to clarify this issue.

There are differing views on the extent of "culture change" resulting from the LTP. Some authorities regard the fundamental shift as one of scale rather than scope since they were pursuing integrated transport policies prior to the introduction of LTPs. For others, the change has been deeper, although for many unitary authorities the issue has been less one of culture change as building a culture from scratch, combined with both technical and political capacity building.

Most authorities have set up new or revised management structures to develop and deliver the LTP. However, evidence from the case studies shows that the increase in staff numbers is typically less than
the rise in capital budgets and requirements of the LTP process would necessarily suggest and there are pressing staff and skills shortages across the local authority sector. Staffing is a particular concern amongst the smaller unitary authorities.

Authorities are adopting a range of approaches to addressing their staffing problems. Examples include:

- the use of agency staff (although at considerable expense);
- direct advertising and recruitment from overseas, including outside the European Union;
- greater externalisation of work through the use of consultants;
- longer-term partnering arrangements with consultants;
- use of consultants to undertake revenue work to free up staff for other tasks;
- partnership arrangements and joint working with neighbouring authorities;
- the provision of funding for vocational and/or in-house training of starters or junior staff.

There is also recognition that the transport sector overall needs to promote itself to Graduates and School leavers through the incorporation of transport issues into course material and through careers offices and lecturers/teachers. Some practitioners also believe that authorities should do more to "think outside of the box" and recruit from non-transport backgrounds. Such individuals may also offer new perspectives and bring new skills to LTP development and delivery. Programmes such as the Transport Planning Skills Initiative are seen as providing a way forward in this respect.

The case studies provide a range of evidence on the level of political engagement by Members into the process. Whilst Members are generally supportive of the LTP, especially at Committee/Cabinet level, the attitudes and rhetoric of individual Members may be at odds with the principles set out in the LTP. Council decisions on revenue budgets and the discretionary element of Single Capital Pot may also indicate the limits of Member support compared to other priorities. There is also some evidence to suggest that Members had, and perhaps continue to have, unrealistic expectations of the LTP programme.

The introduction of the Cabinet system of Government potentially speeds up decision making on the delivery of transport schemes. However, this may be eroded by the increased time taken on public consultation as well as giving Members across the Council less overt engagement in the LTP process.

**Documentation (Chapter 12)**

LTPs are seen as having a number of audiences. These include the Government/Government Offices, the public, members and local stakeholders. Some feel that the LTP is trying to be "all things to all men" and therefore runs the risk of being confused and lacking focus.

However, authorities are becoming increasingly skilled at the presentation of their LTPs and APRs in a way which provides required technical information whilst remaining accessible. Most authorities now appear to prepare non-technical Executive Summary documents, for example whilst others are applying "Plain English" principles to the language used in their documentation.

The Government's Guidance attracts a range of views, ranging from support to comments about over-prescriptiveness and encouragement of short-term "ticks in boxes" rather than long-term underlying progress on key objectives. Both authorities and Government Offices believe that Guidance should be issued far earlier than it has in recent years.

There is concern that DFT Guidance for APRs is becoming more prescriptive and this is reducing the level of local flexibility in structure and layout (and therefore in informing local publics). There are concerns that the resource commitments for a good APR may become "no less than another TPP."
Other officers point out the inefficiencies of moving from a delivery to a reporting culture, distracting attention from the task of delivery.

External stakeholders are, by and large, insufficiently familiar with the details of the LTP process to be able to comment meaningfully on the Guidance.

There is a need for transitional arrangements and guidance for the changeover from the current tranche to the second tranche of LTPs.

**Conclusions and Recommendations (Chapter 13)**

In our view, there is a need for only limited change to the LTP process as its currently stands. The key areas where we believe further consideration is required are as follows:

- the need for supplementary guidance or advice on good practice on specific aspects of the process, such as consultation techniques, target setting, rural issues and cross-boundary working;
- the need for LTP programmes to be better supported by revenue funding;
- the impacts of Single Capital Pot to be kept under review;
- improvements to co-operation between neighbouring authorities including greater structure for LTPs through the regional planning process;
- improvements to authorities' capacity to deliver their LTP programmes, especially through a resolution of widespread staff and skills shortages, and guidance/advice on ways of drawing on additional resources;
- further advice on LTP and APR presentation to better serve the various audiences the LTP needs to address.

In the meantime, there are strong arguments for only limited change to the process in order to allow authorities to develop established procedures and practices for implementing it and for the process as a whole to "bed down." Whilst this Report includes various recommendations for additional Guidance, this should not be seen as additional requirements for authorities, rather additional advice or optional Guidance, available for authorities if and where required. Given LTP practitioners' desire for continuity in the process over a prolonged period, we would recommend little change to the core Guidance. There is a risk that any supplementary Guidance, even if optional, will be seen by authorities as further guidance which they must comply with if they are to receive their indicative allocations. The role of any supplementary Guidance/advice must therefore be clearly defined.

The following table summarises our key recommendations against each of the generic themes. The full set of recommendations is set out in Chapter 13.
### Table 1 - Key Issues for LTP Process and Potential Solutions

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Issue/Challenge</th>
<th>Recommendation on Potential Solutions</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Consultation is costly and time-consuming</td>
<td><em>Partly an inherent outcome of the requirements of the LTP process, but likely to become less onerous as the process beds down and authorities become able to consult in a more focused and cost-effective way.</em>&lt;br&gt;Authorities to develop their own consultation guidelines for different types of policies and schemes, to ensure the process is carried out as quickly and efficiently as possible.&lt;br&gt;Scope for greater integration of various authority consultations into the Local Strategic Partnership framework.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tension between LTPs as expressions of local objectives and priorities and the application of National policy at the local level.</td>
<td>Explicit consideration of this issue in LTP Guidance in advising authorities on using the results of consultation.&lt;br&gt;Re-emphasis in Guidance for authorities to take account of the results of consultation in revising LTP priorities.&lt;br&gt;External stakeholders such as the Highways Agency and SRA to produce Guidance notes setting out their priorities, how they carry out scheme appraisals, and how authorities can best approach them, in order to encourage better understanding between the two sides regarding their relative priorities and objectives.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>External stakeholders may be reluctant to engage in close and binding partnerships</td>
<td>Stronger directions by Government on public agencies to work with authorities on LTP initiatives. Discussions with industry representatives aimed at securing more active engagement at local level e.g. CPT, FTA&lt;br&gt;Authorities to consider use of Transport Act powers where voluntary partnerships ineffective e.g. Quality Bus Contracts&lt;br&gt;Stronger directions on the SRA to engage with authorities alongside its national targets, although realistically this may be more practical at the regional level.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rapid increase in capital funding from TPP raises issues of authorities' capacity to deliver in early years of LTP.</td>
<td><em>This problem likely to diminish further into the LTP five year period, more schemes are brought forwards and authorities become more familiar with the process.</em>&lt;br&gt;Build up authorities' delivery capacity and Best Practice advice on drawing on external resources - see Delivery Theme.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LTP remains a capital based funding process</td>
<td>Guidance on second LTPs should place greater emphasis on the importance of revenue funds to support LTP objectives and require authorities to report their revenue spend proposals in more detail relative to their SSA allocations.&lt;br&gt;Greater integration of LTP with Challenge Bid frameworks including both capital and revenue elements.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Limited increase in revenue funding</td>
<td>Increase in RSG allocations through account of LTP into SSA formulas, combined with stronger advice for its use on supporting</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
LTP practitioners need to be more proactive in arguing the case for transport investment within their authorities and an increased share of the overall corporate budget so that any increase in the SSA feeds through into supporting transport services.

**Coverage of Annex D transport topics is variable**

*Authorities can be expected to develop fuller and more effective policies and practice over time.*

DfT to issue supplementary LTP/APR Guidance on selected topics in partnership with relevant stakeholder organisations.

Flexibility in application of Guidance and assessment criteria to encourage authorities to build their coverage of transport topics over time as expertise and experience within the authority increases.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Issue/Challenge</th>
<th>Recommendation on Potential Solutions</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>&quot;One Size Fits All&quot; Approach whereby same requirements apply to metropolitan LTPs as do small rural unitary Authorities.</td>
<td>Issue supplementary LTP Guidance/expansion of LTP Guidance to recognise diversity of area and authority types, especially in rural areas.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Some issues require national or regional solutions.</td>
<td>Enhanced joint working between neighbouring authorities and closer integration of LTPs with Regional Planning Guidance/Regional Transport Strategies.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Coverage of rural transport issues and solutions is weak in both LTPs and Guidance.</td>
<td>Changes/Addition to Guidance to more fully reflect the needs of rural areas on a par with urban areas. Recognition of the diversity of rural area types and therefore of problems and solutions. Greater focus on revenue-based solutions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Medium-sized schemes not well integrated into process</td>
<td>Review major scheme threshold, at least for smaller authorities where schemes costing between £2 million and £5 million represent a substantial part of the overall programme and can be difficult to implement under the restrictions of the current annual funding process.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Variable linkage between transport policies through LTP and land use planning through Structure Plan, Local Plan and UDP.</td>
<td>Closer contact and liaison between transport and planning officers especially at county/district level. Common sections to LTPs and planning documents on transport and land-use integration.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Current weak linkage between LTPs at a regional level with poor phasing with Regional Planning</td>
<td><em>First LTPs developed prior to current round of emerging Regional Planning Guidance/Regional Transport Strategy. Second tranche of LTPs will have a firmer regional context.</em> LTP Guidance needs to place a stronger requirement for LTP to be set within the Regional Transport Strategy and demonstrate</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Regional Planning Guidance and weak regional leadership for major transport schemes and polices.

Consistency with it. This includes closer joint working between authorities where this covers strategic sub-regions - See Recommendations under Inclusivity Theme.

In longer term, Government proposals for reforming the Regional Planning system likely to provide greater regional leadership, but precise implications for LTPs (especially for Counties) need to be thought through.

Underspend of allocation has been common among authorities in the initial years of the LTP.

This problem is likely to diminish as we move further into the LTP five year period and authorities become more familiar with the process.

Adopt a policy of over-design to build up a bank of schemes for implementing in future years, and to allow for potential delays arising from the design and consultation process. Continuing staff and skills shortages will also need to be addressed to allow authorities to implement such a strategy.

Ensure Members are fully involved in the planning and design process to minimise delay to schemes.

Staff and skills shortages impacting on delivery

Greater use of partnering agreements/contracts with consultants. Best practice guidance to be produced. Greater training of staff internally or funding of external training.

Stronger guidance for joint LTPs for adjoining authorities, where appropriate, with economies of scale and scope for greater sharing of staff across authorities.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Issue/Challenge</th>
<th>Recommendation on Potential Solutions</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Evidence of technical robustness behind strategy development, scheme appraisal and particularly target setting is often poor.</td>
<td>DfT to issue Supplementary LTP Guidance and/or examples of good practice regarding technical robustness. Government to provide some form of audit or technical advisory function during the 2nd LTP development period on technical issues and approaches, including target setting and scheme/option appraisal.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Post scheme evaluation appears to be an area of weakness within a number of authorities.</td>
<td>A key element of the monitoring process involves evaluating change over time. Before and after comparisons are likely to become more important as authorities collect more data and are able to evaluate progress against targets.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The analytical basis for target setting within LTPs is often</td>
<td>Authorities are on a learning curve as to what can, and cannot, be achieved through LTP measures.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 1 - Key Issues for LTP Process and Potential Solutions (Continued)
### Local transport plans - policy evaluation: Part 1 - Final Report

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Within LTPs is often weak with many &quot;finger in the air&quot; targets</th>
<th>Dissemination of good practice from authorities which provide an analytical basis for target setting. Authorities to provide stronger justification for targets set. Supplementary LTP Guidance/Good Practice from DfT on approaches to target setting. Authorities to provide more justification of targets set.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The LTP process is labour intensive.</td>
<td>The LTP process should become less onerous over time as procedures become more embedded and practitioners gain experience. Most authorities appear to be getting better at monitoring and consultation tasks, two of the more onerous tasks. Limited and infrequent changes to the Guidance are essential if the process is to &quot;bed down&quot;.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lack of political buy-in from elected members may limit LTP vision and delivery programme.</td>
<td>LTP practitioners to ensure that Members are fully involved in the LTP process at both strategy and scheme level. <em>The real process of culture change necessary to make LTPs' success will come from changes in public attitudes. This will require members to not shy away from measures which restrict the public's preference for driving their cars.</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LTPs and APRs addressed to multitude of audiences - funding bid and public information document</td>
<td>Greater use of separate 'glossy' Summary Documents aimed at the general public, and technical appendices aimed at Government. Main APR document to be a focused report, accessible to Government, stakeholders and the general public. Consultation to be undertaken on the readability of the APR and quality of Summary Documents, to ensure adequate coverage of relevant issues and ease of understanding. <em>Key issues regarding APRs are to maintain flexibility and ensure the strategic nature of the document remains (i.e. the focus remains reporting on progress and targeting of future spend rather than the bidding process).</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Guidance changes from year to year and is late</td>
<td>Freeze Guidance for more than one year to provide certainty or publish brief notification of changes only rather than full re-issue. DfT to stress the optional and advisory nature of any supplementary guidance issued. DfT to appoint other Department/Consultancy to prepare Guidance before Christmas.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Areas of weakness continue to exist within the LTP process.</td>
<td>Additional/supplementary Guidance is required for Joint LTPs and cross-boundary working, working with the private sector, technical robustness, target setting and monitoring, rural transport and DfT assessment criteria. Guidance should include better coverage and integration with other policy areas and frameworks (e.g. Community Plans), and closer links with national road and rail policy and associated investment plans. The statutory nature of the LTP and the importance of achieving member buy-in to the LTP process should be stressed, along with the importance attached to achieving buy-in in DfT's overall assessment of local authority performance.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
1. Introduction to the Study

Background

Atkins Transport Planning was commissioned in December 2001 by the Department for Transport (DtT) to undertake a Study to evaluate the process of introducing Local Transport Plans (LTPs) for English local authorities.

The Study is divided into two parts:

Part I - Process Evaluation - is intended to ascertain the extent to which the original aims of LTPs are being achieved, whether there are significant differences in the level of achievement between authorities and the causes of these, and what kinds of circumstances, actions and processes are likely and beginning to succeed in bringing about progress towards the desired outcomes in terms of policy and delivery; and

Part 2 - Impact Evaluation - is intended to determine the extent to which LTPs have delivered the desired outcomes originally envisaged as defined by authorities themselves and national transport objectives within the Ten Year Plan. Part 2 has yet to be tendered, but Atkins has undertaken a scoping study and developed a Framework for undertaking the evaluation.

This Report presents the final findings and conclusions of the Part 1 Study. It is emphasised that the focus of this element of work is on the LTP process, rather than the performance of individual LTP submissions as such. The scoping study for Part 2 (Part 2A) which defines a framework for the evaluation work is presented in a separate report.

Scope of the Part 1 Study

LTPs are landmark documents and a "cornerstone" of the Government's commitment to delivering integrated transport. Embodied in the Transport Act 2000, they require authorities in England to plan and deliver five-year programmes for managing and enhancing transport services within a comprehensive multi-modal strategy for the achievement of clear local and national objectives. Authorities are required to consult widely and work in partnership in developing and delivering their LTP strategies and programme and integrate transport investment into wider policy objectives such as regeneration, environmental protection, social inclusion and education. Finally, there is a requirement for regular and robust monitoring and reporting of delivery through Annual Progress Reports (APRs).

There are clear differences between LTPs and the preceding Transport Policies and Programme (TPP) framework in terms of process, content and objectives. The introduction of the LTP framework has been also been paralleled by a substantial increase in transport capital funding and, for some authorities, the transition to unitary status, taking over highway planning responsibilities from county council control.

Overall, the LTP capital settlement runs at £8.4 billion over five years from 2001-2002 to 2005-2006, together with parallel revenue budgets for maintenance and management functions.

Given the extent of change to the local transport planning and delivery process, and the increase in capital resources channelled through it, there is a clear need to evaluate the success of the LTP framework to date in comparison to the TPP format it replaced. The objectives of the Part 1 Study are therefore:

- to set out the key differences between the LTP and TPP frameworks both in policy terms and in terms of what authorities are actually doing on the ground;

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4 Formerly, the Department of Transport, Local Government and the Regions (DTLR)
to evaluate how well the LTP process is meeting its original aims and objectives and explore the key differences for different approaches and performance between difference authorities;

to establish how successfully the new framework was introduced, from the introduction of Provisional LTPs in 1999 to the publication of the Full LTPs in mid-2000;

to identify, and critically evaluate, the key strengths and weaknesses of the process;

to identify the key enablers, and obstacles, to the success in both policy and delivery;

to identify examples of good practice from which DfT and authorities may learn;

to recommend changes to the process, and associated guidance, which may assist DfT and authorities in progressing LTPs in the second round for 2006-2007 to 2010-11.

We are conscious that such an evaluation also represents effectively a mid-term "health check" on how well the process is working, whether change is required and the extent and form that this should take.

**Part 1 Methodology**

Given the broader scope inherent within LTPs, undertaking such a process evaluation is a potentially complex task, drawing information from a range of sources. In order to make the task manageable, we have chosen to evaluate the LTP process in terms of nine generic themes as follows:

- **inclusivity**: issues relating to public/stakeholder consultation and partnership, partnering arrangements. Questions of whether Government Guidance has been followed and what the perceived costs and benefits of public consultation are to local authorities;

- **funding and long-term funding**: issues relating to whether LTPs create more certainty and flexibility in funding and the resulting benefits to authorities. Topics include the balance between capital and revenue resourcing, level and focus of developer contributions, hypothecation of toll/charging revenue and impact of the Single Capital Pot;

- **breadth of initiatives**: evidence that all forms of transport have been included in the LTP process and examining approaches in setting aims, objectives and strategies. Topics include coverage of all modes, urban vs. rural areas, and coverage of economic, social and environmental agendas in terms of policy and funding;

- **integration**: issues covering consistency of LTPs with national policy objectives (at the same time as local discretion/objective setting), linkage with regional transport and economic strategies, assessment of major schemes against NATA criteria and consistency with other agencies/planning bodies;

- **delivery**: issues relating to turning the strategies and increased funding into actual policies and schemes on the ground. Enablers and barriers to effective implementation of the LTP programme;

- **technical robustness**: determination of whether more analysis of transport issues is taking place and the means by which options and preferred strategies have been appraised;

- **understanding progress**: issues relating to realism of targets, baseline data (availability and robustness), monitoring and reporting mechanisms and clarity of objectives/targets. Evidence that more monitoring is occurring relative to that undertaken for TPPs/Packages;

- **change management**: issues of how well local authorities have managed the introduction of the LTP process, the key staff/human resource issues, continuous improvement through Best Value and the overall administrative burden of preparing LTPs; and
Local transport plans - policy evaluation: Part 1 - Final Report

- **documentation:** issues relating to the length of presentation of LTPs and APRs, referencing and making the LTP available to the public and key stakeholders and the adequacy of Government Guidance on submitting bids and progress reports.

Our evidence on these themes is drawn from a number of sources offering a range of perspectives and data. In reporting the findings we have chosen to code each source in order to aid comprehension of each perspective in context. The key sources are:

- a background **literature review**\(^5\) of conference proceedings, previous studies and surveys and the technical press;

- **Government Office Assessments** and Decision Letters\(^6\);

- our **own assessment** of selected LTP source documents;

- a series of **regional workshops** undertaken with LTP practitioners in April and May 2002; and


In reporting our findings, the regional workshops and case studies offer the most up-to-date and comprehensive perspectives from the viewpoint of LTP practitioners themselves. In order to elicit open and frank responses, as well as keep the focus of this Report on the LTP process itself (rather than the performance of individual authorities), these perspectives have not been attributed to individual authorities or individuals.

The following sections now describe each source in more detail:

**Literature Review**

We have reviewed the wide range of views and perspectives on the LTP process as it has developed from the Provisional LTPs, through the first Full LTPs for 2001-2006 to the current round of Annual Progress Reports. We conducted our initial literature review at the start of the Part 1 Study, in February-March 2002, to inform preparations for the regional workshops. We have subsequently updated our review throughout the Part 1 Study to take on board important new contributions from the Institution for Civil Engineers and Commission for Integrated Transport, most recently the CfIT Local Authority Survey carried out by Atkins in late 2002.

The full reference list of documentation and literature reviewed is set out in Appendix A and includes:

- Government Guidance and best practice advice;

- professional journals, such as Local Transport Today, the Surveyor and New Civil Engineer;

- conference proceedings, including the annual LTP conference organised annually by Landor;

- published reports, including those produced for DfT and professional bodies such as the Transport Research Group, County Surveyors Society or CfIT;

- published local authority and transport professional surveys of opinion, including those from CfIT, ICE and the Institution of Highways and Transportation.

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\(^6\) See Appendix D, this report.


Own assessment of selected LTP source documents

A review of 20 randomly selected LTPs/APRs was undertaken against the Annex D requirements for the following criteria:

- Strategy development
- Performance indicators/targets and monitoring
- Establishing a bus strategy
- Measures to encourage voluntary adoption of travel plans by major employers
- Co-ordination of air quality action plan and action on noise
- Sustainable distribution.

The selected authorities were representative of the distribution of authorities nationally by region and authority type, and contain a cross-section of performance (based on assessments undertaken by DTLR and used to allocate Single Capital Pot resources). Details of the chosen authorities are given in Appendix E.

Regional Workshops

Workshops were held in March and April 2002 in each of the eight Government Office Regions, with the assistance of the Government Offices. The workshops were designed to gather the views of local authority practitioners of the LTP process from their experiences of both developing and publishing the LTP and delivering the transport programme on the ground.

Each workshop consisted of an introductory presentation by Atkins outlining issues for debate, and two separate workshop sessions:

Workshop I - The Process of Preparing the LTP

Workshop II - Strengths and weaknesses in LTP development, implementation and monitoring

The topic guide used for undertaking the workshops is included in Appendix E.

Each Authority was asked to send two representatives (four in metropolitan areas) responsible for preparing the LTP submission and/or delivering the programme on the ground. In addition the Regional Development Agencies were invited to send two representatives with responsibilities for transport planning and policy, and liaison with local authorities in developing and progressing their LTP priorities.

A total of 220 officers from metropolitan, two-tier and unitary authorities, and a small number of Regional Development Agencies attended the workshops. To a very large degree the main areas of discussion were remarkably consistent across all regions.

Case Studies

The aim of the case studies was to explore the key Part 1 generic themes in greater depth than was possible in the workshops. The aim was not merely to confirm the issues raised by LTP practitioners previously, but gather wider views within authorities and externally and explore the reasons for apparent viewpoints and statements made. If possible, where problems were identified in the LTP process, the case studies participants were encouraged to explore solutions, whether through action by authorities or by Government in setting future policy.

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Each case study involved the following:

- **desktop research on individual LTPs/APRs, Government Office Assessments, and Comprehensive Performance Assessments** - for example looking at how targets have been set for inputs, outputs and outcomes and how it is proposed that they should be monitored;

- **face to face interviews with key players and stakeholders** - for example local authority Finance Directors to explore how the LTP process has modified the way budgets are prepared, spent and monitored, officers responsible for previous and current public consultation (whether overall policy or specific schemes), or external stakeholders such as public transport operators, freight operators, regeneration partnerships and Chambers of Commerce to obtain contrasting views;

- **exploring outputs from and linkages with other more detailed studies that have been undertaken** - for example, consultancy studies, multi-modal studies, Regional Transport Strategies, and findings from other DTLR sponsored studies.

A stratified random sample of 12 authorities was chosen, reflecting authority type, regional distribution, and different levels of performance, as shown in Table E.1 (Appendix E). Four generic themes were randomly chosen for each authority. The potential individuals/groups to be consulted for each theme are shown in Table E.2.

Table 1.1 shows that 74 individuals were consulted. Over half were local authority officers, predominantly LTP practitioners, Departmental Directors or Assistant Directors. A number of Members were also consulted - their views were particularly important for the Change Management theme.

### Table 1.1 - Case Study Participants

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Number of Consultees</th>
<th>Number of Authorities</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Local Authority Officers</strong></td>
<td>40</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chief Executives</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Finance Officers/Directors</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Departmental Directors or Assistant Directors</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LTP Practitioners</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Officers within the Districts</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Members</strong></td>
<td>6</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lead Member for Transport</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Deputy Leader of Council</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Regional Bodies</strong></td>
<td>13</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Government Officers</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Regional Development Agency</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>External Stakeholders</strong></td>
<td>13</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chamber of Commerce</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School Governors Association</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The Government Offices for each authority were approached, to obtain a 'reality check' on the information provided by authorities.

A number of external stakeholders, consultants, neighbouring authorities and RDA representatives were contacted where it was considered appropriate, especially for the Inclusivity and Delivery themes, although it proved difficult to identify individuals to discuss the LTP process explicitly as distinct from transport issues more generally. Further evidence has therefore been obtained from the Stakeholder Survey undertaken by Steer Davies Gleave in September 2002 as part of their wider Decision Making in Local Transport Planning Study for DfT8.

Appendix E includes the topic sheet used by the study team for each of the case studies.

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8 The Study Steering Group agreed to use of this survey rather than have a second firm of consultants approach the stakeholder organisations in question on essentially similar questions relating to local transport.
Quality of Evidence

A wide range of evidence is used throughout the report and drawn together under each of the generic themes. Due to the qualitative nature of much of this evidence, the following points should be considered:

- much of the early literature was based on the Provisional LTPs with many of the points made superseded by the publication of the Full LTPs a year later;

- the regional workshops consisted of round table discussions with delegates. While the facilitator was responsible for ensuring the discussion remained relevant and covered the defined range of topics, there was generally little intervention. This resulted in a wide range of views being discussed and debated, but due to the nature of the exercise, it is difficult to quantify the strength of these views, or place figures on the numbers of delegates who raised a particular issue. However, all the workshop sessions were recorded and documented by the facilitator, allowing frequently supported views and commonly raised issues to be identified, and distinguished from views expressed by just a few individuals. Efforts have also been made to ensure that the views of vocal individuals, who sometimes dominated discussions, are not over-represented in the report;

- the case studies provided the opportunity to follow-up issues raised in other parts of the study. Each generic theme was covered in six case studies to allow in-depth investigation to be undertaken. This resulted in a detailed understanding and explanation of the issues relevant to the selected authorities, and while it provided evidence for issues raised elsewhere in the report, the number of authorities investigated was small and results can not be assumed necessarily to be representative of all authorities;

- the Government Office written assessments are used to obtain an overview of performance across all authorities, against the 27 Annex D criteria contained in the Full LTP Guidance. The approach however, has some limitations due to the variable nature of the written assessments. Government Officers were not provided with any guidance about the level of detail expected, and consequently, some assessments are highly detailed with comments made about authorities’ coverage and compliance of each of the individual sub-criteria. Other assessments are much briefer, and tend to focus on only a few of the sub-criteria. The purpose of the assessments also means that there is often a tendency to focus on areas of weakness rather than strengths;

- by necessity, the focus of the evidence has been on LTP practitioners themselves and the LTP documentation. This has yielded a wide range of viewpoints and perspectives which we have corroborated through parallel contacts with Government Offices, the Department itself and external stakeholders. However, it is the case that the latter tend to have far less knowledge of the details of the LTP process and the requirements it places on authorities. They have also been more difficult to engage in in-depth discussion. We therefore believe that repeat reviews of the LTP process could set out to focus more on external stakeholder opinions, although we doubt that the views expressed would be substantially different than those set out in this report.

Report Structure

The remainder of this Report is structured as follows:

- Chapter 2 sets out the background to the introduction of Local Transport Plans and the key differences in process, content and objectives compared to the TPP process;

- Chapter 3 presents an overview of the introduction of LTPs and perspectives on the strengths and weaknesses of the process;

- Chapters 4 to 12 present the bulk of our analysis of LTPs based on the key generic themes identified above.
Evidence is drawn from the full range of data collection and analysis undertaken for this study. Sources of evidence throughout the report are indicated in brackets using the following abbreviations:

(LR) - Literature Review;
(GO) - Government Office Assessments (written and visual depictions) and Decision Letters;
(OA) - Our own assessment of selected LTPs;
(RW) - Regional Workshops; and
(CS) - Case Studies.

Grey text boxes are used throughout the report to illustrate points made in the main text using examples drawn from the twelve case studies. White text boxes are used to present examples from other sources of information. In these cases the source of information is clearly indicated.

- Chapter 13 presents our main conclusions and recommendations.
2. Situation Analysis

Introduction

The development and delivery of integrated local transport is central to the achievement of the Government's transport objectives in England as defined within the New Deal for Transport, Transport Act and the Transport Ten Year Plan.

To enable effective delivery of local transport policies and schemes a number of significant changes were introduced both to the content and process of local transport planning and funding. These changes are manifest in the replacement of Transport Policies and Programmes (TPPs) by Local Transport Plans (LTPs).

The introduction of this new framework represents a firm shift to a more wide-ranging and strategic approach to the planning, implementation and management of local transport needs.

To an extent many elements of the LTP process were embodied under the TPP framework in England via the Package Approach in the mid-1990s. However, local authorities were able to choose those areas covered by packages by exception rather than extend strategic analysis and complementary multi-modal planning across the board. The LTP process hence seeks to go further (but in an evolutionary rather than revolutionary way) by introducing new processes for the preparation, funding and delivery of LTPs in terms of:

- problem definition and analysis;
- setting of clear objectives and targets, related to specific outputs and outcomes;
- long-term strategy development with a broad range of complementary solutions working in synergy;
- multi-modal investment;
- flexibility of spending;
- consultation in planning;
- partnership working in implementation; and
- transparency of decision making (e.g. in appraisal and monitoring).

Comparison with Transport Policies and Plans

The Transport Policies and Plans (TPP) framework was introduced in 1974 requiring local authorities to develop their transport policies in detail and present the Government with a programme of proposed expenditure approved on an annual basis. These TPPs were not subject to public or stakeholder participation and were intended as programmes for implementing transport schemes and policies which had already been agreed. Until 1991-1992, resources under TPP were allocated almost entirely for road schemes and minor works.

TPPs continued to be the mainstay of local transport policy and funding until 1998, although changes resulted from the abolition of the metropolitan authorities in 1986, Local Government Re-organisation in the late 1990s and the exclusion of revenue funding from TPPs from 1984. The need for a more multi-modal approach within wider objectives and a clear transport strategy was also partially recognised through the introduction of the Package Approach covering selected urban and (some) rural areas from the early 1990s.

In the latter stages of TPP, funding was specifically allocated under six headings:

- major schemes - road or public transport schemes costing more than £2 million;
- general minor works - smaller schemes costing less than £2 million;
- packages - co-ordinated sets of measures designed to address the transport problems of an area on an integrated basis;
- local safety schemes - small schemes particularly designed to reduce personal injury accidents;
- bridges - funding for assessing and, where necessary strengthening bridges on local roads; and
- principal road maintenance.

The TPP process was an entirely administrative system with no statutory basis. Whilst this gave flexibility to the Department of Transport in allocating funds to local authorities from year to year, there was equally no obligation for authorities to comply with Government Guidance or submit TPPs at all (although all did so in practice).

The TPP Guidance for 1995 highlights the view that the package approach was "expected to become the norm for funding local transport infrastructure in urban areas. The Guidance also specifies that:

"Even where they are not submitting a package bid, authorities should present their proposals within the kind of strategic framework that is a prerequisite of a successful transport package. Bids should demonstrate suitable land use policies, and show that full consideration has been given to the potential of public transport, walking and cycling, and improved traffic management, and for improved interchange between transport modes."

Despite this gradual shift in emphasis, the introduction of LTPs in place of TPPs from 1999 onwards must be seen in the context of a policy shift by Government away from funding major local highway schemes to an approach centred on demand and traffic management. The refocus on groupings of small-scale local management measures, together with a re-emergence of transport planning as a central discipline of national policy, favoured an approach which was both more strategic in its outlook whilst providing more flexibility at the local level.
Local Transport Objectives Under the TPP System

The Secretary of State's principal objective is to ensure that the country has the modern transport system it needs to achieve sustainable economic growth:

- with as little adverse impact as possible on the environment;
- in ways that ensure personal safety and give customers freedom of choice; and
- at a cost it can afford.

The specific aims for individual modes of transport relevant to the TPP system are:

- in the case of public transport services to:
  - improve efficiency, enhance choices and stimulate innovation;
  - promote the contribution of rail and bus services to the maintenance and improvement of the environment and reduction of road congestion;
  - secure value for money and improved quality of service for users.

- in the case of expenditure on roads, to:
  - assist economic growth, efficiency and competitiveness by providing an efficient road network;
  - conserve and enhance the environment;
  - enhance road safety by building safer roads; and
  - manage and maintain the road network in a cost-effective manner, making the best use of existing roads.

The introduction of the package approach underlines the importance of considering local transport needs on a cross-modal basis, for individual projects to complement each other within an overall strategy and for that strategy to be consistent with local development plans.

Source: Department of Transport. Local Authority Circular 2/95 (1995)

TPPs were generally seen as being incapable of delivering this agenda:

- Government took decisions on very small schemes, often costing as little as a few thousand pounds, wasting time and resources;
- decisions were taken in isolation, often on purely financial grounds, rather than their contribution to a wider strategy;
- emphasis on annual settlements was seen as militating against strategic long-term planning by local authorities and, except for the package approach, does not encourage an integrated approach to dealing with transport problems.

Such thinking underlies the introduction of more strategic, multi-modal and integrated Local Transport Plans with greater certainty and flexibility of funding across years, Table 2.1 sets out the principal differences between the TPP and LTP approaches.

The decision to proceed with the introduction of LTPs was made by Ministers straight after the publication of the Integrated Transport White Paper and has been undertaken in two stages. In July 1999, local authorities submitted a Provisional LTP (PLTP) inclusive of a five year spending plan but with funding approval given for the first year. This was followed by Full LTPs in July 2000 for 2001-2002 to 2005-2006 with Government providing firm funding for the first year and "indicative" allocations for the following four years, reviewed annually in response to Annual Progress Reports.
(APRs). The first APRs were submitted in August 2001 with Ministers announcing £1.5 billion for the latest local transport settlement in December 2001. The second APRs were submitted in July 2002 with a Ministerial announcement on the settlement for 2003-2004 due in mid-December.
### Table 2.1 - Key Differences Between LTPs and TPPs

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Transport Policies and Programme</th>
<th>Local Transport Plans</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Administrative</td>
<td>Statutory</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Produced annually</td>
<td>5 year plans - greater certainty of future funding for local authorities and greater certainty in delivery of measures.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Primarily a bidding document for central Government funds</td>
<td>Partly a bidding document, but also a strategic planning document for a local audience setting out local transport policies for the next 5 years.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Programme of capital investment</td>
<td>Consideration of both capital investment and local authority revenue expenditure (joined-up thinking).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Resources tightly ring-fenced to particular areas of expenditure</td>
<td>Greater local discretion over allocation of resources (based on Government guidelines) - details of individual schemes to be provided only where they cost more than £250,000. Greater flexibility in shifting funding between schemes provided these contribute to the overall strategy.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Limited input from operators and other local partners.</td>
<td>Inclusive approach, with an emphasis on partnership working (with operators, businesses and local interest groups) to deliver key outcomes and public consultation to ensure widest possible ownership of the LTP strategy. Greater transparency of decision-making, greater emphasis on wider outcomes and improved integration with other local and regional planning frameworks.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Broad objectives (except under package approach)</td>
<td>Greater emphasis on targets, performance indicators and monitoring in areas not previously covered by packages, including wider policy issues such as social inclusion, air quality and sustainable distribution.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Local transport plans - policy evaluation: Part 1 - Final Report

| Historic emphasis on road schemes, although shift to measures to encourage use of non-modes. | Decisive shift in favour of measures to encourage public transport, walking and cycling. Availability of new powers such as road user charging and workplace charging levies; greater emphasis on so-called "soft" measures such as travel awareness campaigns and company travel plans. |


**Funding - Increased Investment Flexibility**

Crucially, LTPs are being delivered in a climate of increased funding for transport nationally. Table 2.2 shows that the transport capital allocation to English local authorities in 2001-2002 is more than double that for the last year of the TPP process; allocations are set to continue to rise in subsequent years.

The average projected annual settlement under the LTP of £1.68 billion compares to around £890 million for the five year period between 1991 and 1996 and around £525 million for the period between 1996 and 1999/2000, the last year of the TPP settlement. Local authorities are also now able to secure funding from a range of other sources, including the Strategic Railway Authority's Rail Passenger Partnership, Rural Bus Challenge and Urban Bus Challenge. In December 2001, the Department announced an additional £20 million fund to local authorities to bid for the introduction of real-time bus service information in 2002-2003.

**Table 2.2 - Local Transport Plan Settlement 1999-2006**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Previous and Current</th>
<th>Indicative</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>£ Billion</td>
<td>0.54</td>
<td>0.68</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Revenue funds have also been increased to 2003-2004 as part of the Comprehensive Spending Review, although such funding is not specifically part of the LTP process or ringfenced for transport purposes. The proportionate increase is far less relative to capital funding although this is a potentially complex issue explored more fully in Chapter 5 of this report.

**Parallel Environmental Factors Influencing the Process**

LTPs have not developed in a political, economic, social or technological vacuum. There are a multitude of external factors, many of them inter-related, which influence the issues addressed in, and by, LTP strategies and programmes, as well as the capacity or will of local authorities to address them. The full list of key exogenous factors is set out in Table 2.3.

High on these factors is the Modernisation of Local Government Agenda and the transition of many authorities to unitary status since 1997. Such authorities have had to address not only the task of developing their local transport priorities and programmes (from a variable inheritance), but introduce new corporate systems and processes. Even for more established authorities, the introduction of Best Value, Community Strategies and Local Strategic Partnerships targeting cross-cutting themes represent emerging challenges to which the LTP must respond.

Despite the range of exogenous influences, DfT maintains that the key aims of LTPs remain valid since their introduction. However, some change of emphasis is occurring from the publication of the
Ten Year Plan, the greater emphasis on delivery of nationally prescribed targets defined by Government for all public services and the introduction of Single Capital Pot from 2002-2003 onwards.

**Table 2.3 - Environmental Analysis of LTP Process**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Political</th>
<th>Socio-Cultural</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Local Government Re-organisation: Creation of new unitary authorities with responsibilities for all local services including transport.</td>
<td>Continuing growth in car ownership and use, linked to economic growth, increasing disposable income and social attitudes.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Road Traffic Reduction Acts: Requirement to submit Road Traffic Reduction Report part of Full LTP Guidance. Road traffic reduction to be considered in LTP development.</td>
<td>Social inclusion: Extension of social inclusion/equal opportunities agenda (e.g. to rural areas).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Best Value: LTP to be in line with Best Value requirement for continuous improvement. LTP process subject to Best Value Reviews and Continuous Performance Assessment.</td>
<td>Fuel protests Winter 2000: Emphasises public opposition to &quot;anti-car bias&quot; of New Transport Agenda and reduces politician support for demand management.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Introduction of Continuous Performance Improvement, monitored through inspection.</td>
<td>Staff/skills shortage: Worsening of staff shortages in authorities, consultants and public transport operators, including consequent employment disputes in rail sector.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Local Government changes in political control/Member responsibility influence capacity/willingness to effect change/implement LTP.</td>
<td>Requirement for public to be directly consulted on new frameworks (Best Value, Local Strategic Partnerships etc).</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Economic**

**Technological**
Ten Year Transport Plan

Regeneration: Key priority driving transport policy in inner city and former heavy industrial areas. Debate over link between economic growth and traffic generation.

Regional Planning: Requirement for LTPs to be consistent with new RPG and RTS and RDA to be consulted on LTP. Future development of Regional Spatial Strategies

Rail Developments: Implications of Hatfield/Railtrack Administration and establishment of Network Rail for funding/delivering LTP rail objectives and on passenger confidence/expectations.

SRA and HA strategic plans for national road and rail networks.

Airport Developments: Government consultation on regional airports proposals. LTP requirement to consider surface access issues.

- Detrunking: Significant increase in local authorities' responsibilities for maintaining and managing the highway network.
- Vehicle and fuel technology Development of quieter and less polluting fuel and vehicle technology together with in-vehicle navigation/route information systems.
- Information Technology: IT may assist LTPs social inclusion, travel plans and sustainable distribution.
- PT Information National initiative for public transport (rail and bus) information.
- Rapid Transit DFT Guidance more favourable towards LRT including targets for patronage in Ten Year Plan. Emergence of new intermediate mode technologies.
3. Overview of the Evidence

"Blimey! At last we can do something about transport." (RW)

Introduction

This Chapter presents an assessment of perspectives of the LTP process overall within the evolving professional literature, from local authority LTP practitioners, Members, Government Offices and DfT itself and from external stakeholders. It also provides the basis from which subsequent chapters explore questions relating to each of the generic themes identified in the previous chapter.

Literature Review

There is no shortage of commentary on strengths and weaknesses of the LTP process, the potential of LTPs to realise benefits on the ground, and suggestions for improvement with claims and counterclaims made in light of the Integrated Transport White Paper, during the submission of the PLTPs and with the full LTPs now submitted and entering into the implementation phase.

Within this body of opinion, the response is mixed and while the general feeling is one of approval and that the LTPs are laying the right foundations there are a number of weaknesses and concerns identified.

The full literature review is set out in the Interim (Emerging Findings) Report. Key conclusions raised by this review include the following:

- the introduction of LTPs in principle represents a major step forward in local transport planning and provision;
- the parallel increase in funding for LTPs is likewise welcome, although there is mixed opinion on whether the nature (rather than size) of programmes put forward by authorities are substantially different than the latter years of the TPP. There are also concerns over whether the programmes can be effectively delivered;
- local authorities are seen as having widely adopted the Government's five national transport objectives in drawing up their LTPs. Integration with regional policies and policy frameworks is more patchy, especially given the lack of synchronisation between the publication of LTPs and emerging Regional Planning Guidance/Regional Transport Strategies;
- LTPs - both Guidance and submissions - show limited integration with land use planning and planning frameworks;
- some sources question whether authorities have the political will/commitment to implement the Government's agenda, particularly in regard to substantive demand management measures, although lack of leadership at the national level is also seen as contributing factor to this;
- public consultation is considered to have been well taken up by authorities in developing LTPs. However, there are issues relating to how "meaningful" this is in the sense of not considering ideas and opinions which do not conform to the Government's policies and being undertaken from a perspective of "conventional wisdom" which does not allow innovative ideas to get through;
- coverage of all modes on a consistent and comprehensive basis is generally not yet accomplished and there is a wide range of approaches reflecting local objectives, area and authority type. LTPs are, however, essentially "urban" in their policies and the incorporation of rural and suburban areas is patchy;
- a perceived lack of a robust analytical foundation to many LTPs makes assessment difficult and limits comparison of one area to another. Likewise, the many targets in LTPs may lack a firm basis and some commentators question whether they can be met;
there have been changes in the way that local authorities work in preparing their LTPs. These range from closer inter-departmental working and consultation to wholesale restructuring. However, there are differences in views on the extent to which authorities have recruited to meet the LTP agenda and staff shortages are a key concern for delivery;

inadequate timescale is a theme which emerges from a number of sources, derived both from the increased workload in LTP preparation (especially the need to consult widely), insufficient staff resources and timing of Government Guidance;

whilst commending the best LTPs for their comprehensive approach and presentation, some commentators consider the use of graphics and desktop publishing techniques for some authorities to be "excessive;" and

many sources refer to LTPs as a "steep learning curve" along which authorities are developing rapidly as they go.

Many of these points represent hypotheses which have been explored in more detail within the regional workshops and the case studies and are further reported elsewhere in this Report.

Overall Views of LTP Practitioners

The introduction of the LTP process is welcomed by almost all authorities as a definite step forward from the TPP. From evidence presented in both the regional workshops and the case studies, there is no desire to return to the annualised scheme-led framework of the TPP which is perceived retrospectively as primarily a bidding document for roads maintenance and enhancement.

"Probably the best thing that has happened to local transport planning in the last fifteen years or so." (RW)

The introduction of process appears to be welcomed independently of the increase in capital funding available.

"The big difference is not the process, but the budget." (RW)

However, the increase in capital resources to fund transport programmes has clearly had a benefit in gaining acceptance of the process, not only amongst officers, but also elected members who may now more clearly see the relevance of transport and their role in making investment decisions. The increase in resources is also the influence driving delivery of the LTP programme, as demonstrated by the views of one LTP practitioner:

There are a range of views on how much of a fundamental change the LTP represents from the latter years of the TPP framework. In policy terms, many of the metropolitan and two-tier authorities were increasingly adopting an integrated strategy and encouraging non-car modes under the Package Approach. For these authorities, the change is therefore more one of administrative and financial procedures and funding availability to do more outside the established package areas rather than a fundamental policy shift. Practitioners from one metropolitan area even assert:

"We were doing this before LTPs were invented; we showed the way." (RW)

For others, particularly the new unitary authorities, the LTP has been more of a break in policy, in some cases literally "starting from scratch" in terms of technical data, agreed policies and programming. However, some unitary authorities have been assisted by the evolution of an existing package or the transfer of transport planning staff from the County (CS).

The new framework is still "work in progress" for many authorities with the first LTPs being essentially a "TPP Mark II" rather than a full application of the approach. It is felt that full adoption all tenets of the LTP process could take a number of years, with the second Full LTP being a better indicator of success or otherwise than the first. The second LTP may be especially more developed in
terms of new policy requirements, integration with regional and land use planning and less time taken for preparation.

**Strengths and Weaknesses**

Key strengths of the new arrangements are seen as:

- the statutory nature of LTPs, meaning that they are taken more seriously by senior officers and members;
- the five-year timescale allowing longer-term planning;
- the objective/target (rather than scheme) led approach;
- greater flexibility in switching funding between schemes;
- integration of key policy areas within the wider strategy;
- value added by public and stakeholder consultation (although this is also cited as a weakness);
- encouragement given to partnership working.

"You're asked to do a logical process. You set the strategy, you set the implementation programme and over the next five years you're going to deliver that programme. Much more rational than the old way of doing it." (RW)

"It gets people thinking outside of their individual silos." (RW)

Key weaknesses noted are less related to the overall principle of the LTP, but more to its administration and detailed application:

- the extent of change and sheer logistical requirements of the process in such a short time period;
- "one size fits all" approach, with the same requirements falling on small unitary authorities as the largest metropolitan areas;
- the imbalance between capital and revenue funding, with insufficient revenue funds to manage the considerable increase in workload and delivery programmes;
- the cost and time-consuming nature of consultation, together with the risk of "consultation fatigue" amongst the public and key stakeholders;
- a lack of clear linkage between LTP and other funding regimes, including Challenge Bid funding.
- the return of annual capital settlements which must be spent by year end through the introduction of the Single Capital Pot;
- an excessive focus on targets and "ticks in boxes", potentially encouraging short-term decision-making and investment;
- lack of integration with national strategies being developed by the Highways Agency and the Strategic Rail Authority;
- timing and annually changing requirements of Government Guidance, giving insufficient time for the process to bed down.
Perspectives from Members

The views of Members, as ascertained from the case study authorities, are largely supportive of the LTP process overall and in principle. Both Senior Officers and Members perceive it as raising the profile of transport within the authority for a variety of reasons including:

- the greater level of capital funding available;
- the requirement for authorities to be more proactive in allocating resources to specific schemes;
- the need for authorities to consult widely in developing and implementing their LTPs. This is also seen in the context of the need to involve local communities in decision making and the development of Local Strategic Partnerships; and
- the statutory status of LTPs compared to the administrative nature of TPPs.

Nevertheless, other spending areas, particularly education and social services, are often seen, by Members, as more urgent local priorities and this can be demonstrated by budget decisions made on revenue funding and the allocation of the discretionary element of Single Capital Pot.

The degree to which individual Members have embraced the integrated transport principles behind the LTP, as embodied within the Integrated Transport White Paper, appears to vary, with many focusing on road maintenance and management as key priorities and giving less emphasis to the encouragement of non-car modes. In this sense, the response of some Members may be at odds with the aspirations of the LTP strategy and indeed, there is some evidence that Members, whilst stating their support for LTP policies, do not always fully comprehend the details and the implications of the policies they support.

The case studies suggest that the Lead Member for Transport (or equivalent) is usually more knowledgeable and supportive of the LTP and of Officers in delivering it than Members who are not directly concerned with transport via Cabinet or Committee. The latter are less likely to understand the detail of the LTP or the role of the authority in implementation; they also appear more likely to retain attitudes and approaches to transport which reflect the TPP priorities and which may be at odds with the LTP.

However, this is more likely to emerge at the level of individual schemes rather than the overall LTP strategy where the prescriptiveness of the Full LTP Guidance limits the extent to which local policies can be in contravention of national transport objectives. Likewise, where changes in political control have occurred, this does not appear to have resulted in dramatic shifts of emphasis within the LTP strategy.

Political differences at Member level appear to be a key factor limiting cross-boundary co-operation in developing LTP strategies and programmes, more so than between Officers. This is especially the case in a number of the new unitary authorities, particularly where there are differences in the parties in political control of each authority.

In seeking improvements to the process, Members emphasise the need for increased revenue funding to authorities in order to support the capital allocation of the LTP, given the competing priorities for existing revenue funds.

The role of Members in developing and implementing the LTP is explored more fully in Chapter 11 (Change Management). Member perspectives are also examined in Atkins' *Local Authority Survey (2003)* undertaken for the Commission for Integrated Transport, to be published shortly.
Perspectives from Government

Discussions with Government Officers largely concur with those of LTP practitioners in welcoming the LTP process as a major improvement on TPPs. Likewise the views on strengths and weaknesses are broadly consistent.

However, Government Officers raise a number of concerns with regard to LTP development and delivery:

- the introduction of LTPs has been extremely labour-intensive and expensive, not only for local authorities, but Government itself. This may become less onerous over time as Plans become bedded in and authorities develop more effective systems for consultation, scheme preparation, strategic review and presentation and production of the documents. However, in order for this to happen, it is important that Guidance does not change too radically or too often;

- the application of the same Guidance to the same level of detail for all authorities regardless of size, type of area or resource availability may be too prescriptive. There is potential for greater flexibility in which Guidance is applied or LTPs/APRs assessed;

- in a similar vein, it is left to Government Officers, rather than the LTP Guidance explicitly, to advise authorities which of the Annex D criteria are important and which could be downplayed in the event of resource/time constraints. It is not realistic to expect the smaller authorities to cover all of the criteria.

For the Department itself, the original objectives of the LTP process remain valid, although the concept reflects "1998 thinking" in terms of devolving transport responsibilities to the local level. There have been some changes of emphasis to reflect the subsequent publication of the Ten Year Plan and greater focus across Government in delivery against national prescribed targets.

The degree to which these objectives have been met by authorities is seen as (unsurprisingly) variable with older, established authorities responding well and some (although not all) smaller, newer authorities struggling to meet the requirements. Hence, some authorities (e.g. Hampshire, West Yorkshire) have been "one step ahead of the game," continuing their good performance from the TPP-Package framework whilst many new unitary authorities (e.g. the ex-Berkshire authorities) have found technical and political difficulties. Those unitary authorities which have bucked the trend include Telford, York and Warrington, partially because of strong political leadership and the recruitment of strong officer teams with technical support.

Many of the issues relating to the LTP process are seen as reflections of the wider questions of corporate performance and political leadership by authorities; solutions may be found at this level rather than focused specifically on transport.

A key achievement of the process is that most authorities have made efforts to deliver and that major progress has been made in integrated transport at the local level in a relatively short-time.

Against this, recognised weaknesses include the resource intensive nature of the process for authorities, Government Offices and the Department itself in preparing and assessing LTPs, the "ticks in boxes" approach of parts of the Guidance, difficulties of comparing LTP strategies across authorities and the current reliance on the LTP documents themselves in assessing performance rather than actual delivery on the ground.

These weaknesses aside, the approach is seen by the Department as providing more benefits than weaknesses.

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10 Our own review of Government Office Assessments and evidence from the regional workshops and case studies largely confirms this view.
Perspectives from External Stakeholders

It is important that any process evaluation seeks the views of external stakeholders likely to be affected by LTP strategies and investment programmes. It has generally been more difficult to engage such individuals and organisations, although our case study in the North East has been particularly successful in engaging a range of views besides the County Officers and Members. We have also obtained the results of Steer Davies Gleave Stakeholder Survey which sought views of local transport planning from a number of nationally important stakeholder organisations.

Where provided by the SDG Survey and our case study results, the feedback from external stakeholders on the LTP process is mixed. This is perhaps unsurprising given that this group comprises a range of organisations with differing remits, objectives and priorities. Indeed, a number of key stakeholders (e.g. the SRA, CPRE, RAC) have essentially national objectives and this, combined with staff resource limitations, limits their capacity to engage with the LTP process at the local level. In other cases, some of the feedback suggests only limited understanding of the process itself or willingness to develop a more informed perspective (LR, CS).

Where firm indications are given, stakeholders appear generally supportive of the process, welcoming the increase in resources and more strategic perspective. However, there is a perception from some that the process is not yet delivering improvements in line with their initial expectations or that their particular priorities or interest groups have been fully taken on board.

Amongst the strengths cited from the SDG Survey\(^\text{11}\) and case studies are:

- the five-year programme provides greater certainty of funding (LR);
- there is more consultation and views are more likely to be taken on board (CS County North East);
- the process of partnership working brings individuals and organisations together which wouldn't normally meet (CS County North East);
- availability of match funds to support commercial investment (CS Unitary, West Midlands);
- the LTP framework provides a good policy basis for improving local public transport (CS Unitary South West);
- some major schemes are now being progressed which business has long lobbied for (CS County North East);
- coverage of rural issues is far better than under the TPP (CS County North East);

Amongst the key weaknesses cited are:

- compared to the requirements and the expectations, authorities are slow to deliver (LR);
- in many cases, the "good intentions" of the LTP is not backed up with action on the ground (CS County South East, CS County North East);
- consultation fora can be little more than "talking shops" (CS Unitary Eastern Region);
- insufficient local authority understanding of stakeholders priorities, including commercial realities (LR, CS North East);
- inadequate integration with other planning frameworks and programmes (LR);
- lack of innovation in favour of tried and tested solutions (LR);
- exclusion of revenue funding (LR, CS Unitary West Midlands);

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\(^\text{11}\) This survey received responses from 17 out of 85 national stakeholder organisations contacted.
- a continued focus on road-based improvements (LR);
- a poor focus on community transport (LR); and
- LTP rail proposals are poorly developed and aspirational, rather than robust and realistic (SRA).

Further views from external stakeholders are covered under the various generic themes, especially the Inclusivity theme in Chapter 4.
Changes to the Process

The overall positive reaction to the introduction of LTPs is reflected by the fact that most LTP practitioners, Government Officers and stakeholders contacted in the regional workshops and case studies are pressing for limited change to the process. Indeed, a common reaction from the individuals we spoke to has been a desire for continuity in the process over a prolonged period which will allow authorities' planning, management and monitoring capabilities to "bed down" and deliver the LTP programmes with certainty against a minimum of new requirements. After four years of changing Guidance from Government, many LTP practitioners now feel that the time has come to "get on and deliver" rather than dramatically change the process further.

There is little desire to return to a system based on the principles of the TPP.

Where there are changes desired, they tend to be related to the administration, coverage, funding or delivery of the LTP process rather than its fundamental principles. Proposals for change, suggested by LTP practitioners (RW) or developed by Atkins in response to issues raised by practitioners, include:

Administration

more flexible application of the LTP and APR Guidance to reflect different authority types and local priorities;

assessments of LTPs and APRs which avoid the "tick box" syndrome and allows authorities to focus on their key priorities rather than making sure that every mode and topic is covered in order to comply directly with Guidance;

earlier LTP and APR Guidance from the Department;

care by authorities and the Department to keep the resource burdens involved in the production of APRs manageable; and

further good practice guidance on a number of areas, such as public consultation, monitoring and target setting, rural issues and cross-boundary working.

Coverage

strengthened guidance on authorities to work with their neighbours when addressing strategic transport issues and problems and more onus to consider joint LTPs where these coincide more clearly with Travel to Work Areas;

enhanced linkage within the LTP Guidance between action at the local level and action at regional and national level where the latter may be more effective in addressing travel patterns and problems; and

enhanced coverage of rural transport issues and the type of measures likely to be appropriate in rural areas.

Funding

inclusion or account taken of increased requirements for revenue funding to deliver LTP outcomes;

improved integration between the various "Challenge Bid" rounds and the LTP framework; and

the re-introduction of two-year Supplementary Credit Approval in place of the current annual Basic Credit Approval introduced under the Single Capital Pot.
**Delivery**

- a recognition that authorities face differing, and in some cases acute, shortages of staff and specific skills to deliver their LTP;
- greater onus on external agencies and stakeholders to recognise the importance of the LTP and work with authorities in delivering local transport programmes; and
- a recognition that delivery of LTP outcomes will take time and that the Department should be patient in expecting results on the ground.

Again, these issues represent hypotheses which have been tested more fully in the case studies. We return to these proposed changes in each of the relevant theme chapters and also in Chapter 13 covering our conclusions and recommendations.

**Unintended Side-Effects**

Unintended effects of the LTP process, as identified from the individuals and organisations we spoke to, tend to relate to parallel issues associated with the process rather than elements of the process itself. For example, the significant increase in funding available to authorities has had a number of unintended effects:

- substantial increases in funding coupled with the wider requirements of the LTP process have led to a significant increase in staffing requirements within authorities, in terms of both quantity of staff and range of skills required to develop and deliver the LTP. This in turn has resulted in increased demands being placed on consultants and contractors. The shortage of transport planners across the whole Transport sector is well documented in Chapters 8 (Delivery) and 11 (Change Management) and there is a perception amongst most LTP practitioners that this has led to a significant increase in salaries, which in turn has impacted on consultancy/contractors’ fees and delivery costs;

- evidence from the case study authorities suggests significant levels of underspend in the first full LTP year, and transfer of funding to maintenance schemes due to difficulties authorities have experienced in gearing up to delivering larger expenditure programmes (see Chapter 8). This problem may diminish during the latter years of the LTP period, as authorities adapt to larger capital budgets.

Unintended impacts more closely associated with the LTP process tend to be related to the new decision-making powers given to Members. Greater local discretion over allocation of resources provides potential for tensions between national and local priorities. While no hard evidence has been found of Members transferring capital into policy areas which are not being promoted at national level, there is evidence of bland statements of principle at policy level, and examples of specific schemes being delayed or altered at implementation stage due to Member intervention (Chapters 8 and 11).

**Conclusions**

The overall introduction of LTPs across England has been largely successful given the extent of change from the TPP system and the resource requirements in making the switch. Key issues relate to the financing (particularly revenue) and application of the process, and delivery of LTP programmes on the ground, rather than the fundamentals of the process itself.

The following nine chapters explore these perspectives in more detail based around the key generic themes, drawing on the evidence gathered from across this Part 1 Study.
4. Inclusivity

"Good idea in theory. Less so in practice." (RW)

"Two problems with consultation. At the strategic level, I'm not sure we're engaging people properly..... and at the detailed level we are unable to control it; it tends to get out of hand.” (RW)

Introduction

Inclusivity is an integral part of the LTP process. Plans must be broadly based and well supported by the public and a range of interest groups both in drawing up the LTP and delivering the programme. Authorities are also expected to consult widely in the drawing up of their Annual Progress Reports.

This theme addresses the challenges authorities have faced in consulting their public and key stakeholders on their LTP, the level of success achieved and the degree to which the results of consultation have been incorporated into policies and delivery. We also consider the extent of liaison, in policy and practical terms, with other local authorities and external stakeholders including public transport operators, health authorities and the private sector.

Key questions covered in this Chapter include:

- whether the main elements of Government Guidance on participation and stakeholder consultation have been followed;
- the issues and problems authorities have faced in their efforts to consult the public and stakeholder organisations;
- whether there is evidence of more partnership working in the development and delivery of LTPs and whether this varies between key stakeholder organisations;
- whether consultation and participation activities on the LTP are co-ordinated with parallel exercises for other frameworks, such as Best Value;
- the lessons to be learned from the experience of consulting on and working in partnership on the first LTP which can be applied to the second.

Compliance with LTP Guidance on Public Consultation

The Full LTP Guidance states:

"Local transport planning needs to be an inclusive process. We attach a high priority to effective public involvement in local transport policy and this will be a key factor in our consideration of LTPs."

The evidence, from all the sources examined, suggests that Government Guidance on public and stakeholder consultation has been well taken up and that this is one of the stronger areas of the first LTPs. Authorities themselves feel that their consultation efforts in the first LTP have been relatively successful, but with scope for improvement in the mix and specification of the methods used.

Our review of the Government Office LTP Assessments confirms that authorities have made good progress in consulting their public, almost all meeting the "minimum" Annex D requirements (GO). However, they appear to have been less successful in feeding the results of consultation back into the

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12 The ICE Local Transport and Public Realm Survey 2002 finds that 77% of authorities believe their community involvement techniques are "very effective" or "effective." The corresponding question for the CfIT Local Authority Survey finds that 62% of respondents feel their authority is doing enough to involve the public and only 20% feel they should be doing more.
process in terms of redefining objectives or programme priorities, and providing evidence that they have done so.

The latter finding may reflect the view of a number of sources that consultation on the LTP strategy has often been progressed to confirm support for a generalised set of objectives rather than genuinely gauge differences of opinion (LR). This stems from the tension between requirement for LTPs to be consistent with national transport objectives and the Ten Year Plan whilst also reflecting local aspirations and priorities. As the Transport Research Group (2001) contends:

"Prior knowledge of Government policy has created a background of conventional wisdom that has influenced the direction of consultation, thereby prejudicing open consideration of ideas that do not conform to the Government's policies" (LR)

Evidence from the regional workshops and case studies provides some concurrence with this view, although the lack of differing opinions is also seen as part and parcel of the difficulty in engaging the public on strategic transport issues more widely.

"In our authority, we felt that the aspirations of the local population did not marry easily with national Government objectives." (RW)

"The LTP system is very much about local solutions to local problems and I just wonder whether you can really do that with the process, or do you feel you're being pushed down alleys of what the Government want you to do at the national level.... This is where we get a conflict in what the LTP is supposed to do." (RW)

Nevertheless, far more consultation is clearly taking place relative to the TPP and most authorities have put considerable resources into public consultation spanning a wide range of methods and approaches.

Some authorities, mainly the conurbations and urban areas with established packages already had some consultation experience under the TPP and other frameworks and, in these cases, this has meant gradual change (scale rather than scope) from existing practice. Unitary authorities have often had to engage their public via completely new frameworks and have often been less equipped to do so\(^\text{13}\), although the smaller areas covered and smaller number of interest groups has made the task slightly less onerous.

"This [consultation] was totally new. We'd never done anything like this before." (CS Unitary)

\(^{13}\) For example due to shortage of staff. See Chapter 8.
## Case study - LTP consultation in a metropolitan region

The metropolitan LTP within our case study selection is based on public and stakeholder consultation on the PTLP. The approach to consultation was commended by the Government Office. Methods pursued included a summary brochure and questionnaire, meetings with community and interest groups, structured market research and discussions with the PTA's Passenger Consultative Committee. The LTP includes a detailed account of the methodology and evidence of the findings of consultation in a technical appendix and summarises the key specific messages relating to objectives and the overall strategic direction of the LTP. The submission demonstrates that consultation results have been considered in developing the final LTP through a table set out in the following format:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Comment</th>
<th>Respondent(s)</th>
<th>Action Taken</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Environmental and social objectives should be given more priority</td>
<td>Interest and Community Group Seminar</td>
<td>Objectives have been revised and presentation amended to clarify equal status of objectives</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>More priority should be given to enforcement</td>
<td>Interest and Community Group Seminar</td>
<td>Ongoing discussions are being held with the Police regarding enforcement. The Plan includes provision for investment in camera technology to aid enforcement.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Road Traffic Reduction should be a fundamental objective of the Plan</td>
<td>Friends of the Earth and other environmental groups</td>
<td>The objective has been amended, but not to the extent sought by the respondents. A key target is to prevent traffic growth across the urban cordon.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>There should be better facilities for disabled people.</td>
<td>Brochure questionnaire respondents</td>
<td>The Plan places considerable emphasis on improving the accessibility of the transport system</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Means of Public Consultation

The requirement to consult the public and key stakeholders on LTP policies and schemes is seen as one of the key strengths of the process, engendering a degree of ownership which was largely absent from the TPP. However, the task of consulting on the LTP, APR and individual schemes can be costly, time consuming and with the potential to raise expectations amongst the public and particular interest groups which are then difficult to satisfy.

Authorities have engaged a wide range of approaches to consultation on their LTP, a number of which are being continued as part of ongoing engagement with the public, including consultation on specific schemes. Approaches employed by the case study authorities include:

- circulation of the PLTP or summary leaflets with return questionnaires, usually to all or a large proportion of households across the authority;
- static exhibitions at libraries, council offices, other public buildings and shopping centres;
- travelling staffed roadshows and exhibitions;
- public meetings
- transport/attitudinal surveys of the public and business;
- focus groups;
- Citizen's Panels;
- Officer attendance at neighbourhood or residents' groups or similar fora ; and
- public consultation via the Internet.

Table 4.1 summarises the use of these methods across the 6 case study authorities included for this theme.

Table 4.1 - Preferred Methods of LTP Consultation

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Authority</th>
<th>Unitary (East)</th>
<th>Unitary (East)</th>
<th>County (North East)</th>
<th>County (South East)</th>
<th>Unitary (South West)</th>
<th>Unitary (West Midlands)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Leaflet/Questionnaire</td>
<td>■</td>
<td>■</td>
<td>■</td>
<td>■</td>
<td>■</td>
<td>■</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fixed Exhibition in Public Buildings/Places</td>
<td>■</td>
<td>■</td>
<td>■</td>
<td>■</td>
<td>■</td>
<td>■</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Travelling Roadshow</td>
<td>■</td>
<td>■</td>
<td>■</td>
<td>■</td>
<td></td>
<td>■</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Public Meetings at Civic Centre/Town Hall</td>
<td>■</td>
<td>■</td>
<td>■</td>
<td>■</td>
<td></td>
<td>■</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
One case study unitary authority (Eastern Region) is using a Public Forum on the authority's internet site, to allow residents to discuss issues of importance to them. The site appears to be well used with 17 issues raised in September 2002, receiving 83 responses and several thousand viewings. Views are not automatically forwarded to officers and members, but both groups can view the comments in the same way as the public. Interestingly, issues surrounding mini-roundabouts and traffic calming were the most common transport concerns; however, most other issues were non-transport related.

The forum, also provides an opportunity for the Council to post information bulletins to the public. For example, the forum has recently been used by the Council to request public contributions to two DfT consultation reports relating to bus use in the authority.

Some approaches have clearly had more success than others. Whilst the case studies reveal a range of experiences, it would appear that more targeted consultation exercises focused on specific user groups or fora have generally been more successful than broader-based impersonal approaches based on widespread circulation of questionnaires or public exhibitions. This is resulting in some authorities reconsidering the methods they intend to deploy in consulting on the second LTP.

The following remark is typical:

"Some days on the roadshow, no one would turn up or you'd only get a turnout of three or four. I'm not sure whether we would look to do this [roadshow] next time around." (CS Unitary)

Invitations to public meetings at civic offices or other council venues likewise tend to elicit a low turnout. Evidence of the success of mass circulation of summary leaflets and questionnaires is a little more mixed, but still appears to be low. One case study authority (County North East) circulated over 10,000 PLTP leaflets with attached questionnaires, receiving only 350 responses from the public (3.5% response rate). Another (Unitary, South West) achieved 3,860 responses from 70,000 leaflets mailed to every household in the area (5.5% response rate).

In these, and a number of other examples, the costs associated with the exercise are not considered worthwhile relative to the feedback received.

By contrast, many authorities appear to have found that engaging the public through user groups can be more effective, especially when addressing strategic issues or focusing on particular policy areas such as rail or cycling strategies. This works most effectively when such groups have already been established for other purposes such as Community Strategies, Local Agenda 21, Rail User Groups or

| Transport Patterns/Attitude Survey | ■ |   |   |   |   |   |
| Citizens' Panel | ■ | ■ |   |   |   |   |
| Neighbourhood or Residents' Groups/Fora | ■ | ■ | ■ | ■ | ■ | ■ |
| Meetings with Interest Groups | ■ |   |   |   |   |   |
| Internet Questionnaire/Survey |   |   |   |   |   | ■ |
similar channels for residents' or community representation in the democratic process. Moreover, such
groups offer a vehicle for the ongoing consultation process on the APR and specific LTP initiatives.

Few authorities in either the regional workshops or case studies have fully integrated consultation on
the LTP with parallel frameworks for Best Value, Corporate Plans, Community Health and the like,
pursuing consultation as a largely separate exercise. There is some evidence of authorities using pre-
existing Citizens' Panels and developing Local Strategic Partnerships.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Case study - consulting ethnic minorities on transport</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>As part of its market research to support consultation on the LTP, one metropolitan group of authorities held focus groups with specific sub-groups of the Asian community and undertook in depth interviews with Asian women from low-response sub-groups. The aim was to reach people whom it was felt would be under-represented when using conventional survey techniques. To this end, focus groups were held with the following: Pakistani women who relied on others to drive them; Asian male car drivers; Young Asian males and females who use public transport. 15 sets of interviews were also held with Pataan, Bengali and Gujerati women. The exercise revealed useful information about the travel patterns and choices of the groups targeted. Whilst many views coincided with those of the &quot;mainstream,&quot; the surveys also provided insights into the perceived security of using public transport and taxis, experiences of racism and language and cultural barriers which prevent some of the respondents from using public transport.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Experience of Public Consultation

Authorities are fairly united in saying the majority of the public are difficult to engage at the strategic level of the LTP. Individuals often tend to be interested in their own local issues and find significant difficulty in understanding broad objectives and policies.

"It all comes down to what an individual member of the public wants to know and I'm not sure that the full strategic planning thing doesn't just turn them off. It's about what affects me now, not grand policies and plans." (RW)

"The real problem is getting people to feel that its their Local Transport Plan. A lot of people say it's the Council's LTP so it's what they can do for us rather than how we can be involved in the process." (RW)

"They [the public] either like the scheme or they don't like the scheme; it's as simple as that. They don't step back and look at the strategy. They just can't get a handle on it." (CS County)

"In a ward where half the people are on benefit, you are not going to get any constructive views on how we should do our LTP. It's not on their list of priorities and you're wasting your time." (CS Unitary)

The issue of this limited public engagement has the potential to reduce the value of the results. Consultation exercises may be constrained to the "usual suspects" rather than the wider community and difficult to reach groups (e.g. ethnic minorities, young people) may be under-represented.

In a similar vein, practitioners argue that the consultation process may also be dominated by small vocal interest groups, usually opposed to the authority, rather than the "silent majority." This is particularly the case when dealing with individual schemes and can cause considerable delay in implementation to the extent of Members becoming involved.

"We basically abandoned the scheme because, well to be frank, it wasn't a popular scheme and there was an election coming up." (RW)

As noted above, the public may also raise transport priorities or proposals which conflict with the Government's national objectives. There is a feeling from some practitioners that whilst the local public may retain a personal mobility and pro-car agenda, expressing this via consultation for the LTP would harm the funding allocation given by the Government. In some cases, authorities may get around this by restricting consultation questions to general principles "that hardly anyone could disagree with" rather than specifics which may invite opposition or contrary views.

Many officers perceive a danger of "consultation fatigue" amongst the public, with exercises also being carried out for Best Value, Community Plans and a range of other frameworks. Further consultation could therefore elicit diminishing returns and public annoyance, again increasing the danger of specific interest groups dominating the feedback. Some authorities are seeking to reduce the exposure of the public to excessive consultation by combining the various frameworks rather than consulting on each one separately. For example, one case study authority uses feedback on transport issues gathered from questions in other department's questionnaires and consultation frameworks rather than commissioning its own specifically.

There are varying views over whether the benefits of consultation outweigh the considerable costs with some practitioners feeling the Guidance on this issue to be excessively prescriptive and onerous, for example by requiring consultation on the Annual Progress Report itself as well as individual schemes as they are developed and implemented. Chapter 5 provides some evidence of the relative costs of consultation for different scheme types.

From a stakeholder perspective, there is evidence that consultation can be ad hoc, focused around the needs of the LTP practitioners, and may not always be as comprehensive as stakeholders would wish.
Case study - stakeholder consultation I

"In those service areas where some consultation had taken place, we found evidence that important stakeholders were not consulted. Councillors told us that 'we were merely kept informed'. We also spoke with representatives of specialist access groups, users of education and Social services transport, parish councils, and local businesses, all of whom commented on a lack of consultation and involvement."

"We were surprised to find that some key officers were not even involved in their own service area under review. We also found that officers with an indirect involvement in the review, such as planners and highway officers, were not consulted. They might have had a view on the improvements that are needed or practical suggestions to make."

Unitary Authority (South-East), Comprehensive Performance Assessment, Audit Commission (2002)

Case study - stakeholder consultation II

"There is currently no regular mechanism for actively involving public transport users in matters of policy development as well as raising day-to-day issues. We were also made aware of the potential for more active dialogue with education contractors on a regular basis, rather than again, consultation at particular times designated by the Council."

County Authority (North-East), Comprehensive Performance Assessment, Audit Commission (2002)

Case study - stakeholder consultation III

"Although there is frequent contact with users of special needs transport and with the two client departments, there has not to date been a structured approach to consultation with the users of these services. LTP officers consider this to be primarily the responsibility of Education and Social Services departments, but plan to work with those departments to improve consultation."

County Authority (North-West), Comprehensive Performance Assessment, Audit Commission (2002)

Future Public Consultation

Overall, consultation is an area where authorities are still finding their feet and learning good practice. Much of the criticism over consultation relates to widespread impersonal exercises at a strategic level undertaken in advance of the first LTP and authorities appear to acknowledge that the process could be managed in a more targeted and focused way.

"We are more targeted now. We use fora with interest groups who want to talk to us, rather than going to the whole of the public and asking for their views of strategy." (RW)

It is generally agreed that better guidance on good practice on planning, undertaking and interpreting consultation exercises at a number of levels would address some of the uncertainties and concerns raised. In particular, authorities possibly need to be clearer, at the outset, on the role of the public, stakeholders and interest groups in "buying into" the preferred LTP strategy, shaping the strategy itself and providing input into the identification and selection of solutions.

To this end, the hierarchical approach proposed in the "Cone of Involvement" is instructive (Figure 4.1). This distinguishes between Information - an essentially one-way process where information is disseminated to the public via impersonal methods such as summary leaflets and public notices/displays - and methods for Consultation and Participation where feedback is sought on
defining objectives, proposing solutions and selecting measures. The latter involves the community having a direct input into the final outcome of the process, but is confined to those who have the time and inclination - and to a lesser degree the knowledge - to become actively involved. The quality of public feedback therefore increases as the consultation process becomes more focused and therefore the ability of the consultees/participants to actually influence the process constructively grows.

Figure 4.1 - The Cone of LTP Strategy Involvement

Such an approach may assist in overcoming consultation fatigue and public apathy issues identified for LTP consultation exercises by allowing resources to be focused at groups able and willing to provide detailed feedback on LTP strategies. It may also improve cost-effectiveness of authorities' efforts to make LTPs more inclusive.

Within this framework, the structures being developed under Community Strategies and the associated Local Strategic Partnerships (LSPs) may present a vehicle by which authorities could consult on transport proposals and the LTP more generally. In a number of the case study authorities local groups are being established under the LSP made up of local members, residents or community representatives, public sector agencies and specific interest groups. The agenda is typically community-led and covers a range of issues of interest to the groups' members with the potential to include transport at a number of stages. One case study authority's APR notes:

"It has become increasingly clear that many consultations in the past are undertaken independently by different agencies, leading to consultation fatigue. Consultation processes

Adapted from IHT (1996) Developing Urban Strategies
will be streamlined through development of Community Strategies and Local Strategic Partnerships." (CS County)

We would recommend that further investigation into the scope for closer integration between the LSP framework and consultation/participation in the LTP process be undertaken and, if this proves positive, appropriate advice incorporated into the Second LTP Guidance
Evidence of Partnership Working

The Full LTP Guidance states that "In putting together their LTPs, highway authorities will need to work closely with other local authorities and service providers." This includes effective liaison arrangements with neighbouring authorities, public transport operators and the business sector. In two-tier authorities, district councils should be "active partners" in the development of LTPs.

The need to work in partnership with external stakeholders to develop and deliver the LTP is seen as both strength and weakness of the process. The extent of successful partnership working varies with the case studies suggesting that some stakeholders such as the Countryside Commission, Chambers of Commerce, and Freight Transport Association have been brought on board for the first time and bus and rail operators involved to a greater extent than under the TPP. However, initiatives often appear to be confined to broad statements of shared objectives rather than practical collaboration on the ground and the extent of collaboration can be constrained by differing commercial, social or political objectives of the organisations concerned.

Our coverage of partnership working looks at a number of areas, starting from broad strategic alliances to specific stakeholders involved or concerned with the LTP process. Our comments here should be read in conjunction with the analysis of external stakeholder views set out in Chapter 3.

Strategic Partnerships

Some authorities have chosen to put partnership at the core of their approach to the LTP, assembling stakeholder groups comprising a range of public and private organisations.

The driver and remit for such "Strategic Partnerships" varies and in the case studies examined may grow out of parallel processes to the LTP itself, such as sub-regional regeneration or the need to refocus new unitary authorities on an agreed set of priorities. The reaction from external organisations involved in the partnerships is positive, with the partnerships being seen as genuine attempts by the authorities involved to be more inclusive and share important decisions14.

Against the benefits, there are drawbacks. These include the amount of member and officer time spent organising meetings and responding to questions and requests from stakeholders. Continuing the active engagement of all the stakeholder organisations involved beyond the initial "honeymoon" of the LTP settlement can also be difficult and the success of the groups can depend as much on the enthusiasm of the individuals involved as on the institution itself.

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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Case study - a partnership forum</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A Partnership Forum represents a key element of one county council's (North East) approach to progressing the LTP strategy and programme. The Forum currently has between 35 and 40 active members representing key stakeholders from the districts, public transport operators, walking and cycling organisations, Transport 2000, Freight Transport Association, Government Officers and others. Meetings are held quarterly and members also receive a monthly progress report on the LTP, including a statement of financial status. Whilst the County currently convenes the Forum, the Districts have been asked to provide a Chair over the next year with the possibility of an external stakeholder chair for the third year of rotation.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Forum, which has been commended by the Government Office, provides a means of both monitoring the delivery of the LTP and discussing wider transport issues of a national or...</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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14 Evidence from LTP authorities has been corroborated by statements from a selection of stakeholders spoken to during the case studies (e.g. bus operators, Chambers of Commerce – see Table 1.1).
regional nature. The County also sees the Forum as having a key role in formulating objectives and strategy for the second LTP. The Forum is widely welcomed by the Districts\(^{15}\) who also see the involvement of such groups as the Cycle Touring Club and Transport 2000 as a means of broadening out the historic engineering-led approach of some County transport planners.

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**Case study - local strategic partnerships and the LTP**

One unitary authority in the South West is proposing to create a two-tier structure - four Area Assemblies based on ward boundaries supported by independent Community Forums.

**Area Assemblies**

It is expected the Assemblies will:

- oversee the delivery of services to the area and manage devolved budgets
- support recognised community forums and administer funding
- contribute to the Local Strategic Partnership
- engage with local communities and agencies to solve local problems
- provide opportunities for area-based development
- provide a place for the Council and other service providers to present issues and consult the community about their proposals.

Their proposed membership is likely to consist of:

- Ward Councillors, Partner Agencies (e.g. Police), Council for Voluntary Services, Community Forum Representatives
- and be reflective of the Local Strategic Partnership

**Community Forums**

Community Forums are independent community groups which will be able to influence decision making and the delivery of services at a local level. The Forums will also:

- Provide a way for the public to raise their own views and concerns about Thurrock Council or local issues;
- Strengthen local community networks and develop constructive and effective partnerships between local people and the Council;
- Allocate funding for local initiatives, once they've been officially recognised by their local Area Assembly.

Their proposed membership is likely to consist of:

- Individual residents, Public service providers, Local businesses, Faith groups.

Over the past year, two pilot community forums have been run. Some examples of transport related issues discussed include:

*Road Traffic Action Working Group* - Local residents worked with schools and parent groups to identify road safety issues around schools in the area, and to put forward solutions.

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\(^{15}\) Evidence from three District Councils contacted for this case study.
Passenger Transport - Following residents' concerns about the bus service to and from Tilbury, a strategy and an action plan to deal with the three main issues - demand, delivery and funding was agreed.

Traffic Issues in Tilbury - Local residents were involved in the consultation process, and issues causing concern were dealt with by council officers.

Footpath - Following a petition from local residents and support from the Area Committee, it was agreed that the desired path would be implemented.

Neighbouring Local Authorities

Joint working between authorities appears to be variable except where district councils have been consulted in drawing up the LTP and where joint LTPs have been continued from former packages. Whilst there are a small number of examples of good practice, this is an area which appears to be a weakness in the process and where LTP practitioners acknowledge that more could be done, given greater political will and time. This is especially the case in considering specific cross-boundary initiatives rather than shared statements of principle.

The weakness of joint working is particularly evident from the unitary authorities examined in the case studies. In one example in the West Midlands, the authority and LTP boundary diverges significantly from the travel-to-work and former package area with the consequence that the predominantly rural hinterland outside the LTP area appear to be less well served than under the county system.

Officers frequently refer to political differences between members in hindering the effectiveness of collaboration, even where this would have clear strategic advantages. Indeed, the logic of a "Joint LTP" may be accepted by officers (and even urged by Government Officers), but this thinking is not acted upon for essentially political reasons.

"In principle, a good idea [Joint LTP], yes. In practice, knowing the personalities involved, I can't see it happening." (CS Unitary)

Even where joint working is well established, such as the metropolitan areas, there are real difficulties in balancing the needs and priorities of the various metropolitan districts/boroughs, particularly where there are differences of political control.

"One problem with partnerships is that sometimes the decision which is made is made on the basis of displeasing the least number of people rather than whether it's the best thing to do.” (RW)

Public Transport Operators

Joint working between bus and rail operators is, unsurprisingly, variable, being generally better in the metropolitan and large urban areas. Overall, the evidence is that greater partnership is being progressed compared to the TPP. One reason for this is the larger amount of capital funds now available to local authorities acting as an incentive for operators to engage more fully and proactively.

Nevertheless, partnership has its limits and some officers and Members express "deep frustration" at the requirement to produce LTP bus and rail strategies without the powers for delivery. In several of the case studies, the commercial interests of the bus operators are seen as taking precedence over supporting local LTP policies. Operators may be quite risk averse as well as experience their own operational and staff difficulties which limit their capacity to support the LTP. Feedback from bus operators directly confirms this impression of a tension between organisational objectives.

"It's proved more difficult working with bus operators - naively, we didn't appreciate the nature of their organisation or structure and we've had to go out on a limb ourselves to bring them along." (RW)
It is also unclear whether the national commercial objectives of the large transport groups are driving investment and scheduling plans at a local level. There is some evidence that the introduction of new buses tends to be focused on the larger metropolitan or urban areas relative to small towns or rural areas. Similarly, the Overground concept has been introduced by FirstGroup in a number of English towns and cities, for example, with seemingly limited consultation in the instance of one of the case study authorities examined.

Case study - the bus operators' perspective

Both the major operators in a county in the North West welcome the LTP as an effective policy document which offers greater support for enhanced bus services relative to the TPP. The increased level of consultation through the Partnership Forum and for specific schemes is also welcomed as a means of putting operators in touch with a wider range of County Officers and organisations involved in the transport sector. Both operators, however, emphasise their commercial objectives and the need to take operational decisions on service levels to reflect staff availability and reliability targets, separately of the LTP.

Against overall approval for the LTP as a policy document, there are concerns at the pace of delivery where the County is perceived as slow compared to other authorities. Only one Quality Bus Corridor has been designated and there have been delays in progressing proposals elsewhere.

Joint working with the rail industry is frequently seen as slow, frustrating and unproductive and a number of the case study authorities emphasise the difficulties in developing meaningful rail investment programmes. A particular difficulty is felt to exist where there are competing demands on rail infrastructure for local and national needs with the national requirements largely taking precedence. The Strategic Rail Authority is seen as particularly difficult to work with:

"No joined up thinking on rail issues at all at the moment." (RW)

"The SRA are very good at telling us what they have decided, but after they've taken the decisions, not before." (RW)

On rail, we are not masters of our own destiny. They [the SRA] have their own priorities and we have to take a backseat to that." (CS County)

The difficulties largely reflect the differing local and national priorities and remits of authorities and the SRA, the latter viewing the Rail Passenger Partnership (RPP) as its preferred channel for progressing local rail improvements.

The strategic rail authority

Authorities' comments on the lack of engagement with the SRA should be seen in the context of an organisation which has undergone dramatic change since LTPs were published. The Authority has evolved from the former Office for Passenger Rail Franchising (OPRAF) through the Shadow Strategic Rail Authority to an organisation focused on achieving the Government's national targets for rail as set out in the Ten Year Plan. Whilst the SRA's Guidance obliges it to "have regard" to Local Transport Plans, the current structure of the organisation is therefore a nationally focused one rather than one which is able to engage with authorities at the local level.

The SRA also faces resource limitations in engaging with authorities at the local level. No

16 These views are based on a one-to-one meeting with the SRA, September 2002.
more than four officers within the organisation have responsibilities for liaising with authorities on their LTPs, all based in London. There are proposals to strengthen the SRA's regional presence, but this is still in the process of being planned and implemented.

Overall, the SRA sees the coverage of rail issues in LTPs as "disappointing" and believes many LTP objectives and proposals are unrealistic and inconsistent with its wider network management responsibilities. Whilst this partly results from the inevitable tension between the needs of long-distance and local passenger and freight traffic, it is also seen as stemming from a lack of operational and technical knowledge by authority officers constraining the submission of informed and well-supported bids.

In any case, the SRA sees its engagement with authorities most productively at the regional and metropolitan level, matching its strategic priorities and also its staff and time resources. Ultimately, this requires a greater degree in cross-boundary co-operation between authorities in developing and prioritising their rail aspirations in order to get them through LTP or RPP acceptance.
Government Offices

Interestingly, the LTP process is seen as largely improving working relationships between authorities and Government Offices. This appears to be due to the increase in funding availability and more liaison in assessing drafts of the LTP and APR.

"The impression with TPP was, you put your exam paper in, in July and you waited until December to see whether you passed or failed. There's much closer liaison throughout the year now."

"We connect with [the Government Office], but there is a lack of understanding from DTLR about what the difficulties are at local level."

Conversely, the Department itself is seen as largely distant and "out of touch" with the technical challenges and political realities facing LTP practitioners on the ground as well as failing to provide leadership on key national policies. This is probably no better or worse than the TPP period, however, and the Department receives credit for the increase in capital funding and the greater flexibility for authorities in transport spending.

Other Public Agencies and Stakeholders

The regional workshops and case studies provide a range of evidence of partnerships with other public agencies and stakeholders. These include:

- the Highways Agency;
- the Countryside Agency;
- the Health and Education Sectors, including Primary Care Trusts and local schools.

The evidence is that more partnership working towards LTP objectives is taking place compared to the TPP. However, the driver for such engagement is often a requirement for the stakeholders involved to engage with authorities in developing their future initiatives. Examples include the Highways Agency's Pathfinder initiative and the Countryside Agency's Rural Transport Partnership scheme. These initiatives do not result from the LTP process per se, but are consistent with it and add value to what authorities can achieve using LTP funding and policies.

Case study - a highways agency perspective

A regional representative of the Highways Agency was consulted regarding the extent of partnership working with a county case study authority in the North-East. The introduction of the LTP was felt to have improved the level of partnership working between the County Council and the Highways Agency (HA), although this relationship was well established prior to the change-over. Co-ordination between work on the trunk road network and improvements locally has now improved and the Partnership Forum provides a good medium to share information and future priorities.

Changing objectives within the Agency itself, for example the establishment of a Network Management Division, now places more emphasis on working with local authorities and accounting for priorities set out in Local Transport Plans. Some authorities, such as the case study authority in question, have been proactive in capitalising on this, others (especially where trunk roads are less important as part of the overall network) less so.

Case study - healthy city partnership

One unitary authority (West Midlands) is a Co-Chair of the Healthy City Partnership,
designated under the World Health Organisation, which aims to consider the health of the local community from a holistic perspective cross-cutting against a range of activities and sectors including combating poverty, reducing crime, enhancing educational opportunities and promoting healthy lifestyles. The City Health Development Plan includes a number of linkages to the LTP including road traffic reduction, reducing air and noise pollution, encouraging healthier lifestyles through greater take-up of walking and cycling, and the development of travel plans. The City is working with a number of other agencies including the Local Health Trust, three Primary Care Trusts, the University and Voluntary Action and practical initiatives have included Walking Buses and local accident reduction.

**The Private Sector**

The wider business sector, like the general public, appears relatively difficult to engage and consultation exercises with local businesses appear to elicit a low response rate unless in relation to specific schemes or local issues. The views of many business representatives (e.g. Chambers of Commerce, Freight Transport Association) also look to authorities to deliver on strategic improvements often at a regional level, rather than local enhancements for public transport, walking and cycling.

Engagement with small businesses is seen as especially problematic. One APR (County Eastern Region) notes:

"The sheer number of independent hauliers in the County, often having only one or two vehicles and sharply differing characteristics and viewpoints, suggests that partnerships and a single approach to sustainable distribution may be impractical." (OA)

The greater certainty of funding over a five year period, and against larger absolute budgets, does appear to be benefiting partnerships which authorities are able to form with private development and implementation interests, for example in relation to major public transport schemes and access to regeneration areas and development sites. The various intermediate mode schemes being pursued in a number of localities, usually in some form of proposed public-private partnership, offers supporting evidence of this. However, one LTP practitioner questions whether this is actually sufficient to secure additional third-party contributions:

"Developers are aware that the Government will be providing 70-80% more capital funding in the next ten years and that one of the major delivery mechanisms for the major schemes will be local authorities. As a result, they know that some authorities will have more opportunities than others and therefore it is questionable whether they will seek to fund the schemes themselves." (CS County)

The capacity to integrate LTP funding with developer contributions under Section 106/278 Agreements may be greater within unitary authorities where transport planning and development control functions co-exist within the same organisation.

**Conclusions and Recommendations**

We find that authorities are making major endeavours to follow the LTP and APR Guidance on public consultation and partnership working. These attributes are seen as major strengths of the process, but with implications for the length of time and logistical complexity of developing inclusive strategies and effective programmes delivered via a range of different stakeholders.

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17 Less than 7% in the case of one business survey conducted for one LTP in the North-East.

18 Anecdotal evidence, but partially confirmed by discussions with one case study Chamber of Commerce.
Authorities are, however, still on the learning curve for this theme. Given the emerging problems of "consultation fatigue," the need is for LTP practitioners not to consult more but "smarter," taking account of the principles set out in the "Cone of Involvement" outlined in this Chapter.

There is also a growing understanding of the potential and the limitations of partnership working in achieving LTP objectives. Partnership is certainly improving under the LTP, but there are tensions between authorities and the organisations which have key roles in delivering local transport objectives. Some of this relates to the "expectations gap" over the extent of control and influence authorities have over these external organisations, the separate (sometimes nationally focused) objectives of these organisations and the skill of LTP practitioners themselves in assembling effective stakeholder coalitions under the umbrella of the LTP.

We propose a number of recommendations for taking the inclusivity theme forward in the second tranche of LTPs. These are set out in Chapter 13.
5. Funding and Long-Term Planning

"The big difference is not the process, but the budget." (RW)

"The LTP masquerades as a policy document, but behind it lies a bid for capital funds. In that sense, it's little different from the TPP." (CS County)

Introduction

The introduction of the LTP process has been paralleled by a substantial increase in local transport funding. The resources available have been increased further by the publication of the Ten Year Plan in July 2000. Under the LTP process, authorities have been given indicative capital funding allocations over a five year period, reviewed and confirmed each year, in place of the previous annual bidding round of the TPP.

This theme explores the extent of the funding increase for authorities and whether this is feeding into increased delivery on the ground and an enhanced ability to plan programmes in the long-term. Key questions addressed include:

- the extent of the change in local transport funding between TPP and LTP periods;
- whether increased funding and greater certainty has led to longer-term strategic and investment planning;
- evidence of other funding sources and co-ordination of these with the LTP;
- the balance between capital and revenue budgets and the key issues relating to revenue funding of transport initiatives, management and maintenance; and

Compliance with Guidance

Unsurprisingly, virtually all LTPs meet the Department's minimum requirement to clearly identify the level of resources bid for in each year of the LTP. There is also greater realism about the level of resources available and some indication of planned revenue expenditure (GO). However, there is less compliance with other Annex D criteria such as:

- maximising the contribution of the private sector, including as a provider of funds;
- indication of the scope for modification of the programme including scaling it down; and
- the relationship between the LTP capital bid and the authority's revenue budgets, including a commitment to provide future revenue resources.

The Increase in Capital Funding

Chapter 2 summarises the Full LTP settlement, announced by Ministers in December 2000, as £8.4 billion over five years. The level of financial support for the Ten Year Plan over the next three years, as set out in the recent 2002 Spending Review (HM Treasury), exceeds the original commitment, but it is currently not clear whether any of this additional funding will benefit the LTP settlement.

For individual authorities, the full LTP settlement has meant a doubling or more of their capital settlement under the TPP/Package Approach. Figures 5.1 to 5.6 below show the change for six of the case study authorities. In the instance of one unitary authority in the South West, annual capital funding has risen from around £2 million per annum to almost £5 million. For another North East County, capital funding has grown from a low point of less than £2 million in 1998-1999 to over £15 million in the current year.
Actual allocations may be greater than those indicated if including major schemes which have yet to be fully accepted. In many instances, bids for highway and bridge maintenance and integrated transport block have been almost entirely met.

The increase in capital funding and its projection over a five year period is widely welcomed by both LTP practitioners and Members (RW, CS). The increase in allocations is viewed as allowing more investment to be undertaken on the ground as well as levering greater matching investment from external stakeholders, such as bus operators and developers. This contrasts with a view of the level of funding under TPP as insufficient to allow significant progress to be made even where packages had established the principles of new multi-modal and integrated programmes.

"Until the increased funding came along over the last couple of years, we were in crisis - the roads were getting worse and in terms of new initiatives, the only schemes we were doing were safety schemes. It was pointless being proactive in going any further than this." (CS County)

"With the money we had under the package, it was not worth doing detailed work. Nothing was ever going to come of it so why bother?" (CS Unitary)

Authorities we spoke to appreciate the benefits of greater flexibility in the way that funds can be switched between spending areas (RW, CS) and there is little desire for a reintroduction of centralised ringfencing of minor schemes which characterised the TPP process. A number of the case study authorities have already used this flexibility to switch capital expenditure between spending areas, for example between integrated transport and highway maintenance. Others point to the opportunity to co-ordinate structural maintenance work with integrated transport enhancements thereby creating economies of scale and a minimisation of disruption to road users.

The five year horizon for indicative capital funding is generally seen to be about right (RW, CS). Funding periods below three years are seen as too much akin to the TPP and beyond five years introduces an unacceptable degree of uncertainty in scheme planning. Some practitioners (CS) remark that the LTP period should be rolled forward on an annual basis, rather than focusing on a firm five year block, although this risks a reintroduction of a degree of annual bidding.

Figure 5.1 - TPP and LTP Capital Bid, Allocation and Expenditure Since 1997-98 (Unitary Authority South West)
Figure 5.2 - TPP and LTP Capital Bid, Allocation and Expenditure Since 1997-98 (County North East)
Figure 5.2 - TPP and LTP Capital Bid, Allocation and Expenditure since 1997-98 (County/Authority North East)

Figure 5.3 - TPP and LTP Capital Bid, Allocation and Expenditure Since 1997-98 (Unitary West Midlands)
Figure 5.3 - TPP and LTP Capital Bid, Allocation and Expenditure since 1997-98 (Unitary Authority West Midlands)

Figure 5.4 - TPP and LTP Capital Bid, Allocation and Expenditure Since 1997-98 (County South East)
Figure 5.5 - TPP and LTP Capital Bid, Allocation and Expenditure Since 1997-98 (County East Midlands)

Figure 5.6 - TPP and LTP Capital Bid, Allocation and Expenditure Since 1997-98 (Metropolitan Area)
The increase in capital funding appears to be reducing practitioners’ concerns at the resource-intensive nature of some parts of the LTP process, for example the level of consultation now required, the requirement of enhanced monitoring or the need to prepare an Annual Progress Report, since the potential payoffs from following the Guidance are recognised as substantial.

However, the increase in capital funding has been rapid and comes after many years of under-resourcing of local transport planning and scheme development. This is creating problems of delivery for many authorities. Evidence from the second APRs and discussions with the case study authorities highlight the fact that some authorities are currently unable to achieve full spend of the increased capital allocations. The precise reasons for this are discussed in Chapter 8 which focuses on delivery issues.

There are a number of concerns over funding, however, as follows:

- co-ordinating LTP funding with other sources of finance, especially the various Challenge bidding rounds regularly announced by the Government;
- the increasing cost and complexity of LTP schemes;
- the imbalance between capital and revenue funding;
- the introduction of Single Capital Pot.

Each is addressed below.
Co-ordination with Other Funding Streams

The case studies provide evidence of a wide range of funding sources being used to support local transport enhancements in addition to the core LTP capital allocation. The sources include:

- Single Regeneration Budget;
- European Objective II;
- Rural Transportation Partnership Scheme;
- Rural Bus Subsidy Grant/Rural Bus Challenge;
- Travel Plan bursary (DETR/DfT);
- Lottery funding;
- Rail Passenger Partnership (Strategic Rail Authority);
- District Councils; and
- Developer contributions (through Section 106/278 Agreements).

The evidence from the case studies suggests that there are some good examples where local transport schemes have been delivered effectively using a package of funding sources, thereby minimising the call on LTP funds. The certainty of funding over a number of years is assisting in this process.

In the metropolitan LTP case study within this Study, for example, investment by the PTE in bus stops and priority measures has been matched by the main bus operators investing in new vehicles and smartcard technology. In some instances within the case studies, schemes such as bus interchanges, access roads or environmental traffic management schemes have been funded using entirely external funds, particularly developer contributions.

Some authorities claim to have developed an effective "bidding culture" allowing them to apply for and successfully obtain a range of other funding sources (CS Unitary West Midlands), although the impacts of this are not all positive.

Whilst the funding from external agencies is welcome, the multiplicity of sources can make projects unwieldy from a financial viewpoint and financial officers can have difficulty in keeping track of the differing pots of funding, timescales, bidding methods and reporting mechanisms. There is also a perception that the constant bidding for funding can actually detract from effectively spending the resources already secured and delivering schemes on the ground.

"It would help if all the different funding agencies had the same requirements in terms of audit trails, administration and monitoring.... Often we feel that the systems they (external funding agencies) are asking for are quite onerous." (CS County)

"The Council is building up a high level of expertise in bidding amongst its transport and highway officers.... However, moving towards a bidding culture can lead to uncertainty and wasted effort which can be counterproductive to long-term strategic planning." (CS Unitary)

Private Sector Funding

There are mixed views from LTP practitioners on whether authorities are maximising the potential use of the private sector for funding purposes. A number of Officers at the regional workshops and during the case studies felt that sufficient sums were being secured, for example through Quality Bus Partnerships and major development opportunities. However, there is no firm consensus and others point to a lack of skills in negotiating with private sector partners and the risk of driving away potential investment if funding burdens on developers or local businesses are seen to be "excessive"
for business growth. Use of Private Finance Initiative tends to be restricted to the Major Schemes only and then only if strict conditions are met.

Our own assessment of selected LTPs shows that funding contributions from the private sector are poorly reported by authorities; not helped where the highway authority powers and development control functions reside at county and district levels respectively.

**Challenge Funding**

It is unrealistic to expect significant convergence of bidding procedures and reporting mechanisms between the LTP and funding streams from Europe, regeneration bodies and other non-transport sources. However, this is more feasible for the various "Challenge" bidding rounds (for example, for urban and rural bus services, public transport information and travel plan co-ordination) issued by the Department itself in recent years.

These Challenges offer an avenue for authorities to bid for schemes on an annual basis to fund local transport services and infrastructure separately from the LTP19 with innovation and deliverability usually forming key assessment criteria rather than local transport objectives and targets per se. Views on linkage between the Challenges and the LTP and the acceptability of running the Challenges alongside the LTP process vary between authorities.

Not surprisingly, most concerns are expressed by less successful authorities who argue the Challenge process is a "beauty contest" which favours the larger, better resourced authorities able to assemble the most comprehensive bids.

"They are a great idea as long as you get the money at the end of it." (CS County)

"There is no guarantee of success - they are just a one off." (CS County)

Some argue that Challenge funds should be incorporated into the LTP framework.

"The LTP should really be the only vehicle for funding transport in an area. Other mechanisms should not be used to confuse the issue." (RW)

Other officers refer to a single "Transport Challenge" bid according to the LTP (RW).

Against this, some Members appear to prefer the Challenges since success in securing funding for initiatives allows them to announce "good news" to local people (and voters) outside of the set LTP/APR timetable. Challenge funds are also outside the controls of Single Capital Pot and therefore free from reallocation into other spending areas and are able to fund revenue as well as capital expenditure.

On balance the evidence from the regional workshops and case studies is that the Challenge framework is deterring rather than adding to the LTP process and might be better incorporated into it, possibly by inviting ring-fenced funding bids for specific initiatives through APRs. That said, the ringfencing and revenue funding advantages of Challenge awards caution against their abolition in the short-term.

**Cost of Schemes**

The workshops and case studies provide some evidence that the increase in LTP capital funding is being rendered less effective through a substantial increase in design and construction costs. For some

19 The 2002 Urban Bus Challenge round, for example, is being conducted to a different timetable than that for LTPs/APRs and bids are required only to "be generally consistent with Local Transport Plans with particular reference to their bus strategies."
Local transport plans - policy evaluation: Part 1 - Final Report

cost increases may be as much as 25% since 1997\(^{20}\). Likewise, consultants' costs for scheme appraisal and planning are showing large rises.

"Some design costs are more than the actual scheme - it's ridiculous!" (RW)

Scheme costs are also rising due to the need to consult widely. The 2002 ICE Local Transport and Public Realm Survey suggests that consultation can account for between 1% and 50% of total scheme costs.

Some APRs cite the impact of the Aggregates Levy in increasing the costs of highway schemes, the costs of which were unknown at the time of LTP bidding.

Finally, the staff and skills shortage affecting the UK transport sector inevitably finds its way into increased staff costs, be they in-house transport planners, consultants or bus or train drivers. One APR notes:

"The skills shortage has been compounded by the usual economic effect that a shortage of supply coupled with increased demand engenders, namely an increase in price on staff and materials, over and above the rate of general inflation." (CS County)

Table 5.1 - Proportion of Total Project Costs Spent on Consultation

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Scheme Type</th>
<th>Average</th>
<th>Lowest</th>
<th>Highest</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Traffic Calming</td>
<td>11%</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>25%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Residents' Parking Scheme</td>
<td>22%</td>
<td>1%</td>
<td>50%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pedestrianisation Scheme</td>
<td>11%</td>
<td>3%</td>
<td>30%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Major Road Scheme</td>
<td>4%</td>
<td>1%</td>
<td>21%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


The Revenue Question

"The Local Transport Plan process does not include an explicit link between capital and revenue expenditure. We consider that the needs of the authorities to support the LTP strategy with revenue expenditure should be reflected in future Revenue Support Grant determination." (CS Metropolitan)

The Shortage of Revenue Funding

Almost as consistent as the welcome for increased capital funding under the LTP, are concerns that authorities' transport revenue budgets have not been increased proportionately in line with capital.

As noted above, whilst authorities typically indicate their planned revenue expenditure over the life of the LTP, they are less successful in setting out the relationship between capital and revenue in meeting LTP objectives or making a commitment to provide sufficient revenue to support the capital programme. Evidence from the case study authorities shows that revenue budgets have typically remained static or risen only slightly since the introduction of the LTP and are forecast to remain this way over the life of the Plan.

\(^{20}\) The County Surveyors’ Society estimates current year-on-year cost increases of 5%, driven by the Aggregates Levy, and also to a lesser extent by the increase in capital programmes and skills shortages. A more recent survey of average construction costs by the Civil Engineering Contractors Association suggests increases in 2001 of 8%.
"We are spending millions more in capital, but our bread and butter revenue funded work is suffering." (CS County)

Evidence from the CfIT Local Authority Survey is consistent with this view with 78% of respondents expressing satisfaction with their capital settlements compared to 22% with their level of revenue funds. Moreover, 88% of respondents say that providing additional revenue funds is the key means of improving the funding process.

Figures 5.7 and 5.8 below show a comparison of capital and revenue budgets for one unitary and one county authority (both case study authorities). Both cases confirm a substantial change in the balance between capital and revenue over the LTP.

**Figure 5.7 - Actual and Forecast Capital and Revenue Budgets (County North East)**

![Figure 5.7](image)

**Figure 5.8 - Actual and Forecast Capital and Revenue Budgets (Unitary West Midlands)**
The comparative shortage of revenue budgets relative to the increase in capital is of concern to authorities for essentially three reasons (RW, CS):

- a number of initiatives included or encouraged under LTP Guidance are more revenue-based than capital, requiring substantial inputs of staff time or ongoing funding support in services rather than infrastructure. Examples include travel awareness campaigns, public transport information, co-ordination of travel plans and revenue support for tendered bus services or community transport, all of which may play a role in meeting authorities’ LTP objectives and targets;

- the delivery of a larger and more complex programme of capital works itself requires greater expenditure in scheme feasibility studies, design, consultation, and project management during implementation. Whilst some of this can be capitalised under the capital schemes being progressed (as effectively part of the scheme’s total cost), there is a requirement for additional professional and support staff on an ongoing basis; and

- expenditure in capital assets in the early years of the LTP raises future management and maintenance requirements over and above current liabilities.

The revenue implications of capital expenditure
A recent CfIT Report on the Ten Year Plan provides evidence of the revenue implications for the capital investment in Quality Bus Corridors in Manchester. These derive from the need to maintain carriageway markings, street furniture and signal detection equipment, enforcement of parking controls and bus lanes, and airtime costs for passenger information. These are estimated at £110,000 per corridor per year and with GMPTE implementing 17 corridors in total, this results in an additional revenue cost of £1.9 million per annum, or almost £10 million over the life of the LTP. Whilst some of this may be funded by the bus

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21 Some authorities claim that transport initiatives for rural areas are more likely to be revenue-based. Therefore the “capital bias” of the LTP process impacts on rural areas disproportionally.

operators, this results in a substantial additional burden on the Manchester authorities which is not currently met through the LTP or explicitly through Revenue Support Grant.

Hence, the evidence suggests that insufficient revenue funding is being made available now or being earmarked for the future to compliment and support the increased capital allocations under the LTP. This shortage is contributing to problems in addressing the administrative and project management burdens of delivering the capital programme (See Chapter 8) and runs the risk that the assets being implemented cannot be maintained to a sufficient state of repair where they continue to support local transport objectives.

"It's easier to spend £50 million on capital works than £5 million on Travelwise because we don't have the revenue funding." (RW)

"We have real concerns. If you can't maintain the bus lane or cycle path that you put in now, then in future years, many of the benefits are going to be lost." (CS County)

One case study authority (County North East) has attempted to estimate the supplementary revenue requirement resulting from the LTP. It estimates this figure to be £10 million over the five-year period on top of a capital bid of £96 million and base revenue budget of £92 million; in other words, around 10% of the equivalent capital budget.

Some authorities have been able to ease the emerging shortages through capitalisation of revenue expenditure. This can be achieved through the use of partnering agreements with consultants for project development and implementation (RW, CS) and through awards from DfT, the Countryside Agency and others for bus services, travel plan bursaries and other Challenge bids which include revenue elements. However, these approaches do not represent a solution to the fundamental problem of insufficient revenue budgets to support the LTP.

Dimensions to the Revenue Shortfall

Whilst there is widespread agreement that there is a revenue problem, subtleties arise when considering its causes. Essentially, there appear to us to be two main dimensions: the overall revenue allocation from the Government to authorities (the Standard Spending Assessment) and political and senior management decisions made within authorities on the allocation of resources according to local priorities. Each is addressed in turn.

The Standard Spending Assessment

Local authority revenue budgets are made up of a combination of local taxation, capital receipts and support from Central Government. The latter is known as Revenue Support Grant which is allocated according to a Standard Spending Assessment (SSA) calculated according to authority's underlying demographic, physical, economic and social characteristics. It is intended to reflect the relative costs of providing comparable services between different authorities.

The total SSA covers a range of services provided by each authority, including education, fire, social services and some transport services. The latter are classified under Highways Maintenance and Environmental, Protective and Cultural Services, and like other areas are calculated using a formula using the relevant characteristics of each authority. Further details of the SSA are included in Appendix F.

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23 For example, the SSA for Police services is calculated according to residential population, day-time population, the police establishment and police pensions. Cost adjustments are built in for the socio-economic characteristics of the Police Authority area and the cost of service provision between areas.

24 The highways maintenance block of the SSA is calculated based on lengths of road by type, the relative costs of maintenance and estimated costs per kilometre, taking account of traffic flows, population and winter weather conditions.
The evidence presented to us during the regional workshops and the case studies suggests that, assuming limited scope to raise local revenue resources by increasing Council Tax, there is currently little account taken of the revenue requirements on authorities arising specifically from the LTP process within the SSA. Evidence from the CfIT Local Authority Survey also emphasises authorities' perceptions of this.

### Case study - a county view of the SSA settlement

"For the fifth successive year the County Council (Eastern Region) will receive less Government support per head of population than any other county in England. ... We suffer because Government believes the county to be very 'middle of the road'. It does not attract substantial cash that high levels of deprivation would provide, nor on the other hand does it attract extra money such as the Area Cost Adjustment, which high cost areas in the South East receive. ... Despite intense lobbying and independent research, which proves conclusively that we are a high cost area - more so than some other parts of the South East - successive Governments have refused to include us in the Area Cost Adjustment Scheme. Just as a record, government support per head of population was £547 for our authority and £774 for one of our immediate neighbours."

### Authorities' Allocation of Revenue Budgets

Revenue Support Grant is given to authorities in a non ring-fenced form that allows them to switch resources according to local priorities. Hence, transport departments' revenue budgets must compete with other spending departments across authorities for their overall share of the corporate budget.

Evidence from the case study authorities suggests that Members and the executive management frequently perceive other areas to have a greater call on available resources, especially education and social services. This often leaves transport functions receiving a lower share of the overall revenue allocation, sometimes less than is recommended in the SSA formulas.

"I don't really think they (Members) see transport on a par with the big spenders, education and social services. We fight each year for an increase in the budget, but the reality is that those departments take precedence and everyone else has to make cuts in order to balance the books." (CS Unitary)

"Of course we'd like to increase it [revenue], but you can't do everything in the money the Government gives us and the reality is that this authority places a priority on children's education and dealing with our ageing population." (CS County Member)

"We tend to follow Government priorities and certainly education has seen a big boost in recent years." (CS County Member)

There is some anecdotal evidence that the increase in LTP capital funding may actually reduce the ability of transport departments to secure further revenue funds if Members perceive them to be "relatively well off" from the LTP settlement.

Not surprisingly, the extent of transport revenue shortfalls, as a result of political decisions within authorities, varies and appears to reflect both the outlook and priorities of Members and also the capacity of LTP practitioners to argue the case internally. One case study authority, for example, has typically only passed two-thirds of its highways SSA to the transport budget, deeming social services to have a greater call on the resources. In another, the full SSA is passed across in full because Members perceive a major local problem with the backlog of highway maintenance.

"We pretty much use on highways what the SSA formula dictates - it is a strain, but the capital has certainly helped to supplement that and has prevented us having to increase our revenue spend." (CS County)
This finding is backed up by other sources. The ICE Transport and Public Realm Survey for 2002 finds that on average only 87% of the SSA for highway maintenance is actually spent on highways maintenance, with a range from 66% to 108%. Similarly, the CfIT Local Authority Survey finds that 62% of respondents perceive transport funds are being diverted into other policy areas, especially in metropolitan and unitary authorities.

Hence, whilst making the case that the SSA settlement is insufficient to fund transport services in support of the LTP, some authorities are not allocating their existing transport elements fully, representing a "double whammy" on transport departments' revenue budgets year on year.
Solutions

If one accepts the basic proposition that LTP practitioners are receiving insufficient revenue funds to allow effective delivery of LTP objectives and maintenance of capital assets being implemented as part of LTP programme, there are essentially four means of addressing the problem:

- Government to place greater onus on Members and Senior Directors to recognise the local revenue implications of capital expenditure and make appropriate responses, for example by raising local taxation (if possible) or re-allocating funds from other spending areas to reflect a higher priority for transport, at least to the full level of the SSA formula;
- expanding and modifying the SSA to explicitly recognise the revenue implications of the LTP, whilst retaining the discretion of authorities to allocate revenue budgets according to their own (democratically accountable) priorities;
- expanding the LTP itself to become a combined capital and revenue instrument, with the latter ringfenced specifically to local transport; and
- allowing a greater degree of capitalisation of revenue expenditure than is currently permitted by district auditors or sanctioned by the Government.

Of these four options, we believe that changes to the way the SSA is calculated to explicitly recognise the LTP may offer the best way forward, at least in the short-term. The use of Challenge funding also allows authorities to allocate ring-fenced revenue budgets to specific transport areas. We return to these solutions in our conclusions in this Chapter and Chapter 13 when outlining our final recommendations.

The Single Capital Pot

The introduction of two-year Supplementary Credit Approval in the early stages of the LTP process was seen as a big improvement from the annualisation of the TPP (RW, CS). However, the introduction of the Single Capital Pot (SCP) from 2002-2003 onwards is seen as a step backwards by LTP practitioners in terms of:

- allowing authorities to switch capital funds to more electorally popular areas such as social services and education; and
- re-introducing a degree of annualisation in spending through one-year Basic Credit Approvals.

One Year Credit Approvals

The latter weakens the five year timescale of the LTP and is seen as leading to "effectively a return on year by year spending."

"Two-year settlements give you flexibility to carry that money forward. You're not being forced to spend it, stick it into easy-to-do schemes or negotiate with other departments who can spend it in the time." (RW)

"In principle, I preferred the two year SCA settlement because it was ringfenced and you knew where you stood." (CS County)

However, whilst the preference amongst LTP practitioners is for a re-introduction of two year SCA, there is an appreciation from some that resources can be managed within and between years by effective programme management and discussions with other spending departments to transfer resources according to changes in their various programmes:

"We are probably in the worst period now, right this year, and hopefully we will get used to changes that have to be made in order to ensure that spending projects are carried out within the one year timescale." (CS County)
Evidence has still to emerge as to whether the one-year Credit Approvals will substantially impair authorities' capacity to deliver multi-year schemes or whether more effective management and tracking of project delivery and expenditure will reduce the impact below the anxieties of LTP practitioners.

**Switching of Capital Funding**

Many LTP practitioners are concerned that Members will be placed under increasing pressure to transfer parts of the Integrated Transport and Maintenance core allocations to other spending areas, especially education and social services departments. This is more of a concern if transport budgets are seen to be underspending (RW/CS).

The case studies show few examples of substantial capital funding being switched to date, however, with one Member arguing that the flexibility of the Single Capital Pot is "more theoretical than practical" and that major switches of the core transport capital budget were not on the agenda.

"It isn't really a Single Capital Pot at all!" (CS County)

"If Members wanted to target the money elsewhere then it may become a problem, but not so far." (CS County)

One case study showed Members were making maximum use of the flexibility provided by the SCP with a resulting reduction in the core transport programme. However, transfer of the discretionary element of the SCP to non-transport services is more common (RW, CS). Withdrawal of funding is seen as most at risk for small scale schemes (CS).

A recent survey by Local Transport Today supports the case study findings.

### Single capital pot survey

A Local Transport Today survey (20 June 2002) of 16 English local authorities finds some evidence to confirm concerns that indicative allocations for Integrated Transport and Maintenance would be transferred to higher priority spending areas. While most councils surveyed followed government guidance to put integrated transport and maintenance awards into transport spending, two authorities, Birmingham and Sandwell, moved 10% and 22% respectively of their integrated maintenance block into other service areas.

The survey also shows that only 7 of the 16 authorities surveyed had allocated any of the discretionary element to transport. Where awards to transport were made however, they tended to be relatively large, accounting for 50-98% of the discretionary award. One authority, Bath and North East Somerset, allocated all of its discretionary award to transport, and boosted the allocation with additional capital resources available to the authority.

### Case study - the flexibility of single capital pot

Members at one unitary authority (South West) have decided to allocate only £2.5 million of the £5.5 million allocation for Integrated Transport and Maintenance, to delivery and implementation of the LTP in 2002/03. Due to problems within the authority, a large proportion of the allocation is being transferred to Education and Social Services. The authority has recently received very poor Ofsted and Social Services reports. Furthermore, Social Services has overspent by £1.9 million and the authority has a statutory obligation to accommodate this debt.

At corporate level, education is seen as the main priority within the Authority, and under the present conditions it is difficult to argue a strong case for high transport expenditure and the
Conclusions and Recommendations

This Chapter has presented a range of evidence of the impact of the substantial increase in capital funding which has accompanied the introduction of LTPs. In some instances, authorities have been presented with capital budget increases of two to three times what they were receiving under the TPP. This is, unsurprisingly, welcomed as a positive development, although more recent evidence (e.g. in the most recent APRs) suggests difficulties in achieving full expenditure of the increased resources.

The greater certainty of funding and flexibility of switching funds between transport schemes is welcomed. However, authorities have concerns at the growing imbalance between capital and revenue budgets and the potential impact of the Single Capital Pot. To this end, we have a number of recommendations as summarised in Chapter 13.

In particular, we believe that authorities and DfT itself should re-examine the role that revenue budgets play in meeting local transport objectives. Ultimately, an evaluation of the state of Local Government finance is beyond the remit of this Part 1 Study, but we believe that the current arrangements for the Standard Spending Assessment should be reviewed to establish whether there is a case for specifically taking into account the revenue implications of capital spend under the LTP as well as the growing need for revenue-based transport initiatives themselves.

Alongside a review of the SSA, transport professionals within authorities may need to be more proactive in arguing the case for transport investment and an increased share of the overall corporate budget so that any increase in the SSA feeds through into supporting transport services.

The implications of the Single Capital Pot are causing some anxieties for LTP practitioners. We believe that it is too early to be certain whether these anxieties will be realised, but the key issues should be kept under review in terms of single-year Credit Approvals and the capacity of authorities to switch core capital budgets out of transport into other areas. In the meantime, authorities should be reminded of the implications for future LTP funding implications if, by switching transport capital allocations, they are then unable to meet the targets set out in their LTP.

Finally, DfT should aim for greater co-ordination between the second LTP round and the Challenge bid rounds, in particular seeking to reduce the resource intensity of the latter relative to delivering the LTP. Inviting Challenge bids within the APR framework might be one way of doing this. However, the ringfenced nature of the Challenge funding, the level of innovation and focused delivery encouraged in bids and the mixture of capital and revenue funding cautions us against the complete incorporation of Challenge bids into the LTP at this time.
6. Breadth of Initiatives

"The TPP simply meant road schemes. The LTP has enlarged our horizons tremendously. Public transport is now considered equally with road schemes and that’s a huge difference." (RW)

"I think our managers at that [TPP] time had settled for the old school where they didn’t want to hear about cycling and buses. But the fact that it [LTP] was a national initiative meant we could go and say ‘look we’ve been told to do it. We’ll have to do it now.’ I think it really gave the opportunity to broaden what we wanted to do in the first place." (RW)

Introduction

LTPs must be comprehensive and wide-ranging in their objectives and their coverage. This is set out in some detail in Part II of the Full LTP Guidance - The Coverage of Local Transport Plans - and reinforced by the Annex D criteria which provide a checklist of the various strategies and initiatives that authorities must consider as part of their LTPs.

This theme therefore looks at the range of initiatives addressed by LTP strategies and programmes, and whether authorities have been successful in taking them in policy and practice. Key questions include:

- whether all forms of transport are being factored into the LTP process;
- how well authorities have adopted policies and schemes in relation to new transport areas required by LTP Guidance, such as travel planning, sustainable distribution and air quality strategies;
- attitudes and approaches to demand management and the direct charging of road users; and
- the coverage of urban and rural transport issues.

Related issues, such as the degree to which Members have embraced the integrated transport principles underlying LTPs, and integration with wider policy areas such as social inclusion and regeneration, are covered in other sections of this Report.

Coverage of Transport Investment under TPP and LTP Guidance

The scope of transport initiatives which authorities are required to cover through the LTP process is substantially broader than that required under TPP. The Full LTP Guidance requires authorities to show consideration for:

- widening travel choice (bus, rail, taxis, cycling and walking);
- traffic management and demand restraint (road safety, parking and direct charging);
- integrating transport (interchange, linkage with national guidance, public transport information, journeys to school, travel plans, disability issues, social inclusion and air quality);
- planning and managing the highway network (maintenance, bridge strengthening, major projects and detrunking);
- rural transport; and
- sustainable distribution.

The Guidance clearly acknowledges the shift, at the heart of the Integrated Transport White Paper, to achieving a balance between car and non-car modes, addressing the needs of the full range of transport users and delivering better conditions for freight operators as well as passenger traffic. To a degree, some of these elements were emerging under the Package Approach; however, the LTP
process extends coverage of individual modes and initiatives further and rolls them out across the whole of authorities' areas, not just selected urban areas included in packages.

**Overview**

Authorities believe they are considering a wider range of issues and initiatives covering differing modes and policy areas as required by the LTP Guidance. However, whilst TPPs were seen as principally roads-based, many authorities were moving in this direction under the Package Approach and a wider range of policy and measures is also being promoted by the wider policy debate in transport rather than LTPs specifically.

Some authorities believe it is Local rather than Central Government which has led the way on this shift:

"Local authorities have always been interested in local transport!" (CS County)

"We were doing all this before LTPs were invented. We showed the way." (CS Metropolitan)

Nevertheless, the introduction of LTPs has given greater impetus to those authorities which were slow to embrace the Package Approach and widened coverage of all modes to a greater number of authorities, including many which were more roads-orientated. Even amongst the more progressive authorities, Officers have had to consider a wider range of policy frameworks such as regeneration, air quality, health and climate change which were "glossed over" in packages developed in the mid-1990s.

The impact of LTPs, therefore, has not been to introduce a broader-based and multi-modal approach to authorities from scratch, but extend early initiatives in terms of scope and comprehensiveness of coverage. The LTP process is also seen as helping to persuade Members to give more emphasis to non-car modes and initiatives.

Practitioners feel that the LTP process is right to address this wider policy agenda and aim to deliver action against a range of different priorities. There is slightly less consensus on the degree of success that authorities have had, and are currently having, in delivering the agenda in programming terms. The latter is covered in more detail in Chapter 8 (Delivery), but reasons for the divergence between development of policy and implementation include:

- the lack of well-defined and designed schemes to take forward in the short-term with the increased LTP capital funding, leading to authorities pursuing implementation of schemes inherited from the TPP period;
- staff and skills shortages in some of the new areas being taken forward under LTPs, for example relating to sustainable distribution and travel planning;
- shortage of resources to cover mainly-revenue based schemes;
- the difficulties in engaging external stakeholders in non-road schemes who may hold differing commercial or social objectives to those set out in the LTP;
- some members remain focused on an essentially roads-based agenda with "lip-service" given to public transport, walking and cycling. This focus appears more likely to emerge at the level of delivery of individual schemes rather than challenging the overall strategy set out in the LTP.

A number of the case study authorities express particular concern at having to cover modes in their LTP over which they do not have direct control or responsibility:

"On the roads we are the provider, on buses we are part provider and on rail we are merely the persuader." (CS County)
"Many aspects of travel are outside the control of local authorities and, except in situations where a Passenger Transport Executive exists, most authorities have only limited influence over the quality, frequency and organisation of local bus and rail services." (APR Commentary CS Unitary)

Authorities also express some concerns on the breadth of initiatives now having to be covered in terms of the (staff) resources required and the danger of "spreading the jam too thinly" especially in areas where they have limited powers. This is a particular problem for unitary authorities which may be forced, by resource constraints, to focus on a limited number of areas rather than try to comprehensively cover all the topics in the Annex D checklist.

"Let's concentrate on some big hits rather than dispersing our efforts over a wide range of small things." (RW)

Some authorities extend this point to arguing that the Guidance (and Annex D in particular) forces authorities to be "all things to all modes" and by requiring strategies against such a wide range of areas is pushing towards an "English Standard LTP" which fails to really emphasise local differences and priorities in place of equal coverage of all modes across the board.

One case study county authority, for example, was "marked down" by the Government Office for not including a taxi policy although this was felt only to be applicable to large metropolitan areas and free-standing towns. Another unitary authority had its PLTP criticised for excluding waterways, despite the lack of canals and rivers in the area. A section was subsequently added to the Full LTP despite a view internally that it was "largely irrelevant."

This "tick box" approach further underlies the tension in the LTP process, identified in Chapter 4, between the expression of local transport aspirations and priorities and the application of national transport objectives and policies at the local level.

**Compliance with LTP Guidance**

The Government Office Assessments of the Full LTPs, provide a ready means of evaluating how authorities have factored all modes and transport topic areas required in the Guidance into their LTPs. The Government Office Assessments, updated for the APRs, have been used by the Department to describe authorities' performance as "good", "medium" and "poor" with respect to each of the Annex D criteria. The percentage of LTPs scoring "good" against each Annex D criteria is shown in Figure 6.1.

The results show:

- Nationally, LTPs are assessed more highly on the "General" criteria for LTP assessment (problem identification, strategy development, implementation programme and monitoring), and on criteria relating to Planning and Managing the Highways Network, Widening Travel Choice, and Traffic Management and Demand Restraint. LTP submissions are judged less highly on Integrated Transport and Integration with other Policy Areas, Rural Issues, and Sustainable Distribution;

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25 A review of Government Office written assessments and possible health warnings about the value of the written assessments are outlined in Appendix E. The results in Section 6.4 are based on the visual depictions (Proforma 4 forms) completed by Government Officers and the written assessments, which summarise the level of performance achieved by authorities against the 27 criteria. The Proforma 4 forms are not necessarily subject to the same health warnings as the written assessments.
The two most successfully met single criteria are Development of a Principal Road Maintenance Strategy (95% of LTPs authorities categorised as 'good') and Development of a Bridge Strengthening Strategy (89% of LTPs categorised as 'good'). However, this may be due to the highly structured and prescriptive nature of these topic areas making it relatively straightforward for local authorities to comply with the Guidance;

- LTPs perform less well against Guidance in the following areas:
  - airport surface access (only 28% of LTPs assessed as 'good');
  - public transport interchange (27%);
  - detrunking (26%);
  - five year forward look at major highway projects (24%); and
  - sustainable distribution (24%).

- In general, LTPs do not perform well against environmental criteria and requirements introduced since the end of the TPP process:
  - sustainable distribution (only 24% of LTPs assessed as 'good');
  - measures to encourage adoption of travel plans by major employers (26%);
  - action on climate change (32%); and
  - ability to recognise the needs and special character of the countryside (33%).

- LTPs perform moderately well against Guidance on social criteria: disability issues (37%) and social inclusion (45%);

- Performance of LTPs (in terms of assessment against Guidance) varies geographically with those LTPs most compliant in covering a wide range of modes and topics including Hampshire, Buckinghamshire, North Nottinghamshire, West Yorkshire and Telford. LTPs with a high number of "poor" scores and performing less well against the Guidance include Slough, West Berkshire, North Yorkshire and Rutland;

- Performance against the requirements of Guidance varies by region, ranging from 61% classified as "good" in the North West to 22% in the North East;

- In general, the metropolitan authorities produce LTPs which most comprehensively and fully comply with the Guidance, whilst this is less evident with unitary authorities.

This analysis largely concurs with the findings of the case studies which show that whilst most authorities have included an outline strategy or statement against virtually all of the Annex D criteria, the level of comprehensiveness and effectiveness of the strategies put forward varies markedly. Indeed, Officers contend that it is relatively easy to "write fine words" in the LTP which have little meaning in practice and do not lay the basis for establishing initiatives on the ground.

"Anyone can put a strategy to encourage cycle use into their LTP just to get the tick in the box. The more important thing is writing something you then go on to turn into practice. If the Members don't like it, or you haven't got the staff to do the work, then it just doesn't happen."

(RW)

"Some of our sections in our LTP were little more than holding statements until we figured out what our policy was actually going to be." (CS Unitary)

Figure 6.1 - Government Office Assessment of Local Transport Plans against Full Guidance Annex D Criteria
Local transport plans - policy evaluation: Part 1 - Final Report

Key for Figure 6.1:

- General Criteria
- Widening Travel Choice
- Traffic Management and Demand Restraint
- Integrated Transport
- Integration with other Policy Areas
- Planning and Managing the Highways Network
- Rural Issues
- Sustainable Distribution

% LTPs Assessed as "Good" Standard
Developing Specific LTP Strategies and Measures

In this section, we summarise authorities' coverage for a selection of specific new areas required by the Full LTP Guidance. The bulk of the analysis is drawn from our own evaluation of twenty selected LTPs against Annex D of the Full LTP Guidance, although reference is also made, where relevant, to the literature review and case study material. The full reviews of these topics can be found in Appendices G-K of the Interim (Emerging Findings) Report for this Study and are not repeated here.

Development of a Bus Strategy

Not surprisingly, this is one of the better covered areas in the LTP submissions (OA) building on authorities experience of preparing bus initiatives and early Quality Bus Partnerships under the Package Approach. However, compliance with the Full LTP Guidance varies by authority type with metropolitan and county authorities generally showing better compliance than many unitary councils.

Following on from the LTP submissions themselves, many authorities appear to be making good progress and there are a growing number of good practice examples including on-street priority, real-time bus passenger information and use of LTP funds for the purchase of new buses for use on tendered services.

Nevertheless, there are differences in the objectives adopted by authorities and bus operators and there are limits to the extent of the partnerships now being taken forward, as set out in Chapter 4.

Case study - city rider bus project

One unitary authority (West Midlands) has used LTP funds to support the purchase of new low-floor buses onto tendered socially-necessary routes in the north of the city not covered by the principal Quality Bus Corridors. The vehicles have been given to the successful tendering company for a period of five years to operate subsidised services, reducing the overall tender price and therefore the burden on the Council's revenue budget. To date 10 new buses have been purchased with evidence of substantial increases in patronage on the routes covered. The City Council sees the scheme as meeting its social inclusion objectives and an innovative use of LTP capital funds.

Additional issues can be summarised as follows:

- authorities appear to be good at carrying out consultation to identify problems and opportunities. However, not all LTPs clearly identify the public's contribution to the overall bus strategy;
- all local authorities state that it is their intention to develop QBPs and about one-third of the selected authorities have set targets for QBP implementation. Most authorities have outlined plans for future partnership arrangements, however, progress and level of detail provided varies;
- evidence suggests that partnerships are well established in metropolitan/PTE areas and also in most Shire authorities. However, arrangements appear to be less well developed in unitary authorities;
- LTPs appear to be good at summarising use that has been made of the Rural Bus Subsidy Grant and describing the criteria underlying support for services from this grant. However, they appear to be less successful at providing evidence that use of the grant takes account of overall policies for rural areas;
- inclusion of bus punctuality targets and indicators is a general area of weakness in LTPs, with a high level of non-compliance. This appears to be an area where further guidance would be beneficial; and
community transport and social inclusion is an area where many local authorities only partly comply with the necessary requirements. Very few authorities include specific objectives covering Community Transport and Social Inclusion, although a number of LTPs include accessibility objectives which may incorporate these issues.

Local Rail Initiatives

Whilst the Full LTP Guidance states that "authorities should act as facilitators with the rail industry to progress schemes included in their LTPs," in practice it has been difficult for many authorities to engage rail operators beyond their franchise commitments and the nationally focused objectives and targets of the SRA. Moreover, whilst many authorities have included targets for rail patronage and performance in their LTPs, they lack the direct powers or resources to influence the key indicators. Most of the LTP rail strategies have, in any case, been overtaken by events including the drop in patronage following the Hatfield accident and the placing of Railtrack in Administration.

As noted in Chapter 4, the SRA itself regards the inclusion of rail issues within the LTPs are patchy and generally quite poor from the viewpoint of commercial realism and knowledge of railway operations.

Green Travel Plans

The development of travel planning predates the introduction of LTPs, but the submissions contain a range of proposals for expanding their take-up by employers and major trip generating organisations. Most LTPs examined (OA) suggest that authorities are doing well in meeting minimum requirements and a number set specific targets for the take-up of travel plans over the LTP period.

In general most authorities show evidence of assessing the baseline, putting forward monitoring proposals for the take-up of travel plans, entering into dialogue with employers and public transport operators and preparing a travel plan for the authority's own premises. However, evidence of established partnerships and effective authority travel plans is more patchy and weaknesses also exist for evidence of integration with other awareness raising activities such as school travel plan and partnerships with the National Travelwise Association.

Overall, coverage of this topic can be expected to grow over the period into the second LTP, especially for those authorities winning Government bursaries for travel plan co-ordinator posts. However, making progress on the LTP requirements is highly resource intensive (requiring scarce revenue funding) and involves a change in attitudes rather than specific capital expenditure. Unitary authorities appear to have particular problems due to their overall staffing and revenue constraints and their comparative lack of success in winning travel officer bursaries from the Department.

Case study - safer routes to school

As part of their objectives to promote safe travel to school by non-car modes, one case study authority (Unitary West Midlands) is promoting the Safer Routes to School Challenge. Each year, the schools within the areas are invited to submit bids to provide for safer, healthier and more sustainable travel to school. These bids can come from parents, teachers, local residents or pupils, but must have the support of the School's Head Teacher and Chair of Governors. The school must also undertake to develop a School Travel Plan.

The Challenge is steered by a working group incorporating road safety, education, development control, health promotion, transport planning and engineering representatives. The first Challenge was issued in 1998 under the former Package with 14 school bids accepted by 2000-2001. A further 53 schools are to be targeted over the life of the LTP, with an average spend of £35-50,000 per school.

The Programme is being assisted through the appointment of a School Travel Plan Co-ordinator in June 2001. The Council sees distinct advantages to the Challenge approach,
including community ownership of the initiative, the development of School Travel Plans to supplement Safer Routes measures and raised public awareness of transport issues.

**Sustainable Distribution**

Sustainable distribution is one of the less well performing areas of the LTPs as assessed by Government Offices. Our own evaluation largely confirms this picture with many LTPs treating freight as an add-on rather than fully integrated into wider strategies. This is particularly the case for rail, water and air freight although authorities appear more comfortable in dealing with the traffic management of HGV flows and mitigation of lorry impacts on the local road network and environment. Many authorities indicate their intention to establish Quality Freight Partnerships.

In a sense, this is not surprising given the lack of focused consideration of freight issues under the TPP system and the relatively novel nature of concepts such as Delivering the Goods and Freight Quality Partnerships. The freight and logistics sector is also largely in the private sector and run along wholly commercial lines, giving authorities limited scope to intervene directly.

The evidence is that local authorities still have some way to go in rebalancing their strategies to reflect movement of goods as well as people. However, almost all authorities include a description of their sustainable distribution policy and many are clearly making efforts to bring freight operators, businesses and the local community into the planning process. Other areas of relatively good performance include evidence of progress in establishing Freight Quality Partnerships and evidence of lorry routing strategies.

However, partnerships with the distribution industry are in their infancy and still seem to be based on discussions on principles rather than effective joint action on specifics on the ground. Authorities also clearly have a long way to go in strategies to develop best practice and identifying flows which could be transferred to alternative modes, including an assessment of lorry journeys to be saved. Assessments of existing operational and non-operational facilities and the account of rail and water freight in land use planning decisions are mixed between different LTP submissions.

**Disabled Mobility**

The Literature Review (Oxley, 2002) suggests a big variation in the way that disability is handled among LTPs. Whilst most include a written commitment to meeting the needs of disabled people, the follow-through into specific policies and actions is often less convincing although specific initiatives of benefit to disabled people may be included under other topic areas (e.g. interchange, community transport).

"The plans at the bottom cannot be considered as satisfactory. Not a matter of could do better but must do better. The plans at the top are not perfect, but what they do have in common is a clear commitment to meeting the mobility needs of disabled people and a good follow-through, including consultation into specific policies."

**Taxis**

The Literature Review (Jacobs for DfT, 2002) likewise suggests a large variation in the effectiveness with which this topic is addressed in the LTPs. In general, unitary authorities appear to handle the key issues better than other authority types. However, only 16 out of 85 LTPs pass the minimum requirements in every category specified by the Guidance.
Air Quality and Noise

Coverage of air quality and noise issues in LTPs is variable. Almost all LTPs show evidence of awareness of local air quality management and the need to achieve statutory air quality targets, including Air Quality Action Plans where required. However, less compliance is achieved in developing robust assessments of local air quality and noise impacts or in assessing the benefits of LTP measures in quantitative terms.

Road User Charging

Whilst LTP Guidance and the Transport Act 2000 provides for authorities to introduce direct charging of road users and the Ten Year Plan assumes that London and other major urban areas will have introduced road user charging and workplace parking schemes by 2010, the evidence from the regional workshops and case studies is disappointing at this time.

Few of the case study authorities are actively considering charging schemes at the current time. There is one exception - Durham County Council - which introduced England's first charging scheme for Durham City Centre in October 2002 as part of the wider Durham City Package, although this is essentially limited to one street rather than an area wide application to a large city centre.

Most other authorities confine their coverage of direct user charging to broad support or statements of principle with little indication of follow-through in terms of action. The following commentary in one case study authority's APR is typical:

"The new powers of road user charging and workplace parking charging available to local authorities will have limited effect if they are not uniformly applied across the UK, and moreover would actually be harmful to the local economy if they are applied in some cities and not in others."

This finding is consistent with CfIT’s interim conclusions on the progress of the Ten Year Plan which finds that "few authorities are advanced in proposals to implement new charging schemes" (LR26) and that it is unlikely that many of the charging schemes envisaged in the Plan will be operational by the end of the decade. Indeed, many authorities appear to be waiting for London's experience with congestion charging from 2003 and it is unlikely that the first extensive schemes outside of the Capital will be up and running until well into the second LTP period. The recent decision by Nottingham City Council to delay its proposed Workplace Parking Levy scheme confirms this trend.

Case study - road user charging

Once case study authority (County North East) is the first authority in England to apply the Transport Act 2000 to develop a Road User Charging Scheme under its LTP. Following consultation and the approval of the Secretary of State, this commenced from 1st October 2002 and is designed to manage traffic demand in a historic peninsula city centre. Drivers accessing the area via the only road open to general traffic will be charged £2 to exit via a controlled gate. The scheme is expected to generate around £500,000 per annum after operating and enforcement costs and is being implemented under an integrated transport package for the city which also includes on-street parking controls and the development of a network of Park and Ride sites.

The City Council (District) views progress on the package under the LTP positively. Although the basic strategy of demand management and environmental protection of this historic city was conceived in the mid-1990s, the limited funding available under TPP meant little has been accomplished in practice until the last 3 years. With funding now running at

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between £300,000 and £400,000 per annum, the city is seeing improvements to public transport, new and upgraded pedestrian and cycle links, controls on on-street parking and the development of the Road User Charging Scheme. The Park and Ride Major Scheme has also been provisionally accepted by DfT.

The package is led by the County Council although the City Council is fully represented on both the Officer and Member Working Groups and the level of collaboration between the two authorities is regarded as good and "probably" better than under the TPP.
Coverage of Rural Transport

The 10-Year Plan for Transport and the Rural White Paper detail spending increases for rural transport and increased support for rural shops and services\(^2\). One of the principal means by which rural transport is to be improved is through obligations on authorities to set out an integrated strategy for public transport, cycling and walking, road safety and traffic management in rural areas as part of their LTPs.

The coverage of rural areas within LTP policies and programmes provokes some debate in the literature, amongst LTP practitioners and concerned external stakeholders. Overall, coverage of rural transport appears to be better than under the TPP, especially given the availability of parallel initiatives such as Rural Bus Subsidy Grant and the Rural Bus Challenge, the Rural Transport Partnership Scheme and the Parish Transport Fund. However, further development of rural transport in both the LTP Guidance and authorities' strategies is felt to be required. This also reflects the need to obtain robust demand and travel condition data which is usually lacking or of poor quality relative to the data available for urban areas.

Many feel that the LTP process promotes an essentially urban agenda. Headicar (2000) observes:

"Even in rural areas, most LTPs seem essentially urban in their policies. With some exceptions, it is difficult to identify or evaluate the rural dimensions of policies, let alone see how different policies add together to make a rural transport strategy."

Furthermore, rural areas are not homogenous entities as the LTP Guidance appears to imply. In 'honeypot' tourist destinations such as the Lake District, Derbyshire Dales and Pembrokeshire Coast, issues of traffic growth, congestion and environmental degradation are at the fore. Many rural parts of the Home Counties serve a dormitory function for larger urban centres and accessibility is a central issue. In more peripheral and remote areas, such as Cornwall and parts of the North East, objectives are likely to place more emphasis on providing economic opportunities, improving social inclusion for those without access to a car. Hence the approach to rural transport adopted by authorities through their LTPs needs to be different in each case.

Authorities also point out (RW,CS) that many transport solutions in rural areas are essentially revenue-based, such as support for rural bus services, demand responsive and community transport, public transport information and support for public services. Whilst mechanisms do exist for promoting such solutions (as set out below), they are frequently not programmed or funded through the LTP itself.

Nevertheless, LTPs refer to a range of rural transport initiatives, including:

- new or enhanced bus services funded through Rural Bus Challenge;
- the establishment of Rural Transport Partnerships pursuing a range of access and mobility improvements for those without a car;
- retention of rural services such as post offices, banking services and general stores;
- road safety measures and traffic calming of rural villages;
- although conventional bus services remain the mainstay of rural transport in many areas, greater use of flexible, demand responsive operations such as the *Wiltshire Wigglybus* and *Devon Flexibus*;
- the proposal of bypass schemes to reduce traffic impact on village communities, improve road safety and improve journey times; and

\(^2\) Rural transport spending in England is set to increase from £155 million in 2000/01 to £239 million in 2003/04
the progression of rural cycle and pedestrian routes complementing the development of the National Cycle Network.

Whilst such initiatives are complementary to LTP objectives, they are often progressed or funded through alternative frameworks; the role of the LTP/APR is therefore to report good practice and demonstrate consistency with the LTP strategy rather than play a central role in initiating activity.

### Case study - developing rural transport partnerships

The predominantly rural nature of one county in the North East has led to the County Council looking to a range of initiatives to improve accessibility and enhance social inclusion in a rural setting. It is choosing to do this by combining LTP funding with partnerships with the Countryside Agency, district councils and local stakeholders. Funding has also been secured from Rural Bus Challenge/Rural Bus Subsidy Grant in the context of supporting new public transport/demand responsive transport services for rural areas. These initiatives are fully consistent with the LTP and dovetail with LTP programmes in the respective areas.

One Rural Transport Partnership was established in 1999 covering the three districts. The Partnership is led by the County Council via a dedicated RTP Officer and is promoting enhanced access to employment, education, health and other services. As well as the local authorities, partners include public transport operators, Sustrans, Age Concern and residents' groups. Specific initiatives over a 3-5 year timescale include:

- minibus and taxi driver training;
- transport information;
- demand responsive and community transport using a combination of taxis, minibuses and car shares;
- discounted and concessionary fares;
- support for walking and cycling through the provision of infrastructure, training and awareness raising.

A second Rural Transport Partnership has developed a Bike Bus as a new service for walkers and cyclists in the North Pennines Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty. Operated by a taxi company, the buses are able to carry up to 24 cycles in a rear trailer. The service operates during the summer months and is aimed at reducing the traffic impact of tourism and visitors to the area.

The requirement for coverage of the rural transport agenda also means predominantly urban authorities have to devote time and resources to a topic that is not relevant to local circumstances and predominantly rural authorities preparing LTP submissions which have to incorporate strategies which relate more to metropolitan or large urban areas. Indeed, one rural authority (RW, North East) was criticised by the Government Office for not including the "Rural Issues" section in its LTP when the whole strategy was planned and presented as a rural one. This is essentially a variant of the "one size fits all" perspective the process.

"The rules which apply to metropolitan boroughs or London have no place in rural areas." (RW)

In summary, our evidence suggests that the LTP process needs to be guided and progressed more flexibly to reflect the needs of the differing types of rural areas and reflect a broader range of transport and planning solutions to the problems of inaccessibility, social exclusion, traffic growth and environmental management within a rural context.
Conclusions and Recommendations

The evidence is that a greater range of modes is being factored into the LTP process and that authorities are making progress in developing strategies and delivery programmes for policy areas covering public transport, non-motorised modes, travel awareness and planning and sustainable distribution.

For some authorities, these policies are effectively continuations and developments of those developed under the Package Approach from the mid-1990s. For these authorities, the impact of LTPs has not been to introduce a broader-based and multi-modal approach from scratch, but to expand early initiatives in scope and comprehensiveness of coverage. The LTP has also helped to persuade Members, as well as Officers, to give more emphasis to non-car modes.

Nevertheless, progress is variable, both across topics and between authorities. This is not surprising given the relative capabilities and local priorities of different authorities and the differing balances of influence on policy and practice between Officer and Member level. It is also important to realise that adoption of new integrated transport policies does not, in itself, lead to widespread and effective delivery on the ground and one of the most frequent criticisms of the LTP from external stakeholders is that the "good intentions" of the Plan are not followed up in terms of practical schemes. The reasons for non-delivery, even when the objectives and policies are right, are covered in Chapter 8 (Delivery).

The sheer breadth of initiatives now expected to be incorporated into LTPs itself raises issues. There is some evidence that the Annex D criteria, in particular, may give rise to a "tick box" mentality amongst LTP practitioners whereby all modes and topics are covered regardless, rather than authorities prioritising policy and action where it would be most effective and in tune with local priorities.

On a similar note, there is evidence that authorities are currently dappling in a wide range of initiatives, but as yet there are few examples of authorities expanding schemes which are found to be most effective at delivering change on the ground.

Chapter 13 summarises the key issues and our recommendations under the Breadth of Initiative theme.
7. Integration

Introduction

LTPs have been developed against a changing national, regional and local transport policy context and are required to integrate with these planning frameworks as well as wider policies for social inclusion, regeneration, health, education and environmental conservation. This theme asks the extent to which LTPs are consistent with national transport policy as well as linking to these wider policies.

We also consider the linkage between the LTP and policies for land use, development control and parking, and crucially how LTPs integrate with the regional context, the current Regional Planning Guidance/Regional Transport Strategy framework and the proposals in the Government's Planning Green Paper.

Consistency with National Policy

The evidence suggests that LTPs are generally consistent with current Government transport policy as expressed in the Integrated Transport White Paper, Ten Year Plan and Transport Act (LR, OA, RW, CS).

Most commentators agree that the Government's integrated transport policy has been widely adopted by authorities (LR) and some authorities, as set out in Chapter 6, actually regard themselves as leading, rather than following, the development of national policy. Key Government priorities such as Quality Bus Partnerships, public transport information, encouraging walking and cycling and travel planning feature strongly in many LTPs which also frequently restate the White Paper's overarching objectives of environment, economy, safety, integration, and accessibility. Plans also often refer to objectives for sustainable distribution, disabled access and mobility, rural initiatives, road traffic reduction and social inclusion. TRG (2001) notes:

"The authors of the Plans have been meticulous in following the DETR Guidance. Invariably, the LTPs list the over-arching national objectives before interpreting them in the local context." (LR)

Steer Davies Gleave (2001) concur through their finding that:

"Local authorities have adopted the transport agenda set by Central Government and view their own activities in this paradigm." (LR)

Evidence from the case studies confirms such views:

"...in respect of Park & Ride, cycling and walking, demand management and improved bus and rail interchanges, policies are consistent with national and regional policies to increase the use of non-car modes of transport whilst reducing dependency on the car". (CS, Unitary)

There is less clarity on whether LTPs are any more or less consistent with current national transport policies in comparison with TPPs and national transport policies in the 1980s and 1990s. To some extent, this reflects the fact that Government policy was itself changing during this period whilst the fundamentals of the TPP framework did not (with the possible exception of The Package Approach). However, the bidding, rather than strategic, focus of the TPP also meant it was less able, or required, to closely reflect the prevailing national context.

"The LTP is a more embracing document. The TPP was shorter and more financial and there was greater emphasis on roads and bridges. Basically this meant we had less scope to fully cover the national picture, although its also fair to say that it [national policy] was far weaker at that time." (CS County)

In large part, consistency with national policy is not surprising; it is largely a requirement of the LTP Guidance and a condition of funding approval. However, the issue of public and stakeholder
consultation on objectives and policies which do not conform with Government objectives has already been raised in Chapter 4, whilst concern is also expressed on the capacity of authorities to follow policies through to effective delivery due to technical capability and staff shortages (See Chapter 8).

There are variations to which Members, rather than Officers, have adopted integrated transport principles inherent in the LTP. Whilst it is clear that many are supportive, encouraged by the statutory status of LTPs and the increased capital funding available, others have yet to be fully engaged and continue to espouse a roads-orientated approach, seeing greater electoral advantage in appealing more to car users (or at least not being perceived as "anti-motorist"). There is hence a feeling that the decisions and rhetoric of some Councillors, especially those not in Cabinet or Committee, are often at odds with the principles of the LTP. This may result in general statements of policy which say little concrete and do not reflect practice on the ground (RW), in order to reconcile political differences within the authority.

There is also concern from some Members that Central Government is 'handing down' difficult issues and policies to the local tier without an adequate lead at national level. Hence, unpopular measures such as speed cameras, parking control, road user charging and demand management, are being promoted via LTP Guidance and Government capital funding, limiting exposure of national politicians. Ultimately, this has the potential to limit political willingness at local level to follow through on more radical measures, especially where particular problems - rail investment, sustainable distribution - are seen as best tackled at a regional or national level (RW). The disappointing progress made to date on the introduction of direct charging schemes in major towns and cities, in line with the Ten Year Plan, may also be interpreted as coming from a lack of Government leadership in this potentially contentious area.

"More support from Government and national campaigns to raise awareness and let the public know why these things are being pushed. Don't rely on [local authorities] against so much public opposition. We can do it if they [Government] help us." (RW)

Finally, it is noted that national policy frameworks within Central Government and also those originating from European regulations and legislation may not be integrated with Integrated Transport White Paper principles. Examples include:

- the tension between policies for parental choice of school and reducing the need to travel;
- the centralisation of health facilities and other public services;
- the pursuit of Best Value performance indicators which can guide investment into areas not prioritised within the LTP;
- decisions by national agencies and enterprises - for example, the Royal Mail's recent decision to step up use of HGVs over use of the rail network;
- the recommendations of some Multi-Modal Studies and actual programmes of what can actually be delivered within a reasonable timescale, at an acceptable cost and within political realities;
- the Office of Fair Trading and its current policies on competition in the bus industry which are seen as creating major difficulties for such practices as integrated timetabling, fares and ticketing; and
- the impact of the European Working Time Directive on commercial driver's working hours with implications for staffing and costs in the road haulage industry and public transport sector.

**Integration with the Ten Year Plan**

There is a recognition that LTPs are important in delivering the Government's Ten Year Plan (CS), although many practitioners view other mechanisms (e.g. SRA) as more important and LTPs are generally seen as vehicles for pursuing local transport objectives rather than the wider national agenda per se.
Integration with Broader Policy Objectives

LTP practitioners remark that the LTP has required them to talk to colleagues in other departments/organisations in a way that was inconceivable under the TPP (RW). Hence, there is evidence that transport professionals are liaising more closely with the health and education sectors, social services, regeneration partnerships and business groupings.

"We have to be more proactive than under the TPP." (RW)

Chapter 4 (Inclusivity) provides some discussion on how transport professionals are consulting and working in partnership with representatives from other fields and sectors. However, there are limits to the practical results of such liaison.

Integration of the LTP with policies for the Highways Agency and Strategic Authority are discussed in Chapter 4 (Inclusivity). Overall the respective national and local policies are seen as poorly integrated, although there are some exceptions with the Highways Agency as set out below.

Case study - trunk road pathfinder project

The Highways Agency is progressing the grade-separation of two junctions of a major trunk road in a city centre of one case study authority (Unitary West Midlands). The project has been designed as a "Pathfinder" project to integrate with local transport and planning objectives and is being taken forward by a partnership between the Agency, City Council, transport consultants and the contractor. The City Council has a central role on the partnership providing much of the information for the Environmental Statement and transport model as well as ensuring the scheme meets local regeneration, environmental and transport objectives as set out in the LTP.

The scheme is due for completion by 2004 and will provide the basis for complementary traffic management, public transport priority and walking and cycling initiatives in the city centre, some of which are expected to be funded through the LTP.

Health, Education and Social Services

Authorities' health, education and social services departments have frequently been involved in drawing up the LTP, at least in terms of consultation28. There is less evidence that they have been actively involved since the initial Plan, for example in drawing up the APR or developing joint cross-cutting delivery programmes, although representation may continue through the strategic partnership approach discussed in Chapter 4.

Whilst there is much discussion, the relationships are still under development in terms of practical action and the linkages may not be fully understood by all those involved (CS). To a degree, this may be due to health and education professionals assuming that the onus for planning and funding input will come from the transport side rather than fostering a two-way partnership.

"The LTP has clearly improved communication and has raised awareness of the problem solving role played by transport. As yet, I'm not so sure it is actually leading to solutions." (RW)

"Everyone else has got their own strategies and plans to work with - they are just too busy to deal with our stuff too". (RW)

In many cases, integration with health and education professionals is difficult because these staff are under their own time pressures and performance regimes. Head teachers, for example, are often too

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28 Brief discussions with officers in other departments in one of the case studies (County North East) confirms initial involvement through a joint steering group, but lapsing since the publication of the LTP itself.
busy running their schools on a day-to-day basis, leaving little time to devote to Safer Routes to School, whilst social services or health departments are under their own directives from Government and the authority which give little explicit priority to transport per se.

### Case study - integration with the local education authority

LTP practitioners within one unitary authority reported on the difficulties they had had in engaging the Local Education Authority in the implementation of school-related LTP schemes. The LEA was perceived to be uninterested in travel related issues due to other priorities (such as maintenance of school buildings) which place constraints on staff time and financial resources within the Education Department. No-one within the Education Department was available for interview, when approached.

Lack of joint-working between the transport and education departments was not considered to be a barrier to delivery of School Travel Plans and Safer-Routes-to-School initiatives, as LTP practitioners approach schools directly, targeting those with enthusiastic head-teachers first (an approach which other case study authorities also adopt). Schools are targeted in clusters, with each cluster consisting of one secondary school and 'feeder' primary schools in the vicinity.

Lack of joint-working has been more of a barrier when the LEA has been looking at building new schools on green-field sites. LTP practitioners report difficulties in convincing education officers of the need to consider how pupils will travel to school, and feel that there is a need for a cultural change within the LEA.

*N.B. A number of attempts were made to contact education officers within case study authorities for interview, but this proved to be extremely difficult.*

### Case study - journey with swim scheme

In order to maximise usage of, and increase revenue on a rural bus service, currently funded by one case study authority and a Government grant for rural services, a case study authority (Unitary South West) set up a partnership arrangement between the local bus operator and a sports centre on route. An arrangement was set up whereby a child under 16 purchasing a return ticket, would be entitled to a free swim at the sports centre. The opportunity was also taken to route the service to serve an area of the community that had no provision following the deregistration of the commercial service.

The development of Community Plans and the associated Local Strategic Partnerships may assist in creating greater cross-sectoral interaction, however, and involving local people more proactively in the provision of a range of local services.
Road Traffic Reduction Act

All LTPs have complied with Government Guidance and the 1997 Road Traffic Reduction Act in preparing a Road Traffic Reduction Report (WS Atkins 2001). Almost all authorities include data on current and future forecast traffic levels in their area and over four-fifths include coverage of targets to reduce the level or rate of growth of traffic over and beyond the lifespan of the first LTP.

However, the majority of LTP focus is on slowing the rate of growth in traffic rather than using transport measures to deliver an absolute reduction. It is also clear that for many authorities, objectives for road traffic reduction are considered secondary to aims for economic regeneration and social inclusion.

"In such cases, targets and measures which imply greater than a marginal reduction in traffic growth are seen as threatening local competitiveness or constraining access to employment and other opportunities for local people." (LR)

Whilst most local authorities have included road traffic reduction issues in their consultation with the public and key stakeholders, the carrying of the results of this consultation through to the final LTP targets and strategies is less evident.

The linkage within LTPs between environmental protection, road traffic reduction and objectives relating to economic growth and local competitiveness, attracts some comment. TRG (2001) expresses some concern on the narrow focus on particular issues, ignoring their wider implications, in particular, on the economy. Whilst achieving economic objectives is an area in which some LTPs appear to falter:

"Contrary to best practice, there is a lack of detailed economic assessment regarding the likely impacts of proposed schemes. It has been understood by some that 'direct links between traffic growth and economic growth should be severed in order to achieve sustainable economic growth'." (LR)

However, there is a concern that current public transport cannot serve the demand:

"There is a risk that local economies could decline rather than grow from implementation of strategies adopted in LTPs to reduce car travel without improving public transport first. Furthermore there is little evidence that the local economies will be monitored to determine the effect adopted strategies will have." (LR)

Regeneration and Social Inclusion

The focus of many LTPs is more on economic regeneration than previously under the TPP although this is not seen as especially related to the switch to the LTP explicitly. A number of the case study authorities place a priority on the provision of an environment for inward investment, employment creation and serving the needs of minority groups and the LTP is seen as important for achieving these aims in both an urban and a rural context, complementing other initiatives.

Integration of Major and Medium-Sized Schemes with LTP Policies

There are varying views on the degree of success to which major schemes have been integrated into wider LTP strategies. Some practitioners see the current tranche of major schemes as essentially "dusted down" from the TPP (RW, CS) rather than developed from scratch with integrated transport objectives in mind. This partially reflects local political priorities dating back a number of years as well as the long lead-in times to conceive, plan, consult and design major schemes from the start.

Evidence from the case studies largely confirms this in terms of the key "ready to go" schemes often being roads-based and long-standing priorities. One County, for example, initially included in its LTP a Park and Ride network for its main city and proposals for a railway line re-opening, both of which would be implemented in the latter half of the LTP period. With the increased funding for the LTP
following the announcement of the Ten Year Plan, however, the County submitted to the Government Office proposals for two major road schemes, both of which had been proposals within the TPP. Since these were fully designed and worked up, the road schemes, once accepted by the Government, are now being implemented, compared to the Park and Ride remaining at the Provisional Acceptance stage.

Once the current phase of Major Schemes goes through the delivery cycle, it is felt that the next phase may better reflect the multi-modal nature of the LTP.

More of an issue appears to exist for the so-called "Medium Schemes" - those of around £2 million to £5 million in value which may have substantial local impacts, but for which Government approval is not specifically required or ring-fenced capital funding available. These schemes tend to "fall between stools" in that they require substantial funding commitment over multiple years, but lack the firm commitment of ring-fenced capital that is awarded for major schemes. This problem is seen as affecting unitary authorities, in particular, which may find it difficult to develop or propose any Major Schemes over the £5 million threshold.

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Case study - local transport plans and the Thames Gateway</th>
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<tr>
<td>At a strategic level, three of the case study authorities (covering two Government regions) are playing a role in developing a sub-regional approach to planning transport investment to support economic and social regeneration objectives through the Thames Gateway Strategic Partnership. This body includes representatives from several Government Departments, the Highways Agency, Strategic Rail Authority, Regional Assemblies for Eastern England and the South East and representatives from London Government, including the Mayor and London Development Agency.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Two sub-regional Thames Gateway Partnerships provide the means for neighbouring authorities to pursue joint initiatives and address common concerns to Government. Recent discussions have revolved around the need for new crossings under the Thames, the development of major rail schemes such as Crossrail, and the future of tolling at Dartford and the authorities feel that the Thames Gateway initiative has been important in raising the profile of transport and social infrastructure for supporting regeneration and demographic growth in the corridor and getting a range of public sector organisations liaising on a regular basis.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Whilst the various authorities' LTPs refer to the wider Thames Gateway context, more direct linkages between the Partnership and LTP programmes are more difficult to identify, especially as the London end of the Gateway is covered not by the LTP framework but separate and more limited Borough Spending Plans progressed by Transport for London under the Mayor's Transport Strategy. There are some exceptions, with LTP proposals for Medway Transit and Kent Thameside Fastrack receiving support by the Strategic Partnership. Moreover, the recent decision by Government to continue tolling of the Dartford Crossings was accompanied by an announcement of £1 million additional funding for each of the two neighbouring authorities with bids submitted through the 2002 APRs.</td>
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**Integration between Transport and Local Land-Use Planning**

A real challenge, attracting a wide range of views, is how to achieve better integration of transport and land use planning. This has only been addressed in passing in the first tranche of LTPs, although some officers remark that the LTP should be a logical progression of the County Structure Plan/Unitary Development Plan process.
This view has also been expressed by the Institute of Logistics and Transport (2002)29: 

"Integration between land use and transport planning is insufficiently considered and consequently the proposals that could affect integration are weak and inadequate. The proposals offer the potential to demonstrate the prospect of more "joined up" thinking within Government at whatever level (national, regional or local) and this has not been sufficiently pursued so far by the reforms put forward."

The Transport Research Group (2001) raises the point, made by a number of other commentators, of the poor integration between the LTP and wider land use planning frameworks.  

"It is clear from the plans that local authorities have detailed information on issues such as unemployment, housing, passenger flows and in some cases accessibility. However, in the majority of cases, the understanding is not developed to provide clear indications of the contribution that improved land use planning might make in reducing travel demand." (LR)

It continues:

"The change that will be brought about in the use of different modes of transport are far from clear and the projects are focused on transport solutions, not land-use ones. Given the role that land-use changes will have in meeting all of the Government's overarching objectives, this is a disappointing aspect of the plans." (LR)

This statement is consistent with the ILT Survey on the New Transport Agenda (ILT, 2002) which finds excessive focus of LTPs on supply-side measures and insufficient attention given to land-use interventions. Hazel (2000) places some reason for this at Government's door arguing that the LTP Guidance "does not force genuine integration."

One reason for this lack of linkage, aside from limited contact between planning officers responsible for the Structure Plan, Local Plans or Unitary Development Plans, lies in the frequently different phasing of land use and transport frameworks. One unitary case study authority, for example has an aspirational 30 Year Vision, a Structure Plan inherited from the former county and a Local Plan which expired in 2001, leaving a land use policy vacuum for the LTP. However, unitary status for other authorities has provided an opportunity to link the LTP with new UDP policies as these plans are developed and examined in public, even resulting in same staff developing the LTP and writing the transport elements of the new UDP.

"Yes, you would expect some consistency [with the UDP]. I wrote both of them and used much of the same material that I drafted originally for the LTP, so they're bound to say the same thing. The timing was useful as was not giving it all to the planners to write themselves." (CS Unitary West Midlands)

This approach appears less likely in county authorities with LTP practitioners admitting that the LTP does not always sit well with the land use policies. Nor does the approach of individual districts to parking standards or development control always reflect demand management objectives in the LTP, especially where the application of controls may be relaxed to attract key developers:

"Development and developers will not come if you allow only 1 in 10 workers to use the car to get to work. We have to be pragmatic about how we do these things." (CS County East Midlands)

Despite these concerns there is little support, from the LTP practitioners or Members we spoke to, for merging the land use and transport planning frameworks at the current time, although any evolution in this area is likely to be undertaken through the Government's proposals for changing the regional planning system, as set out below.

Case study - transport and land use in a metropolitan area

Land use policies for the case study metropolitan LTP are contained in the Unitary Development Plans of the individual metropolitan districts. The LTP includes, in a technical annex, details of the key transport policies in the UDPs and their consistency with the LTP. The latter is not universal due to the differing timescales for adopting and revising the UDP policies, although it is expected to improve as the planning framework is revised, examined and adopted. The LTP is also put in the context of Draft Regional Planning Guidance published in late 1999.

The LTP includes how the UDP policies complement and support the LTP in terms of travel plans, development control, promotion of walking and cycling, location of development, Major Schemes and parking. With regards to the latter, some Districts retain Minimum Parking Standards adopted in the late 1980s and early 1990s which appear at odds with the demand management objectives of the LTP. The following statements from two of the Districts are typical:

"These [parking] policies need revising to fully reflect the Transport White Paper and other Government Guidance such as PPG13. The replacement of the existing minimum car parking standards with maximum standards when assessing the needs of new development is one such area requiring revision. This will enable a more balanced transport provision for access to new development, and will help to discourage car use."

"Review of the UDP will allow the reassessment of Major Scheme proposals against Government and sustainability criteria to ensure consistency with the LTP."

None of the UDPs adopted at the time of the LTP included policies requiring the development and implementation of Travel Plans for new developments, although the Districts are making various efforts to roll them out in practice.

Consistency of LTP and UDP policies is improving as the latter are reviewed and Replacement Plans put on Deposit. For example, the 2000-2001 APR notes for one District:

"The Replacement Plan is more closely aligned with the Local Transport Plan. The location strategy places more emphasis on reducing travel and in particular those journeys made by private car. The development of housing sites is phased to reflect this."

Integration with the Regional Planning Framework

It is clearly important to determine the extent to which current regional planning arrangements are consistent with, and support or hinder, the development and delivery of LTPs.

The regional context for LTPs is shown in Figure 7.1 and is clearly complex, involving a wide range of agencies with a variety of responsibilities implemented through differing processes. In theory, LTPs are informed by the relevant Regional Planning Guidance and associated Regional Transport Strategy, drawn up by the Regional Assembly/Chamber, and informed by, amongst others, the Regional Economic Strategy and Multi-Modal Studies. This should create a tiered framework of consistent transport policies and programmes spanning from the regional to the local level and making the difficult trade-offs in terms of major infrastructure, development and charging policies which become too parochial at the purely local level.

Figure 7.1 - Current Institutional Relationships and Responsibilities for Regional Plans in England
In practice, the picture is far less clear and focused than this and the linkage between LTPs and Regional Planning Guidance/Regional Transport Strategies can be considered one of the main weaknesses of the process. This is not least due to the fact that up-to-date and consulted RPG/RTS frameworks had not been completed when the Full LTPs were submitted\textsuperscript{30}, leading to many being prepared effectively in a regional vacuum. Freer (2001) states,

"There is the problem of order. Structure plans and regional transport strategies are now being prepared, and ideally these would have preceded LTPs. The value of all these plans can be diminished if they are not in step with one another."

One case study authority attempted to address this problem, by seconding an employee part-time (around 2-3 days per week) to the regional planning body, to assist in the transport aspects of the RPG. The remainder of the employee's time was spent working on the authority's LTP, thus ensuring consistency on issues of common interest. In another example, the regional planning body itself, had set up a forum to ensure a consistent transport policy at regional level:

\footnote{\textsuperscript{30} The Draft Regional Transport Strategy for the South East, for example, was not published until early in 2002 and will not be finalised until well into 2003.}
Case study - integration with regional planning

A Regional Transport Officers Group was established by one regional planning body to ensure consistency at a regional level on transport policy. The group contains representatives from the 17 local authorities in the region including the 5 metropolitan districts and the two Passenger Transport Executives. It evolved as a result of a review of the Regional Transport Strategy and aims to ensure consistency at a regional level on transport policy. The meetings also provide an opportunity for authorities to provide feedback on local scheme development. Guest speakers are also invited to attend and provide information on current best practice or other ongoing initiatives.

Evidence from the case study authorities suggests that lack of integration between LTPs and the Regional Planning Framework, is not simply one of timing. One LTP practitioner felt that their authority was perceived to be a low priority area, due to its relative prosperity, and hence involvement of the regional planning body was limited. In another example, the RDA was seen by the Government Office as having compatible views with local LTPs, hence limiting the extent of integration (CS).

Other sources have raised similar points in relation to the recommended programmes arising from the Multi-Modal Studies; for example, the completion of the West Midlands Multi-Modal Study (WMMMS) may necessitate a significant rethinking of the West Midlands LTP31. This may mean revising the LTP in mid-passage to "do more and do it faster" with a more than doubling of funding bid for order to fund the WMMMS recommendations. West Midlands is in the process of revising its LTP with a view to resubmission in 2003.

Local Transport Today (2002) notes this mismatch and sees the production of Annual Progress Reports as an opportunity for DFT and local authorities to break the various frameworks into line.

"APRs, as well as being testimonies about an Authority's efforts to integrate transport services and strategies locally, are also intended to show integration with the wider context of Government policy covering areas such as the Urban and Rural White Papers, Best Value, and the transport and mobility needs of disabled people. Councils that made little effort to demonstrate their appreciation of the wider policy context were frowned upon by their government offices."

Given that the majority of RPG/RTS frameworks will be in place by 2005-2006, there is greater scope for the second tranche of LTPs to be more consistent at the regional level.

"I think what was going to go into the Regional Transport Strategy was going to come from the same people who were developing the LTPs, so I think essentially both are eventually going to say the same thing." (CS County South East)

This may not be the only complication, however. Aside from the issue of timing, there are inconsistencies between Local Transport Plans, emerging Regional Transport Strategies and the recommendations of a number of recent Multi-Modal Studies. Once case study authority, for example, noted that the proposals to facilitate movement along a major coastal corridor appeared at odds with its local objectives for demand management. Similarly, whilst a number of Multi-Modal Studies have identified urban road user charging as medium-term recommendations, this has yet to be followed up by a firm commitment by the concerned authorities to define and implement charging schemes on the ground.

CfIT (2002)\textsuperscript{32} approaches the current problems from the perspective of a critique of the current regional planning processes rather than LTPs directly.

"The regional planning process is, clearly, complex, demanding of high levels of consultation and co-ordination. As with all structures, it demands strong leadership to provide regional leadership unencumbered by local agendas. The current institutional structure cannot guarantee to produce such leadership, nor the technical capacity to support it." (LR)

The implication of CfIT's work is that the regional planning structures are currently unable to provide a strong context for the development of LTPs at a local level. This is due to a number of factors, including:

- the lack of resources through the Highways Agency and particularly the Strategic Rail Authority to progress regional rail proposals coming out of the Multi-Modal Studies or promoted by authorities themselves on their own account or through the RTS framework;
- the current weakness of co-ordination and cross-boundary working between LTP authorities (as identified in Chapter 4 on Inclusivity) especially in considering a combined approach to regional parking standards, charging schemes or major infrastructure enhancements;
- the institutional weaknesses of the regional planning organisations themselves, with staff often drawn from local authorities on a part-time or seconded basis, the use of local data sources and analytical tools often developed for other purposes and a weak political "centre" able to direct decisions onto authorities at the local level; and
- the tendency of Regional Transport Strategies to be essentially compiled and unprioritised "wish lists" on behalf of all the concerned authorities rather than a strategic and focused examination of regions' transport needs unencumbered by local (rather than regional) priorities.

Hence whilst the view from the early literature is that LTPs are being progressed in a regional vacuum is no longer so true, questions remain over the regional framework and its weak influence on LTP strategy and programme development.

On a related issue, concerns were raised by one case study authority regarding the impacts that the possible creation of a regional assembly could have on future transport policy. In particular, the authority was concerned that regional transport policy would be dominated by metropolitan interests.

\textsuperscript{32} Commission for Integrated Transport (2002): 10 Year Plan Monitoring Strategy - Organisation, Planning and Delivery of Transport at the Regional Level. Prepared by Faber Maunsell et al. for CfIT
Integration with Regional Development Agencies and Regional Economic Strategies

Integration of LTPs with Regional Development Agencies and their strategies is at a very early stage. The RDAs are seen as focusing on job creation and regeneration with very little understanding of transport impacts or integrated transport policy (RW). Evidence from the case studies largely confirms this with LTP practitioners having little direct contact other than through wider stakeholder consultations.

Implications of Changes to the Regional Planning Framework

In light of some of the problems set out above, in December 2001, the Government published its Planning Green Paper for consultation, outlining its proposals for reforming the planning system. A number of case study authorities identify the need for stronger regional leadership, and may therefore welcome the Statutory nature of the Regional Spatial Strategies. These Strategies, and the proposals for associated sub-regional strategies, may also force more cross-boundary working between neighbouring authorities, identified as a weakness in the current LTP process, where authority (and therefore LTP) boundaries are inconsistent with journey-to-work areas and key transport corridors and where there is a need for urban centres to develop complementary transport measures for their rural hinterlands.

In terms of moving towards a streamlined system of Local Development Frameworks, the Government's proposed reforms to the planning system are expected to have less impact on unitary authorities where land use and transport functions are already combined. However, within county authorities, the proposals may represent a barrier to the integration of transport and planning, as they take planning responsibilities away from counties (to the Regional Assemblies/Chambers) while leaving them responsible for LTPs.

"Deleting strategic planning from the County area will act to sever the link between transport and development. This has got to be a backward step." (CS County North West)

Clearly, the future evolution of LTPs will need to consider any changing structure of regional government and adapt accordingly, in particular the potential strengthened status of Regional Spatial Strategies in influencing or even directing authorities in their planning and transport policies.

Conclusions and Recommendations

We conclude that Local Transport Plans are, in broad terms, consistent with national transport policy as defined in the Integrated Transport White Paper, more than the consistency of TPPs with Government policies in existence in the 1980s and 1990s, although this is as much due to the requirements of Government Guidance as authorities' adoption of the White Paper's principles. Some authorities view themselves as "leading the way" although for others, there is evidence of some divergence between local transport policy as set out in the LTP and the perspectives and rhetoric of individual Members, especially those not in the Committee/Cabinet structures of Councils.

Integration with wider policies for health, education and social services, whilst frequently cited in the LTP documents, is patchy in practice and, with some notable exceptions, often confined to consultation on the LTP bid and statements of broad principle rather than active and ongoing collaboration on funding and delivery. Integration with regeneration and social inclusion policies is possibly better, perhaps due to the higher recognition of transport's role in supporting regeneration and urban renaissance initiatives, although this is not necessarily ascribed to the LTP process on its own.

Cross-cutting coverage of a range of policies affecting local communities and integration of perspectives and expertise from a range of local authority departments may, in future, be assisted by the evolution of Community Plans and Local Strategic Partnerships.

The integration of LTPs with the land use planning system is a possible area of a weakness, although integration with development control and parking policies is better in unitary authorities compared to...
counties and metropolitan districts where the roles are split between different tiers of Government, and priorities may diverge, especially between towns and their rural hinterlands.

Finally, there is a need for greater consistency and integration of LTPs to deliver transport objectives and outcomes at the regional level. The evidence is that the current regional institutions and processes are insufficiently robust and engaged by authorities to provide this, even taking account of the different phasing between LTPs and RPG/RTS. The Government's proposals for reforming the regional planning system have the potential, if properly constituted, to force greater cross-boundary working between neighbouring authorities and ensure a greater strategic linkage between LTP boundaries and wider travel-to-work areas. This may have clear advantages for unitary authorities' LTPs. However, the implications for the county system are less clear if this leads to an organisational separation between transport planning through the LTP and strategic planning through the Regional Spatial Strategy and Local Development Frameworks.

Chapter 13 summarises the key issues and our recommendations for the Integration Theme.
8. Delivery

"We used to have to say no a lot. We don't have to say it quite so often now." (RW)

"Under TPP, we had capital projects which were seen to deliver. Now we are dealing with a lot of things which look tiddly, but which may have a big effect over time." (RW)

"We're definitely delivering more with the LTP than we ever did with the TPP." (RW)

Introduction

Effective and visible delivery on the ground is a key Government priority within the context of the Ten Year Plan and a central factor to the decision to radically increase local transport capital funding. This chapter examines:

- whether there has been a shift in the type of scheme being taken forward by authorities between the TPP and LTP regimes;
- whether more is actually being delivered relative to the TPP process; and
- crucially, what key barriers/enablers to delivery exist?

The Extent of Delivery

It is widely recognised that LTPs are delivering more on the ground and in general delivering a wider range of schemes than under the TPP. This is largely related to the increase in capital funding set out above, although the statutory nature of LTPs is also felt to be an advantage (RW). The LTP is seen as providing the "moral pressure" to pursue activities under a greater breadth of headings (CS).

"We've probably achieved more in the last four years than in the previous fifteen combined. The money now available has made a huge difference and we also appreciate the certainty of more funds over the next few years to continue the job" (CS County North East)

Figure 8.1 shows that all case study authorities are spending more than they did under the TPP process, with most more than doubling their delivery programmes in financial terms. The six officers we spoke to from the case study authorities all felt that they were also delivering more in terms of outputs, a view which was also commonly expressed at the regional workshops. However, frequent concerns raised about the rising costs of staff, consultants, contractors and materials suggests that the increase in outputs on the ground may not be as great as that suggested by the expenditure figures.

The CfIT Local Authority Survey provides some supporting evidence of this finding. Only 14% of respondents said they are ahead of schedule in implementing their LTP. Nearly a third are on schedule and half are slightly or substantially behind schedule, although this view is clearly related to expectations of progress within each authority.

Despite increased levels of expenditure, many of the case study authorities have been unable to spend all their allocation (Figure 8.2), reporting under-spends in their latest APR. Figure 8.3 expands on this by showing the areas of under-expenditure experienced by one particular case study county authority.

Figure 8.1: Expenditure on Integrated Transport and Maintenance under the TPP and LTP
* Expenditure figures are believed to include developer funding as well as LTP funding. N.B. Unitary (East)/County (North East): LTP Finance Forms only included in APRs sent to DfT.

**Figure 8.2: Allocated and Actual Expenditure on Integrated Transport and Maintenance under the TPP and LTP**

* Expenditure figures are believed to include developer funding as well as LTP funding. N.B. County3/Unitary4: LTP Finance Forms only included in APRs sent to DfT.

Of the case study authorities examined in Figure 8.2, three have been able to off-set an under-spend on Integrated Transport by increasing Maintenance spending. For one county, however, the substantial under-spend is a result of lack of spending on Maintenance rather than Integrated Transport. This appears to be due to staff shortages which have prevented scheme preparation work being undertaken. The authority has decided to take advantage of the flexibility of the 2 year SCA to
hold back funding while further consultation work on programmes and schemes is undertaken. Measures have also been put in place to address staff shortages, including the setting up of partnership arrangements with the private sector.

**Figure 8.3: Areas of underspend within a Case Study Authority (North East)**

![Diagram showing areas of underspend]

**Summary of Underspend**

Significant underspend in all key areas of Integrated Transport:
- Integration (-£811,000 or 34%),
- Widening Travel Choice (-£749,000 or 57%),
- Traffic Management and Demand Restraint (-£858,000 or 61%)

No spending on Interchanges, Information, Bus Priority, Traffic Management in the Countryside, Freight Movement.

High rates of spending (over 80% of allocation) on Packages, Quality Partnerships, Traffic Calming, Green Travel Plans, Countryside Campaigns, Highway and Bridge Maintenance (not shown on graph).
The capacity of local authorities to deliver programmes which are two to three times larger than those developed for the TPP varies. Many of the authorities have commented that it has taken time for the delivery of schemes to catch up with the increase in capital allocations. Authorities which had a clear strategy and delivery capability under the previous framework appear to have been in a better position to ramp it up under the LTP, recruiting additional staff and employing consultants as necessary (RW). A number of authorities already had policy documents in place under the TPP system, and the LTP is therefore seen as giving authorities encouragement and endorsement to what they were already doing (CS).

Conversely, authorities which had a far narrower TPP, or no TPP at all (i.e. some unitary authorities) have experienced more difficulty in (i) developing detailed schemes and programmes (ii) staffing up for implementation. They may also have less capability to manage risk (political, cost overruns, consultation) than others.

"Small unitaries just cannot afford the LTP." (RW)

To a degree, this divergence of delivery capacity and actual delivery has the potential to become self-perpetuating with the "successful" authorities able to attract more staff and win more Challenge bids, thereby maintaining their competitive advantage over smaller, less-well resourced authorities (RW). Designation of Centres of Excellence is seen by some as reinforcing this trend, by strengthening the employment capabilities of these authorities - referred to by one practitioner as "the Manchester United Effect." (RW) Nevertheless the role of Centres of Excellence as sharers of best practice is generally welcomed (RW).
Changes in Type of Policies and Schemes Being Delivered

The increased level of funding has generally enabled authorities to deliver a wider range of policies and schemes than was possible under the TPP process. However, truly innovative schemes appear to be the exception rather than the rule at present. The recent Road User Charging Scheme in Durham and initiatives using LTP funds for the purchase of buses for tendered services are two of the more innovative examples, although the Challenge Bid frameworks often include innovation as one criteria for assessing submissions.

In some cases, authorities were already implementing a wide range of schemes through funding received for package bids: the increased funding has allowed such authorities to ramp up spending on similar schemes (Figure 8.4).

"There are certain areas which have received more investment since the LTP e.g. cycling, walking and public transport. However, it is important to note that these schemes have always been a significant part of transport policy within the Council and it is the increase in funding that has enabled greater investment rather than any specific change in thinking."

(CS, County South East)

Other authorities developed package bids in the mid-1990s, but received little funding: the additional funding through LTPs has enabled authorities to implement these bids and thus new types of schemes are being delivered.

"The County acknowledges that much of the LTP programme being delivered in the first 2-3 years is essentially repackaged from the TPP." (CS, County North East)

Other authorities received very little funding under the TPP process and were only able to deliver a very narrow range of schemes, for example local safety and traffic management. The increased funding has allowed a much wider range of schemes to be delivered, although the time required to develop such schemes and the implementation of the backlog of TPP schemes is constraining this process (Figure 8.5).

Figure 8.4: Integrated Transport Expenditure by Scheme Type (Unitary, South West)
The authority has traditionally delivered a wide range of schemes. During the first year of the LTP priority was given to Park and Ride, Cycling and Bus priority schemes. These were also key priority areas in either 1998/99 or 1999/00. Walking has also been a priority area under the TPP.

The percentage of LTP funding allocated to maintenance was the same as in 1998/99.

Figure 8.5: Integrated Transport Expenditure by Scheme Type (County East Midlands)

Prior to the LTP, the authority only had sufficient resources for local safety schemes and isolated package schemes involving rural speed limits, economic development and regeneration, and rail improvement schemes. The authority is now able to deliver a wider range of schemes.

Many authorities have welcomed the increased maintenance funding, and there is some evidence that maintenance schemes have been given priority in the first year of the LTP, with the percentage of actual expenditure on maintenance exceeding the percentage of allocated expenditure for maintenance (Figure 8.6) - solid red shading identifies authorities where this has occurred.

"The County has a huge highway network which is largely rural and uncongested. Prior to the LTP, there was a huge backlog of maintenance work, although this is seemingly starting to improve." (CS County)

Figure 8.6: Allocation/expenditure on Maintenance
There is also evidence that walking and cycling schemes are becoming more common within many authorities, in line with the national agenda (RW/CS):

“For example, all of our pelican crossing facilities have been re-timed to make it easier for pedestrians to use them.” (CS County)

However, there is a feeling that some authorities and some members remain focused on an essentially roads-based agenda with “lip-service” given to public transport, walking and cycling (RW).

Progress on bus schemes is patchy. While some practitioners suggest that the greater certainty provided by the LTP process has enabled greater partnerships with bus companies to be established (RW/CS):

“Even though the partnerships with bus companies are fairly modest in cost, at least we are able to sustain them.” (CS County)

Other authorities have experienced strong resistance to bus lanes from Members, particularly when they are seen as taking highway capacity or parking space away from car-drivers (RW/CS).

As detailed elsewhere in this Report, the uncertainty surrounding Railtrack and the nationally focused objectives of the SRA have undoubtedly hindered progress in achieving various rail proposals.

“Railtrack are just not interested - trying to build up partnerships with the rail industry has been an absolute nightmare.” (CS Unitary)

“The protracted refranchising process has not helped, nor the bureaucracy and red tape involved in obtaining Strategic Rail Partnership funding for projects. The discrepancy
Local transport plans - policy evaluation: Part 1 - Final Report

"between the funding mechanisms and timescales for highway schemes is likely to create a bias in favour of road projects."

While, one case study authority felt that the LTP had enabled rail station improvements which would not have been envisaged under the TPP process, most practitioners reported slow progress on rail schemes (RW).

It is acknowledged that it is more difficult to justify road schemes and over time, whilst there are currently many roads-based schemes in programmes carried over from the TPP, the balance of major and minor schemes ought to swing firmly towards alternative modes.

"LTP offers much more than road schemes, which in turn has provoked interest amongst a wider range of Members." (RW)

As the first LTP period concludes and authorities move into the second LTP period, more are likely to spend across a wider range of areas. This process will take time, however. In part, this is down to the culture of local authority transport departments with transport planners and traffic engineers focusing on "more of the same" in the sense of schemes they know and understand well, as well as the views of Members. Newer types of scheme - such as travel plans, pedestrian measures and the like - will take time to develop better understanding and good practice.
**Barriers to Delivery**

The delivery process has become more complex due to a wider range of skills needed, the need to address (and justify against) a wider range of objectives, the requirement for greater public/stakeholder consultation and partnership working with external organisations and the need for consideration of private finance in some cases. Hence the process is taking longer and is more resource intensive.

The evidence points to the following key barriers to effective delivery of the LTP programmes (RW/CS):

- **staff and skill shortages**, reflecting both shortages in revenue funding to support additional posts, but also wider staffing and skills issues affecting the whole transport sector;
- shortage of **revenue funding** to fund consultation, project management and future maintenance liabilities, as set out in Chapter 5;
- **public/political will** with Members and communities not supporting specific schemes, or Members withdrawing support in the event of opposition from vocal interest groups, as set out in Chapter 11;
- the need to **consult**, with problems as set out in Chapter 4;
- actual, or the risk of, hostile **press coverage**;
- increases in **tender prices/construction costs**;
- inappropriate **contract arrangements**;
- shortages of **contractors**;
- **cross-boundary issues** (for schemes crossing or beyond authority borders, such as park and ride);
- **inter-departmental working**, with some other departments (e.g. education) seeing transport as nothing to do with them;
- lack of support from external **stakeholders**;
- the return of potential **annualisation of funding** through Single Capital Pot;
- **exogenous factors** such as the Foot and Mouth outbreak of 2001, which resulted in delays to consultation and site surveys for a number of rural transport schemes; or industrial action resulting in significant delays to works which entail connections to the electricity supply network or disruption to the public transport network;
- **late issue of LTP/APR Guidance** by the Department itself; and
- **excessive DfT focus on monitoring** and reporting on targets ("No time left to actually do things on the ground").

**Revenue Funding and Staff Shortages**

Of these barriers, staff shortages and the lack of revenue funding are seen as the most pressing, as reflected across all of the workshops and most of the case studies.

**Revenue Funding**

"Until the revenue issues are addressed, it will be extremely difficult to make sustained progress on transport." (CS Metropolitan)

The ICE 2002 Local Transport and Public Realm Survey shows that 72% of authorities have severe or significant problems with the balance of revenue versus capital funding. The limited availability of
revenue funds is seen as inconsistent with the increase in capital resources. The shortage is compounded by the need to use higher quality materials to meet other policy objectives, the increased use of technology, the increasing requirement to bid for funds through mechanisms such as Rural and Urban Bus Challenge, and the need to match funding to secure non-LTP funded improvements.

Further details of the revenue issues associated with LTP capital programmes are set out in Chapter 5 relating to Funding and Long-Term Planning.

**Staff and Skills Shortages**

The same survey shows a major shortfall in the number of specialised staff engaged in implementing the LTP, particularly in transport planning, with authorities currently employing only 76% of the required number of staff (Figure 8.7). Over 80% of authorities report severe or significant difficulties recruiting senior staff. Junior staff appear equally difficult to recruit, suggesting that the skills shortage is likely to be long term. 66% of local authorities report serious or significant difficulties in recruiting transport planners. Highways design and maintenance engineers, traffic engineers and general technicians also appear to be in short supply.

The CfIT Local Authority Survey finds that a third of authorities have shortages of 30% or more of senior staff.

"We put in a half page ad in Local Transport Today. The ad won a prize for design, but we only got one applicant who was not suitable anyway." (RW)

**Figure 8.7 - Current Staff Shortages within Local Authorities**

![Bar chart showing current staff shortages within local authorities](image)

Source: Local Transport and Public Realm Survey 2002, Institute of Civil Engineers.

The case studies identify skills shortages (both within authorities and the private sector) within some of the new areas of work associated with the LTP, such as consultation and Home Zones. Such skills were generally not required under the TPP process. It was felt that both Civil Engineers and consultants lacked the skills and understanding required to integrate different schemes. For example, a single LTP scheme can encompass road safety improvements, walking and cycling facilities, whilst also being part of a safe-routes-to-school scheme. There is still a tendency however, to consider each element as a separate scheme (CS).
Some of these recruitment difficulties come from pay differentials and variations in career prospects between authorities. Indeed, in some instances there are tensions over larger authorities "poaching" staff from smaller ones. The same can be said for Transport for London offering higher salaries than has been the norm in transport planning for many years. A number of smaller unitary authorities also see their small size and location as a barrier, with potential candidates more likely to favour positions in the neighbouring urban authority or in larger Shire authorities. (RW/CS)

Some authorities do not have the budget to employ the necessary staff:

"There are simply no resources within my authority to employ more staff. The salary budget is completely ringfenced and constrained." (RW)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Case study - staff vacancies in a unitary authority</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>One unitary authority (South East) has established a new organisational structure and new posts necessary to implement the LTP. Until the structures were approved, there was an embargo on recruitment, both on new posts and to existing vacant posts. However, there is now a problem in recruiting qualified staff as shown in the table below. This has had an impact on the implementation of the LTP programmes and the authority is underspending against its Integrated Transport allocation.</td>
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### Transport Strategy and Management Division

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Group</th>
<th>Posts</th>
<th>Vacancies</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Transportation Strategy</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Transport and Infrastructure Development</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

An example of the outcome of the failure to recruit a Principal Transport Planner post in the Transportation Strategy Group has been that both the Parking Plan and the Walking Plan have not been progressed to consultation. Subject to recruitment, it is anticipated that this consultation will now be carried out in 2002/03.

A number of solutions are being pursued by authorities:

- the use of agency staff (although at considerable expense);
- direct advertising and recruitment from overseas, including outside the European Union;
- greater externalisation of work through the use of consultants to undertake specific tasks;
longer-term partnering arrangements with Consultants;
use of consultants to undertake revenue work (e.g. Development Control) to free up staff for other tasks;
partnership arrangements and joint working with neighbouring authorities;
the provision of funding for Masters or Diploma degrees in transport planning and/or in-house training of new starters or junior staff.

There is also recognition that the transport sector overall needs to promote itself to Graduates and School leavers through the incorporation of transport issues into course material and through careers offices and lecturers/teachers. Programmes such as the Transport Planning Skills Initiative are seen as providing a way forward in this respect.

While a number of authorities make use of the private sector to undertake operational and professional tasks, their contribution is largely focused on proving Operational Services. For example, while an estimated 81% of authorities use the private sector to assist with Highways Construction, only 54% of authorities use the private sector to assist with Highways Design\(^{33}\). Only 21% of authorities report that more than 25% of their highway and transportation services are provided by the private sector.

The case studies highlight a number of concerns and issues relating to the use of consultants:
- the LTP requires a strong understanding of the policy issues which is difficult to accommodate in project briefs;
- Members can be nervous of having consultants fronting LTP schemes, preferring more politically sensitive Council Officers to lead;
- consultants often do not have sufficient understanding of local authority procedures and issues to lead LTP schemes;
- the commitment of consultants to local schemes is often questioned;
- consultants often lack the skills required to lead LTP schemes e.g. consultation skills and the ability to integrate different policy areas within a single scheme;
- the consultancy sector faces staff shortages in the same way as local authorities; and
- tendering procedures for separate elements of work can be time-consuming.

On the positive side, use of the private sector can:
- address staff and skills shortages and under spends in key areas where the authority is understaffed (RW/CS);
- improve skills and expertise through the authority bringing in private sector innovation and experience (CS); and
- address some of the pressing revenue issues in that much of the contract can be funded through LTP capital for scheme preparation and delivery rather than revenue funding from ongoing employment of authority staff (CS).

Overall a balance has to be struck between passing risk to the private sector, achieving efficiency savings in line with Best Value and getting the flexibility, political/community sensitivity and responsiveness which is now an integral part of delivering local transport. There is a need for political issues to be addressed in parallel with technical work to avoid abortive costs.

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\(^{33}\) Local Transport and Public Realm Survey 2002, Institute of Civil Engineers.
### Case study - use of consultants to aid LTP implementation

For one unitary authority, consultants are currently being used to deliver part of the LTP programme, but only on specific projects driven by a brief. While the use of consultants is seen as beneficial on large projects, a considerable amount of work needs to be undertaken before the brief can be written. Furthermore, a considerable amount of an officer's time (typically 75%) is still needed to manage studies. A critical mass of internal staff is therefore required if consultants are to be effective. Thus the use of consultants on a project-by-project basis can only play a limited role in solving authorities' staffing problems. Integrated schemes often have low profit margins and can be less interesting than the larger schemes, and hence consultants may not be interested in undertaking the work.

In order for consultants to play a greater role, the traditional client-consultant relationship (whereby consultants tender for specified elements of a project and carry out the work in their own offices) needs to be transcended, and consultants need to take responsibility for managing and delivering an entire project, from start to finish. This entails working with members and officers in other departments, liaising with contractors and undertaking public consultation. These are areas where consultants tend to have little experience, and are also seen as lacking commitment or local knowledge. Partnership or term consultancy arrangements (see definition below) are seen as the only means of overcoming such problems, however, experience has shown that it can take 12-18 months for consultants to understand the necessary procedures.

The authority is considering making greater use of consultants, including setting up a term consultancy arrangement, however, they recognise the limitations of this approach.

### Case study - strategic alliance

A "Strategic Alliance" was agreed in 2002 between one county (North East) and two private contractors in order to address growing underspends in key areas in the LTP programme. Balfour Beatty and Babtie have now been appointed to work with the authority in key aspects of delivery including detailed design, consultation and construction supervision. The firms are also able to provide skills in areas, such as public transport and Accident Investigation and Prevention, where the county is currently substantially understaffed. The Alliance will have a Joint Board and will share staff and offices.

The County sees the Alliance as essential to deliver its LTP programme. The arrangements also have the advantage to short-cutting lengthy tendering procedures for separate elements of work and "bringing in private sector innovation and experience, thereby delivering Best Value." The Alliance also addresses some of the pressing revenue issues in that much of the contract can be funded through LTP capital for scheme preparation and delivery rather than revenue funding from ongoing employment of County staff.

### Case study - partnership working between authorities

The provision of services to one unitary authority by the neighbouring large urban authority minimises overheads, achieves economies of scale, ensures consistency of approach and provides training expertise. Services provided currently consist of maintenance functions regarding traffic signals and Safety Cameras, and support to Stage 3 and Stage 4 Air Quality Reviews. A Joint Rail Strategy has also been developed between a number of neighbouring authorities, due to lack of sufficient expertise within individual authorities, the need to address cross-boundary issues, and to raise the profile of local rail issues with the SRA.
Given the above concerns, many authorities are looking to partnering contracts with consultants to deliver their LTP programme.

"Getting consultants on board is the only way we can see as an authority that we can deliver the sort of programmes that we're meant to deliver. We need a big consultant on board as a permanent relationship, at least for five to seven years." (RW)

**Partnering contracts between local authorities and consultants**

| A partnership arrangement involves the key elements of a standard term consultancy, but involves a closer working relationship between officers and consultants. Consultancy staff work in the local authority offices alongside local authority staff, and take responsibility for both managing and delivering projects. A partnership arrangement will generally involve a greater level of responsibility on the part of the consultant. |

The impact of the LTP on staff and skills requirements is discussed further in Chapter 11 (Change Management).
**Other Barriers/Enablers**

**Annualisation of funding**

The loss of the two-year SCA and the introduction of the one-year SCP is a frequently mentioned problem, particularly given the time-consuming nature of the consultation required to implement 'newer' schemes such as Home Zones and Safe-Routes-to-School schemes.

"It is impossible to fully deliver a scheme from April to March especially given the increased amount of consultation that is required." (CS)

Even in the more well-established authorities, "street lighting and road maintenance are taking priority over the larger schemes" (CS).

A policy of over-design is being adopted in a number of the case study authorities. This is to allow for potential delays arising from the design and consultation process, but also to build up a bank of schemes for implementing in future years. This will reduce the risk of underspend and also improve estimating for future programming. (CS). Ensuring that members are involved in scheme design issues at an early stage, is seen as another solution, allowing potential problems to be identified early on in the process (CS). (See Chapter 11, Change Management)

This issue is discussed further in Chapter 5 (Funding and Long-Term Planning).

**Inappropriate contractual arrangements**

In some cases, contractual arrangements in place to deliver the TPP have been unsuitable for LTP delivery, as demonstrated in the example below:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Case study - contractual arrangements to deliver the local transport plan</th>
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<tr>
<td>The Term Contract arrangement entered into by one case study unitary authority to deliver the TPP specified a total value of works which the contractor would undertake, with specified staff rates. The threshold was adequate under the TPP process, but was not sufficient for the levels of funding the LTP was providing. The authority has now diversified its contract base and uses five contractors on a 'call-off' basis. Each contractor provides a set of rates for different types of work, and the appropriate contractor is chosen for each scheme. Although the rates are higher than previously (due to a general increase in contractors' rates and the less competitive rates associated with five contractors being appointed rather than a single contractor to undertake all the work), the arrangement is enabling the LTP to be delivered, and is seen as a positive move by the authority concerned.</td>
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**Increases in tender prices/construction costs**

The effect of price inflation on contract prices is resulting in fewer improvement schemes being delivered from available funding.

A number of Government Officers felt that there was an expectations gap over what can actually be delivered through LTPs, given recent tender price inflation, the costs of consultation and the capacity of some authorities to manage a substantial increase in the size and scope of their programmes (RW).

**Lack of support from external stakeholders**

Many authorities have found partnering organisations useful in developing strategies, but less effective in aiding delivery of schemes.

Different objectives and timescales adopted by partnering organisations can represent a barrier to delivery. One authority reported that a range of competing initiatives for schools has meant long lead-
in times and difficulties in securing Head Teacher support for Safer Routes to School schemes, whilst the SRA's pre-occupation with the upgrade of the East and West Coast Main Lines is acting as a significant break on attempts to open a local line to passenger traffic (CS).

It appears that authorities still need to take the lead when implementing Green Travel Plans, School Travel Plans, and Safer-Routes-to-School schemes, unless a "champion" can be found within the relevant organisation. Even then, a "champion" is still needed to ensure the business or school remains committed to the plan. (CS)

**Member involvement**

Political will from Members is a clear issue for successful delivery. The following three quotations are by no means exceptional:

"They [members] all signed up to the LTP, but they didn't sign up to the schemes. No matter how good your cycling scheme is, the reaction is 'never mind that. It's half a million quid. No way!'" (RW)

"We've got the reports, we've got the plans. But we haven't won the battle internally and without that, you get nowhere." (RW)

"The implementation of schemes can still be at the whim of an Executive Member, especially in the run-up to election time." (RW)

It is also suggested that in some authorities Senior Officers may be sceptical over the LTP strategy or specific aspects of it.

This issue is discussed further in Chapter 11 (Change Management).

**Key Enablers**

Enabling factors can be divided into factors inherent to the LTP process, those related to, but not part of the process, and local/geographical issues.

The key enabling elements of the LTP process are seen by officers as:

- the greater certainty of funding;
- the five year plan period;
- the flexibility to switch funding between spending areas;
- the emphasis on Partnership working (although this can be a barrier as well as an enabler - see Inclusivity Chapter); and
- the statutory nature of the LTP.

These factors were widely mentioned amongst LTP practitioners and officers (CS/RW). The first three factors are seen as being particularly beneficial.

Greater certainty of funding has enabled greater partnerships to be formed with the private sector which can facilitate the implementation of schemes, and has also enabled authorities to set up term consultancy contracts with consultants to enable design work to be undertaken prior to scheme implementation. The five year plan period is seen as enabling forward planning and design, to ensure schemes are ready for implementation, while the ability to switch funding between spending areas allows schemes to be more effectively managed to reflect resource availability and pace of implementation. The statutory nature of the LTP has generally ensured greater member buy-in than was the case under the TPP system.

The following issues related to the LTP process are also key enablers:
conversion to unitary status combining all transport responsibilities along with planning, housing, education and health within one organisation, is commonly seen as facilitating joint working between departments (RW/CS). This can aid delivery of schemes and ensure schemes delivered are of a high quality. Examples of joint working between the development control team and LTP practitioners were frequently quoted, facilitating the delivery of Green Travel Plans and other sustainable solutions (CS). Other examples were quoted where joint responsibility for transport and environment had delivered schemes with considerable landscaping and environmental protection measures (CS);

the existence of "champions" within local authority health and education departments, able to devote time to transport, can have a significant impact in aiding delivery of associated transport schemes. Similarly, the existence of "champions" within major employment centres is an important factor in the adoption of Green Travel Plans. (RW/CS);

package bid funding under the TPP process, which can mean that (i) the authority has a backlog of schemes ready to implement and, (ii) that much of the work required to gain public support of the strategy has already been done (CS); and

a stable political regime, and long standing members with a good appreciation of the issues (CS), or strong political leadership (CS).

Local and geographical issues can also enable delivery:

self-contained urban areas with few cross-boundary issues, are likely to experience few delivery problems due to conflict with neighbouring authorities (CS);

a municipally owned bus company, which while independent, tends to be more supportive of measures to promote public transport than may be the case in other authorities (CS);

extensive housing expansion and office development can provide significant amounts of developer funding, and gives the authority stronger powers to negotiate with developers over planning obligations, such as Section 106 contributions and Green Travel Plan targets and requirements (CS).

Case study - delivery through planning obligations

One unitary authority (South West) was recently able to impose stringent conditions on the planning permission agreement for a new hospital, due to the inaccessible/unsustainable location chosen for the development and the pressure for development in the area.

The initial Section 106 agreement consisted of:

- 3 subsidised bus routes serving the hospital, over 10 years;
- over 2 kms of cycle track to be built; and
- implementation of a purpose-built bus-gate.

The hospital has responded by appointing a 'champion' for green travel, introducing a shuttle bus, and introducing car-parking charges.

On a related issue, Member support for developer contributions, reflecting public concern about the impacts that further development in the authority may have on transport, is also important. Authorities are also able to turn down developments with poor transport links, where member buy-in has been achieved.
Conclusions and Recommendations

It is widely recognised that LTPs are delivering more on the ground and, in general, delivering a wider range of schemes than under the TPP. The process is seen as providing the certainty of funding and strategic perspective within which to pursue activities under a wider range of headings.

However, the process of introducing the LTP raises a number of practical delivery issues. The sudden large increase in capital funding from a comparatively low base, has been constrained through lack of staff, rising costs and a number of acute barriers to delivery. For many, especially external stakeholders, what is now being delivered under the LTP is less than the substantial expectations in 2000. Given current capacities to deliver, it is suggested that the increased funding could have been phased in over several years. Authorities will take some time to catch up and match their delivery programmes to the funds now coming through.

Chapter 13 summarises the key issues and our recommendations for delivering the LTP.
9. Technical Robustness

Introduction

The LTP Guidance requires that authorities' strategies must be based on a comprehensive and effective analysis of local issues and problems and appraise a range of solutions to arrive at a preferred approach. This theme therefore examines how authorities have examined their baseline transport issues and assembled strategies to meet the problems identified.

Due to the detailed nature of this theme, Atkins' own assessment of twenty selected LTPs and the twelve case studies provide the main body of evidence for this chapter, supplemented by evidence from the regional workshops and other references, where appropriate.

Technical Robustness Overview

In general, practitioners themselves feel that more technical analysis is being undertaken to inform the strategies and programmes set out in the LTP and reported in the APR (RW). The prescriptive nature of the guidance, the use of external consultants, and more extensive data collection exercises is seen to have resulted in an evidence-based approach to problem identification, objective setting, and strategy development (OA). However, while there are some good examples of technical approaches being employed, it is often unclear from the LTP documents, to what extent more sophisticated approaches are being used (OA).

Results from the six case study authorities shows mixed evidence of more in-depth analysis being undertaken:

[LTPs have enabled a greater analysis of transport problems and possible solutions particularly with regard to road maintenance which is becoming much more scientific. A good example is the Local Development Programme where considerable consultation has been undertaken with the community to try and establish problems and potential solutions]. "Previously we used to just rely upon origin and destination surveys, whereas now, we undertake much more in-depth analysis. This is much more sensible and pragmatic." (CS)

[It is debatable whether there is more analysis of transport problems and solutions as attention is often focused on delivery rather than analysis due to the lack of resources]. "Plan making and monitoring can often get out of proportion and detract from actually delivering schemes on the ground." (CS)

"There is certainly a different sort of analysis being undertaken but I'm not sure that there is more than under the TPP." (CS)

Much of the analysis being undertaken is based on the results of public consultation. Public perceptions provide much of the initial evidence and analytical evidence is then used to inform, support and refute these perceptions.

"A lot of the time we are reacting to public wishes where we are trying to create an environment that is suited to the users in specific areas, e.g. in housing estates we try and ensure people are able to walk to and from a bus stop rather than use their cars." (CS)

In some cases, consultation is the preferred method for appraising strategic options, due to the cost benefits over multi-modal transport models and the ability to engage the public in determining a consensus view on problems, options and preferred solutions (CS). However, this approach is not without its problems as detailed in Chapter 4 (Inclusivity).

Multi-modal models, micro-simulation models tend to be used for specific studies and larger schemes. Some authorities have chosen not to use modelling techniques as they are seen as being inappropriate for the needs of LTP schemes (CS).
The partnership element of the LTP process has been found to facilitate access to data in some cases, enabling authorities to obtain data from public transport operators (CS/RW).

**Analysis of Transport Issues and Problems**

Problem identification and analysis is generally shown to be handled well by authorities with the majority of LTPs (60%) being rated 'good' against the Annex D assessment criteria for this topic (GO).

Local authorities have used a variety of methods for identifying problems (LR, GO, OA):

- assessments related to overall objectives;
- technical analysis - including comparisons of local transport performance with other places (benchmarking) and modelling of a future do-minimum scenario to identify future problems;
- consultation with local communities, user groups, stakeholders and other partners; and
- analysis based around key themes identified in LTP guidance.

Consultation can help identify what people see as the problems in the transport system. Technical analysis will provide evidence to support these perceptions. Further analysis can explain how these problems threaten corporate aims and objectives. Assessing the problems against the key themes from the guidance will ensure that the authority also looks at national priorities.

Atkins' review of selected LTPs suggests that consultation and analysis against overall objectives and key topic themes are the most common methods for identifying transport issues and problems. There is relatively little evidence of sophisticated technical analyses involving benchmarking or modelling approaches being employed. However, the use of data (from consultation exercises, surveys, stakeholders or published sources) to support and identify problems/issues is a common feature of all these approaches, resulting in robust problem identification. (OA) Data availability and analysis is felt to be strongest for "more established" transport areas such as traffic flows, accidents and journey times (RW).

Better performing authorities tend to summarise problems under a handful of themes, from which they are able to develop clear objectives and strategies. In weaker LTPs, a long list of problems may be identified under a range of topic headings. This approach can be associated with poor objective setting and lack of focus (OA).

**Objective Setting**

Most authorities have set a clear set of objectives, consistent with the Government's objectives for the environment, safety, economy, accessibility and integration, with corresponding area-based and topic-based local objectives (OA).

Most authorities have carried out consultation to inform the objective setting process, but evidence suggests many authorities are not keeping the public fully involved in the process and are not redefining the aims and objectives of the plan as a result of the consultation approach. In these cases, the purpose of consulting the public primarily appears to be to gain support for objectives already fixed upon rather than to seek consultees' input into the objectives.

Government Office comments such as:

"Extensive consultation and partnership working on objectives....but aims 'tested through consultation' not determined" (GOSE LTP Assessment)

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34 See also Chapter 4 (Inclusivity)
"Public consulted and supported objectives but no evidence that they were directly involved in determining them" (GOSE LTP Assessment)

are more common than:

"The plan is very strong on consultation which has clearly played a significant role within the study and hence the plan's preparation. Particularly impressive is the level of detail in the consultation annex, together with the analysis of that consultation and the detailing of the Council's response to a number of the points raised. This is helpful in tracing how objective setting and strategy development can be traced to the consultation outputs." (GONW LTP Assessment)

The realism of some objectives is unclear due to lack of quantification and explanation:

"Difficult to say if objectives are realistic as many are not quantified" (GOSE LTP Assessment)

"The objectives seem sensible and realistic though the basis for them is not always clearly explained." (GOEM LTP Assessment)

There is some evidence that a few authorities are still concentrating on purely transport issues, failing to incorporate the wider range of related issues (OA).

The prioritisation of short and long term objectives appears to be an area of weakness in the LTP process. Government Office comments such as:

"Although there are references in the text to short and long term issues, it is felt that the plan would benefit from a more structured approach differentiating between short and long term goals for individual sections" (GONW LTP Assessment)

"An appendix includes brief details of priority objectives, although from reading the main document everything appears to be a priority" (GONE LTP Assessment)

are more common than:

"The overall objectives of the LTP are listed in priority order. The likelihood of them being achieved is directly linked to objectives contained within the topic-based strategies and this provides a clear recognition of what can be achieved in the short and longer term. It is evident that objectives and targets have been set according to priority and the expected level of resources likely to be available." (GOSW LTP Assessment)

**Strategy Development**

Strategy Development is generally handled well by authorities: the majority of LTPs (60%) were rated as 'good' by Government Offices against the Annex D assessment criteria for this topic.

Views expressed at the regional workshops suggest that more technical analysis is being undertaken to inform the strategies and programmes set out in the LTP. This is felt to be a reflection of the Guidance on Full LTPs, the greater breadth of initiatives and greater use of external consultants. Lack of comprehensive data is seen as a problem amongst some new unitary authorities, however, a number of Unitaries have invested substantially in new data collection and analysis, even achieving Centre of Excellence status. However, some authorities complained that they did not have sufficient time to produce the background data to support their strategy. (RW)

Many unitary authorities have had to develop their strategies from scratch. Other authorities have either built on the former TPP strategy or have taken the opportunity to undertake a fundamental review of their approach. (RW)
**Overall Strategy**

A wide range of approaches to Strategy Development are adopted by authorities, although all are objective-led (OA):

- a common approach is to develop a set of measures directly aimed at addressing each of the objectives/themes in turn. Such approaches often lead to the development of a single overall strategy, with no alternative strategies considered. This approach is justified, as producing a plan that is fully integrated and justifiable. In some cases the strategy can be based around a causal chain approach;

- development of alternative overall strategies is generally undertaken by large urban authorities. Two alternative approaches appear to be taken:
  - development and testing of hypothetical "cartoon" alternative strategies in order to determine what the key elements of their strategies should be and what role different strategies can play;
  - in other cases more realistic options have been worked up, closer to the final 'preferred' strategy. In addition, evidence of analysis and modelling permeates throughout the strategy, and may be used to test alternative target scenarios.

- authorities which do not identify alternative overall strategies, tend to develop a 'menu' based approach, which identifies a suitable range of measures, which can then be scaled up or down in response to consultation results or the different needs of different areas of the authority;

- some authorities are restricted to certain overall approaches, due to an existing commitment to major schemes;

- in a few cases, authorities have benchmarked themselves against similar sized settlements to determine the areas on which the strategy should focus and the level of improvement which is required.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Strategy development in a metropolitan area (OA)</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>One metropolitan LTP evolved from the former Transport Package through a five stage process involving consultation, review, development and evaluation. The process is summarised as follows:</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Stage 1:</strong> Broad review undertaken in 1999 of the package strategy to understand revisions and development required in the light of the Integrated Transport White Paper, associated daughter documents and provisional LTP guidance. This review indicated that there was a high level of consistency between the metropolitan districts' strategic approach and Government LTP Guidance. The priority was to ensure that the LTP was developed to reflect the increasing emphasis on integration.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Stage 2:</strong> A review of the provisional LTP undertaken between September 1999 and March 2000 to ensure that the transport objectives reflected the vision of the authorities; that the document was consistent with new European national and regional policy objectives; and that there was ownership among key stakeholder groups including transport providers. This resulted in changes to the working of the key objectives and a clarification to ensure that environmental objectives were not subsidiary to economic objectives.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Stage 3:</strong> This was undertaken in parallel to Stage 2 and involved the development of the remaining topic strategies such as the rail development plan, highway maintenance, bus strategy, sustainable freight movement, airport surface access, social exclusion and personal safety. In addition, the role of land use planning and how this interacts with the transport strategy was revisited in the light of the draft Regional Planning Guidance and PPG13.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Stage 4: Involved a re-appraisal of the major scheme proposals in the light of the revised plan objectives and the overall strategic approach to transport. This work was assisted by the appointment of independent consultants.

Stage 5: This stage interacted with Stage 4 and involved an assessment of the overall performance of the provisional Plan in meeting and achieving its objectives. This involved the development of a transport model by independent consultants which produced forecasts for key indicators, for example travel by mode and carbon dioxide emissions.

Public Participation in Strategy Development

Evidence from the Government Office Assessments of the 85 LTPs shows that most authorities appear to have involved the public in the strategy development stage of the LTP; but, as with objectives, there is limited evidence to show that they have been fully involved in the process, particularly in the consideration of alternatives. The example below demonstrates a typical approach:

Case study - public involvement in strategy development I

One unitary authority identified appropriate mode/topic-based strategies for a range of themes. Three alternative packages of measures were identified based on different levels of funding required from the private sector. Modelling was used to identify the impact of each option on traffic growth. The chosen preferred strategy was based on public consultation results. Perhaps not surprisingly, the public opted for the option based on the highest level of funding, which would also deliver the most. The option based on the lowest level of funding would have little impact on reducing traffic growth and congestion relative to the do-min scenario and would not improve public transport reliability.

"Alternatives presented to the public do not represent real alternative approaches, merely alternative funding levels, with different levels of funding required from the private sector.”

(.GOYH LTP Assessment)

Other authorities have experienced similar problems:

'Wide ranging consultation but seems to be more based on seeking support for provisional plan, not testing alternatives’.(GOSE LTP Assessment)

'Good participation but no evidence that public involved in any consideration of alternatives'.

(GOSE LTP Assessment)

Views expressed at the regional workshops confirm this view. Many authorities are finding it difficult to engage the public at the strategic level of the LTP or are concerned that public views may run counter to Government policy, as set out in Chapter 4. The example below shows one of the ways in which the public can be successfully involved in strategy development.

Case study - public involvement in strategy development II

The public in one southern unitary authority was asked to rank the following transport proposals in the order in which they believed the Council should action them:

Improve bus travel
Reduce traffic speeds
Provide more park and ride
Improve road safety
Extend and improve cycle routes
Maintain the existing road network
Improve pedestrian routes
Build more roads
Lorry route strategies

Implement safer-routes-to-schools

As a result of public opinion, public transport and the needs of pedestrians and cyclists are given top priority in the overall transport strategy.

"Impressed by the inclusive and comprehensive way in which the public have been involved in developing the strategy and the measures that have been taken to ensure that the consultation process is continuous including the Citizens Panel involving 2,000 local people and the holding of exhibitions in supermarkets and shopping centres. Public consulted on congestion charging and work place parking charges." (GOSW LTP Assessment)

**Strategy Appraisal**

The prescriptiveness of the Guidance means that preferred strategies are appraised using the Appraisal Summary Table approach, and tend to reflect the Government's overarching objectives. Most authorities produce the required ASTs for the Full Strategy with and without Major Schemes. The inclusion of variant ASTs in the LTP for alternative strategies is sparse. Some of the more comprehensive LTPs include an assessment of the LTP against each of the Annex D criteria. (OA)

The prescriptiveness of the Guidance means that Major Scheme assessments are carried out in line with the principles set out in the Integrated Transport White Paper, again using the Appraisal Summary Tables. The inclusion of variant ASTs for different Major Scheme options is patchy. (OA)

Use of ASTs to reflect local objectives does not appear to be widespread. Where they have been used they are generally in addition to the Central Government ASTs, rather than instead of them (OA).

The quality of the ASTs themselves varies, particularly in terms of the quantification and description of impacts35.

Although not an Annex D requirement, the Guidance requires authorities to provide supporting evidence to accompany their Appraisal Summary Tables covering issues of distribution and equity, affordability and financial sustainability, practicality and public acceptability, and social exclusion; along with an analysis of problems which the proposals will address. A number of authorities fail to provide the necessary supporting evidence for their Full LTP Strategy and where supporting evidence is provided the quality varies greatly. (OA)

Few authorities have developed formal approaches to assess smaller schemes. The Prioritisation Framework, developed by one of the new unitary authorities and described over the page is one of the few examples of a more formalised approach.

One LTP authority has used sophisticated modelling techniques to develop a multi-criteria appraisal tool (EVAL) to compare and rank schemes and policies. Surrey began developing its transport model in the 1970s, and has been building and extending it over the last 25 years. M25 issues in the 1990s prompted Surrey to focus on developing powerful modelling techniques to match those of the Highways Agency and other interested parties; this involved incorporating 1991 London Area Transport Study data, and elements of the South-East Regional Transport Model and the M25 Model. As a result, the County has a dedicated team of highly experienced modellers and a suite of modelling

software which is far superior to most authorities'. This puts it in a unique position to apply sophisticated modelling techniques to the development and appraisal of LTP schemes, as well as target setting and monitoring (See Chapter 10 on Understanding Progress).

More commonly:
- consultation results have an important impact on scheme choice, particularly in relation to the newer types of schemes. Consulting with the public in order to determine what they actually want is seen as part of the appraisal process;
- solutions are appraised against local objectives, using a simple tick and cross approach, or consideration of the pros and cons of each option. In one authority, scheme options for rural areas are assessed against local objectives as national objectives and targets are seen as an inappropriate basis for assessing schemes (CS); and
- the chosen LTP strategy is modelled to identify the degree to which it addresses identified problems and LTP objectives.

### Case study - prioritisation framework

One case study authority (Unitary South West) has developed a Prioritisation Framework for Integrated Transport Schemes, based on the Government's 5 key Transport White Paper policy objectives and those identified for the LTP. For each of these objectives a checklist of relevant attributes has been identified. Each scheme is scored against the different attributes listed under each objective: the maximum possible score for a scheme is 60 points.

**Key policy objective 1 - To contribute to an efficient economy, and support sustainable economic growth in appropriate locations.**

*Does the proposal improve or worsen the following factors (possible score per item = -1, 0, or +1):*

- Access to industrial/commercial premises?
- Access to shopping areas?
- Access to tourist sites?
- Viability of commercial premises?

*Is the proposal likely to (0 or +1):*

- Create jobs?
- Promote private investment?
- Include funding from partners? (+1 point if up to 50% funded by others, +2 points if up to 100%)

*Does the proposal (0 or +1):*

- Promote modal shift or encourage the use of walking and/or cycling?
- Promote modal shift or encourage the use of public transport?
- Reduce journey times? (including sustainable modes)
- Reduce traffic volumes in total? (including displaced traffic)

Given constraints on funding, a Value for Money (VFM) index is calculated for each scheme:

\[
VFM \text{ index} = \left( \frac{1}{\log (\text{Cost of Scheme})} \right) \times \left( \frac{\text{Points Scored}}{60} \right) \times 3000
\]

The VFM index is designed to score all schemes out of a notional maximum of 1000 points (i.e. a
scheme costing £1,000 and scoring a maximum 60 points would achieve an index of 1000, a similar scheme costing £10,000 would score 750).

By using the scheme prioritisation and VFM index together, the decision-making process can be informed so as to achieve a capital programme that balances both scheme impact and scheme cost.

All schemes were prioritised and a draft implementation programme was drawn up for the Full LTP. The Framework also provides a mechanism for amending the programme in a transparent way, in response to new initiatives and schemes developed during the 5-year period.

### Developing a county EVAL model

EVAL is a multi-criteria appraisal tool, originally developed in the 1970s, to compare and rank schemes/policies. It combines a highway assignment model with standard appraisal methodologies:

- Design Manual for Roads & Bridges
- Calculation of Road Traffic Noise 1988 (Green Book).

**Appraisal Methodology**

**EVAL diagram**

**Benefits of EVAL**

- Uses established appraisal methodologies
- Ideal for comparative assessments
- Quick and efficient process to screen a large number of schemes
Used in various forms for 30 years
Surrey is currently developing in multi-modal appraisal tool.

*Using Modelling Techniques in Setting and Monitoring LTP Targets, Surrey County Council Seminar, 24 September 2002*

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**The road traffic reduction act**

The Road Traffic Reduction Act obliges each local authority which is a local traffic authority to produce a report containing an assessment of existing levels of local road traffic, a forecast of expected growth in those levels, and targets for reducing the level of local road traffic in their area or its rate of growth.

An analysis of all 85 Local Transport Plans outside of London shows:

- all but 15 Road Traffic Reduction Reports (82%) include coverage of targets to reduce the level or rate of growth of car traffic in their area. Where applicable, these are mainly broken down by area or time period. A small number of local authorities set targets for travel to school, HGV traffic and seasonal targets where these trips are regarded as especially problematic or possible to tackle;
- targets for reducing congestion are in their early stages. This reflects the early stage of developing congestion benchmarks by the Department itself and is not a requirement of the Act;
- the analytical basis for the targets set is not always made explicit. Various approaches for target setting are set out below:

*Basis for Road Traffic Reduction Targets*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Criteria</th>
<th>Number</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>NRTF/Tempro</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>31.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Local Transport Model</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>17.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Consultancy Study/Assistance</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>12.9</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
linkage of targets to measures set out in the Local Transport Plan is often implied rather than made explicit or justified through quantitative analysis. A number of Councils also concede that the measures proposed in their LTPs will have only a marginal impact on traffic volumes (e.g. in the order of 2-5% below prevailing growth);

collaboration with neighbouring local authorities and consultation with the public and key stakeholders is variably handled, but is generally an area that could do with improvement in coming years; and

likewise, there is only limited evidence that other key stakeholders, such as Railtrack, the Highways Agency, bus operators and local business, are being actively engaged.

*Source: Review of Local Authority Road Traffic Reductions Reports. WS Atkins (2001)*
Technical Robustness

A review of selected LTPs suggests that the level of analysis undertaken relates to the size of the authority, the level of urbanisation, the number and size of major schemes, and the general competence and experience of the authority. (OA)

While modelling of individual elements of the strategy is common, modelling of the overall strategy tends to be limited to the 'preferred solution', undertaken once the preferred strategy has been identified. There are fewer examples of modelling informing the overall strategy approach. The example from one Centre of Excellence demonstrates such an approach.

Developing a county LTP strategy

One South East County's LTP strategy is primarily objective/target-led, while also being heavily influenced by public consultation results and analytical work. Four overall strategy options were developed. Two strategies were tested using the County Transportation Model, together with Public Transport and Cycling Accessibility Models, in order to assess the degree to which each strategy addressed the LTP objectives. In addition, all four alternatives were appraised using the New Approach to Appraisal (NATA).

Various elements of the strategy are also heavily influenced by modelling/analysis work. For example, the County Transportation Model was used to identify packages of measures for two alternative traffic reduction targets. The two options were presented to local residents, businesses, etc., and consequently the more ambitious target, and associated measures were included in the Full LTP.

Similarly, the Public Transport and Accessibility Models were used to assess current levels of accessibility by public transport, cycling, and walking, and design appropriate measures to achieve accessibility targets.

In most cases, some modelling of the overall 'preferred' strategy has been undertaken in order to quantify impacts for the Appraisal Summary Tables. This varies from an economic appraisal to more in-depth modelling covering casualty rates and noise impacts. (OA)

Analysis relating to Major Schemes is more evident, however, not all authorities provide much detail of the analysis undertaken.

For other elements of the strategy, a number of authorities have commissioned topic-based studies to inform their strategies. In addition, many authorities appear to have models or methodologies established for identifying levels of accessibility amongst rural communities, which can then be used to target investment. A number of authorities commented that they had developed more scientific methodologies for prioritising maintenance and road safety schemes.

Many of the new types of LTP schemes cannot be modelled in the traditional way, and it is generally unclear whether walking, cycling, and safer-routes strategies are informed by an analytical approach. The Prioritisation Framework described above is one of the few examples of a formalised approach developed to address all types of LTP schemes.

While there are a number of good examples of analysis being undertaken, the level of analytical detail provided in LTPs is generally small, particularly with respect to the overall strategy. Bristol is one of the few authorities to set out in detail the 'Technical Assessment of the Preferred Strategy'. Bristol's LTP provides a detailed summary of the analysis behind the LTP Strategy, and reasons for the chosen approach, outlining studies undertaken to date, options considered, and reasons for preferred strategy. Summary results for various options are presented. Others mention the use of modelling approaches or consultancy studies undertaken for specific schemes, but this is often only in passing, with little attention given to the findings of the study/work. (OA)
Target Setting

Target setting appears to be a weakness within the LTP process. There appears to be a general feeling from practitioners that target setting was rushed into too quickly, with little understanding about what was required on the ground to meet these targets. In particular, even amongst leading authorities, there appears to have been a considerable amount of ‘guesswork’ in the first round of target setting, with many authorities adopting "finger in the air targets" (RW) or simply adopting the national targets without consideration of whether they are applicable to the local situation (OA).

In general, the technical rationale underpinning the targets appears to depend on the size of the authority and the availability of appropriate data prior to the introduction of LTPs. Large well established authorities with a good track record have handled the exercise much better than small authorities, particularly the new unitary authorities, many of which are starting from scratch. In general, technically robust targeting is less of a priority 'than getting a programme in place and delivering on it'. (RW)

A variety of approaches have been used to set targets (OA):

- some of the better performing authorities have adopted a hierarchy approach, focusing mainly on high level outcome targets and performance indicators, but also including secondary topic and local based targets. Secondary targets tend to be a mix of outcome, output, and to a lesser extent, input targets. They tend to be reported separately from the primary targets. The use of a hierarchical approach allows the authority to focus on the key aims of the strategy;
- in some cases, authorities have developed a comprehensive set of headline targets in their LTP, accompanied by a range of secondary targets; but have failed to make the distinction in the APR, thus losing the focus that the headline targets provide;
- other LTPs adopt a less focused approach, with no hierarchical structure of targets. The number of targets adopted varies greatly.

The use of modelling techniques features strongly amongst those LTPs which have performed well in this area, along with:

- public consultation,
- benchmarking (e.g. West Midlands),
- the findings of the Road Traffic Reduction Act Report, and
- reference to national targets and Government, Regional and Local objectives.

Most targets are topic-based, and cover input, output and outcome targets. Best Value targets and targets relating to Road Traffic Reduction Act Reports are generally well handled. (OA)

Despite the high level of compliance regarding this requirement, there are still a number of weaknesses (OA):

- a number of the less comprehensive LTPs concentrate on output rather than outcome indicators. In these cases, targets may fail to monitor real change in travel behaviour on the ground;
- while a number of authorities have developed a comprehensive set of topic-based targets and indicators, few authorities have developed separate targets for each of their area-based strategies;
- corporate 'quality of life' indicators are poorly covered;
- targets, performance indicators and objectives are not always correctly defined, and it is not always clear how the three elements relate to each other;
- the realism of the targets set is not always clear; and
targets and performance indicators are generally linked to objectives, but the relationship between targets/indicators and measures is less well defined. Limited use is made of causal chains to show the relationship objectives, measures and targets.

Most authorities include local targets which address the need to deliver national targets. However, the competency with which this has been done varies between authorities:

- there is a tendency for authorities to relate all their targets to national targets, and in some cases to relate them to as many national targets as possible. As a result, links between local targets and national targets can often be tenuous; (OA)
- national targets are often included in LTPs without being adapted to take into account local circumstances. For example, virtually all LTPs include the national road safety target, but very few authorities have adapted the target to reflect local circumstances. The picture is similar in relation to the setting of local cycling targets, with most authorities adopting the national target, without providing evidence that this is appropriate for the area under consideration, or that measures are sufficient to achieve it. (OA)

Adaptation of national targets to local circumstances requires a technically robust approach to target setting. This is currently a key area of weakness within the LTP process, suggesting a need for further Guidance outlining approaches which authorities can use. This should include approaches which can simply be applied, without the need for sophisticated modelling software, which is felt by a number of the LTP practitioners concerned to be beyond the capabilities of authorities which are only just starting to develop their modelling capabilities36.

### Case study - the realism of targets

One unitary authority (South East) has set targets which its officers concede may not be achievable by 2005-2006. The targets for a 50% increase in bus use, a 150% increase in cycle trips and the completion of 5 Quality Bus Partnerships are considered especially unlikely to be met given the progress made on delivery to date and entrenched public attitudes towards car use. (CS)

Another unitary authority (West Midlands) states that it will not achieve its rail patronage targets due to the recent problems resulting from Hatfield, the Administration of Railtrack and disruption caused by the ongoing upgrade of the West Coast Mainline. Whilst it has been criticised by the Government Office for an actual decline in rail passengers over the last two years, Officers feel that the reasons for this are completely beyond their control and, in retrospect, the authority was unwise to include a target over which it had limited ability to influence. (CS)

Many of the outcome targets set appear to be largely aspirational. One view expressed is that 'aspirational' targets are not necessarily a problem as they tend to focus the mind on what needs to be achieved. However, other authority representatives feel that ambitious targets raised expectations amongst politicians and the public, and exposed authorities to criticism. Some authorities regret not just concentrating on a few key modest targets. (RW)

One case study authority described the difficulty they had had determining how challenging targets would be (CS). It was suggested by one authority that there should have been a year or two prior to target setting to allow authorities to simply measure things and understand the changes in behaviour which result from changes on the ground (RW).

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36 Based on views expressed at Surrey County Council’s one day seminar: Using Modelling Techniques in Setting and Monitoring LTP Targets, Sep 2002.
Benchmarking (OA)

One metropolitan LTP has benchmarked itself against 20 European cities and to a certain extent has used this to determine the level of public transport service it should be providing. E.g. the region currently has 37% of low floor buses in its fleet, compared to 85% in Bremen. It has therefore set itself a target to convert 85% of its fleet to low floor buses by 2006, and put measures in place to achieve this (e.g. Quality Bus Partnerships).

Summary and Conclusions

LTPs show some evidence of an analytical approach to strategy development. However, the level of analytical detail provided in LTPs is generally small, compared to the range of techniques now available, and appears to relate to the size of the authority, the number and size of major schemes, and the general competence and experience of the authority. Many authorities also tend to regard the use of public consultation as at least as important as any in-depth analytical work they may do in-house.

Many LTPs appear to be essentially objective-led with any analysis undertaken playing a secondary role to quantify/determine impacts of certain elements of the strategy. Analytical or evidence-led approaches appear to be largely confined to large urban or high performing authorities.

Testing of alternative solutions is patchy, varying from authority to authority. In general, the larger, well-established authorities with large LTP bids appear to have carried out a significant amount of alternative testing: innovative major schemes such as road user charging and mass transit systems, in particular, have been subject to extensive analysis usually using sophisticated transport models. In general there appears to be less evidence of alternatives to the overall strategy considered compared with alternatives to specific major schemes, except where the two coincide.

Chapter 13 sets out our recommendations for this theme.
10. Understanding Progress

"The process is good, but we're being judged on those targets on a year by year basis. This is ridiculous because you won't see any impact for at least five years minimum." (RW)

Introduction

In comparison to the TPP system, the LTP process places a greater emphasis on targets, performance indicators and monitoring across all areas of the programme. Monitoring was introduced into the TPP process as part of the Package Bid Approach (e.g. via the Causal Chain), but tended to focus on the monitoring of specific schemes. The LTP process requires a much broader approach to monitoring, covering a greater range of schemes and policy areas. It is intended to inform the strategy and help prioritise expenditure. APR Guidance also reflects a shift across Government towards the delivery of nationally prescribed targets for public services.

Over time, DfT expects to move from assessing LTPs in terms of the documentation to performance in delivery, and monitoring data is needed to support this. This Chapter therefore considers authorities' proposed and current arrangements for monitoring the impact of their LTPs.

Monitoring Performance

The Full LTP Guidance makes clear that measuring the success of the plan is of utmost importance. The LTP should identify the expected outcomes for each objective, and authorities should keep the strategy under review as the programme is implemented.

There is evidence that LTP practitioners acknowledge performance monitoring as a vital component of the planning process, revealing what is being done well and where resources should be concentrated in the future (RW).

"If you don't monitor, you don't know whether you are doing it right or wrong" (RW)

According to Government Office Assessments, performance monitoring is handled well by about half the authorities (51%), whose LTPs are rated 'good' against the DETR Annex D assessment criteria for this topic.

Our review of the Government Office Assessments for all 85 LTPs suggests:

- most authorities have identified a set of targets and performance indicators measuring progress against objectives, including meeting the requirements of the Road Traffic Reduction Act (although in some cases these do not cover all forms of transport in the LTP and it is often less clear how these relate to national targets);
- most also provide confirmation that arrangements are in place to monitor targets or steps are being made to ensure that monitoring is carried out;
- corporate Quality of Life indicators are generally poorly included.

Outputs are generally seen as easier to measure than outcomes although measuring outcomes is perceived to be more useful and meaningful with respect to LTP objectives. (RW)

The number of performance indicators cited or reported per authority varies in the LTPs from 7 to a huge 197 in total. The majority of indicators are outcome indicators (56%) and output indicators (42%) (Table 10.1). There are very few input indicators, measuring financial input, or contextual indicators relating to other policy areas (e.g. shop vacancy rates, number of visitors to the area, crime incidents in car-parks, levels of obesity, internet access, employment levels, etc.)37 - some contextual

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37 DfT Database of APR Indicators.
indicators may also be categorised as outcome indicators, for example, employment levels if linked to measures to improve social inclusion.

**Table 10.1: Types of Indicator Cited in LTPs**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of Indicator</th>
<th>% of Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Input</td>
<td>0.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Output</td>
<td>42%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Outcome</td>
<td>56%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Contextual</td>
<td>1.5%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(DfT Database of Performance Indicators from the 2001 APRs)

Table 10.2 sets out the linkage of specific performance indicators and targets relating to selected topic areas. Virtually all authorities have set targets for road safety, cycling, modal shift, walking, public transport (general and bus) and environment. Comparatively few authorities have targets for freight, transport choice, integration, bridges, local economy, and social inclusion.

**Table 10.2: Linkage of Authorities' Performance Indicators to Topic Areas**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Indicator Topic</th>
<th>% of Authorities</th>
<th>Indicator Topic</th>
<th>% of Authorities</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Road Safety</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>Traffic Management</td>
<td>79%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cycling</td>
<td>99%</td>
<td>Travel to School</td>
<td>79%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Modal shift</td>
<td>96%</td>
<td>PT (Rail)</td>
<td>72%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Walking</td>
<td>95%</td>
<td>Travel to Work</td>
<td>66%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PT (General)</td>
<td>94%</td>
<td>Freight</td>
<td>59%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Environment</td>
<td>92%</td>
<td>Transport Choice</td>
<td>58%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PT (Bus)</td>
<td>93%</td>
<td>Integration</td>
<td>56%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Access</td>
<td>88%</td>
<td>Bridges</td>
<td>51%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Road Maintenance</td>
<td>88%</td>
<td>Local Economy</td>
<td>48%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Traffic Volumes</td>
<td>85%</td>
<td>Social Inclusion</td>
<td>41%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(DfT Database of Performance Indicators from the 2001 APRs)

It is worth noting that more than 90% of authorities have defined performance indicators for cycling, modal shift, and walking, despite concerns outlined elsewhere in this report about the difficulties they are having measuring these activities, suggesting that indicators have been set in the absence of a full understanding about the monitoring arrangements required, an issue alluded to in several of the regional workshops.

Geographical coverage of indicators and target client groups are shown in Table 10.3.

**Table 10.3: Geographical Coverage and Target Client Groups for Indicators**
### Geographical Coverage of Indicators

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Geographical Coverage of Indicators</th>
<th>% of Authorities</th>
<th>Target Client Group</th>
<th>% of Authorities</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Authority-wide</td>
<td>54%</td>
<td>All</td>
<td>48%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School</td>
<td>16%</td>
<td>Children - school</td>
<td>16%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Workplace</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>Employees</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Railway Stations</td>
<td>4%</td>
<td>Disabled</td>
<td>8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Roads - Trunk/Principal</td>
<td>4%</td>
<td>Bus users</td>
<td>6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Centre of City/Town</td>
<td>3%</td>
<td>PT users</td>
<td>6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Roads - Local</td>
<td>3%</td>
<td>Rail users</td>
<td>3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rural</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>Other</td>
<td>3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>6%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(DfT Database of Performance Indicators from the 2001 APRs)

85% of performance indicators included in the 2001 APRs had targets attached\(^{38}\).
Evidence of LTP Monitoring

It is generally acknowledged that more monitoring of performance is taking place, than was the case under the TPP system. Furthermore, the monitoring appears to be more targeted and rigorous (RW/CS).

One case study authority described TPP monitoring as superficial before and after studies, traffic monitoring and post-completion safety audits, while another authority described it as "very ad-hoc". In some cases, new monitoring teams have been set up to undertake the additional work, while other authorities are using consultants to undertake the data analysis.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Case study - monitoring the LTP for a small unitary authority</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The monitoring team for one small unitary authority (South West) has increased from 1 member of staff to 2, and the budget for surveys has been increased by 80%. The authority is also undertaking a wider range of surveys, including cycle counts, bus punctuality surveys and journey time surveys, none of which were carried out under the TPP. More classified cordon counts are also being undertaken.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

A number of authorities believe too many targets are being programmed and consequently monitoring is becoming too onerous (RW/CS). Local authorities not only have to monitor indicators for the LTP but also have to carry out extensive monitoring to meet the requirements of Best Value and Comprehensive Performance Assessment as laid out by the Audit Commission. There is a general concern that with too many targets and indicators, authorities will lose sight of what they are monitoring.

However, there is some evidence that authorities have dropped indicators which they have found to be too difficult or expensive to collect. One case study authority outlined a number of satisfaction indicators relating to passenger transport interchanges, the parking strategy, social inclusion measures, and pedestrian facilities which it intended to report on. However, the surveys were found to be very expensive and they have since been dropped. Another authority has dropped the target on rail patronage against which it is reporting on the basis that it has very limited capacity to actually influence this indicator on its own.

It was suggested by some practitioners that some regional monitoring should be introduced to monitor activities such as freight movement, where changes may only be significant at a regional level. The riposte to this suggestion was that local targets were seen as an important way of identifying local changes, which may otherwise be swamped at the county or metropolitan level (RW). Encouraging authorities to work in partnership with neighbouring authorities to undertake freight monitoring on a regional scale, where the authorities concerned consider this appropriate, would reduce the monitoring burden on authorities and may produce more informative indicators particularly where regional freight strategies are being pursued.

Quality of Monitoring Undertaken

A number of concerns exist about the quality of the data being collected and whether performance indicators are really monitoring change on the ground. In particular, there is concern that the complex issues surrounding most targets are not being fully taken into account, and there is a lack of understanding about the real causes of change on the ground (RW). The problem is exacerbated by the high cost associated with monitoring, described by one authority as "horrendous" (CS), and the lack of available data.

"The problem we have with monitoring is that in order to get an accurate answer you need to spend a fortune, so you don't spend a fortune, so you don't get an accurate answer...Unless you're talking about monitoring over 10 years, we can't really confidently say which way it's even going, let alone how far we've got." (RW)
Transport Research Group (2001)\textsuperscript{39} draws similar, if more critical, conclusions:

\textit{“The general impression is of a minefield of measurements from which nothing or everything can be proved, depending on one's prejudices and views.... There is no consistency and there is great potential for confusing and misleading statistics that will be difficult to measure, interpret and compare one area with another.”}

These are not new issues. WS Atkins (1996)\textsuperscript{40} drew similar conclusions in reviewing Local Authority package bids within the TPP framework.

Issues are expressed in monitoring certain aspects of the programme (RW):

- walking and cycling are mentioned as areas where authorities were having difficulty collecting reliable data, at a reasonable cost. Cycle use in particular is seen as being dependant on weather and locality;
- the difficulty in picking out freight movements in the area, and identifying origins and destinations - ‘we just couldn't get our heads around it’;
- the availability of bus related data is also highlighted as a problem area: some operators co-operate, some do not;
- collection of modal split data is seen as a costly exercise to do correctly;
- measurement of congestion also poses methodological and other problems. These are problems which are not always understood or acknowledged by members or senior management who "want a simple answer";
- a number of officers were unsure about the effectiveness of particular initiatives, although DfT state they are considering a "toolbox" for assessing scheme impacts in the next LTP Guidance.

\textit{"We do not know whether our schemes are actually contributing towards our targets". (RW)}

One case study authority highlighted the difficulties of monitoring performance in terms of achieving broad policy objectives, which may extend beyond the LTP (e.g. regeneration objectives). Examining individual components of the LTP is seen as missing the bigger picture. Furthermore, it is felt that neither the BVPIs nor the LTP core indicators address performance against broad policy outcomes, and requirements to produce these indicators can become an end in itself, deterring attention from the overriding policy objectives. Given that broad policy objectives tend to cut across individual departments, more cross-cutting indicators reflecting the combined contribution of a range of actions would be beneficial. However, it is recognised that measuring progress in terms of overall outcomes and separating out how the LTP schemes and measures contribute to these is very difficult. It is also acknowledged that it is too early for an understanding of the overall impacts of the LTP to be discernable, and hence authorities are currently focusing on monitoring outputs and transport impacts relating to specific projects. (RW)

The above discussion highlights the importance of a causal chain approach to link objectives, measures and expected outcomes. A review of 20 selected LTPs showed that causal chains had only been used by approximately one third of authorities.

\textsuperscript{39} Transport Research Group (2001) The Local Transport Plan Submissions – A Report to the Public Policy Committee of the RAC Foundation

\textsuperscript{40} W.S. Atkins (1997) Monitoring Framework for Package Approach.
Reliability of the LTP F4 form

The F4 Form is intended, in theory, to provide a picture of the key outputs of LTPs, both to-date and forecast over the whole LTP period. They ought, therefore, to provide a consistent means of comparing scheme implementation across authorities and form an important part of evaluating LTP outcomes. However, there is a general feeling that the LTP-F4 Forms are "onerous and time consuming" (CS) and an "administrative nightmare" (CS).

"Why do we need this? It's garbage" (RW)

Concerns relate to the difficulty in providing data for future years, the time required to complete the forms accurately, and the potential usefulness of the information. There is some evidence suggesting that even the retrospective data is based on best estimates.

"It could be more accurate" (CS Unitary)

It appears that the data required in the F4 Forms is not usually required by authorities, and as a result, they need to go back through the records at the end of the year to extract the relevant information - a time consuming process.

The strength of the dissatisfaction with the F4 Forms suggests that the data provided may currently be of limited use due to the poor accuracy of the information provided. Part 2A of this study makes the following recommendations:

- the importance of F4 Forms is emphasised to authorities, and the future use of the data outlined. At present practitioners are unclear about how the data will be used, with many believing that it is simply for Ministers to use as achievement markers;
- some auditing of F4 Forms is carried out at an early stage, to check the accuracy, reliability and usefulness of the data. This should be undertaken by, or on behalf of the Department for Transport and the Local Government Association; and
- authorities are given further guidance on how to complete the F4 Forms, including examples of how specific schemes should be recorded.

APR Core indicators

In the first APRs, authorities were asked to indicate which of their local targets were linked to national targets. Whilst there was some read-across between the two sets of targets, the Department felt that there were too many variations to enable the Government to build up a clear picture of progress using these data. As a result it was difficult to quantify the contribution that authorities were making towards achievement of national transport targets. To rectify this situation, the Second APR Guidance included a list of core indicators on which all authorities are expected to report progress, reflecting either Public Service Agreement or 10 Year Plan targets. Where no data is available, arrangements should be made to start gathering the information for the third APR.

A review of the 20 selected 2001 APRs suggests that authorities will find some indicators more difficult to monitor than others, based on their current monitoring arrangements (OA). Road Safety and Road Maintenance are well developed areas of work, and most authorities have sufficient monitoring arrangements in place to address the core performance indicators for these topics, although for Road Maintenance the methods used for monitoring vary widely from one authority to another, making comparisons unreliable.

In addition, the bus indicators should not present too many difficulties to authorities as the core indicators are also Best Value Indicators which many authorities are already monitoring. Better partnership arrangements with local operators and the powers given to authorities in Clause 143 of the Transport Act 2000 to demand this information have helped authorities collect the relevant data (CS). However, a number of practitioners at the regional workshops still reported difficulties in obtaining patronage data from bus operators, especially outside of the PTE areas.
The rural bus service accessibility indicator (proportion of rural households within about a 10 minute walk of an hourly or better bus service) is new to many authorities and comprehensive reporting may not be possible until the 2002/03 APRs (a few authorities do not have to report, as they do not have rural households). Methods of collecting the data vary: nationally, it is collected through the National Travel Survey which asks respondents about their proximity to a regular bus service. An alternative method used by some authorities is to produce figures by overlaying bus route information on population data using a GIS-based accessibility model. Given appropriate definitions and standards to be used (e.g. on walking speed) they should be able to produce estimates consistent with each other and DfT. However, for those authorities who do not currently monitor accessibility, setting up monitoring arrangements may be a resource-intensive exercise.

Cycling indicators are covered well in the APRs, although a very wide range of definitions have been adopted. There is also considerable variation in the extent of monitoring with some authorities undertaking monitoring at just one or two locations while others have developed a much more extensive programme. Lack of consistency between approaches makes it impossible for the Department to compare progress.

A number of practitioners express concern about the clarity of the definitions for some of the core indicators:

"Take buses for example. If you go for the 'bums on seats' figure, what does this actually mean i.e. people who have paid for a ticket, people who have boarded the bus, are return journeys counted twice? It is very unclear." (RW)
Meeting the Ten Year Plan Targets

Many LTP practitioners doubt the ability of LTPs to deliver the targets set out in the Government's Ten Year Plan (RW). "Far-reaching and challenging" and "unrealistic" are common reactions to the targets. An alternative view was that national targets were generally set at realistic levels originally but the limited progress made in some areas of implementation means that some targets are now over ambitious. (CS)

Practitioners appear to be more optimistic about delivering the road safety target, but less hopeful of meeting the bus passenger, cycling and road maintenance targets. This appears to be largely due to established expertise in certain areas and the relative influence the LTP can have on different targets. (RW/CS) The rural accessibility target is seen as more of a revenue issue than a capital issue (CS). Congestion and cycling are seen as aspirational targets, which are particularly difficult to meet. While aspirational targets may not be met, they are seen by some as having some benefits as they focus attention on priority areas. (RW)

The focus on congestion rather than traffic volumes, at a national level, has taken the emphasis away from traffic restraint. This is seen as a backwards step, as mode shift away from car use becomes less likely, and achievement of the cycling target becomes unlikely. (RW)

There is a strong feeling that more positive leadership is required from Central Government, if the targets are to be achieved. LTPs are seen as being able to have only a limited impact on the Ten Year Plan targets, and significant mode shift will require action at national level. The Government is seen to have shied away from difficult solutions, and as a result, it appears unlikely that LTPs will be able to deliver the targets set out in the Ten Year Plan.

"LTPs alone will not create a modal shift. What we need is a change in national legislation." (CS)

"For example, the price of cars has come down in recent years and we have no control over the cost and quality of buses in the County." (CS)

"We can do a lot in terms of safety schemes etc. to reach the accident targets, but if the accidents are caused by people driving too fast, then it is up to Government to step in and do something about it......We would like to use more speed cameras but this is against Government policy." (CS)

A 'hearts and minds' approach is also seen as key to delivering mode shift. Modal transfer is all about changing lifestyles and aspirations (revenue funded issues) rather than infrastructure improvements, and there are some concerns that the LTP process is failing to address these issues (RW). Cultural factors will also have an effect on people's travel patterns e.g. parental choice for schools.

There are concerns that the public are being misled about what could be realistically achieved on the ground. Loss of credibility in the process, due to failure to deliver improvements on congestion is seen as a real long term concern. (RW)

Ten Year Plan targets are seen as being more applicable to urban situations than rural situations. For example, a new bus service in a rural community may only be used by 20 people, and despite being a lifeline for those using it, has very little significance in terms of overall targets. This can be seen as a problem for predominantly rural authorities:

"We only have one major town where we can apply Government targets and principles in terms of big bus schemes. Hence, they [the Government] have to recognise what we are doing on a local level." (RW)

A number of concerns were expressed regarding the clarity and robustness of the Ten Year targets, and one practitioner felt that the Government's targets were not based on SMART principles (specific, measurable, attainable, realistic, and time-dependent).
The rationale and evidence behind the setting of targets at national level was questioned in one regional workshop. It was felt that more justification of national targets was required, as an example to local authorities of good target setting. (RW)

Conclusions and Recommendations

The Part 1 Study has drawn the following key conclusions on efforts to monitor LTP progress:

- there is a concern that too much emphasis was being put on monitoring and achieving targets. Many authorities feel that they are under considerable pressure to meet targets, regardless of whether these were the right way of achieving change;

- there are concerns amongst practitioners about adverse consequences following failure to meet such targets, when in reality any improvements in performance indicators should be seen as a benefit. Indeed, a popular view is that under-performing authorities should be given more resources and should not be threatened with further constraints on their ability to deliver - such an approach is not recommended without some measures put in place to ensure that under-performing authorities deliver with a considerable degree of certainty;

- there is a general dislike of the 'naming and shaming approach' adopted by the Department regarding the quality of LTPs/APRs, in particular through the Single Capital Pot discretionary scoring;

- a number of concerns exist about the quality of the data being collected and whether performance indicators were really monitoring real change on the ground. In particular, there is concern that the complex issues surrounding most targets are not being fully taken into account, and there was a lack of understanding about the real causes of change on the ground;

- despite the claims of "over-prescriptiveness," there appears to be a general wish for more guidance on target setting, performance indicators and monitoring. Some practitioners also feel that more guidance should be given on the weighting which should be attached to the various elements of the LTP, in order to allow different targets to be prioritised - at present there is no basis for determining whether a cycling target should be given priority over a safety target. In general, the requirement is for more guidance in the form of advice for those authorities who need more assistance, rather than compulsory guidance which will add to the administrative burden placed on authorities;

- there is generally support for the introduction of core indicators in the Second APR Guidance since these provide greater certainty to authorities on what they should be monitoring. However, further guidance is felt to be required to ensure consistent and robust data collection, for example, on cycling. However, there is also concern that the indicators are not necessarily picking up modal shift.

Chapter 13 sets out the key issues and recommendations under the Understanding Progress Theme. These should be read in conjunction with the more detailed analysis and our proposals for developing an Evaluation Framework for LTP Outcomes, as set out in our Part 2A Final Report.
11. Change Management

"There is more awareness of the benefits of transport policy for everybody in the authority now." (RW)

"Dinosaurs!" (RW)

Introduction

This chapter covers the organisational and cultural changes within authorities which have resulted from the introduction of the LTP process. This includes administrative burdens in terms of staff time and resources as well as the extent to which authorities have to restructure their organisation to plan and deliver the LTP. It also examines how political representatives have fed into the process and how member involvement has changed since the TPP system.

The Administrative Burden of Introducing LTPs

Almost all authorities agree that preparation of the LTP had been a lengthy, resource-intensive and onerous task: the needs to monitor targets and carry out consultation are seen as the most burdensome elements. (RW) It is seen as a considerable step up from writing an annual TPP which often recycled material and bids from year to year. However, as noted elsewhere, the change to the LTP system is overwhelmingly welcomed (RW/CS) and the effort required to produce the first LTP considered worthwhile. The LTP is seen as a more integrated and inclusive document, with greater emphasis on monitoring and appraisal, which has been accompanied by significant financial benefits.

The increased burden is partly due to the novelty of the process, and it is thought that preparation of the second LTP will be less intensive. Larger authorities have found the resource issues less pressing than smaller ones, where the task of steering the LTP may fall on only 1-2 people working under considerable pressure. (RW/CS) The burden appears to have been greatest amongst the smallest Unitaries, who, as former districts, had very little input into the county-wide TPP.

"We'd write one page in an afternoon" (CS Unitary)

There is more disagreement on the administrative burden of preparing APRs with some authorities seeing them as simple updates and others regarding them with the potential to become as burdensome as TPPs.

"Whoever wrote the guidance that says preparing an APR should not be over-onerous, has obviously never had to write one." (RW)

The changing nature of the Guidance is seen as adding to the burden by many authorities. The extent to which the process "beds down" as authorities move further into the five year period will depend on the extent to which the Guidance changes. (RW/CS) The need to monitor targets and undertake consultation will still remain, but most authorities appear to be getting better at undertaking these tasks, achieving the result more quickly and with fewer resources.

Outside of transport departments, part of the administrative burden is recognised as the need to drive consultation and work in partnership with external stakeholders, other local authority departments and members. Whilst this is seen as a strength of the final product, it is regarded as very difficult to co-ordinate in the interim. (RW)

Institutional Capacity

Whether the LTP is seen as delivering a major culture change within authorities largely varies by authority. Many (more established) authorities deny that there has been any fundamental shift and that the LTP has merely accelerated a trend which was already occurring under the TPP-Package
framework. For the unitary authorities, the issue has been less culture change and more building a culture from scratch, combined with both technical and political capacity building. (RW)

**Change in Management and Administrative Processes**

In some instances, authorities have coped with the issues raised by the LTP by establishing new transport strategy teams with a wider remit than previously and scope to drive a change of approach to transport throughout the authority. This may be partially linked to the wider Modernising Local Government agenda; in others the main motivator was the LTP itself. (RW)

Much of the change in management and administrative processes, whether associated with the LTP, the wider Modernising Local Government Agenda, or the change to unitary status, appears to be driven by the increasing emphasis on partnership, as shown in the examples below:

| Case Study - Management and administrative processes - the experiences of Unitary authorities |
| In a number of cases, the change in status from a District or Borough Council to a unitary authority, has provided a catalyst for management and administrative reorganisation, which facilitate ways of working consistent with the principles underpinning the LTP. This includes the combination of the engineering, transport and planning departments, overseen by a Director of Technical and Environmental Services or Head of Strategic Planning and Transportation, to give a greater breadth of vision to transport issues and a greater focus on the transport portfolio. It also encourages joined-up thinking in addressing the causes of transport problems, consideration of longer-term objectives, and sets transport in a broader framework of corporate objectives. |

| Case Study - management and administrative processes - the experiences of a County |
| One county (North East) adopted a new structure, the Development and Implementation Group (DIG) to plan and deliver the LTP. This included officers for such areas as public transport and travel awareness which had not been present under the TPP. Overall the number of officers involved in the DIG is around double the number engaged under the TPP. A Partnership Forum was also set up with key stakeholders from the districts, public transport operators, walking and cycling organisations and others. A Corporate Working Group ensured functions such as education and social services were brought into the process. This Working Group no longer meets, although LTP officers retain responsibilities for ensuring contact with these wider authority functions. |

| Case Study - management and administrative processes - the experiences of a large County II |
| Within one county (South East), LTP champions have been set up for various aspects of the LTP to promote good communications. The role of the champions is to explain why the schemes/initiatives are being promoted and to explain the inter-relationships with other schemes and policy areas. Transport objectives are now generally less technical and more behavioural, and this has meant that better communications have been required. In general, the LTP has contributed to a much more 'business orientated' approach in the department, where staff provide feedback upwards to demonstrate what they can do to assist the overall portfolio of work. |
Changes in Staffing Requirements

The LTP process has resulted in authorities requiring more staff, due to the increased capital programme, with a wider range of skills. LTP programmes now consist of a large number of smaller schemes, which are particularly resource intensive, requiring lengthy consultation and joined-up thinking.

Chapter 8 (Delivery) provides evidence on the current mismatch between resource requirements and staff available. However, few authorities say that they have increased recruitment substantially to cover preparation or delivery of the LTP. Indeed, staffing has sometimes worsened through re-organisation and early retirement of senior officers. Pay is considered low relative to consultants and other sectors and local authority problems can be seen as part and parcel of the wider skills shortage afflicting the whole of the transport sector. The unitary authorities appear to have considerably more problems in recruiting and retaining professional staff:

"We just do not have the resources available. We are already down 20-30% on staff compared to last year." (RW)

"For the smallest authorities, expecting comprehensive and effective LTPs is just not realistic." (CS)

Where authorities have been able to substantially increase their staff resources, the approaches adopted differ: in one example, a county in the North has chosen to double the number of senior planners and delivery managers, with dedicated posts covering for example consultation and travel planning. (CS); another county in the Midlands has chosen to employ 6/7 young staff a year and train them in-house, because they have reasonable confidence that there will be work available in 5/6 years time; elsewhere authorities are funding Masters Degrees in Transport Planning in order to train staff.

One unusual practitioner perspective sees the recruitment problem as a "failure to think outside the box" and draw from other professions. In many cases, the search for new staff goes no wider than engineers and planners with the view that "this is the way we have always done this so why change." The alternative view is that skilled professionals who do not necessarily have a transport background could do an equally good (if not better) job and bring new innovative perspectives, quickening the time and effectiveness of delivering the LTP outcomes. Some authorities are already doing this with a retired army captain and former Body Shop PR manager being cited as examples of recent recruits. (RW)

As set out in Chapter 8, a number of authorities highlight the use of consultants to ease the workload of LTP preparation and delivery. This varies from management of the consultation programme to specific technical analysis (e.g. Road Traffic Reduction Report) to drafting the submission document itself (RW) with many authorities now regarding partnering and similar arrangements with consultants as essential to deliver their LTP programmes and targets.

Changes in Skill Requirements

The ease of changed mindset for the LTP had varied between departments and between individuals. It is pointed out that some aspects of the LTP, such as travel planning and travel awareness, require new skills and ways of thinking. For older professional staff with a highway engineering background this can be difficult and therefore culture change will take a number of years and reflect the gradual recruitment of staff with new skills and broader backgrounds (e.g. marketing) or straight from School/University. This is especially the case for "Hearts and Minds" measures where a knowledge of marketing promotion, psychology and business management is likely to have greater relevance than transport engineering or modelling techniques (RW). Such shifts may also have implications for the gender profile of local transport departments with some evidence of growing "feminisation" of particular skills or parts of the authority (CS).

"We need people other than engineers, including poets, writers, in fact anybody who can change hearts and minds." (RW)
Many older transport professionals have not yet adapted to the new policy requirements and still think in terms of individual schemes rather than integrated, objective-led packages.

The example below demonstrates some of the staffing issues facing small unitary authorities, and changes which they need to make:

Case Study - Staffing issues facing a Unitary Authority

The unitary authority is seeking to deliver the LTP with a similar level of in-house resource to that deployed on the TPP; this was small given the authority's limited input to the countywide TPP. The level of funding is not seen to be sufficiently guaranteed to enable the Council to expand its permanent staff numbers. Moreover, as the capital funding for transport has increased then transport receives a lower priority in the allocation of revenue funding.

The LTP has necessitated a broadening of the skills base. In common with most Unitaries there was no transport planning policy group and this function was part of a centralised strategic planning team. The LTP preparation requires strategic planning skills to be applied to transport specifically and has therefore required technical staff to broaden out from their traditional engineering and operational roles. The LTP process has also encouraged technical and managerial staff to take a wide view of ways of working - "it provides a legitimate framework for planners and engineers to talk". The emphasis on partnership has also necessitated the engineering staff broadening their consultative skills.

The role of senior officers in managing the process is vital given the need to manage technical work, manage the participative process and manage political sensitivity. Continuity in staffing at this level has been an important factor in the progress made. The detailed knowledge of officers enables problems to be foreseen and imaginative solutions explored in discussion with various stakeholders. This is seen as contrasting with the rigid bureaucracy of both the TPP and Local Plans (e.g. 6 week consultation period on Local Plans). The breadth of initiatives being implemented, the participative approach and the reliance on private sector support increase the need for co-ordination of resources between different officer levels and departments.

In common with other authorities, the Council relies on technical support from consultants to prepare and implement the LTP.

Case Study - Transferring skills from county to unitary authorities

One unitary authority (West Midlands) has received particularly strong praise from the Government Office for its development of effective policies and initiatives for travel planning, Safer Routes to School and progress on a local and regional Travelwise Campaign. Much of the expertise to progress such initiatives was not present in the authority before unitary status, however, but transferred from the County in 1997 with several key staff choosing to take posts in the unitary rather than remain with the larger authority.

The authority has since further strengthened its in-house skills and capability in school and employer travel planning by winning two DETR bursary posts to support professional staff for a period of three years. Both post-holders are female and from non-transport backgrounds.
**Political Engagement in the Process**

LTPs were developed prior to the current implementation of the Modernising Local Government agenda, and hence most Councils were still based on the old Committee structure. In most authorities, a Cabinet structure has now been introduced consisting of a Cabinet of Executive Members, with responsibility for key decisions, and backbenchers responsible for scrutinising the executive's policy proposals and their implementation. The process is designed to improve the efficiency of local decision-making and is summarised in Figure 11.1.
Within this shift from Committee to Cabinet structure, political buy-in to the LTP in many authorities has been patchy. Members may support the LTP in strategic terms, but then not approve specific schemes in the subsequent programme. Individual Members may also use rhetoric or pursue local campaigns which are at odds with the principles they have supported, in theory, in the LTP.

Whilst the increase in capital funding has undoubtedly made the LTP more attractive to members, the potential for switching resources under Single Capital Pot, and the variability of success in getting member approval for specific transport schemes and revenue budgets, suggests that the process of political input in local investment decisions has some way to develop. Most of the leading LTPs are backed by strong political leadership at Cabinet and Council level; where such engagement is lacking, resources and progress on local transport is likely to suffer (RW, LR).

Where it is evident, Member involvement in the LTP process is generally welcomed (CS), although many officers are also keen to highlight schemes where Member involvement has resulted in delays to implementation, or schemes being dropped (RW). In some authorities, officers are struggling to get comprehensive LTP Programmes, consistent with national objectives, delivered against a lack of political support; and in some instances, the Provisional LTP was actually better than the Full LTP due to changes in political control (RW). This, however does not appear to be the norm and changes in control generally have a minimal, or at least very slow, impact on LTP strategies.
Local transport plans - policy evaluation: Part 1 - Final Report

Member Involvement in Strategic Issues

Members are involved in development and approval of the LTP in a number of ways: through cross-party Task Groups, through Transport Forums also involving a wide range of stakeholders, and via Committee/Cabinet meetings.

Case Study - Member involvement in LTP strategy development and approval - the experiences of a high performing Unitary authority

Member involvement in the LTP strategy was primarily through the LTP Task Group. The LTP initially received strong endorsement from the Labour and Liberal Democrat members, but the Conservative members, many of which were new members, were reluctant to endorse it without further consideration. A cross-party Task Group consisting of 2 Conservative, 2 Labour and 1 Liberal Democrat members, was therefore appointed to carry out a thorough examination of the document, calling on operators and various stakeholders for advice. Members involved in the process had relatively little transport experience, as it was felt that non experts would ask more pertinent questions. Following the examination, all parties endorsed the plan.

Such Task Groups provide a means of ensuring on-going Member involvement in strategy development. Area Panels or Area Assemblies provide an opportunity for all Members to get involved in strategic issues at a local level, along with the public, although decisions surrounding individual schemes tend to attract more interest at such forums. Since the introduction of the Cabinet system, Scrutiny Committees have provided an opportunity for backbenchers to influence strategy, as shown below:

A number of LTP practitioners comment that, like the general public, Members can be difficult to engage at the strategic level (RW), particularly if they have not been directly involved in the LTP through Task Groups or Scrutiny Panels, or as the Lead Member for Transport in Cabinet (CS). Even then there is a tendency to focus on specific schemes rather than the whole picture (CS). One senior officer suggested in a case study that his authority's approach of presenting an annual programme to the Cabinet for approval, based on schemes to be implemented over the following year, exacerbated this problem. It was suggested that an annual programme based on allocations of funding to different policy areas may help Members focus on policy issues rather than specific schemes. Identifying individual schemes at Cabinet level is seen as getting in the way of strategic thinking. (CS)

Case Study - The role of Scrutiny Panels in influencing strategy - the experiences of a Unitary Authority

A Scrutiny Panel was set up in May 2001 to review bus service provision in one case study authority. It was at the request of 10 residents and with the support of two councillors, following three petitions, which expressed "great dissatisfaction" with the service being provided. The Panel consisted of 6 Members and one Lay Member, and was given the following brief:

(i) To assess demand in the Borough for bus transport;
(ii) To discuss with bus operators in the area ways of fulfilling this demand and assessing how they would meet increased demand in future;
(iii) To consider what actions the Council can take to improve the situation;

The Panel proposed some 35 recommendations for consideration by the Council, the operators and the regulatory authorities. These have formed the basis for the authority's bus strategy.
Member Involvement in Individual Schemes

Member involvement in decisions regarding individual schemes is generally more extensive. The public have been found to be primarily interested in local schemes which have a direct impact on their lives, and thus, in representing their constituents this is the key area of concern for Members.

The role of members in scheme implementation appears to vary according to specific circumstances, and particular Members can have a strongly positive or strongly negative influence on delivery. An example was quoted by a unitary authority, where a 'Safer Routes to School' scheme was stopped because a local Member supported a landowner's objection surrounding a rights of way issue through his land. It was felt that the Member lacked the strength/courage to oppose a Constituency resident. Another example was quoted by the same authority, where a local Member helped bring together a local safety scheme, a 20 Mph scheme, and a safer routes scheme, in a holistic way, by co-ordinating consultation and facilitating scheme delivery. (CS) Another authority quoted examples of member reluctance to use CPO powers for cycle routes, due to political pressures (CS).

Members are generally supportive of LTP schemes, especially those in Cabinet. However, there are some examples of Members strongly opposing schemes seen to be anti-car (e.g. bus-lanes or removal of on-street parking), and some examples of Members keen to promote their 'pet' schemes. Many LTP practitioners highlight cases where politicians had signed-up to strategies in the LTP, but opposed them at implementation stage. Problems can occur on all types of schemes and tend to depend on local circumstances (CS).

“They [members] all signed up to the LTP, but they didn't sign up to the schemes. No matter how good your cycling scheme is, the reaction is "never mind that. It's half a million quid. No way!".”

This highlights the importance of achieving Member buy-in to the LTP process, in practice as well as principle, in order to ensure delivery of the strategy on the ground.
Variations in the Administrative Process

The extent to which the Lead Members are involved in individual scheme decisions, depends on the administrative process in place. In some authorities, all schemes, however small, are approved by Members. In reality, however, most schemes are not queried or scrutinised unless issues are raised by the public through Area Panels or other local fora which can not be easily addressed. (CS)

At the other extreme, some authorities operate a process whereby an annual programme of schemes is approved by Cabinet at the beginning of the year, and officers are given delegated powers to implement schemes without further approval from Members. Members then only become involved in scheme decisions in response to issues raised by the public. However, this approach results in a number of problems. Most importantly, there is no formal Member review process to ensure schemes are still addressing intended policies (following scheme consultation) or are still considered value for money (following possible increases in scheme costs at detailed design stage). A formal review and approval procedure, following detailed design, would:

- ensure that potential public objections are considered at an earlier stage;
- ensure that members are clear on the final scheme design, thus giving them a greater sense of LTP ownership, and enabling them to inform the public more effectively;
- strengthen the strategic and policy focus regarding scheme implementation, and ensure that the initial policy drivers are still in place. (CS)

Figure 11.2 below illustrates this point.

Involving Members in scheme decisions at an earlier stage would also reduce delays to the delivery process, as potential problems likely to be raised by the public, would be identified at an earlier stage. Ultimately, this might result in more contentious schemes being implemented faster by adapting to concerns raised far closer to their inception.

Figure 11.2: Potential Member Involvement in LTP Process and Scheme Implementation
Impact of the Leader and Cabinet System on LTP Delivery

From a practitioner perspective, the move to Cabinet decision-making appears to have had little effect on delivery of schemes. One case study officer commented that the lack of delegated powers to officers, has led to an element of duplication, with schemes and decisions getting approved firstly by officers, and secondly by Cabinet. However, another practitioner found the system to be more streamlined with less Member involvement (CS) so much appears to depend on the relationship and level of trust between officer and Member level within the authority.

The impact at Member level has been more significant. While it is acknowledged that the Cabinet system provides a more efficient means for decision-making, it has concentrated responsibility for transport among fewer Members. This is seen as giving greater responsibility to individual Executive Members, but has meant that other Members have become less involved in the process. Hence, whilst Cabinet Lead Members may now have a much better understanding of transport issues and be supportive of the LTP, there may be a lack of ownership and buy-in to the LTP amongst backbench Members. This is particularly true of new Members, who were not involved in the initial development and approval of the LTP through the Committee structure (CS).

Case Study - The impact of the Cabinet structure on member involvement - the perspectives of a Unitary authority Member

Under the old Committee system in one unitary authority, about 20 members were involved in decision-making. Under the current system, all decisions are made by the Cabinet, which consists of approximately 8-10 Members. Hence fewer Members are involved in the decision making process, and fewer understand the details of the LTP process. Outside the Cabinet there is little ownership of the LTP and many members are unaware of the LTP. This feeds back to the Area Panels, forums for liaison with residents, businesses and interest groups, on which all Members sit. Lack of understanding regarding the LTP can result in members being strongly influenced by vocal interest groups.

The lack of two-way consultation between portfolio members/senior officers and other members is raised by a number of members and officers.

Case Study - The impact of the Cabinet structure on member involvement: from the perspective of a unitary authority Member.

When scheme decisions are made, officers produce a Delegated Decision Report, which is discussed at a closed meeting between Officers and the Portfolio Member. There is no mechanism for feedback of actions to Portfolio Members or other members. Similarly, when residents raise queries/issues about specific schemes with their local Member, these are passed on to Officers, but again there is no feedback from Officers to Members.

One Member felt that the Cabinet system had made decision making more 'opaque', resulting in short Cabinet meetings with little discussion of issues. In contrast, the Lead Member for Transport and Environment at the same authority felt there were more opportunities for members to be involved in the LTP process, with the Scrutiny Committee providing an opportunity to challenge officers, which did not previously exist.

Whilst Cabinet decisions may indeed result in faster turnaround of schemes than under the system of Committee approval, in practice this benefit is often eroded by the requirement to spend a greater amount of time on public and stakeholder consultation (CS).

One unitary authority provides an interesting contrast to the other case studies in that it is in the process of moving from a Leader and Cabinet system to an Elected Mayor and Council Manager"
system. Details are set out below, although the implications of this system specifically for the authority's LTP is unclear at this stage.

There is also some evidence from the case studies that Member buy-in to the LTP process is difficult to achieve because the overall influence of Members is limited by the requirement to comply with national transport policy, local PSA targets and the requirements of Best Value/Continuous Performance Assessment. It is suggested that there is a need for a policy document or long term vision statement, behind the LTP, which has local ownership, and which can be expressed without Government constraints. The LTP would be just one of the delivery mechanisms which would feed into the plan, the others covering environment, employment, housing, education and regeneration, for example. However, it is acknowledged that it is difficult to achieve the right balance between national and local objectives and that there is a definite tension in the LTP process in this regard.

### Case study - the elected mayor system of local government

One of the case study authorities (Unitary West Midlands) is introducing an "Elected Mayor and Council Manager" system of Council administration in place of the Leader and Cabinet model. The new Council Constitution, decided by referendum in May 2002, will change the backbone of the Authority's decision-making processes and overall style of management. The "Executive" of the Mayor will provide political direction to the Council, define the policy framework (including the LTP) and implement key decisions, subject to overview and scrutiny by the Council Assembly. The Mayor will also be the Council's principal public representative and spokesperson.

The election for Mayor was held in October 2002 and won by an independent candidate. This follows the results of the early Local Government elections in May which saw a shift from Labour control to a coalition of Conservative and Independent Members. The implications of the political and administrative changes for the LTP are still unclear, although little policy change is likely in the short-term. The Mayor is more likely to have an influence on individual schemes within the LTP programme, the allocation of revenue to support transport, and the development of the second LTP submission. The role of Assembly Members in influencing LTP policies and schemes through the scrutiny and call-in process has also to be tested, although there are concerns over the extent to which rank-and-file Members of the Councils will be actively engaged in the LTP process.

### LTPs as Statutory Documents

There is some evidence that the statutory nature of the LTP raises its profile amongst Members and provides more weight to transport claims when compared to education, and social services. Examples are quoted where the statutory nature of the document has proved very important when the authority had been seeking to lead by example on the implementation of a Travel Plan for the authority and some Officers now put the LTP alongside the Corporate Plan and the Structure Plan. (CS)

In other case study authorities, the statutory nature of the document appears to have had limited effect.

### Expectations

Evidence that the introduction of the LTP has raised expectations amongst Members is inconclusive. In many cases, Members have tended to temper expectations as they are ultimately accountable to the public. Elsewhere, however, Members appear to have had unrealistic expectations about the speed at which schemes would be delivered on the ground. Change to unitary status, more than the introduction of LTPs, appears to have raised expectations amongst Members as they can now focus solely on a small area.

Members may also have unrealistic expectations as to the progress that an authority can make on its own and are frequently frustrated at the lack of partnership working with bus and rail operators. At the same time, as set out in Chapter 4 (Inclusivity), it is often Member, rather than Officer, differences
which are the main constraint on joint working between neighbouring authorities even where this has clear strategic planning advantages and is urged on by the Government Office (CS).

**Single Capital Pot Decisions**

Many LTP practitioners are concerned that Members will be placed under increasing pressure to transfer parts of the Integrated Transport and Maintenance core allocations to Education and Social Services departments, especially if underspends continue to occur. (RW/CS)

As set out in Chapter 5 (Funding and Long-Term Planning), the case studies show few examples of this happening to date, although transfer of the discretionary element of the SCP to non-Transport services is more common (CS).

This issue is discussed in more detail in Chapter 5, *Funding and Long Term Planning*. 
Achieving Greater Member and Public Engagement

There are a number of potential methods of addressing the lack of engagement amongst Members:

- area sections in the LTP to provide local context for Members. This is already undertaken in a number of county LTPs;
- electronic versions of the LTP (on CD-ROM or the internet) to make the document more accessible;
- effective communication between portfolio members/officers and other members, e.g. regular seminar meetings and progress reports to members;
- workshops aimed at back-benchers rather than senior members (possible arranged through the Local Government Information Unit);
- cross-party task groups/scrutiny panels involving backbench Members to address strategic issues; and
- closer links with the Local Strategic Partnerships;

In line with the Modernising Local Government Agenda, a number of authorities are setting up area forums (in the form of Area Panels, Area Assemblies, Community Forums and the like) in order to provide local people with greater local democracy. The forums meet on a regular basis and provide the public with the opportunity to:

- raise issues of concern regarding a range of community issues; and
- become involved in developing Council services.

In some authorities, these Area Forums are already becoming the focus for on-going LTP/APR consultation on strategic and local issues, and other authorities expressed their intention to make greater use of such forums in the future (CS). This is discussed in further detail in Chapter 4 (Inclusivity).

Conclusions and Recommendations

The introduction of LTPs has clearly been a very resource intensive process for all parties including authorities, Government Offices and the Department itself. In general, this intensity is seen as onerous, but worthwhile, given the greater financial rewards than under the TPP. There is less consensus on the resource intensity, and benefits, of preparing APRs on an annual basis. It is expected that the process will become less onerous over time as it "beds down," although this partially depends on the extent to which DfT issues further changes in the Guidance and process requirements.

This Chapter provides some evidence of the organisational and cultural changes undertaken by authorities in preparing and implementing their LTP, albeit within a context of acute staffing constraints for many. Surprisingly few authorities appear to have recruited extensively to handle the LTP in-house. There are a number of reasons for this, including recruitment caps and revenue budget shortages, and a more common approach appears to be the development of partnering or term agreements with consultancy firms, with authorities effectively buying in the skills and staff they need. There is agreement that LTP initiatives require a greater range of skills and staff aptitudes compared to the engineering and planning focus of the TPP, but the pace at which authorities are acquiring these, or are committed to acquiring them in-house, is not surprisingly variable.

We do conclude that Member involvement in the LTP process, whilst undoubtedly greater than under the TPP, raises a number of key issues of the effectiveness of engagement, not only between Officers and Members, but between Cabinet and Backbench Members. Whilst many Members, especially those in Cabinet, are generally supportive of the LTP, the rhetoric and activities of others may often be at odds with LTP objectives and principles. Member support for local transport may also have its
limits, as evidenced by the continuing shortage of revenue budgets in many authorities and recent decisions on the allocation of the discretionary element of Single Capital Pot. Hence, there is a need for more constructive engagement with a wider range of Members across authorities and a maturing of the political management process as practised by senior transport officers within authorities.

Chapter 13 sets out the key issues and our recommendations for the Change Management Theme.
12. Documentation

"APRs should be presented in a style that is meaningful to the reader. Clear and well-structured APRs can add to the understanding of what are often complicated issues. They should be written in plain language and use examples, tables and maps to help make the contents comprehensible and easy to understand." (DfT APR Guidance 2002)

"Graphic designers appear to have been let loose on some LTPs with rather unhappy results." (Oxley 2001)

Introduction

LTPs must be accessible, readable and comprehensive documents which meet the criteria in Government Guidance effectively, whilst also being understandable to a wider audience.

This last theme covers issues relating to:

- the length and style of LTPs/APRs;
- referencing and making the LTP available to the public and key stakeholders;
- structuring and presentation of the LTP to a number of different audiences including the public, Government Offices, DfT and other transport professionals; and crucially,
- the adequacy of the Government's Guidance on LTPs and APRs.

Length and Style and Content of LTPs/APRs

LTPs vary considerably in style and length, but are usually substantial documents. The shortest are generally about 100 pages in length (with or without additional appendices) increasing to several hundred pages in length in up to half a dozen separate volumes. In style, they vary from predominantly black and white reports, with limited use of maps, diagrams and photographs, and no executive summary, to professionally produced glossy documents, making extensive use of desktop publishing, coloured maps, diagrams and photographs, and with glossy standalone executive summaries targeted at the general public. (CS/OA)

Annual Progress Reports are, not surprisingly, far shorter. However, few authorities have kept to the recommended APR length of 30 pages. Of the six 2002 APRs examined as part of the case studies, only one was within the prescribed length, with all others exceeding the recommended limit. The longest APR examined was 56 pages, although some cover more than 100 pages. All six APRs included appendices, which varied in length from 40 pages to about 200 pages. (CS)

Use of desktop publishing, maps, photographs, and other illustrations is more widespread amongst the 2002 APRs, used in either the main report or a standalone Executive Summary. Four of the six case study authorities have produced 'glossy' standalone Summary Reports for members of the public and interested stakeholders. In two cases, 'glossy' versions of the main APR have also been produced, but the other two authorities have chosen to limit the amount of desk-top publishing used in the main report, thus targeting the main document at Government and the Summary Document at the public.

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<td>One unitary authority (South East) has made a conscious effort not to spend any more time than necessary to produce their APR. They have not spent time and effort on engineering the</td>
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41 DETR (April 2001) Guidance on LTP Annual Progress Reports.
correct 'spin'; instead the focus has been on providing the basic factual information in the manner requested. The APR printing costs are lower than for the TPP in accordance with APR Guidelines. Whilst other local authorities are producing more glossy versions, the authority has stuck to the guidelines which suggest that black and white is appropriate. It is difficult, however, to stick to the 30 page length and meet all the requirements in sufficient depth. In their feedback, DfT suggested that colour maps might assist, although this appears to be contrary to previous advice.

The authority in question is conscious that other local authorities' APRs are evaluated on all of the information provided and that they are not penalised for spending large budgets on their preparation or by making them lengthy. They suggest that the DfT could produce a template for the information and tighter guidance on the format. Different requirements might be appropriate for the APRs for the unitary authorities compared to the Counties, to ensure that they obtain best value from their resources.

Some of the weaknesses identified by the Government Offices, regarding the six 2001 APRs are summarised below (GO):

- weak reporting on actual progress and a general lack of detail;
- reporting of progress against all targets is not always undertaken, with some targets ignored;
- little indication of how progress on the targets that are unlikely to be met are to be brought back on schedule;
- poor reporting of reasons for overall cost increases, and limited reporting of previous year's expenditure and future spend;
- weak reporting on steps taken to address barriers to delivery e.g. staff shortages; and
- little recognition of best practice sharing and learning.

**LTPs and APRs as Public Documents**

LTPs serve a number of roles. They are a bidding document for Government funds and must contain a certain amount of financial information. But they are also a means of engaging communities and other partners in local transport issues and priorities. The plans therefore need to be accessible to a very wide audience.

Many LTP practitioners expressed difficulties in handling the dual nature of the LTP and APR documents.

"*We have to present the document in the form that is required by Government, whilst trying to make it as user friendly as possible!*" (CS)

Some feel that the LTP is trying to be "all things to all men" and is therefore confused and lacking focus. The public do not want to read detailed bidding figures and the Government do not need the plain English language, photographs and glossy covers.

"*The LTPs have ended up being huge documents. There is no clear guidance and the attitude from the Government Office seems to be 'well, have a go and we'll think about it'."* (RW)

A number of Government Officers also express an awareness of the lack of clarity on the audience the LTP and APR is written for. Consequently some authorities target Government Offices and others the public, making comparisons difficult (RW, GO). This issue is highlighted in the case studies, with one authority seeing the key audience for the LTP and APR as the Government, with the public, local businesses and operators given second priority: meeting the needs of the entire audience is perceived to be impossible. Other case study authorities give much greater priority to the needs of the public. (CS)
Some practitioners suggest that two documents might be better than one, with one being an accessible public document and the second containing detailed technical and bidding information (RW). Indeed, some authorities already effectively do this through the publication of a non-technical LTP/APR summary leaflet/brochure for widespread public distribution. However, proposals to produce separate strategy and bidding elements of the LTP are not generally supported, as the current system is seen as encouraging joined up thinking (CS).

DfT itself also remains unconvinced that the LTP needs to be "unbundled" into separate documents for specific roles. Authorities are seen as having developed quite effective means of keeping their publics aware of the LTP/APR whilst still providing the required technical data to Government Offices and the Department.

Methods identified from the case studies include:

**APR consultation** to identify reader satisfaction with the document and areas for improvement, including feedback via the internet;

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<td>Following publication of the first APR, one case study authority sent copies to over 150 organisations, parish councils, businesses and individuals for comment. A total of 37 responses were received. The document was found to be clear and legible to read and easy to understand, but did not satisfactorily cover relevant issues.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The following changes were therefore made in the 2002 APR:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>a fully page-numbered index has been included to aid location of particular topics of interest;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>reader-friendly language and terms have been used, and use of 'local government' language avoided;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>larger print has been used;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>more detailed has been provided on schemes implemented and benefits realised over the past year (an appendix provides details of all schemes implemented in 2001/2002);</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>a table reporting progress towards targets indicates whether particular targets are likely to be met and if not what actions the authority is proposing to take;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>an appendix outlining the future year's programme has been included, as Members and the public tend to be more interested in future progress than past progress;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>scheme completion dates have been provided where possible.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

production of a stand alone Executive Summary for the public and Members\(^{\text{42}}\);

\(^{\text{42}}\) Concerns about the level of resources this would require, were expressed by some authorities.
Case study - APR consultation

Cheshire County Council published an 11-page leaflet summarising the main elements of their APR. It includes details of how to get copies of the full APR, the Full LTP and large print versions of the APR. The leaflet is also used to provide travel and timetable information contacts.

Cheshire's Local Transport Plan 2001-2006
Annual Progress Report 2001
Summary

delivering local solutions to our transport problems

use of Plain English to ensure the documents can be clearly understood by the public;

Case Study - Plain English approach

One case study authority (Unitary, South East) has ensured their APR is accessible to the public by avoiding the use of technical language. The use of the causal chain approach to assess progress is seen as too academic, and terminologies such as inputs, outputs, and outcomes are seen as inappropriate for communicating progress to the public. The Council have therefore developed their own approach, not inconsistent with the causal chain approach, where for each project they identify:

- What has it cost?
- What have we achieved?
- What are the results?
- Are we on track?
- What are the next steps?

Tick boxes are used to indicate which objectives, and national and local targets which will be addressed by the project, and text boxes are used to summarise linkages to other elements of the strategy, consultation undertaken, and contribution to social inclusion/road safety objectives.

- a list of abbreviations and terminology at the start of the document;
use of **maps, diagrams and photographs** to illustrate complex concepts. It is often the case that such illustrations can explain complicated issues without the need for lengthy textual commentaries. Careful use of tables and graphs allows a considerable amount of technical information to be presented in a way that does not put off the non-technical reader (Bristol LTP provides a good example of this)\(^43\). Maps can help illustrate proposals at a strategic level (e.g. Blackpool LTP)\(^44\);

- a well thought out **layout and structure** can make the document more accessible;

- use of **signposts** - for example, Surrey LTP has four main chapters: Objectives, Problems and Opportunities, Strategy, Implementation Programme. A flow diagram is repeated in each one, highlighting the relevant stage in the process. There are also differently coloured 'sidebars' for each chapter;

West Yorkshire's LTP includes a similar type of flow diagram at the start of each of its chapters to show how each chapter fits into the overall process;

\(^{43}\) A Good Practice Guide for the Development of Local Transport Plans.

\(^{44}\) As above.
Layout - Text laid out in two columns (newspaper style) and the use of tables, bullet points and illustrations to break up the text, can make the document more readable;

- **Linking objectives, implementation programme, and targets and performance indicators** -
  The use of tables and diagrams can play an important part in identifying the link between the various elements of the process. A number of authorities use tables to show the relationship between the various components. For example, Hampshire LTP includes tables in each of its Area Strategy chapters relating Area Objectives, Area Measures, Local Headline Targets, and Performance Indicators;

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Objective</th>
<th>Type of Measure</th>
<th>Local Headline Target (By 2020)</th>
<th>Performance Indicators</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Travel Demand Management: to restrain traffic and provide Park and Ride</td>
<td>Park and Ride</td>
<td>To reduce traffic levels in Winchester by 20% from 1998 base</td>
<td>Level of traffic volumes from cordon surveys</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>City Centre environmental enhancements</td>
<td>To reduce the share of car traffic in peak periods to 50% of all commuting journeys by the year 2030</td>
<td>No. of bus priority facilities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>City Centre parking charges</td>
<td></td>
<td>No. of car park spaces by type</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>City centre traffic circulation changes</td>
<td></td>
<td>No. of business and school transport plans</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>No. of shoppers in city centre</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
for its 2002 APR, one authority has adopted a system of symbols to indicate which LTP strategies are contributing to each of the key policy objectives, and how these schemes relate to wider policy objectives:

Other LTPs make use of causal chain diagrams to identify the link between targets, performance indicators and objectives. For example, Greater Manchester has developed 13 key LTP objectives. Each objective is listed in turn in the Monitoring Chapter, and a causal chain diagram shows the link between the LTP objectives, measures, performance indicators and headline targets. Accompanying each causal chain is a brief description of the problems the objective aims to address, together with linkages to the Government's overarching objectives.
Making the LTP Accessible

All case study authorities make the LTP and APRs available to the public at the council offices, and generally also at local libraries. Many authorities also distribute the documents to a wide range of consultees, including parish councils, a range of interest groups, Members and district councils. (CS)

Placing of the LTP and APRs on the local authority internet site is increasingly widespread. Of the twelve case study authorities, eight authorities have placed copies of their LTP and two APRs on the internet, in PDF format allowing the complete documents to be easily downloaded. Only two case study authorities failed to place their LTPs and APRs on their internet site, making no reference to either document.

Foreign language, large-print, braille and audio versions of the LTP/APR are not common. Budget constraints appear to have prevented authorities from producing copies of the documents in alternative formats, although some authorities invite individuals to contact them if they are unable to read the standard documents:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Case Study Description</th>
<th>Accessibility of Document</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Unitary, Average</td>
<td>Audio and braille versions of LTP/APRs produced. No foreign language versions available, although this is an issue given the number of ethnic minorities in the authority. A translation service is used in response to specific requests.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unitary, Well below average</td>
<td>No alternative versions produced to date due to budget constraints, but the 2002 APR includes a statement saying that alternative formats can be supplied if individuals have difficulty reading the standard format.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unitary, Average</td>
<td>No indication of alternative formats available.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>County, Average</td>
<td>Large print version of the LTP is available.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>County, Above average</td>
<td>No indication of alternative formats of LTP available, but the following statement is included in the 2002 APR:</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**DISABILITY DISCRIMINATION ACT 1995**

*This document has been printed in Arial (a sans serif font for maximum legibility) using 12 point type wherever practicable. If any reader needs larger printing, please contact us and we will do what we can to help (please see below for contact details).*

| County, Average        | Individuals asked to contact Council with respect to Audio, Braille, Large Print, or foreign language copies. |

Producing different versions of the report for different people is seen by some practitioners as adding to the bureaucracy and financial burden surrounding the process. In general it is felt that specific groups with specific concerns will approach the authority directly, and will generally require more detailed information than that provided in the LTP/APR. (CS)

The cost of purchasing copies of the LTP and APR were obtained from three case study authorities. One authority offered free copies of the LTP and APR on request; a second authority charged £15 per additional LTP copy and £5 for a copy of the 2001 APR (the price of 2002 APR had yet to be decided); the third authority charged £40 per additional LTP copy, reflecting the greater use of desktop publishing in the document, but making it less accessible to the general public in the process.
Adequacy of LTP/APR Guidance

The Guidance on Full LTPs and the subsequent APR Guidance attracts a range of views, ranging from broad support to comments about over prescriptiveness and encouragement of short-term "ticks in boxes" rather than long-term underlying progress on key objectives (RW/CS).

LTP Guidance

Many comments on the Full LTP Guidance relate to the length compared to the TPP Guidance and the number of criteria to be followed:

"We're being judged on 27 categories and then we receive criticism that we're spreading ourselves too thinly. And can we really address 27 categories - really?" (RW)

"A big purple monster!" (RW)

Conversely:

"I'm happy with the amount of guidance. I wouldn't have less guidance." (RW)

The length and comprehensiveness of the Full LTP Guidance is partly a result of some authorities themselves wanting more advice on key areas of policy and partly the result of inputs from other Whitehall Departments and parts of DfT (then DLTR). Hence the Full LTP Guidance was longer than that originally produced for the Provisional LTPs. (RW, DfT).

Most of the case authorities also emphasise that they would wish to see only limited change to the LTP Guidance for the second tranche of submissions, allowing the process to "bed down", although some streamlining may be desirable in places.

APR Guidance

There is some concern that DFT Guidance for APRs is becoming more prescriptive and this is reducing the level of local flexibility in structure and layout (and therefore in informing local publics). There are concerns that the resource commitments for a good APR may become "no less than another TPP." Other officers point out the inefficiencies of moving from a delivery to a reporting culture.

"It's all too far hands on, we can either do the work or tell you that we are doing the work. We cannot do both." (RW)

Government Officers also comment on the tendency for DfT to ask for reporting of progress at the expense of allowing authorities time to get on with the job on the ground. Some Government Officers suggest APRs every two years as a way of countering this. This would not only help authorities but would also assist the Government Offices which face their own problems of staff and skills shortages.

Against this, it is accepted that the APR does have a useful role to play in keeping key stakeholders and the public on-board:

"It [the APR] is doing some good because it is reassuring for councils to know that someone is looking at what is being done." (RW)

The focus of the APR on reporting progress, is also seen as beneficial by many practitioners, and helps targets expenditure for the following year (RW). The role of the APR as a strategic forward planning tool would be weakened by conversion to a Bi-annual Progress Report, as would its use as an annual bidding document.

Concern that the APR document could evolve into another TPP is not widespread, provided the focus remains on reporting on progress rather than revising the LTP policies themselves or presenting large numbers of supplementary bids (CS). However, one authority expressed concern that without a revenue element, the LTP would evolve into another TPP. There was some support for the idea of using the APR to roll on the 5 year programme:
"The world does not just stop in 2006" (CS)

However, this approach does not sit well with ensuring the focus remains on reporting progress.

There is a general concern that local authorities have to produce a "plethora" of reports and documents for Government. It is suggested by some that it might be better to have a single cross-cutting "State of the Locality" Annual Report for all Government Departments, reducing preparation time and information duplication. (RW) DfT acknowledge the case for such a document combining all service areas including transport and removing the need for separate reviews and reporting frameworks. However, this is a number of years away and requires improvements in joint-working between departments across authorities. (RW, DfT) Some of the issues raised by this Study indicate that this is still some way off.

On a final point, there was a view that more information is required on how LTPs/APRs are assessed. This point applies particularly to the Single Capital Pot performance scores. (RW) Inclusion in the most recent APR Guidance of the assessment criteria by which the 2002 APRs would be judged, was considered by one authority to be particularly useful (CS).

**Prescriptiveness and Timeliness of Guidance**

DfT acknowledges that the Guidance needs to strike a compromise between authorities which want "everything prescribed exactly" and those who desire a degree of latitude in interpretation and style. It is unlikely that one set of Guidance will ever please all authorities (RW, DfT).

Overall, we conclude that the length and level of detail of the main LTP Guidance is about right within the current process arrangements. However, more advice is possibly required on prioritising LTP submissions between the various topic areas as well as supplementary good practice guidance on specific aspects, such as consultation management, joint working between neighbouring authorities, and analytical processes.

There is some support for having quite prescriptive APR Guidance if this encourages authorities to report a smaller number of indicators to a consistent formula. In comments that predate the publication of the latest APR Guidance for 2002-2003, officers observed:

"*The only thing going into the APR should be the key indicators which the Department wants to evaluate.*"  (RW)

"*It would be much better if the Government told us specifically what headline indicators they want reporting on.*"  (RW)

Guidance is universally felt to be produced far too late and with too many changes from year to year:

"*The latest edition of the APR Guidance has just come out. The LTP Guidance was delayed and its always delayed. The TPP was just as bad and there's no change.*"

"*It's incredible that every year they seem to change the goalposts yet again.*"

The late timing and annual change is considered as problematic for Government Offices in advising authorities as it is for authorities producing LTPs/APRs (RW, GO). The problem is recognised by the Department, but the timing largely reflects resource constraints within DfT with the same team responsible for the Guidance also carrying out the assessment process. Essentially, preparation of Guidance cannot start until the assessment process has been completed. (RW, DfT)

One authority expressed concern about the transitional arrangements from the first to second LTP (for example, is a provisional LTP for 2006-2011 required in 2005?), and felt that further guidance from DfT on this was essential in the next 12 months. (CS)
Conclusions and Recommendations

Documentation is, in one sense, the least important of our generic themes for evaluating the LTP process. An attractive and well-illustrated LTP bid does not necessarily guarantee sound transport policies and effective delivery capability. In another sense, documentation is possibly the most important aspect of the process. Without comprehensive, well-written and accessible documents, authorities cannot hope to convince Government of the credibility and robustness of their proposals, much less carry the public, key partner stakeholders and their own Members with them.

This Chapter has demonstrated a range of good practice that authorities have used to present their LTPs and APRs. In many cases, the Government Offices note a visible improvement between the quality of the first LTP and the more recent APR as authorities learn to make the presentation of information both useful and accessible and pick up effective practices from reviewing their peers’ submissions. On the other hand, there is a tendency from some authorities to place an emphasis on glossy, desk-top published volumes at the expense of sound technical information and clear demonstration of progress. The best authorities are able to combine both sound presentation with a robust technical programme.

More importantly, the current level of Guidance from the Department is seen as pitched at about the right level in terms of length and prescriptiveness. The key issues here relate to the late issue of the Guidance and the degree of change imposed on authorities each year. The latter is especially poignant: authorities by and large wish to see Guidance which changes little, does not impose new requirements of the process each year and allows time for the whole LTP development and reporting process to settle down so that authorities can establish themselves more fully with it.

Whilst this Report includes various recommendations for additional Guidance, this should not be seen as additional requirements for authorities, rather additional advice or optional Guidance, available for authorities if and where required. Given LTP practitioners’ desire for continuity in the process over a prolonged period, we would recommend little change to the core Guidance. There is a risk that any supplementary Guidance, even if optional, will be seen by authorities as further guidance which they must comply with if they are to receive their indicative allocations. The role of any supplementary Guidance/advice must therefore be clearly defined.

Chapter 13 sets out the key issues and our recommendations relating to the Documentation theme.
13. Conclusions and Recommendations

"LTP is a huge opportunity and a good step forward. It is imperative to spend the money and spend it wisely. We must deliver the programme." (Ekins 2002)

"The Integrated Transport White Paper has laid the right foundation and, with the right guidance, LTPs and local authorities can deliver the required policies." (Hazel 2002)

A Work In Progress

As set out in the opening sections of this report, LTPs require local authorities in England to plan and deliver transport schemes and policies within the context of a focused strategy. This should be supported by the public and stakeholders, linked to clear objectives and targets, and defined both locally and within the context of the Government's Ten Year Transport Plan and five overarching transport objectives.

The LTP is thus a key strategic document on top of the bidding function inherited from the TPP. The Government has also chosen to support the introduction of the new process with a substantial increase in capital funding and grant authorities the discretion to allocate resources flexibly between spending areas over an extended five year period, giving them greater financial capability to deliver their LTP physically on the ground.

On both grounds - innovation of the process and intensity of the resources available - it is vital that Government has an accurate assessment of the success of LTPs in succeeding the TPP process and how well the new arrangements are working in practice. This is not only useful monitoring in its own right and as part of the wider debate on public services, but has implications for how Ministers will structure, guide and fund the process when the second tranche of LTPs are prepared for the period 2006-2011. At the same time, any review inevitably carries political significance and will be of major interest to a range of other organisations, including policy makers from other Government Departments, the Commission for Integrated Transport, academics, political parties and authorities themselves at both Officer and Member level.

Our assessment is therefore of some importance and, combined with parallel work, can be seen as a "half term report" on the LTP process in its first period of implementation. It is a means of judging the success of its initial specification, introduction and early operation, seeing what has worked, is working and conversely what is not. It is also important in judging whether, and where, changes to the process or its application need to be made and what form these changes might take.

This "half term report" draws on a range of data, views and perspectives, including the professional literature, Government's own assessments of LTP submissions, the views of LTP practitioners, opinions of Members and external stakeholders and, of course, the LTPs and APRs themselves. Much of this evidence is inevitably subjective and contextual. Many conclusions, only halfway through the first LTP round, must also be seen as intermediate, subject to confirmation after the first LTPs have concluded in March 2006. This is largely due to the 'unknown' element of the new policy and the associated levels of scepticism and enthusiasm for anything new until the benefits are proven.

It is also clear that authorities, even the leading practitioners of integrated transport, are still finding their feet with the LTP process. Indeed, the same could be said for Government Offices and the Department for Transport itself. Whilst many of the basic principles underlying the LTP emerged through the Package Approach, authorities are having to adapt their policies, working practices and internal management structures in the light of a four year period where Guidance from Government has been continually changing and evolving. Authorities have been subjected to considerable change over what is seen as a very short period of time, particularly when combined with the sharp increase in capital funding. There are concerns amongst practitioners over expectations of what authorities can actually deliver in terms of change on the ground and changes to travel patterns which have become engrained over many years.
This report therefore presents an assessment of a "work in progress" rather than, at this stage, a fully mature LTP process which has had several years to bed down and develop its own established practices, customs and modus operandi. The latter might be expected to evolve towards the end of the Ten Year Plan period. Nevertheless, there is enough evidence to allow some conclusions to be drawn with some confidence.

**Overall Perspectives**

The impression we have received from LTP practitioners, Members, academic experts and, to a lesser extent, external stakeholders, is positive. LTPs really are seen as a dramatic improvement from the former TPP system and authorities believe that after years of underfunding and narrowly-based allocations, they really are in a position, as one LTP Practitioner put it to "do something about transport."

As such, LTPs offer increased scope to deliver the Government's transport objectives and agenda locally on the ground. It is encouraging that where there are concerns or criticisms, these are often of the way in which the process is being administered, financed or monitored, rather than of the principles underlying the process itself. Not surprisingly, these concerns are often expressed most strongly by those performing less strongly against the process requirements, but are also shared to a degree by the leading authorities.

Given the greater flexibility associated with the LTP process, the skills shortage, the level of change authorities have had to accommodate, and the greater Member involvement in the process which creates uncertainty over delivery of schemes on the ground, it is not surprising that some authorities are progressing more successfully than others. For some aspects of (and stakeholders in) the process, it is therefore a question of "keep up the good work" whilst for others there is an implication of "could do better" or even "must do better."

A key issue for the DfT is thus how best to assist the poorer performing authorities without bringing in radical changes to the process or imposing substantial amounts of additional guidance on authorities. With sufficient resources this could be achieved through additional specialist support and advisory teams seconded from DfT to improving authorities for limited periods, or by encouraging greater use of external resources.

The key strengths and weaknesses of the process are set out in Chapter 3.

**The Need for Limited Change**

The overall positive reaction to the LTP is reflected by the fact that most LTP practitioners, Government Offices and stakeholders are pressing for limited change to the process. Indeed, a common reaction from the regional workshops and case studies has been a desire for continuity over a prolonged period which will allow authorities' planning, management and monitoring capabilities to "bed down" and deliver the LTP programmes with certainty and a minimum of new requirements. After four years of changing Guidance from Government, it would be a fair summary to state that authorities now feel that the time has come to "get on and deliver" rather than dramatically change the process further.

There is no certainly no desire to return to a system based on the principles of the TPP. Proposals for radically different planning and resource allocation frameworks such as those based on demographic and economic formulas or a single land use planning and transport programming document also find relatively little favour given their costs and uncertain benefits.
Key Issues

We conclude that key debates on the success of the LTP process exist in essentially six key areas:

**Political Process**

There are issues over the degree to which Members may support the LTP process in terms of outline policy and actual delivery. The rhetoric and actions of some Members, especially those outside Cabinet or Committee framework, may often be at odds with the principles expressed in the LTP. The discretion given to democratic local decision making in the allocation of capital and revenue across policy areas is part and parcel of this wider question.

The evidence from a number of sources also highlights the tension between LTPs as a vehicle for local aspirations (with transport supporting these) and as an instrument for applying national transport policy at the local level, with the latter becoming a stronger driver of the process since the original conception of LTPs. Recent APR Guidance continues this trend.

**Funding**

The increase in capital funding under the LTP is substantial and welcomed by almost all parties. However, the rapid ramping up of capital budgets from a low base does raise problems of delivery.

Aside from this, the fact is that the LTP remains a capital-based process; the shortage of revenue funding is clearly a constraint on the management, delivery and maintenance of LTP measures, especially in rural areas where a greater proportion of solutions tend to be revenue based. There are differences between authorities, and Government itself over whether these issues are due to factors within or outside the control of authorities themselves when funding is considered at the corporate level rather than for individual spending areas.

Our assessment is that the "revenue shortage" derives from both inadequate consideration of LTP capital funding within the Standard Spending Assessment and the political priorities given by Members, and authorities corporately, to other spending areas. Solutions might therefore be a combination of changes to the SSA formulas and subsequent RSG allocations combined with a need for a greater recognition by authorities of the need to pass revenue through to support their transport objectives. LTP practitioners themselves need to become more proactive and politically astute internally in influencing the senior management and political decisions within their authorities.

The evidence on the impacts of Single Capital Pot on capital allocations and the spread of budgets across years is not yet conclusive and this issue will need to be kept under review.

**Administration**

There are concerns that the flexibility and greater certainty of programming offered by LTPs in principle could be eroded in practice by requirements for frequent, in-depth reporting, constantly changing (and late) guidance and increasing appraisal, monitoring and consultation requirements.

There is a trade-off between whether these increased burdens are a reasonable condition of dramatic increases in funding and whether they threaten to stifle the process, especially for those authorities experiencing significant revenue and staffing limitations;

**Integration**

There are questions over the extent to which LTPs are integrated with other policy areas and frameworks, not only within local authorities themselves but with national agencies. There are also key issues relating to the extent to which authorities have control over areas for which the LTP is the main policy and delivery vehicle, such as public transport management/investment and schools transport.
The linkage between local transport planning and land use planning is an area for improvement. In particularly, the link between LTPs and regional planning frameworks is currently a weakness of the process, and although the proposed changes towards Regional Spatial Strategies may strengthen integration in the medium-term, the full implications for the LTP process need to be clearly thought through.

**Analytical Techniques**

There are questions over the extent to which authorities' technical capabilities currently meet the increased requirements of LTP strategy development, target setting and scheme/programme appraisal. Whilst there are some examples of good practice, many authorities have yet to fully develop their modelling, consultation management and appraisal systems to a robust level. This issue is especially poignant for target setting where a failure to develop targets to a robust methodology must ultimately cast doubt on their realism and achievability.

**Culture and Organisational Capacity**

Organisational capacity is partially related to the variability of political buy-in referred to above, but also the extent to which local authority skills and experience are adapting to a wider policy and technical agenda. Staff and skills shortages afflicting large parts of the transport sector.

Some authorities have chosen to solve the issue through external resources, contracting with consultants and other partners to reinforce their in-house capability; however, the evidence suggests that organisational capacity, along with revenue limitations, remains one of the key barriers to LTP planning and delivery.

**Evidence**

There are key issues relating to whether LTP targets are set robustly and monitored locally and for the achievement of national transport targets. A balance needs to be struck between excessive monitoring requirements which are costly, time consuming and detract from the process of delivery and systems which provide sufficient confidence to all that the process of delivery is achieving its intended outcomes. It is also essential that authorities are compared on a like-for-like basis when identifying examples of good practice.

These issues do not affect all organisations equally, but vary by (i) their capacity to develop and deliver effective LTP policy and programmes, as determined by their resourcing and technical/staff capabilities and (ii) their political commitment to the national transport agenda both in policy terms and willingness to implement a wider breadth of initiatives. Hence the performance of the LTP process overall contrasts between those authorities with a strong political commitment and technical capability to deliver, and those authorities lacking both political commitment to multi-modal transport principles and delivery capability.
Recommendations

This Report has focused on nine generic themes for examining the process of developing and delivering LTPs. The tables set out at the end of this chapter illustrate the key issues and challenges arising under each generic theme and our proposed recommendations to address them.

Final Comments

Some of our recommendations - for example, earlier and less frequent changes to Guidance or more advice to authorities on good practice - can be implemented relatively rapidly. Others - revenue or staff shortages within authorities - require more careful consideration and will be solved only in the medium- to long-term, potentially only in partnership and agreement across different Government Departments and stakeholder organisations. It is also the case that whilst some issues are purely technical or administrative, others carry a political dimension which will require a firm lead from Ministers and Members if they are to be addressed; some suggest the need for long-term cultural change as part of the wider debate over public services. These latter dimensions of change will not be easy and nor do we presume to recommend what Government or Local Government policy should be in future years, only to flag up the key issues for consideration by elected representatives.

In rolling the LTP process forward, we conclude with the positive reaction to it as set out in this Report. Authorities are beginning to deliver some major successes and make a material difference in the lives of their communities. More can be expected by 2005-2006 and LTF practitioners should be praised for the substantial efforts put in since the Integrated Transport White Paper in getting the process to where it is now. Whilst much remains to be done, a substantial foundation has been laid for taking the process forward.

Next Steps

In related work to develop a Evaluation Framework for undertaking an Impact Evaluation of the LTP Process, Atkins recommends that the Part 1 Process Evaluation is repeated at the end of the LTP period, to establish whether the key conclusions are still valid or whether authorities, DfT itself and other key stakeholders have evolved improved arrangements for managing the process.

It is recommended that the repeat evaluation be undertaken against the same generic themes identified for the current Part 1 study, and that questions used in the regional workshops and case studies are repeated in similar form, to introduce a longitudinal element to the research and identify how views and experiences have changed over the five year period. For this reason, the case study authorities should remain the same where possible, to ensure consistency in the study.

By necessity, the focus of the evidence in this report has been LTP practitioners and the LTP documentation, supplemented by interviews with Government Offices, the Department itself, Members and external stakeholders. Government Officers provided a useful ‘reality check’ on the information and views provided by LTP practitioners. External stakeholders proved difficult to engage in in-depth discussion and therefore a repeat review of the LTP process should set out to focus more on external stakeholders’ opinions and consider ways with which these groups can be more constructively engaged.

It is also recommended that the regional workshop element of the Process Review is undertaken and reported on in late 2003/early 2004 in order to inform the revised Departmental guidance for the second period LTPs. Consideration should be given to extending the regional workshop approach to involve senior local authority officers at a corporate level, officers from other policy areas, Lead

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46 For example, through dedicated stakeholder workshops as part of one or more of the case studies.
Inclusivity

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Issue/Challenge</th>
<th>Recommendation on Potential Solutions</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Consultation is costly and time-consuming | *Partly an inherent outcome of the requirements of the LTP process, but likely to become less onerous as the process beds down and authorities become able to consult in a more focused and cost-effective way.*  
Authorities to develop their own consultation guidelines for different types of policies and schemes, to ensure the process is carried out as quickly and efficiently as possible.  
Scope for greater integration of various authority consultations into the Local Strategic Partnership framework. |
| Many approaches to widespread public consultation attract low response rate | Guidance to emphasise distinction between "information" for general public and "consultation" and "participation" of smaller groups.  
Authorities to be encouraged to refer to Guidance in GOMMMS on consultation and participation.  
Consultation exercises focused on smaller groups and fora, including groupings established under Local Strategic Partnerships. |
| Public is difficult to engage on strategic transport issues. | Recognition that public is easier to engage when consulted on specific schemes or proposals. Distinction between strategic and scheme-specific consultation in the Guidance.  
Greater emphasis on in-depth consultation exercises with smaller groups as set out above, rather than large scale public consultation exercises. |
| Results of consultation are not always taken in account in revising LTP priorities. | Re-emphasis on this requirement in LTP Guidance. Requirement for authorities to include specific details of how they have changed their LTP in response to public and stakeholder feedback. |
| Consultation fatigue | Scope for greater integration of various authority consultations into the Local Strategic Partnership framework. |
| Tension between LTPs as expressions of local objectives and priorities and the application of National policy at the local level. | Explicit consideration of this issue in LTP Guidance in advising authorities on using the results of consultation.  
Re-emphasis in Guidance for authorities to take account of the results of consultation in revising LTP priorities.  
External stakeholders such as the Highways Agency and SRA to produce Guidance notes setting out their priorities, how they carry out scheme appraisals, and how authorities can best approach them, in order to encourage better understanding between the two sides regarding their relative priorities and objectives. |
| External stakeholders may be reluctant to engage in close and binding | Stronger directions by Government on public agencies to work with authorities on LTP initiatives. Discussions with industry representatives aimed at securing more active engagement at local level e.g. CPT, FTA |
Local transport plans - policy evaluation: Part 1 - Final Report

| partnerships level e.g. CPT, FTA | Authorities to consider use of Transport Act powers where voluntary partnerships ineffective e.g. Quality Bus Contracts |
| Difficulties of engaging Strategic Rail Authority and rail industry partners in delivering LTP rail objectives and proposals. | More realistic expectations on the capacity of LTPs to deliver rail enhancements covering more than local networks. |
| | Stronger directions on the SRA to engage with authorities alongside its national targets, although realistically this may be more practical at the regional level. |
| | More consideration of LTP objectives in RPP bids and vice versa |
| Evidence of limited joint working with neighbouring authorities in developing cross-boundary policies and programmes | Re-emphasis of this requirement in LTP Guidance. |
| | Stronger advice from Government Offices on authorities to consider LTP joint initiatives covering travel-to-work areas rather than just administrative boundaries, where appropriate. |
| | See Recommendations for Regional Planning on Integration Theme |

Funding

| Issue/Challenge | Recommendations for Potential Solutions |
| Rapid increase in capital funding from TPP raises issues of authorities' capacity to deliver in early years of LTP. | This problem likely to diminish further into the LTP five year period, more schemes are brought forwards and authorities become more familiar with the process. |
| | Build up authorities' delivery capacity and Best Practice advice on drawing on external resources - see Delivery Theme. |
| LTP remains a capital based funding process | Guidance on second LTPs should place greater emphasis on the importance of revenue funds to support LTP objectives and require authorities to report their revenue spend proposals in more detail relative to their SSA allocations. |
| | Greater integration of LTP with Challenge Bid frameworks including both capital and revenue elements. |
| Limited increase in revenue funding | Increase in RSG allocations through account of LTP into SSA formulas, combined with stronger advice for its use on supporting transport services. |
| | LTP practitioners need to be more proactive in arguing the case for transport investment within their authorities and an increased share of the overall corporate budget so that any increase in the SSA feeds through into supporting transport services. |
| Single Capital Pot: Loss of two-year SCA and the return to annualisation of funding. | The perceived problems are untested at the current time and may be reduced by improved project and budget management across projects and between local authority spending areas. |
| | If acute problems of carryover are shown to arise, then |
consideration of reintroduction of some 2 year SCA outside the bounds of Single Capital Pot may be appropriate.

Single Capital Pot: Potential threat to transport capital budgets due to reallocation to other spending areas.

The perceived problems are untested at the current time with only one of our case study authorities choosing to reallocate any of its core transport allocation. Risks of transport losing significant amounts of funding may be more theoretical than actual.

If acute problems of carryover are shown to arise, then consideration of reintroduction of some ringfenced capital outside the bounds of Single Capital Pot may be appropriate.

Challenge Bids are resource-intensive, reward better-off authorities and are poorly aligned with the LTP Process

Challenge frameworks have key advantages of ringfenced capital and revenue budgets awarded against innovative schemes which are often more focused in terms of delivery. They also allow Government to target resources on priority areas at a local level.

Challenge bids should be retained in funding terms, but be required to be structured within the objectives and overall strategy of the LTP. Submission of bids at same time as APR (as a Supplementary Bid) would reduce resource burden and demonstrate closer integration with wider policies.

Poorly-performing authorities should be given specialist advice and assistance via GOs to prepare improved bids.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Breadth of Initiatives</th>
<th>Issue/Challenge</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Coverage of Annex D transport topics is variable e.g. coverage of rural issues, sustainable distribution, climate change are areas of weakness in GO Assessments</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Authorities can be expected to develop fuller and more effective policies and practice over time.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>DfT to issue supplementary LTP/APR Guidance on selected topics in partnership with relevant stakeholder organisations.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Flexibility in application of Guidance and assessment criteria to encourage authorities to build their coverage of transport topics over time as expertise and experience within the authority increases.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Better integration of Challenge bid frameworks with LTP policies and strategy, using bids as a means of upgrading authorities coverage of key priority areas.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Authorities lack skills in all modes and areas not required to be covered.</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>DfT to emphasise need for innovative recruitment and training practices and use of partnering organisations to develop initiatives where skills are currently lacking.</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>See Recommendations under Delivery and Managing Change Themes</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>&quot;One Size Fits All&quot; Approach whereby same requirements</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Issue supplementary LTP Guidance/expansion of LTP Guidance to recognise diversity of area and authority</td>
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</table>
apply to metropolitan LTPs as do small rural unitary authorities.

Some issues require national or regional solutions.

Authorities have influence rather than direct control over many agencies and organisations contributing to LTP objectives.

Many transport initiatives may be revenue-based.

Adoption of local charging schemes is slower than envisaged in Ten Year Plan

Coverage of rural transport issues and solutions is weak in both LTPs and Guidance.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Integration</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Issue/Challenge</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Variable integration with wider schemes and policies within authorities and external agencies</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Poor integration with national road and rail investment programmes pursued by Highways Agency and Strategic Rail Authority.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Major Schemes are often roads-based and date from TPP period</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
and are poorly integrated with LTP objectives and strategy. generation of Majors developed under the TPP are progressed through the project cycle. Stronger Guidance for authorities to consider linkages between Majors and integrated transport block schemes, demonstrating synergies between different streams of investment.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Medium-sized schemes not well integrated into process</th>
<th>Review major scheme threshold, at least for smaller authorities where schemes costing between £2 million and £5 million represent a substantial part of the overall programme and can be difficult to implement under the variable linkage between transport policies through LTP and land use planning through Structure Plan, Local Plan and UDP.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Variable linkage between transport policies through LTP and land use planning through Structure Plan, Local Plan and UDP.</td>
<td>Closer contact and liaison between transport and planning officers especially at County/District level. Common sections to LTPs and planning documents on transport and land-use integration.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Current weak linkage between LTPs at a regional level with poor phasing with Regional Planning Guidance and weak regional leadership for major transport schemes and polices.</td>
<td>First LTPs developed prior to current round of emerging Regional Planning Guidance/Regional Transport Strategy. Second tranche of LTPs will have a firmer regional context. LTP Guidance needs to place a stronger requirement for LTP to be set within the Regional Transport Strategy and demonstrate consistency with it. This includes closer joint working between authorities where this covers strategic sub-regions - See Recommendations under Inclusivity Theme. In longer term, Government proposals for reforming the Regional Planning system likely to provide greater regional leadership, but precise implications for LTPs (especially for Counties) need to be thought through.</td>
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**Delivery**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Issue/Challenge</th>
<th>Recommendations on Potential Solutions</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Underspend of allocation has been common among authorities in the initial years of the TPP.</td>
<td>This problem is likely to diminish as we move further into the LTP five year period and authorities become more familiar with the process. Adopt a policy of over-design to build up a bank of schemes for implementing in future years, and to allow for potential delays arising from the design and consultation process. Continuing staff and skills shortages will also need to be addressed to allow authorities to implement such a strategy. Ensure Members are fully involved in the planning and design process to minimise delay to schemes.</td>
</tr>
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</table>
The increased level of funding has generally enabled authorities to deliver a wider range of policies and schemes than was possible under the TPP process, however, truly innovative schemes appear to be the exception rather than the rule at present.

The second tranche of LTPs are likely to result in delivery of more innovative schemes, once the backlog of TPP schemes have been delivered and authorities have recruited staff with the skills required for more innovative solutions.

 Authorities to be encouraged to develop genuinely new major schemes for the second LTPs.

Maintenance schemes appear to have been given priority in Year 1 of the LTP, with % of actual expenditure on maintenance exceeding the % of allocated expenditure for maintenance, amongst many authorities.

Many authorities are likely to see a more representative implementation of maintenance and integrated transport schemes, as they move further into the five year period, and are able to draw up detailed designs for new schemes. However, authorities with large backlogs of maintenance may continue to prioritise maintenance schemes at the expense of integrated transport schemes.

DfT to issue Guidance outlining their views regarding the transfer of Block allocation to maintenance schemes, and the impact of such decisions on future allocations.
Staff and skills shortages impacting on delivery  | Greater use of partnering agreements/contracts with consultants. Best practice guidance to be produced.

Stronger guidance for joint LTPs for adjoining authorities, where appropriate, with economies of scale and scope for greater sharing of staff across authorities

Simplified reporting requirements for under-resourced authorities

Support for sector-wide initiatives e.g. Transport Skills Initiative

Greater training of staff internally or funding of external training

Local authorities to be realistic about the costs of bringing in extra resources.

*The following changes are also required to address the staff and skills shortage:*

*Improved remuneration and conditions for transport professional, especially in South East*

*Consultants to broaden their areas of expertise and knowledge regarding the requirements of the LTP process e.g. member involvement, consultation requirements*

"Manchester United Effect" - Highly performing authorities maintaining their advantage through recruitment of top professionals  | Government Offices/DfT to place greater emphasis in assessments on improvements from starting point rather than absolute performance.

Second/rotate staff into struggling authorities.

Capacity building within struggling authorities

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Issue/Challenge</th>
<th>Potential Solutions</th>
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</table>
| Evidence of technical robustness behind strategy development, scheme appraisal and particularly target setting is often poor. | DfT to issue Supplementary LTP Guidance and/or examples of good practice regarding technical robustness, including:

- methods of strategy formulation and assessment;
- examples of scheme appraisal techniques for non-Major Schemes based on modelling and non-modelling approaches;

Authorities to provide more evidence of technical robustness in second LTPs in the form of technical... |
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Local transport plans - policy evaluation: Part 1 - Final Report</strong></th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Government to provide some form of audit or technical advisory function during the 2nd LTP development period on technical issues and approaches, including target setting and scheme/option appraisal.</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Post scheme evaluation appears to be an area of weakness within a number of authorities.</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>A key element of the monitoring process involves evaluating change over time. Before and after comparisons are likely to become more important as authorities collect more data and are able to evaluate progress against targets.</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>The analytical basis for target setting within LTPs is often weak with many &quot;finger in the air&quot; targets.</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Authorities are on a learning curve as to what can, and cannot, be achieved through LTP measures.</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Dissemination of good practice from authorities which provide an analytical basis for target setting. Authorities to provide more justification of targets set.</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Supplementary LTP Guidance/Good Practice from DfT on approaches to target setting.</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>There is a danger of authorities losing sight of what they are monitoring due to the plethora of targets now being programmed to meet LTP, Best Value, Audit Commission and CPA targets.</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Neighbouring authorities to be encouraged to carry out regional monitoring where appropriate (e.g. freight movements, mode share data).</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Consideration to be given to some central monitoring of performance by Government to take pressure off the local authorities while ensuring consistency between areas and quality of data.</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Corporate Quality of Life indicators are poorly covered in monitoring programmes.</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>DfT Guidance to emphasise the importance and role of corporate Quality of Life indicators.</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Concerns about the quality of data being collected and whether the complex indicators surrounding targets are being fully taken into account.</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>DfT to undertake independent research to identify and quantify impacts surrounding new measures, e.g. green travel plans, home zones, etc.</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Greater prescription of core indicators, particularly with respect to cycling.</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Authorities to be encouraged to work in partnership with neighbouring authorities to undertake freight monitoring on a regional scale, where appropriate, particularly where regional freight strategies are being pursued.</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Concerns exist over the quality of the LTP-F4 Forms.</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>DfT to emphasise the importance of F4 Forms to authorities, and outline future use of the data.</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Audit of the F4 Forms to be carried out at an early stage, to check accuracy, reliability and usefulness of the data. This should be undertaken by, or on behalf of DfT and the Local Government Association.</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Further guidance on how to complete the F4 Forms, including examples of how specific schemes should be recorded.</strong></td>
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Managing Change

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Issue/Challenge</th>
<th>Recommendation on Potential Solutions</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The LTP process is labour intensive.</td>
<td>The LTP process should become less onerous over time as procedures become more embedded and practitioners gain experience. Most authorities appear to be getting better at monitoring and consultation tasks, two of the more onerous tasks. Limited and infrequent changes to the Guidance are essential if the process is to “bed down”.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The LTP process requires new skills and ways of thinking, especially in regards to the &quot;hearts and minds&quot; measures.</td>
<td>Local authorities and Consultants to ensure older professional staff and engineers receive training in the new skills required. Academic and Professional institutions to provide appropriate training courses. The importance of developing a wider range of skills to be emphasised in any national skills or transport planning initiatives.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| Lack of political buy-in from elected members may limit LTP vision and delivery programme. | LTP practitioners to ensure that Members are fully involved in the LTP process at both strategy and scheme level. This can be achieved through the following approaches:  
  - Task Groups, involving Executive and non-Executive members, to review the overall LTP (2006-2011 LTP);  
  - Encouraging Scrutiny Panels (based on non-Executive Members) to review and contribute to LTP strategies;  
  - Annual Spending Programme presented to Members to be based around allocations of funding to different policy areas, rather than specific schemes, to focus high level schemes on strategic issues.  
In addition, a formal Member Review process at scheme design stage will  
  - ensure potential public objections are considered at an earlier stage;  
  - strengthen the strategic and policy focus regarding scheme implementation, by ensuring the scheme design is still addressing intended policies (following scheme consultation) and still considered value for money (following possible increases in scheme costs at detailed design stage);  
  - ensure that Members understand the issues surrounding the final scheme design, thus giving them a greater sense of LTP Ownership and enabling them to inform the public more effectively.  

The real process of culture change necessary to make LTPs’ success will come from changes in public attitudes. This will require members to not shy away from measures which restrict the public’s preference for driving their cars. |
| The Cabinet system is seen as giving greater               | Local authorities to increase Member involvement in the process through:  
  - Task Groups, involving Executive and non-Executive members, to review the overall LTP (2006-2011 LTP);  
  - Encouraging Scrutiny Panels (based on non-Executive Members) to review and contribute to LTP strategies;  
  - Annual Spending Programme presented to Members to be based around allocations of funding to different policy areas, rather than specific schemes, to focus high level schemes on strategic issues.  
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The real process of culture change necessary to make LTPs’ success will come from changes in public attitudes. This will require members to not shy away from measures which restrict the public’s preference for driving their cars. |
Responsibility to individual Executive Members, but has meant that other Members have become less involved in the process. 

Process through:
- Area sections in the LTP to provide local context for members;
- Electronic versions of the LTP (on CD-ROM or the internet) to make the document more accessible;
- Effective communication between portfolio members/officers and other members, e.g. regular seminar meetings and progress reports to members;
- Workshops aimed at back-benchers rather than senior members (possible arranged through the Local Government Information Unit);
- Closer links with the Local Strategic Partnerships;
- Cross-party task groups/scrutiny panels involving backbench Members to address strategic issues

**Documentation**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
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<th>Recommendations on Potential Solutions</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>LTPs and APRs addressed to multitude of audiences - funding bid and public information document</td>
<td>APR Good Practice Guide, based on good practice examples from 2002 APRs, and also identifying current areas of weakness. Greater use of separate Summary Documents aimed at the general public, and technical appendices aimed at Government. Main APR document to be a focused report, accessible to Government, stakeholders and the general public. Consultation to be undertaken on the readability of the APR and quality of Summary Documents, to ensure adequate coverage of relevant issues and ease of understanding. <em>Key issues regarding APRs are to maintain flexibility and ensure the strategic nature of the document remains (i.e. the focus remains reporting on progress and targeting of future spend rather than the bidding process).</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Guidance changes from year to year and is constantly late</td>
<td>Freeze Guidance for more than one year to provide certainty or publish brief notification of changes only rather than full re-issue. DfT to stress the optional and advisory nature of any supplementary guidance issued. DfT LTP Division to appoint other Department/Consultancy to prepare Guidance before Christmas.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&quot;One size fits all&quot; - Guidance sets same requirements for metropolitan and small rural authorities</td>
<td>Guidance to be less prescriptive allowing greater flexibility in interpretation of Guidance to reflect authority type and capacity. DfT to stress the optional and advisory nature of any supplementary guidance issued. Different Guidance streams for different authority types. Comparisons to be based on these types rather than through a &quot;one size fits all&quot; approach: this would require greater liaison</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Transitional arrangements between LTPs is unclear</strong></td>
<td>DfT to issue Guidance on outline timetable and process for development, consultation and publication of second LTP within 2003</td>
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| The "plethora" of reports and documents authorities are now required to produce is becoming increasingly burdensome. | *The LTP process should become less onerous over time as procedures become more embedded and practitioners gain experience.*  
Flexibility in requirements for smaller authorities, including strengthened requirements for joint working, to reduce LTP/APR burden.  
Consideration to be given in the long term to a single cross-cutting "State of the Locality" Annual Report covering all policy areas. |
| Areas of weakness continue to exist within the LTP process. | Additional/supplementary Guidance is required for Joint LTPs and cross-boundary working, working with the private sector, technical robustness, target setting and monitoring, rural transport and DfT assessment criteria.  
Guidance should include better coverage and integration with other policy areas and frameworks (e.g. Community Plans), and closer links with national road and rail policy and associated investment plans. The statutory nature of the LTP and the importance of achieving member buy-in to the LTP process should be stressed, along with the importance attached to achieving buy-in in DfT's overall assessment of local authority performance.  
*It is important that any additional guidance remains flexible and advisory in nature.* |