

Place and Resources Overview Committee

4 June 2025

Joint Local Transport Plan 2026 - 2041 For Recommendation to Cabinet

Cabinet Member:

Cllr J Andrews, Place Services

Local Councillor(s): N/A

Senior Leadership Team:

Jan Britton, Executive Director, Economy and Environment

Report author and job title: Owen Clark (Strategic and Policy Team Manager)

Email: owen.clark@dorsetcouncil.gov.uk

Statutory Authority:

Report status: Public [Choose an item.](#)

1. Executive summary (maximum of 500 words)

- 1.1 This report presents the Local Transport Plan 2026 to 2041 (LTP) and the first five-year Implementation Plan for consideration and seeks recommendation for its adoption as part of the council's strategy framework.
- 1.2 The LTP sets the long-term transport strategy for Dorset and BCP to 2041, informed by extensive engagement with residents, businesses and stakeholders. Consultation demonstrates strong overall support for the Plan's direction among Dorset residents, providing a clear mandate to proceed with adoption.
- 1.3 The Plan establishes priorities for transport investment and will be supported by delivery programmes including the Bus Service Improvement Plan (BSIP), Active Travel Infrastructure Plan (ATIP) and Rights of Way Improvement Plan (RoWIP). The accompanying Implementation Plan identifies priority schemes for the period 2026–2031, subject to funding and approvals.
- 1.4 A Monitoring and Evaluation Plan sets out how progress towards delivering the LTP's vision and objectives will be tracked.

- 1.5 Timely adoption is essential to ensure continued compliance with statutory requirements, avoid a policy gap beyond 2026, and maintain eligibility for future Government funding.

2. Recommendation(s)

- 2.1 It is recommended that the Committee:

- a) Considers the feedback received from the formal public consultation and endorses the amendments to the LTP.
- b) Endorses the Local Transport Plan 2026 – 2041 and recommend it for approval by Cabinet and adoption at Full Council.
- c) Supports delegated authority to the Executive Director for Regeneration, Infrastructure and Growth, in consultation the Cabinet Member for Place Services, to approve any necessary minor non-material and non-policy altering changes that such do not materially alter the substance, objectives or strategic direction of the plan before it is published.
- d) Supports delegated authority to the Executive Director for Regeneration, Infrastructure and Growth, in consultation the Cabinet Member for Place Services, to approve timely updates to the Implementation Plan, where the need arises, to take account of changes of national policy, local priorities or funding.

3. Reason for the recommendation(s)

- 3.1 The Council has a statutory duty under the Transport Act 2000 to prepare and maintain a Local Transport Plan. The current plan (2011–2026) is approaching expiry, and adoption of the new LTP is required to ensure continued compliance.
- 3.2 The proposed LTP is supported by a comprehensive evidence base and extensive engagement with residents, businesses and stakeholders. Consultation demonstrates strong overall support for the Plan's vision and objectives, with high levels of support among Dorset residents, providing a clear local mandate for adoption.
- 3.3 The final Plan has been strengthened in response to consultation feedback, with greater emphasis on public transport, safety, network resilience and deliverability, ensuring it reflects local priorities and is positioned for effective implementation.
- 3.4 Timely adoption is also critical to maintain eligibility for Government funding and to provide a clear strategic framework for future investment. As the Plan is being developed jointly with BCP Council, delegated authority to senior

officers is recommended to enable any final minor amendments prior to publication.

- 3.5 The recommendation to provide delegated authority to update the Implementation Plan ensures that it can remain responsive to changes in national policy, local priorities and funding availability over the Plan period. This flexibility will support effective delivery, enable timely responses to emerging opportunities, and ensure continued alignment with the LTP's strategic objectives.

4. The Local Transport Plan 2026-2041

- 4.1 This report seeks the Committee's recommendation to Cabinet to adopt the Joint Local Transport Plan 2026–2041 as presented in Appendix 1.
- 4.2 The LTP is the Council's statutory transport strategy, setting the framework for movement of people and goods over the next 15 years. It establishes a long-term vision for a transport system that is safe, sustainable, inclusive and resilient, supporting economic growth, environmental protection, and improved health and wellbeing.
- 4.3 Our transport plan contains a vision which shows what we want travel to be like by 2041:

Our travel will be transformed through innovation and digital connectivity, creating accessible and inclusive travel choices for our residents, workers and visitors. Our transport network will support sustainable economic growth in our urban and rural communities, contribute to our decarbonisation targets and protect our unique local environment.

- 4.4 At the heart of the LTP is a vision-led, place-based approach to planning transport. This represents a shift from traditional approaches focused on predicting traffic demand, towards proactively shaping a future transport system that offers genuine travel choice, reduces reliance on the private car, and enables more sustainable patterns of development and movement.
- 4.5 The Plan is underpinned by six key objectives which together deliver our vision for the transport system:
- a) safeguarding the climate and environment;
 - b) improving health and wellbeing;
 - c) creating accessible and prosperous places;
 - d) enabling a safer transport system;

- e) maintaining a resilient and fit-for-purpose network; and
 - f) ensuring public transport is inclusive and accessible.
- 4.6 Together, these objectives support stronger, healthier communities, improve connectivity, particularly in rural areas, and enhance access to jobs and services. The Plan also provides the basis for securing investment and aligning transport with growth ambitions.
- 4.7 Adoption of a new LTP is both timely and necessary. The current plan expires in 2026, and maintaining an up-to-date and compliant LTP is essential to retain eligibility for Government funding and ensure continued investment in Dorset's transport network.

How the new LTP was developed

- 4.8 The Joint LTP has been developed through an evidence-led process in partnership with BCP Council. Preparation commenced in 2023 following Cabinet approval.
- 4.9 A comprehensive evidence base was used to identify key transport challenges and opportunities across the area. Early engagement with residents, businesses and stakeholders helped shape the emerging strategy and ensured that local priorities informed the draft Plan.
- 4.10 Formal consultation on the draft LTP Strategy and Implementation Plan took place over a nine-week period (18 August to 20 October 2025. Consultation was undertaken at a formative stage and sought views from residents, businesses, community groups, town and parish councils, statutory bodies and key stakeholders, including health, transport, environmental and accessibility organisations.
- 4.11 A range of accessible methods were used, including online and paper surveys, easy-read materials, email responses, and a programme of engagement events across Dorset and BCP. This approach ensured the consultation was proportionate, inclusive and aligned with statutory requirements, and that responses have been taken into account in the preparation of the final Plan. For the full Consultation report see Appendix 4.
- 4.12 The final LTP reflects the feedback received through consultation and has been updated to align with the latest Department for Transport guidance published in April 2026.
- 4.13 The resulting Plan is a robust, evidence-based strategy, developed collaboratively and clearly aligned with both national policy and local priorities.

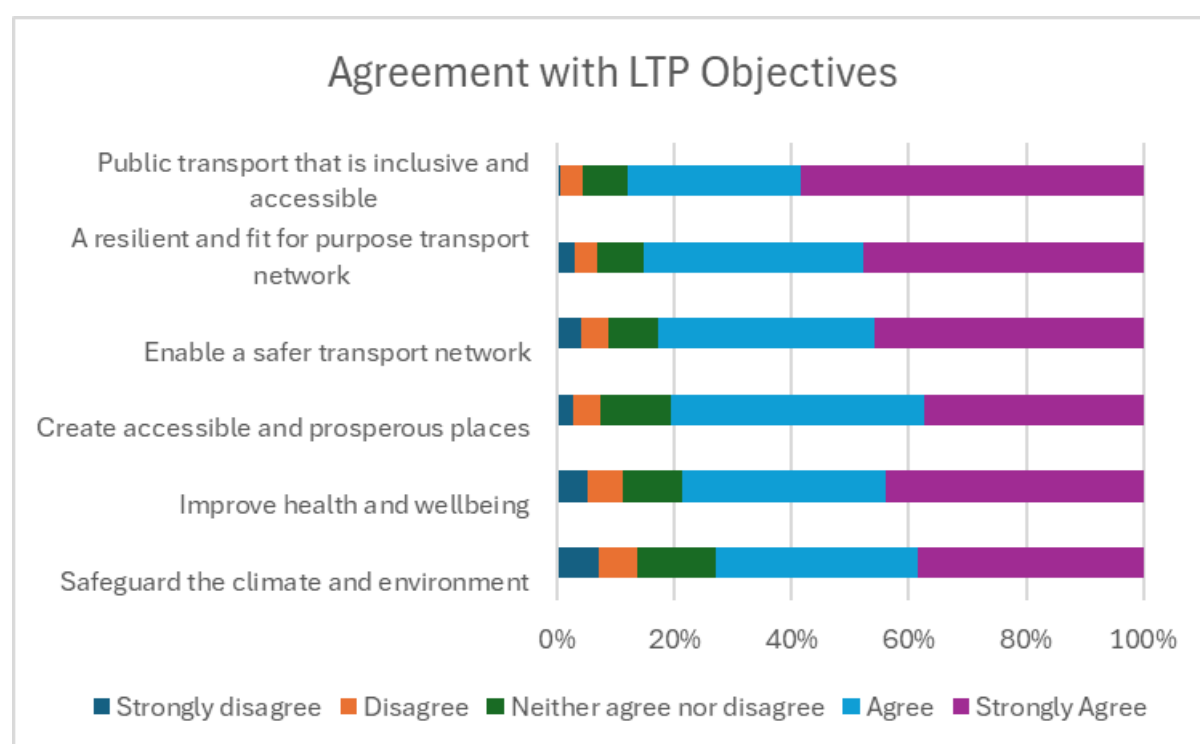
4.14 A Monitoring and Evaluation Strategy (see Appendix 3) has also been developed to articulate how progress in delivering the LTP objectives will be monitored and measured over the lifetime of the plan.

Consultation Feedback

4.15 The online consultation received 1,397 valid responses, with approximately 70% from Dorset Council residents and 30% from the BCP Council area.

4.16 The results demonstrate strong overall support for the LTP's direction. In Dorset, 72% of respondents agreed with the vision and objectives, representing a clear and positive mandate to proceed with adoption of the Plan.

Figure 4.1 - How much do you agree or disagree with each objective of our transport strategy? (Dorset Residents)



4.17 Across Dorset and BCP, the key priorities identified were:

- Public transport (especially buses) was the dominant issue, with around half of respondents identifying improvements to frequency, reliability and coverage as their top priority.
- Road network concerns were also significant, including congestion, delays and poor maintenance.
- Safety was a consistent priority, with strong support for measures to reduce casualties and improve conditions for vulnerable users.

- d) Accessibility, affordability and inclusion cut across all themes, particularly for older people, disabled users and those without access to a car.
 - e) Active travel attracted broad support, particularly for safer and better-connected walking and cycling routes, although views were more mixed where impacts on road space were perceived.
- 4.18 Feedback also highlighted important geographic differences. Dorset responses placed particular emphasis on rural connectivity and bus provision, while BCP responses focused more on urban network performance, including congestion and journey reliability.
- 4.19 A consistent theme across both residents and stakeholders was the need for clear delivery plans, realistic funding assumptions, and confidence that the strategy can be implemented effectively.
- 4.20 Feedback from residents and stakeholders has directly informed targeted changes to the final LTP. These changes respond specifically to key issues raised through consultation, particularly in relation to public transport, safety, network condition and deliverability. A summary of how feedback has been addressed is set out in the table below:

Table 4.1 – Summary of post consultation changes

You said (Consultation feedback)	We did (Changes to the LTP)
Public transport provision, particularly buses, is insufficient, especially in rural areas	Strengthened the emphasis on improving bus service availability, coverage and accessibility, with clearer supporting policy direction
Greater focus is needed on personal safety	Added stronger references to personal safety, including measures relating to violence against women and girls and safer travel environments
The condition of roads, pavements and overall network maintenance	Increased emphasis on highway maintenance, including footway quality, crossings, and network resilience
More needs to be done to ensure the network is safe for all users	Strengthened the focus on road safety, including safer crossings and improved conditions for vulnerable users
Accessibility and inclusion should be central, particularly for those without access to a car	Reinforced the importance of inclusive and accessible transport, particularly public transport and active travel options
Need for clearer plans showing how the strategy will actually be delivered	Added a new section on deliverability and funding, improving transparency around implementation
Requests for better-connected walking and cycling routes, alongside concerns about impacts	Maintained and clarified support for active travel, with a clearer narrative on balancing competing needs
Greater focus needed on school travel and safer routes for children	Added additional references to safer school travel throughout the document
Concern that objectives could be interpreted as prioritised unevenly	Clarified that all objectives are equally important and not ranked in priority order
Desire for clearer, more accessible summary information	Produced an additional summary version of the LTP to support understanding and engagement

- 4.21 These changes ensure that the final LTP is more clearly focused, more responsive to local needs, and better positioned for delivery.
- 4.22 Overall, the consultation confirms strong support for the LTP and demonstrates that the final Plan has been shaped by local priorities. The changes introduced directly respond to the issues raised, strengthening both the strategy and its deliverability.
- 4.23 Timely adoption of the LTP is now required to ensure compliance with statutory requirements, maintain access to Government funding, and provide strategic certainty for transport investment beyond 2026.

5. Alternative options considered

- 5.1 A range of alternative approaches were considered in developing both the LTP strategy and the associated Implementation Plan.
- 5.2 A do-nothing option was discounted as it would not meet statutory requirements beyond 2026 or reflect significant changes in national policy, climate commitments and local priorities.
- 5.3 An approach based on predicting future traffic demand was considered but discounted in favour of a vision-led and objectives-based framework. This reflects the requirements of the Government's 2026 Local Transport Plan guidance, which requires that new LTPs are developed from a clear vision and set of objectives rather than traditional demand-led forecasting.
- 5.4 The Implementation Plan has been developed through a clear appraisal process, ensuring that shortlisted schemes contribute to LTP objectives, reflect local priorities, and are deliverable within realistic funding assumptions.
- 5.5 A Dorset only LTP was ruled out, ratified at Cabinet in September 2023, as a joint plan with BCP Council was considered the most effective option, reflecting the functional economic geography of the area and enabling a more coherent and competitive approach to securing external funding.

6. Legal considerations

- 6.1 The preparation, adoption and ongoing review of the LTP engages statutory duties under the Transport Act 2000 (as amended), which requires the Council to prepare, maintain, implement and keep under review a Local Transport Plan.
- 6.2 In developing the LTP, the Council has also had regard to its wider public law obligations, including but not limited to:
 - a) The duty to act reasonably and taken into account all relevant considerations.

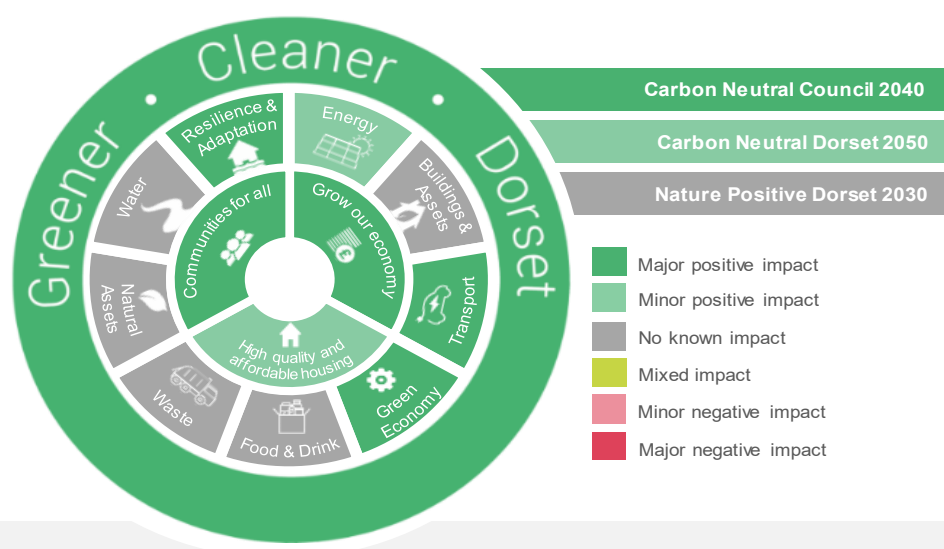
- b) Compliance with consultation requirements in accordance with established public law principles.
 - c) The Public Sector Equality Duty under section 149 of the Equalities Act 2010.
 - d) General duties of transparency and proper decision-making.
- 6.3 The report and accompanying appendices set out how these requirements have been addressed. Subject to Members being satisfied that these duties have been properly discharged, the Council is lawfully able to approve and adopt the LTP.
- 6.4 There is a residual risk of legal challenge (including by way of judicial review) in relation to the adoption of the LTP. This risk has been mitigated through an evidence-led approach, lawful consultation, consideration of equality impacts, and compliance with applicable environmental assessment requirements.
- 7. Financial implications**
- 7.1 The cost of preparing the new LTP has been met from a Government capacity grant. Preparation has primarily been undertaken using internal resources, with targeted external support where required.
- 7.2 Concerns raised during the consultation highlighted the need to ensure that the LTP is deliverable and supported by realistic funding assumptions. This has been reflected in the final plan and the accompanying Implementation Plan.
- 7.3 Individual schemes identified in the Implementation Plan are indicative and remain subject to the availability of funding, development of detailed business cases, statutory processes and separate governance and decision-making processes under the council's constitution. Long term delivery is dependent on future government funding settlements, funding opportunities and other sources (e.g. developer contributions). As such inclusion within the LTP or Implementation Plan is not commitment to its delivery or funding. The Council will continue to prioritise investment and make decisions on individual schemes as funding becomes available and as proposals are developed.
- 7.4 This approach ensures that the LTP remains flexible, realistic, and capable of responding to changing financial circumstances, while still providing a clear and robust strategic direction for transport investment.
- 7.5 Significant funding has been confirmed by the Department for Transport to support delivery of the Implementation Plan. The council has been allocated approximately £158.5m of consolidated transport funding for the period 2026/27 to 2029/30, including capital and revenue funding through the

Integrated Transport Fund and Bus Services Fund. This includes over £33m in 2026/27 to support highways maintenance, bus services, active travel and local transport priorities. Detailed funding breakdowns and allocations are set out in Appendix 6.

- 7.6 Maintaining an up-to-date, compliant LTP is essential to remain eligible for Department for Transport funding. Failure to adopt a new Plan would place the Council at a competitive disadvantage and risk reduced future investment.
- 7.7 Should future funding levels change, the Implementation Plan will be reviewed and updated, in line with the recommended delegated authority, to ensure that delivery remains aligned with available resources and priorities.

8. Natural environment, climate & ecology implications

- 8.1 The likely impacts of the LTP on the natural environment, climate and ecology have been assessed through an Integrated Impact Assessment (IIA), a non-technical summary is presented in Appendix 7. The IIA incorporates a Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) and Habitats Regulations Assessment (HRA). This integrated approach provides assurance that the LTP has been developed with due regard to its environmental, climate and ecological implications, in line with statutory requirements.
- 8.2 The climate emergency decision wheel is presented below. The accessible table of impacts and table of recommendations are presented in Appendix 8.



Quantitative Impact on CEE targets (if known)		
	Unit	Number of units (+/-)
2030 - Natural asset extent & condition	Ha	0
2040 - Operational Emissions	CO ₂ (tonnes)	

- 8.3 The LTP supports the council's commitment to addressing the climate and ecological emergency by promoting a shift towards more sustainable transport. This includes increasing use of public transport, walking and cycling, alongside supporting the transition to zero-emission vehicles.
- 8.4 The strategy recognises the growing impact of climate change on transport infrastructure and promotes a more resilient network through improved design, maintenance and adaptation to extreme weather.
- 8.5 The LTP also supports a more integrated approach to transport and spatial planning, encouraging patterns of development that reduce the need to travel and protect Dorset's natural environment.
- 8.6 A "nature-positive" approach is embedded throughout the Plan, with opportunities to enhance biodiversity through transport infrastructure, including green infrastructure and sustainable drainage.
- 8.7 Overall, the LTP is expected to contribute positively to climate, environmental and ecological objectives while supporting sustainable and resilient communities.

9. Well-being and health implications

- 9.1 The LTP supports improved health and wellbeing by promoting a more active, inclusive and sustainable transport system. It recognises the role transport plays in physical activity, air quality and access to services.
- 9.2 The strategy encourages walking, wheeling and cycling for shorter journeys, helping to increase activity levels and reduce reliance on the private car.
- 9.3 By improving access to public transport and essential services, the LTP also supports social inclusion, particularly for those without access to a car.
- 9.4 Public Health have responded to the public consultation and are supportive of the LTP.

10. Other implications

- 10.1 NA

11. Risk implications

- 11.1 HAVING CONSIDERED: the risks associated with this decision; the level of risk has been identified as:

Current Risk: Medium – Without an up-to-date LTP in place, we risk a reduction in Government funding.

Residual Risk: Low

- 11.2 There is a risk of reduced access to Government funding if the Council does not maintain an up-to-date and compliant Local Transport Plan.
- 11.3 As a jointly developed plan with BCP Council, there is also a risk that changes arising from each authority's approval process may require minor amendments prior to publication. This will be managed through delegated authority to senior officers.
- 11.4 Future changes to governance arrangements, including the potential establishment of a Strategic Authority, may alter responsibilities for transport planning. However, adoption of the LTP provides a robust and credible foundation for any future sub-regional transport strategy. The LTP is aligned with aspirations for transport within the wider potential Wessex geography.

12. Equalities

- 12.1 In exercising its functions in relation to the preparation and adoption of the LTP, the council has had due regard to the matters set out in section 149 of the Equality Act 2010 (the Public Sector Duty), including the need to:
 - a) Eliminate discrimination, harassment and victimisation;
 - b) Advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and those who do not; and
 - c) Foster good relations between such persons.
- 12.2 An Integrated Impact Assessment (IIA), incorporating an Equalities Impact Assessment (EqIA), has been undertaken alongside the development of the LTP. This provides a structured and proportionate assessment of impacts on protected and vulnerable groups and demonstrates that due regard has been given throughout the preparation of the Plan.
- 12.3 The IIA identifies that transport has differential impacts across groups, with particular vulnerabilities for older people and disabled people (in relation to accessibility and infrastructure), young people (in relation to reliance on public transport and affordability), women and vulnerable users (in relation to personal safety), and rural communities (in relation to access to services and risk of isolation).
- 12.4 The IIA concludes that, without intervention, these impacts are moderate to significant given the essential role of transport in accessing services, employment and wider opportunities. The LTP is, however, expected to deliver overall positive equalities outcomes, particularly in improving accessibility, safety and inclusion.

- 12.5 The IIA also identifies that impacts are dependent on the design and delivery of individual schemes. The LTP therefore adopts a mitigation-led approach, including:
- a) the application of inclusive design principles;
 - b) the undertaking of scheme-level Equality Impact Assessments where appropriate;
 - c) ongoing monitoring through the LTP Monitoring and Evaluation Framework; and
 - d) continued engagement with groups more vulnerable to transport disadvantage.
- 12.6 Reasonable alternatives have been considered through the IIA process, ensuring that the preferred LTP strategy reflects an approach that maximises accessibility and inclusion, while balancing environmental and economic objectives.
- 12.7 The findings of the IIA have directly informed the development of the LTP, including its focus on public transport, accessibility, active travel and safety. Consultation responses, including those representing protected characteristics and transport-dependent groups, have also been taken into account.
- 12.8 Consultation identified public transport as the most prominent issue. Improvements in availability and accessibility are expected to particularly benefit groups who are more reliant on these services, including younger and older people, disabled users and those on lower incomes.
- 12.9 Overall, the IIA demonstrates that the LTP is expected to have a positive impact, particularly in improving access to services, jobs and opportunities for those less able to travel by car.
- 12.10 Members are required to have due regard to the equality implications set out in this section and the supporting appendices when making their decision. The IIA Non-Technical Summary is provided at Appendix 8 for reference.

13. Appendices

- 13.1 Supporting evidence accompanying this report includes:

Appendix 1 – Local Transport Plan 2026-2041

Appendix 2 – Implementation Plan 1 2026-2031

Appendix 3 – Monitoring and Evaluation Strategy

Appendix 4 – Consultation Report

Appendix 5 – Summary of changes made

Appendix 6 – Summary of Government funding for transport delivery

Appendix 7 – Integrated Impact Assessment (IIA) Non-Technical Summary - Weblink

Appendix 8 – Natural Environment, Climate and Ecology accessible table of impacts and table of recommendations

14. Background papers

14.1 Previous Committee Decisions:

- a) Place and Resources Overview Committee. 25th September 2025
- b) Cabinet. 5th September 2023.
- c) Place and Resources Overview Committee. 27th July 2023.

15. Report sign-off

- 15.1 This report has been through the internal report clearance process and has been signed off by the Director for Legal and Democratic (Monitoring Officer), the Executive Director for Corporate Development (Section 151 Officer) and the appropriate Portfolio Holder(s)