

Meeting of the Council – 27th February, 2006

Report of the Cabinet

Local Transport Plan 2005/06 to 2010/11

Purpose of Report

1. To approve the Local Transport Plan (LTP2) submission for funding the West Midlands (WM) transport initiatives for the period to 2011.

Background

2. The West Midlands Metropolitan Authorities and the Passenger Transport Authority (PTA) jointly submit a Local Transport Plan and this enables over £100m capital investment per annum to the conurbation. This is now being split between funding direct to the West Midlands Conurbation as contained within the Annual Capital Settlement (ACS) and regionally determined allocations.
3. The Cabinet approved the draft LTP2 for submission at the meeting held on the 15th June 2005.
4. This is the final LTP2 document which seeks to clarify long and short term strategies in advance of any recommendations arising from demand management studies, financed through the Transport Innovation Fund (TIF), in addition it contains the Integrated Transport and Maintenance initiatives proposed over the five year period to 2010/11.
5. The final LTP2 takes into account:-
 - Demand management
 - The regional prioritisation Process
 - Sub-Regional Studies
 - The Accessibility Strategy
 - The Equality assessment
 - The Strategic Environmental Assessment (*Overall impact LTP2 positive*)
 - Stakeholder and public consultation.
 - The ACS Letter of the 14th December 2005

6. Each Council and the PTA, must approve this document for submission to Government by the end of March 2006.
7. The West Midlands Planning and Transportation (P & T) Sub-Committee considered the LTP2 at it's meeting on 13th January and the West Midlands Joint Committee at their meeting on the 25th January resolved to commend LTP2 to individual authorities.
8. The Select Committee on the Environment considered the LTP2 at the meeting held on 23rd January and resolved that Quality Bus networks should be investigated and expressed concern in connection with the withdrawal of local train services from Stourbridge to Birmingham New Street.
9. In respect of Quality Bus Networks the Settlement Report later on the agenda sets out a proposal for Brierley Hill.
10. In terms of quality of delivery of public transport services the bus strategy seeks close working between the PTA/Centro, local authorities and bus companies as current statutory processes preclude Quality Bus Contracts in the short term – the statutory obstacles were raised with the Secretary of State at the meeting held on 25th January and there was recognition that reliability issues affect modal shift.
11. Insofar as train services to Birmingham, The Council's comments were fed back, by the Cabinet Member for Transportation, to the Strategic Rail Authority as part of the consultation on the Rail Utilisation Strategy which has now been approved without amendment in respect of local services to Birmingham.
12. This report sets out matters that have changed or been developed since the draft LTP2 was submitted.

DEMAND MANAGEMENT (TRANSPORT INNOVATION FUND INITIATIVE)

13. The Transport Innovation Fund (TIF) is the Government's commitment to seeking a political consensus for tackling congestion by way of funding local feasibility studies that examine innovative packages of transport measures aligned to local circumstances.
14. Against this background The DfT has awarded the West Midlands, through the TIF, £2.6m over the next 2 years to undertake a feasibility study (reporting in summer 2006) that examines predicted levels of congestion and examines all the options for tackling it.
15. The West Midlands' TIF bid is the next stage of the West Midlands commitment to tackling congestion started in LTP1 and the West Midlands Area Multi Modal Study.
16. The TIF provides the West Midlands with an opportunity to investigate congestion solutions and unlock vital new money for transport – the Government has made it clear that TIF is the only route to new, significant, additional transport funding.
17. The TIF enables a potential platform to help fund a world class transport network in the West Midlands including a redeveloped New Street Station, better buses, Metro, roads and trains.

18. West Midlands business bodies are supportive of the TIF initiative and are engaged with the feasibility study now being undertaken and in a similar vein public consultations and involvement on the wider issues is a key element.
19. The Current TIF bid is Phase 1 and future phases will be subject to political decision and debate with the widest range of stakeholders.
20. In taking the bid forward the following conditions have been established:-
 - Any scheme must improve and not detract from the region's economy
 - Appropriate transport alternatives must be provided to offer choice
 - Funds should be able to be hypothecated to enhance region's reinvestment
 - Should fully utilise the region's innovation and skills base
 - Any scheme must recognise the inter-relationship with our Motorway network
 - Be responsive to local conditions in terms of location and time of day
 - Be integrated with overall transport strategy
 - Be consistent with the conurbation's economic growth and social inclusion strategies.
21. Work is underway and LTP2 has been changed to reflect this setting out measures to be considered in the short term.

SUB REGIONAL STUDIES

22. LTP2 reflects current progress on the sub regional studies in particular the Black Country Study and The City Region Development Plan.

REGIONAL PRIORITISATION

23. The Government has devolved to The Regions, within a framework of regional allocations, decision making in respect of funding for Transport, Housing and Economic Development.
24. The Regional Transport Partnership considers matters associated with the prioritisation process.
25. By the end of January 2006, regions are required to submit advice on priorities for all major schemes to 2007-08, as well as indicative, longer term, priorities to 2015-16.
26. The Government has provided Regional Funding Allocations (RFA) for three years up to 2007-08 and indicative longer term planning assumptions beyond the three years of the current spending review period. RFA represents only part of the Government's spending on transport in each region. Rail expenditure is not currently included, but is expected to be included in future as details become available on both franchises and infrastructure. Transport Innovation Fund (TIF) is not incorporated into the RFA, since it is designed to support the achievement of national objectives.
27. The Government is therefore seeking advice from the regions to assist them in making decisions on local transport major schemes, i.e. schemes costing more than £5m, where direct grant is sought by the Local Authority. It should

be noted that following prioritisation, transport allocations on specific schemes will continue to be subject to the subsequent decisions of the Secretary of State.

28. In March 2005 a joint team was convened between Local Government, Central Government and the private sector to develop and apply a methodology which would assist the West Midlands Region in prioritising alternative transport investment within the Region

ACCESSIBILITY

29. Included as part of the final LTP2 is an Accessibility Strategy. This strategy sets out the areas of work being undertaken by Authorities' to improve access to essential services.
30. Accessibility Planning focuses upon promoting social inclusion by tackling the accessibility problems experienced by those in disadvantaged groups and areas. It also concentrates on access to those opportunities that are likely to have the most impact on life chances: employment, education, health care and fresh food shops.
31. The Accessibility Strategy has a three-level approach:
 - Strategic level analytical evidence produced using the DfT software, Accession.
 - Discussions with Local Strategic Partnerships, Primary Care Trusts, Local Education Authorities and providers of transport for people who cannot use conventional public transport.
 - Building on work in disadvantaged areas such as Regeneration Zones.
32. The strategy sets out an aim to embed accessibility considerations within decisions that are taken in developing transport schemes. It also outlines a process whereby each authority will work in partnership with other organisations providing essential services. This will aim to ensure services are located in the most accessible locations and with adequate transport provision for those without access to a private form of transport or who are mobility impaired.
33. Accessibility issues have been considered as part of the prioritisation of the integrated transport schemes within the LTP.
34. Two new targets have been introduced associated with access to job interviews and hospitals – a study is ongoing into accessibility to Russells Hall Hospital.

STAKEHOLDER AND PUBLIC CONSULTATION

35. This identifies improving public transport, particularly rail, and highway maintenance as high priorities – appendix 3 sets out a synopsis. There is evidence of growing support for Metro. The lowest level of support is for new road building – albeit some representations from fleet operators have sought a higher priority for road building to increase capacity.

ASSESSMENT OF LTP

36. The settlement letter gives an assessment of the Provisional LTP that was assessed by DfT on six Criteria, scored as set out below:-

<u>Assessment Criteria</u>	<u>Assessment</u>
Context	Promising but needs more work
Analysis	Promising but needs more work
Maximising Value from Resources	Promising but needs more work
Involvement	Very Promising
Performance Management	Promising but needs more work
Priorities	Promising but needs more work

Overall, this equated to a “Promising” assessment.

37. Where more work was needed, as indicated above, additional clarification has been included.
38. A number of detailed comments were received and these have now been taken on board in the final LTP2 in particular mechanisms for monitoring progress in respect of delivering targets have been put in place – being brought within the remit of the P&T Monitoring Sub Group.
39. The LTP2 is on deposit in the Members Library and appendix 1 sets out the contents of the document, appendix 2 the Executive Summary and appendix 3 a synopsis of the December 2005 Consultation.
40. Minor presentational and factual changes may be required before final submission, but policy content will remain fixed.
41. On consideration of the information contained in this report, the Cabinet, at its meeting held on 8th February, 2006, resolved to recommend the Council to approve the proposals set out in paragraph 48 below.

FINANCE

42. The Local Transport Plan Settlement is the means by which transport capital resources are distributed to Local Authorities.
43. Maintenance and block allocations will be issued as non-ring fenced, single pot Supplementary Capital Expenditure (Revenue) SCE(R). Major schemes allocations will be secured as half grant contributions (Transport Supplementary Grant for road schemes and Section 56 grant for public transport as was previously the case) and half ring fenced SCE (R).

Law

44. The Transport Act 2000 requires that Local Transport Plans be submitted.

Equality Impact

45. An independent equality assessment has been undertaken. This concluded that the LTP2 was acceptable from the equality perspective. It identified ways future engagement could be improved and highlighted how factors such as racism and anti social behaviour impacts on the use of public transport.
46. The shared priorities agreed with DfT aim to improve social inclusion, the access to opportunities and to enable individuals and communities to realise their potential.
47. The Capital Programme includes specific provision to benefit pedestrians and other vulnerable users of the highway; assist social inclusion and the mobility of the less able.

Recommendation

48. That the LTP2 be approved for submission to Government and that the Leader's action in approving the West Midlands Transport Innovation Fund Bid be confirmed.

David Caunt

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Leader of the Council

Appendix 1

LTP Contents

- Executive Summary
- Introduction
- Vision for the West Midlands
- Transport in it's Wider Context
- Objectives
- Travel & Transport Problems
- Opportunities
- Strategy Development
- The strategy
- Implementation
- Performance Management

Together with a series of annexes covering; Congestion Strategy, Rights of Way improvement Plans, Hackney carriage and Private Hire Policy Statement, Road Safety Strategy Statement, Network management Duty Statement.

LTP2 - Executive Summary

Preface

We want the West Midlands to be securely established and recognised as an economic powerhouse of the United Kingdom.

Our vision is for a conurbation where jobs are interesting and plentiful, where urban life is of a high quality, and where the transport network offers attractive and effective ways of accessing work, shops, education and leisure.

We want to see high quality bus, rail and light rail networks serving vibrant urban centres, and less of the traffic congestion which delays our activities, dirties our air and denies economic and social opportunities. We want effective links with the hub of the national rail network and strategic motorways.

We need to invest in transport to create communities in which people want to live, and in which businesses feel it is right to locate. We need to regenerate old industrial land, to accommodate our plans for long term growth.

All this matters, not just to the West Midlands but to the nation, because our conurbation is home to more than 2.5 million people and is the largest outside London. As the nation's second city, we have the potential to raise international perceptions of the UK beyond the capital.

But for Birmingham and the metropolitan area to be recognised as a 'World City', we need a transport system which makes people *choose* to live, work and stay here, which attracts international businesses, which sustains a global cultural mix, and which is capable of hosting world sports and arts events. Without this transport system, we fail.

So the West Midlands is serious about tackling congestion and investigating long term solutions. We have a coherent strategy for improving accessibility, public transport, air quality and safety over the next five years, along with better management of traffic. Our vision and our plans are set out in this document.

Our vision

The seven authorities of the West Midlands Metropolitan Area have formally agreed a shared vision for:

- *a thriving, sustainable and vibrant community where people want to live and where business can develop and grow*
- *town, city and local centres that are attractive and vibrant, where high-quality public transport is the norm and walking and cycling are common-place*
- *cleaner air and less congested traffic conditions*
- *a safer community with fewer road accidents and with environments in which people feel secure*
- *equal opportunities for everyone to gain access to services and facilities and enjoy a better quality of life, with travel choices that are attractive, viable and sustainable.*

Introduction

The Transport Act 2000 requires all local transport authorities in England, outside London, to prepare Local Transport Plans (LTPs). Authorities are also required to take account of the Department for Transport's Full Guidance on Local Transport Plans: Second Edition, which should be read in conjunction with the Government's overall transport strategy set out in the White Paper 'The Future of Transport: a network for 2030', published in 2004.

The White Paper recognises that, over the next 30 years, demand for travel via road, rail and air will continue to grow. However, it also recognises that we cannot simply build our way out of the problems we face. The Government's strategy is built around three key themes: sustained investment, improvements in transport management and planning ahead.

The Regional Spatial and Economic Strategies for the West Midlands both recognise the Metropolitan Area as the driver for economic success for the wider region. These Strategies establish a basis for building the capacity we need to support economic viability and environmental sustainability. The synergies between economic development, regeneration, housing and transport, and the links with health and education, are reinforced. Our priorities are to regenerate communities, identify new opportunities for economic development and employment, and support the vitality of town and city centres.

The Regional Spatial Strategy, published as Regional Planning Guidance 11, sets out the Government's vision for the Metropolitan Area and neighbouring shire counties. It is for *'an economically successful, outward looking and adaptable region which is rich in culture and environment, where all people, working together, are able to meet their aspirations and needs without prejudicing the quality of life of future generations.'*

Against this background, our Final LTP2 for the West Midlands Metropolitan Area has been prepared in partnership by the seven local authorities - Birmingham, Coventry, Dudley, Sandwell, Solihull, Walsall, Wolverhampton - and the West Midlands Passenger Transport Authority. In the process, members and officers from the authorities have strengthened their engagement with the wider region, to ensure that regional Strategies and our LTP2 are closely aligned.

This engagement has produced a framework for prioritising major transport investment in the region. A Regional Prioritisation Exercise has rigorously examined major transport projects right across the wider West Midlands region and struck a strong balance between the needs of the conurbation and the needs of the region. We now have a clear, agreed, deliverable programme of transport priorities that will support other vital policies to drive housing growth and economic regeneration. What is clear is that investing in transport in the conurbation will have significant positive impacts in these respects in the wider region. We have developed good relationships with other stakeholders including the West Midlands Business Transport Group and environmental groups. We continue to work jointly with transport providers such as the Highways Agency, rail industry and bus operators.

We have consulted widely with the public. It is vital that everyone, from government to resident, has had an opportunity to influence the LTP2, if we are to make the Metropolitan Area a more prosperous, more enjoyable place in which to live and work.

Local Transport Plan 2

Our LTP2 builds on the Provisional LTP which we submitted in July 2005. Since then we have undertaken a final round of consultation, in which almost nine out of ten people said they want more done to tackle traffic congestion. Three quarters thought the West Midlands should consider a variety of options, including charging those who drive on congested roads and introducing flexible working hours to reduce peak traffic flows.

More than eight out of ten were in favour of extending the Bus Showcase network, which uses the latest advances in travel. Similarly large majorities want us to be spending more on highway maintenance and working towards improved rail services and an expansion of the Midland Metro tram network. These views have been incorporated into this final LTP2.

Our long term plans for regeneration and economic growth mean that we predict more than 165 million extra car journeys by 2011. We need to accommodate this increase by providing greater transport choice, or our plans for growth will simply generate more traffic congestion and become self-defeating: the extra congestion will create a 'push' factor and incoming residents and businesses will leave again.

In this document, developments since July 2005 have led to a number of major changes around the following issues:

Transport Innovation Fund – work to investigate long term solutions to congestion, including the option of road pricing, is now underway following our successful bid for funding

Regional Prioritisation – transport priorities, including redeveloping Birmingham New Street Station and extending the Midland Metro tram network, are now agreed with our partners across the wider West Midlands region. These schemes have also been rigorously tested to ensure they deliver value for money

Accessibility Planning – we have made considerable progress and now include two new targets on access to job interviews and to hospitals, plus a full statement on our approach to accessibility planning and proposed actions

Strategic Environmental Assessment – certain road schemes in our programme which the SEA identified as posing environmental problems will now only be approved if the benefits outweigh the disbenefits and mitigation measures are included. The outcomes of this assessment have been incorporated in LTP2.

Equalities Assessment – this has concluded that the LTP2 is acceptable, but has also identified how factors such as racism and anti-social behaviour impact on public transport use. These outcomes have also been incorporated into LTP2.

Sub Regional Studies – progress on the Coventry/Solihull/Warwickshire and Black Country studies has been slower than anticipated at the time of the Provisional LTP, and this is reflected in this document

We have also responded to informal feedback from the Department for Transport on our Provisional LTP, and to comments in the settlement letter of December 2005. In this Final LTP2 we have:

Developed a new mechanism which links the Integrated Transport Block to the delivery of LTP objectives and targets

Provided more examples of how we seek to ensure value for money, and how we integrate revenue and capital expenditure

Put in place a new system for monitoring progress on delivering our targets and recommending remedial action where needed

Our strategy in LTP2 works towards reducing congestion, improving air quality, accessibility and road safety, and achieving regeneration across all seven districts in the Metropolitan Area. It provides the framework for the programme of initiatives we will pursue between 2006 and 2011.

It also seeks to promote social inclusion and to help disadvantaged groups access opportunities that are mostly likely to increase their life chances. In particular, our accessibility strategy is designed to:

- enable more people to access job interviews and healthcare
- provide affordable and improved public transport, and greater personal safety
- help people overcome mobility, language and learning difficulties

But it is recognised that our LTP2 is based on existing policy options and their long term effectiveness is likely to be limited. So we want to work with Government to examine a wider range of more radical solutions.

Our successful Transport Innovation Fund bid will enable us to investigate different approaches to demand management as part of a comprehensive package of measures, which include improvements to the quality and scale of the public transport system. However some measures, including electronic road pricing, would take a number of years to introduce.

We will only be able to deliver a long term strategy if we have long term support from the many stakeholders and citizens in our Area. So a key element of our work will be continuing consultation which ensures that people are informed, understand, and can comment.

The results of the TIF work will help to determine our long term strategy, but it is already clear that a step change in our approach to congestion will be necessary. However, we have set out a number of pre-conditions which will need to be satisfied before deciding whether to move to a second stage of technical work later in 2006. We will continue to study potential solutions in partnership with stakeholders and the Government.

This necessary long term strategy to tackle congestion is underpinned by our continuing shorter term efforts to reduce traffic congestion and improve transport in the West Midlands.

Our strategy has three principal elements:

- (a) Make the best use of the existing transport network
- (b) Enhance the quality of public transport
- (c) Target investment in infrastructure to support regeneration

Policies to make the best use of the existing network include encouraging people to make smarter choices with their travel options, including walking and cycling, and rolling out a network of Red Routes to improve both the efficiency of our roads and the local environment. Other key schemes include Urban Traffic Management and Control Improvements, further Park & Ride initiatives and better information for passengers and potential public transport users.

We recognise the need to continue to improve our public transport offer, particularly the bus network in the West Midlands. We have a clear bus strategy and we will continue to engage stakeholders to reverse the decline in bus patronage and work towards a challenging target of 355m passenger journeys by 2011. In the longer term we recognise more needs to be done to improve the bus service in the West Midlands so will be exploring the possibility of taking greater control of the network through Quality Contracts.

Extending the Midland Metro network remains a high priority and is critical to building a cohesive transport network and supporting regeneration. Our heavy rail proposals include redeveloping New Street Station, a national priority, and tackling the overcrowding passengers currently experience on the network.

Examples of how transport investment will help support regeneration in the Metropolitan Area include improving access to Birmingham International Airport, principally through bus improvements.

Targets

Road traffic

Our key target is to limit the increase in road traffic mileage to no more than 7% between 2004 and 2010. This is ambitious, given the 3.3% rise between 2001 and 2003. It will require modal shift from car travel, more bus showcase routes, more bus capacity and the commitment of local employers to TravelWise initiatives.

Our other targets are to:

- have no increase in morning peak traffic flows into the nine LTP centres between 2005/06 and 2010/11, and
- increase the morning peak proportion of trips by public transport into the nine LTP centres as a whole from the 2005/6 baseline of 32.73% to 33.8% by 2009/10
- prevent any increase in average vehicle delays in the morning peak between 2003 and 2010
- have no more than a 7% increase in the total cost of delay on the main road network (excluding buses) between 2004 and 2010

Buses

Bus use in the Metropolitan Area continues to suffer long-term decline. However, buses remain the dominant form of public transport and plans to tackle congestion and reduce traffic depend on an upswing in their fortunes. Our targets are to:

- increase bus use from the 2003/04 base of 325 million trips per year to 355 million by 2010/11
- increase bus satisfaction from 57% in 2004 to more than 60% by 2009/10
- operate 83% of bus services between 'one minute early and five minutes late' by 2010/11

The Metropolitan Authorities will further develop showcase routes, introduce bus priority measures in conjunction with Red Routes, greatly expand TravelWise and seek cooperation with bus operators. If local consultation fails to deliver agreements on physical measures, decline will continue.

Light rail

Passenger numbers on the Midland Metro are stable. Our target is to increase light rail use from 5.1 million trips per year in 2003/04 to 5.8 million in 2010/11. Increased frequency at peak times and new commercial and residential developments in Bilston and West Bromwich should boost ridership. Centro also needs to implement enhanced park and ride facilities.

Personal safety

Personal security is a major issue in local Community Plans and Strategies, and our target is to improve actual per perceived personal safety while travelling on public transport by 10% between 2005/6 and 2010/11.

Cycling

The rate of decline in cycle use is reducing, but to achieve growth is seen as a significant challenge. Our target is for a 1% increase in the cycling index between 2003/4 and 2010/11.

Highway maintenance

We have used local knowledge and engineering judgement rather than in-depth analysis or the prediction of the effect of spending programmes. Frequent changes in the approved monitoring methodology and a lack of consistent, accurate survey data prevent a more scientific approach. Our target is for a 5% reduction in the length of each of the three networks – principal roads, unclassified roads and high usage footways - requiring further investigation according to Department for Transport rules and parameters.

Accessibility

Social inclusion improves access to work, education, health care and fresh food shops. It is a priority for all the Metropolitan Authorities. Our accessibility strategy is based on:

- strategic-level analysis produced by the Accession software (the new tool developed for the DfT)
- discussions with stakeholders such as Local Strategic Partnerships, Primary Care Trusts, Local Education Authorities and transport providers
- building on work in disadvantaged areas such as Regeneration Zones and around New Cross Hospital in Wolverhampton

Our targets are to:

- double the number of people attending job interviews per year via access initiatives from 1150 in the 2005 baseline to 2300 by 2011
- increase by 50% the total population within 30 minutes inter-peak travel time of a main NHS hospital by 'accessible' public transport, from 580,000 in the 2005 baseline to 870,000 by 2011

Regeneration

The main way in which transport can support economic regeneration is to ensure that people and goods can move more efficiently. Our targets are to:

- maintain inter-peak accessibility to the nine LTP centres as a whole between 2004/5 and 2010/11
- increase the proportion of industrial areas accessible to 44 tonne lorries within five minutes of the nearest motorway junction (daytime inter-peak) by 2% between 2004 and 2010

Travel plans

These targets are required by the Regional Spatial Strategy and are for:

- 100% of schools to have travel plans by 2011
- 30% of all employees to work in organisations committed to work place travel plans by 2011

Air Quality

Air quality is an important issue and all the Authorities have completed air quality assessments. Seven pollutants were considered and NO₂ and PM₁₀ particles give most cause for concern. Around thirty Air Quality Management Areas have been declared, a number in the M6 corridor.

Our air quality strategy involves:

- working with the Highways Agency to deal with the substantial emissions from motorway traffic
- detailed initiatives to tackle local hotspots through engineering and traffic management
- broader policies to encourage forms of transport that have less impact on air quality, such as alternative-fuel vehicles

Our target is to reduce the average NO₂ level by 1% between 2004/05 and 2010/11 in areas where NO₂ exceeds the national objective. This is ambitious, given rising traffic levels, but can be achieved if congestion and traffic growth targets are met.

Road Safety

The Metropolitan Authorities have a good track record of reducing accidents and the Area is designated by the Department for Transport as a Centre of Excellence for road safety.

In 2004, total KSI (killed and seriously injured) casualties fell by more than 6%, to a level more than 45% below the 1994-98 baseline. We are on course to achieve the national targets of a 40% reduction in all KSIs and 50% reduction in child KSIs by 2010.

Our road safety strategy is to:

- educate and train road users to travel as safely as possible
- ensure all who live, work and travel in the West Midlands have access to road safety advice
- target safety training at vulnerable users such as cyclists and pedestrians
- subject new infrastructure to safety audits
- implement a programme of safety schemes aimed at accident cluster sites
- use safety cameras to enforce speed limits and traffic signals, backed by educational campaigns

Much of our strategy is aimed at deprived areas, where casualty rates both for all and for children are double those of the least deprived areas. Our targets are to achieve:

- a 40% reduction in all KSIs from the 1994-98 average to 2010, and a 30% reduction from 2004 to 2010
- a 50% reduction in child KSIs from the 1994-98 average to 2010, and a 35% reduction between the 2002-04 average and the 2008-10 average
- a 10% reduction in slight casualties from 2004 to 2010

These targets are regarded as ambitious but realistic and assume similar levels of spending to the last five years.

Delivery

The authorities have made substantial efforts to put in place a robust monitoring and review regime, in order to ensure we achieve targets and value for money. The Monitoring Group, comprising senior Members and reporting directly to the Planning & Transport sub-committee, meets monthly to consider detailed progress reports on delivery, expenditure, progress towards targets and trend information.

This frequent monitoring and review cycle means problems are identified early in order for remedial action to be taken, and ensures that targets remain both realistic and ambitious. Huge challenges lie ahead. We must make sure we deliver our LTP 2006 efficiently and effectively, so that we maximise progress towards the vision for the West Midlands, which is shared by the Government, the Metropolitan Authorities and citizens alike.

Conclusion

The West Midlands deserves a world-class transport system that meets the needs of local people, and reflects the significance of our position at the heart of the nation. Ignoring congestion is not an option if the West Midlands is to remain competitive and see jobs and housing grow. We have a sound strategy for the next five years, but it is also time to start looking longer term, at all the potential solutions to our transport problems.

LTP 2 CONSULTATION DECEMBER 2005

A major consultation exercise seeking views from the public and key stakeholders on the Provisional West Midlands LTP was carried out in December 2005. This was the final consultation exercise to be carried out in advance of the submission of LTP 2 to Government in March this year. The results of the consultation have been taken into account in the preparation of LTP 2.

Two consultation leaflets were designed, one for the public and one for stakeholders. The primary purpose of which was to draw attention to the fact that this is the final stage of a long consultation process, and to survey views on important transport issues facing the West Midlands. The leaflet also notified stakeholders interested in the Strategic Environmental Assessment of the dual consultation on that.

The consultation leaflets asked 13 closed questions based on the original 11 questions that were asked as part of the July 2004 public consultation with the addition of 2 closed questions on congestion.

Results

The sample size of respondents was a very robust - 5,138 across the West Midlands.

The responses indicate a broad consistency with the consultation that was run in July '04 and the consequent priorities reflected in the LTP. Rail was still ranked as people's most important priority (59% strongly agree), with 'Building more roads' coming out worst (15% strongly agree).

The consultation asked respondents to prioritise, from a list of 14 options, which transport improvements they feel are the most important. The priorities for respondents are:

- Work towards better rail services – 50% rank this in their top four transport priorities
- Spend more on highway maintenance – 43% rank it as a top four priority
- Extend the Midland Metro tram network – 40% rank it as a top four priority
- Extend the Bus Showcase network – 38% rank it as a top four priority
- Do more to tackle congestion – 31% rank it as a top four priority

The consultation included the original 11 questions asked in the July '04 consultation with the addition of two new questions:

- In response to "We should do more to tackle traffic congestion" 88% responded in agreement that more should be done to tackle traffic congestion.
- In response to "We should investigate pros and cons of all options for tackling congestion" in which "charging those who drive on the most congested roads at the busiest times" was mentioned as an option, 75% of all responses responded in agreement, rising to 95% of stakeholder response.