

EAST HERTS COUNCIL

ENVIRONMENT SCRUTINY COMMITTEE – 13 SEPTEMBER 2016

REPORT BY THE HEAD OF COMMUNICATIONS, STRATEGY AND POLICY

PROPOSAL TO SET UP A TASK AND FINISH GROUP ON SUSTAINABLE TRANSPORT

WARD (S) AFFECTED: All

Purpose/Summary of Report:

- To provide the background on setting up a task and finish group for sustainable transport.
- To provide draft terms of reference for the task and finish group for approval.

<b><u>RECOMMENDATIONS FOR DECISION:</u> that</b>	
<b>(A)</b>	<b>The Draft terms of reference for the Task and Finish Group on Sustainable Transport be approved; and</b>
<b>(B)</b>	<b>The Membership of the Task and Finish Group on Sustainable Transport be agreed.</b>

**1.0 BACKGROUND**

1.1 Following elections to East Herts Council in May 2015 discussions on preparing a new Corporate Strategic Plan (setting out Council priorities) began in Autumn 2015. On 3<sup>rd</sup> October Members met to discuss long term policy objectives and challenges. “Sustainable transport” emerged as one issue Members were keen to address.

1.2 The Corporate Strategic Plan was subsequently adopted by Full Council in April 2016 and included an objective of “*working with key partners such as the County Council on sustainable transport solutions for East Herts, including community transport and green travel planning*” as part of an overall theme to encourage a flourishing local economy.

- 1.3 This objective captures current activity the council is involved in such as supporting highly localised community transport schemes and encouraging green travel amongst staff. It also acknowledges that large scale transport infrastructure projects are often led by other agencies and typically East Herts Council will only have a limited impact upon their delivery. However there is an appetite from Members to further understand the potential value the district council can bring and it was acknowledged at the time of adopting the Corporate Strategic Plan that further thinking around this would be required.
- 1.4 Members had a subsequent away day on 21 May 2016 to consider a range of issues – one of which included sustainable transport. A number of next steps emerged from that session:
- Commitment to continue supporting community transport schemes where there is evidence of need, supporting vulnerable and isolated residents. It was acknowledged however that a stronger commissioning approach was needed, working alongside the CVS, to understand the value for money each scheme delivers. There was also a general recognition that these schemes are as much about supporting the public health agenda as they are about transport. This work has been taken forward under the Housing and Health Service.
  - Sustainable transport is also about highly localised interventions to improve connectivity (eg. around cycle routes, cycling facilities, electric car charging points, etc) and this should be explored further
  - There are a number of strategic transport issues which will affect the future prosperity of the district. These include road and rail infrastructure to support housing growth in strategic sites across the district as well as wider regional/national needs around the A10/ M11 corridor, West Anglia Mainline four-tracking, Crossrail 2 and Stansted Airport. Hertfordshire County Council is developing a transport vision for 2050, and has progressed new transport modelling software (COMET) which can be used to predict the impact of development on the highway. Whilst mindful that much of this strategic infrastructure is outwith the direct control of the district, members were keen to understand what role the council could play in order to influence the future provision of sustainable transport in the district, not least in the context of the strategic sites included in the District Plan and the council's ability to affect change through these developments.
  - There is an opportunity to 'future proof' development and

undertaken desk top reviews of national and international examples of towns and districts which have developed visionary approaches to sustainable transport. How much of this good practice is transferable in a rural district such as East Herts is currently unknown.

- A task and finish group was suggested as a possible next step.

1.5 Draft terms of reference and a work programme for such a task and finish group are attached at **Essential Reference Paper 'B'**. A copy of a paper on sustainable transport which was shared with Members ahead of the away day on 21 May can also be found at **Essential Reference Paper 'C'**.

## 2.0 **IMPLICATIONS/CONSULTATIONS**

2.1 Information on any corporate issues and consultation associated with this report can be found within **Essential Reference Paper 'A'**.

Contact Member: Councillor Gary Jones – Executive Member for Economic Development  
[gary.jones@eastherts.gov.uk](mailto:gary.jones@eastherts.gov.uk)

Contact Officer: Ben Wood, Head of Communications, Strategy and Policy, Extn: 1699.  
[ben.wood@eastherts.gov.uk](mailto:ben.wood@eastherts.gov.uk)

Report Author: Ben Wood, Head of Communications, Strategy and Policy, Extn: 1699.  
[ben.wood@eastherts.gov.uk](mailto:ben.wood@eastherts.gov.uk)