

Agenda Item 10, Enc viii) Local Transport Plan (LTP) – Councillor Priorities 2026/27

Purpose of the Report

To invite Ashington Town Councillors to agree their top three highways and transport priorities for submission to Northumberland County Council (NCC) as part of the preparation of the 2026/27 Local Transport Plan (LTP) Capital Programme.

Background

Each year NCC prepares a capital programme of works in line with the North East Transport Plan (NETP) Strategy.

Significant work is undertaken to identify priorities through data collection, condition surveys, and requests logged in NCC's Directory of Requests.

As part of this process, Town and Parish Councils are invited to submit their top three priorities. These will be considered alongside those of County Councillors and other consultees before the draft LTP programme is presented to Local Area Councils in February, ahead of final approval in March.

The LTP is capital funding only. It cannot be used for revenue-funded schemes such as public transport services, pothole repairs, or routine maintenance.

Assessment Criteria

Requests are assessed against the following NETP-aligned criteria:

- a) Overcomes inequality and supports the economy
- b) Carbon neutral transport
- c) Improves public health
- d) Encourages sustainable travel choices
- e) Improves network safety and security

Additional factors considered:

- f) Part of a wider package of measures
- g) Clear community priority
- h) Attracts external funding or links with other projects

Scoring: 2 = strong contribution, 1 = some contribution, 0 = none

Summary of Guidance for Councillors

When considering priorities, Members should note:

- The programme is highly competitive – demand far exceeds available funding.
- The annual allocation for Integrated Transport improvements across the County is approx. £1.6m, spread across walking, cycling, safety and traffic management schemes.
- Small, evidence-based, high-impact schemes have the greatest chance of success.
- Submissions should be issue-led (e.g., “pedestrian safety outside X school”) rather than proposing a fixed solution.

A step-by-step guide follows to support Members in choosing priorities most likely to be successful

Step 1 – Is it eligible for LTP funding?

✓ **Yes** – It is a *capital* improvement (crossing, footway, cycleway, safety scheme, signage, traffic management, parking restrictions). → Go to Step 2

✗ **No** – It is *revenue* (potholes, bus services, routine maintenance, resident parking, speed cameras/signs). → **Not eligible**

Step 2 – Are you describing an *issue* (not a solution)?

✓ **Yes** – “Pedestrian safety concern outside X School” / “Speeding traffic on Y Road.” → Go to Step 3

✗ **No** – “We want a zebra crossing here.” → **Reframe** as the issue/problem first.

Step 3 – Does it meet the scoring criteria? For each issue, ask:

Criteria	Score (0–2)
a) Tackles inequality / supports economy	
b) Reduces carbon / supports sustainable travel	
c) Improves health	
d) Encourages walking, cycling, public transport	
e) Improves safety & security	
f) Links to wider package / project	
g) Clear community priority	
h) Attracts external funding	

(2 = *strong*, 1 = *some*, 0 = *none*)

✓ **High scoring (8+ points)** → Go to Step 4

⚠ **Medium scoring (4–7 points)** → May be considered, but less likely.

✗ **Low scoring (<4 points)** → Very unlikely to be funded.

Step 4 – Is it realistic within funding limits?

✓ **Yes** – Small/medium scale, affordable within ~£1.6m annual county pot. → **Strong candidate**

✗ **No** – Large, costly scheme (e.g. new junction, long cycleway). → **Unlikely to be funded**

✓ **If the scheme is eligible, issue-led, scores well, and is realistic** → it has a better chance of being included in the programme.



Northumberland Local Transport Plan (LTP) Capital Programme

Town and Parish Council notes for Guidance

Criteria for LTP Schemes

Introduction

Each year we prepare a capital programme of works in line with the long term North East Transport Plan (NETP) Strategy.

Significant work goes on throughout the year to develop this programme from existing known issues and from collected data.

As part of preparing the annual LTP capital programme we like to know what your top three highways and transport priority issues are for your area, so that they can be considered for inclusion in the LTP Capital Programme.

Requests for improvements and maintenance received from the local community over time are recorded in the Directory of Requests database held by the County Council. Details of the requests that have been made within your area throughout the year are provided to assist in consideration of potential priorities.

When submitting priorities, please give as much information as possible, including the location and the reason for the priority, i.e., what is the issue that needs to be addressed? (e.g., pedestrian safety, speeding traffic). In each case it is the "issue" that is assessed, not any proposed solution.

The requests are assessed by officers in Technical Services. Our assessment criteria are aligned with those of the NETP.

The priorities submitted are discussed with County Council Members in the autumn for their comment before the final draft programme is developed and presented to the Local Area Councils for final comment (usually in February), prior to the final approval of the LTP capital programme in March.

The LTP programme is capital funding. It cannot be used for revenue funded schemes, such as public transport services or pothole repairs or general maintenance. Requests for new or improved bus or rail services will therefore be forwarded to the Public Transport Team who liaise with operators, (public transport infrastructure, e.g. raised kerbs at bus stops, is eligible for LTP funding). Routine maintenance requests such as pothole filling or ditch clearance will be forwarded to the relevant Highway Area.

We would note that as the demand for schemes significantly outweighs the funding available it is impossible to approve all the requests that we receive in the annual programme.

Requests are assessed against the following criteria:

- a) Overcome Inequality and Grow Our Economy
- b) Carbon Neutral Transport
- c) Healthier North East
- d) Appealing Sustainable Transport Choices
- e) Safe, secure network.

Other Criteria:

- f) Part of a package of measures
- g) Community Priority
- h) Attracts External Funding or Synergy with other projects

Scoring

2 = contributes to the criteria

1 = makes some contribution

0 = no contribution

The potential cost of schemes is also considered when developing the programme. For instance, the total funding provided annually by central government for LTP highways improvements is approximately £1.7m. Given the wide spread of improvement projects for road safety, cycling and walking, speed reduction, junction improvements etc it is unlikely that individual schemes requiring significant funding will be included in the annual LTP capital programme (eg major junction improvements, extensive cycleways)

Integrated Transport (Highway Improvement) Schemes

Integrated Transport schemes provide improvements to the existing highway network. They can include improvements to footways and cycleways, pedestrian crossings, road safety schemes, dropped kerbs, bus stop improvements, junction improvements, improvements to signs and road markings, speed management and changes to parking restrictions. The below provides some further information on some of these issues.

- Safety Schemes are assessed according to the number and severity of personal injury accidents from Police records.
- Speed management requests will be first discussed with the Police to consider any necessary enforcement intervention and may, if appropriate, be subject to a formal speeding survey before being considered for inclusion in the programme.
- This authority has a set policy for the introduction of local speed limits, which is based on national guidelines provided by the Department for Transport. This is predominantly based on road environment and the length and density of frontage development sufficient to justify the limit. The minimum requirement is for a distance of 600 metres of continuous frontage development.
- The County Council does not fund speed limit interactive signs. These are usually funded through Members Local Improvement Scheme allocations or by Town or Parish councils' contributions with agreements necessary to ensure Town or Parish Councils are aware of their commitments to fund the future costs of management and maintenance of these signs.

- ROSPA national guidance recommends that 20mph zones only be considered in residential areas and streets or in urban environments with a significant pedestrian interaction. 20mph zones should not be considered on strategic routes or through routes.
- When a request for a pedestrian crossing facility is received and is felt to be feasible for consideration a pedestrian/vehicle (PV2) survey is carried out for a two and a half hour period in the morning and afternoon, during school term. The survey involves recording the traffic flow and pedestrian crossing flow over a 50m length either side of the proposed crossing point. The policy adopted by the County Council is that where sites return a PV2 value of 0.2 or higher the provision of a crossing facility will be investigated further (this is dependent on funding being identified for the scheme and the location being suitable for introduction of a pedestrian crossing). However, where the PV2 value is below 0.2 the site is considered inappropriate for such a facility and no further investigation takes place.
- Northumberland County Council does not fund Resident Permit Schemes through the LTP. Although we receive regular requests for the introduction of Resident Permit Schemes as a means easing parking pressures in residential areas these are usually funded through Members Local Improvement Scheme allocations or by Town or Parish councils' contributions. The primary aim of a 'Resident Permit Parking' scheme is to protect residents, who live adjacent or close to settlement centres, from external parking pressures. They generally do not solve the majority of resident parking issues and in many circumstances create further ongoing problems. It should be noted that there is no right to park on a particular part of the highway and the only legal right a driver has is to pass and re-pass.
- Issues concerning traffic regulation (e.g., parking restrictions) are also considered as part of this annual review, rather than on an ad hoc basis throughout the year. This enables county wide priorities to be established.

Roads, Bridges & Public Rights of Way Maintenance

- The road, footway and bridge maintenance programme is developed largely from condition surveys. Foot/cycleway maintenance is prioritised from condition surveys, and on lengths where a lot of reactive maintenance work has been carried out and/or complaints from the public have been received.
- Public rights of way schemes are identified by the Countryside Access Team following consultation with path users. Works focus on meeting the Council's statutory duty by repairing flood damage or river erosion and improving the surface and drainage of damaged and well used paths in popular walking/riding areas.

Should you have any queries, officers will be happy to provide advice as necessary. Please contact highwaysprogramme@northumberland.gov.uk or contact Tel: 0345 600 6400