

A Better Connected Essex: Transport Strategy

Member briefing

Agenda

1 Executive Summary

2 Why do we need a strategy?

3 Vision, themes, outcomes and activities

4 Place based strategies

5 Place & Movement

6 Policies

7 Consultation feedback



Executive summary

1

It's vision-led and outcomes-focussed strategy, not a list of designed schemes.
It's the **compass, not map**

2

Covers Highways *AND* Transport - buses to bridges, active travel to maintaining our asset, roads to rail; and developed by multiple teams

3

It has strong public support – 86% agreed or strongly agreed

4

Districts and Combined Authority need it

5

Multiple documents: policies and implementation plans are legal requirements

What will a new transport strategy do?

Set vision for future

Since our last strategy in 2011, **travel needs and challenges have changed**. The new strategy will set out **Essex's highways & transport vision**, ensure better access for all, and deliver the services residents need and want, and what we aim to achieve in Essex e.g. what do we want provision to look like in 5/10/15 years?

Enable Everyone's Essex

Supports growth, improved health outcomes, access to skills & jobs,

Guide decisions

A modern, effective strategy to **guide transport service delivery and investment**, and it will define **how we deliver and manage services**.

Provide alignment

It will guide transport elements across Essex County Council strategies for **better alignment** e.g. Air Quality, or Spatial Development Strategy

Support districts

Districts need an up-to-date LTP to support their local plans with a clear transport framework. It will **strengthen collaboration** with partners in planning homes and jobs, ensuring that development happens where it can be supported

Support transition

It supports a smooth **transition to a combined authority**, who will become responsible for the LTP, whilst we produce a Greater Essex strategy

What will a new transport strategy NOT do?

Address detailed concerns

Transport strategy is the COMPASS, not the MAP e.g. Strategy will highlight the need to introduce more EV chargepoints but the EV strategy will deliver this

Guarantee funding

Transport strategy comes with minimal revenue funding but is essential to funding discussions with Central Government

Produce designed or costed pipeline

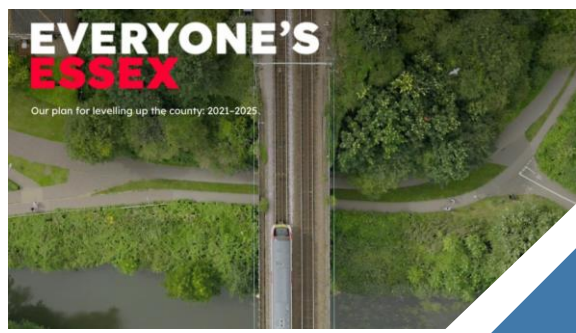
No longer possible to fund speculative pipeline. All ideas will need significant design, cost, VfM / affordability and deliverability assessments

Deliver schemes

Schemes will be delivered as funding becomes available



Strategy hierarchy: LTP first, then modal-specific strategies



Everyone's Essex
High Quality Environment
Transport and Built Environment



Statutory Strategies

- Local Flood Risk Management Strategy
- Essex Minerals Local Plan
- Essex Local Nature Recovery Strategy (LNRS)
- Essex Joint Health and Wellbeing Strategy
- **A Better Connected Essex (LTP)**
- Traffic Management Strategy

Other transport strategies:

- Essex Bus Service Improvement Plan (BSIP)
- Essex Electric Vehicle Infrastructure Strategy
- Local walking & cycling infrastructure plans
- Development management policies
- Safer Speeds strategy

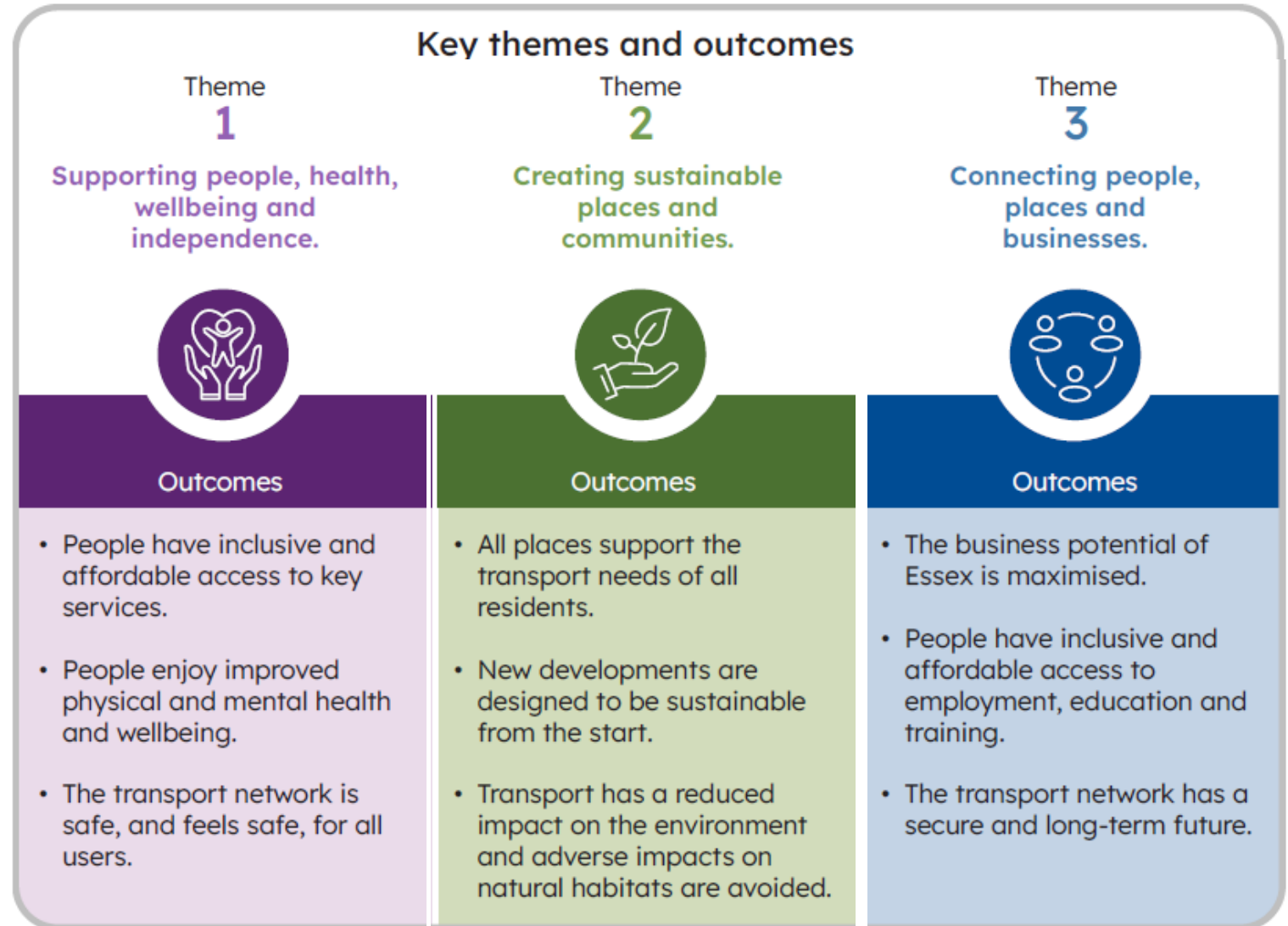
Other non-transport strategies (indicative)

- Sector development strategy
- Air Quality Strategy
- Essex Green Infrastructure Strategy
- Essex Digital Strategy
- Housing strategy 2021 to 2025
- Essex Joint Health and Wellbeing strategy



Strategy vision, key themes and outcomes

‘Our vision is for a safe transport system that supports economic growth and prosperity; provides access to our homes, services, education, work and leisure; contributes positively to our places and people’s health; and enables more sustainable choices and journeys to be made.’



Three step approach

1

Managing and maintaining the existing network

- Maintenance and management of our current transport network
- Prioritising more sustainable use of our current network
- Promoting smarter working and sustainable forms of transport, such as walking and cycling or travelling by bus or train

2

Minor improvements and changes

- Investing in improving our current transport network
- Better journey planning and ticketing, such as the TravelEssex app
- Introducing new technology and ensuring we have a sustainable transport
- Improving the transport network and addressing any gaps and congestion points
- Providing sustainable travel options to access new developments

3

Significant improvements and transformation

- Planning and understanding where significant change is needed and securing funding
- Reducing emissions from transport
- Transforming our network with technology improvements
- Encouraging and supporting positive lifestyle changes through transport projects

Under outcomes, we have example activities ¹

1. Supporting people, health, wellbeing and independence (40 activities)

- Design, build, operate and maintain transport infrastructure so that it is **accessible, easy and safe** to use for everyone
- Support the introduction of multi operator and **fully integrated smart ticketing** for transport services in Essex
- Work with landowners and other partners to ensure that public rights of way are **well maintained and easy to use**

2. Creating sustainable places and communities (32 activities)

- Implement our **Electric Vehicle Strategy** to provide reliable, convenient, accessible and fairly priced network of electric charge points
- Use accessibility planning to help **locate new homes**, jobs and essential services in appropriate places that **align with our vision for transport**
- Reduce the **noise impacts** of our road maintenance and construction activities

3. Connecting people, places and businesses (33 activities)

- Prioritise **journey time reliability** for all modes of transport, including freight and public transport
- Work with the rail industry to explore how Essex stations can be served by a minimum of **two trains per hour**
- Implement our plans and strategies to **maintain our transport infrastructure** to appropriate standards which offer value for money to the Essex taxpayer



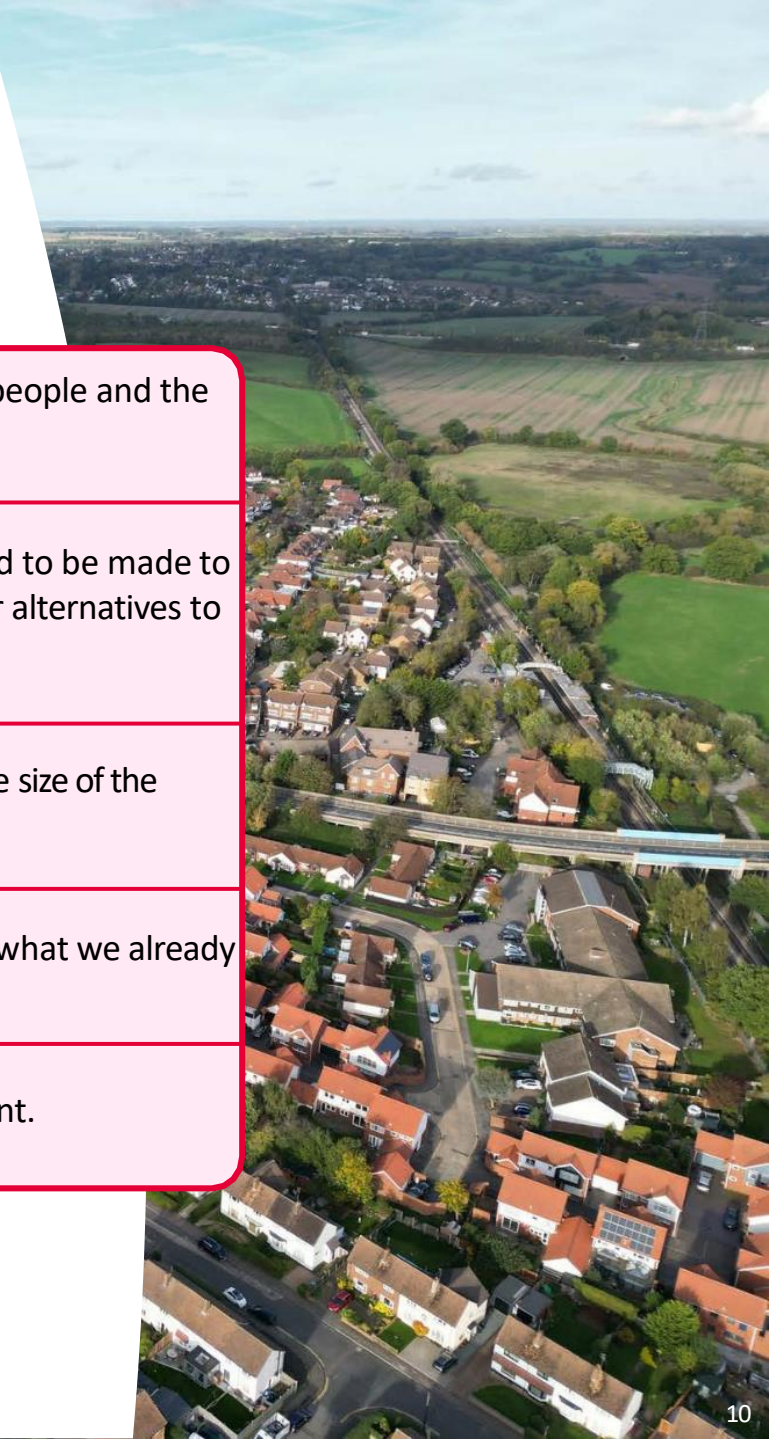
What does this mean at a local level ?

- Developed **13 place-based strategies** with partners and communities.
- **5-stage process** helped identify transport issues, and **potential solutions** to deliver **desired outcomes**.
- Potential solutions consider alignment with strategic **outcomes, affordability, funding likelihood, and ease of delivery**.
- Ideas need **considerable work** to prioritise and design - creating a pipeline ready for future funding
 - Need to set by Combined Authority and Mayoral priorities
- County council must use funding to deliver the greatest **value for residents** and taxpayers, guided by **vision and evidence**.

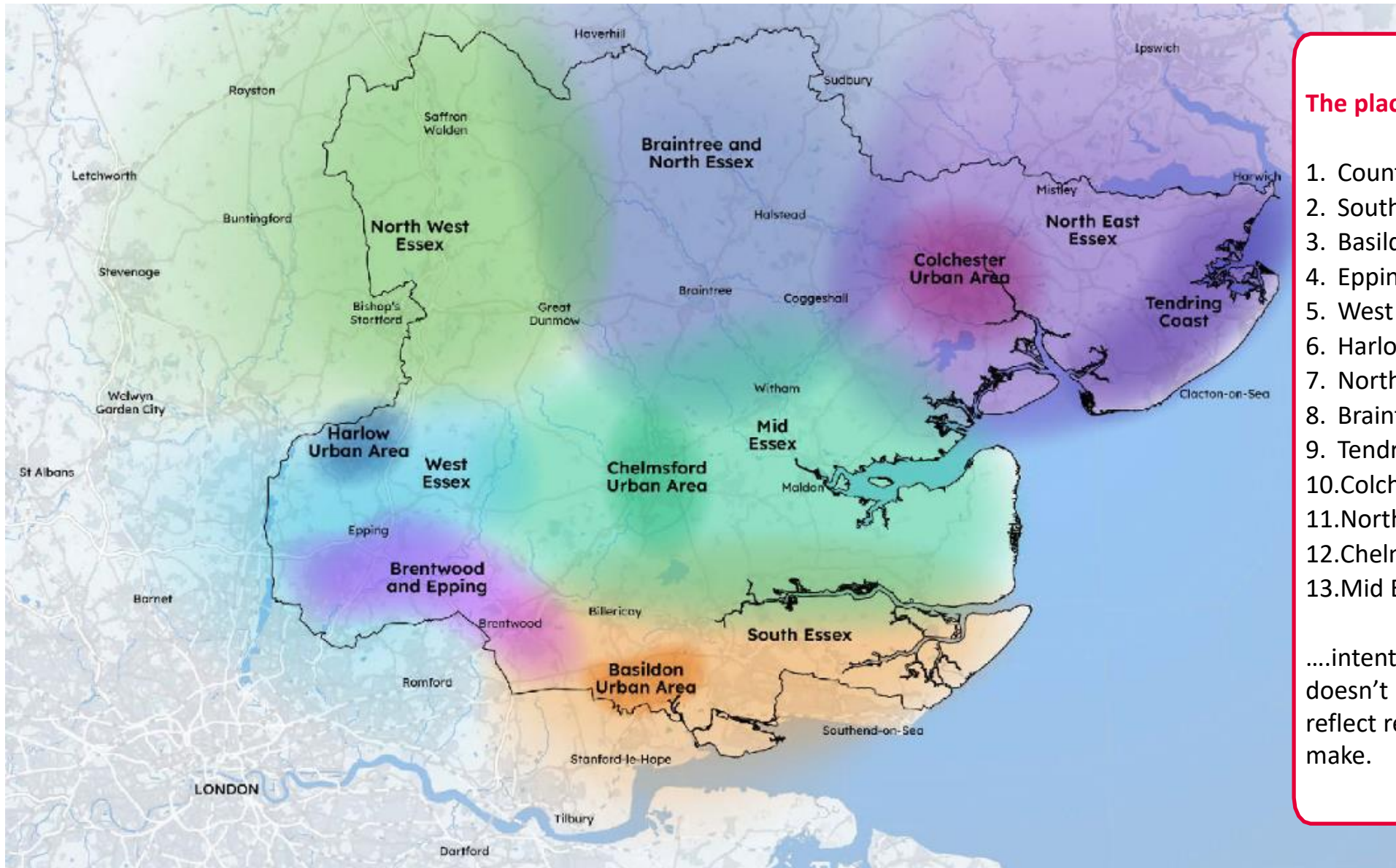


5-stage process

- 1** Understanding what is important to people and the outcomes that need to be achieved.
- 2** Understanding the journeys that need to be made to achieve the desired outcomes and/or alternatives to travel.
- 3** Defining the transport challenge and the size of the intervention needed to address it.
- 4** Thinking about making better use of what we already have.
- 5** Project identification and development.



Place-based strategy geographies



The place-based strategy areas are:

1. County-wide
2. South Essex
3. Basildon Urban Area
4. Epping and Brentwood
5. West Essex
6. Harlow and Gilston Urban Area
7. North West Essex
8. Braintree and North Essex
9. Tendring Coast
10. Colchester Urban Area
11. North East Essex
12. Chelmsford Urban Area
13. Mid Essex

....intentionally **not** districts –travel doesn't respect boundaries – instead reflect real the journeys people typically make.

Place & Movement

- How and why people move around Essex changes from place to place
- Streets need to reflect different users, and different types of journey
- Need a new approach which reflect this

1 STRATEGIC JOURNEYS

- Connecting businesses to their suppliers and customers
- National and international connections, including ports and airports
- Freight transport



2 REGIONAL JOURNEYS

- Access to employment, education and training
- Growth hubs connected to surrounding areas by rail, rapid transit and innovative bus services
- Integrated services, fares and ticketing

3 LOCAL JOURNEYS

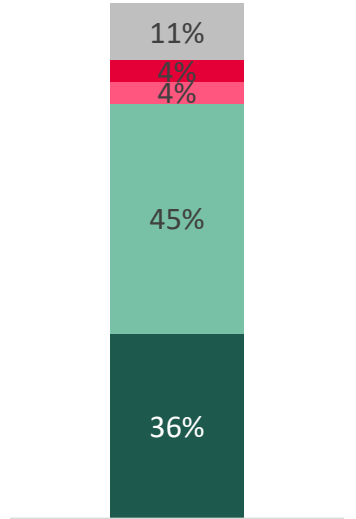
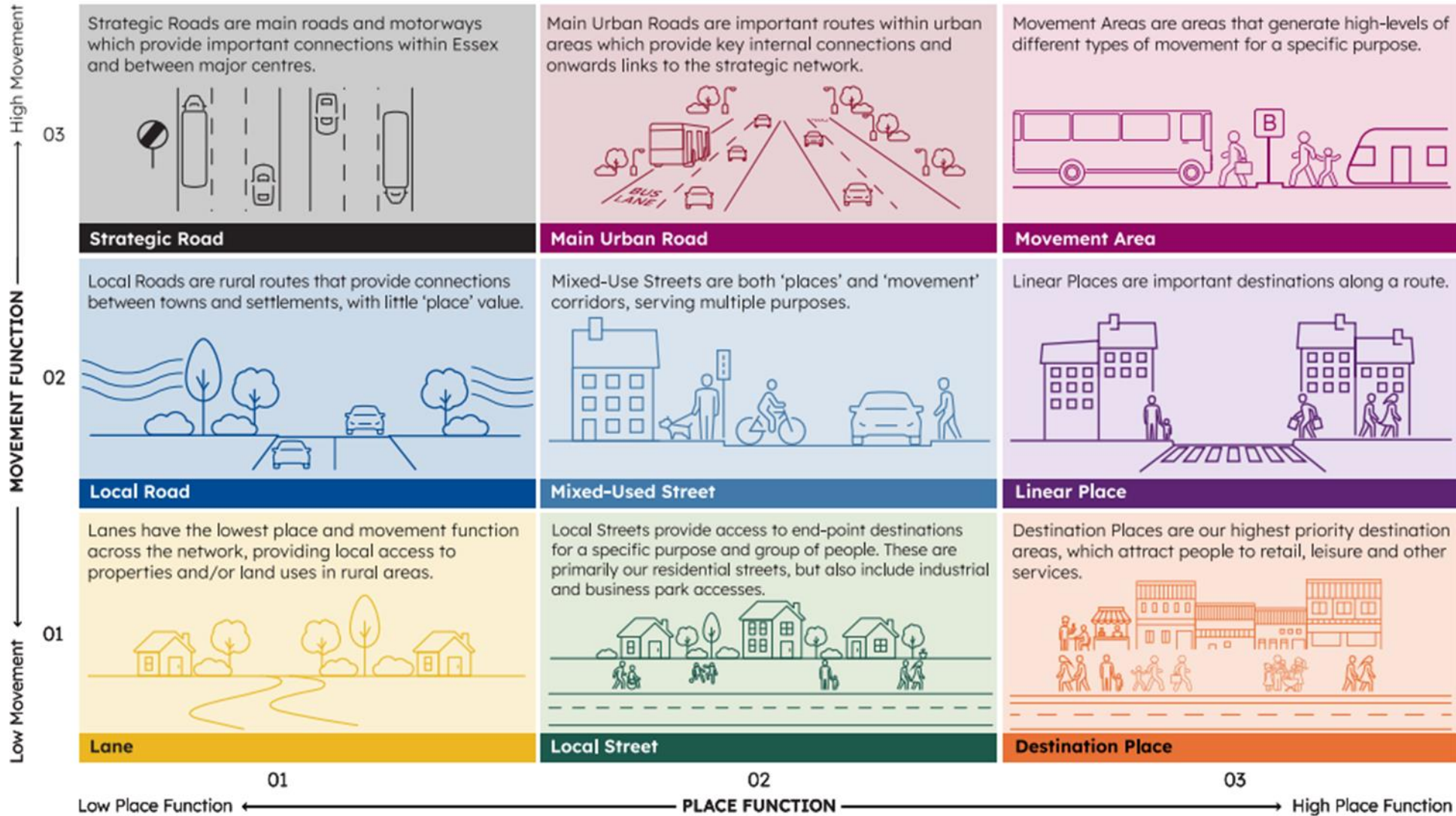
- Connectivity within urban areas, including the integration of large developments and sustainable urban extensions
- Focus on using buses and active modes of travel, such as walking and cycling

4 NEIGHBOURHOOD JOURNEYS

- Creating great local communities
- Quality urban environments with trees and landscaping
- Very local links within neighbourhoods
- Focus on active modes of travel, such as walking and cycling
- Local deliveries via sustainable means, such as via cargo bikes



New approach: Place & Movement



Need for a more flexible approach to classifying roads and streets

- No opinion / Not answered
- Strongly disagree
- Disagree
- Agree
- Strongly agree

Transport strategy introduces new policies (1/2)

1

Understanding the travel needs of all people and businesses of Essex.

We will work with partners to ensure that the travel needs of all people and businesses in Essex are clearly understood and reflected in how transport services are planned and delivered, including making effective use of the latest innovation and technology.

2

Access to key services.

We will work with partners and service providers to enable everyone living, working and investing in Essex to access key services with a particular focus on resolving inequalities in access to the transport network.

3

Sustainable and active travel choices.

We will encourage existing communities and require new developments to maximise the use of sustainable forms of travel such as walking, wheeling, cycling, horse riding and public transport for a safer, healthier and more resilient Essex, with better access to a wider range of opportunities.

4

Being safe and feeling safe.

We will work with partners to make travel in Essex safe and feel safe for all users of the transport network.

5

Historic and built environment.

We will aim to conserve and enhance the historic and built environment, protecting the places people live, and our historic and built environment from the harmful effects of transport. We will strive to make places more people focussed with an emphasis on placemaking to make spaces safe and accessible for all.

6

Integrating planning and transport.

We will work with partners to put people and places at the heart of our decisions to secure new development at the most appropriate and sustainable locations.

New policies cont.

7

Carbon reduction.

We are committed to reducing transport-related carbon emissions through our approach to planning transport and new development in line with government policy.

8

Our natural environment.

We will aim to operate, maintain and enhance a transport network that is sympathetic to and enhances our natural environment and habitats.

9

Maintenance and asset management.

We will work with partners to make the transport network safe to use, resilient and fit for purpose, especially during periods of adverse weather.

10

Connectivity and journey reliability for all modes of transport.

We will work with partners to plan the transport network in each location so that we balance the needs of local communities while promoting connectivity and reliable journeys for all.

11

Freight movement.

We will work with partners to support the efficient and sustainable movement of freight.

12

Sustainable transport provision.

We are committed to giving people the choice of inclusive, reliable and affordable sustainable transport.

Local Transport Plan Public Consultations

Part 1: Consultation on key elements of the emerging strategy



5 August – 22 September 2024

Focus: Draft themes & outcomes of the emerging strategy

Responses: 651

Questions:

- 21 core questions about our proposed four themes, and the 3 outcomes under each theme, as well as activities to achieve the outcomes
- The principles behind our proposed new 'Place and Movement Approach' to classifying roads and streets
- 'Three Step Approach' to improving transport

Part 2: Consultation on the full draft strategy: A Better Connected Essex, including ISA



31 July – 24 September 2025

Focus: Vision for the full draft strategy, place-based strategies

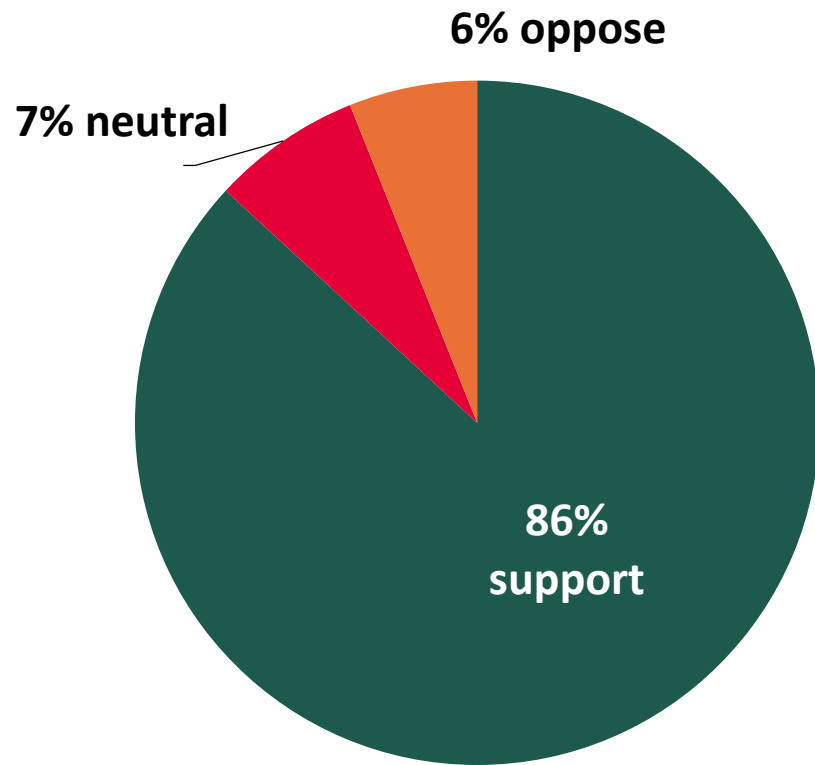
Responses: 597

Questions:

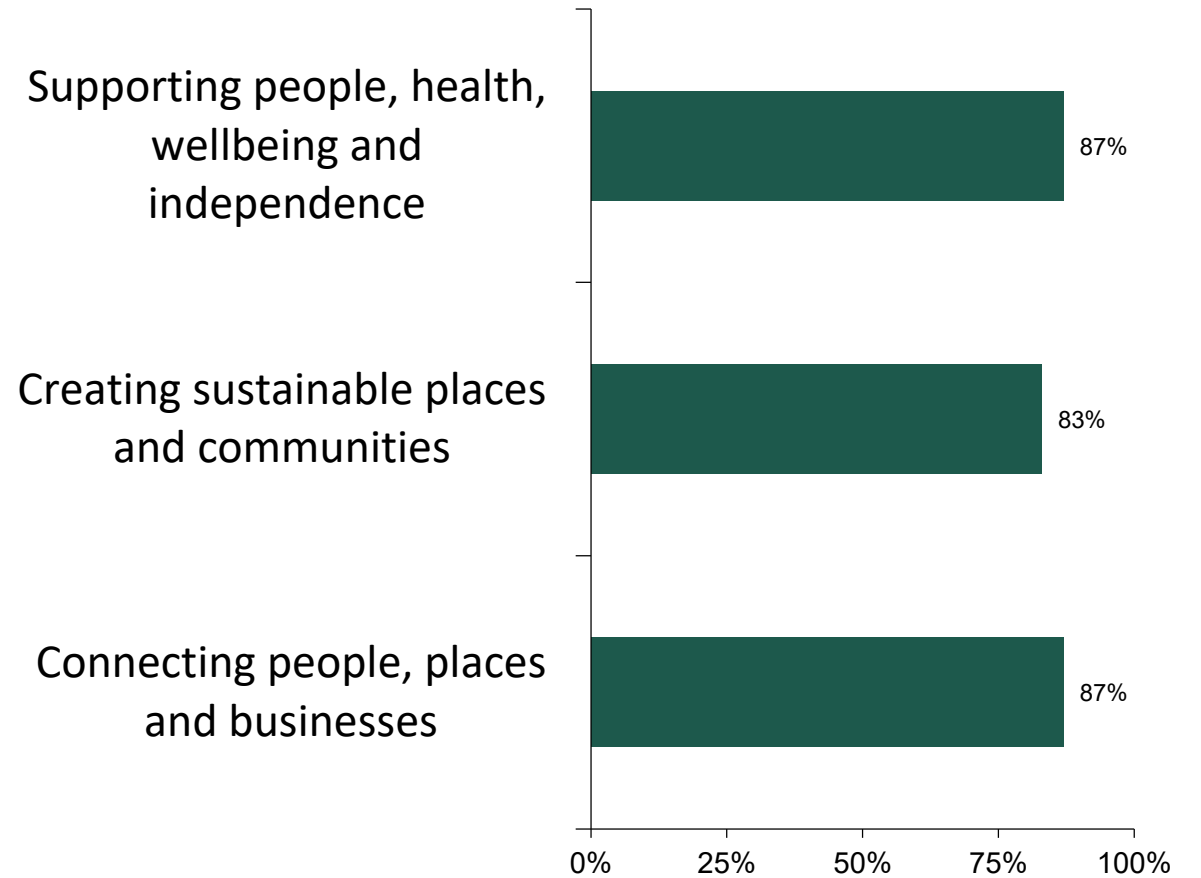
- 8 questions about the full draft Essex Transport Strategy
- 4 questions about each of the 13 place-based strategies (Implementation Plans)
- 1 question about the Integrated Sustainability Appraisal (ISA), which is a process for assessing social, economic and environmental impacts of strategies and projects and was a statutory element)

Public support for vision and themes

Supports the Vision (%)

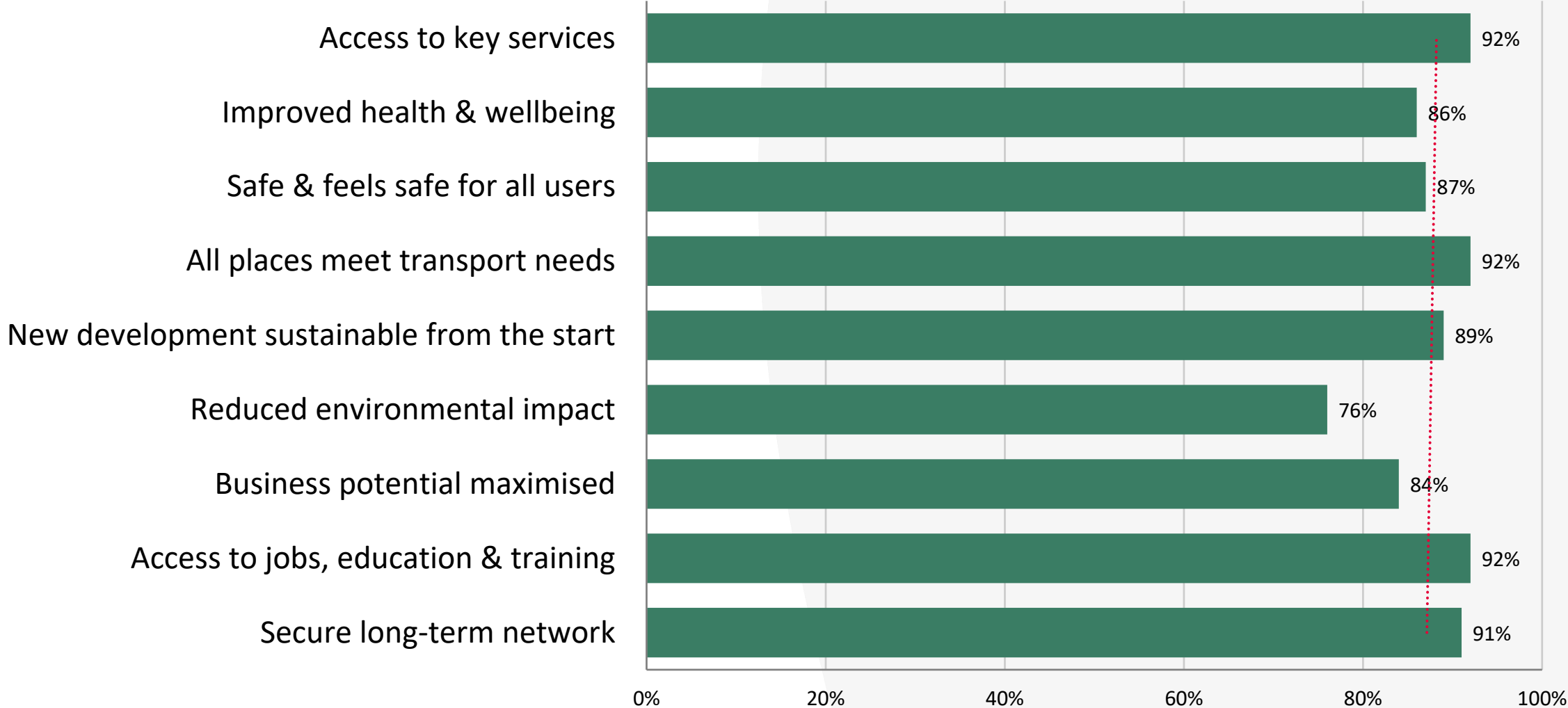


Agreement with key themes (%)



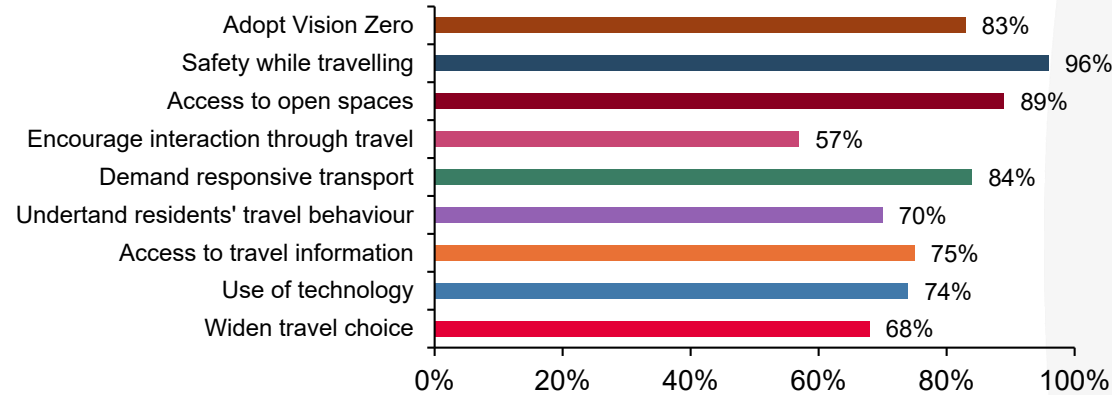
Public support for outcomes

Support for outcomes %

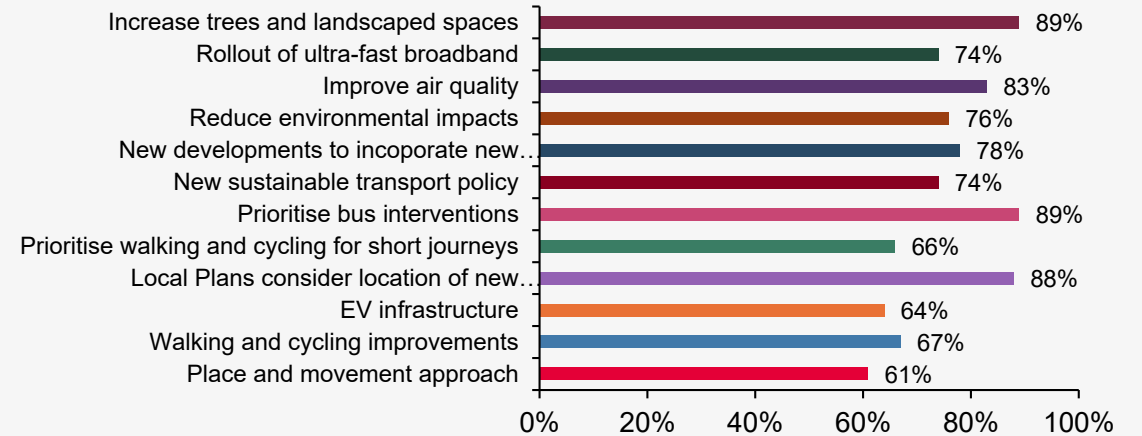


Public support for activities

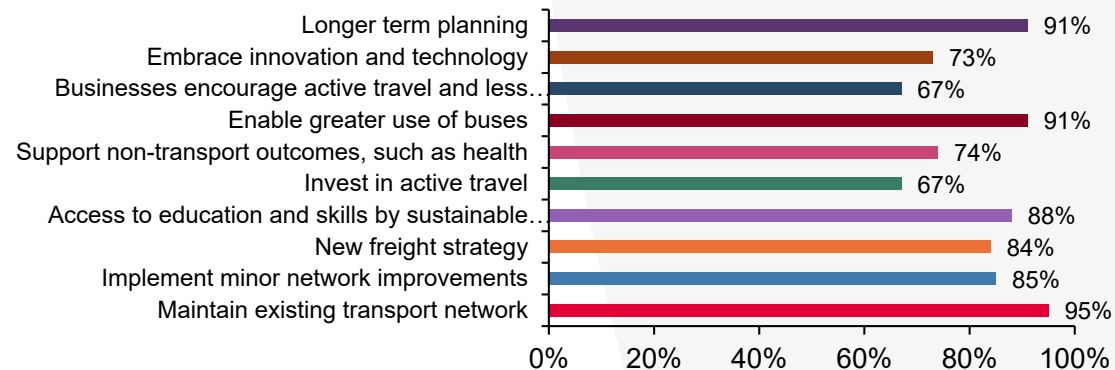
Support for 'Supporting people, health, wellbeing and independence' activities



Support for 'Creating sustainable places and communities' activities

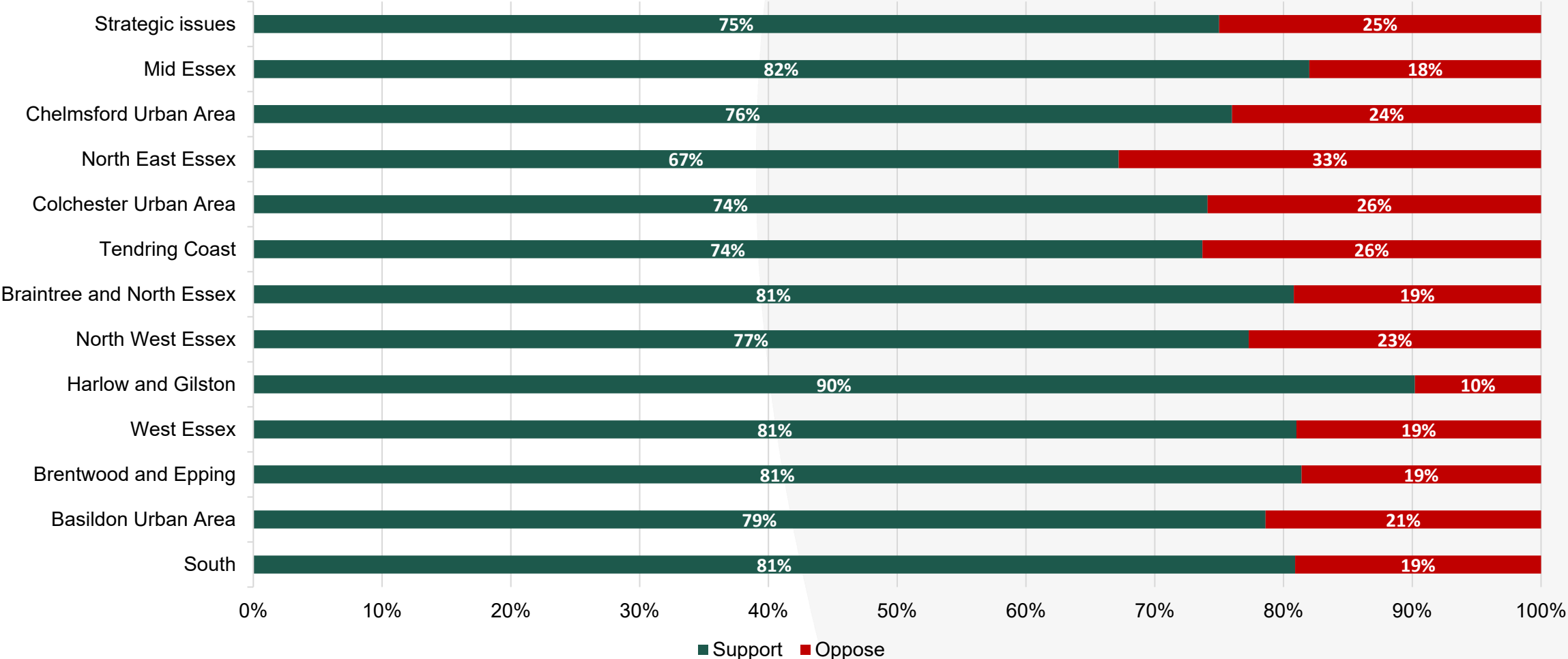


Support for 'Connecting people, places and businesses' activities



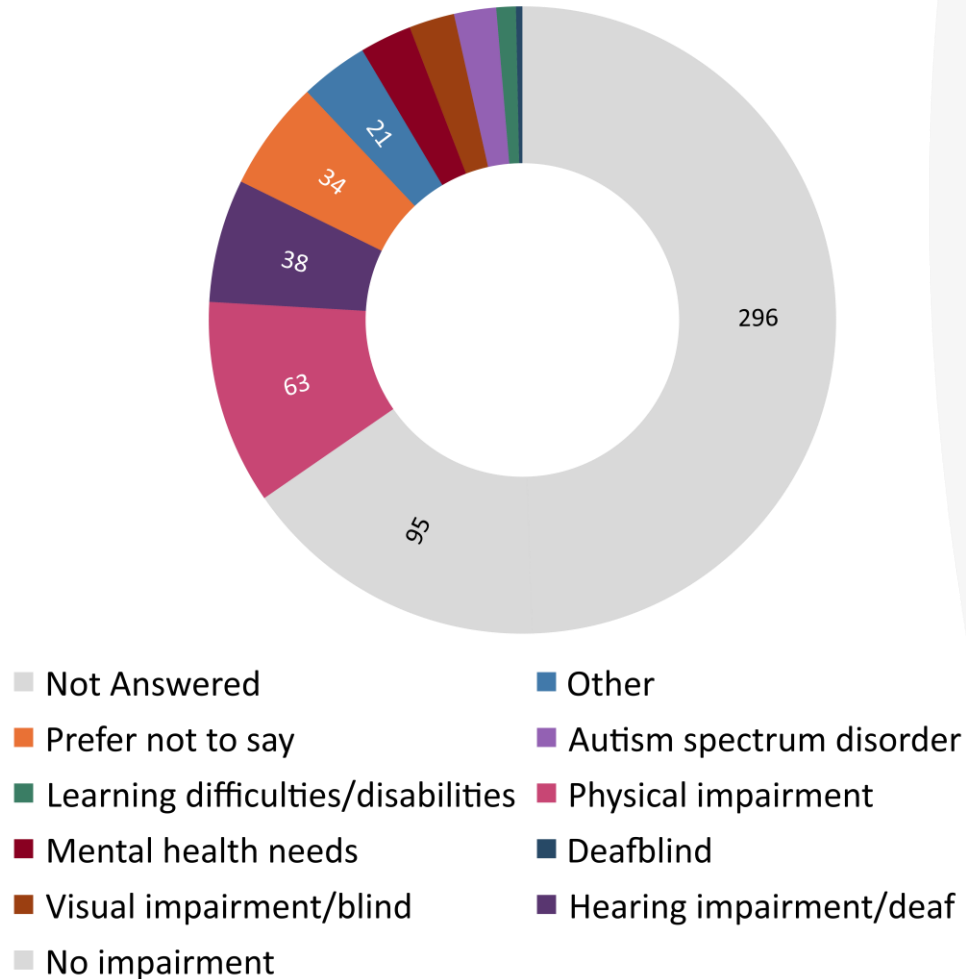
Public support for place-based strategies

Support for place-based strategies



Support from accessibility groups

Respondents by disability or impairment (#)



Of those who identified as having a disability or impairment:

82%

support for the vision for transport

agreed its importance in connecting people and key places

93%

agreed with its importance in supporting people's physical and mental health, wellbeing and independence

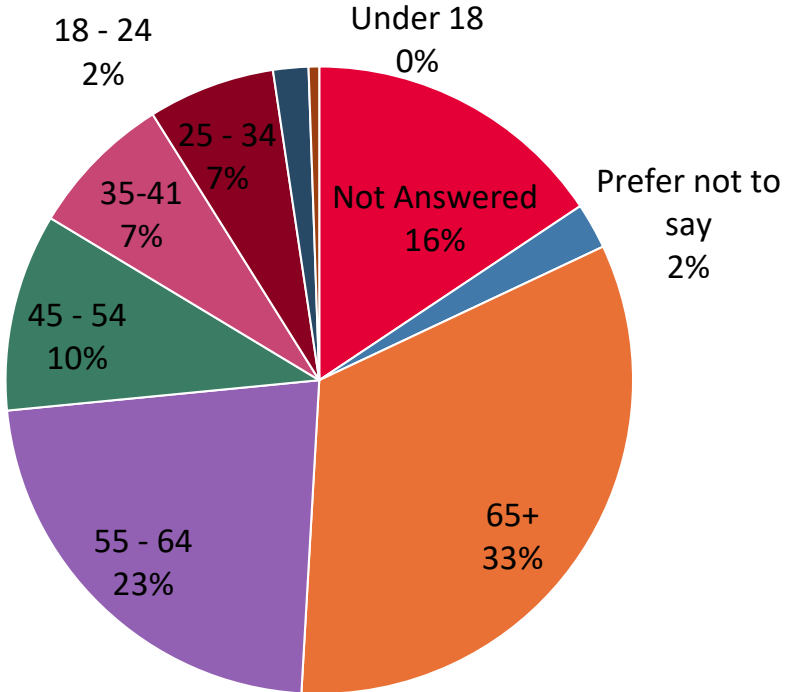
92%

agreed with the importance of transport in both supporting businesses and economic growth, and creating sustainable places and communities.

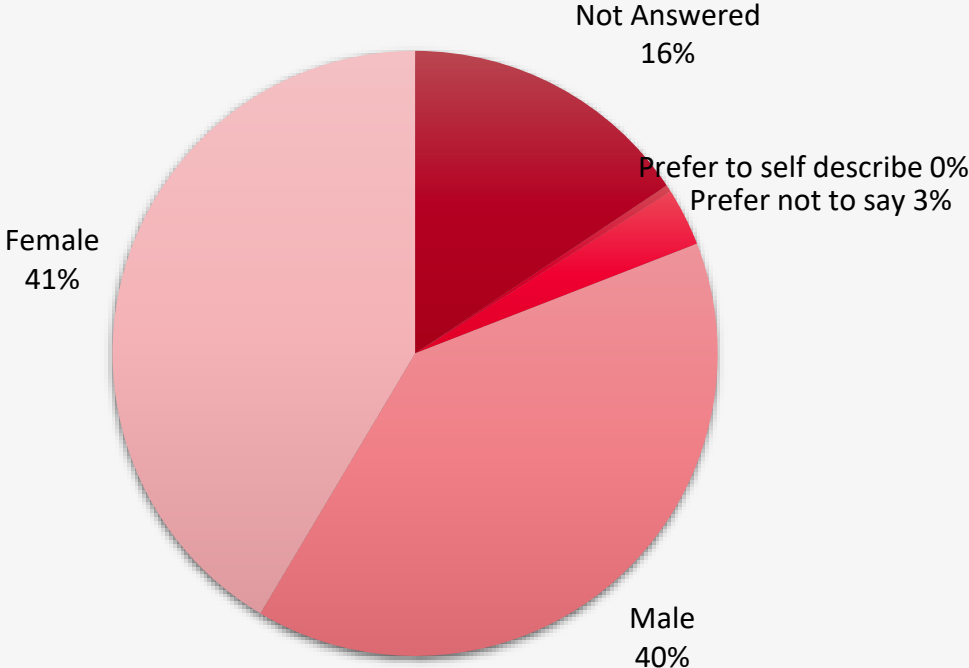
89%

Demographic overview of consultation responders

Age Of Respondents



Gender identity of respondents



Response demographics typical for ECC consultations

Open comments from respondents ^



Bus

397 responses

“Too many bus services do not run in the evening, leaving anyone travelling by train stranded.”



Road Infrastructure

214 responses

“Every time the A130 is blocked, or Benfleet is blocked the whole of South East Essex comes to a standstill.”



Development

183 responses

“When large developments are being considered, the local infrastructure needs to be improved beforehand.”



Vulnerable Users

168 responses

“Ensure accessibility for pan-disability is a key priority.”



Road safety

160 responses

“Safety would be massively improved by imposition of a 20mph speed limit as the de facto default”

^ Inclusion of a particular comment is indicative and does not reflect ECC’s formal position

Additional post-consultation changes



Vision & outcomes

- **Expanded vision include positive contribution places and health**
- Expanded graphic to show environmental outcomes, as well as economic and societal ones
- Wording changes to outcomes to reference equitable access and biodiversity



Safety and accessibility

- Reference to future Accessible Transport Strategy
- **More on Vision Zero ambition**
- Updates to our planned activities to support inclusion
- Strengthening of references to horse riding throughout the document



Policy & Governance

- Renaming implementation plans to place-based strategies to reflect the high-level
- **Additional performance measures**
- Rewording policy 5 to better reflect the content



Health & Wellbeing

- **Detail on adult social care-related transport issues**, and the Essex Joint Health and Wellbeing Strategy's approach to improving health and wellbeing

Advisory Groups & Performance

- Reference to the use of advisory Transport Review Groups to support us in monitoring and evaluating the performance of garden communities and large-scale developments



Transport strategy: more detail

Recommended reading

Document Title	Focus
Core strategy: A Better Connected Essex (100 pages)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Vision, themes and outcomes • Deep dive into each theme, what the data tells us and potential activities to address high level challenges • Approach to Performance and monitoring • 12 new Highways & Transport polices **legal requirement** • Summary of environmental, habitat and equalities impact
Integrated Sustainability Appraisal interim report (225 pages), summary (25 pages), and Habitats Regulations Assessment report (221 pages)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Summary and detailed assessment of impact of Transport Strategy on the environments and habitats of Essex, and any actions required
Consultation summary report (14 pages) and full consultation report (68 pages)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Summary and detailed results from two public consultations including feedback on place-based strategies
Consultation feedback register (9 pages)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Verbatim feedback on Transport Strategy and detail of changes made
Equalities Comprehensive Impact Assessment (11 pages)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ECIA on the impact on priority and protected groups, and climate
Place-based strategies (12 X ~40 pages), plus 1 county-wide	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Introduction to the area and current transport situation, the local challenges and needs. • Transport ambitions in the area and the outcomes we want to achieve. • Assessed collection of potential ideas, prioritised against the full range of LTP outcomes and aligned with the delivery of Everyone's Essex. Ideas are not designed, costed, approved

*recommended Members read place-based strategy for their area(s), plus countywide.

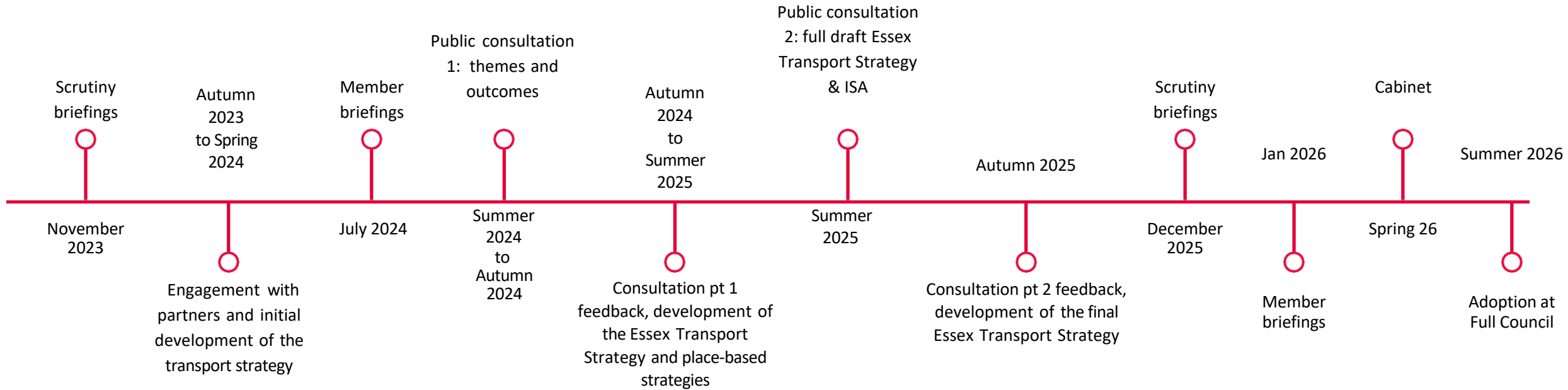
PERFORMANCE MEASUREMENT, example[^]

- Transport strategy is focussed on ‘outcomes - we will track each of the nine outcomes
- We will track these through key performance and output measures.
- These measures will be collected at different timescales, depending on the complexity of the projects.

Theme / Outcome	Strategic measure	Intermediate measures	Output and activity measures	Links to LTP policy
<p style="writing-mode: vertical-rl; transform: rotate(180deg);">3. Connecting People, Places and Businesses</p> <p>Maximising the business potential of Essex.</p>	<p>Journey time reliability for all modes of transport <i>and</i> Strategic connections</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Reduction in journey time delay and variability on key strategic routes in Essex ▪ Reduction in journey times between key towns and cities in Essex by public transport ▪ Change in DfT connectivity metric of key towns and cities in Essex by public transport / walking / cycling ▪ Increase in public satisfaction with walking and cycling ▪ Increase in public satisfaction with public transport ▪ Increase in public satisfaction with the highway network ▪ Freight modal shift for specific locations and routes 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Number of stations in Essex served by at least two trains per hour ▪ Percentage of population served by high frequency public transport (number of buses, rapid transit services, trains per hour to be defined) ▪ Number of mobility hubs delivered ▪ Number of first mile / last mile delivery options (e.g. e-cargo bike locations, parcel locker locations, etc) in use 	<p>9. Maintenance and asset management. We will work with partners to make the transport network safe to use, resilient and fit for purpose, especially during periods of adverse weather.</p> <p>10. Connectivity and journey reliability for all modes of transport. We will work with partners to plan the transport network in each location so that we balance the needs of local communities while promoting connectivity and reliable journeys for all.</p> <p>11. Freight movement. We will work with partners to support the efficient and sustainable movement of freight.</p>

[^] Full list of performance measures are in the core strategy document

Timeline so far, and next steps



1. Scrutiny endorsement (Dec 25)
2. Member briefings (Jan 26)
3. Cabinet (March 26?)
4. Full council to approve and adopt later this year (May 26?)
5. Publication (June)
6. Adoption as interim strategy by combined authority (TBC)

