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**WOKINGHAM
BOROUGH COUNCIL**

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To:- All Committee Members

CLIMATE EMERGENCY OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE - TUESDAY, 23RD MAY, 2023

I am now able to enclose, for consideration at the next Tuesday, 23rd May, 2023 meeting of the Climate Emergency Overview and Scrutiny Committee, the following report that was marked as 'to follow' on the agenda sent out recently.

Agenda No Item

9 **CEAP Traffic Reduction Targets - Update (Pages 3 - 12)**

To scrutinise progress against the traffic reduction targets in the Climate Emergency Action Plan.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Susan Parsonage', written in a cursive style.

Susan Parsonage
Chief Executive

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Agenda Item 9

TITLE	CEAP Traffic Reduction Targets – Update
FOR CONSIDERATION BY	Overview and Scrutiny Management Committee on Climate Emergency
WARD	None Specific
DIRECTOR	Giorgio Framalocco, Director of Place and Growth

OUTCOME / BENEFITS TO THE COMMUNITY

This paper is a response to queries from the Overview and Scrutiny (O&S) group. The benefits to the community are reductions in Carbon Emissions as set out in the Climate Emergency Action Plan (CEAP).

RECOMMENDATION

The Committee is requested to note the contents of the report and feed back comments for future development of the Transport elements of CEAP and Local Transport Plan 4 (LTP4).

SUMMARY OF REPORT

In the previous Overview and Scrutiny Committee – Climate Emergency meeting the progress of measures linked to traffic reduction, and the effectiveness of these measures were queried. This paper sets out the latest available figures regarding traffic in the borough and provides a brief update on the measures so far. This is followed by a short review of evidence which demonstrates the reduction in motor traffic expected to be achieved based on case studies and government guidance.

Background

The O&S committee has asked for an update on *“progresses against the expected CEAP carbon reduction targets linked to traffic”*. The Committee wishes to *“understand how things are progressing with traffic reduction in the borough, based on what the CEAP says. We are spending funding to facilitate active and sustainable travel, how is that going to reduce the number of vehicles on the road and minimise carbon emissions from traffic.”*

This report provides some detail on the current traffic levels in the borough and explains the progress made on each of the transport interventions in the CEAP.

Active and Sustainable travel

The following section outlines some of the current drivers for active and sustainable travel and explains the thinking behind how this leads to a reduction in traffic.

The DfT's [Decarbonising Transport: A Better, Greener Britain](#) sets out a number of commitments toward decarbonising transport. Two of their commitments are under the heading "Increasing cycling and walking" as below:

- "We will deliver the Prime Minister's bold vision for cycling and walking investing £2 billion over five years with the aim that half of all journeys in towns and cities will be cycled or walked by 2030."
- "We will deliver a world class cycling and walking network in England by 2040."

The Decarbonising Transport Document sets out that it expects a 1–6MtCO₂e savings from 2020 to 2050 due to increasing walking and cycling and state that "*mode shift to active transport is one of the most cost-effective ways of reducing transport emissions*". The commitment is also expected to produce £20-100m in air quality benefits by 2050.

This is being reflected by the emerging guidance for Highway Authorities to follow when they produce their Local Transport Plans and will be reflected in Wokingham Borough Council's LTP4.

Transport is a priority area for Carbon Savings as set out in the CEAP due to higher-than-average car ownership in the borough and it being a key emissions contributor. 1A.4 sets out that 10% (13,623 TCO₂e) of the targeted Carbon Savings are to be from an increase in "Active Travel" such as walking, wheeling, and cycling.

Cost of Living

This work, along with the work of My Journey, is essential if we are to support our residents, particularly those on lower incomes, to be feel safe and confident enough to walk and cycle more:

[Active Travel England news story: Active travel now accounts for 20% of all minutes of activity taken by adults in England, \(April 2023\):](#)

- Sport England's [Activity Check-In](#) survey, published in February 2023, has found that 1 in 5 adults are now walking or cycling rather than using the car due to cost-of-living increases. This is a smaller survey of 2,000 adults and 450 children and young people that tracks attitudes and opinions at semi-regular intervals during the year.

Evidence indicating likely reduction in private Internal Combustion Engine (ICE) car use from increased sustainable travel

The following is just some of the evidence supporting the idea that increasing walking, wheeling, and cycling (or active travel) can reducing Carbon emissions and reduce private vehicle use. More information can be found by following the links.

[Active Travel FAQs \(Government Research Briefing\), \(March 2023\):](#)

- The Government's 2021 Transport Decarbonisation Plan stated that increasing cycling and walking could result in a saving in CO₂ equivalent emissions of 1-6Mt from 2020 to 2025 and produce £20-100m in air quality benefits by 2050.

- A study by the University of Oxford's Transport Studies Unit in 2021 found that the shift from cars to cycling only had to be small to have a significant impact on CO₂ emissions.

[Department for Transport \(DfT\) Gear Change: One year on:](#)

It is noted that the below was impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic and that longer term change will need tracking:

- In 2019 around 58% of car trips were less than 5 miles and around a quarter were less than 2 miles. Evidence shows that making it easier and safer to walk or cycle, increases the number of people walking and cycling and reduces the number of people making short car journeys, meaning that traffic falls overall.
- The number of miles cycled on the road rose to 5 billion, overall a 45.7 per cent increase on 2019.

[Active Travel: Local Authority Toolkit \(August 2022\)](#)

- Walking currently accounts for only 5% of the total distance travelled in England. Around 49% of trips in towns and cities under 5 miles were made by car in 2021, with around a quarter of all car trips in England less than 2 miles. Many of these trips could be walked, wheeled, or cycled, which would help to reduce the 68 megatons (Mt) carbon dioxide equivalent (CO₂e) emitted from cars in 2019.
- In cycle share schemes, an average of 53kg of CO₂e are saved per cycle share user each year according to [CoMoUK's 2021 bike share report](#).
- Active travel can reduce the proportion of people driving children to school by up to 33%. Through projects such as the [Big Pedal](#), 8.5 million car miles could be saved, resulting in a decrease of 2,500 tCO₂e and reductions in NO₂ levels

Update on measures

Table 2 below sets out a brief update of each of the measures in the CEAP related to transport:

Table 2 Transport Measures Update

Reduction in ICE private car mileage	
Electric Vehicle (EV) Registration	
To develop an EV strategy for Wokingham Borough.	A first draft of the report has been completed. This is being finalised by officers to include more specific targets for various charge point types.
Provide a uniform method of accessing public and private charge points	Completed.
Review the residential charge point infrastructure for those who have communal parking facilities such as flatted developments.	94 chargers have been installed to date by the council, in addition there are various publicly available chargepoints. There are a further 42 planned with 38 of these being delivered under the On Street Residential ChargePoint Scheme (ORCS) to be delivered in 2023.
Ensure that all EV charging points installed in the Borough are 'smart ready' to balance	Action completed for existing chargers.

the electricity load demands on the grid.	Some sites have limited capacity so load balancing for multiple charging sessions are planned to be implemented in the coming years.
Support local businesses, including commercial property owners, to transition their commercial fleets to EV. Also to encourage employees to switch to EV for private use.	One scheme has been done via a commercial tenant request, with the potential for more of these in future. A few businesses have also been contacted specifically following low carbon workspace grants and the benefits and viability of EVs highlighted.
Promote uptake of EVs with our residents through engagement	Not started
Coordinate the installation of EV charging points into both council buildings and private or commercially owned land, in line with the EV network plan approved in the strategy.	EV standards from the borough's highways design guide is being used. A checklist has been developed to help project managers identify needs and types of chargers based on needs of users and other restrictions. 230 active sockets installed, with a further 89 planned.
Reduced Travel (Removing Journeys)	
Engage businesses to promote home and remote working when possible.	A survey will be completed by the end of the summer to understand the needs of homeworking for the Borough's businesses.
Promote Liftsharing schemes / opportunities through My Journey to help individuals and businesses develop bespoke travel policies.	This project is currently on hold as it is incorporated into an upcoming My Journey business plan, though communications with businesses is continuing.
Public Transport Increase	
Produce bus service improvement plan.	A revised Bus Service Improvement Plan (BSIP) 2 was published in February 2023 and will be submitted for future rounds of bidding.
Establish an enhanced partnership with contractors to improve usage.	This follows on from the revised BSIP, approved in February 2023 and will include variation clauses for: more frequent and more reliable bus services, better access in rural areas, more attractive fares for young people, better marketing and improving buses themselves.
Support electrification of local buses under ZEBRA (Zero emission bus regional areas).	2nd bid submitted for Route 21 - Lower Earley - Reading University - Reading Town Centre as part of BSIP, particularly for urban routes including Lower Earley as strong feasibility due to shorter route, but unsuccessful. This will be revisited if suitable funding opportunity arises.
Improve the bus public transport network for Wokingham Town	Contracts have gone out for retender with bus companies due to the costs involved.

Bus Stop Infrastructure Works to Support North Arborfield SDL Bus Strategy.	This has been assessed as part of an ongoing Enhanced Partnership agreement process, with new bus stops added and routes amended as part of wider works.
Increase peak-hour bus transport for Lower Earley.	Currently the route is still operating with capacity, so there is not a case for increasing, though it is being monitored regularly.
Implement the South of M4 bus strategy.	Completed, though will be reviewed as part of an ongoing Enhanced Partnership agreement process for new pattern of service, dependent on the joint review with Reading Borough - collaborating on this project towards shared goals.
Investigate demand services opportunities and on-demand flexi-routes.	A bid has been submitted to DfT as part of BSIP but unsuccessful. Under consultation to explore DRT further, with recent changes to focus more on fixed routes.
Home to school transport project.	Completed - The school bus contracts have been re-tendered with the switch that happened on the 06/09/21, and with ongoing monitoring revisions have taken place following changes in demand.
Active Transport Increase	
To provide primary school children with the opportunity to develop practical skills and an understanding of how to cycle safely.	Courses still underway. Project fully funded with a total of 2109 children trained across the 3 levels of bikeability, alongside 15 families as part of a new scheme.
Encourage and support local schools to join Modeshift Awards scheme for active and sustainable travel.	Ongoing work with schools via certification and competitions. 12 schools actively engaged with and an additional 10 schools with air quality focus and monitoring equipment. 26 schools registered for the annual Big Walk and Wheel.
Roll out the Healthy School Streets programme.	Ongoing discussions with schools to plan a pilot. Awaiting DfT approval of the application for enforcement on Moving Traffic Offences (MTO)
Increase the uptake of cycling from local business by promoting the Love to Ride programme.	An audit has now been completed after last year, with a number of significant changes made, leading to a strong increase in users, with 122 active companies and 2530 participants.
Develop the Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan (LCWIP) to be Borough wide and implement 50% LCWIP by 2030.	The LCWIP has been adopted by the Council. The Woodley to Reading route is now awaiting a review. A new bid for the Active Travel Fund 4 is with Active Travel England, this aims to fund the development of the design of Reading Road A329 by the end of March 2024. (BP garage Winnersh to Broad Street Wokingham in 4 phases). A new Active Travel Route on the A327 (between Observer Way and Shinfield Eastern Relied Road) is

	presently in early design phases. Network rail are replacing the Carnival Hub bridge but intend to have stepped access only; officers are working to add ramps for accessibility.
Deliver engagement and cycle training events across the Borough.	Cycling events in the 2022/23 financial year included: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Easter Bike Bonanza at Shinfield. • Close Pass operation with Thames Valley Police. • Children’s cycling activities at 7 HAF events (Holiday Activities and Food) around the borough. • Women returning to cycling event. • Helped to organise Wokingham Bikeathon and E-bike event. This year, we will continue to run a similar programme of events.
Adult cycle training.	Began end of April 2022 and going out to businesses as well as over 55s.
Completion of the Cross Berkshire Cycle Route – NCN (National Cycle Network) 422.	Completed. This route is also included in the LCWIP to being upgraded to align with LTN (Low Traffic Neighbourhoods) 1/20 standards.
Promote active and sustainable travel modes amongst new residents at new developments and SDLs.	This is ongoing, with welcome packs being sent to new developments, in the 2022/23 financial year this included developments in Wokingham, Shinfield, and Arborfield. Personal travel planners visited homes in Shinfield for 3 weeks in October 2022.
Reduced Road Freight	
Develop a domestic and industrial freight management policy alongside LTP4.	Not Started; to be considered further as part of LTP4.
Support the transition of business vans to cargo bikes.	The council currently has 2 cargo bikes that are going to be loaned out to businesses and 1 to be used by the Transport Planning and My Journey teams.
Local Transport Plan 4	
Develop a Local Transport Plan to combine and vitally support the above strategies and actions, enabling greater coordination and opportunities for government funding.	The details for the evidence base for the initial stages of this report have been collected. Options which will inform the strategies in above sections are being developed for the draft of the full report which is expected to be consulted on later in 2023.

LCWIP

The most carbon savings from Active Travel measures in the CEAP are set to be achieved from implementation of a high-quality network of cycling and walking routes in the borough.

The Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan or 'LCWIP' as commonly referred to, is a strategic document that analyses local travel patterns to help identify where best to invest in cycling and walking infrastructure ideally over a 10–15-year period.

The LCWIP enables a long-term approach to developing strategic active travel connections between key origins/destinations and forms a vital part of the Government's strategy to make walking, wheeling, and cycling the natural choices for shorter journeys, or as part of a longer journey.

By developing this, Wokingham Borough Council are best placed to apply for funding if and when it becomes available, with a list of identified walking and cycling schemes. In addition, having the LCWIP in place with network plans for each area helps us to ensure active travel connectivity with the Local Plan developments and request funding from developers towards the new infrastructure.

Target 1A.4.5 (above) is to “Develop the Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan (LCWIP) to be Borough wide and implement 50% LCWIP by 2030”. The LCWIP has now been developed and adopted by the council. This document sets out the following regarding commuting distances in Wokingham:

“The most common commuting distance in Wokingham Borough is between 5km and 10km (representing almost 20% of commute trips). The second most common distance is 2-5Km (17%), and over 1 in 4 commutes is less than 5km. This highlights that there is a real opportunity to encourage the uptake of active travel among commuters within the borough, with many trips being considered an acceptable length to use active travel modes of transport. (2011 Census)”

The first part of the action is now completed as the LCWIP is adopted, however, the target of 50% implementation by 2030 looks to be challenging. Although the LCWIP is not fully costed the initial work on two Active Travel Fund schemes suggests that the total cost to deliver the whole network will run into many millions. Whilst further work will continue in making some high-level cost estimates and developing some of the proposals into more defined schemes, it is unlikely that a more accurate cost estimate will be available until much later in 2023/24.

Progress with Traffic Reduction

The Transport Planning team are currently reviewing the Council's network of traffic monitoring equipment. This network is currently made up of:

- 58 loops under the surface of the road which provide vehicle volume and classification counts and speed data.
- 16 camera-based (Vivacity) sensors with 33 countlines¹ at 13 locations. These capture the following:
 - Vehicle volume and classification
 - Pedestrian counts as well as cyclists on footway/shared paths
 - Track turning counts (at 9 sites)
- Temporary monitoring is also completed on an ad-hoc basis where required.

¹ A countline is a virtual line in the camera's field of view. When a vehicle, pedestrian or cyclist crosses this line, they are counted and classified.

The loops under the surface of the road are difficult to maintain and often suffer from damage by contractors digging and vandalism; at present less than 10 loops are classified as functioning correctly (11 May 2023), whilst all Vivacity Sensors are operational.

This review seeks to provide the following information:

- Understand what Automatic Traffic Counters (ATC) are presently working.
- Review whether all locations are still appropriate.
- Understand gaps in the present network and look to remedy this.

The current status of the monitoring network makes understanding the change in vehicle numbers and travel behaviour difficult to consistently monitor. However, once remedied will provide an important basis to reviewing the CEAP carbon targets linked to traffic.

For this report we have reviewed four of the loops which have been functioning since 2018 (or in one case 2019) to review the change in traffic volume since this time. As the Vivacity cameras were installed in 2020, they do not have enough pre-pandemic data to be used for this purpose at this time.

The data in Table 1 shows an overall decrease in two-way vehicle flows between 2019 and 2022, however, it should be noted that the COVID-19 pandemic has had a lasting effect and that it is not clear what “normal” presently is.

Table 1 – Average daily two-way vehicle flows and % Change from 2019 to 2022

Site Number	Site Location	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	Percentage Change 2019 v 2022
Site 99	A4 Bath Road, Sonning	18671	19308	13472	16843	17419	-10%
Site 204	Binfield Road, Wokingham	-	1539	1156	1288	1410	-8%
Site 207	Culver Lane, Earley	5496	5678	3948	4803	4588	-19%
Site 211	Loddon Bridge Road, Earley	11326	11824	7798	7893	10570	-11%

In addition to these sites the Council will refer to the DfT figures, however, the 2022 figures have not yet been released. Figure 1 shows the annual traffic by vehicle type (all vehicles or cars and taxis) in Wokingham between 1993 and 2021.

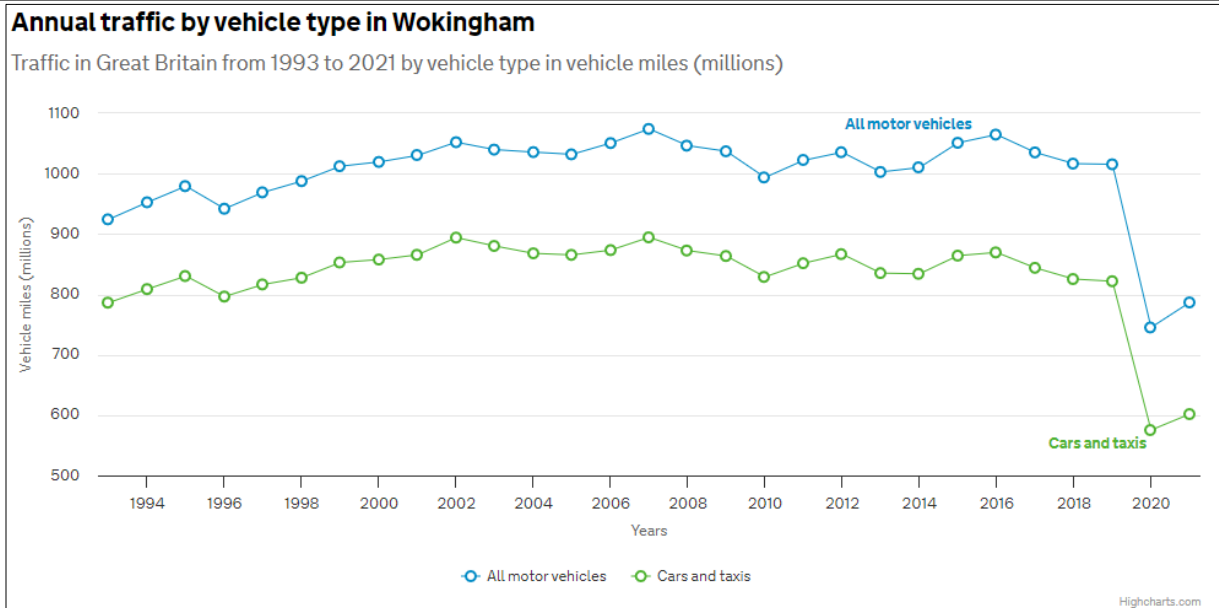


Figure 1 – Annual Traffic by vehicle type in Wokingham between 1993 and 2021 (DfT, 2023)

These figures are clearly heavily impacted by the COVID 19 pandemic and the restrictions in place in Wokingham throughout this time. This graph is caveated in the following way on the [DfT website](#).

“Whilst historically significant, the long term trends can be misleading in most cases due to the extraordinary circumstances observed as a result of the coronavirus pandemic. Vehicle miles travelled in Great Britain have had year-on-year growth in each year between 2011 and 2019. Following a sharp decline in 2020, traffic levels for 2021 have increased on the previous year but still remain lower than the 2011 levels. Therefore, to say traffic has fallen over the last decade would misconstrue, as the overall decrease is entirely due to the decline in traffic levels observed in the 2020-2021 estimates.”

Future Monitoring and Carbon Reduction

Monitoring and evaluation of the CEAP in terms of decreasing car use and motorised vehicle mode share², and the subsequent emissions calculations will be more formally defined by our Local Transport Plan (LTP). This will take into account the targets of the CEAP as well as emerging guidance from DfT (due in 2023). This guidance will expect LTPs to describe how the Council will deliver quantifiable carbon reductions in transport.

Local Transport Plans (LTPs) set out how the council intends to manage its transport responsibilities including objectives, policies, and plans for transport improvements. LTPs are statutory requirements, an obligatory legal requirement enforced by the government. All Local Transport Authorities in England must have a Local Transport Plan. This must be presented to the DfT and can help to secure funding.

Our new Local Transport Plan, LTP4 will further guide improvements to footways, cycle lanes, roads, and other transport networks for the next 10-15 years. Offering more options of getting around and more chances for active travel, especially for shorter

² Mode share is the share of people using a particular mode of transport within overall transport figures of an area.

journeys to reduce air pollution, traffic congestion, tackle the climate emergency and promote fitness. This could also include traffic management measures including on street parking charges/restrictions and measures to make car journeys less attractive. This takes into account changes in technology, national and regional policy/guidance and travel patterns which have changed since our existing LTP3 was created.

The Local Transport Plan is the overarching document setting out transport priorities for the council. It sits alongside our Local Plan which guides all types of growth and development across the borough, from housing and employment to green spaces and more.

LTP4 is presently in its early stages with a draft LTP4 expected later this year and the final version completed and adopted in summer 2024.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS OF THE RECOMMENDATION

The Council faces severe funding pressures, particularly in the face of the Covid-19 crisis. It is, therefore, imperative that Council resources are focussed on the vulnerable and its highest priorities.

	How much will it Cost/ (Save)	Is there sufficient funding – if not quantify the Shortfall	Revenue or Capital?
Current Financial Year (Year 1)	n/a		
Next Financial Year (Year 2)	n/a		
Following Financial Year (Year 3)	n/a		

Other financial information relevant to the Recommendation/Decision

This paper sets out progress so far and responds to a query from the O&S group; there is no recommendation which leads to any change in costs and the cost of each measure in the CEAP is already accounted for.

Public Sector Equality Duty

The completion of an Equality Impact Assessment (EqIA) is an essential part of Transport Planning Schemes. A Stage 1 EqIA will be completed for all schemes, should any disproportionate impacts be found on a protected equality group then a Stage 2 EqIA will be completed which considers the full impact and any necessary mitigation required.

Climate Emergency – The Council has declared a Climate Emergency and is committed to playing as full a role as possible – leading by example as well as by exhortation – in achieving a carbon neutral Wokingham borough by 2030

The benefits to the community are reductions in Carbon Emissions as set out in the Climate Emergency Action Plan (CEAP).

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