

TITLE	Wokingham Borough Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan – Update
FOR CONSIDERATION BY	Community and Corporate Overview and Scrutiny Committee on 29 November 2022
WARD	None specific;
LEAD OFFICER	Director, Place and Growth - Steve Moore

OUTCOME / BENEFITS TO THE COMMUNITY

A completed Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan will help WBC determine where best to focus future investment in active travel infrastructure to support walking and cycling across our Borough. The report will be used as a basis for long term planning of routes to ensure the delivery of a high-quality, connected walking and cycling network enabling residents to consider active travel as a viable alternative to motor vehicles for many of their trips.

By developing the LCWIP, WBC will be best placed to secure any government funding that becomes available through a series of bid ready projects prepared for submission as well as ensuring that necessary funding can be secured from developers and other funding sources as opportunities arise.

Active travel has numerous benefits including reducing both congestion and CO₂ emissions from transport as well as improving air quality and physical and mental health.

RECOMMENDATION

That the Committee consider the update and provide input to help shape the final document.

SUMMARY OF REPORT

This report is supported by a presentation to be given at the meeting. This will explain the purpose of the Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan (LCWIP), give an overview of the process and then gives an update on the current position of the report and next steps.

The networks for walking and cycling have been proposed and a recent consultation asked the public for views on these as well as potential measures that could be taken forward in future. That consultation closed on 2 October 2022 and is currently being analysed.

On completion of the analysis, the routes and measures in the report will be reconsidered, and then all of the routes will be prioritised to ensure that as funding becomes available those routes that will have the greatest impact will be addressed first to help increase uptake of walking and cycling in the borough.

A final report is expected early 2023.

Background

There has been a major shift in central government in terms of the provision of funding and support for walking and cycling. A number of key documents have been produced which set out the national ambition for increased walking and cycling, guidance for completing assessments and also design guidance for facilities which will encourage those who do not currently walk much or cycle to consider these as a viable choice for transport. These include:

- Cycling and Walking Investment Strategy
- LCWIP Technical Guidance for Local Authorities
- Gear Change – A bold Vision for Cycling and Walking
- Decarbonising Transport
- Local Transport Note 1/20 – Cycle Infrastructure Design
- Cycling and Walking Investment Strategy 2

The Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan (LCWIP) process was introduced in 2017, the guidance enables local authorities to create a network based on data as well as local knowledge to ensure that new facilities and routes are created in the most appropriate locations and will be used by those who do not currently choose to cycle.

The LCWIP guidance recommends a six-stage process:

Stage	Name	Description
1	Determining Scope	Establish the geographical extent of the LCWIP, and arrangements for governing and preparing the plan.
2	Gathering Information	Identify existing patterns of walking and cycling and potential new journeys. Review existing conditions and identify barriers to cycling and walking. Review related transport and land use policies and programmes.
3	Network Planning for Cycling	Identify origin and destination points and cycle flows. Convert flows into a network of routes and determine the type of improvements required.
4	Network Planning for Walking	Identify key trip generators, core walking zones and routes, audit existing provision and determine the type of improvements required.
5	Prioritising Improvements	Prioritise improvements to develop a phased programme for future investment.
6	Integration and Application	Integrate outputs into local planning and transport policies, strategies, and delivery plans.

Progress to Date

As part of the gathering information stage, a public engagement exercise was carried out in March/April 2021. This helped to identify particular barriers to cycling across the borough and any particular hot spots that people felt were most in need of improvement. This also helped us to understand the type of facility which people across Wokingham

borough would prefer to see and what would help encourage them to walk and cycle more.

The networks for walking and cycling were then developed using a combination of this information, modelling of desire lines and key origin/destinations and workshops with various stakeholders. In the summer of 2021 these routes (see Appendices A and B) were finalised and then audited by visiting each location and walking the routes to examine the key criteria set out in the guidance. This then led to a compilation of all the routes and their issues which could then be used to propose measures along each route to bring them up to a desired standard.

Consultation

A consultation was held on the Commonplace website from 11 July to 4 September. Towards the end of this period the website experienced an issue which meant it was not possible to comment for several hours. Because of this issue, the decision was taken to move the consultation to WBC's Engage platform, this site remained live until 2 October 2022.

There were 3,922 views of the consultation with 2,528 providing a response, of these 140 used the Engage site. In total there are over 10,000 individual responses to the proposals, and our consultants have been analysing these since the consultation closed, however they are not yet finished. The presentation introduces the early findings from the analysis so far.

Next Steps

Once the analysis has been completed, the routes and measures will be reassessed, and amendments made as necessary. There will then be a prioritisation process in line with the LCWIP guidance, which will see the routes and measures ordered so that when funding opportunities arise, we are able to select which measures should be bid for in order to ensure the greatest benefit to users.

- **Dec 2022** Consultation report and necessary amendments
- **Jan 2023** Prioritisation of routes and measures
- **Feb 2023** Final Report ready for approval

It should be noted that once the final report is adopted it will remain a live document to allow us to make amendments based on follow-up surveys, feasibility design and consultation and add to the network as new developments or changes on the network occur. This design and consultation will need to ensure that the needs of all road users are considered as there is potential for road space to be taken from motor vehicles and previous experience has shown that this can cause concern to some.

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 – see below	n/a	Revenue & Capital
Next Financial Year (Year 2)	n/a – See below	n/a	Capital
Following Financial Year (Year 3)	n/a – See below	n/a	Capital

Other financial information relevant to the Recommendation/Decision

The study itself has been funded using our existing revenue budgets. The future Capital expenditure is expected to be mainly sourced from DfT (currently via Active Travel England and its Active Travel Fund) as well as from other sources including developer contributions.

Public Sector Equality Duty

An EQIA will be carried out prior to completion of the final report.

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

Increased active travel is a key component of reducing the impact transport has on the climate emergency; transport is one of the highest contributors of carbon emissions in the borough.

List of Background Papers

Refer to list in text, main document for reference is the LCWIP Guidance [Local cycling and walking infrastructure plans technical guidance \(publishing.service.gov.uk\)](https://publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/107114/local_cycling_and_walking_infrastructure_plans_technical_guidance.pdf)

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Date 29 th November 2022	Version No. 1