

<b>TITLE</b>	<b>Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan</b>
<b>FOR CONSIDERATION BY</b>	The Executive on Tuesday, 21 March 2023
<b>WARD</b>	(All Wards);
<b>LEAD OFFICER</b>	Director, Place and Growth - Simon Dale
<b>LEAD MEMBER</b>	Executive Member for Active Travel, Transport and Highways - Paul Fishwick

## **PURPOSE OF REPORT (INC STRATEGIC OUTCOMES)**

This report presents the Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan with a view to the council adopting it as the strategic plan for Active Travel over the next 10-15 years.

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.

Getting more people to walk and cycle will help us respond to the [Climate Emergency](#), tackle congestion on our roads and achieve the ambition of our [Corporate Delivery Plan](#) to make Wokingham Borough a great place to live, learn, work and grow and a great place to do business.

## **RECOMMENDATION**

That the Executive agrees to adopt the Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan as the Council's strategic plan for Active Travel over the next 10-15 years

## **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

The Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan (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.

Active Travel England (ATE) are the body allocating funding to boroughs for Active Travel Schemes, they require that bids to them must be supported by an LCWIP. The LCWIP is developed using DfT guidance ensuring that evidence and approved auditing methods are used to ensure consistency across the country. This provides assurance that any scheme identified and developed from an LCWIP is likely to prove as effective as possible. ATE also awards revenue funding to each Highway Authority in England; this year Wokingham was awarded £127k revenue whilst its Active Travel Scheme has been awarded £4.4M to date; these were based on the borough having an LCWIP in development at the time. Without an LCWIP it is likely that future funding awards will be much reduced.

This report presents the final LCWIP which has been completed following DfT guidance and has been subject to two separate public engagement exercises. The LCWIP itself is appended to this report and contains details of each stage undertaken throughout the plan's development, including how the walking and cycling networks have been identified, the measures proposed for each of the routes on the networks and how the responses from the public have helped to shape the final plan.

This paper also details future development of the LCWIP and how schemes identified through the process will be taken forward in future.

## **BACKGROUND**

The Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan (LCWIP) 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.

Getting more people to walk and cycle will help us respond to the [Climate Emergency](#), tackle congestion on our roads and achieve the ambition of our [Corporate Delivery Plan](#) to make Wokingham Borough a great place to live, learn, work and grow and a great place to do business. Increased activity will contribute to numerous National, regional, and local objectives including those of the transport & highways, public health and sports & leisure teams; the Wokingham Active Travel Plan recommended a borough-wide audit of pedestrian and cycle facilities in order to encourage residents to consider using active modes of travel, future infrastructure improvements must consider the needs of pedestrians and cyclists whilst accommodating the movement of motor vehicles. The LCWIP process effectively delivers this by developing comprehensive pedestrian and cycling networks linking existing and new development, and key local destinations. The Wokingham Health and Wellbeing Strategy's key objective is to create a healthy and resilient community, by encouraging people within the Borough to be more physically active. The strategy aims to improve physical health for all ages, and lower the percentage of overweight people, thus, by providing a walking and cycling network through the LCWIP process, residents will have access to safe, attractive routes which will contribute to the wider health and wellbeing goals of this strategy.

Journeys below 5 miles represented 58% of all private car journeys in the UK in 2019 providing the biggest opportunity for switching short car trips to active travel modes. Walking and cycling are ideal modes of transport for local trips, and convenient options for regular exercise. They are low-cost, accessible, healthy, environmentally friendly and efficient.

The LCWIP will form a Daughter document of the borough's Local Transport Plan (LTP). Which is currently in development; emerging guidance from the Department for Transport indicates that active and sustainable travel, as well as provision for electric vehicles, will all be key required elements of the LTP which will have a focus on reducing carbon emissions from transport.

## **BUSINESS CASE**

The DfT has now launched Active Travel England and invested £450m in Cycling and walking over the next two years. Active Travel England (ATE) is responsible for ensuring the delivery of the Government's "Gear Change" cycling strategy is also assessing schemes nationally to ensure that they meet the guidance within the Cycle Design Standards Local Transport Note LTN 1/20. ATE are responsible for allocating funds to Highway Authorities and any scheme funded by Active Travel England is expected to have been identified from an authority's LCWIP. By adopting an LCWIP, the borough is providing assurance that any scheme from the plan has been identified and developed using the established methodology using evidence and stakeholder feedback, and so is likely to prove as effective as possible.

ATE also allocate revenue funding to each Local Highway Authority in England. This is known as the cycling capability fund, this enables the borough to spend revenue on improving design standards, promoting active travel and delivering some initiatives. The funding is awarded based on an assessment of each borough which includes whether it has an adopted LCWIP. Because Wokingham BC had an LCWIP in development in the last assessment it was awarded £127k for 2023.

The borough’s Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan can be found at:

<https://www.myjourneywokingham.com/cycling/local-cycling-and-walking-infrastructure-plan-lcwip/>

This plan explains the background and supporting documents and methodology employed to determine the primary strategic routes for walking, wheeling and cycling in the borough. It also explains the stakeholder engagement and the potential measures that can be considered along each of the strategic routes to bring each route up to a standard that will encourage new users to walk, wheel and cycle. The LCWIP is structured as follows:

1	Introduction	This explains the LCWIP process.
2	The Active Travel Context	Looks at the case for walking, cycling and wheeling and the national, regional and local policy which supports and promotes the approach.
3	LCWIP Geographical Scope, Vision and Objectives	Describes the extents of the project and the vision for the LCWIP along with the objectives.
4	Gathering Information	Discusses the modelling methodology, evidence and considerations in developing the Plan.
5	Early Stakeholder Engagement	Describes the initial engagement exercise and its outcomes.
6	Network Planning for Walking and Cycling	Introduces the network development and subsequent auditing undertaken to determine the networks for walking, wheeling and cycling.
7	Infrastructure Improvements	These are the initial proposed improvements which could be implemented to bring each route up to suitable standard.
8	Second Public Engagement	Describes the work completed to share the above work with the public to enable them to comment and input into the plan. This also introduces the refined networks and changes/considerations to be made when the proposed improvements move into feasibility.
9	Route Prioritisation	Introduces the prioritisation process that is employed to decide which routes are most important in terms of meeting the objectives of the LCWIP.
10	Integration and Application	Describes how this work will need be integrated into the Local Transport Plan and the activities of the borough to ensure that any opportunities for funding from external grants, developers and internal bids can be effectively utilised to help deliver the network.

The plan, once adopted will help to identify routes and individual schemes for future bids as well as being a tool to use in negotiation with developers to demonstrate the overall

plan for active travel in the borough. As such the Plan will remain a live document and prioritisation is likely to change depending on funding opportunities as well as any changes in local or national policy. These priorities will also change as different elements are delivered.

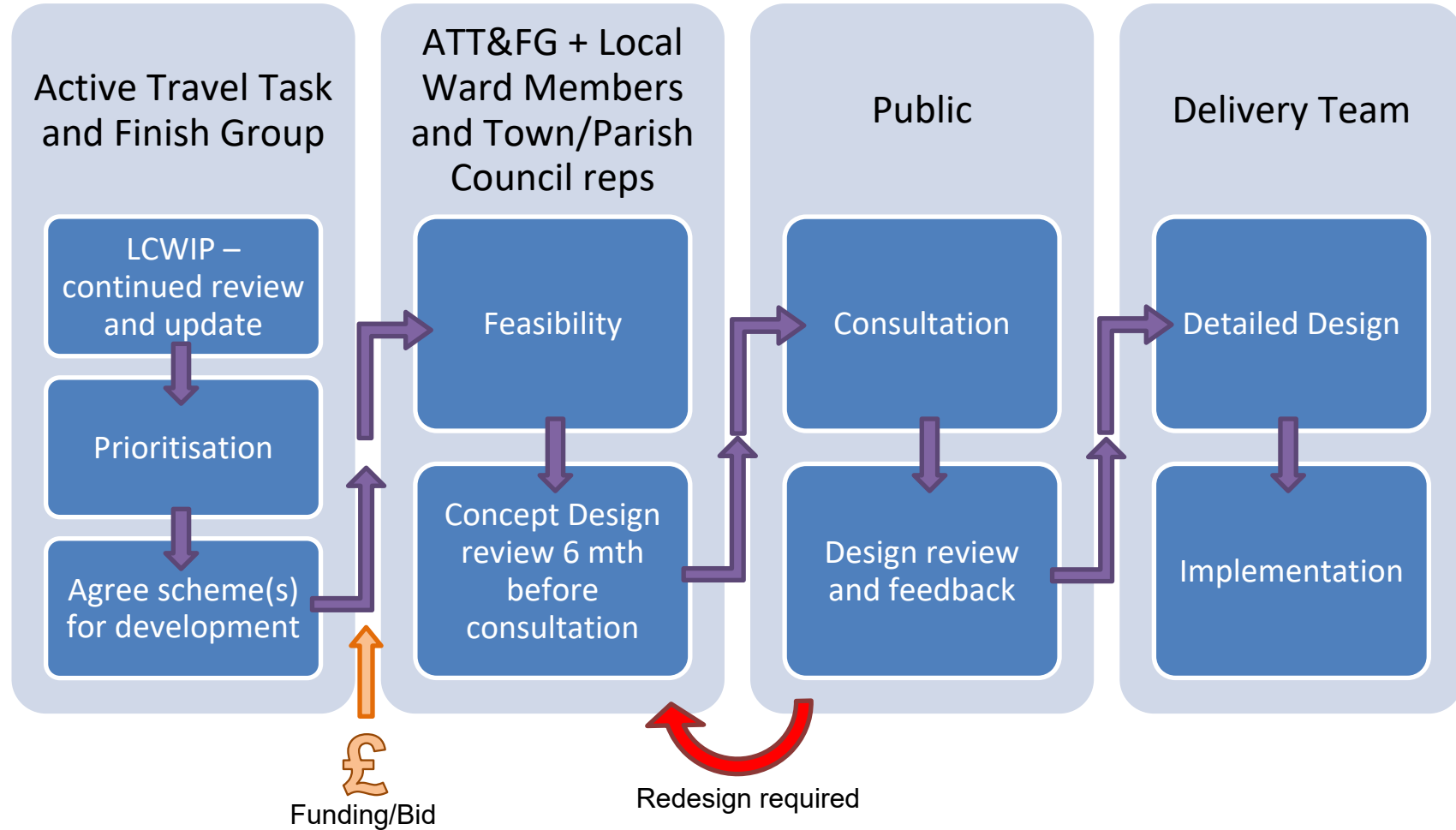
The early stages of the plan were shared with the Corporate and Community Overview and Scrutiny Committee and subsequently a Task and Finish Group was created to oversee completion of the report (refer to separate paper regarding Task and Finish Group recommendations/comments). The recommendations of the Task and Finish Group have been taken into account in finalising the LCWIP report. In addition to these, it has been suggested that there should be a Walking, Wheeling and Cycling Member Working Group that will continue to oversee the ongoing development of the LCWIP. This group will also help to shape future scheme selection and the feasibility work that goes into producing the early designs for consultation. Once a scheme is at an appropriate stage the working group will discuss the design with Ward Members and Town and Parish Councils to enable local input at an early of development prior to any public consultation. This process for scheme identification and development is explained by the figure below.

Scheme development and delivery flow chart

6 Monthly

As required

170



## FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS OF THE RECOMMENDATION

***The Council faces unprecedented financial pressures as a result of; the longer term impact of the COVID-19 crisis, Brexit, the war in Ukraine and the general economic climate of rising prices and the increasing cost of debt. It is therefore imperative that Council resources are optimised and are focused on the vulnerable and on 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)	1,406,000	Yes	Revenue and Capital
Next Financial Year (Year 2)	1,200,000	Yes	Capital
Following Financial Year (Year 3)	805,000	Yes	Capital

### Other Financial Information

The LCWIP development has been funded using existing revenue budgets with addition funding from the cycling capability fund grant.

The current Woodley to Reading Active Travel scheme which is in development has been awarded £3.411M capital from Active Travel England; this is currently sufficient though final scheme estimate is not yet available as the scheme is not finalised.

A bid for £600k has recently been submitted to cover development costs for scheme development on the A329, this would need to be spent in 2023/24, if successful the Capital programme will require amendment; year 3 (2024/25 will also need to be added to capital programme once final likely expenditure is known).

There will continue to be a capital requirement over the coming years and this is expected to come from ATE grants and developer contributions as much as possible.

### Stakeholder Considerations and Consultation

A comprehensive consultation has been completed on the measures proposed within the LCWIP. This was to gauge opinion and understand initial views on very early potential schemes and the outputs will be used to help develop schemes in future as each is considered further once funding becomes available. When schemes are taken forward there will be a full public consultation on each one to ensure that the local population can have their say on any proposals.

### Public Sector Equality Duty

An Initial impact assessment has been completed that identifies no potential issues

### ***Climate Emergency – This 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***

Encouraging and enabling active travel is one of the key actions in the Climate Emergency Action plan to help reduce the impact of road transport on Carbon emissions.

### Reasons for considering the report in Part 2

Not applicable.

<b>List of Background Papers</b>
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Appendix 1 – Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan and Appendices 1A-1G are large files that can be downloaded from: <a href="https://www.myjourneywokingham.com/cycling/local-cycling-and-walking-infrastructure-plan-lcwip/">https://www.myjourneywokingham.com/cycling/local-cycling-and-walking-infrastructure-plan-lcwip/</a> Appendix 2 – LCWIP initial impact assessment
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