

CABINET

DATE OF MEETING: 1 June 2023

TITLE OF REPORT: Hart's LCWIP Consultation Draft

Report of: Executive Director - Place

Cabinet Portfolios: Planning Policy and Community Safety and Development Management

Key Decision: No

Confidentiality: Non-Exempt

PURPOSE OF REPORT

1. To consider the draft Hart Local Cycling & Walking Infrastructure Plan (LCWIP) and approve it for public consultation.

RECOMMENDATION

Cabinet is recommended to:

- approve the draft Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan (LCWIP) for public consultation; and
- delegate authority to the Executive Director – Place, in consultation with the Portfolio Holders, to make any final changes to the draft LCWIP document prior to consultation in light of further comments from Hampshire County Council.

BACKGROUND

2. Hart district is a semi-rural area with key towns and villages where public transport is relatively poor, and which does not provide a realistic solution for most peoples' day to day travel needs.
3. A key priority of the Council's Corporate Plan 2023/2027 is to encourage more cycling and walking by extending the Green Grid network and working with Hampshire County Council and others to improve infrastructure and reduce barriers to walking and cycling.
4. The Council declared a climate change emergency in April 2021, which includes the commitment to putting the reduction of carbon dioxide in the atmosphere at the front and centre of all policies and formal decision making. This included a pledge to make Hart district carbon neutral by 2040.
5. The evolution of electric bicycles means that cycling is now a more realistic option to a wider variety of users, as long as it is supported by the appropriate infrastructure.
6. Over recent years the concept of a 15-minute neighbourhood (sometimes known as a 20-minute neighbourhood) has increased, which recognises that a 15-minute walking journey (circa 1.6km / 1 mile) is a realistic distance people would be willing to walk to the primary 'daily needs' such as retail, schools, leisure and health.
7. The LCWIP will assist in delivering the interlinked priorities of:
 - accessibility & inclusivity,
 - health & wellbeing,
 - climate change & air quality,

- mitigating the impact of development,
 - place shaping & placemaking, and
 - economic vitality.
8. National policy encourages councils to prepare LCWIPs that set out a plan for delivering new or improved infrastructure for cycling and walking. To date, eight Hampshire local authorities have adopted LCWIPs for their areas. Hart District Council and Hampshire County Council have jointly commissioned Sustrans (a charity making it easier for people to walk and cycle) to develop the LCWIP for Hart district.
 9. National policy and guidance, 'Gear Change – A Bold Vision for Walking and Cycling' (March 2020) and the Cycling and Walking Investment Strategy 2 (CWIS2) (July 2022) sets out higher and more ambitious standards for active travel infrastructure required to achieve the Government's vision of half of all short, urban journeys to be made by cycling or walking by 2030. In addition, the Government has confirmed that local councils that do not have a LCWIP will not receive funding for active travel.
 10. The LCWIP for Hart district will enable the Council to:
 - demonstrate a clear commitment to walking and cycling by identifying and prioritising infrastructure improvements, which will help to create Hart's Green Grid,
 - respond appropriately to demand from communities for better walking and cycling facilities,
 - provide high quality infrastructure to meet the demand of a growing population,
 - ensure that consideration is given to active modes of travel through the integration of the LCWIP with local planning and transport strategies and policies, and
 - make the case for future funding for active travel infrastructure and developer contributions.
 11. The development of the Hart LCWIP will support future revenue and capital funding bids for cycling and walking.

MAIN ISSUES

12. The Hart LCWIP has been developed in accordance with the Government's guidance and sets out an ambitious proposed network of new and upgraded walking zones and cycling routes across the district.
13. It builds on the work facilitated by the University of Winchester in 2020 and the public consultation on the Green Grid strategy. It seeks to complement, but not duplicate, the County's Local Transport Plan 4 and the work undertaken by the QEB Transport Steering Group.
14. The LCWIP guidance recommends that LCWIPs are focused on areas where there is a larger density of population and therefore where there is the greatest propensity to increase levels of cycling and walking. Consequently, the draft LCWIP focuses on, and between, the seven key towns and villages in Hart district – Fleet, Church Crookham, Yateley, Blackwater, Hook, Hartley Wintney and Odiham.
15. The approach used to develop the cycling and walking networks involved building an understanding of accessibility by walking or cycling to both existing and planned key destinations, including residential areas, town/village centres,

employment areas, schools and colleges and leisure and recreation areas. The key cycle routes within each of the geographical areas were identified through an evidence-based approach which included analysis of 2011 and 2021 census data alongside other data sources to identify and map out journeys of up to 10km. In terms of walking trips, the work to determine the priority network focused on routes to and from key walking trip generators (within a 2km radius) such as town centres, schools, leisure facilities, employment areas and railway stations within each area.

16. Walking and cycling routes, as well as existing barriers to walking and cycling, were also informed by key internal and external stakeholders throughout the different stages of development. Stakeholders included local town and parish councils as well as local cycling, walking and access groups and local schools.
17. Neighbouring local authorities were also included as stakeholders and consideration given to adopted LCWIPs such as Basingstoke's and Rushmoor's, to help facilitate a wider network across Hampshire and into Surrey and Berkshire.
18. It is important to note that the draft LCWIP is a high-level document. The proposed cycling and walking networks indicated in the plan outline the potential alignment of a route and the interventions and should not be considered as detailed proposals. The delivery of the LCWIP is dependent on the Council's ability to seek and secure funding to both develop and deliver future schemes.
19. The DfT's LCWIP guidance states that it is 'envisaged that the LCWIP will need to be reviewed and updated approximately every four to five years to reflect progress made with implementation.'
20. If the recommendation for the draft LCWIP to go out for consultation is approved, the consultation will run for a ten-week period from June to August 2023. This is longer than the six weeks usually used for other consultations, like the local plan, but is more aligned to the other Hampshire LCWIP consultations that have taken place to date. It also makes additional allowance for encroaching into the summer holidays.
21. Consultation is a critical part of drafting LCWIPs. Public feedback on the draft LCWIP and its appendices, particularly the proposed routes and interventions for each area, will help ensure the network accurately responds to demand from local communities for high quality walking and cycling infrastructure.
22. The proposed consultation approach includes the following:
 - a LCWIP Consultation Webpage hosted by HCC, including summary information, links to a consultation survey/questionnaire and interactive map of proposed schemes where comments can be placed onto the relevant part of the map.
 - several consultation events are being planned across the district in high footfall areas, where residents can obtain further information about the LCWIP and how to engage.
 - digital campaign including the use of social media.
 - advertising the consultation in libraries and leisure centres.
23. Feedback from the draft LCWIP consultation will inform the final version of the plan.

24. The revised LCWIP, including a summary of the public consultation feedback, will be brought back to Cabinet later this year for consideration. The timing for adoption will depend on the volume of responses to the consultation.

ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED AND REJECTED

25. An alternative draft LCWIP, with different cycle routes or walking zones is rejected. The proposed cycle routes and walking zones have been selected using a methodology outlined in government guidance and is based on evidence collected (including input from key stakeholders). Alternative routes may not meet the criteria identified in the guidance and therefore could have implications for the Council's (and the County Council's) ability to qualify for active travel funding.

26. The option of not consulting on a draft LCWIP is also rejected. Public feedback on the draft LCWIP, particularly the proposed routes and interventions for each area, will help ensure the network accurately responds to demand from local communities for high quality walking and cycling infrastructure. Without public consultation, the draft would not accord with government guidance and therefore could have implications for the Council's (and the County Council's) ability to qualify for active travel funding.

CORPORATE GOVERNANCE CONSIDERATIONS

Relevance to the Corporate Plan and/or The Hart Vision 2040

27. The proposed projects would fit with the Corporate Plan 2023/2027 as follows:

- Encourage more cycling and walking in the district by extending the Green Grid network and working with Hampshire County Council and others to improve infrastructure and reduce barriers to walking and cycling, and
- Extend the Green Grid through adopting and implemented, in partnership with Hampshire County Council, a Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan.

28. The draft LCWIP would also fit with the Hart Vision 2040:

- Ensures work, education, health and other facilities are easily reachable through effective walking, cycling or road and rail transport links, and
- Creation of green corridors between all settlements to encourage sustainable healthy transport and provide cycles for hire to enable movement.

Service Plan

29. Is the proposal identified in the Service Plan? Yes

30. Is the proposal being funded from current budgets? Yes

31. Have staffing resources already been identified and set aside for this proposal?
Yes

Legal and Constitutional Issues

32. There are no legal or constitutional implications as a result of the recommendation.

Financial and Resource Implications

33. There are no direct financial implications as a result of the recommendation.

34. Having an adopted LCWIP will enable the District Council and County Council to make future bids for funding and highlight schemes which may qualify for developer S106 contributions.

Risk Management

35. There are no risk management issues as a result of the recommendation.
36. There may be practical risks with the development and delivery of specific LCWIP routes or zones and these will need to be managed through the relevant risk management and project management processes. There may also be legal processes such as Traffic Regulation Orders that will need to be undertaken, depending on specific measures progressed. These will be subject to separate assessment and consideration as specific scheme proposals are developed.

EQUALITIES

37. The LCWIP is a high-level document which sets out the framework for delivering infrastructure improvements for walking and cycling. As it does not set out any detailed designs for the infrastructure, there is a neutral impact on people with protected characteristics. Any detailed transport schemes delivered by Hampshire County Council or Hart District Council will be subject to an Equalities Impact Assessment.

CLIMATE CHANGE IMPLICATIONS

38. The Hart LCWIP will be at the forefront of taking positive action to support several current and long-term challenges relating to climate change:
- energy and fuel consumption: The current lack of connected and high-quality active travel infrastructure encourages car travel and discourages active travel. The LCWIP seeks to provide new and improved active travel infrastructure provision that will make walking and cycling more attractive, safe, direct and comfortable to use to stimulate modal shift. This will contribute to reducing energy and fuel consumption as well as reducing emissions,
 - carbon off-setting or mitigation: Provision of connected and high-quality active travel infrastructure that enables more people to walk and cycle can contribute to carbon off-setting or mitigation by incentivising behavioural change by making consumers consider the environmental impact of their journeys, and
 - climate change adaption: Active travel infrastructure, where possible, will utilise materials that are conducive to alleviating flood risk and enhance biodiversity.

ACTION

39. Subject to the decision of Cabinet, the LCWIP will go out to public consultation for a period of ten weeks.
40. Following the consultation, the responses will be analysed. A report will be brought back to Cabinet to consider the responses, and recommended amendments to the LCWIP. At that point Cabinet will decide whether to adopt the LCWIP.

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Appendices

Appendix 1: [Hart District LCWIP_v3.0.pdf](#)