

HAMPSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL**Decision Report**

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| Decision Maker: | Executive Member for Economy, Transport and Environment |
| Date: | 20 January 2015 |
| Title: | Hampshire Walking and Cycling Strategies |
| Reference: | 6397 |
| Report From: | The Director of Economy, Transport and Environment |

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1. Executive Summary

- 1.1. The County Council has been developing (through a cross-departmental working group) a draft cycle strategy for Hampshire. Both the Government and Local Enterprise Partnerships have recently announced potential new funding streams for cycling which the County Council needs to take into account so that it is best placed to take advantage of future funding opportunities. This includes the need to consider walking alongside cycling as part of a wider approach by the County Council to the active travel agenda.
- 1.2. The purpose of this report is therefore: to establish the key principles that need to be included in the cycling strategy; to make a commitment to bring forward in parallel a draft walking strategy based on similar principles; and to commit to a consultation on both strategies in Spring/Summer 2015.
- 1.3. The County Council approach to active travel is cross-departmental but with clear responsibilities:
 - The Economy, Transport and Environment Service provides the infrastructure for day-to-day essential travel (utility travel) through capital funded network improvements and then maintains the lengths of carriageway, shared surfaces, cycle ways and footways used by pedestrians and cyclists.
 - The Culture, Communities and Business Services support and develop leisure and sport, walking, running, horse riding, and cycling that more generally uses leisure routes on the public rights of way and minor roads networks.

- 1.4. Each of these services supports the commitment to Active Travel as an aspect of healthy living and public health.
- 1.5. In recent years there has been a major increase in the level of interest and participation in recreational (and sporting) forms of cycling, both nationally and in Hampshire. However this has not translated into more utility cyclists. The 2011 journey to work census data revealed a falling proportion of Hampshire residents cycling to work, now amounting to under 2% as a mode share for journeys to work.

2. Contextual information

- 2.1. During 2014, Hampshire County Council has been developing a Cycling Strategy. Whilst significant progress has been made there is now thought to be merit in reconsidering the proposed nature of a Cycling Strategy. One factor that has arisen in recent months has been the revised Government guidance related to cycling - the Department for Transport's Cycling Delivery Plan.
- 2.2. No work has as yet been undertaken on a county walking strategy but it is now appreciated that, for the County Council to be best placed to take advantage of future funding opportunities, a walking strategy would also now be beneficial.
- 2.3. It is hoped that both the Walking and Cycling Strategies will deliver a number of benefits to Hampshire County Council and to local residents and businesses. One benefit is likely to be financial. The strategies will be written to facilitate access to funding streams, potentially including future bids to the Local Sustainable Transport Fund and to the Local Enterprise Partnerships.
- 2.4. For both walking and cycling there will be over-arching strategies with a clear distinction between utility transport trips and provision for recreation and sports activities. In the case of the Walking Strategy, for example, the transport interest includes issues like urban permeability and safe routes to school, whilst the recreational aspects cover the likes of rambling issues and Rights of Way. There should be public health benefits arising from both the transport and recreational aspects of the strategies.
- 2.5. Delegated approval is sought for the Director of Economy, Transport and Environment to be able to authorise public consultation on both strategies starting in Spring 2015. Whilst this delegated approval is sought from the Executive Member for Economy, Transport and Environment, it is recognised that the other Executive Members have an interest in these strategies and will be engaged in their development and finalisation.
- 2.6. Whilst no free-standing horse riding strategy is proposed, the County Council will ensure that equestrian matters are taken into account in all suitable highways, transport and countryside policies and strategies.

3. Finance

- 3.1 A key source of funding cycling infrastructure and initiatives between 2012 – 2015 has been through Hampshire’s successful bids to the Local Sustainable Transport Fund (LSTF). This has included £4.1m for six towns in north Hampshire, part of which has been allocated to cycling related projects. In addition, Hampshire’s two National Park Authorities secured £3.81m LSTF funding for the same period, with a further award of £2.053m for 2015/2016.
- 3.1. Hampshire also benefits from the Cycle Ambition Fund, recently securing £3.6m to support cycling and sustainable travel in the New Forest and a further £3.8m to support cycling in the South Downs.
- 3.2. The County Council receives an annual grant from central government of £350K for Bikeability. This funds cycle proficiency training for approximately 8,750 people each year. In addition to this, Test Valley, Gosport, and Fareham receive government funding via Schools Games Organisers, which provide a further 3,780 places on Bikeability courses.
- 3.3. Other funding streams include developer contributions through legal agreements, the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) and European funding via the Local Enterprise Partnerships, as well as Local Transport Plan capital monies.
- 3.4. Many cycling projects also support walking initiatives. Pedestrian improvements remain an important part in the County Council’s transport capital programme.

4. Performance

- 4.1. Performance on both walking and cycling strategies will be principally assessed on participation rates and public satisfaction. These will be measured from various sources. The 2011 census, for example, provides travel to work data. The ‘Active Travel’ survey demonstrates the percentage of the population who cycle once a month. Traffic counts (primarily through automatic traffic counters) will be a key way to monitor the levels of local cycling to particular locations. In certain localities, regular cycle parking surveys take place which can also be used to assess the number of cyclists. Meanwhile the school census can give an indication of the percentage of children walking or cycling to school. The annual National Highway & Transport (NHT) survey provides an indication of public satisfaction with cycle routes and facilities, and also indicates public priorities for Highways and Transport investment, including cycling.

5. Future Direction

- 5.1. Public consultation on both strategies will be at least eight weeks in length, starting Spring 2015 and continuing into Summer 2015.

6. Recommendations

- 6.1. That the Executive Member for Economy, Transport and Environment approves the development of a Walking Strategy and a Cycling Strategy for Hampshire based on the principles outlined in this report;
- 6.2. That authority to finalise the draft Strategy for public consultation be delegated to the Director of Economy, Transport and Environment, in consultation with the Executive Member for Economy, Transport and Environment.
- 6.3. That the outcomes of the consultations on both strategies, and any proposed changes in light of feedback received, are reported back to the appropriate Executive Member to review and approve the final strategies.

CORPORATE OR LEGAL INFORMATION:

Links to the Corporate Strategy

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| Hampshire safer and more secure for all: | no |
| Corporate Improvement plan link number (if appropriate): | |
| Maximising well-being: | yes |
| Corporate Improvement plan link number (if appropriate): | |
| Enhancing our quality of place: | yes |
| Corporate Improvement plan link number (if appropriate): | |

Section 100 D - Local Government Act 1972 - background documents

The following documents discuss facts or matters on which this report, or an important part of it, is based and have been relied upon to a material extent in the preparation of this report. (NB: the list excludes published works and any documents which disclose exempt or confidential information as defined in the Act.)

Document

Location

IMPACT ASSESSMENTS:

1. Equality Duty

1.1 The County Council has a duty under Section 149 of the Equality Act 2010 ('the Act') to have due regard in the exercise of its functions to the need to:

- Eliminate discrimination, harassment and victimisation and any other conduct prohibited under the Act;
- Advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic (age, disability, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, gender and sexual orientation) and those who do not share it;
- Foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it.

Due regard in this context involves having due regard in particular to:

- a) The need to remove or minimise disadvantages suffered by persons sharing a relevant characteristic connected to that characteristic;
- b) Take steps to meet the needs of persons sharing a relevant protected characteristic different from the needs of persons who do not share it;
- c) Encourage persons sharing a relevant protected characteristic to participate in public life or in any other activity which participation by such persons is disproportionately low.

1.2 Equalities Impact Assessment:

The impacts of developing the strategies on the following groups should all be positive:

Age (medium, positive, impact)

One impact of the walking and cycling strategies as far as age is concerned relates to the encouragement of younger members of society to walk or cycle more, with resultant public health, environmental, and amenity benefits. Another age impact (which could arise if certain types of infrastructure or support is more widely provided) might be to encourage people to continue to walk and/or cycle into older age.

Disability (medium, positive, impact)

The strategies will each include a section promoting access for all, which, as examples, might include facilitating walking for those with mobility impairments and raising awareness of inclusive cycling opportunities and accessible bike rides.

Maternity (medium, positive impact)

The walking strategy in particular will encourage improvements to the pedestrian environment, including for those with pushchairs.

Rurality (medium, positive, impact)

Whilst car ownership is higher in rural areas, there is still a significant proportion of rural residents (including the young and many mature residents) who do not drive and many of these will live in an area with a limited bus service. For these residents cycling provides an opportunity to access schools, training, employment, services, and facilities in nearby towns and villages and is therefore an important method in reducing rural isolation.

No negative impacts of this decision have been identified requiring mitigating action. The wider consultation proposed will enable these groups to influence the further development of the strategies.

2. Impact on Crime and Disorder:

- 2.1. There are no expected crime and disorder impacts arising from the development of walking and cycling strategies.

3. Climate Change:

- 3.1. How does what is being proposed impact on our carbon footprint / energy consumption?

An increase in the number of people walking and cycling, particularly if they are travelling for transport purposes, would help reduce the carbon footprint of local residents.

- 3.2. How does what is being proposed consider the need to adapt to climate change, and be resilient to its longer term impacts?

The measures proposed in the draft walking and cycling strategies are resilient to the longer term impacts of any climate change.