

HAMPSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL**Decision Report**

Decision Maker:	Executive Member for Economy, Transport and Environment
Date:	19 January 2016
Title:	Hampshire Walking Strategy
Reference:	7180
Report From:	Director of Economy, Transport and Environment

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1. Executive Summary

- 1.1. The purpose of this paper is to report on the key responses made to the recent public consultation on the draft Hampshire Walking Strategy and suggest revisions to the text of the draft strategy in light of the feedback received.
- 1.2. A summary of the key points made in the consultation is included in Appendix 1 with the text of the revised strategy attached as Appendix 2.
- 1.3. The Hampshire Walking Strategy identifies a number of key aims and it is hoped that approval in alignment with the Local Transport Plan will facilitate progress on these aims:
 - To provide a clear statement on Hampshire County Council's overall aspiration to support walking in the short, medium and long term;
 - To provide a framework to support the development of local walking strategies;
 - To provide a means to prioritise the County Council's funding to the best value for money investments for walking; and
 - To support the County Council in realising additional funding opportunities for walking measures.
- 1.4. If approved, the Hampshire Walking Strategy will serve as a guide for the County Council in developing policy and making decisions related to or affecting walking across Hampshire.
- 1.5. The Hampshire Walking Strategy has been developed with input from across the authority representing a variety of interests and expertise including public

health and leisure activity as well as the core function of catering for walking on the highway network.

2. Contextual information

- 2.1. Through cross-departmental working, the County Council has been developing a draft Hampshire Walking Strategy for Hampshire.
- 2.2. The draft strategy was approved by the Executive Member for Economy, Transport and Environment as a basis for consultation.
- 2.3. The public consultation on the strategy took the form of a 6 week consultation from 26th October until 7th December 2015. This was publicised via online information and a questionnaire, and direct mailing to interested parties including parish councils, district councils and local and specialist interest groups.
- 2.4. This consultation on the draft Hampshire Walking Strategy was preceded by a similar consultation on The Hampshire Cycling Strategy over the summer of 2015. The Hampshire Cycling Strategy was approved by the Executive Member for Economy, Transport and Environment, in September 2015.
- 2.5. This strategy, if adopted would sit alongside the Hampshire Countryside Access Plan that is concerned primarily with access over the rights of way network for leisure purposes.
- 2.6. This strategy would also support the 'living well' priority of the Joint Hampshire Health and Wellbeing Strategy 2013-2018
- 2.7. The strategy is designed to meet the needs of all users and aims to make walking accessible to all, especially to support continuous journeys and independent mobility, for instance for those who are wheelchair bound. Improving accessibility for people with disabilities is already an integral part of the County Council's work and will continue to be so.

3. Public Consultation Response

- 3.1. 149 individuals and groups completed the questionnaire with generally positive responses:
 - 84% of respondents agreed or strongly agreed with the objectives of the strategy.
 - 88% of respondents thought the aims of the strategy were clear.
 - 63% of respondents found it easy or very easy to understand the draft walking strategy
 - 58% of respondents felt that achieving the aims of the draft strategy would encourage people to walk more in Hampshire.

A further 37 email responses were received to the consultation inbox. The consultation comments have been analysed and the key topics raised (by 8

or more recipients) have been summarised in the table below in order of frequency, together with suggested responses that have been incorporated into the Hampshire Walking Strategy as appropriate.

Topic	Response
Expressed support for strategy, or elements of it.	We welcome support for the strategy and its key themes and actions.
Walking needs to be accessible for all ages/abilities (taking into consideration the state/safety of the network and its accessibility for all users i.e. stiles vs gates and safe routes to school.	Accessibility is covered within the strategy. The text has been expanded to consider ways in which accessibility can be improved for specific age groups, independent mobility and more rural areas. The Countryside Access Plan also mentions initiatives which improve accessibility.
Need an improved, better connected footpath network (both urban and rural), which amongst other purposes serves to link local communities to local green spaces, without pedestrians having to contend with traffic.	The strategy has been strengthened to ensure that new developments are easily accessible by walking and planning them around the access needs of pedestrians. For rural areas, see the below topic and response.
Too focused on urban routes - it needs more of a focus on countryside and leisure walking.	The Walking Strategy aims to work in partnership with the Countryside Access Plan (CAP) and this point has been strengthened within the strategy. The CAP describes how rights of ways and access to the countryside will be managed over the coming years.
Needs more detail on funding, including consideration of health funding streams. No mention of developer contributions. Given funding constraints, viability of delivery is in question.	The strategy will be used as part of a process to secure new funding avenues, where appropriate. The document is a statement of intent, funding levels may change over the lifetime of the strategy.
Maintenance of paths and pavements is important, including investment in well used routes. Routes need to be accessible. Current maintenance standards are flagged up as insufficient; arguable these should be improved before new routes are added.	Work with local partners to establish the improvement and maintenance needs of priority routes. Clarify in the strategy that money for maintenance is not to be used for adding new routes, and that when new routes are added funding for maintenance should be a consideration.
Needs to be more emphasis and background on wayfinding (both urban and rural).	The strategy supports additional wayfinding for popular urban routes and will explore how these can be met. The Countryside Access Plan seeks to make improvements to signage and promotion of through-routes on the rights of way network. Alongside this, HCC will continue to provide freely available, online maps of rights of way and promoted routes.
The health and social impacts of walking need to be recognised/promoted.	The links with the public health agenda have been strengthened throughout the strategy.
The strategy should link better with cycling and other users of the network to optimise	Link to cycling strategy and other corporate strategies have been strengthened.

resources.	
Not everybody wants to/is able to/has the confidence to walk. Applies to both urban and rural routes.	The strategy recognises that through the right travel planning, clear wayfinding and providing the right facilities, it can help make walking more attractive to everyone. Reference has been made to the development of continuous routes and independent mobility. The need to address perceived and actual personal safety issues for walkers has been also incorporated.
General support for working in partnership with the caveat that the districts and neighbouring authorities have their own financial constraints.	Work with partners to identify opportunities for joint funding across authorities and corporate priorities.
Need for connectivity through multimodal journeys, including urban to rural, and vice versa. Public transport and walking routes should be better integrated.	Better references have been made to the benefits of walking routes as part of multimodal journeys.
Needs more detail on the delivery mechanism, including timescales and actions. Establish a working group.	This is agreed and further references have been made to joint working during the delivery stage.
Concerns that all highway be suitably maintained to levels, and that none are improved or created at the expense of others.	The strategy has been amended to include reference to identifying locally important routes with local representatives, alongside strategically important routes.
Safety - improve pedestrian safety on roads, reduce speeding, educate drivers and pedestrians, and the use of road signs.	The section on pedestrian safety has been enhanced to incorporate many of the comments received.

3.2. Councillors Stallard and Gibson have both expressed their support for a Hampshire Walking Strategy and officers from Countryside Service and Public Health have input into the strategy.

4. Finance

- 4.1 Funding the Hampshire Walking Strategy will require drawing together resources and searching for additional sources of funding which could be applied to walking investments. In many instances the measures set out in the strategy will complement wider initiatives or investments by the County Council, so it will be important to look at opportunities to add value to these by incorporating walking measures.
- 4.2 The overall largest contributor of funding is central Government. Direct funding is in the form of Local Transport Plan (LTP) funding, whilst indirectly funding is received via the Local Enterprise Partnerships through the Local Growth Fund (LGF).
- 4.3 The pressures associated with central government funding should however be noted, in that the funding landscape has changed in recent years with LTP funding diminishing. Following the expiry of the existing LSTF grant in

April 2016, a new Access fund will be available to support growth in walking and cycling, although arrangements for the allocation of this fund have yet to be announced.

- 4.4 Government funding for transport is also provided indirectly as part of the Local Growth Fund which is administered through the Local Enterprise Partnerships (LEPs). The Local Growth Fund brings together funding for housing, infrastructure and other areas into a single capital pot. The Council's allocation for local transport will be determined within the context of the overall priorities of each LEP. Both LEP's have prioritised improving infrastructure for sustainable travel choices including walking.
- 4.5 Developer contributions collected by the County Council through planning agreements have historically played an important role in funding walking infrastructure investment to support development growth. Whilst planning agreements will remain important for larger scale development, future development funding for infrastructure will increasingly be collected through the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) collected and distributed by the local planning authorities.
- 4.6 Funding for walking from the Department for Transport (DfT) may become available as a result of the Infrastructure Act (February 2015) which places a legal requirement on the Secretary of State for Transport to set out a strategy for national walking (and cycling) investment, and importantly to provide the funding to meet it. A draft Cycling and Walking Investment Strategy for public consultation is expected from the DfT in spring 2016, with a Statement of Funds available in early 2016. Further details on both the background and timescale for the Cycling and Walking Investment Strategy are available from the DfT [on their website](#).

Performance

- 5.1 Progress with the Hampshire Walking Strategy will be principally assessed on participation rates, public satisfaction, and safety statistics. These will be measured from various sources. Census data, for example, provides travel to work information. The Local Area Walking and Cycling Statistics (taken from Sport Englands Active People Survey, which surveys 165,000 adults per year across England) gives valuable information about walking, and local community groups in conjunction with the districts/ boroughs can also help us monitor the success of the strategy, for example, through community street audits.
- 5.2 There is a high priority placed on safety within the strategy which is monitored through the National Highways and Transportation Survey and through Hampshire Police data on road traffic injury accidents. In addition, the strategy presents the opportunity to work in an effective cross-departmental way by monitoring through the County Council's Countryside Access Plan managed through the Countryside Service.

Future direction

- 6.1 Should the Hampshire Walking Strategy be approved, focus will shift to the delivery of actions. A cross-departmental group of County Council officers will seek to identify potential funding opportunities and to work closely with local communities and delivery partners to implement the strategy. This group met for the first time on the 7th January to discuss the implementation of the cycling strategy. Having the same group for both strategies will ensure that a holistic approach to implementation is achieved.

Recommendations

- 7.1 That the Executive Member for Economy, Transport and Environment approves the suggested changes made to the text of the draft Hampshire Walking Strategy following the public consultation, as contained in the appendix to the report.
- 7.2 That the Executive Member for Economy, Transport and Environment approves the Hampshire Walking Strategy in alignment with the Local Transport Plan and as a basis for future funding bids and development partnerships.

CORPORATE OR LEGAL INFORMATION:**Links to the Corporate Strategy**

Hampshire safer and more secure for all:	yes
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):	

Other Significant Links

Links to previous Member decisions:		
<u>Title</u>	<u>Reference</u>	<u>Date</u>
Hampshire Walking and Cycling Strategies (EMETE Decision Day report)	6397	20 January 2015
Hampshire County Council Cycling Strategy – Decision Day	6847	15 September 2015

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.)

DocumentLocation

None

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 the walking strategy on the following groups should all be positive:

Age (medium, positive, impact)

An impact of the walking strategy is that if it leads to more accessible and safer walking routes, it could encourage both younger and older members of society to walk more, with resultant public health, environmental and amenity benefits.

Disability (medium, positive, impact)

The strategy will include a section on accessibility which promotes access for all where appropriate, which, as examples, will include safely removing unnecessary fixed obstructions where possible, and working with the district and borough councils in reducing the incidence of vehicles blocking routes. This will consider the needs of disabled users as appropriate, including those in wheelchairs, and where possible aim to create continuous routes suitable to support independent mobility for the less able.

Maternity (medium, positive impact)

The walking strategy will encourage improvements to the walking environment, which potentially could include those walking with babies or young children (such as with bike trailers).

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, better walking routes provides an opportunity to access schools, training, employment, services, and facilities within their own local area.

Poverty (medium, positive, impact)

Those on low incomes are less likely to afford car ownership and a strategy that improves conditions for walking is likely to provide enhanced access to services, retail, etc.

Poor Health (medium, positive, impact)

Better conditions for pedestrians within Hampshire could lead to residents evaluating lifestyle choices leading to some making a modal shift from driving towards walking. This could lead to an improvement in air quality (as a result of less cars on the road), which would be of health benefit to those who suffer from poor health as a result of poor air quality.

Regular physical activity such as brisk walking can reduce the risk of many chronic health conditions including heart disease, stroke, type 2 diabetes and cancer. Even relatively small increases in physical activity are associated with some protection against chronic diseases and an improved quality of life

There are no negative actions to mitigate against.

The strategy seeks to 'widen the net' so that residents and families not currently walking as part of their everyday lifestyle feel able to walk in a safe and convenient manner to get to their preferred destination. These residents often fit into one or more of the categories noted above.

2. Impact on Crime and Disorder:

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

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, 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 walking strategy are resilient to the longer term impacts of any climate change.