



Borough of Telford and Wrekin

Cabinet

14th July 2022

Local Cycling & Walking Infrastructure Plan

Cabinet Member: Cllr Richard Overton - Deputy Leader & Cabinet Member:
Housing, Enforcement & Transport
Carolyn Healy, Cabinet Member for Climate Change, Green
Spaces, Natural and Historic Environment and Cultural Services

Lead Director: Dean Sargeant – Director: Neighbourhood & Enforcement
Services

Service Area: Strategic Transport & Highway Network Management

Report Author: Matt Powell – Service Delivery Manager: Strategic Transport &
Highway Network Management

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Wards Affected: Borough wide

Key Decision: No

Forward Plan: Not Applicable

Report considered by: SMT on 15th June 2022
Cabinet on 14th July 2022

1.0 Recommendations for decision/noting:

It is recommended that Cabinet:-

- 1.1 Approves the adoption of the Local Cycling & Walking Infrastructure Plan (LCWIP) attached in Appendix A.
- 1.2 Delegate authority to the Director: Neighbourhood & Enforcement Services, in consultation with the Deputy Leader & Cabinet Member: Housing, Enforcement &

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Transport to refresh the existing 2017 Cycling and Walking Strategy to support the emerging Local Transport Plan.

- 1.3 Endorse the proposals to engage with stakeholders including Town & Parish Councils as part of continued development and delivery of the Local Cycling & Walking Infrastructure Plan.
- 1.4 Note progress to date in delivering cycling and walking across the borough including improvements to the A518, Silkin Way and on-going investment into our Public Rights of Way network.

2.0 Purpose of Report

- 2.1 The purpose of this report is to seek Cabinet endorsement of the newly developed Local Cycling & Walking Infrastructure Plan (LCWIP) for the Borough.
- 2.2 Once approved, the Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan and the emerging Cycling and Walking Strategy will become the Council's key documents in setting out its commitment to delivering these modes of transport. These documents will enable the Council to be ideally placed to co-ordinate activities that achieve the aims of the strategy and secure funding from external sources such as the Department for Transport and developers.

3.0 Background

- 3.1 Like many areas, Telford & Wrekin saw a significant increase in residents exploring their neighbourhood during 2020 and 2021. This increase saw residents becoming more active and enjoying both cycling and walking to explore the many green and open spaces we have in the borough.
- 3.2 Telford & Wrekin has an extensive network of walking and cycling routes. However, we recognise that the borough's highway network was designed for the car but this provides an ideal opportunity to dovetail further improvements into infrastructure that promotes an integrated approach to active travel.
- 3.3 In the last two years, the council has invested £600,000 into measures to improve and promote cycling and walking. This has included:
 - The creation of a new 2km cycleway/footway along the A518 between Donnington and Church Aston
 - Investment into the maintenance of the 22km Silkin Way
 - Installation of high quality cycle facilities in district centres
 - Investment in a dedicated footway/cycleway sweeper
- 3.4 There is a further investment planned during 2022 to include £800,000 into signage/way finding and infrastructure along the Silkin Way along with £150,000 for high quality cycle parking hubs currently being delivered.

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- 3.5 This investment complements the recently opened Telford Bike Hub in the award winning Telford Town Park; this dedicated facility provides cycle safety training for both children and adults while carrying out general bike maintenance sessions. During 21/22 the Road Safety Education Team delivered a number of cycling training sessions that included:
- 777 children achieving Bikeability Level 1 & 2 training,
 - Delivery of 61 one-to-one cycle training sessions to both children and adults
 - 582 Learn to Ride places for children
- 3.6 Such training supports the Council's 10 by 10 initiative that encourages every child to experience ten life enhancing activities by the age of 10.
- 3.7 In support of our commitment to bringing forward our ambitious plans, the Council has successfully recruited a dedicated Active Travel Delivery Specialist, who will take a leading role delivering our plans.
- 3.8 In 2020 the Department for Transport published a new policy called 'Gear Change' which set out a vision for a travel revolution in England's streets, towns and communities.
- 3.9 The plan described the vision to make England a great walking and cycling nation. It set out the actions required at all levels of government to make this a reality, grouped under four themes:
- Better streets for cycling and people
 - Cycling and walking at the heart of decision-making
 - Empowering and encouraging local authorities
 - Enabling people to cycle and protecting them when they do
- 3.10 In light of the above, and prior to developing the LCWIP, the Council undertook a detailed cycling and walking consultation which provided feedback on travel habits and factors that are seen as barriers to walking and cycling more. This information has been used to inform the LCWIP and other ongoing schemes.
- 3.11 As part of developing the LCWIP process two stakeholder meetings have taken place, one at initial concept stage and the second to discuss scheme details. The sessions were held with Cabinet Members and officers from across the organisation including; health and wellbeing, business and economy, tourism, highways and planning. The sessions enabled feedback to be captured in order to inform the strategy and develop holistic plans.
- 3.12 Emerging thoughts on the LCWIP were presented to Communities Scrutiny Committee at their February 2022 meeting. Scrutiny were provided with an update on active travel in the borough with the following recommendations approved:
- Endorse the approach to Active Travel and progress made to date.
 - Consider the approach to develop a Local Cycling & Walking Investment Plan (LCWIP) and associated strategy refresh and whether there are any interventions that could be brought forward.

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- 3.13 Communities Scrutiny Committee queried whether there was opportunity to further extend the A518 scheme; the LCWIP identifies the A518 corridor as a route that will continue to be developed (where possible) where funding opportunities are available. Committee also queried signing/promotion of our existing cycle network which is currently in development as part of our wider plans for promoting active travel across the borough.
- 3.14 The LCWIP has been developed to set out Telford & Wrekin's vision to further enhance active travel through improving and building new infrastructure; this will ensure our ambitious plans meet the objectives set out in 'Gear Change' and in accordance with new national design guidelines within Local Transport Note 1/20. This is a long-term plan to encourage and support residents and visitors of the Borough to walk and cycle more in their everyday lives.
- 3.15 The new LCWIP is a delivery focussed plan which sets out a number of infrastructure improvements. The first iteration of the plan is data-led, with high-level proposals that seek to bring about change in the nature of our transport networks to support more active modes of travel. However, it is important to note that the infrastructure plan is a working document that will evolve as detailed stakeholder engagement takes place.
- 3.16 As a delivery document, the LCWIP will be complemented by a Cycling and Walking Strategy to provide an important link to the Local Transport Plan (LTP). The Council's existing Cycling and Walking Strategy was adopted in 2017 and will be updated to reflect the objectives set out in the LCWIP. The LTP is the overarching strategy governing how we will manage our transport networks going forward; the Council is awaiting updated government guidance on LTP development is currently under review.
- 3.17 Whilst the LCWIP is infrastructure focussed, this wider strategy document will also be updated to focus on our work around promotion of walking and cycling. This work will build on elements like the launch of the Bike Hun in Telford Town Park, and focus on encouraging and supporting residents to walk and cycle more. A key element of this promotion will be how we communicate about our routes through things like enhanced digital mapping and increasing the amount of publicly available information.

4.0 Summary of main proposals

- 4.1 The LCWIP helps determine priorities for both the short and long-term around infrastructure for active travel. This involves both improving the existing network and creating new connections.
- 4.2 The LCWIP proposes 'zones' and 'corridors' where improvements can be made which are based on improving access to our borough towns and enhancing their connectivity to other areas by alternative modes of transport. These areas are then assigned a priority for future implementation.
- 4.3 The LCWIP should be seen as a working document that will be reviewed and updated regularly. Updates should take into account any changes to future legislation or guidance from the DFT and funding opportunities that come to fruition.

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- 4.4 Each proposal requires more detailed design as well as engagement with Town and Parish Council's and local stakeholders. This will also help identify any early deliverables or existing schemes that could be adapted to include the LCWIP proposal and ensure compliance with national design standards.
- 4.5 It is recognised that significant investment is needed to bring forward plans outlined in the LCWIP. The LCWIP and updated strategy identifies funding required to help support future funding opportunities.
- 4.6 A full communications plan will be written to support the LCWIP to show the council's commitment to developing sustainable travel locally. The LCWIP will also feed into existing campaigns around health, active lifestyles, climate change and transport. Any infrastructure projects going forward would also have their own campaign.
- 4.7 It is also recognised that there are areas of the borough that are not currently included in the first iteration of our LCWIP, which is due to the need to prioritise interventions in line with Department for Transport guidance. However, the need for tailored plans to be created for the areas not currently included is clear, and through the life of the LCWIP we will work with local stakeholders in these areas to develop plans further.

5.0 Alternative Options

- 5.1 The LCWIP is required to support the Cycling and Walking Strategy as set out by the Department for Transport. However schemes that are within the LCWIP will evolve through the design and consultations process. Similarly, alternative schemes that are not in the plan will be still be considered concurrently, and either considered for funding separately or added into the LCWIP.

6.0 Key Risks

- 6.1 Having an ambitious plan in place may create an expectation of timely delivery that the Council will manage in relation to issues such as the life of the plan, securing finance to deliver schemes, and how schemes will develop through future stakeholder engagement.

7.0 Council Priorities

- 7.1 The adoption and implementation of the LCWIP and strategy will support the following priorities:
- Protect and create jobs as a Business Supporting, Business Winning Council
 - We will ensure that neighbourhoods are safe, clean and well maintained
 - We will improve the health and wellbeing of our communities and address health inequalities.

8.0 Financial Implications

- 8.1 As this Investment Plan is setting out a long term delivery strategy, there are no immediate financial implications of the report. However it is noted that funding will be

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required to deliver the plan, and as such, specific financial decisions based on the availability of internal and external funding will need to be made as any schemes are brought forward.

9.0 Legal and HR Implications

- 9.1 The Government Cycling and Walking Investment Strategy set out the ambition to make walking and cycling the natural choices for shorter journeys or as part of a longer journey.
- 9.2 In support of the government Cycling and Walking Investment Strategy (CWIS), the Department for Transport (DfT) has encouraged local authorities to prepare a Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan (LCWIP) in order to take a more strategic approach to planning for active travel, and in order for councils to be better placed when applying for funding opportunities. The Government released the 'Gear Change' vision document in July 2020 which sets out the national ambition to make walking and cycling the natural choice for journeys. The Borough have now developed the new Local Cycling & Walking Infrastructure Plan (LCWIP).
- 9.3 The LCWIP is not a statutory document and there are no direct legal implications associated with this document. Any relevant legal implications will be applied when individual schemes are considered.

10.0 Ward Implications

- 10.1 The LCWIP is a borough wide plan but planned infrastructure enhancements and developments are specific to certain areas/routes, and may be subject to change depending on future engagement and design stages.
- 10.2 It is however noted that the proposals considered at this stage are high level and each proposal has not yet been considered in significant detail. As schemes are brought forward detailed consultation with stakeholders will be undertaken to consider more specific local implications.

11.0 Health, Social and Economic Implications

- 11.1 The LCWIP provides ideal opportunity to improve public health and economic growth of the borough; safe, well maintained infrastructure encourages both residents and visitors to travel in a more active and sustainable way.
- 11.2 The Chief Medical Officer produced a set of Physical Activity Guidelines in 2019 and what we should be doing in order to benefit our health and reduce our risk of Type II Diabetes, Cardiovascular Disease, some types of Cancer, excess weight and obesity, fundamentally improving mental health and emotional wellbeing.
- 11.3 Cycling and walking improve personal health and fitness levels with the benefits widely accepted by health professionals. It offers an alternative mode of transport that the

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Council has taken a number of steps towards encouraging more people to use their bikes for both leisure and commuting to work

- 11.4 The LCWIP will support creating a healthier local population; it has been proven that a brisk walk for 30 minutes a day can help reduce obesity levels and reduce disease. Adults should do some type of physical activity every day at a moderate intensity (breathe faster, feel warmer). Ideally 150 minutes of moderate intensity or 75 minutes of vigorous exercise per week. The easiest way to achieve this daily activity is through walking and cycling. The weight of evidence suggests that if walking and cycling can be increased, they have potential to lead to important health gains at the population level, and thus benefit the NHS and the wider health and care system.
- 11.5 The Active Lives Adult Survey is published twice a year and Active Lives Children and Young People is published annually. Both give a unique and comprehensive view of how people are getting active.
- 11.6 When looking at the latest data (Nov 20-21) from the Active Lives Adult Survey the number of people 'walking for leisure' is significantly higher (60.8%) than 'all cycling' (13.7%), 'active travel' (19.6%) and 'cycling for leisure' (10.9%) based on Participation in the last 28 days: At least twice in the last 28 days by activity.
- 11.7 Since Nov 17-18, there has been a steady decline in percentage of adults participating in 'active travel' from 29% to the latest results 19.6%. For 'all cycling' it still depicts a decreasing trend in participation from the highest participation ever achieved Nov 18 -19 18.3%. When looking at data around 'cycling for leisure' there has been a decrease from Nov 15-16 (14.2% and May 20 – 21 (14.8%) to Nov 20 – 21 (10.9%) based on Participation in the last 28 days: At least twice in the last 28 days by activity.
- 11.8 Sustrans and Arup provided a new report (July 2020) which showed large unmet demand for cycling from ethnic minority and disadvantaged groups. 'Cycling for Everyone', highlighted inequalities within cycling participation in urban areas between different demographics, including those from ethnic minority groups, women, disabled people, older people, and those at greater risk of deprivation.
- 11.9 The report told us that the Covid-19 pandemic has brought to light many disparities within society. Cycling has proved its worth during the pandemic, however, 74% of people from ethnic minority groups living in cities and towns do not currently cycle. Despite low participation levels, the report found 55% of people from ethnic minority groups who do not currently cycle would like to start. This compares to 37% of White people. In addition, 38% of people at risk of deprivation, 36% of women, and 31% of disabled people who do not cycle would like to give it a go.
- 11.10 Linked with areas of our most disadvantaged areas is the need for links with our major business sites and ensuring accessible and safe active travel infrastructure enabling people to be fit and well at work and boosting productivity and the economy as a result.
- 11.11 The LCWIP also supports a happier community; 'Walking for Health' states that 'physically active people have up to a 30% reduced risk of becoming depressed, and staying active

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helps those who are depressed recover.’ Walking is an accessible exercise which can help prevent and treat certain mental health issues.

11.12 Active Travel benefits the environment and local people as a result of cleaner and greener air and reducing chances of some respiratory conditions.

11.13 The Local Cycling & Walking Strategy will be updated which will support the LCWIP. The objectives of the strategy will seek to increase the number of people cycling and walking, by making these viable and attractive alternative modes of transport for everyday journeys, including leisure trips. By encouraging greater levels of physical activity in the borough, the strategy will help contribute towards improving the health and wellbeing of residents.

12.0 Equality and Diversity Implications

12.1 The infrastructure delivered by these proposals is aimed to improve access to the borough by all, in turn promoting inclusivity. With regard to specific engineering interventions, the impact and accessibility of these would be considered in the associated design phase in line with national guidance and standards.

12.2 In terms of non-infrastructure interventions, the associated strategy that will be updated at a later date will consider in more depth issues around equalities and under-represented groups with regard to Active Travel. This will built on work already undertaken in conjunction with Public Health. The implications of the non-infrastructure elements of future work will there

12.3 The proposals are not thought to have any specific impacts on our armed forces community, other than through access to any improved infrastructure that would be available to all.

13.0 Climate Change and Environmental Implications

13.1 Studies undertaken by the University of Oxford have found that those who switch just one trip per day from driving to cycling can reduce their carbon footprint by approximately 0.5 tonnes a year.

13.2 The LCWIP provides opportunity to enhance air quality, public health and economic growth of the borough through encouraging both residents and visitors to travel in a more active and sustainable way by providing a safe and appealing environment to do so. This will create access to more facilities including leisure and shopping and also connect more of our local green spaces.

13.3 Also by enabling and promoting the increased use of active modes, it is hoped that residents and visitors can be encouraged to use more sustainable modes of travel than the private motor car, further supporting our aim to reduce the environmental impact of our transport network.

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14.0 Background Papers

- 1 Active Travel Update – Communities Scrutiny – 15th February 2022

15.0 Appendices

- A Local Cycling & Walking Investment Plan (LCWIP)
- B Cycling & Walking Strategy 2017

16.0 Report Sign Off

Signed off by	Date sent	Date signed off	Initials
Finance	09/06/2022	10/06/2022	DR
Legal	09/06/2022	20/06/2022	SH
Director - Neighbourhood & Enforcement Services	09/06/2022	09/06/2022	DRS