

BABERGH DISTRICT COUNCIL

TO: Cabinet	REPORT NUMBER: BCa/21/50
FROM: Cabinet Member for Environment / Sustainable Travel	DATE OF MEETING: 4 th April 2022
OFFICER: Fiona Duhamel, Assistant Director for Economy and Regeneration	KEY DECISION REF NO. CAB240

BMSDC SUSTAINABLE TRAVEL VISION & LOCAL CYCLING AND WALKING INFRASTRUCTURE PLAN

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 Cabinet are asked to consider whether or not endorse the Babergh and Mid Suffolk District Councils Joint Sustainable Travel Vision and Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan (LCWIP).

2. OPTIONS CONSIDERED

- 2.1 Option 1 – To endorse these strategic documents
- 2.2 Option 2 – To decide not to endorse these strategic documents

3. RECOMMENDATIONS
3.1 Recommendation that the joint Councils' draft LCWIP and Sustainable Transport vision are endorsed.
3.2 That the completion of the final documentation is delegated to the AD for Economic Development and Regeneration in consultation with portfolio holders for Environment.
REASON FOR DECISION
3.3 Endorsement is recommended so that the LCWIP can be supported and utilised as recommended by National Government guidance. The Sustainable Travel Vision will be used to inform the public about our key values, aims, ambitions and narrative around Sustainable Travel. The LCWIP will also be made public, but the key functions of this document are to inform SCC Highways and our own planning directorate of our active travel infrastructure ambitions, in order to capture opportunity for delivery.

4. KEY INFORMATION

- 4.1 Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plans (LCWIPs), as set out in the Government's Cycling and Walking Investment Strategy, are a new, strategic approach to identifying cycling and walking improvements required at the local level.

- 4.2 LCWIPs enable a long-term approach to developing local cycling and walking networks, ideally over a 10 year period, and form a vital part of the Government's strategy to increase the number of trips made on foot or by cycle.
- 4.3 LCWIPs are considered key in obtaining funding to deliver active travel schemes.
- 4.4 SCC Highways have encouraged District and Boroughs to develop their own LCWIPs, to inform and enhance the county-wide LCWIP, and assist investment decision making with a strong evidence base.
- 4.5 The LCWIP has been developed in accordance with the national government technical guidance for producing LCWIPs, adapted where necessary to better reflect the needs of our more rural landscape.
- 4.6 The key outputs of our LCWIP are; a network plan for walking and cycling which identifies preferred routes and core zones for further development, a prioritised programme of infrastructure improvements for future investment, and a report which sets out the underlying analysis carried out and provides a narrative which supports the identified improvements and network.
- 4.7 The process of producing the LCWIP included identifying potential infrastructure schemes via public consultation (which received over 1,880 responses) and prioritising them according to a range of different factors/criteria. The full methodology is detailed in the LCWIP technical report.
- 4.8 The development of the LCWIP was overseen by a cross-district, cross-ward, cross-party 'Task and Finish' member group.
- 4.9 The technical guidance recommends that the LCWIP will need to be reviewed and updated approximately every four to five years and should also be updated if there are significant changes in local circumstances, such as the publication of new policies or strategies, major new development sites, or new sources of funding. This updating should also capture any delivery of infrastructure improvements and the identification of new infrastructure needs.
- 4.10 As such, the prioritised scheme list (and accompanied mapping) remains a dynamic element of the LCWIP.
- 4.11 Many local authorities outsource the development of an LCWIP to a contractor (a practice criticised by Cycling UK, who are potentially going to become a statutory consultee for LCWIPs in the future), but BMSDC's has been developed in-house, with support and local knowledge from officers, members, SCC highways and an extensive community consultation.
- 4.12 While the LCWIP will be publicly available on our website, the accompanying Sustainable Travel Vision is designed to be a more accessible public-facing summary, setting out our key values and ambitions around active and sustainable travel.
- 4.13 The Sustainable Travel Vision included input from members, given during interactive all-member workshops delivered in 2021.

5. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

6. The only associated costs in bringing forward the LCWIP have been officer time, and the small-scale procurement of the 'Commonplace' platform to carry out the consultation which provided the evidence to then develop the LCWIP list of schemes.

The LCWIP will be utilised to gain funding for the delivery of schemes, providing the evidence needed to advocate for investment from any arising funding opportunities.

7. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

There are no expected legal implications.

8. RISK MANAGEMENT

If Cabinet does not endorse the LCWIP, there a risk that it will adversely affect the prioritisation of investment and resources from both local and national funders, based on local evidence and best practice, and will not provide the confidence to support the delivery of schemes that will provide meaningful improvements.

9. CONSULTATIONS

The LCWIP was developed by public consultation. The active travel infrastructure schemes included in the LCWIP were identified through a 'Commonplace' community consultation, which collected public comments and suggested during a six-week period between May and July 2021. The consultation website (which included information about why the councils were collecting information and suggestions, and how this would be developed in an LCWIP) was accessed by 3431 visitors. There were 1881 responses/contributions to the consultation itself. 328 people signed up to receive news and updates about the ongoing development of the LCWIP and the Councils' active travel workstream.

10. EQUALITY ANALYSIS

An EQIA is not required because this report is not recommending specific delivery action, however the strategy will have positive impacts on equality by providing improved active travel options for local communities.

11. ENVIRONMENTAL IMPLICATIONS

Encouraging and facilitating more active travel will have a positive impact on the local environment and air quality and is very much in line with the ambitions laid out within the joint councils' Environment Delivery Plan, Carbon Reduction Management Plan and the Suffolk Climate Change Partnership.

12. BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS

- The BMSDC Sustainable Travel Vision
- The BMSDC Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan (LCWIP) Methodology Report
- The BMSDC LCWIP Prioritised lists of schemes
- The LCWIP network zone & active travel desire lines mapping:
 - <https://www.google.com/maps/d/edit?mid=1sxy99y1tOzI74iXgTZrB9-ofvsF1q7nH&usp=sharing>