

MID SUFFOLK DISTRICT COUNCIL

TO:	Council	REPORT NUMBER: MC/22/16
FROM:	Cabinet Member for Environment	DATE OF MEETING: 21 July 2022
OFFICER:	Fiona Duhamel, Director for Economic Growth and Climate Change	KEY DECISION REF NO. N/A

BMSDC SUSTAINABLE TRAVEL VISION & LOCAL CYCLING AND WALKING INFRASTRUCTURE PLAN (LCWIP)

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 To inform members that, following Cabinet endorsement earlier in the year, the Babergh and Mid Suffolk District Councils Joint Sustainable Travel Vision and Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan (LCWIP) are now published.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 2.1 It is recommended that these documents are 'for noting'
- 2.2 It is recommended that all members are aware that these documents, and their associated supporting documents, have been published on the council's website and are therefore in the public domain. These documents, hosted on the councils' sustainable travel webpage, will be utilised within the councils sustainable travel workstream going forwards, and feedback/local knowledge is welcomed at any time with regards to the dynamic/live document elements of the LCWIP. Members can signpost to these documents/this webpage, in the first instance, when any queries regarding active travel arise.

3. KEY INFORMATION

- 3.1 Mid Suffolk, along with Babergh, District Council have been working to consolidate and refine their aims and ambitions around active and sustainable travel across the districts. This is summarised, in an accessible public-facing format, in the councils' Sustainable Travel Vision which sets out our key values around active and sustainable travel and how we will work to achieve them.
- 3.2 The Sustainable Travel Vision includes input from members, given during interactive all-member workshops delivered in 2021.
- 3.3 Alongside this, and specifically related to active travel, the councils have published a Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan (LCWIP).
- 3.4 LCWIPs, as set out in the Government's Cycling and Walking Investment Strategy, are a strategic approach to identifying cycling and walking improvements required at the local level.
- 3.5 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.

- 3.6 LCWIPs are considered key in obtaining funding to deliver active travel schemes.
- 3.7 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.
- 3.8 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.
- 3.9 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.
- 3.10 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.
- 3.11 The development of the LCWIP was overseen by a cross-district, cross-ward, cross-party 'Task and Finish' member group.
- 3.12 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.
- 3.13 The LCWIP can also be refined and benefit from further feedback and local knowledge, which is welcomed at any time.
- 3.14 The LCWIP is hosted in the public domain on the council's website, on a dedicated sustainable travel webpage, and is accompanied with information about how key stakeholders and interested parties can get in touch with the Sustainable Travel Officer to provide feedback and/or relevant information. Amendments can be made to the proposed scheme lists (and accompanied mapping) following further discussion, as long as this remains in line with the processes laid out in the LCWIP methodology.
- 3.15 As such, the prioritised scheme list (and accompanied mapping) remains a dynamic element of the LCWIP.

4. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

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.

5. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

There are no expected legal implications.

6. RISK MANAGEMENT

It is important that council now retains momentum within this workstream, so that the Sustainable Travel Vision is backed up with action.

It is important that the council now continues to advocate for, and help facilitate, the progress and implementation of LCWIP schemes, but also manages expectations when it comes to the delivery of those schemes, in terms of funding limitations, the need to work with partners, and the impact this has on timescales.

7. 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.

8. EQUALITY ANALYSIS

An EQIA is not required at this stage because these documents are a steer towards investment priorities, rather than specific delivery action which will need to be taken forwards with partners. However, it has been noted by the EQIA team that these strategies will have positive impacts on equality by providing improved active travel options for local communities.

9. ENVIRONMENTAL IMPLICATIONS

Encouraging and facilitating more active and sustainable 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.

10. BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS

The following associated documents are collated on the councils' website:

www.babergh.gov.uk/environment/sustainable-travel

- 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