

**INFRASTRUCTURE, HOUSING AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE – 11
OCTOBER 2022**

PART I - DELEGATED

**6. LOCAL CYCLING AND WALKING INFRASTRUCTURE PLAN (LCWIP)
PROPOSED DRAFT FOR CONSULTATION
(DCES)**

1 Summary

- 1.1 This report seeks approval for public consultation on the proposed Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan (LCWIP) to take place ahead of reporting back to the IHED committee followed by the Policy & Resources Committee before expected adoption by the Full Council.
- 1.2 The LCWIP is a new, strategic approach to planning sustainable active travel networks, developed to support the aims and objectives of the *National Cycling and Walking Investment Strategy* and required to enable the local Highway, Traffic and Transport Authority, the County Council, to apply for national funding for these routes.
- 1.3 The LCWIP process enables the identification of cycling and walking improvements required at the local level. The process enables a long-term approach to developing local cycling and walking networks over a ten-year period and is a vital component of the Government's strategy to increase the number of trips made by both forms of active travel.
- 1.4 The LCWIP has been developed jointly with the County Council (a requirement) and Watford Borough Council (a logical partner given the distribution of settlements in the District around the Watford conurbation, and a partner which was required by the County Council). Other neighbouring Local Authorities have been consulted as part of the LCWIP process as were a range of relevant stakeholders, including all District Council (and other partner Local Authority) Members.

2 Details

- 2.1 The District Council promotes walking and cycling through its Cycling Strategy by developing its proposed improvements to local cycling and walking infrastructure, often jointly with the local Highway Authority, Hertfordshire County Council (HCC). The Strategy is intended to promote cycling as a cheap, fun, healthy, reliable and adaptable form of transport, available to almost everyone. The Strategy contains three objectives:
- Maximise the use of cycles as a mode of transport, in order to reduce reliance on the use of private cars;
 - Develop a cycle network which is safe, convenient, attractive and efficient, and so encouraging and enabling cycling;
 - Ensure that the needs of cyclists are represented in transport, land use, health, education, leisure and environmental proposals.
- 2.2 The strategy is published at www.threerivers.gov.uk/cycling and has enabled infrastructure improvements as well as initiatives to enable and encourage local

people to walk and cycle (typically through travel planning tools and training, such as through Personal Travel Planning and the Leavesden Cycle Hub).

- 2.3 Infrastructure improvements under this strategy include 5.5 miles of Grand Union Canal towpath improved since 2015 to provide a wider, level route enabling traffic-free travel between most local settlements, from Rickmansworth to the northern end of Kings Langley; the completion of the Station Cycle Parking strategy (2009); and the South Way Cycleway in Abbots Langley.
- 2.4 The current District Strategy (updated 2008) integrates with the HCC South West Hertfordshire Cycling Study (2013) within the current Local Transport Plan 4, and the Integrated Transport Strategy (2008) integrated into Local Planning Policy in 2011.
- 2.5 Each individual link ('path') in these routes is considered in terms of ease and safety of cycling; and improvements are made where feasible. Most schemes primarily involve improvements to path design but some also include creating new routes or changing the legal status of paths to prioritise cycle access. The programme has been adjusted to a two-year model to take into account the life cycle of projects and financial commitments.
- 2.6 The latest planned review of the Strategy was agreed to meet new national standards, following publication of the first government guidance to Local Authorities on development of their cycling strategies. The new guidance details how local authorities (and specifically Local Planning Authorities) should produce cycling strategies called 'Local Cycling and Walking Implementation Plans' ('LCWIPs') using a detailed standard approach.
- 2.7 The draft report and plans were developed by consultants commissioned by a group comprising Three Rivers District Council, Watford Borough Council and Hertfordshire County Council (which led the group) starting in 2020.
- 2.8 The key outputs of LCWIPs 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
 - A report which sets out the underlying analysis carried out and provides a narrative which supports the identified improvements and network
- 2.9 The work to produce these outputs started in March 2020 by Mott MacDonald instructed by the consortium of the three Local Authorities. Data collected and analysed led to the identification of the outline Proposed Network by Spring 2021 and the draft final report was produced in December 2021.
- 2.10 The process included careful stakeholder mapping and the involvement of identified key stakeholders and Members at two stages; first to consider the proposed networks and next to consider the proposed interventions (in outline).
- 2.11 Views from key stakeholders were invited in 2020 and 2021 and the District Council opted to extend the project programme in order to ensure that further stakeholders considered to be key by local District Councillors were also included, so all schools and the Parish Councils were consulted in 2021. Interest was shown by Sarratt PC in particular, as the committee will note that no strategic routes extend to Sarratt itself.

- 2.12 At the second stage held in Autumn 2021, stakeholders and Members raised concerns at some of the proposed outline interventions (identified earlier by Officers without effect on the proposals), as the plan explicitly identified ‘gaps’ in various key routes that indicated these routes would not be deliverable.
- 2.13 A decision not to consult until these ‘gaps’ had been addressed was followed by further assessment by two consultancies (a local cycling specialist and an LCWIP specialist retained by Department for Transport) this year, whose suggestions and views were then taken to the County Council’s retained consultant WSP (which has an LCWIP specialist now working in other Hertfordshire Districts) which has been trying to rectify these problems. This has all been carried out with the close support of the County Council which must also adopt the Plan for it to be effective in securing funding.
- 2.14 It is important to note that in proposing a cycling network, the LCWIP includes only ‘strategic’ cycle routes, which in the Three Rivers District are low-density and focussed only on the key corridors identified by the tools that are required to be used for this process (as set out in the Guidance).
- 2.15 This means that the District Council’s current promoted cycle route network (viewable here www.threerivers.gov.uk/cycling), which was initially expected to be replaced by LCWIP routes, will be retained as a non-strategic ‘local network’ which is nevertheless essential to increasing cycling as it comprises routes that the County Council has suggested could be considered as ‘feeder’ routes to the Strategic Proposed Cycling Network.
- 2.16 Other challenges raised by the consultant were the subject of concern to local Councillors, including proposals for strategic cycleways across a SSSI that has been deprecated by the statutory authority responsible for its protection and across private land where land owners had objected to the proposal. It was noted that this plan was indicative and would not be implemented where it was not deliverable, but as local Councillors considered strongly that undeliverable proposals should not be included; these have now been removed.
- 2.17 The proposed Strategic routes are now ready to be consulted upon. The consultation process is proposed to comprise an online presentation of the proposed routes, some of which have been further developed to include proposed interventions (at a very high level).
- 2.18 To avoid confusion, it is planned to carry out a two-stage consultation, starting with consultation on the routes to be included in the Strategic Proposed Cycling Network and a separate survey on the ‘local route network’. The consultation will be hosted by Hertfordshire County Council and all enquiries will be directed to their website.
- 2.19 This model is proposed following stakeholder consultation (with Parish Councils and schools) during the development of the Plan, which attempted to consult on both networks simultaneously on the basis that consultees would prefer to envisage the entire network at once and comments on both networks could be separated. We found that the careful description of the difference between the two networks was not always understood by respondents (detail published here <https://www.threerivers.gov.uk/lcwip2021>). It is essential at this significant stage of consultation that responses we receive are not in any way confused by the fact that there must be two networks.

- 2.20 At the close of the consultation (run jointly by HCC and TRDC) comments received will be considered prior to the LCWIP returning to TRDC Committees for formal adoption, expected early 2023.

3 Options and Reasons for Recommendations

- 3.1 The report, proposed Cycle Route Network and proposed Core Walking Zones as set out in **Appendix A** comprise the output of a two-year, five-stage process to develop an evidence-based strategic network proposal, which is considered sufficiently robust to be suitable for public consultation.
- 3.2 The suggested interventions, which importantly are only indicative and high-level (not necessarily to be delivered as detailed in this document) are set out in **Appendix B**. This document has been circulated to all TRDC members in advance of the meeting and will be presented with any further comments at the Committee meeting. These interventions are a selection of deliverable improvements to the proposed Three Rivers strategic cycling and walking network (current proposed network maps are published here www.threerivers.gov.uk/cycling).
- 3.3 These proposals will contribute to the completion of safer, more attractive routes for all people to cycle and walk. Each route connects two or more key destinations including local settlements, schools and educational sites, employment areas and community facilities. The Infrastructure Plan will complement the current Cycling and Walking Strategy which will include other proposals both for 'non-strategic' routes and to facilitate cycling by providing the infrastructure to support bike storage, training, wayfinding, repair and information.
- 3.4 Agreement to proceed with public consultation on the Plan and interventions will be the next step in delivery and adoption of the LCWIP.

4 Policy/Budget Reference and Implications

- 4.1 The recommendations in this report are within the Council's agreed policy and budgets and will wherever possible be delivered through by external funding. The relevant policy is entitled *Corporate Framework 2020-2023* and was published on 18 September 2020. Further details are included in the Regulatory Services Service Plan.
- 4.2 The recommendations in this report relate to the achievement of the following performance indicators:
- Delivery and implementation of a Cycling and Walking Strategy

5 Legal, Equal Opportunities, Community Safety, Public Health, Customer Services Centre

- 5.1 None specific.

5.2 Financial

- 5.2.1 The delivery and adoption of the LCWIP is within existing budgets. The proposed Plan purely sets out a Policy perspective and does not commit the District Council to deliver any of its proposed schemes (although note that some are already committed under previous agreements. Any proposals not provided for within current budgets will be brought forward for consideration as part of the normal budget process.

5.3 Staffing

5.3.1 The Plan is being prepared utilising existing staff resources and identified budgets.

5.4 Environmental

5.4.1 Progression of this Plan will contribute to the completion of safer, more attractive routes for all people to cycle and walk. Each route connects two or more key destinations including local settlements, schools and educational sites, employment areas and community facilities. The Infrastructure Plan will complement the current Cycling and Walking Strategy.

5.5 Communications & Website

5.5.1 All consultation will be managed using existing resources, staffing and communications support.

6 Risk and Health & Safety Implications

6.1 The Council has agreed its risk management strategy which can be found on the website at <http://www.threerivers.gov.uk>. In addition, the risks of the proposals in the report have also been assessed against the Council's duties under Health and Safety legislation relating to employees, visitors and persons affected by our operations. The risk management implications of this report are detailed below.

6.2 The subject of this report is covered by the Regulatory Services plan. Any risks resulting from this report will be included in the risk register and, if necessary, managed within this plan.

Nature of Risk	Consequence	Suggested Control Measures	Response <i>(tolerate, treat, terminate, transfer)</i>	Risk Rating <i>(combination of likelihood and impact)</i>
Infrastructure Plan not adopted due to public lack of support	Schemes within the District could potentially be ineligible for central government funding	The plan was developed to a high standard using input and review from multiple expert and local groups, Councillors and organisations to ensure potential concerns are addressed.	Tolerate	3

6.3 The above risks are scored using the matrix below. The Council has determined its aversion to risk and is prepared to tolerate risks where the combination of impact and likelihood scores 6 or less.

Very Likely ----- Likelihood ----- ▼ Remote	Low	High	Very High	Very High
	4	8	12	16
	Low	Medium	High	Very High
	3	6	9	12
Low	Low	Medium	High	
2	4	6	8	
Low	Low	Low	Low	
1	2	3	4	
	Impact			
	Low	-----▶		Unacceptable

Impact Score	Likelihood Score
4 (Catastrophic)	4 (Very Likely (≥80%))
3 (Critical)	3 (Likely (21-79%))
2 (Significant)	2 (Unlikely (6-20%))
1 (Marginal)	1 (Remote (≤5%))

6.4 In the officers' opinion none of the new risks above, were they to come about, would seriously prejudice the achievement of the Strategic Plan and are therefore operational risks. The effectiveness of the management of operational risks is reviewed by the Audit Committee annually.

7 Recommendation

7.1 It is recommended:

- i) Members provide any feedback on the proposals and agreement is given to proceed with a public consultation exercise.
- ii) The decision is delegated to the DCES, in consultation with the Lead Member for Transport and Economic Development, to consider any further comments

received on the proposals and incorporate, as appropriate, into the Plan prior to public consultation.

- iii) The outcomes of consultation will be submitted to the relevant committees (P&R and IHED ahead of formal adoption, expected later this financial year.

Data Quality

Data sources:

Draft LCWIP report and appendices

Data checked by:

Peter Simons, Senior Transport Planner, Regulatory Services

Data rating:

1	Poor	
2	Sufficient	
3	High	y

Background Papers

APPENDICES / ATTACHMENTS

Appendix A – LCWIP report, route map and core walking zones maps

Appendix B – LCWIP indicative high-level cycling route interventions - being circulated to all Cllrs in advance of the meeting and will be presented at the meeting as a presentation