

Agenda Item No. 4(d)

DERBYSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

**MEETING OF CABINET MEMBER – HIGHWAYS, TRANSPORT AND
INFRASTRUCTURE**

21 June 2016

Report of the Strategic Director – Economy, Transport and Communities

**DERBYSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL'S PROPOSED RESPONSE TO THE
DEPARTMENT FOR TRANSPORT'S DRAFT CYCLING AND WALKING
INVESTMENT STRATEGY**

(1) **Purpose of Report** To seek Cabinet Member approval for the Council's proposed response, as detailed in this report, to The Department for Transport's (DfT) draft Cycling and Walking Investment Strategy (CWIS).

(2) **Information and Analysis**

Background

The Government has recently published a draft CWIS for consultation. This strategy sets out the Government's ambition and objectives for cycling and walking, the financial resources available to meet those objectives, how the objectives will be delivered and the appropriate governance arrangements. The link to the draft strategy can be found below:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/draft-cycling-and-walking-investment-strategy>

The Government is seeking views on the approach and actions set out in the strategy, including the potential roles of Government and non-Government bodies in delivering the strategy, the assistance local authorities and Local Enterprise Partnerships (LEPs) would find beneficial to support the development of infrastructure plans and the proposed activities for meeting the objectives of better safety, better mobility and better streets.

Throughout the document, the Government highlights the importance of working in partnership with local bodies, business and commerce, the third sector, individuals and the wider public and private sector. It also emphasises the changing institutional landscape and the opportunities arising from increased devolution of powers to local areas and the retention of business rates by local Government.

The Government's goal is that, by 2040, walking and cycling should be a normal part of everyday life, making cycling and walking the natural choice for shorter journeys, or as part of a longer journey.

Government acknowledges that realising this ambition will take sustained investment in cycling and walking infrastructure, together with long-term transport planning and a change in attitudes, amongst Central Government, local bodies, businesses, communities and individuals.

Key objectives and targets of the Strategy

That by 2020, the Government will:

- Increase cycling activity, where cycling activity is measured as the estimated total number of cycle stages made each year;
- Reverse the decline in walking activity, measured as the total number of walking stages per person per year;
- Reduce the rate of cyclists killed or seriously injured on England's roads, measured as the number of fatalities and serious injuries per billion miles cycled, each year; and
- Increase the percentage of children aged 5 to 10 that usually walk to school.

In addition, there is also a target for 2025 to:

- Double cycling, where cycling activity is measured as the estimated total number of cycle stages made each year, from 0.8 billion stages in 2013 to 1.6 billion stages in 2025.

Financial resources

The resources proposed to be made available by Central Government for delivery of the Strategy do not form part of the consultation. However, Section 5 of the strategy sets these out up to 2020-21, in line with the Spending Review 2015 (SR2015) settlement period. The Government states the aim of this is to assist forward planning and reduce the potentially negative impact of the stop-start funding previously seen in the sector.

Set out below are the five main sources of funding for cycling and walking which have been identified. Much of this funding is already committed. The main sources of unallocated funding currently available are the Access Revenue Fund and the Local Growth Fund, on which announcements will be made during 2016.

1. Cycle Ambition Cities: £191 million from 2013-14 to 2017-18. Eight cities were awarded funding in 2013 to build cycle networks by delivering quiet routes, including Dutch-style segregated cycleways and improved cycle links to key services, such as employment and education.

2. Bikeability: £50 million from 2016-17 to 2019-20. This is the Government's long-standing programme of cycle-training for school-children which is available to every local body in England (there are separate funding arrangements for Bikeability in London).
3. Highways England designated fund for cycling, safety and integration: £100 million from 2015-16 to 2020-21 for cycling. This funding is intended to support the cycle-proofing of the existing strategic road network with improved facilities for cycling and reduced severance.
4. Access fund: £80 million revenue from 2016-17 to 2020-21. This new fund is intended to build on the legacy of the Local Sustainable Transport Fund (LSTF). It will be allocated by competition, with a transitional year in 2016-17. Further information on the funding for 2017-18 and beyond will be available by summer 2016.
5. DfT Local Transport Programmes including Local Growth Fund, DfT Highways Maintenance Block and Integrated Transport Block.

Consultation

Through the consultation process, the DfT is seeking the following:

1. Suggestions and evidence of innovative projects and programmes which could be developed to further its goals of:
 - increasing cycling activity;
 - reversing the decline in walking activity; and
 - reducing the rate of cyclists killed or seriously injured.
2. Views on how to increase cycling and walking in typically under-represented groups.
3. Views on the approach and actions as set out in Section 8 of the Strategy to meet their key objectives.
4. Views on the potential roles of Government and non-Government bodies in delivering the Strategy and how they can work together.
5. Views on the assistance local authorities and LEPs would find beneficial to support the development of infrastructure plans.
6. Views on the proposed activities, also set out in Section 8 of the Strategy, for meeting its objectives of better:
 - Safety.
 - Mobility.
 - Streets.

Due to the timings of both the consultation itself, which ran from 27 March 2016 to 23 May 2016, and a specific consultation workshop held on 16 May 2016 in Manchester, it was not possible to seek earlier approval of this report from the Cabinet Member. Therefore, an Officer response has already been submitted to the DfT to ensure the Council complied with the consultation deadline. However, the response has been clearly identified as being subject to ratification by the Cabinet Member for Highways, Transport and Infrastructure. The response submitted is as follows:

Derbyshire County Council's response to the consultation

That the Council very much welcomes the strategy as it provides a great opportunity to build on the Government's commitment to increase levels of cycling and walking in England. It is also timed well with the launch of the Derbyshire Cycle Plan and the ongoing development of the Council's own key cycle network.

Derbyshire County Council believes that the Strategy would be strengthened by a more detailed analysis of how the (very welcome) target for increasing the number of cycle stages will be met; specifically, which groups are targeted and how best they are to be introduced to cycling? The Strategy does not, in its draft form, fully recognise the role which needs to be taken by the nation's 'playgrounds' such as its National Parks. Providing the infrastructure, required to encourage people to take up cycling within the urban environment, is perfectly valid, but many others will 'pick up the habit' on Derbyshire's world class trails and long-distance routes, and a genuine 'investment strategy' must recognise the need to develop these assets.

In terms of the specific questions posed by the DfT, as detailed above, the Council would also like to respond as follows:

1. Regarding suggestions and evidence of innovative projects and programmes, the work undertaken to date, on behalf of Government into a potential national cycleway, associated with HS2, offers the prospect of being a genuine game-changer for cycling. As well as providing an uplift in sustainable connectivity between the communities along the HS2 routes, this would provide a high-standard and high-profile network attractive to new and potential UK cyclists, as well as visitors to the UK. There are already some genuinely exciting projects building around cycle tourism, not least the Peak Resort development near Chesterfield, the Pedal Peak project and the HS2 cycleway would lift the UK into a prominent position to build its international status. The Council recognises that the publication of a specific network raises a number of issues over resources and delivery, but wishes to stress its strong 'in-principle' support for the concept and its willingness to act as a delivery partner.

The Council is also keen to highlight here, in terms of reducing casualties, the apparent lack of targets to reduce pedestrian casualties.

2. With regards the Council's views on increasing walking and cycling to under-represented groups, the fundamental issue here is the need to recruit local champions, embedded within communities, who are able to galvanise interest and provide support to encourage these groups to take up cycling and walking on a more frequent basis. Evidence from Public Health also suggests that easier access to green spaces will be of significant benefit in this regard and that 'tweaks' to infrastructure to

enable greater connectivity, i.e. links to existing networks for example, may be far more beneficial than larger scale infrastructure developments.

3. With regards the Council's views on the approach and activities as set out under Section 8 of the draft Strategy, these are clearly outlined in the Derbyshire Cycling Plan, which can be accessed by clicking on the following link:
<http://www.derbyshiresport.co.uk/uploads/the-derbyshire-cycling-plan-2016---2030.pdf>

The four key strategic aims of the Plan, for information, are as follows:

- **Infrastructure Connectivity:** High quality connected routes in all cycling environments, supporting all forms of cycling, creating and supporting economic growth.
 - **Increased Participation:** Behaviour change approaches and targeted participation programmes at community level will support and enable more people to cycle, closing the gaps in participation and reducing health inequalities.
 - **Effective Communication and Marketing:** Excellent, well connected marketing and communications for Derbyshire residents and visitors to the county, helping to change behaviour, increase confidence and get more people cycling regularly.
 - **Advocacy:** Cross sector advocacy for policy change and implementation at the highest level.
4. The Council believes one key area for concern is the apparent lack of cross Government thinking with regard to cycling and walking. This is also evident on a more local level so is not an issue solely for Central Government. The Council's view is that this should not just be focussed primarily on transport delivery practitioners but should also include input from service areas/departments responsible for Public Health and Economic Regeneration, for example. There are massive health and economic benefits to active travel, as highlighted in the recent paper 'Working Together to Promote Active Travel'. The following link refers to this paper:
https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/523460/Working_Together_to_Promote_Active_Travel_A_briefing_for_local_authorities.pdf
5. The Council is of the opinion it is not prescriptive guidance that is required but clarity over the quantum of resources and the ability to forward plan. It would help enormously if local authorities were aware of how much funding was specifically available over, for example, the next ten years and that specific tools, such as the Cycling Propensity Tool, were accessible and available to use to help assess options that would enable a

process of prioritisation. Local authorities, in the main, know what to do, it is having the resources to effect delivery that is the key. This is why the Council is keen to highlight its concerns over the funding landscape set out in the draft Strategy. There is only a small amount of dedicated investment, totalling £316 million for 2016-17 through to 2020-21. This marks a reduction of approximately one third on dedicated investment from 2011-12 to 2015-16. This seems totally inadequate when compared, for example, with the Government's £15 billion Road Investment Strategy.

The Council would also like to highlight here the completely different set of challenges presented by off-road schemes when compared to highway schemes. These challenges include extended lead-in times resulting in the fact that only so much can be done ahead of grant monies being confirmed, especially if there is a need to tie down match funding or landowner agreements, finalise survey work and complete planning applications. In comparison, a scheme within the highway does not require landowner agreements, rarely requires any ecological or other surveys, and has deemed planning consent and just requires consultation with local councils and residents.

6. Please refer to (3) above.

Finally, the Council would like to lend its support to the observations of British Cycling, one of its key partners in the development of the Derbyshire Cycling Plan, as alluded to above. British Cycling has urged Government to consider bringing the CWIS in line with the 5 point test (as detailed below), and to provide programmes more in tune with activity needed across the country to increase levels of cycling activity:

1. That it provides a pathway towards achieving the Government's ambition for cycling and walking in England.
2. That it is a plan to achieve, at least, to meet the clear targets for both cycling and walking and other outcomes.
3. That it is a clear investment plan package of committed Government investment and other potential funding to deliver the Strategy.
4. That it becomes a framework for assessing performance.
5. That it has an independent governance structure that challenges and supports.

(3) Financial Considerations There are no financial considerations associated with this report.

In preparing this report the relevance of the following factors has been considered: legal, prevention of crime and disorder, equality and diversity, human resources, environmental, health, property, social value and transport considerations.

- (4) **Key Decision** No.
- (5) **Call-in** Is it required that call-in be waived in respect of the decisions proposed within this report? No.
- (6) **Background Papers** Held on file within the Economy, Transport and Communities Department. Officer contact details – Richard Lovell, extension 38192.
- (7) **OFFICERS RECOMMENDATION** That the Cabinet Member approves the response to the Department for Transport's draft Cycling and Walking Investment Strategy consultation, as detailed within this report.

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