

Agenda Item No. 7(d)

DERBYSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

CABINET

23 February 2016

Report of the Strategic Director – Economy, Transport and Environment

**DEVELOPMENT OF A KEY CYCLE NETWORK AND CYCLE
INFRASTRUCTURE DELIVERY PLAN (HIGHWAYS, TRANSPORT AND
INFRASTRUCTURE)**

- (1) **Purpose of Report** To seek Cabinet approval to the principles of developing a Key Cycle Network and associated Cycle Infrastructure Delivery Plan, and the approach to be adopted in their development.
- (2) **Information and Analysis** At its meeting of 15 December 2015, Cabinet considered a report relating to the production of the Derbyshire Cycle Plan, subsequently launched at an event held on 19 January 2016 (minute No. 438/15 refers).

The approved Cycle Plan sets out an ambition that by 2030, Derbyshire will be the most connected and integrated County for cycling in England, recognised as a world class cycling destination for all. More people of all ages and abilities will be cycling regularly for leisure, active travel, commuting and sport. This ambition sits within the context of national aspirations for increasing walking and cycling, with the launch of a Government strategy anticipated during the Summer of 2016. It is likely that associated resources (whether these are allocated by formula, competition or bespoke ‘deals’) will be offered to those areas willing to act as ‘partners’ in the delivery of the national strategy.

In association with this it is also expected that Government may announce a delivery plan for a national cycle network following the same strategic corridors as high-speed rail (HS2), but including connections across the gap between its eastern and western legs. Derbyshire’s ability to take advantage of these resources will be dependent on being able to clearly demonstrate both strategic support and a clear plan of action.

The current Derbyshire Cycle Plan sets out four strategic aims:

- 1) Infrastructure Connectivity: High quality connected routes, in all cycling environments, supporting all forms of cycling, creating and supporting economic growth.
- 2) 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.
- 3) 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.
- 4) Advocacy: Cross sector advocacy for policy change and implementation at the highest level.

These will be delivered through the actions of a number of partners, but clearly the County Council will play a central role. At its meeting on 15 December 2015, Cabinet noted that the Cycle Plan launch would be followed by bespoke partner action plans, and that Cabinet would be asked to consider a report early in 2016 dealing with the County Council's planned actions. This report recommends two such actions, relating to the first strategic aim:

- The development of a Key Cycle Network (KCN) across the County.
- The adoption of a Cycle Infrastructure Delivery Plan (CIDP).

Whilst there will be a strong connection between these two areas of work, each could involve elements which fall outside the other. The KCN will inevitably include a number of existing routes and probably some (existing or proposed) alongside canals or trunk roads managed by the Canal and Rivers Trust and Highways England respectively. These would not need to feature in the CIDP. Conversely, the CIDP could include infrastructure which is neither on, nor connected to, the KCN; examples would be small-scale interventions, such as connections between individual communities and existing, local trails. Both the KCN and CIDP though will need to be geared to the targets set out in the Derbyshire Cycle Plan (DCP) (numbered below for the purposes of this report):

- Double the number of people cycling by 2030 (DCP1).
- Reverse the decline in women's cycling and accelerate its growth, year on year (DCP2).
- Double the number of children cycling to school (DCP3).
- Create a baseline for, and measure the contribution of cycling to the local economy (DCP4).

In setting guidance for the creation of the KCN and CIDP, Cabinet may wish to consider whether to apply any criteria to reflect the Council's own objectives as expressed in the Council Plan Update 2015-16. The most directly relevant objectives to the Cycle Plan are:

- A strong economy (linked to DCP4).
- Healthier communities with reduced health inequalities (DCP1-3).
- Thriving children, young people and families (DCP3).

A number of others stated priorities could also be relevant to some infrastructure schemes and could be used as secondary criteria:

- Well connected communities.
- Resilient and safe communities.
- Sustainable and green communities.
- Independent and supported older people.
- Adults with physical and learning disabilities leading independent and fulfilled lives.

Together, it is proposed these be used as the basis of an assessment framework for the CIDP and as guiding principles for the definition of the KCN. In addition, account will have to be taken of the likely criteria to be applied by the potential providers of external funding.

The identification of a KCN and the adoption of a CIDP are not intended to preclude the investigation or implementation of other infrastructure suitable for cycling. There will remain valid reasons for other interventions within the highway, not least for safety reasons, and the County's Greenways Strategy will continue to be supported to put in place a network of routes suitable for all users.

The KCN is intended to 'elevate' to a strategic level those links (both on and off-road) which form the County's most important routes and the CIDP will inevitably focus on bridging gaps within the KCN or linking communities to it. The KCN, both in definition and development, will need to link to the proposals of partners and their own plans; given that the Derbyshire Cycle Plan covers the whole geographical County, Derby City's infrastructure proposals will be of the greatest significance.

The status of routes to be used for cycling raises a number of regulatory issues, all of which will need to be taken into account in developing the KCN. Greenways, which have over recent years represented the main area of investment for off-road cycling, are usually given bridleway status through public path creation agreements with landowners or creation orders. This means that they provide legal rights for use by walkers, cyclists and horse riders in perpetuity. Sometimes that use is granted on a concessionary basis,

but unless this is by a public body, it can only be considered as a temporary arrangement as permission can be withdrawn by the landowner at any time and may not be desirable where the construction of the route involves a considerable financial outlay. There are potential cycle routes which might not be suitable for horse riders. Elsewhere, particularly in urban areas, cycling routes have been created by converting public footpaths into cycle tracks, giving rights of access for walkers and cyclists. Potentially Traffic Regulation Orders could be required to create sections of highway which are to be used only by cyclists. All these options raise issues around being able to secure the landowner's agreement, their entitlement to compensation and anyone's right to object to orders.

It is recommended the KCN adopts a hierarchy of infrastructure provision with the objective of providing segregation where appropriate between cyclists and other users. At the top of this hierarchy in urban areas would be links developed to 'cycle superhighway' standards, intended for lawful use only by cyclists and provided only where other user groups have suitable alternatives available to them (such as a separate footway). These facilities are being introduced on a number of key corridors in cities and larger towns across the country and are intended to provide safe, attractive routes for travel at any time and in any weather conditions. Superhighways provide segregation for cyclists from vehicular traffic, but also reduce conflict with pedestrians. They can have clear benefits (such as lighting and drainage) as a result of being adjacent to the carriageway, whilst also overcoming key safety issues such as bus stops. In Derbyshire, these are likely to be feasible only on a very limited basis on existing roads, not least because they will work best along sections with few junctions or accesses and with no on-street parking. They could, however, be introduced within major new developments.

Where demand is lower, surfaces shared by pedestrians and cyclists will be more applicable and will usually be less onerous to introduce. In rural areas, 'Dutch' design standards would represent the equivalent to a superhighway, providing a suitably wide, surfaced route for cyclists with provision alongside for walkers and equestrians. Greenways, where these groups share a single surface, cater for the same user groups but without physical segregation.

The CIDP will be a significant influence on future Local Transport Plan capital programmes and on bids into external funds, such as the Local Growth Fund or the potential D2N2 (Derby, Derbyshire, Nottingham and Nottinghamshire) Investment Fund, proposed in association with the North Midlands Devolution Agreement. Proposals will need to take full account of ongoing maintenance and renewal requirements as part of the development process. For that reason, it will be essential to explore fully with partners how day-to-day maintenance responsibilities such as keeping routes clear of vegetation can be discharged.

It is proposed that both the KCN and CIDP be produced in 'consultation draft' form, accompanied by equalities and health impact assessments, and subject to public consultation before being adopted. Cabinet, at this stage, is requested to agree in principle to their production, to note the proposed criteria to be adopted in setting priorities and to agree to consider a consultation draft at a later date.

(3) **Financial Considerations** All preparation work on the proposed KCN and CIDP would be carried out in-house using existing staffing resources within Economy, Transport and Environment.

(4) **Equality and Diversity, and Health Considerations** A health, and equality and diversity impact assessment will be carried out alongside the development of the proposals.

Other Considerations

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

(5) **Key Decision** No.

(6) **Call-In** Is it required that call-in be waived in respect of the decisions proposed in the report? No.

(7) **Background Papers** Held on file within the Economy, Transport and Environment Department. Officer contact details – Jim Seymour, extension 38557.

(8) **OFFICER'S RECOMMENDATIONS** That Cabinet agrees:

8.1 In principle, to the creation of a Derbyshire Key Cycle Network and Cycling Infrastructure Delivery Plan

8.2 To note the use of the proposed criteria set out in the report in their development and consider any amendments.

8.3 To receive consultation drafts of the Key Cycle Network and Cycling Infrastructure Delivery Plan at a future date.

Mike Ashworth
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