

Cambridge City Council

Record of Executive Decision

To agree the response to the Active Travel Strategy Consultation

Decision of: Councillor Katie Thornburrow, Executive Councillor for Planning Policy and Infrastructure

Reference: 22/URGENCY/P&T/15

Date of decision: 05/11/22 Date Published on website: 08/11/22

Decision Type: Non-Key

Matter for Decision: To agree the response to the Active Travel Strategy Consultation currently being undertaken by Cambridgeshire County Council. It is proposed to be a joint response with Cambridge City Council.

The consultation material is available online: [Active travel strategy for Cambridgeshire public consultation | Consult Cambridgeshire \(engagementhq.com\)](#)

The deadline for comments is 7 November 2022

Background:

The Active Travel Strategy (the Strategy) has been prepared by Cambridgeshire County Council and expands on the overarching vision for transport set by the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Combined Authority in the Local Transport and Connectivity Plan (LTCP). The Strategy will be adopted as a 'child' document of the LTCP.

The Strategy will align with and complement other adopted and emerging strategy documents including the Cambridgeshire Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan (LCWIP), Cambridgeshire's Rights of Way Improvement Plan (ROWIP) and future Area-based transport strategies.

The overall purpose of the Strategy is to provide a comprehensive set of policies that will enable quality provision of active travel infrastructure and initiatives in Cambridgeshire. It is also designed as a tool to secure additional funding for active travel improvements, including funding bids to central government.

The strategy focuses on utilitarian walking and cycling journeys including journeys to schools, town centre and health facilities, transport hubs and employment. Active travel refers to walking and cycling but includes other modes of travel that supports the aim of the strategy to encourage a shift away from journeys by private car. It currently excludes e-scooters as they are not legal to use on the public highway except as part of the e-scooter hire trial being undertaken in Cambridge. The strategy also recognises the inter-relationship with the Rights of Way network, which caters for a wider range of Non-Motorised Users (NMU) including horse riders.

The Strategy document is structured around a Vision, 4 themes, 5 Objectives, 28 Policies and an Action Plan.

Vision

Active travel will be embraced in all transport policies, projects, investment and development in Cambridgeshire, prioritising cycling and walking and associated travel modes. We will create a well-connected, safe and inclusive active travel network that will become the 'go-to' travel option for many journeys.

Four Themes

The following themes run through the Strategy

- Embrace active travel as a transport priority within Cambridgeshire. It will look at internal processes and better collaboration and communication with partners and stakeholders that puts active travel at the forefront of all decision making and investment
- Enhance the existing network of pavements, footpaths, cycleways, bridleways, and other public rights of way so it is connected and fit for purpose. For example, through improved surfacing, widening, signage, crossings, and decluttering pavements.
- Expand existing routes to create a well-connected, safe, joined up active travel network. Providing quality new access to key amenities such as schools, village/town centre facilities, transport hubs and places of healthcare and employment from surrounding areas.
- Encourage modal shift to active travel modes through a variety of initiatives focussed on encouraging and supporting behavioural change. Make people aware that travel by active modes is a viable, attractive, healthier and safe option for many of their local journeys.

Five Objectives

In summary, the five objectives build on the four themes, and aim to:

1. Deliver a high quality, safe and connected network to enable a switch from car journeys and support achieving net zero and improving health.
2. Focus on shorter journeys and longer journeys by e-bikes and involving public transport, better connecting urban and rural communities to local facilities, improving social inclusion, physical and mental health and wellbeing.
3. Deliver step change in active travel provision, embedded in all future decision making, projects, schemes and policies.
4. Ensuring the network is fit for purpose, designed into schemes and developments from the outset, prioritising maintenance, and adopting a 'whole life cycle' approach.
5. Explore new ways to promote and encourage active travel that create behaviour change and modal shift.

28 Policies

The policies are intended to be read in conjunction with other plans and strategies and provide a robust framework for all parties involved with active travel to adhere to. The policies are set out under each of the four themes and linked to the five objectives (outlined above). Where appropriate, the policies recognise different approaches may be required for urban and rural areas.

Delivery

The Strategy includes an Action Plan setting out further actions the County council intend to take to assist planning for active travel. It lists active travel schemes, expanding on the LCWIP work, that will be developed and prioritised. An ambitious Strategy is presented to push for the optimum provision possible within the funding opportunities available over the short, medium and long term. As each scheme is developed key stakeholders will be consulted at an early stage and full public consultation undertaken.

The Strategy currently outlines high level short term actions; it is intended that a more detailed Action Plan will be developed following the public consultation. It will also be monitored and updated on an annual basis. This section includes maps for

each district identifying the priority routes, including LCWIP and GCP schemes, together with existing network to highlight the connectivity of proposed routes.

Main Issues and proposed main response points:

- High level strategy to improve infrastructure for active modes, which the Councils can support – it aligns with the Local Transport Plan and Council's emerging Greater Cambridge Local Plan aims to support active travel.
- The Action Plan includes maps with routes for improvement but these are limited in detail (although there is an interactive map online) and there is no rationale explaining why these schemes have been identified over others. The plan indicates that the next step is to develop a detailed action plan of schemes following stakeholder engagement. The Councils request that this engagement includes engagement with the City and District Councils.

Why the Decision had to be made (and any alternative options): The Consultation raises important issues that the Council wishes to respond to.

The Executive Councillor's decision: To approve the proposed Consultation response to the Active Travel Strategy consultation.

Reason for the decision: As above

Scrutiny Consideration: The Chair and Spokesperson of Planning and Transport Scrutiny Committee were consulted prior to the action being authorised. No adverse comments were made.

Report: A report detailing the background and financial considerations is below.

Conflict of interest: None known.

Comments: A parallel decision is being considered by South Cambridgeshire District Council.

Further information

Appendices

Appendix A: Proposed joint response by South Cambridgeshire District Council and Cambridge City Council Councils to Cambridgeshire County Council on the Active Travel Strategy

Background Papers

The consultation material is available online: [Active travel strategy for Cambridgeshire public consultation | Consult Cambridgeshire](#)

Appendix A: Proposed joint response by South Cambridgeshire District Council and Cambridge City Council Councils to Cambridgeshire County Council on the Active Travel Strategy

This response to the Active Travel Strategy consultation is provided by Cambridge City Council and South Cambridgeshire District Council.

The Councils support the principle and purpose of the Active Travel Strategy, intended as it is to provide a step change in cycling and walking improvements across the County. The Councils support the approach to encourage more people to use active modes and through scheme designs increase biodiversity; this will help the Councils towards their goals for achieving net zero and doubling nature. Active modes are the most inclusive modes and strategy will also help to address social inequalities, improve social inclusion and wellbeing. The proposal to adopt an Active Travel Toolkit for New Developments is also supported

The strategy advises that regard to and it should be read in conjunction with District Council Local Plans, transport strategies, Neighbourhood Plans and parish-led Local Cycling and Walking Improvement Plans (LCWIP). There is also reference to the plans, such as the LCWIP, and the GCP schemes. Whilst the strategy seeks to explain its purpose and relationship with other strategies care should be taken to keep this relationship clear and provide clarify regarding the status and purpose of different strategies, and to ensure there is a clear and coordinated approach to active travel schemes.

In terms of detailed design, the councils support that the design of new routes will have regard to current guidance, especially the Department for Transport's LTN 1/20 Cycle Infrastructure Design (DfT) and 'Gear Change' document (2020) as well as considering the Sustrans Handbook for Cycle Friendly Design and LTN 1/12 Shared Use Routes for Pedestrians and Cyclists.

The Action Plan includes maps with routes for improvement but these are limited in detail (although there is an interactive map online) and there is no rationale explaining why these schemes have been identified over others. The plan indicates that the next step is to develop a detailed action plan of schemes following stakeholder engagement. The Councils request that this engagement includes engagement with the City and District Councils.

The Councils also urge the County Council to engage the public, cycling and walking organisations, parish councils, residents' associations and developers through the route options and detailed design process.

In addition to the response above, the following comments are offered where it is considered that strategy could be clarified

Page	Section	Comment
		<p>It would be helpful to the reader to explain the respective roles and relationship between the partners and stakeholders in terms of preparing strategy documents and delivery of the schemes and measures therein; in particular the Combined Authority (transport authority) and Cambridgeshire County Council (highway authority), and Greater Cambridge Partnership (as a delivery body).</p> <p>It would be helpful to explain the role the District Councils have in planning terms, for example through Local Plans, in also addressing active travel.</p>
		<p>There is an opportunity for the introductory text to be clearer that walking and cycling are the most inclusive modes (i.e. affordable to everyone and not dependent on being able to drive or own/run a car), particularly for people within and close to towns.</p>
6/7	definition of active travel	<p>It is noted that for the purposes of the strategy the definition of active modes focuses on utilitarian cycling and walking. Whilst there is acknowledgement of people who use wheelchairs / mobility aids and adapted cycles, the strategy wording could be more inclusive by recognising and responding to a wider range of disabilities and issues users face, including blind, deaf, people with cognitive issues such as dementia, learning disabilities, etc.</p> <p>The last paragraph defines active travel as walking and cycling but that it also includes other modes of travel that</p>

		<p>supports the aim of the strategy. It would be helpful to elaborate on this and define what the other modes are.</p> <p>It is noted that e-scooters are not included as an active mode given that they are not currently legal to use on public highway (except as part of official trials). However, it would be helpful to acknowledge that if they are legalised in future their use may require further consideration to minimise conflicts between active modes.</p>
10	1 st paragraph	<p>Points of clarification:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Do 'district-based transport strategies' address ALL modes, not just 'other' modes? • The strategy should not just be read in conjunction with other 'child' documents but also in conjunction with the parent document (LTCP)
10	Last paragraph	<p>Amend to read - "The strategy must align with other existing and emerging documents, STRATEGIES AND SCHEMES" – to capture (for example) GCP schemes which are not documents.</p>
12	Last paragraph	<p>Refers to housing and employment growth "is planned to expand" – revise to "expected to continue" (or similar wording)</p>
14		<p>Within the strategy there are repeated references to 'market towns'. These should be amended to 'towns' (i.e. delete 'market'). This is particularly relevant on page 14 which outlines the diverse settlements in Cambridgeshire and, as currently drafted, excludes the South Cambridgeshire (non-market) towns of Cambourne, Northstowe and Waterbeach.</p>
14	2 nd paragraph	<p>The first paragraph relates to Cambridgeshire and the 2nd paragraph relates to Cambridge. There is reference in the second paragraph to reducing car miles within Cambridgeshire, which could infer to the reader that it is only Cambridge which will be addressing this target. This point would be better included in the first paragraph which addresses the whole Cambridgeshire area.</p>

15	2 nd paragraph	Note the issue of vulnerability is not solely in relation to fast moving traffic, but for example from isolated, unlit routes.
	3 rd paragraph	Rephrase “the Cambridge cycling phenomenon is spreading to South Cambridgeshire...” to “South Cambridgeshire also enjoys high levels of cycling” (or similar wording)
	5 th paragraph	Point of clarification / presentation - refers to a graph illustrating the opportunities - where? (doesn't correspond with any diagram headings)
16	Illustration	Amend the 4th label - “Low cycle culture outside of GREATER Cambridge and inactive lifestyles”
17	Illustration	Amend “District Local Plans” heading to “District” or “District Councils” Amend the first line to “District Local Plans, SPDs and transport strategies” Suggest adding reference to Cambridge City Cycle Parking Guide
28	AT04	States “An important way to ensure the optimum solution is provided is to safeguard active travel routes in Local Plans” - Question whether ‘safeguard’ is the correct term.
32	3 rd paragraph	Support the reference to incorporating ecological benefits in schemes with the aim of doubling nature, however remove “Where possible”.
39	AT18 4th bullet point	Care is needed with reference to widening shared use paths across green spaces without consideration of the wider environmental considerations, particularly across the commons within Cambridge.
		Is there a missing aspiration / bullet point around making new direct cycle routes away from / off-road to link key destinations? The other bullet points are focussed on on-road provision.

40		As above, potentially missing reference to making direct walking routes away from / off-road.
	AT21 5 th bullet point	As above, question whether 'safeguard' is the correct term.
46	AT27	References support for cycle share schemes. This could also support delivery of community cycle share schemes.
52	AT101	Refers to using studies of market towns to identify missing links etc – the plan should also clarify how routes will be identified in other areas.