

**INFRASTRUCTURE, HOUSING AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE -
20 NOVEMBER 2018**

PART I - DELEGATED

7. THREE RIVERS CYCLING & WALKING STRATEGY – SCHEME DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME, 2019/20-2020/2021 (CED)

1 Summary

1.1 This report requests that the committee agrees the current work programme of cycling and walking improvement schemes in the Three Rivers District, which is promoted by the District Council and its partners. The report also provides an update of the current Cycling Strategy review, which will update the 2003 Strategy.

2 Details

2.1 The District Council promotes walking and cycling through its Cycling Strategy (2003, updated 2008) by developing improvements to local cycling and walking infrastructure. The strategy includes supporting initiatives to enable and encourage local people to walk and cycle (typically through travel planning and training, such as through the new Leavesden Cycle Hub). 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 intended to promote cycling as a cheap, fun, healthy, reliable and adaptable form of transport, available to almost everyone.

2.3 The District Cycling Strategy aims to develop a network of cycle routes. Each individual link in these routes is considered in terms of ease and safety of cycling; and improvements are made where feasible. Typical improvements include better path surfaces, new dropped kerbs, lighting, drainage, directional signage and the widening of paths where feasible, to reduce conflict between cyclists and other road users. 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.

2.4 The Council has also formally endorsed the South West Hertfordshire Cycling Study (2013) which forms part of the Local Transport Plan, and the Integrated Transport Strategy (2008) which forms part of local Planning Policy. The District Council works with the County Council to deliver schemes proposed by the Study, many of which were proposed earlier by the District Council.

Scheme progress

- 2.5 A recent example of successful partnership working is the completion by TRDC (partnering with HCC, the Canal & River Trust and other districts) of over five miles of improved level traffic-free routes on the Grand Union Canal corridor, which link into new cycling routes developed in Abbots Langley and Leavesden, connecting Croxley Green with the Leavesden County Park complex. This scheme forms a significant part of a nearly traffic-free walking and cycling route that now connects most of the District's settlements including Abbots Langley, Kings Langley, Leavesden, Rickmansworth, Croxley Green and Watford.
- 2.6 New cycle parking facilities have been introduced around the district to support the development of various routes in each town, often aimed at improving access links to local schools and employment centres.
- 2.7 While the improvements of paths through Leavesden Country Park are largely on hold awaiting the outcome of the Abbots Langley project, specific local Member requests for better lighting are being progressed ahead of this and a scheme to complete the extent of, and upgrade the quality of, lighting near Langley Lane is shortly to be implemented.
- 2.8 The District Strategy is currently being reviewed in order to meet new standards for the provision of walking and cycling improvements set by Government in 2017. The revised strategy, for which a study has been commissioned, will be subject to a full public consultation following consultation with all local Ward Councillors.
- 2.9 The current scheme programme as agreed in November 2017 is set out in Appendix A, which shows the current status of each scheme with some additional schemes that are proposed to be included.
- 2.10 The new schemes proposed to be progressed as part of this programme include the further extension of the Grand Union Canal towpath to complete the section to Red Lion Lane. This is being pursued by Canal and River Trust in consultation with Hertfordshire County Council and the Parish Councils and would complete the stretch from Croxley Green to the northern District boundary.
- 2.11 The other new scheme is not yet developed in detail but is proposed on the strength of HCC proposals for a County-wide bike share scheme similar to the London Santander bike-share scheme. HCC officers are preparing a proposal that would involve District Councils and have been researching this over the last year. Any specific commitment for the District Council to support this scheme will be brought as a future report to this committee.
- 2.12 There is some evidence of demand for bike share in Three Rivers District but due to the high costs involved, officers have since 2015 been developing options to introduce Cycle Hubs models as alternative methods to deliver bike hire, as well as bike repair, storage and training.
- 2.13 The new Leavesden Cycle Hub launched in September, introduced by the District Council's Leisure Service, is managed privately and supported by a contribution of £32,000 from the TRDC Cycling budget and a grant of £50,000 from Hertfordshire County Council Public Health. The Hub is the first outcome of the investigation and provides each of these facilities to visitors to the Country Park. The Hub offers a range of facilities including servicing and repairs, bike hire, bike registering,

reconditioned bike sales and cycle tuition for children and adults, along with opportunities to keep active for free through weekly led cycle rides.

- 2.14 The success of this Hub (a development of the mobi-hubs proposed by the Integrated Transport Strategy (2008)) which will influence the development of this element of the Cycling Strategy to deliver infrastructure to help people locally to get into cycling. Several further locations are already proposed which could benefit from the bike-share proposal once it has been developed by Hertfordshire County Council.

Cycling Strategy review

- 2.15 A revised strategy to improve cycling (as well as walking and other sustainable travel modes) has been developed in order to integrate and build on the success of the many initiatives taken by the District Council to encourage sustainable travel around the District. It was intended that this revised Strategy would be presented to this committee following public consultation.
- 2.16 Following publication of the first government guidance to Local Planning Authorities on development of their cycling strategies (in April 2017), it is clear that to meet these new standards our current Strategy must be reassessed in some detail. 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. It is understood that Stevenage BC is producing an LCWIP jointly with HCC as a pilot scheme. It is intended that a new LCWIP is developed this year (2017/18), taking into account both the current Three Rivers Strategy and the HCC study of 2013 which provide detail of our shared proposals in limited parts of the district.

3 Options and Reasons for Recommendations

- 3.1 The recommended schemes that are under investigation as set out in Appendix A comprise 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).
- 3.2 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. Other proposals will facilitate cycling by providing the infrastructure to support bike storage, training, wayfinding, repair and information, as envisaged in the Local Plan.

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 supplemented by external funding. The relevant policy is entitled *Three Rivers Cycling Strategy 2003* (updated 2008).

5 Communications & Website Implications

- 5.1 The scheme development process involves informal consultation with the public, local businesses and local interest groups. This is typically carried out using a range of questionnaires and publications that are published online or on paper as appropriate. Consultations published online will be accessible from the websites both of the District Council and of the Council's sustainability programme

(www.greenourherts.org.uk). These mechanisms will also be used to promote any schemes that are developed for the strategy.

- 5.2 Scheme marketing and promotion is important to the success of the strategy as routes will not be used until potential cyclists are made aware of them and encouraged to use them for everyday travel. Officers recommend that an element of the funding allocated to each scheme should be used in marketing and promotion. It is important, for example, that a launch event is held for each scheme. These events should be publicised as widely as possible, followed by promotional activities over the next year following the completion of each scheme, such as promoted rides, publication of leaflets and community engagement to highlight the improved routes.

6 Financial Implications

- 6.1 The 2019/21 capital budgets for development of the Cycling Strategy will be used towards these schemes and the programme will be managed within the existing budgetary provision. External funding is sought for every scheme particularly as most are delivered jointly with external partners.

7 Legal Implications

- 7.1 Some schemes require formal consultation of the public, usually under the traffic order-making regulations of the Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984 or under the Highways Act 1980 and associated legislation. In addition to this, it is intended that the occupiers of any property affected by any proposals will be directly informed.

8 Equal Opportunities Implications

- 8.1 Relevance Test

| | |
|--|----|
| Has a relevance test been completed for Equality Impact? | No |
| Did the relevance test conclude a full impact assessment was required? | No |

9 Staffing Implications

- 9.1 There are no staffing implications if this work programme is agreed. Schemes are developed by the Transport and Parking Policy team within Regulatory Services with support from external contractors where necessary. Where staffing resource affects delivery timescales, projects timescales are revised in line with available resources.

10 Environmental Implications

- 10.1 The programme is intended to support the Council's objectives to promote sustainable travel, as set out in section 2.
- 10.2 The impact of schemes on the local built environment and street scene will be considered as part of individual schemes.

11 Community Safety Implications

11.1 All schemes are designed to take account of safety implications. For example, where appropriate the police will be consulted and where necessary road safety audits will be carried out.

12 Public Health implications

12.1 As detailed in Section 4 above, cycling as a form of active travel and recreational exercise contributes towards general public health and is enabled and encouraged by these recommendations.

13 Customer Services Centre Implications

13.1 The scheme development process involves informal consultation with the public, local businesses and local interest groups. This is typically carried out using a range of questionnaires and publications that are published online or on paper as appropriate. Consultations published online will be accessible from the websites both of the District Council and of the Council's sustainability programme (www.greenourherts.org.uk). These mechanisms will also be used to promote any schemes that are developed for the strategy.

14 Risk Management and Health & Safety Implications

14.1 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.

14.2 The subject of this report is covered by the Regulatory Service Plan. Any risks resulting from this report will be included in the risk register and, if necessary, managed within this/these plan(s).

The following table gives the risks if the recommendation(s) are agreed, together with a scored assessment of their impact and likelihood:

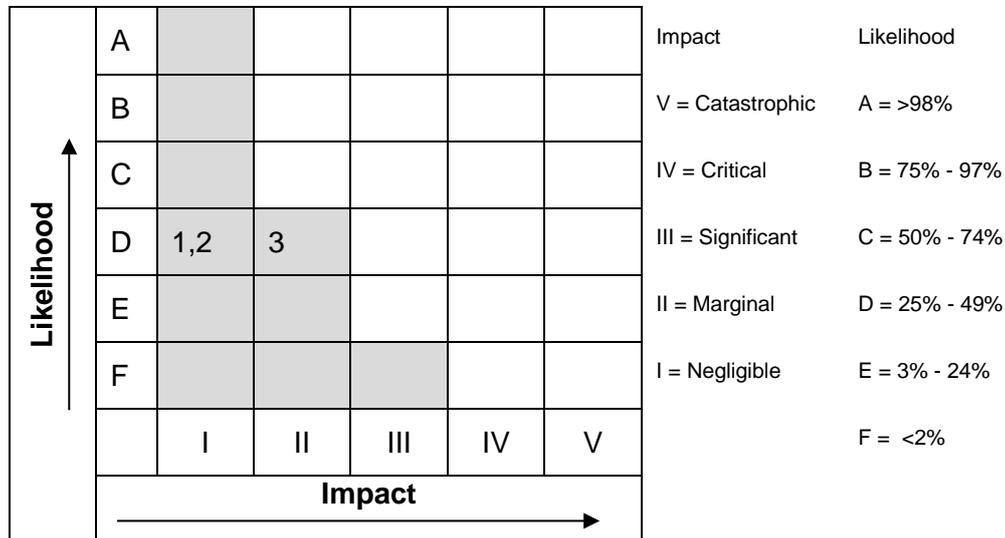
| | Description of Risk | Impact | Likelihood |
|---|---|--------|------------|
| 1 | The programme may not be completed in full, due to the consultative nature of the legal process for introducing legal changes to paths and to limited resources within the council. | I | D |
| 2 | Due to the nature of proposed schemes that often rely on partnership working, lack of partners could lead to limited resources or legal powers being available to ensure that schemes would be implemented. | I | D |

14.3 The following table gives the risks that would exist if the recommendation is rejected, together with a scored assessment of their impact and likelihood:

| | Description of Risk | Impact | Likelihood |
|---|---|--------|------------|
| 1 | The ability of the Council to meet its strategic objectives detailed in section 4.1 and 4.2 would be reduced. | II | D |

14.4 Of the risks detailed above none is already managed within a service plan.

14.5 The above risks are plotted on the matrix below depending on the scored assessments of impact and likelihood, detailed definitions of which are included in the risk management strategy. The Council has determined its aversion to risk and is prepared to tolerate risks where the combination of impact and likelihood are plotted in the shaded area of the matrix. The remaining risks require a treatment plan.



14.6 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 treatment plans are reviewed by the Audit Committee annually.

15 Recommendation

15.1 That the Committee agrees that officers continue to develop the proposals set out as the work programme at Appendix A; and delegates all decisions on the development of, expenditure on, and any additions to this work programme to the Director of Community and Environmental Services in consultation with the Lead Member for Economic Development and relevant Ward Councillors.

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Data Quality

Data sources: None

Background Papers

None

APPENDICES / ATTACHMENTS

Appendix A - TRDC Cycling Strategy Programme 2019-21