



CABINET – 24 NOVEMBER 2023

**LOCAL CYCLING AND WALKING INFRASTRUCTURE PLANS
PROGRAMME AND OUTCOME OF CONSULTATION ON
LOUGHBOROUGH AREA AND SOUTH OF LEICESTER AREA
PLANS**

REPORT OF THE DIRECTOR OF ENVIRONMENT AND TRANSPORT

PART A

Purpose of the Report

1. The purpose of this report is to advise the Cabinet of work undertaken on the development of a programme of Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plans (LCWIPs) and the outcome of the public engagement exercise on the first two LCWIPs in the programme, for the Loughborough area and the South of Leicester area. The Cabinet is asked to approve both the LCWIPs.

Recommendations

2. It is recommended that:
 - a) The work undertaken on the development of a programme of Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plans (LCWIPs) be noted;
 - b) The outcome of the public engagement on the LCWIPs for the Loughborough area and South of Leicester area be noted;
 - c) The draft LCWIPs for the Loughborough area and South of Leicester area, attached to this report as Appendices C and E, be approved; and
 - d) The Director of Environment and Transport, following consultation with the Cabinet Lead Member, be authorised to update these two LCWIPs, including networks, schemes and their prioritisation, as a result of evidence arising from the delivery of the LCWIPs, new housing and employment development growth, and consideration of future Medium Term Financial Strategies.

Reasons for Recommendations

3. To highlight the challenging financial context in which LCWIPs are being developed and, subject to funding, will be delivered in support of the Council's Cycling and Walking Strategy (CaWS) and the Government Cycling and Walking Investment Strategy vision.
4. To highlight the Government's expectation for local authorities to have evidence based LCWIPs in place, developed in accordance with Government guidance and with local engagement and support, in order to be able to access future Government capital delivery funding.
5. To enable agreed plans to be in place for the County's most urban areas to guide future growth and investment in active travel infrastructure from all sources, including the Government, land developers, district councils and neighbouring authorities.
6. To enable the delivery of evidence based active travel schemes and supporting behavioural change initiatives using a collaborative approach for the benefit of local communities.

Timetable for Decisions (including Scrutiny)

7. A report was considered by the Highways and Transport Overview and Scrutiny Committee on 7 September 2023. Its comments are included in Part B of this report (paragraphs 87 to 89).
8. Subject to the Cabinet's approval, the first two LCWIPs in the programme, for the Loughborough area and South of Leicester area, will be published on the County Council's website.

Policy Framework and Previous Decisions

9. The Council's third Local Transport Plan (LTP3) 2011-2026 identified six overall priorities, three of which are relevant when considering cycling and walking:
 - a) Encouraging active and sustainable travel;
 - b) Improving connectivity and accessibility;
 - c) Managing the impact of local transport system on quality of life.
10. In May 2019, the County Council declared a climate emergency. The Environment Strategy, updated in 2020, set out how the Council will reduce the environmental impacts of travel and transport. Providing a suitable level and quality of cycling and walking infrastructure, coupled with essential education, promotion and engagement using the successful Choose How You Move (CHYM) brand to increase use of sustainable transport, is a key element in delivering the Council's Climate Change commitment and the Environment Strategy.

11. The Director of Public Health's 2019 Annual Report highlighted the need to increase efforts to encourage people in Leicestershire to lead more active lives, helping to tackle obesity, improve air quality and improve physical and mental wellbeing. It contained a key action to increase cycling and walking to improve public health.
12. The Leicester and Leicestershire Strategic Transport Priorities (2020-2050) highlighted where Leicestershire County Council and Leicester City Council will work together to deliver common transport aims and objectives. It prioritises and promotes cycling and walking in preference to single occupancy car use for movement of people.
13. In July 2021, the Cabinet noted the outcome of engagement on the CaWS and approved the CaWS and the development of LCWIPs for the two priority areas of Loughborough and the south-east quadrant of the Leicester Principal Urban Area (subsequently expanded to the southern hemisphere of the Leicester Principal Urban Area, hereafter referred to as 'South of Leicester').
14. In April 2023 the Cabinet approved the Highways and Transportation Capital Programme and Works Programme 2023/24.
15. The Council's Strategic Plan 2022-26 outlined the Council's five key outcomes, all of which are supported by the CaWS:
 - a) Clean and Green
 - b) Great Communities
 - c) Safe and Well
 - d) Strong Economy, Transport and Infrastructure
 - e) Improved Opportunities
16. The Council's Net Zero Strategy and Action Plan 2023-2027 set out the approach to achieving net zero carbon emissions in Leicestershire by 2045 or before. There are six key areas within the plan, including transport (To deliver low-carbon, affordable transport choices for all) and community (To inform, engage and involve residents and communities in identifying and delivering local solutions to achieve net zero carbon). The LCWIPs support these aspirations.

Resource Implications

17. The Council has secured £360,500 revenue funding from Active Travel England's (ATE) capability funding, which has helped meet the cost of developing the two LCWIPs.
18. Funding continues to be identified in the Council's budgets in the emerging MTFS for the development of LCWIPs and to begin building an evidence base to support funding bids.
19. Delivery and implementation of LCWIPs comes at a significant cost. Delivery of the initial 10-year pipeline of LCWIP schemes, representing just part of the

networks to be improved, is being estimated at £36m for Loughborough area LCWIP and £107m for the South of Leicester area LCWIP. The magnitude of costs is well beyond what could be afforded from the Council's own budgets. Implementation of LCWIPs will be dependent on securing funding from ATE or other Government funding streams, and from developers through the planning process.

20. Local authorities that do not have LCWIPs, with compliant schemes, in place will not be Government funded. It appears that there could also be a risk to the receipt of wider Government highways and transport funding without such plans in place, hence the importance of developing LCWIP and the evidence base to secure future funding.
21. Delivery of LCWIP improvement schemes is likely to be long-term, aligned with whatever monies are available.
22. Further detail on the resources implications is given in Part B of this report.
23. The Director of Corporate Resources and the Director of Law and Governance have been consulted on the content of this report.

Circulation under the Local Issues Alert Procedure

24. This report has been circulated to Members representing the electoral divisions in the Loughborough area and South of Leicester area:
 - a) Loughborough: Mrs C. M. Radford CC, Mrs M. E. Newton CC, Mr M. J. Hunt CC, Mr J. Morgan CC, Mrs H. Fryer CC, Mr T. Parton CC, Mr J. Miah CC.
 - b) South of Leicester: Mrs L. Richardson CC, Mr. M. Mullaney CC (for Blaby and Glen Parva division, as currently a vacancy), Mrs A. J. Hack CC, Mr L. Phillimore CC, Mr M. Charlesworth CC, Mr T. Richardson CC, Mrs L. Broadley CC, Mr D. Gamble CC, Mr K. Ghattoraya CC, Mr B. Boulter CC.

Officers to Contact

Ann Carruthers
 Director, Environment and Transport
 Tel: 0116 305 7000
 Email: ann.carruthers@leics.gov.uk

Janna Walker
 Assistant Director Development and Growth, Environment and Transport
 Tel: 0116 305 0785
 Email: janna.walker@leics.gov.uk

PART B

Background

National policy and guidance

25. In April 2017, the Government published guidance on the development of LCWIPs and provided opportunities for Local Transport Authorities to take part (at no cost to themselves) in a pilot development project. The Council, as the Local Transport Authority for Leicestershire, took part in that project and commenced development of an LCWIP for Melton Mowbray.
26. Having LCWIPs in place, developed in accordance with the national guidance, is a Government prerequisite for capital funding for walking and cycling infrastructure. Without LCWIPs in place, Local Transport Authorities would be ineligible to even bid for funding, which is now awarded by Active Travel England (ATE).
27. In July 2020, the Government launched the National Cycling and Walking Plan: 'Gear Change' (the Plan), which set out the Government's ambitions for cycling and walking in England. It set out a comprehensive, long-term vision to increase active travel and embed the benefits of walking and cycling into how people live, work and get around. Taking up walking and cycling has been proven to offer significant benefits for people's physical and mental health and the Government is now funding this agenda.
28. The Plan also recognised that in order to see the intended increases in cycling, the quality of cycling infrastructure must dramatically improve. The Department for Transport's (DfT) Local Transport Note 1/20 (LTN1/20) 'Cycle Infrastructure Design' was also launched in July 2020, in tandem with the Plan. It provides details of the quality of cycling and walking infrastructure that the Government requires. At that time, the Transport Minister made clear that transport projects that failed to reflect LTN1/20 would not receive Government funding.
29. Local Authorities which apply to the Government for funding for cycling and walking infrastructure must ensure that their designs comply with new standards. There is a presumption in the Plan that all new road schemes for which funding is requested from the Government will deliver or improve cycling infrastructure to LTN1/20 standards, unless it can be shown that there is little or no need for cycling in that particular road scheme. This marks a significant change in the Government's commitment to cycling and walking policy and funding which affects the way the Council must develop its schemes.

Overview of LCWIPs

30. Essentially, LCWIPs are required in order to:
 - a) Identify network plans for required cycling, walking and wheeling improvements at the local level;

- b) Enable a long-term approach to developing local cycling and walking networks, for example, over 10-years;
- c) Provide a prioritised programme of infrastructure for future investment;
- d) Understand and evidence the benefits that projects deliver through monitoring and evaluation; and
- e) Support funding bids.

31. The principles of LCWIPs are:

- a) Evidence based and audited routes;
- b) Pipeline of schemes ready to be taken forward quickly;
- c) Plans informed by public consultation and engagement; and
- d) Plans integration with broader Local Transport Plans.

32. The process being followed to develop LCWIPs is set out by the DfT in the guidance referenced above (paragraph 25). The process has six stages and is heavily driven by evidence and public engagement. The data-led approach uses various tools and methodologies to identify potential priority routes, which considered alongside stakeholder input, results in defining a prioritised cycling, walking and wheeling¹ networks for improvement.

33. Accordingly, developing an LCWIP represents a significant undertaking, both in time and resource. This is important to understand, not just from the Council's budgetary perspective, but also because LCWIPs will be fundamental components of area Transport Strategies required to underpin the delivery of new [district council] Local Plans going forward. This is not just to ensure that new development is well-served by high quality cycling, walking and wheeling infrastructure, but also as part of an overall package/strategy to mitigate cumulative impacts of growth across an area.

34. A clear understanding of where future growth is to be allocated in an area is a significant piece of evidence to inform the identification of cycling, walking and wheeling networks and the selection of priority corridors. For example, in most cases it would likely be premature to develop an LCWIP in advance of having such an understanding. This might suggest that LCWIPs should be developed as part of a Local Plan's evidence base. However, the scale of work required to develop an LCWIP is disproportionate to the level of evidence and detail required for a Local Plan. It is yet to be understood how inspectors examining Local Plans will deal with this issue.

35. LCWIPs will provide evidence-led plans for future investment in cycling, walking and wheeling schemes. The plans, once developed, will provide the evidence base for use in Government funding bids and in seeking obligations from land developers to fund and deliver cycling, walking and wheeling schemes.

¹ An equivalent alternative to foot/pedestrian-based mobility. Includes wheeled mobilities such as manual self- or assistant-propelled wheelchairs, including wheelchairs with power attachments or all-terrain attachments, powered wheelchairs, and mobility scooters (three and four-wheeled). Definition sourced from <https://wheelsforwellbeing.org.uk/walking-wheeling-and-cycling-definitions/>

36. LCWIPs will identify the priority routes in an area for improvement which the most people will benefit from. Therefore, the plans (see Appendices A, C and E) will not include every street or route in an area for improvement, but will prioritise those that will promote and facilitate more people to cycle, walk and wheel for their regular journeys.

Partnership Working and Associated Issues

37. The Council has a strong track record of working in partnership with district councils in order to deliver on transport infrastructure improvements in the County. Work in partnership with Leicester City Council has also been undertaken to ensure complementary cross-border measures are explored and implemented where appropriate. It will be essential for these established partnership working arrangements to continue to flourish, to ensure that the benefits are wide-reaching, improving cycling and walking access in market towns and into Leicester.
38. For a number of years, under the umbrella of the Council's CHYM brand in partnership with Leicester City Council, a significant effort has been placed to instil more sustainable travel habits among the population, by working with employers, schools and individuals to provide the skills and knowledge required to make more informed active travel choices.
39. Additional funding support from the Government will enable the Council to extend its reach further, assisting more individuals and working with more employers and schools to make cycling and walking logical choices for everyday trips for more people.

LCWIP development programme

40. In a county with a diverse nature, including market towns, urban areas adjoining the City of Leicester and rural areas, it would not have been appropriate to develop a single LCWIP covering the entirety of Leicestershire. Instead, a programme of LCWIPs is being developed.
41. The LCWIP guidance states that the distances within which cycling and walking have the potential to reduce private car travel should be considered when developing the geographical scope of the LCWIPs. These distances are typically up to 10km for cycling, and up to 2km for walking. The guidance also states that local authorities should consider the density and number of services and facilities to which people want to travel when defining the area boundary.
42. Reflecting the guidance, the greatest opportunities to achieve increased transfer of trips from car to cycling and walking lie in urban areas rather than rural settlements and villages, which are less densely populated and have fewer services and facilities within a short distance conducive to choosing active travel. Therefore, the current LCWIP programme focuses on market towns and other urban areas in Leicestershire, such as:
- a) Ashby-de-la-Zouch

- b) Coalville
 - c) Hinckley
 - d) Loughborough and Shepshed
 - e) Lutterworth
 - f) Market Harborough
 - g) Melton Mowbray
 - h) North of Leicester
 - i) South of Leicester
43. To establish an initial prioritised programme, evidence was drawn from a number of sources, including:
- a) A review of cycling and walking travel levels based on 2011 Census² data (and cycle count data where it was available);
 - b) The DfT's Propensity to Cycle Tool, a web-based tool for estimating cycling potential and health/carbon dioxide benefits;
 - c) The number of collisions involving cyclists or pedestrians in an area;
 - d) Sociodemographic factors including population age and gender profiles, access to a car, and deprivation;
 - e) Planned future developments; and
 - f) The presence of Air Quality Management Areas.
44. The numbers of key attractors within the likely cycling and walking distances of 10km and 2km respectively were also reviewed. These are places to which people are mostly likely to want to travel, including schools, supermarkets, healthcare facilities, and places of leisure such as libraries, parks, and visitor attractions.
45. Based on available evidence, the Loughborough area and South of Leicester area came out top as the first two priorities in the programme.
46. The LCWIP area maps have been appended to this report which also provides an overview and explanation of the network hierarchy proposed (Appendix A).

Loughborough Area LCWIP

47. The Loughborough area LCWIP covers the towns of Loughborough, Shepshed and village of Quorn within the Charnwood district. In summary, the LCWIP boundary was defined by the principal urban area of Loughborough town and the proximity of Shepshed in view of the opportunities for active travel between the areas, particularly in consideration of development growth west of Loughborough. The A6 corridor is also an important sustainable travel corridor extending from Loughborough towards the key trip attractor of Leicester City through the Soar Valley, and as such, the village of Quorn was also included in the LCWIP area, which takes into consideration potential for development of a future Soar Valley LCWIP.

² 2021 Census data was not available at the time of developing the geographical scope. It will be taken into consideration as part of the LCWIP 3-year reviews.

48. The focus of the primary cycle network is around the centres of both Loughborough and Shepshed, with improved links to the Loughborough University campus and the railway station also. Loughborough town centre is identified as a 'prestige' area for walking with the primary walking network having a similar broad focus as per the cycling network. It is not possible to say definitively what types of measures would be provided on each of the different levels of the networks because this would be subject to, amongst other things, detailed design, consultations and the availability of funding. However, in very broad terms the higher the level of classification the greater level of segregation (between cyclists and pedestrians and cyclists and vehicular traffic) being sought. Each of the LCWIP documents contain some conceptual indications of the types of measures that could be provided.

South of Leicester Area LCWIP

49. In summary, this LCWIP boundary was defined by the principal urban area surrounding Leicester. The area broadly covers the southern half of the urban fringe surrounding the Leicester City authority area, and includes the key settlements of: Oadby, Wigston, South Wigston, Blaby, Narborough, Cosby, Countesthorpe, Whetstone, Enderby, new Lubbesthorpe and Braunstone Town, which are all within active travel distance. The boundary of the LCWIP area encompasses the key opportunities to develop sustainable travel corridors both in and out of Leicester, such as along the A6, A5199, A426 and B4114, and also the improved east-west links between the market towns and villages which provide opportunities to reduce severance for active travel between these urban areas and their key services centres. The LCWIP area map has been appended to this report as Appendix A.
50. The focus of the primary cycle network is around improving links into Leicester and on orbital movements and other movements. The centres of Enderby, Blaby, Wigston and Oadby are identified as a 'prestige' area for walking with the primary walking network having a similar broad focus as per the cycling network. The same comments as per the Loughborough area apply in terms of the types of measures that would be provided on each of the different levels of the networks. These LCWIPs represent the first two in the programme to have been completed.

Future LCWIP Programmes

51. Next in the priority programme are the North of Leicester Area and Melton Mowbray. These are at an earlier stage of development. Based on evidence and use of tools such as cited in paragraph 43 of this report, initial draft cycling, walking and wheeling networks have been developed for each of these areas.
52. Following engagement and consultations exercises, it is intended that the North of Leicester and Melton Mowbray LCWIPs will be presented to the Cabinet for approval in Spring 2024. The much-reduced timeframe for their development (in comparison with the first two LCWIPs), reflects that with the Loughborough and South of Leicester areas work had to start from the very beginning. This meant that, for example, no established ways of working were in place for

LCWIP development nor an LCWIP document structure. This work having been done, production of subsequent LCWIPs will take less time.

53. Work to develop an LCWIP for Market Harborough is at an early stage, and it is currently anticipated that it will be presented to the Cabinet for approval in late 2024/25. The Council is also supporting North West Leicestershire District Council (NWLDC) to develop an LCWIP, which will cover Coalville and Ashby-de-la-Zouch. In the work that it had done to develop its own CaWS, NWLDC had closely mirrored the DfT's guidance. Providing NWLDC with support offers a cost-effective way of delivering LCWIPs for those two market towns.
54. Subject to the ongoing availability of funding through refreshes of the Council's Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS), the current identified programme will be completed with development of LCWIPs for the remaining two market towns, Hinckley and Lutterworth.
55. Beyond the current programme, the development of LCWIPs for other areas of the County will be influenced by a number of factors including budget availability; levels of planned future growth emerging in future Local Plans; and other sources of evidence as identified in paragraph 43 of this report.

Choose How You Move (CHYM) - Encouraging and Enabling

56. An important part of ensuring the local communities can access and use the new infrastructure that will be delivered through the LCWIPs, delivering on the Government's and the Council's active travel goals, is the need for supporting behaviour change programmes. The Council's CHYM brand is designed to encourage and enable people across Leicestershire to choose active travel. The key aim in these revenue funded programmes is to create a culture shift in the County, taking a life-cycle approach that begins with children and includes all residents regardless of age or background, by helping to remove barriers to people travelling actively through training, education, support and engagement.
57. The need for long-term Government revenue funding to support encouraging and enabling CHYM programmes is vital in empowering the Council to reach and engage local communities, supporting them to establish lifelong habits of travelling actively more often. The combination of capital funding for LCWIP scheme delivery and revenue funding for CHYM programmes is key in reducing single occupancy car use and for Leicestershire to become a county where cycling, walking and wheeling are safe, accessible, and obvious choices for short journeys, and a natural part of longer journeys.

Consultation

58. Engagement is a vital part of the LCWIP development process, with local knowledge being invaluable in informing potential cycling, walking and wheeling route priorities in local areas.
59. Early engagement to help inform potential priority routes for the first two LCWIPs took place in November 2021 with Members, as well as district and

parish councils, which helped to identify potential draft networks of priority routes for improvement.

60. A public map-based engagement was undertaken between 20 January and 20 February 2022 asking for feedback on the draft cycling and walking networks for the Loughborough area and South of Leicester area LCWIP.
61. Feedback was sought on:
 - a) The draft key cycling and walking network, for example, were there crucial routes missing that lots of people currently use, or could use if improved, or if a change to a route was felt needed.
 - b) Comments on types of infrastructure improvements people would like to see on the cycling and walking network – for example, dedicated cycle lanes, junction improvements, benches etc.
 - c) Other feedback they thought would be of value in developing the LCWIPs for these areas.
62. There were over 1,000 visits to the portal, with 222 comments for Loughborough area and 173 comments for the South of Leicester area. People said they wanted:
 - a) More segregated protected spaces and routes for cycling, walking and wheeling;
 - b) New and improved cycling, walking and wheeling routes;
 - c) Better and wider connected cycling, walking and wheeling networks;
 - d) Clearer continuous routes with better signage;
 - e) More cycle parking;
 - f) New and improved crossings and junctions prioritising cycling, walking and wheeling.
63. The feedback received was used to help develop plans that set out the priority cycling, walking and wheeling routes for improvement going forward, and also show some potential concept ideas of how routes could be improved to the latest high quality design standards.
64. These concept ideas are just the start of the process to design and ultimately deliver improvement schemes on the network, with further local public engagement feedback being a key part of the ongoing process.
65. An information event was also held on 3 July 2023 in Oadby (South of Leicester area LCWIP), to give people an understanding of what an LCWIP was, and to see plans of future improvements that the Council aspired to deliver, subject to future funding. The Cabinet Lead Member Mr. Ozzy O’Shea CC and a representative from ATE attended in support of the event.
66. Officers involved in the early development of the LCWIP’s and from the Safe and Sustainable Team, promoting CHYM, were also available to offer information and advice on active travel. The event included concept design ideas of some of the improvements being considered, which were developed

following feedback from interested groups and members of the public during earlier engagement on the CaWS and LCWIPs.

67. The initial proposals included providing separate protected spaces for cycling, walking and wheeling, with improved junctions and crossings that prioritise active travel routes.
68. Further engagement on the draft LCWIPs with Members, district and parish councils, stakeholders and the public took place between 15 August and 12 September 2023. Its key purpose was to ensure that a wide range of views were considered during the development of the LCWIPs following previous rounds of engagement, helping to determine support for the proposed approach to implementing cycling, walking and wheeling infrastructure in the two LCWIP areas and helping to shape the draft LCWIPs.
69. A survey was available on the Council's website, which was advertised widely through media channels and stakeholder networks. The survey was designed to be easy to complete using mobile phones and tablets. Hard copies of the survey were also available on request and ad-hoc responses were accepted via an online mailbox and by post during the engagement period. There was a total of 151 responses for Loughborough, and 101 responses for the South of Leicester.
70. The feedback was largely positive for both LCWIP areas. A total of 85% of respondents for the Loughborough area LCWIP and 56% for the South of Leicester area LCWIP agreed, or strongly agreed, with the priority cycling, walking and wheeling networks identified in the LCWIP.
71. Additionally, 60% of respondents agreed, or strongly agreed, for the Loughborough area LCWIP, and 64% for the South of Leicester area LCWIP, that the improvements identified in the LCWIP would encourage people to cycle, walk or wheel more.
72. Many respondents also confirmed they were very likely, or fairly likely, to travel more by foot (walking) or by bicycle or electric bike (cycling), if the priority cycling, walking and wheeling network is improved:
 - a) 69% for the Loughborough area LCWIP and 75% for the South of Leicester area LCWIP were very likely, or fairly likely, to travel more by foot (walking);
 - b) 64% for the Loughborough area LCWIP and 73% for the South of Leicester area LCWIP were very likely, or fairly likely, to travel more bicycle or electric bike (cycling).
73. Following the latest engagement exercise, the draft LCWIP documents have been updated with necessary changes in response to relevant feedback. Applicable feedback covering future work has been recorded and will be used to inform later stages of LCWIP scheme development and design. In addition, other relevant feedback is to be used to inform future LCWIP engagement

exercises with a view to continually improving the number of communities reached and improve response rates to engagements.

74. Feedback on the LCWIP as documents was largely neutral. Some respondents commented that the LCWIP documents are too long for some readers to digest. As LCWIPs will be used as evidence bases to support funding they need to include a lot of data and technical detail, but executive summaries for each area have also been created to provide a shorter more concise read for laypersons (see Appendices D and F).
75. Further information on the outcome of the consultation is provided in Appendix B. A summary of the comments of the Highways and Transport Overview and Scrutiny Committee is provided below in paragraphs 86-88 below.
76. The development of all subsequent LCWIPs will be informed by a similar process of engagement and consultation.
77. Subject to approval and future delivery funding, further engagement on the LCWIP infrastructure schemes will take place as schemes are developed and delivered.

Resource Implications in further detail

LCWIP development

78. Funding was, and continues to be, identified in the Council's budgets in the MTFS for the development of the LCWIPs currently in progress. Funding is also identified in the MTFS to support the data collection and analysis to begin building the vital evidence base. This will support funding bids and inform the schemes and measures that are included in the LCWIPs.
79. The Council has also secured a total of £360,500 revenue funding from Active Travel England's (ATE) capability funding, which has helped to assist in meeting the cost of developing LCWIPs.
80. Ongoing discussions with partners (such as district councils) regarding cost sharing through existing working partnerships is also taking place, for example, to support and evidence Local Plans and achieve their successful delivery.

LCWIP implementation

81. Delivery and implementation of LCWIPs comes at a significant cost, with the delivery of the initial 10-year pipeline of LCWIP schemes, representing just part of the networks to be improved, being estimated at £36m for Loughborough area LCWIP and £107m for the South of Leicester area LCWIP. These costs exemplify that delivering significant enhancements to cycling, walking and wheeling networks is a significant and expensive undertaking, such as working on busy roads in urban areas, with restricted space to work, and making changes to existing kerb lines (for example, to narrow down lane widths to

make more space for pedestrians and cyclists), altering existing drainage, and moving existing street furniture.

82. The magnitude of costs is well beyond what could be afforded from the Council's own budgets. Implementation of LCWIPs will be dependent on securing funding from ATE or other Government funding streams, and from developers through the planning process. Having LCWIPs in place that align to the current Government policy, guidance and funding criteria, puts the Council in the best place to secure whatever Government funding is available to Local Transport Authorities and to secure developer contributions. In view of the constraints relating to these funding mechanisms, the Council will look to identify and deliver 'quick win' elements or sections of wider active travel corridor improvement schemes on the network over time.
83. Delivery of LCWIP improvement schemes is likely to be long-term, aligned with whatever monies are available, with any marked change in the pace of delivery only coming about should the Government and Council's funding position be significantly improved, or exceptional levels of external funding secured.

General

84. The Government policy paper 'Gear Change' was backed by the Government's commitment to increase long-term funding for cycling and walking, but local authority schemes that do not follow LTN1/20 infrastructure design and/or do not have LCWIPs in place, will not be funded. It appears that there could also be a risk to the receipt of wider highways and transport funding.
85. It should also be noted that the inclusion of cycling, walking and wheeling measures in all future highway schemes, where appropriate in line with Government guidance, is likely to increase the burden on maintenance budgets. Conversely, a significant reduction in car use, through modal shift to active travel facilitated through delivery of LCWIPs, may go some way to reduce the highway maintenance burden elsewhere on the network.

Comments of the Highways and Transport Overview and Scrutiny Committee

86. The Committee at its meeting on 7 September 2023 considered a report on the development of the LCWIPs programme and the proposed LCWIPs for the Loughborough area and South of Leicester area.
87. During the discussion, the following points arose:
 - a) Consultation with stakeholders regarding crossover journeys into Leicester.
The Director explained that information had been collected from stakeholders and communities, Leicester City Council and district councils. Where funding was available, route planning would be logical and cross-border to provide joined-up development. Having the LCWIP created a baseline business case for funding.

- b) Highways maintenance.
The Director said that concerns raised by local communities about the condition of roads as a hindrance to cycling had been fed back to the DfT (which was currently considering the future funding of highway maintenance). It was acknowledged that local authorities would need to make the case to the Treasury for more funding in this area.
- c) The effect of the COVID pandemic.
There had been an upturn in walking/cycling during the pandemic. As more people were now working from home at least part of the time there was an opportunity to encourage them to walk/cycle to local services. Data around car usage was better than that for cycling and walking.
- d) Production of LCWIPs
It was expected that two plans per year would be developed, and where possible they would be aligned to the development of Local Plans.
- e) Funding.
All the LCWIPs were dependent on funding for delivery which would come from a range of sources, such as grants and funding from developers.
- f) Prioritisation.
Priority areas had been identified largely around the potential to reduce the number of short car journeys, and recognising that some areas in the County had already benefited from investment. LCWIPs would be developed for areas that connected together, i.e. not creating arbitrary boundaries.

- 88. The Committee asked that its comments be submitted to the Cabinet.
- 89. Subject to the Cabinet's approval, feedback from the Committee will be used for later stages of scheme development and design and will help to inform future LCWIP development process and engagement.

Monitoring and evaluating the impacts of LCWIPs

- 90. Good monitoring and evaluation of the LCWIPs and the data that informs their ongoing development and delivery is key to understanding how people are travelling in local communities and how it changes over time, throughout the day, week, month or year, and how to support the move to active travel. Better understanding of travel patterns and how people choose to travel at a local level will help ensure that the LCWIP improvement schemes will provide the right facilities to encourage and enable people to travel actively.
- 91. However, until relatively recently the counter technology available has been relatively unsophisticated. Whilst it was possible to install a counter at particular point on the network to establish that how many cyclists a day passed over it, it was far more difficult to collect area wide data to inform wider patterns of travel habits and to put that figure in the context of travel by other modes across the area. Isolated data has very limited benefits when it comes to seeking to

establishing meaningful baselines and to evaluate impacts of schemes and area wide measures overtime.

92. To build a better understanding of travel habits, networks of multi-modal counters are now being installed in LCWIP areas. These counters are cameras that use artificial intelligence to anonymously count numbers travelling by cycling, walking or by all other modes such as by car or bus. Investing in this type of technology will help build an expanding knowledge base detailing the picture of local travel and how best to facilitate more active travel in Leicestershire communities.
93. Data from these cameras will be essential to establishing a meaningful and as robust as possible baseline from which to assess the impact of LCWIP future schemes and monitor progress towards the CaWS targets.

Conclusion

94. The Council is committed to delivering on the Government's ambitions for cycling, walking and wheeling set out in 'Gear Change', and to the delivery of much improved networks and infrastructure in accordance with the LCWIP guidance and LTN1/20.
95. LCWIPs will identify the priority routes in an area for improvement up to a 10-year period, for both cycling and walking, which the most people will benefit from. Therefore, the plans will not include every street or route in this area for improvement, but rather the priorities that will promote and facilitate more people to walk and cycle for their regular journeys.
96. Demonstrating that commitment, a programme of LCWIPs has been identified and prioritised based on available evidence and use of DfT tools, with a focus on the urban areas adjoining Leicester and market towns, areas which offer the greatest opportunities to attract people away from car use to more sustainable and active modes of travel.
97. The first two priorities in the programme, for the Loughborough area and the South of Leicester area, are complete and appended to this report. Whilst the next two priority LCWIPs, for the Melton Mowbray area and the North of Leicester area, are at a mid-stage of development, the intention is that they will be submitted for approval by the Cabinet in Spring 2024.
98. Work has also commenced to develop an LCWIP for the Market Harborough area and the Council is supporting work by NWLDC which will generate an LCWIP for the market towns of Coalville and Ashby-de-la-Zouch.
99. Subject to the ongoing availability of funding through future refreshes of the MTFS and/or from ATE, the currently identified programme will be completed with the development of LCWIPs for the Hinckley and Lutterworth areas. Beyond that, consideration will be given as to what other areas of the County it would be appropriate for LCWIPs to be developed.

100. Whilst the Council has had the ability to date to fund the LCWIP development programme (combined with funding from ATE), the magnitude of the cost of their delivery will go well beyond that which is ever likely to be affordable to it; the delivery of cycling, walking and wheeling infrastructure of a standard that is intended to help deliver on the Government's ambitions and that accords with LTN1/20 will be significant.
101. Having LCWIPs in place, developed in accordance with the DfT's guidance, is a prerequisite for being eligible to 'bid' for Government funding, awarded via ATE; otherwise, the Council would be ineligible to 'bid' for funding to improve cycling, walking and wheeling networks. It appears that there would also be a risk to the receipt of wider highways and transport funding. Given the magnitude of costs for delivering LCWIPs and current financial pressures on the Council, delivery of improvement schemes is solely reliant on securing future Government grants, or from securing obligations from land developers via the planning arena, and this is expected to remain the case long-term.
102. LCWIPs will also form key components of area transport strategies required to enable the delivery of the next round of district councils' Local Plans. Having robust, evidence-based area strategies in place, supported by an appropriate policy framework set out in the Local Plan, places the Council in the best position to seek to secure maximum levels of developer contributions.
103. Engagement is an important part of this development process and local knowledge is invaluable in informing potential cycling and walking route priorities in each area. Various stakeholders, including the public and key cycling user group representatives, are aware of this LCWIP development programme and have inputted into LCWIP development to date. The Council will continue to make such stakeholders aware of the progress of development and there will be further opportunities to provide feedback.
104. A stronger national policy change along with allocation of significant funding is required to support local authorities to deliver active travel improvement schemes and behavioural change programmes, in order to support the level of mode shift that would be required to meet the Government's carbon reduction ambitions set out. Nevertheless, LCWIPs will enable growth to be delivered in ways that are more sustainable in transport terms and provide greater opportunities across the areas for more active means of travel. In that way their successful delivery will be a key aspect of the Council seeking to achieve its own net-zero ambitions and support improvements to the health of local communities.

Equality Implications

105. An Equality and Human Rights Impact Assessment (EHRIA) screening exercise was undertaken to inform the development of the high level, strategic CaWS. This included comprehensive engagement with Members, district and parish councillors, stakeholders (such as the Canals and River Trust), the public and focus groups.

106. The EHRIA screening for the CaWS identified an overall neutral impact, and a full EHRIA was not required. LCWIPs define the approach to delivering the CaWS in specific geographical areas. Given the use of the CaWS evidence and data to steer early development of the LCWIPs, there are currently no further equality implications arising from the recommendations in this report.
107. As LCWIP infrastructure schemes are developed, equality issues for each geographical area will be considered during each scheme's development.
108. The Council has made a range of commitments to promote equality and diversity and to reduce disadvantage and inequality of opportunity. The CaWS supports these commitments.
109. The CaWS and supporting LCWIPs aim to make cycling, walking and wheeling more accessible for all sectors of society. The emphasis in the CaWS is on inclusive design of new infrastructure that enables cyclists to travel on any type of machine. This will enable people with mobility difficulties who may wish to use an adapted cycle to take full advantage of the new infrastructure.
110. It is intended that the inclusive design of new infrastructure will encourage all genders to cycle. The inclusive infrastructure design principles are also intended to benefit children who may wish to cycle, walk or wheel for the school journey. The ongoing engagement, promotional and training activities which are already undertaken under the Choose How You Move (CHYM) banner, will continue and progress within the LCWIP development, enabling the Council to raise awareness of new opportunities and further develop the skills required to cycle and walk for the school journey.
111. Although the Government defined term "LCWIP" only refers to cycling and walking, LCWIPs seek to bring a holistic approach to planning and design, resulting in plans that increase people's opportunity to travel actively for their journeys (this is inclusive of people with disabilities, including those with mobility impairments). LCWIPs cover walking and wheeling in many forms, which includes bikes, trikes, e-cycles, scooters, and inclusive mobility such as mobility scooters, wheelchairs, adapted bikes and wheeled frames/rollators. The term 'walking and wheeling', or 'walking/wheeling' represents movement at a pedestrian's pace, whether someone is standing or sitting, walking/wheeling unaided or using any kind of aid to mobility, including walking aids/wheeled aids, personal assistants or support animals. The plans also consider provision for equestrian use where appropriate.

Human Rights Implications

112. The original EHRIA screening for the CaWS considered both equality and human rights implications. Given the early stage in the LCWIPs development, and use of the CaWS evidence and data to steer their development, there are currently no further human rights implications arising from the recommendations in this report.

113. As LCWIP infrastructure schemes are developed further, then human rights implications for each geographical area will be considered during each scheme's development.

Environmental Implications

114. High-level environmental challenges and climate change commitments are supported by the CaWS and its supporting LCWIPs.
115. Where relevant, an appropriate Environmental Impact Assessment will be completed as specific LCWIP schemes are developed.
116. The need to encourage travel by more sustainable modes has never been greater. In 2019, the Council declared a climate emergency and committed Leicestershire to being carbon neutral by 2045, five years ahead of national targets. An increase in walking and cycling journeys would contribute toward meeting this commitment.
117. Air pollution has a significant effect on public health, and poor air quality is the largest environmental risk to public health in the UK. Across Leicestershire, prevalence of asthma (the symptoms of which can be triggered by air pollution) was 6.3% in 2018/19, which is higher than the England average of 6%. Preventable mortality attributable to PM2.5 (fine particles largely from the combustion of fuels, including vehicles) is, on average, the third leading cause of death across Leicestershire. The Council is committed to tackling air pollution in the County, working in partnership with district councils, and Leicester City Council.
118. The Air Quality and Health Joint Action Plan (2020-2024) is a partnership Plan, delivered jointly with the Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland Clinical Commissioning Group, University of Leicester and Blaby, Charnwood, Harborough and North West Leicestershire district councils. One of its priorities for active and sustainable travel is that Plan should act as a catalyst for behaviour change and modal shift to green travel. Each authority, with support from the County Council's Safe and Sustainable Travel team, will be expected to promote active travel to their residents and workforce.

Health Implications

119. Although the health of the local population is now better than ever, and life expectancy for both men and women is higher than the England average, Healthy Life Expectancy is falling. There are also inequalities across local communities, for example, although the health of people in Leicestershire is generally better than the England average, about 12% (14,100) of children live in low-income families.
120. In Leicestershire, cycling and walking levels are lower than the national average. The percentage of adults in Leicestershire that cycle at least three days per week was 2.4% in 2018/19 (compared to 3.1% nationally), and the

percentage of adults who walk at least three days per week was 18.5% in 2018/19 (compared to 22.7% nationally).

121. One of the nation's key health challenges - obesity - is a major concern for the County's local service providers. In 2018/19, 64.5% of adults (age 18+) in Leicestershire were classified as overweight or obese. Healthy weight issues begin at an early age and by year six at school, 30.6% of Leicestershire pupils were either overweight or obese in 2019/20. There is clearly a role for cycling, walking and wheeling to play in addressing such health concerns across the County.
122. All the evidence indicates that physical activity has an overwhelmingly positive impact on health and wellbeing. Taking 150 minutes exercise per week as an adult is classed as being 'physically active'. Being physically active reduces a person's risk of dementia by 30%, depression by 30%, heart disease by 40%, type 2 diabetes by 40%, breast cancer by 25% and osteoporosis by 50%.
123. In addition to physical health benefits, walking and cycling also have positive benefits for mental health. Exercise such as cycling can lower levels of the body's stress hormone, cortisol. Cycling and walking both release 'feel-good' hormones known as endorphins, which help to relax the mind, promote happiness and reduce feelings of anxiety. The NHS promotes regular exercise for those experiencing depression, proposing that "even a brisk 10-minute walk can clear your mind and help you relax" and people should "just be more active in your daily routine by walking or cycling instead of travelling by car or public transport."³
124. The Joint Strategic Needs Assessment (JSNA, 2018-2021) analysed the health of the County's population with a view to improving health and wellbeing and minimising inequalities. Of particular relevance to the CaWS, the JSNA local overarching strategic recommendations include:
 - a) Prioritise cycling and walking as the preferred means of transport in Leicestershire, including health impact assessments on new large developments, adoption of 20mph limits/zones where appropriate, and providing cycling and walking infrastructure.
 - b) Co-ordinate with local planning authorities to influence policy and planning guidance, increasing, provision of active travel and high-quality walking infrastructure in new developments.
 - c) Co-ordinate work on active travel/rights of way linked to wider physical activity programmes commissioned by public health.
 - d) Promote use of rights of way and access to green spaces, including the Council's own parks.
125. The Joint Strategic Needs Assessment (JSNA, 2018-2021) analysed the health of the County's population with a view to improving health and wellbeing and minimising inequalities. Of particular relevance to the CaWS, the JSNA local overarching strategic recommendations include:

³ <https://www.nhs.uk/mental-health/self-help/guides-tools-and-activities/exercise-for-depression/>

- a) Prioritise cycling and walking as the preferred means of transport in Leicestershire, including health impact assessments on new large developments, adoption of 20mph limits/zones where appropriate, and providing cycling and walking infrastructure.
- b) Co-ordinate with local planning authorities to influence policy and planning guidance, increasing, provision of active travel and high-quality walking infrastructure in new developments.
- c) Co-ordinate work on active travel/rights of way linked to wider physical activity programmes commissioned by public health.
- d) Promote use of rights of way and access to green spaces, including the Council's own parks.

Background Papers

Cabinet – 20 July 2021 - Cycling and Walking Strategy -

<https://politics.leics.gov.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=135&MId=6445&Ver=4>

You Said, We Did - Cycling and Walking Strategy engagement

<https://www.leicestershire.gov.uk/have-your-say/you-said-we-did/engagement-2021>

Leicestershire County Council's CaWS and Action Plan

- CaWS:
<https://www.leicestershire.gov.uk/sites/default/files/field/pdf/2021/7/27/Cycling-and-walking-strategy.pdf>
- CaWS Action Plan:
<https://www.leicestershire.gov.uk/sites/default/files/field/pdf/2021/7/27/Cycling-and-walking-strategy-action-plan.pdf>
- CaWS Action Plan – First Annual Update (Published 2023)
<https://www.leicestershire.gov.uk/sites/default/files/2023-07/Cycling-and-walking-strategy-action-plan-annual-update.pdf>

Net Zero Strategy and Action Plan

<https://www.leicestershire.gov.uk/environment-and-planning/net-zero/net-zero-leicestershire-strategy-action-plan-and-reports>

Cycling and Walking Investment Strategy

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/the-second-cycling-and-walking-investment-strategy/the-second-cycling-and-walking-investment-strategy-cwis2>

Appendices

Appendix A - LCWIP Area Maps and Route Priority Definitions

Appendix B – Final Engagement Summary on the Draft Loughborough Area LCWIP and the Draft South of Leicester Area LCWIP

Appendix C – Loughborough Area LCWIP and Appendices

Appendix D – Loughborough Area LCWIP - Executive Summary

Appendix E – South of Leicester Area LCWIP and Appendices

Appendix F – South of Leicester Area LCWIP - Executive Summary

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