

Environment, Development and Transport Committee

Item No.

Report title: Norfolk Cycling & Walking Action Plan

Date of meeting: 17 March 2017

Responsible Chief

Officer: Tom McCabe – Executive Director, Community and Environmental Services

Strategic impact

This report asks members to approve the Norfolk Cycling and Walking Action Plan (Appendix A). This will further the Council's ambition to promote health and wellbeing through good infrastructure. This Council aims to ensure people have access to sustainable transport choices and recognises that walking and cycling plays a key role in meeting these overall transport objectives. Possessing a strategic vision and an action plan for increasing the number of people cycling and walking regularly has contributed to the Council's recent success in gaining sustainable transport funding totalling £1.9m from the Department for Transport. Notably this was the first time that the County has been successful in attaining this type of funding; this Council was also one of the few in the East of England to be granted this funding.

Executive summary

NCC, working with partner district councils, has been successful in bidding for funding to deliver both capital for cycling and walking infrastructure and more recently revenue funding, to promote both the use of new infrastructure and the benefits of cycling and walking for health and wellbeing. More bids are likely in the future and it is important that the Council moves forward with its plans.

This Committee appointed a member and officer working group back in March 2015 to oversee this important area of work. The Cycling and Walking Working Group has been successful in delivering the Norfolk Cycling and Walking Action Plan and latterly in securing sustainable transport revenue funding both via the Department for Transport's Sustainable Transport Transition Year Fund (£396,000) and latterly the Access Fund (£1.5m). An extensive network of walking and cycling links are incorporated into the design and build of the Norwich Northern Distributor Road and full consideration will be given to walking and cycling opportunities in market towns and development of future schemes such as a Great Yarmouth Third river crossing.

Recommendations:

1. To approve the Norfolk Cycling and Walking Action Plan (Appendix A).

1. Proposal

1.1. NCC has had significant recent success in bidding for funding for cycling and walking improvements and promotion. Most recently the Council has bid for and secured sustainable transport revenue funding through the Department for

Transport's Access Fund. Further funding opportunities require that we take our cycling and walking plans forward, further develop these and monitor their implementation. To continue with this success it is recommended that we consolidate our plans through formally adopting the Norfolk Cycling and Walking Action Plan as an essential element of our future planning and development.

1.2. This Council's success in securing sustainable transport funding has been underpinned by pulling resources together from a wide variety of services and overseeing the process through the appointment of a member and officer working group chaired by the Cycling and Walking Champion. Again, to continue and further this success it is recommended that the EDT Committee consider maintaining the working group and reappointing both the working group and the Cycling and Walking Champion after the council elections in May. This will enable us to ensure people have access to sustainable transport choices and live healthier lifestyles.

2. Evidence

2.1. Significant Department for Transport resources have been secured through pursuing a strategy for increasing the number of people cycling and walking. These resources facilitate both the delivery of infrastructure and promotional activities, and in addition the ability to evaluate the success of these measures in meeting the key aims as outlined in the action plan. This evaluation is key to taking an evidence based approach to the implementation of cycling and walking measures. We are working with UEA's Norwich Medical School to develop and refine our approach to cycling and walking evidence.

2.2. A strong and well academically supported approach to evaluation is also key to the success of future funding bids, not only potentially to the Department for Transport but to other streams such as Public Health England, the New Anglia LEP, our local clinical commissioning groups and Sport England.

3. Financial Implications

3.1. As shown there is significant potential resource to be bid for from the Department of Transport; the recommendations itemised in this report will help secure the County Council's successful position in the longer-term. To date the only resource that has been drawn on to secure the £1.9m from the Department for Transport has been member and officer time and £12,000 for consultancy.

3.2. There are no additional costs identified. The recommended work identified in this report will again require officer and member time to further develop the Norfolk Cycling and Walking Action Plan and monitor its implementation.

3.3. The Council is actively engaged in the delivery of residential travel plans through the 'AtoBetter' programme, which is externally funded by housing developers, and this is enabling residents on new development sites to have access to sustainable transport choices. We will closely monitor what funding opportunities are available and the Cycling and Walking Action Plan enables the strongest possible case for funding to be presented.

4. Issues, risks and innovation

4.1. A lesson that we can draw on through comparing our recent experience with that of other regional highway authorities is that we must keep a baseline of expertise in this area up to date at both officer and member level. A strong evidence base and using that foundation to apply for central government funding is key to future funding success.

5. Background

5.1. Relevant background to this report has been provided with the Norfolk Cycling and Walking Action Plan (Appendix A), the Pushing Ahead bid document (Appendix B) and the terms of reference for the Norfolk Cycling and Walking Working Group.

6. Terms of Reference for Norfolk Cycling and Walking Working Group

6.1 Introduction

6.1.1 Cycling and walking are embedded in a number of the Council's adopted policies; this helps to ensure that people have access to sustainable transport choices and live healthier lifestyles. Central government is making significant investment in capital infrastructure and revenue related to cycling and walking. With a number of different departments involved in the development and implementation of cycling and walking, there is a role for this group to oversee the development and adoption of an implementation plan.

6.2 Group structure and key roles

6.2.1 Cycling and Walking Champion:

The role of the Champion is to provide political leadership, focus and a point of contact for cycling and walking measures within Norfolk County Council.

The focus of this appointment internally is to lead on the development and subsequent delivery of Norfolk's Cycling and Walking Implementation Plan – giving a high-level member focus to cycling and walking initiatives. Externally the Champion will be the political respondent to organisations interested in NCC's cycling and walking plans.

The Champion will encourage a range of people to play a fuller role in developing and encouraging more cycling and walking.

In addition, the Cycling and Walking Champion will:

- a. Work with officers and others in raising the profile of cycling and walking.
- b. Work collaboratively with the relevant Committees and Members.
- c. Work with other Members and Member Champions, as appropriate.
- d. Attend relevant training, learning and development opportunities.
- e. Keep apprised of developments and issues relevant to cycling and walking.
- f. Promote good practice.
- g. Keep a watching brief on the Council's levels of performance regarding cycling and walking.
- h. Keep members informed of relevant issues and raise awareness of cycling and walking.

- i. Agree funding bids with the Chair and Vice Chair of EDT.
- It is envisaged that the group will be supported by a range of officers.

6.2.2 Members representing key council committees:

The focus of these appointments internally are to assist with development and subsequent delivery of Norfolk's Cycling and Walking Delivery and Implementation Plan – giving a cross-committee member focus to cycling and walking initiatives. Externally the Working Group members will be the political respondents to organisations interested in NCC's cycling and walking plans. Group members will encourage a range of people to play a fuller role in developing and encouraging more cycling and walking.

In addition, the group members will:

- a. Work with officers and others in raising the profile of cycling and walking.
- b. Work collaboratively with a range of other committees on cycling and walking improvement measures and initiatives.
- c. Work with other members as appropriate.
- d. Attend relevant training, learning and development opportunities.
- e. Keep apprised of developments and issues relevant to cycling and walking.
- f. Promote good practice.
- g. Keep a watching brief on the Council's levels of performance with regard to cycling and walking.
- h. Keep other members informed of relevant issues and raise awareness with regard to cycling and walking
- i. Assist with funding bids.

6.2.3 Public health officer representative:

Will provide relevant input from their area of expertise and represent current and emerging policies from public health relevant to cycling and walking.

6.2.4 Economic Development and Strategy representative:

Will provide the planning, regulatory and development context for cycling and walking related matters and additionally advise on the relevant governance of agreed actions and activities through the planning system.

6.2.5 Environmental Department representative:

Will provide relevant environmental legal, planning and regulatory expertise and provide advice on Green Infrastructure and environment related planning governance measures relevant to cycling and walking.

6.2.6 Highways and major project representative:

Will provide advice on the highways related aspects of cycling and walking, including the local transport strategies, infrastructure design advice, safety and monitoring advice and will coordinate infrastructure design for cycling and walking infrastructure projects.

6.2.7 Representatives from other departments/groups:

Officers from other sections of the County Council, and partner District and City Councils may be co-opted onto the Cycling and Walking Working Group as need arises for their relevant expertise and advice. In particular, officers from Active

Norfolk and Children's Services will be asked to provide advice and participate in the development of the Cycling and Walking Implementation Plan.

6.3 Norfolk Cycling and Walking Group Arrangements

6.3.1 Role of the Group

The role of the group is to:

- Set a clear and specific vision for Norfolk which outlines how cycling and walking will be increased and supported;
- Develop a local walking and cycling delivery plan, supported by local partners – such as the third sector;
- Develop the approach to working with partners;
- Demonstrate a commitment to door-to-door journeys, and to creating safe cycling and walking provision through cycle proofing and pedestrian proofing new transport infrastructure and, where relevant, a planned and funded cycling and walking investment programme;
- Demonstrate that our walking and cycling plans include steps to meet the needs of people from hard to reach groups – including disabled people, older people, and others – where those needs are different from the needs of other people;
- Agree the group terms of reference;
- Receive/report progress updates on bids, projects and development;
- Identify further funding opportunities.

6.3.2 Membership and Chairperson

- The Norfolk Cycling and Walking Group will be made up of members and officers as defined. The Group may also invite others to attend specific meetings, including specialists, for specific agenda items.
- The Chairperson is to be the Political Cycling and Walking Champion.

6.3.3 Meetings and papers

- Group meetings will be held as necessary as directed by the Chair to oversee the development of this work.
- An agenda and papers will be distributed approximately one week in advance of each meeting. Agenda items for future meetings will be agreed by the Group at the previous meeting where possible. It may be necessary for the Chair of the group to add items on the agenda, for example when urgent issues arise or to ensure the timetable can be achieved.

6.4 Resource

6.4.1 Resources from across the services will be utilised to ensure the implementation plan can be formulated.

6.4.2 Specific monitoring of resources and reporting will be carried out along with a regular review of progress.

Officer Contact

If you have any questions about matters contained in this paper or want to see copies of any assessments, eg equality impact assessment, please get in touch with:

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