



Growth and Development Scrutiny Group

Wednesday, 26 January 2022

The Provision of Cycling Networks in the Borough - Part 2

Report of the Director - Neighbourhoods

1. Purpose of report

- 1.1. This report follows a Growth and Development Scrutiny in July 2021, following a Councillor request for scrutiny in July 2020, regarding the provision of cycle paths in the Borough. This report provides a follow up Growth and Development Scrutiny Group session regarding cycling provision in the Borough, to enable Councillors to consider the emerging issues related to cycling and consider the inclusion of walking in making recommendations for future action.
- 1.2. In July 2021, the Group received three comprehensive presentations from Nottinghamshire County Council Local Transport Plans Manager, the Cycle Campaign Group for Nottingham 'Pedals' and Sustrans the UK charity for walking and cycling.
- 1.3. To conclude the discussion from the two sessions and following a request from Scrutiny members, the Group will receive a presentation on the evening from the Planning Policy Manager regarding the planning policy context to deliver high quality walking and cycling infrastructure in new developments.
- 1.4. The Communities Manager will summarise the discussion and present a 'plan-on-a-page' for consideration and recommendation for adoption as a supporting document for both the Climate Change Strategy and Leisure Strategy.

2. Recommendation

It is RECOMMENDED that that the Growth and Development Scrutiny Group:

- a) consider the information provided at the meeting and agree to include both walking and cycling in the scope of future action
- b) make comments on the proposed walking and cycling 'plan-on-a-page' (Appendix 1) to enable the Council to adopt the plan.

3. Reasons for Recommendation

- 3.1. Rushcliffe Borough Council, along with most local authorities across England, has set a goal for the district to be net zero from carbon emission by 2050. The Council has a clear responsibility to lead and ensure that the authority confronts the challenges involved in meeting this target. One way to do this and help reduce the consumption of fossil fuels is to create a sustainable transport network and to encourage change regarding how people travel.
- 3.2. There is a substantive body of evidence regarding the many benefits of walking and cycling, not just for the walker or cyclist's health and wellbeing, but for the wider quality of the environment in which we live and work, including benefits to overall environmental sustainability, carbon neutrality and the economy.

4. Supporting Information

- 4.1. In July 2021, the Growth and Development Scrutiny Group received three detailed presentations regarding the benefits of walking and cycling which provided a local context building on the Department for Transport policy paper 'Gear Change' (2020). The plan describes the vision to make England a great walking and cycling nation and it sets out the actions required at all levels of Government to make this a reality, grouped under four themes:
 - Better streets for cycling and people
 - Cycling and walking at the heart of decision-making
 - Empowering and encouraging local authorities
 - Enabling people to cycle and protecting them when they do.
- 4.2. The presentations were shared with members of the Scrutiny Group and they were asked to identify areas of focus for future discussion, no responses were received to this request. Therefore, officers have responded to feedback given at the meeting in July 2021 and this update will focus on the planning policy context and some proposed next steps ('plan-on-a-page' at Appendix 1).

Planning Policy Context

- 4.3. In terms of local planning policy and decisions on planning applications, the Government sets out several requirements relating to Active Travel within the 2019 National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF).
- 4.4. The NPPF requires local planning policies to promote and support walking and cycling in two main respects – from a health and active travel perspective and also from a sustainable transport perspective.
- 4.5. In respect of the first, the NPPF sets out that planning policies and decisions should enable and support healthy lifestyles by achieving development layouts that encourage both cycling and walking. In respect of sustainable transport, the NPPF sets out that transport issues should be considered throughout local plan-making and also as part of preparing and determining

relevant development proposals in order to ensure that, alongside other matters, opportunities to promote cycling are identified and pursued. It is also required by the NPPF that planning policies should provide for high quality walking and cycling networks and supporting facilities such as cycle parking, drawing on Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plans prepared by local transport authorities.

- 4.6. While the latest NPPF post-dates preparation of the current Rushcliffe Local Plan, cycling is already promoted and supported by a number of Local Plan policies. Policy 14 of the 2014 Core Strategy, for example, identifies that the priority for new development is selecting sites already, or which can be made, accessible by cycling, walking and public transport. It also sets out that cycling provision should be prioritised, alongside walking and public transport, and ahead of measures to increase road capacity, in the delivery of transport networks to serve new developments. This includes, within Policy 14, an expectation that improvements to cycling facilities should be provided early in the build out period of new developments, and that these improvements should be sufficient to encourage sustainable modes of transport.
- 4.7. The site-specific policies within the Core Strategy for the plan's strategic allocations also set out a number of specific cycling related requirements. For example, for the Melton Road, Edwalton strategic allocation, it is required that there are improvements to cycling facilities through and beyond the site. In the 2019 Local Plan Part 2, cycling is promoted and supported most specifically by its Policy 39, which concerns the health impacts of development. The policy sets out that, where applicable, development proposals should support and enhance health by, alongside other provisions, providing new homes and employment developments in locations that promote walking and cycling.

Local Authority Context

- 4.8. As outlined in the previous report and presentations, the Borough Council's role in supporting the provision of cycling in the Borough is limited and, therefore, it is important that we continue to work with our partners on this. The scrutiny has, however, demonstrated that there are clear benefits to establishing an overall aim to "increase participation in walking and cycling by all in Rushcliffe". This can be further distilled into three priority outcomes:
 - Promotion
 - Safety
 - Infrastructure.
- 4.9. The Rushcliffe Walking and Cycling 'plan-on-a-page' (Appendix 1) sets out the proposed activity that the Council could undertake moving forward which aligns with the Council's Climate Change Strategy 2021 and the Leisure Strategy 2017-2027.

5. Implications

5.1. Financial Implications

There are no specific financial implications arising directly from the report. Existing resources will be used to support the action plan and funding options will be considered in the event of any additional infrastructure requirements.

5.2. Legal Implications

There are no specific legal implications arising directly from the report.

5.3. Equalities Implications

There are no specific equality implications arising directly from the report.

5.4. Section 17 of the Crime and Disorder Act 1998 Implications

The promotion of safer walking and cycling route, safety education and the provision of secure storage and target hardening measures to reduce cycle theft should form a key strand of any future promotion of cycling in the Borough.

6. Link to Corporate Priorities

Quality of Life	The promotion of walking and cycling has a significant impact on the health and wellbeing of a community.
Efficient Services	
Sustainable Growth	Sustainable travel is required to deliver sustainable housing growth to meet the current and emerging needs of all our communities
The Environment	To meet the challenges of climate change sustainable travel forms a key part of reducing carbon emission from our communities

7. Recommendations

It is RECOMMENDED that that the Growth and Development Scrutiny Group:

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Background papers available for Inspection:	
List of appendices:	Appendix One: Cycling and Walking Plan