

Environment and Sustainable Communities Overview and Scrutiny Committee

18 April 2016



Overview of Strategic Cycle Routes within County Durham

Joint report of Assistant Chief Executive and Corporate Director of Regeneration and Economic Development

Purpose of the Report

- 1 To provide members of the Environment and Sustainable Communities Overview and Scrutiny Committee with an overview of the strategic cycle routes within the County.

Background

- 2 Members will recall that when refreshing the work programme of the committee at the meeting held on 8 July 2015, it was agreed that members would receive an overview of the strategic cycle routes and also undertake a visit to see 'first hand' the development of some cycle routes within the County.
- 3 Arrangements were made for members to undertake the visit on the 4 April 2016 to strategic cycle routes at Newton Aycliffe, along the A167 and in Durham City. This provided members with the opportunity to view completed successful cycling schemes, proposals for developing new schemes and locations where conflicting demands put pressure on design and development of cycling schemes. The session included a short presentation before the site visits.
- 4 At the meeting on the 18 April, members will receive a presentation from Peter Ollivere (Principal Policy Officer) and Victoria Lloyd-Gent (Sustainable Travel Officer) focusing on the following:
 - Policy Context
 - Cycling Strategy and Action Plan
 - Cycling Network Planning process
 - Cycling infrastructure improvements
 - Issues and Challenges
 - Next steps.

Background – Strategic Cycle Routes

- 5 Cycling is a booming activity for sport, recreation and travel. This leap in interest has created a growing demand for more and better cycling infrastructure.
- 6 Spatial plans such as the North East Transport Plan, the County Durham Plan and the Durham City Sustainable Transport Strategy set out the broader sustainable transport vision.
- 7 The approach to developing strategic cycling routes in County Durham is set out in the existing Cycling Strategy and Action Plan. Cycling is part of the ongoing work to encourage and enable more people to choose sustainable travel modes.
- 8 Cycling has far reaching benefits for the individual and the wider community, economy and environment.

Current position

- 9 A Cycling Network Planning Process is currently being developed to determine the status of the existing cycle route network and determine a potential network. An audit and assessment of the condition and usability of cycle route infrastructure within the 12 main towns and key routes in between is currently being undertaken by Sustainable Transport. Audit and review has been completed for six of these towns with completion planned by April 2017.
- 10 Strategic routes are continuing to be planned, designed and built. This work is funded by the Local Transport Plan (LTP) programme as well as the Local Growth Fund secured through the North East Combined Authority.
- 11 Cycle parking being installed at key destination points as part of a rolling programme of works.

Next Steps

- 12 Develop policies for the emerging NECA Transport Plan and County Durham Plan.
- 13 Update County Durham Cycling Strategy and Action Plan by Spring 2017.
- 14 Developing Cycling Super Routes within the main towns, links to key employment sites and completing the Great North Cycleway are the main cycle route infrastructure priorities.
- 15 Continue to seek funding through NECA and use LTP funding to carry out infrastructure improvements.
- 16 Produce town maps for each town audited.

- 17 Develop a system for maintenance and securing legal status of the cycling network.
- 18 Safeguard and cycle-proof routes for the future.

Recommendations

- 19 It is recommended that the Environment and Sustainable Communities Overview and Scrutiny Committee note the content of the report and comment upon the information provided within the presentation.

Background Papers

None

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Appendix 1: Implications

Finance – Funding for the development and construction of strategic cycle routes will continue to be secured through the Local Transport Plan and other sources.

Staffing – None

Risk – Considered as an integral part of scheme design and delivery.

Equality and Diversity / Public Sector Equality Duty – None

Accommodation – None

Crime and Disorder – Included as an integral part of scheme design.

Human Rights – None

Consultation – Consultation with users and affected parties undertaken as part of scheme design.

Procurement – Works designed and constructed by the Council's own staff resources.

Disability Issues – Accessibility for user groups considered as part of scheme design.

Legal Implications – Considered as part of scheme development and design.