

**REPORT TO:** Environment and Urban Renewal Policy and Performance Board

**DATE:** 26 February 2020

**REPORTING OFFICER:** Strategic Director – Enterprise, Community and Resources

**PORTFOLIO:** Transportation

**SUBJECT:** Local Cycling and Walking Investment Plan (LCWIP)

**WARDS:** All Wards

## **1.0 PURPOSE OF THE REPORT**

1.1 This report provides an update on the progress of the Liverpool City Region Combined Authority (LCRCA) Local Cycling and Walking Investment Plan (LCWIP). The Board last received an update at its meeting in June 2019.

1.2 The LCRCA LCWIP has been developed locally within the LCR and links with the national Cycling and Walking Investment Strategy.

## **2.0 RECOMMENDATION: That:**

- i) The content of this report is noted;
- ii) The 'Bike Life' launch on the 4 March 2020 (at the Brindley, Runcorn) is welcomed as a prestigious event to publicise the active travel network (paragraph 3.14 – 3.16).

## **3.0 SUPPORTING INFORMATION**

3.1 Promoting active travel, health and wellbeing, tackling climate change, improving air quality, tackling congestion, and access to employment opportunities are all major policy objectives within Halton's strategic plans. The function of the LCWIP is to invest in infrastructure to deliver these objectives.

3.2 The Department for Transport (DfT) Cycling and Walking Investment Strategy (CWIS) was set out in 2017. The Government's ambition for walking and cycling in England is to double cycling activity by 2025, and each year reduce the rate of cyclists killed or seriously injured on English roads. The

strategy also aims to reverse the decline in walking that has been seen over the last few years and encourage cycling and walking to be the natural choices for shorter journeys in every community.

- 3.3 The Government promoted LCWIP development at a local level to encourage cycling and walking to become favoured options for shorter journeys of 1 to 5 miles. By identifying travel corridors where there is an opportunity to change travel behaviours and address issues relating to safety, accessibility, and routing, the overarching aim of the LCWIP is to increase cycling and walking take up for leisure and travel.
- 3.4 DfT have released a progress update on the national Cycling and Walking Investment Strategy (CWIS) in February 2020. This is the first report to Parliament on the progress made towards achieving the aims, targets, objectives and actions set out in the strategy, focusing on the period 2016 to 2019.
- 3.5 The CWIS set out a 4-year action plan outlining key short-term interventions to support delivery of the aims and targets. Of the 26 actions outlined in the CWIS, around half are substantively completed and many of the remaining actions are long-term interventions that will continue until the end of 2020/21, such as the Access Fund, Bikeability, Cycle Rail and third sector behaviour change initiatives and the development of Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plans (LCWIP).
- 3.6 Announcements are awaited from central government on an expected £1bn (over 5 years) national cycling budget allocation that is likely to be targeted at those areas that have high quality plans for cycling and walking developed through the LCWIP. Halton will be well placed to benefit from this funding if it becomes available.

### **Liverpool City Region LCWIP**

- 3.7 The Liverpool City Region LCWIP was approved by the Combined Authority on 4<sup>th</sup> October 2019. It was developed through the Active Travel Group comprising representatives from the six LCR districts, as well as Merseytravel and the Combined Authority. The document is available for viewing on the Active Travel page of the CA website:  
<https://www.liverpoolcityregion-ca.gov.uk/activetravel/>
- 3.8 The LCWIP identifies a network of strategic routes across the city region. These focus on key origin to destination routes that will be used by commuters and people cycling and walking as transport. The routes will be designed to offer a safe and convenient alternative route. The routes have

been prioritised into a programme based on elements such as predicted employment and housing growth, air quality issues and accessibility.

- 3.9 The LCWIP supports a number of policies from the Local Transport Plan 3, and the LCR's Local Journeys Strategy. The LCWIP will deliver some of the Mayoral priorities to reduce transport emissions, and improve the health of the region by providing new and improved cycle and walking corridors to encourage residents and visitors to the City Region to make more sustainable travel choices.
- 3.10 The first phase of the LCWIP programme involves seven routes across the LCR (Green Travel Corridors, Sustainable Urban Development). This scheme is funded by a mixture of European Regional Development Funding (ERDF), Transforming Cities Funding (TCF) and local authority funding. In Halton, this will deliver a green corridor which will include a new cycle way connecting Sandy Lane in North Widnes linking via Victoria Park, the town centre, to the Silver Jubilee Bridge. A planting scheme which will introduce over 20 new trees, attracting insects and nesting birds to the Town Centre area, whilst also improving crossing points for cyclist and pedestrians around Victoria Park, Appleton area.
- 3.11 The second phase of the LCWIP involves two strategic corridors of significant length to provide a full origin to destination journey. One of these routes is Runcorn to Daresbury (more details below) and the other route is in Wirral (Birkenhead to New Brighton). These two routes are currently being designed by consultant Project Centre Ltd, with a view to being funded through TCF LCRCA funding (TCF projects are due for full completion by March 2023).
- 3.12 In December 2019 The Project Centre were appointed to produce the detailed design for the first of the LCWIP schemes being taken forward. The route links into newly improved and newly constructed cycling and walking schemes along the busway and the Bridgewater canal in Runcorn and connects into works proposed for the Runcorn Station Quarter. The ambition is to provide a comprehensive network of walking and cycling routes which are, where possible, segregated from vehicular traffic, attractive and commodious. The first of these connects the town centre (and ultimately the station quarter) from the junction of Leiria Way and High Street onto Sci-Tech Daresbury via Astmoor and Manor Park.
- 3.13 The Project Centre have carried out a number of site visits to ensure that a segregated cycle route can be constructed which compliments the existing infrastructure yet encourages safe and direct access to employment. This will allow the opportunity for employers to recruit and employ talent from a

wider pool of applicants who perhaps live in nearby towns and cities and do not have access to a car.

### **Bike Life Launch**

- 3.14 Picking up on second recommendation from the previous LCWIP PPB report (June 2019), the Borough is proud to be hosting the Sustrans Bike Life Report launch on the 4 March 2020. Liverpool City Region is the first Combined Authority to be included in the Sustrans Bike Life project. The North West launch for Bike Life will take place in Halton (at the Brindley Theatre in Runcorn), due to the cycling and walking improvements going on and planned in the Borough.
- 3.15 Bike Life is the UK's largest independent survey of attitudes to cycling. Inspired by the Copenhagen Bicycle Account, Bike Life is an assessment of city cycling development, including infrastructure, travel behaviour, satisfaction, the impact of cycling, and new initiatives. The project has been engaged across major cities including Manchester, Glasgow and Bristol in previous years. The Liverpool City Region is included in the report for the first time this year.
- 3.16 Simon O'Brien has now been appointed as the Cycling and Walking Commissioner for the Liverpool City Region. His role is to promote and support the advancement of cycling and walking across the city region and he will be meeting with Halton's Transportation Portfolio Holder to discuss the cycling and walking agenda for Halton.

## **4.0 POLICY IMPLICATIONS**

- 4.1 The LCWIP delivers policy objectives contained in Halton's Local Transport Plan 3, Halton's statutory Development Plan, and the priorities of the emerging LCR Mayoral Transport Strategy.

## **5.0 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 5.1 No immediate financial implications as the report is for information only.

## **6.0 IMPLICATIONS FOR THE COUNCIL'S PRIORITIES**

### **6.1 Children & Young People in Halton**

The LCWIP will benefit the children and young people by improving sustainable, affordable access to places of interest whilst connecting communities.

## **6.2 Employment, Learning & Skills in Halton**

The LCWIP will support a well-connected Halton, reducing barriers to accessing employment and training, and by providing safe sustainable links to current and future opportunities.

## **6.3 A Healthy Halton**

The LCWIP acts as enabler for Halton residents to engage in active travel to promote health and well-being and access the variety of open spaces and parks without the use of motorised vehicles. The delivery of the LCWIP will provide greater opportunities to walk or cycle on those shorter journeys which are currently taken by car. A reduction in short car journeys will help reduce congestion and help improve air quality.

## **6.4 A Safer Halton**

The LCWIP will support an inclusive design guide which will ensure that new infrastructure is appropriately designed to provide safe travel routes.

## **6.5 Halton's Urban Renewal**

The LCWIP supports a number of policies within the emerging Delivery and Allocations plan with the aim to deliver sustainable links and creating well connected communities.

## **7.0 RISK ANALYSIS**

7.1 The risks to this strategy are relatively low, politically all parties support a greener, sustainable and healthier country. The risk will evolve from commitment to funding these initiatives in the long term.

## **8.0 EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY ISSUES**

8.1 The introduction of the LCWIP has no negative impacts on protected characteristics, seeks to be inclusive, and promotes community cohesion through enhanced connectivity.

## **9.0 LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS UNDER SECTION 100D OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 1972**

<b>Document</b>	<b>Place of Inspection</b>	<b>Contact Officer</b>
Halton LCWIP	Municipal Building	Iain Dignall
LCR CA LCWIP	Mann Island	Barbara Wade