

# **Guildford Borough Council**

Report to: Executive

Date: 8 August 2024

Ward(s) affected: All

Report of Director: Housing, Communities & Environment

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Report Status: Open

## **Guildford Borough LCWIP Report Endorsement**

### **1 Executive Summary**

- 1.1 Guildford Borough Council (GBC) has been working in partnership with Surrey County Council (SCC) to develop a Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan (LCWIP) for Guildford.
- 1.2 An LCWIP is a key transport planning document that has been defined by the Department for Transport (DfT). It aims to provide a foundation for an increase in the number of people walking, wheeling, and cycling (often referred to as 'active travel').
- 1.3 It is intended to support a strategic approach to identifying cycling and walking improvements needed at the local level.
- 1.4 The Guildford Borough LCWIP considers the full extent of the borough, with an emphasis on links between key trip attractors and destinations that will encourage a greater mode share for walking, wheeling, and cycling within the Borough.
- 1.5 The LCWIP Report is the first stage in the process to provide an improved strategic, evidence-based basis to future investment in active travel in the Borough.

1.6 The end-to- end process is outlined below:

- **Stage 1 - Plan (LCWIP Report), which includes;**
  - **borough-wide network plan**
  - **concept designs for 7 cycle corridors and 7 Core Walking Zones**
- Stage 2 - Feasibility
- Stage 3 - Business case/secure funding
- Stage 4 - Delivery

1.7 This report recommends that the LCWIP Report for Guildford Borough is endorsed by the Executive.

## **2 Recommendation to Executive**

2.1 That the Executive endorses the LCWIP Report.

2.2 That the Joint Strategic Director Economy, Planning and Place be authorised, in consultation with the Lead Councillor with portfolio responsibility for Planning Policy, to make such minor alterations to improve the clarity of the LCWIP as they may deem necessary.

## **3 Reason(s) for Recommendation:**

3.1 Endorsement would enable SCC as the Local Transport Authority to adopt the report through their democratic process by showing Borough 'buy-in' to the report.

3.2 To enable SCC to access DfT funding and other funding streams for active travel infrastructure development.

3.3 To endorse the report would align with the Council's corporate objectives and planning policy on transport, climate change and air quality.

3.4 The endorsement would give greater planning weight to the LCWIP Report at planning determination and provide an updated borough-wide network plan for walking & cycling.

3.5 To enable minor alterations to be made to the LCWIP should they be necessary prior to publication.

## **4 Exemption from Publication**

4.1 No part of the report is exempt from publication.

## **5 Purpose of Report**

To obtain endorsement for the LCWIP Report.

## **6 Strategic Priorities**

- 6.1 The Corporate Strategy 2024-2034 includes the following priority and action:

*Priority: A more sustainable borough - we're committed to becoming a more socially and environmentally responsible borough.*

*Action: Support the delivery of the routes and infrastructure which make up the Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan, in order to increase and improve opportunities for sustainable transport.*

- 6.2 Policy ID9 (5) of the Guildford Borough Local Plan: Development Management Policies 2023 (LPDMP 2023) states:

*Development proposals are expected to have regard to updated plans prepared by Guildford Borough Council and/or Surrey County Council which detail local cycling infrastructure improvements, such as a Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan.*

## **7 Background**

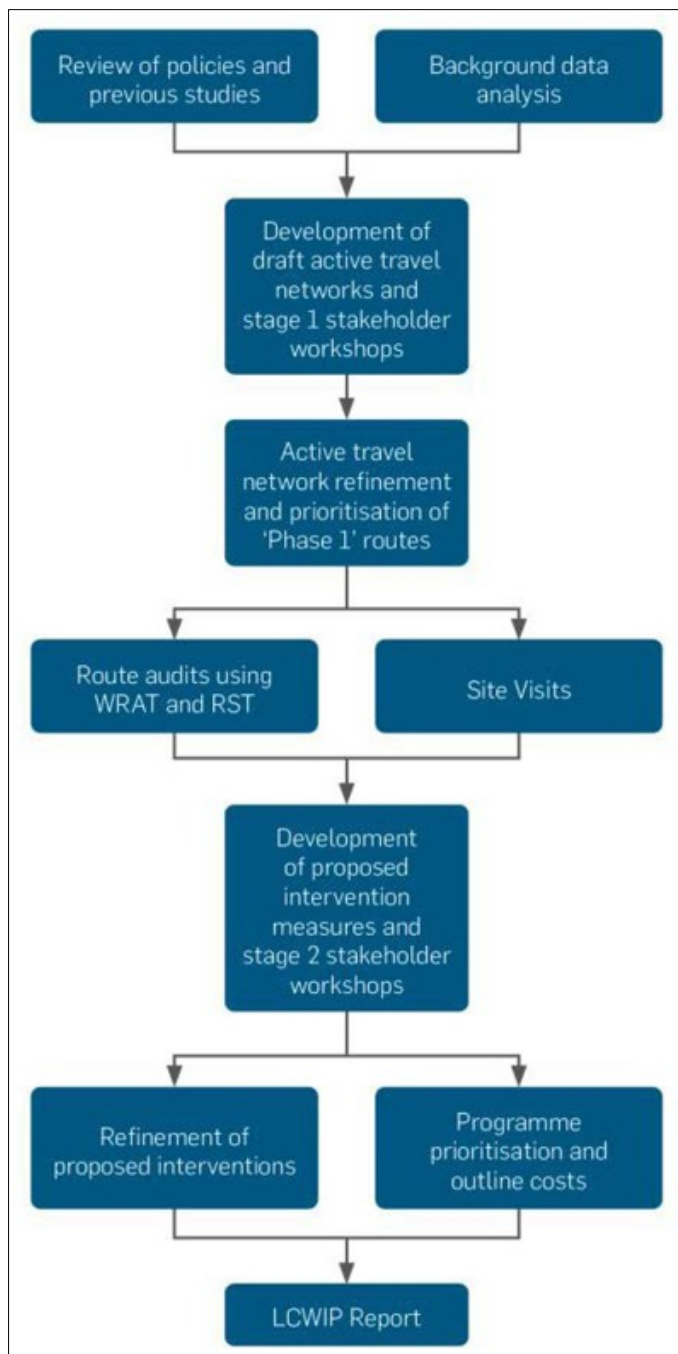
- 7.1 The LCWIP has been developed in line with national guidance for designing walking and cycling infrastructure, including the latest standards and best practice set out in Cycle Infrastructure Design (LTN 1/20), the government's guide for designing cycling infrastructure. The LCWIP is focussed on delivering six key design elements:

- Safety - be safe and feel safe;
- Directness - provide the shortest and fastest ways of travelling from place to place;
- Comfort - good quality, well-maintained, smooth surfaces, adequate width, minimal stopping and starting, and must avoid steep gradients, excessive or uneven slopes and sharp bends, reducing the need to interact with high speed or high volumes of motor traffic;
- Coherence - routes that connect, are simple to follow and are of a consistently high quality;

- Attractiveness - People often value attractive walking and cycling routes with well-designed streets and public spaces, such as parks. Equally, people will avoid routes that cause concerns for their personal safety, such as routes with poor lighting or fast and dangerous traffic;
  - Adaptability - designed to be used by as many people as possible, regardless of age, gender, and disability.
- 7.2 The proposed interventions seek to increase the number of people walking and cycling for short journeys or as part of a longer journey, which will lead to a reduction in short car journeys.
- 7.3 This is considered important to promote health and well-being, reduce congestion and pollution, provide inclusive travel options, and improve the economic vitality of the Borough whilst also balancing the needs of the historic environment.
- 7.4 Guildford Borough Council, through UKSPF funding, have contributed £20,000 to the progression of the LCWIP, as well as officer time. SCC have contributed the majority of the cost and led the procurement process.
- 7.5 The mandate for the GBC expenditure was approved at Executive on 20 March 2023.
- 7.6 The LCWIP network plan updates the established Comprehensive Guildford Borough Cycle Network, which was adopted as part of the LPDMP 2023. The Comprehensive Guildford Borough Cycle Network was itself developed by combining three evidence sources, the Guildford Local Cycling Plan (Surrey County Council, undated circa 2015), Guildford Route Assessments Feasibility Study (Guildford Borough Council, 2020) and the council's concept proposals for the routing of the Sustainable Movement Corridor. The LCWIP looks at the borough as a whole, utilising a standard methodology and addressing gaps in the network outside the urban area. The LCWIP also goes further than Policy ID9, developing plans for walking improvements.
- 7.7 The LCWIP will be adopted by SCC, as the Transport Authority, and it will be further reinforced through County input to the development management process.

- 7.8 Future stages of the LCWIP process (progressing the concept designs to feasibility designs, developing business cases, securing funding and the delivery of schemes) will be led by SCC. Subsequent design stages will include a broader stakeholder and public consultation process and all proposals will be subject to further analysis (e.g. surveys and modelling).
- 7.9 The project has tied in with ongoing projects, such as the work undertaken to develop the Shaping Guildford's Future masterplan and features in the Climate Change Action Plan, Draft Air Quality Action Plan for the Guildford Town Centre Air Quality Management Area and 2023 Air Quality Annual Status Report.
- 7.10 Benefits are intended to be wide ranging including on climate change, air quality and public health.
- 7.11 The core 'day-to-day' project team included SCC officers, GBC officers and SCC's consultants.
- 7.12 The internal GBC steering group also included Executive Members and officers from Corporate Programmes, Environmental Health, and Climate Change.
- 7.13 Officers from Public Health and Parks & Countryside Development have also contributed to the process.

7.14 The flow chart below outlines the LCWIP process leading up to the issue of the report for consideration:



7.15 Further detailed information on the process and technical analyses is included in the report itself for review.

## 8 Consultations

8.1 The process has not been subject to statutory consultation but significant, proactive engagement with representatives and the community has taken place:

- 2 x initial briefing sessions - for elected GBC/SCC/Parish Council Members and for external stakeholders;
- 5 x Stage 1 engagement sessions – with internal officers, elected GBC/SCC/Parish Council Members, external stakeholders (1 in person and 1 online) and neighbouring authorities;
- 5 x Stage 2 engagement sessions – with internal officers, elected GBC/SCC/Parish Council Members, external stakeholders (1 in person and 1 online) and neighbouring authorities;
- Focussed follow-up responses and meetings with elected GBC/SCC/Parish members & interest groups;
- SCC's Commonplace platform was also utilised to allow the general public to register comments related to walking and cycling improvements they wished to see in their area. Inputs from this platform have been considered as an integral part of the process.

## **9 Key Risks**

9.1 None identified.

## **10 Financial Implications**

10.1 To date, it is understood that other Boroughs and Districts in Surrey have contributed funds towards the next step of the LCWIP process either following the report or through prior approval.

10.2 At present, Guildford Borough Council has no such funds approved and no standing agreement with SCC to do so.

10.3 In order to provide clarity, the proposed endorsement of the LCWIP Report does not represent approval of any further funding from GBC towards the LCWIP process.

## **11 Legal Implications**

11.1 As identified above, Policy ID9 provides that development proposals are expected to have regard to updated plans, including an LCWIP. The LCWIP may therefore be considered as part of relevant planning applications.

11.2 Site-specific legal issues may need to be considered at a later date, should the proposed interventions be implemented.

## **12 Human Resource Implications**

None identified.

## **13 Equality and Diversity Implications**

There are no direct equality, diversity, or inclusion implications in this report however, planning to enable low cost, accessible options for active travel intend to lead to positive equality, diversity, and inclusion outcomes. Individual scheme proposals will be subject to an Equality Impact Assessment.

## **14 Climate Change/Sustainability Implications**

A positive impact on climate change and sustainability is expected. The LCWIP Report gives a high-level indication of the uplift in walking and cycling trips which could be achieved upon the delivery of the interventions identified at concept design stage. Future design stages will look at additional elements, including the carbon intensity of construction.

## **15 Summary of Options**

- 15.1 Endorse the LCWIP Report. This would enable SCC to adopt the report through their democratic process and allow the report to be used in the development management process; or
- 15.2 Do not endorse the LCWIP Report. This may delay the potential for future investment in walking and cycling.

## **16 Conclusion**

- 16.1 Guildford Borough Council (GBC) has been working in partnership with Surrey County Council (SCC) to develop a Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan (LCWIP) for Guildford.
- 16.2 An LCWIP is a key transport planning document that has been defined by the Department for Transport (DfT). It aims to provide a foundation for an increase in the number of people walking, wheeling, and cycling.
- 16.3 This report recommends that the LCWIP Report for Guildford Borough is endorsed by the Executive.
- 16.4 To endorse the report would align with the Council's corporate objectives and planning policy.



- 16.5 Endorsement would also give greater planning weight to the LCWIP Report at planning determination and provide an updated borough-wide strategy for walking & cycling.
- 16.6 The process has not been subject to statutory consultation but significant, proactive engagement with representatives and the community has taken place.
- 16.7 The proposed endorsement of the LCWIP Report does not represent approval of any further funding from GBC towards the LCWIP process.
- 16.8 Planning to enable low cost, accessible active travel intends to lead to positive equality, diversity, and inclusion outcomes.

## **17 Background Papers**

[Guildford's UK Shared Prosperity Fund and Rural England Prosperity Fund – Executive Report](#)

## **18 Appendices**

[Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan - Guildford Borough Council](#)