

Environment and Sustainability Committee



Date of meeting 5 September 2022

Title	Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan (LCWIP)
Purpose of the report	To note Phase 1 LCWIP report Agree to move to Phase 2
Report Author	Sandy Muirhead Group Head Commissioning and Transformation
Ward(s) Affected	All Wards
Exempt	No
Exemption Reason	
Corporate Priority	Community Environment
Recommendations	Committee is asked to: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Note the Phase 1 LCWIP report• To agree moving to Phase 2 to further define schemes for cycling and walking within the Borough of Spelthorne at a cost of £175k
Reason for Recommendation	Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plans provide residents with the opportunity to use safe routes for cycling and walking with associated climate change and health benefits. Therefore, it is important for the Council to seek opportunities for introducing safe routes via best practice plans.

1. Summary of the report

- 1.1 This report seeks to inform members of the outcomes of the Phase 1 feasibility study for the Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan (LCWIP) (Appendix 1). The work was undertaken to identify potential routes in Spelthorne for improved cycling and walking facilities.

- 1.2 LCWIPs are blueprints to increase walking and cycling routes. They have benefits in terms of modal shift, health, and well-being of residents especially in helping to reducing the impacts of climate change but also contributing to health and wellbeing. This report is for noting the results of the feasibility

study and agreeing progression to the next phase for which monies were agreed to be allocated to Phase 2 in May 2021. To note: -

- LCWIPs form part of DfT's current investment strategy for cycling and walking to help deliver the Government's aim of doubling cycling by 2025
- LCWIPs are a new, strategic approach to identifying cycling and walking improvements required at the local level
- Best practice evidence-led method for local authorities to plan both cycling and walking infrastructure.
- Plans enable a long-term approach to developing local cycling and walking networks, ideally over a 10-year period

1.3 Key outputs from an LCWIP plan are: -

- A prioritised network plan for walking and cycling preferred routes and core zones for further development
- A prioritised programme of infrastructure improvements for future investment
- To make the case for future funding for walking and cycling infrastructure

1.4 The report in Appendix 1 delivers the above with suggested routes identified for focus in Phase 2.

2. Key issues

2.1 A report went to Cabinet in May 2021

<https://democracy.spelthorne.gov.uk/documents/s34408/LCWIPreportv3%2029042021%20Cabinet.pdf> and it was agreed to undertake the LCWIP, paying £20k towards a Phase 1 feasibility study, results of which are in Appendix 1, and £175k towards Phase 2. It was agreed a potential second phase would be funded from Spelthorne's Surrey Infrastructure Feasibility Study Fund.

2.2 The work on Phase 1 was undertaken by consultants specialising in this field and details of the methodology used are given in the report (Appendix 1). The work involved on the ground assessments, consultation with residents and key groups e.g., cycling. Both key groups and Councillors were invited to workshops to discuss potential routes and in Ashford Councillors met the team undertaking the work. Strategic planning and other officers have been involved in the development of the work and relevant officers across the Council consulted and kept informed.

2.3 The LCWIP ties into some wider issues including the Wider Staines Transport Package and leisure proposals for the River Thames scheme which includes walking and cycling routes so providing health and well-being benefits as well as reducing car use which helps with emission reductions.

- 2.4 A summary of key findings on cycling is found from Pages 100 to 113 and for walking from pages 133 to 143 of the report. As a result of the study 5 cycle routes and 3 walking routes were identified for further development as covered in Chapter 9. The routes selected were prioritised by quantifying a total score based on stakeholder input, potential usage, design, and access.
- 2.5 The study has alluded to the Local Plan and River Thames scheme in its analysis but also the climate change and health and well-being strategies with priorities to reducing emissions in an air quality management area. However, consideration still needs to be given as to whether the schemes suggested are likely to provide the most benefit to the Borough.
- 2.6 If schemes are developed under a Phase 2 programme this can be of benefit so that should opportunities arise for funding the projects proposed, they are in a state ready to submit. This can be of value given many Government scheme applications have short deadlines.
- 2.7 It should be noted the costs provided in the report on cycling and walking improvements are only indicative of future costs.

3. Options analysis and proposal

3.1 Option one

- 3.2 To consider the attached Phase 1 feasibility report and consider the routes proposed to move to a more detailed analysis (Phase 2) including assessment of scheme costs as proposed in section 9 of the report (Appendix 1). This will enable the Council to investigate those options which will help deliver the broad aspirations in the Council Corporate Plan and would align with policies within the emerging Local Plan, the recently adopted Health and Wellbeing Strategy and the proposed Climate Change Strategy (which is being considered elsewhere on this agenda).

3.3 This is the preferred option

3.4 Option two

- 3.5 The committee could decide that having read the phase one LCWIP report (attached) that they do not wish to progress and commit any further monies for phase 2. Not to move forward to the next stage restricts the Borough's ability to address climate change and provide safer routes to encourage cycling and walking with associated health and wellbeing benefits. This would be at odds with all the strategies referred to above. If this option is agreed then the Council would need to consider how it wishes to spend the allocated money (£175k) from the Spelthorne Surrey Infrastructure Fund (e.g. on different infrastructure project(s)).

- 3.6 This is not recommended.

Option three

- 3.7 The committee could decide that whilst they agree with the principles set out in the phase one report, that they wish to amend or re-prioritise those project's which have been highlighted to move forwards to the next stage. This would delay the rollout of phase 2 by a significant period of time. Spelthorne has been prioritised by SCC in terms of its LCWIP work as a result

of the opportunities that arise from the widening of the Lower Thames. Any delays would put this at risk.

3.8 This is not recommended,

4. Financial implications

4.1 The first phase feasibility study for the LCWIP was funded from the Green Initiatives Fund. The original Cabinet report in May 2021 proposed the second phase of £175k was funded from the Spelthorne's Surrey Infrastructure Feasibility Fund.

4.2 The Council has committed to the Surrey Infrastructure Feasibility Fund system and ring fenced £210k. It is a one-off sum, not a rolling commitment. With the find to be topped up by SCC and EM3 The fund has a gearing ratio of 1:0.86. For every £1 which Spelthorne Borough Council invest in the fund the Council will receive £1.86 for scheme development due to investment from Surrey County Council and Enterprise M3 LEP (EM3). In total this should equate to £390k of funds.

4.3 Phase 2 may identify schemes requiring investment, which could cost overall a minimum £7-8M, ranging up to a maximum of £20M over the 10-year life of the plan. There is an expectation that Spelthorne would need to contribute capital match funding in the order of £2m to 5m. This assumes that Spelthorne contribute 25%, the County contribute 25% and the remaining 50% comes from central government grants. The 50/50 split between central and local government is standard on all capital development projects However, the Council needs to be aware that if we look for funding from the Levelling Up Fund there is a risk that the funding from Central Government could be as low as 25%, and we and Surrey would be expected to fund the remainder. In that case, the worst-case scenario if we were to commit fully to a programme costing £20m. would be £7.5m. It is worth bearing in mind however that the LWCIP will be deliberately designed so that it can be 'chunked' up into smaller elements so that Councils can prioritise their spend if they cannot commit to the whole plan

4.4 So, the actual amounts will depend on the scale and number of schemes identified by the feasibility study and until the initial work is complete the overall potential cost can only be indicative. Moving to Phase 2 will assist in defining costs of individual schemes and therefore likely future costs to the Council.

5. Risk considerations

5.1 The key risks relate to not moving forward with Phase 2 as it would prevent us from addressing climate change and providing health benefits to Borough residents by providing safe alternative routes to using the car. There are potential longer term risks related to capital spend for projects on the ground but until costs are known in detail this risk cannot be fully assessed.

6. Legal considerations

6.1 There will be a need for agreements and contracts in due course if we move forward to Phase 2 and subsequent projects.

7. Other considerations

7.1 Within Phase 2 there will further consultation with Councillors and residents. Any walking and cycling opportunities would provide benefits to all residents through providing a safer environment for all residents to walk or cycle. Funding of schemes also needs to be monitored to ensure their development is not to the detriment of ongoing maintenance of the highway and also that highways funds are available to maintain any new routes.

8. Equality and Diversity

8.1 Schemes developed under the LWCIP programme would have to undertake an equality and diversity impact assessment to ensure they are not discriminatory.

9. Sustainability/Climate Change Implications

9.1 The proposal by encouraging walking and cycling reduces the use of cars thus improving air quality and walking and cycling helps improve health, both physical and mental.

10. Timetable for implementation

10.1 Detailed timetable to be agreed with Surrey County Council if agreed to move forward on Phase 2.

11. Contact

11.1 Sandy Muirhead Group Head Commissioning and Transformation.

Background papers: There are none.

Appendices:

Appendix 1 Spelthorne Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan Phase 1