

The Vale of Glamorgan Council

Cabinet Meeting: 5 June, 2017

Report of the Cabinet Member for Neighbourhood Services and Transport

Active Travel

Purpose of the Report

1. To advise Cabinet of the progress made in implementing the Direction from the Welsh Government (WG) which placed duties upon the Council to follow specific processes and procedures to deliver the requirements of the Active Travel (Wales) Act 2013.
2. To seek approval from Cabinet to deliver the requirements of the Act, including a consultation process on the proposed Integrated Network Maps (INMs) within the timescales set out in this report.

Recommendations

1. That Cabinet endorses the Draft Active Travel Maps as attached at [Appendix 2](#).
2. That Cabinet approves the way forward as set out in this Report including commencing a formal consultation on the Draft INMs by 15th June 2017.
3. That the Scrutiny Committee (Environment and Regeneration), Community Liaison Committee and Youth Cabinet are consulted on the Draft INMs as part of the formal consultation process.
4. That a further Report is presented to Cabinet in Autumn 2017 outlining the results of the Consultation process and to consider the submission of the final INMs to WG by 3rd November 2017.

Reasons for the Recommendations

1. To update Cabinet on the progress made in accordance with the criteria for Active Travel walking & cycling routes.
2. To enable the Council to fulfil its legal obligations within the specified timescale.
3. To ensure that these forums are consulted, their views considered and that WG deadlines are met.
4. To allow Cabinet to consider the results of the consultation process and approve the final maps before 3rd November 2017.

Background

3. In September 2014, the WG introduced the Active Travel (Wales) Act 2013 (hereafter the "Act"). This was reported to Cabinet on 3rd November 2014 (minute C2516 refers).
4. The Act makes it a legal requirement for Local Authorities in Wales to map and plan for suitable routes for Active Travel within certain settlements as specified by WG.
5. The deadline for submission of the existing route maps was originally 25th September 2015, but the then Minister for Economy, Science and Transport extended this date to 22nd January 2016. The reason for the extension was to enable Councils to fully engage the public through a three month consultation period that was predominantly within school term time there-by enabling children and young people to have the opportunity to become fully engaged in the process.
6. The Existing Route Maps were approved by WG on 12th August 2016.
7. The next stage of the Active Travel process is to produce INMs in accordance with WG's specific Guidance. The INM stages to be followed include the following:
 - Gather Information
 - Journey Mapping
 - Route Assessment
 - Draft INM & Scheme Identification
 - Validation
 - Final Plan & Prioritisation
 - Submission deadline for INM and revised ERM: 03 November 2017
8. The settlements identified in the Vale of Glamorgan Active Travel area by Welsh Government include Cowbridge, Barry, Rhoose, Llantwit Major, Penarth and Dinas Powys.

Relevant Issues and Options

The Requirements of the Act

9. The Act requires two maps to be produced, the existing route maps and the integrated network map. The existing route maps show the routes within the designated areas that are suitable and appropriate for making active travel journeys. These routes could be on road, shared, segregated, or be traffic-free. They can be for walkers or cyclists, or both. They will also show crossing points and the facilities that exist to support active travel on these routes, including cycle shelters / parking / storage and public toilets. The existing route maps need to be accompanied by a statement of the extent to which routes do not meet the standards set out in the Design Guidance.
10. The existing route maps are primarily intended to inform the public of the safe and suitable routes for active travel. The public will need to have confidence that the routes on the maps are suitable for use, that the routes will not stop abruptly and generally that the routes meet the standards set out in the Design Guidance. The maps are intended to give pedestrians and cyclists the information that they require in order to make a decision about how and where to travel. However, the existing

route maps are also a valuable data source for local authorities in managing their active travel routes.

11. The criteria that Active Travel routes have to meet are extremely high and do not reflect the Council's own maintenance standards, or that of the standards that Councils are legally bound to consider when carrying out risk assessments on walked routes to school. Therefore, a route that is deemed available as an appropriate walking route to school, in accordance with the Learner Travel Wales Measure, may not meet the criteria as an Active Travel Route. Likewise, the Council has its own standards for roads or footways when deciding whether it requires maintenance works to be carried out. Hence, the routes for Active Travel reflect WG's aspirations for providing new facilities, but are all heavily dependent on available funding to deliver such routes.
12. The routes are assessed using a scoring mechanism and there may be exception statements that can be used to allow a route to be an Active Travel route without it meeting all of the criteria in the Guidance. Each route has to be assessed separately, which is a long lengthy and resource intensive process. The scoring pass rate to enable a route to be considered an Active Travel route for both walking and cycling, is 70%.
13. The INMs are a Plan for the future. They include routes that are currently used but may not meet the standard of Active Travel routes currently, or they could be routes that do not currently exist but that have been identified within other strategic Plans, or have been identified through the consultation process.
14. The Act requires that the maps are submitted to the Welsh Ministers for approval. The updated existing route maps and the INMs must be submitted to WG by 3rd November 2017 to comply with the Act.

The Draft Active Travel Maps

15. To enable the Council to deliver the requirements of the Act, the Council commissioned Sustrans to assist with undertaking some of the route assessment work required. They have carried out assessments on 28 routes in Barry ([Appendix 1](#) refers). Officers will be carrying out further assessments throughout the other Built Up Areas as part of the process during the consultation period.
16. Pre-consultation has been carried out at various locations during February / March 2017 and many schools have been consulted as part of the process to enable officers to compile maps to include potential routes for consideration during the consultation ([Appendix 2](#) refers).
17. Further routes may be considered as part of the consultation process for both walking and cycling, and these routes can be determined at a future date.

Consultation Process

18. In line with WG requirements, it is proposed to carry out an extensive 12 week consultation process with the public on the proposed maps as identified at [Appendix 2](#). The consultation process will also allow for other routes to be put forward which have not been considered by the Council. However, in order to meet the WG's deadline of 3rd November 2017 for submission of the final Active Travel Maps, it is necessary to commence this formal consultation no later than 15th June 2017. Therefore in order to meet this challenging deadline it is proposed to consult with the Council's Environment and Regeneration Scrutiny Committee, Community Liaison Committee and the Youth Cabinet as part of the formal consultation process

following Cabinet approval of this Report. The results of the consultation process and the final proposed active travel maps will then be presented to a meeting of the Council's Cabinet in Autumn 2017. This way, the Council will be able to meet the consultation requirements set by WG and meet the deadline of 3rd November 2017.

Resource Implications (Financial and Employment)

19. Elements of the work to comply with the actions required to deliver the duties within the Active Travel (Wales) Act 2013 within the timescales prescribed over the plan period will need to receive additional resource investment by the Council, through Grant, developer contributions and existing staff resources. This work will be a key priority for the Visible Services and Transport Division.
20. Funding to create and consult on the maps required as part of the duty in the Act has been provided by the Welsh Government to the sum of £14,000 in 2015/16, £9,000 in 2016/17 and £9,000 in 2017 /18 as part of the Local Transport Fund. This funding has been utilised fully to progress the works, including contracting Sustrans to carry out an audit of some of the routes and to assess these routes against the Active Travel criteria. The duty to secure new and improved routes and facilities for walkers and cyclists will be funded by directing current WG walking and cycling spend at making improvements to the routes identified on the integrated network maps. In advance of the creation of the integrated network maps, local authorities continue to receive funding to deliver the active travel schemes set out in their local transport plans. The costs of enhancing walking and cycling facilities in new road schemes will need to be considered as part of individual schemes, and planned for accordingly.
21. Local authorities are encouraged to seek additional sources of funding to maximise the improvements they can make, for example by developing partnerships with the private sector to support active travel in their area. This could be in the form of corporate sponsorship of schemes and infrastructure through advertising on the maps, which is already done on many tourist maps and/or through working with local employers to promote walking and cycling amongst their staff.
22. The focus of active travel is on walking and cycling as a mode of transport rather than as a leisure activity. However, some routes and facilities for active travel might also encourage recreational walking and cycling. In these cases, it is expected by WG that local authorities will look for opportunities to draw on funding for leisure, tourism or sports facilities.

Sustainability and Climate Change Implications

23. Walking and cycling routes are important to reduce single occupancy car movements, therefore having a positive impact on sustainability and climate change.
24. There is a legal duty on Welsh Ministers within the Measure to promote sustainable measures of travel.

Legal Implications (to Include Human Rights Implications)

25. The guidance is published by the Welsh Ministers under sections 3(4), 4(5), 5(2) and 7(2) of the Act. The Delivery Guidance is one of two guidance documents issued under the Act. The other guidance document is the Design Guidance, which deals with technical standards for active travel routes and facilities. The Design Guidance will be essential to local authorities' decisions on whether a route is appropriate for active travel, and what steps should be taken to improve their routes.

26. Parts of the Delivery Guidance will be of relevance to the Welsh Ministers, who also have duties under the Act, and other delivery partners. However, the primary audience is local authority officers within transport, rights of way, geographic information and technology, education, health, planning and other areas that are connected to active travel.
27. When delivering walking and cycling schemes, compliance is needed with the relevant Highways, Transport and Education Act measures. There is a duty on local authorities to comply with the current Regional Transport Planning (Wales) 2006 Act and Guidance to Local Transport Authorities legislation.
28. WG has made sustainable development its central organising principle. The Well-being of Future Generations Act became law on 29th April 2015, which aims to strengthen the existing governance arrangements for improving the wellbeing of Wales.

Crime and Disorder Implications

29. It is anticipated that the number of road traffic accidents in the Vale, particularly those involving children and young people, will be reduced as a consequence of delivering the initiatives within the Active Travel (Wales) Act 2013. A safe and accessible transport network will have a positive impact on crime and disorder.

Equal Opportunities Implications (to include Welsh Language issues)

30. The Guidance deals with Welsh Language and English Language matters equally.
31. Activities to develop maps, and to create new or improved active travel routes and facilities, will affect some groups differently than others. To meet the duties under the Equalities Act 2010, local authorities must give consideration to these different effects and whether they can be minimised or removed. The maps need to show any obstacles along routes clearly to ensure that individuals can make an informed choice about the most appropriate route for them.
32. There is a need to ensure that in all the stages of preparing and publishing the maps as many people as reasonably possible can access both the maps and the consultation.

Corporate/Service Objectives

33. The schemes that will be identified within the Active Travel (Wales) Act 2013, once delivered, will improve the quality of life for residents and visitors in the Vale.
34. The provision of safe pedestrian and cycling routes provides alternative means of travel, and ensures good accessibility for those without access to private transport. This links with the Council's objectives for social wellbeing and tackling disadvantages and is recognised in the Visible Services and Transport Service Plan.

Policy Framework and Budget

35. This is a matter for Executive decision by Cabinet.

Consultation (including Ward Member Consultation)

36. Ward Members have not been consulted as this report affects all Wards.

Relevant Scrutiny Committee

37. Environment and Regeneration.

Background Papers

None.

Contact Officer

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Officers Consulted

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Head of Regeneration and Planning
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Responsible Officer:

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