

## **BARNSELY METROPOLITAN BOROUGH COUNCIL**

**This matter is not a Key Decision within the Council's definition and has not been included in the relevant Forward Plan**

**Report of Executive Director, Place**

### **Barnsley Active Travel Strategy 2019-2033**

#### **1. Purpose of the Report**

- 1.1 To seek Members approval to adopt the Barnsley Active Travel Strategy 2019 - 2033. This is appended to the report in Appendix 1.

#### **2. Recommendation**

##### **2.1 It is recommended that:**

- 2.1 Members adopt the Barnsley Active Travel Strategy 2019-2033 as set out in Appendix 1;**

#### **3. Introduction**

- 3.1 Active travel via walking and cycling is vital to support economic growth and improve the quality of life for Barnsley's residents. This document sets out Barnsley Metropolitan Borough Council's (BMBC) vision and key outcomes it wants to achieve, as well as the main barriers to engaging and participating in active travel and the key actions needed to be achieved to overcome these barriers.

- 3.2 In Barnsley, the importance of active travel is growing due to three main reasons:

1. The BMBC Local Plan envisages just over 21,000 new homes being built and a significant expansion of the local economy by 2033, which will see Barnsley's economy narrow the gap with our neighbours in the Yorkshire and Humber region and nationally.
2. Increasing concern about levels of excess weight/obesity, poor health outcomes and health inequalities across all sections of the population, which have grown on the local and national agenda. The role that sedentary lifestyles play in obesity has stimulated interest in promoting active travel.
3. In May 2018, the Sheffield City Region (SCR) saw the election of its first Mayor. The elected Mayor has committed in their manifesto to the appointment of an active travel commissioner to work with local authorities in the city region to promote health, the benefits of walking and cycling and ensure new planned routes properly integrate with other forms of transport.

3.3 The vision of this Strategy is to *“create a borough where active travel is a preferred choice, supported by a connected network of high quality, safe and inviting cycle routes and footpaths for all people to use”*. Achieving this vision, will assist the Barnsley economy to grow and promote social inclusion whilst mitigating potential increases in congestion and air pollution, tackle poor health outcomes and inequalities and integrate with and complement other sustainable forms of public transport. By achieving this vision the Strategy will align with the BMBC and SCR Transport Strategies, the BMBC Health Strategy and the BMBC draft Local Plan.

3.4 Following adoption of this Strategy, work will begin on an Implementation Plan, which will set out specific interventions to help deliver the vision and outcomes of this Strategy. These interventions will align with the three actions in the Executive Summary on page 1. The Implementation Plan will cover a 5 year period and will be refreshed in 2024.

#### 4. **Proposal and Justification**

4.1 Achieving our vision, leading to more people walking and cycling will contribute to the following outcomes:

- Improved health and reduced health inequalities by introducing active travel into everyday life;
- Increased economic growth and productivity leading to higher living standards;
- Reduced congestion on the highway network by providing better travel choices;
- Improved Air Quality;
- Safer active travel routes

4.2 These outcomes will be realised by delivering the following actions:

Action 1 – Integrating Active Travel into the Planning Process;

Action 2 – Maintaining and Expanding our Active Travel Routes;

Action 3 – Supporting Active Travel in the Community.

4.3 The economic potential stems both from the direct benefits of having more people walking and cycling and the wider indirect benefits to the economy and health services. Barnsley hosted the Criterium races in 2017 and 2018 and also a stage of the Tour de Yorkshire in 2018. BMBC is also trying to boost Barnsley’s tourist and visitor attraction sectors. Attracting more people into the town centre and to these visitor attractions will boost footfall and associated spend to the benefit of businesses and create additional employment opportunities.

- 4.4 The indirect economic benefits stem from the boost to productivity and the tackling of social exclusion. The current transport system in Barnsley, although adequately serving our present needs does face a number of issues going forward. On many of our key routes, congestion levels are increasing. Not only does this impact on car users, it also impacts on the commercial viability of our bus network, with increased congestion leading to poor bus journey times, as well poor punctuality and reliability issues. Several bus services which used to serve various parts of the borough are no longer running due to the lack of commercial viability.
- 4.5 The economic aspirations in our draft Local Plan may be undermined, if employment opportunities appear, but people are not able to access those jobs due to lack of available transport, or if our roads becomes gridlocked, causing significant delays.
- 4.6 Active travel is part of a wholesale package, which includes sustainable transport to promote modal shift and provide a realistic alternative to the private motor car.
- 4.7 Poor health outcomes and health inequalities in Barnsley are also a key driver for promoting active travel. The chief medical officer of England advises that adults between the ages of 19 and 64 should be active daily and achieve up to 150 mins of moderate activity per week. However, in Barnsley in 2018, only 60.9% achieve this level. In addition, levels of obesity are a growing problem, which is also reflected in regional and national levels. In Barnsley, over 73% of adults, 18% of 4 to 5 year olds and 32% of 10-11 year olds are classed as overweight or obese. Children who are overweight or obese are also more likely to carry this on into adulthood, which potentially leads to poor health outcomes that are likely to increase the likelihood of Type 2 diabetes, dementia, cancer and heart disease. Tackling these health issues have direct and indirect financial costs arising from treatment for both Local Authorities and the National Health Service (NHS).
- 4.8 These health problems, although affecting the whole of the Barnsley borough, do tend to have a greater proportional impact on the poorest areas in Barnsley. Although average life expectancy in Barnsley at birth for men is 77.9 years, in Penistone East this is 82 years, while for men in Dearne North it is only 75.3 years. For women, the difference is even greater, with average life expectancy being 81.6 years, with Penistone East being 86.1 years and Wombwell being only 78.6 years.
- 4.9 Congestion is also a significant source of air pollution. Barnsley has six Air Quality Management Areas (AQMA's), which are defined as having air quality which falls below acceptable national standards. Associated health problems caused by poor air quality include chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD), heart disease and lung cancer, which like the health impacts of obesity and sedentary lifestyles, tend to affect the most vulnerable in society, such as children, the elderly and those on low incomes.

#### Active Travel Study

- 4.10 In early 2018, the BMBC public health team commissioned Sustrans to undertake work on an Active Travel Study, the purpose of which was to provide an evidence base to feed into the Active Travel Strategy. As part of this Study, existing travel patterns in Barnsley were reviewed, surveys conducted which captured people's attitudes, motivations and barriers to active travel, conducted modelling, utilised the Propensity to Cycle Tool (PCT) which identified the area's most likely to benefit from improvements to active travel infrastructure and Route Concept Design along 11 routes to illustrate potential areas for investment.
- 4.11 What the surveys indicated, were that the main barriers to participating in active travel are associated with the high cost of cycling and the lack of access to a bicycle, closely followed by safety concerns and the lack of cycling infrastructure, as well as concerns regarding commuting time and distance. Other barriers relate to the weather and people's concerns about their levels of personal fitness and disabilities.
- 4.12 These barriers contribute to the current state of transport use in Barnsley at the present time. Survey data as presented in Figure 1, shows that 60% of respondents commute as a car driver to places of employment or study, whereas the figure for active travel is 36%. Those travelling via public transport account for 21%.
- 4.13 Figure 4 sets out the percentage of children actively travelling to school over the 10 years between 2008 and 2018. A comparison of this decade shows the proportion of primary school pupils walking to school has held steady over the last 10 years, at just under 60%. There has however been a steady decline in the numbers of secondary school pupils walking to school, which has fallen from 42.8% to just over 30%. Cycling levels for both primary and secondary school pupils have remained at low levels throughout the decade.
- 4.14 The Active Travel Study has indicated the potential for increasing numbers engaged in active travel if the right hard and soft interventions were implemented. Figure 2 shows that 41% of respondents travel less than 5 miles to work or employment, with that figure jumping to 68% of respondents travelling less than 10 miles. In addition, as shown in Figure 3, the journey time for 40% of respondents is less than 20 mins, while 80% of respondents have a commute of 40 mins for less. Although it may not be feasible for all these to be converted to active travel, these are the types of journey's, which are short and quick, which are most likely to achieve modal shift or incorporate active travel as part of the journey and combine this with other forms of sustainable transport.
- 4.15 To achieve our vision and encourage modal shift to active travel, this Active Travel Strategy will be delivered in partnership, with many of the proposed interventions to be presented in the Implementation Plan being delivered via external sources of funding. This will provide an opportunity to build upon and strengthen existing partnership working and deliver our economic and public health aspirations in partnership with the City Region.

## **5. Consideration of Alternative Approaches**

5.1 This Strategy sets out BMBC's vision, key outcomes and actions for active travel in Barnsley which will complement both the BMBC and draft SCR Transport Strategies. Not adopting this Strategy will affect the level of buy-in and support BMBC can expect to help deliver its sustainable transport aspirations, which in turn could compromise the Borough's economic and public health aspirations.

5.2 Not adopting the Strategy will also make it difficult for BMBC to engage with the Active Travel Commissioner appointed by the SCR Mayor and integrate active travel into the wider sustainable transport network.

## 6. **Implications for Local People/Service Providers**

6.1 Good quality active travel links which complement our sustainable transport network are essential to the quality of life of Barnsley's citizens, with transport being vital to the economic growth and development of the borough. This Strategy will help to mitigate growing congestion and encourage Barnsley's population to become more active to promote and improve levels of public health.

## 7. **Financial Implications**

7.1 Consultations have taken place with representatives of the Service Director – Finance (S151 Officer).

7.2 Whilst there are no direct financial implications for the Authority from the adoption of the Strategy, there will clearly be a range of financial "asks" as the interventions to support the Strategy are developed. Further reports will therefore be submitted to Cabinet for consideration when these are more fully formed.

7.3 As indicated in the Strategy (chapter 7) opportunities for funding exist across a range of external sources (e.g. Sheffield City Region Growth Fund, SY Transport Plan) as well as from internal sources such as Public Health Grant. Officers will endeavour to ensure that these opportunities are effectively optimised as part of the intervention development process.

## 8. **Employee Implications**

8.1 There are no immediate employee implications associated with this report, however there will be some implications in terms of workload for Design/Transportation and Public Health staff within the Place and Public Health directorates once the Implementation Plan is adopted.

## 9. **Legal Implications**

9.1 None arising from this report.

## 10. **Customer and Digital Implications**

10.1 None directly arising from this report, however as part of the Implementation Plan the use of digital media and digital interventions may be explored and where appropriate implemented.

## 11. **Communications Implications**

11.1 The interventions used to deliver our outcomes and actions will require the support and assistance of corporate communications, who will assist and advise on promotion and marketing.

## 12. **Consultations**

12.1 Executive Director Place

Executive Director Public Health

DMT Place

DMT Public Health

SMT (Senior Management Team)

Sustrans

BMBC Highways DC

BMBC Public Health

## 13. **The Corporate Plan and the Council's Performance Management Framework**

13.1 This Strategy will help achieve the ambitions of the Corporate Plan by implementing a range of interventions designed to make the people of Barnsley more active, thereby contributing to a thriving and vibrant economy, helping people achieving their potential and building strong and resilient communities.

## 14. **Promoting Equality, Diversity and Social Inclusion**

14.1 This Strategy will support interventions that ensure good accessibility of development and promotes good active travel links.

14.2 This Strategy sets out a vision of ensuring that employment and leisure opportunities as well as essential facilities such as health, training and education are accessible via active travel and that these facilities can be used by all.

14.3 An Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) has been started so we can ensure the benefits of this strategy can be felt by all sections of the community. It has so far identified the need to better understand the specific barriers that some sections of the community face which might limit their active travel choices, for example disabled people, older people, young people and those on low

incomes. It proposes we consider what data we have on these barriers already and consult with these groups so we can identify the best solutions to enable and encourage them to make active travel choices. The EIA will continue to be updated as the strategy is implemented.

## 15. **Tackling the Impact of Poverty**

- 15.1 An underlying cause of poverty can be the inability to access employment opportunities wherever they may arise. This can be due to the lack of a car, or the lack of public transport provision. Boosting active travel will provide additional avenues to access employment. Indirect benefits to the economy from mitigating congestion and boosting the productivity of the Barnsley economy will help boost incomes and reduce poverty.

## 16. **Tackling Health Inequalities**

- 16.1 This Strategy is fully aligned with the BMBC/SCR Transport Strategies and BMBC Public Health Strategy. Achieving the main outcomes as set out in this document and implementing active travel interventions will boost the health of the Barnsley population and reduce health inequalities.

## 17. **Reduction of Crime and Disorder**

- 17.1 One of our outcomes aims to improve the safety of active travel routes. Interventions to be set out in the Implementation Plan will help to achieve this and will lead to a reduction of crime and disorder.

## 18. **Risk Management Issues**

- 18.1 Failure to adopt this Strategy could result in stakeholders failing to understand Barnsley's ambitious development plans and the active travel interventions needed to underpin them as part of the wider sustainable transport package. This would reduce the level of stakeholder buy-in, which could compromise the necessary partnership working required to deliver these interventions.
- 18.2 Reduced levels of stakeholder understanding and buy-in in the BMBC Active Travel Strategy could compromise the success of funding bids necessary to deliver improvements to the active travel offer in Barnsley.
- 18.3 The Implementation Plan when developed, will include a brief risk register detailing the main threats to the successful implementation of the Plan and the wider Strategy.

## 19. **Health, Safety and Emergency Resilience Issues**

- 19.1 None associated with this report.

## 20. **Compatibility With the European Convention on Human Rights**

20.1 None associated with this report.

21. **Conservation of Biodiversity**

21.1 None associated with this report.

22. **GLOSSARY**

23. **LIST OF APPENDICES**

23.1 Appendix 1 – The Barnsley Active Travel Strategy 2019-2033

24 **Background Papers**

Sustrans Barnsley Active Travel Study 2018

Barnsley draft Local Plan 2014 – 2033

Barnsley Transport Strategy 2014-2033

Sheffield City Region draft Transport Strategy 2018-2040

Housing Strategy 2014 – 2033

Jobs and Business Plan

Barnsley Public Health Strategy – 2018-2021

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Financial Implications/Consultations ...  
.....07.12.18.....



..... Date :

Consultations on the financial implications have taken place with representatives of the Executive Director of Finance.