

ECONOMY AND ENVIRONMENT OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY PANEL 8 MAY 2019

CYCLING

Summary

1. The Panel will receive an update on how the Council is delivering for cycling in Worcestershire, including progress with improvements to cycle ways and on cycle schemes.
2. Officers from the Economy and Infrastructure Directorate and from the Council's Public Health Team have been invited to attend, as well as representatives from cycle groups in Worcestershire and the Cabinet Member.

Background

3. The Panel has been keen to keep up to date with the Council's work to enable cycling in Worcestershire, and this update follows the Panel's previous discussion on 3 October 2017. A link to a minutes of the previous discussion can be found [here](#)
4. The Panel requested a further update to understand progress with cycle schemes and enabling cycling; what has been successful and what is planned.
5. Demand to cycle in the County is currently low, but gradually increasing. Census 2011 data identifies that approximately 2% of all journeys to work in Worcestershire were made by bicycle. The figure in Worcester (4%) is noticeably higher, and Bromsgrove (1%) noticeably lower. According to the Sport England Active Lives Survey in 2016/17, 12.9% of adults have participated in cycling for travel in the last year, and in Worcestershire this is 12%. Nationally, 39.9% of adults who have participated in cycling in the last year, whereas in Worcestershire this is comparable at 38%.
6. Worcestershire County Council has limited data on leisure and utility cycling trips, although this is likely to improve significantly in future, as anonymised journey data collection via mobile phone technology gathers pace.
7. On 21 April, 2017, the Government published its Cycling and Walking Investment Strategy. This document:
 - Outlines the government's ambition to make cycling and walking a natural choice for shorter journeys, or as part of longer journeys by 2040;
 - Sets out objectives, aims and short-term targets;
 - Details the financial resources available;
 - Includes a number of indicators to enable monitoring of national performance;
 - Sets out the governance arrangements that will be put in place and outlines actions that have already been taken, as well as actions planned for the future.

8. In Worcestershire, the funding sources cited as being available for investment in walking and cycling from Government are the Local Growth Fund, the Highways Maintenance Block and the Integrated Transport Block. Additional funding has been made available to larger cities as part of the Government's "Cycle City Ambition Fund", but this funding stream cannot be accessed by Worcestershire County Council. As such, available funding for investment in walking and cycling from Government in Worcestershire is modest.

9. Worcestershire County Council was successful in two bids to the Department for Transport's National Productivity Investment Fund for Worcester and Bromsgrove. Since 2018/19 the project has worked towards delivering a package of measures to improve efficiency for all road users on the main east-west route in the centre of Worcester (including measures for walking and cycling), and; "Bromsgrove Town Centre Network", which is delivering nine walking and cycling routes across Bromsgrove. The bids secured £3.2million and £3.4million respectively (matched in turn by £1.4million and £1.5million from the County's Network Efficiency Programme).

10. Subsequent to the publication of the Government's Cycling and Walking Investment Strategy, a Safety Review was undertaken, which specifically focussed on what could be done to improve safety for pedestrians and cyclists. The Government consulted upon this in Autumn 2018, and Government then committed to the following actions:

- Review the existing guidance in the Highway Code to improve safety for cyclists and pedestrians;
- Invest £100,000 to support police enforcement by developing a national back office function to handle dash-cam footage;
- Improve enforcement against parking in cycle lanes;
- Appoint a cycle and walking champion;
- Encourage local authorities to increase investment in cycling and walking infrastructure to 15% of total transport infrastructure spending;
- Engage with cycling and walking bodies to develop a behaviour change campaign.

11. In Worcestershire, spending on cycling and walking infrastructure, as a percentage of total transport infrastructure spending averages around 10%. It must be noted that does include grant funding and S106 contributions sought from developers.

12. In recent years, delivery of measures for cycling has been constrained by funding. Several feasibility studies have been undertaken, which have included prospective route planning. Also, developer contributions have been used to fund a modest package of improvements for pedestrians and cyclists at locations across the County.

13. Significant planned growth and supporting infrastructure have and will continue to provide opportunities to delivery potentially game-changing infrastructure, and the Worcestershire LTP4 sets out this ambition.

14. The Government's Transport Analysis Guidance "WebTAG", which sets out the mandatory criteria for development of business cases to support all major transport infrastructure investment schemes has changed to be far more positive towards investment in sustainable travel modes. It is now highly challenging to consider any highway improvement unless this also includes investment in walking, cycling and/or passenger transport measures. As a result, all new major infrastructure schemes in Worcestershire now include extensive measures to support these modes. For example:

- **Worcester Southern Link Road (Phase 4)** – This major scheme includes comprehensive upgrade of the Orbital Pedway between Powick Hams and Whittington, and the provision of 3 bridges and a subway at the Ketch to provide pedestrians and cyclists with a range of safe crossing points over the dualled Southern Link Road, when completed.
- **Hoobrook Link Road, Kidderminster** – This scheme included the provision of high-quality walking and cycling infrastructure along its full length.
- **Worcester Street, Kidderminster** – This major public realm enhancement scheme will include the longest continuous stretch of contraflow cycle lane in Worcestershire when complete, significantly improving access to and through Kidderminster Town Centre for cyclists.

15. Cycling 'events' are an excellent way of showcasing the County and attracting visitors, at the same time encouraging up-take of the activity by local residents. Redditch is nationally recognised as a pre-eminent domestic road racing series by hosting this year's opening round. Worcestershire County Council staff have assisted in the delivery of all three events. Some figures from last year's event in Redditch, the 7th time the town has hosted the Tour Series:

- 16,000 attendees
- 82% came from outside Redditch
- 12% of visitors stayed overnight
- 61% said they were inspired to cycle more often
- Gross expenditure for the local economy was over £429,000

16. By increasing business sponsorship, Worcestershire County Council has been bringing down its own financial contribution to the event; from £70,500 in 2016 to £23,000 this year and with an intention to bring it down further in 2020. Sponsors include Stofords, West Midlands Railway and the Kingfisher Centre. It's the 8th time we have hosted the event and for the second year running we have been the opening round. This year we also have community Ride it event to help promote cycling to the residents – where anyone can come and ride the track for free and Inter – services races with mens and womens Army, Navy and RAF taking part in their inaugural competition.

Scrutiny to Date

16. As part of the discussion, the Panel may want to refer to the following queries referred to during the previous discussion:

- What further consideration had been given to the Panel's recommendation that a specific budget amount to be put forward for cycling;
- Progress to improve safety of cyclists especially on main roads;

- Progress to enable more cycling, including, for example, maintenance of pathways.

Purpose of the Meeting

17. The Panel is asked to:

- consider and comment on the latest information on cycling
- determine whether any further information or scrutiny is required at this stage
- agree any comments to highlight to the Cabinet Member.

Supporting Information

Appendix – Additional Information on Cycling in Worcestershire.

Contact Points

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Background Papers

In the opinion of the proper officer (in this case the Head of Legal and Democratic Services) the following are the background papers relating to the subject matter of this report:

- Agenda and Minutes of Economy and Environment Overview and Scrutiny Panel on 3 October 2017 - available on the Council's website at:
<http://worcestershire.moderngov.co.uk/ieListMeetings.aspx?Committeed=388>