

Cabinet

11 March 2025

Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan (LCWIP)

Portfolio Holder: Councillor Simon Curry, Portfolio Holder for Climate Change and Strategic Regeneration

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Summary

This report presents Medway's Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan (LCWIP). The LCWIP outlines a long-term strategy for developing cycling, walking, and wheeling networks in Medway, supporting future investment in Active Travel.

This report was previously considered by the Regeneration, Culture and Environment Overview and Scrutiny Committee on 21 January 2025 and the comments of the Committee are set out below at section 7 of the report.

1. Recommendations

- 1.1. The Cabinet is asked to note the comments of the Regeneration, Culture and Environment Overview and Scrutiny Committee as set out in section 7 of the report.
- 1.2. The Cabinet is requested to agree adoption of Medway's Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan, as set out at Appendix A to the report.

2. Suggested reasons for decisions

- 2.1. The LCWIP aligns with existing and emerging policies and strategies and provides a long-term commitment to walking and cycling in Medway. The Plan will support the uptake of Active Travel and establishes the case for future investment in Medway's cycling, walking and wheeling networks.

3. Budget and policy framework

- 3.1. The costs associated with developing and publishing Medway's LCWIP have been met by revenue grant funding from National Government received between 2021 and 2024.
- 3.2. The One Medway Council Plan prioritises creating clean, green, safe, and connected communities. Developing a safe and convenient cycling and walking network will support this priority by offering more travel options and promoting sustainable travel, which will benefit the health and wellbeing of Medway's residents.
- 3.3. Medway's Local Transport Plan (2011-2026) identifies an increase in travel demand arising from population growth as a key challenge. Active travel will play a key role in addressing this challenge by enabling a modal shift away from private motor vehicles to more sustainable modes. The plan aims to increase the uptake of active travel by improving infrastructure to create a safer, more attractive, and convenient network for walking and cycling that will help to reduce congestion, enhance air quality, and promote healthier lifestyles.

4. Background

- 4.1. In 2017, National Government published the first Cycling and Walking Investment Strategy (CWIS). This strategy recommended that local highway authorities create LCWIPs to identify local cycling and walking improvements. It provided guidance on preparing the plan and prioritising improvements to encourage more walking and cycling for everyday journeys. A second Cycling and Walking Investment Strategy was published in July 2022, which reflects targets in relation to Net Zero and transport with an ambition for 50% of all journeys in towns or cities to be walked or cycled by 2030.
- 4.2. In 2020, National Government published 'Gear Change', which outlined a vision for transforming cycling and walking infrastructure, aiming to create safer, healthier, and more sustainable communities.
- 4.3. Active Travel England (ATE) was established as an Executive Agency of the Department for Transport in 2022 and 2023. Its goals include enhancing design standards for active travel infrastructure, ensuring local authorities are accountable for their investments, offering advice on improving walking, wheeling, and cycling provisions, and boosting local authorities' skills and capacity to implement schemes.
- 4.4. The LCWIP will serve as a ten-year plan that outlines the delivery of cycling and walking interventions in Medway. It provides a network plan for walking and cycling that acknowledges the existing network and identifies preferred routes and core zones for further development, as well as a prioritised programme of infrastructure improvements for future investment. All stages of the recommended process delivering the LCWIP have been completed.

- 4.5. The first stage of the LCWIP process involved an extensive information gathering exercise, which focussed on:
- The existing walking and cycling network in Medway
 - Levels of walking and cycling locally
 - Mapping and understanding current and forecast demand for walking and cycling
 - Identifying barriers to active travel in Medway
- 4.6. With this baseline information established, the network was audited to identify priority areas and routes where interventions would have the greatest impact. These included areas with new developments, employment and education sites and other trip generators such as leisure facilities and shopping areas. Other factors taken into consideration included the suitability of the route in terms of pre-existing levels of walking and cycling, directness and topographical conditions.
- 4.7. High level 'concept' designs were developed for the priority walking and cycling routes identified. This work was undertaken in accordance with DfT guidance for the design of safe, accessible and attractive walking, cycling and wheeling routes. Wheeling includes adapted cycles, wheelchairs, mobility scooters, prams and push scooters. Potential interventions include:
- The provision of segregated and shared pedestrian/cycle infrastructure
 - Priority for cycles at junctions
 - Improved pedestrian and cycle crossing facilities
 - Measures to control kerbside/footway parking and reduce 'street clutter'
 - Measures to reduce vehicular traffic at side road junctions
 - Traffic calming infrastructure and a review of existing speed limits
 - Resurfacing of footways and the installation of tactile paving at crossing points
- 4.8. Concept designs were developed for the following priority cycle routes:

Route number	Route	Approximate length
1	A2 High Street, Rainham to Best Street, Chatham	7.6km
2	Maidstone Road, Rainham	1.7km
3	Walderslade Road to Chatham Hill Gyratory, Chatham	5.3km
4	Upper Luton Road to Kitchener Avenue, Chatham	3.3km
5	Church Street to Sturdee Avenue, Gillingham	2.1km
6	Sturdee Avenue to Woodlands Road, Gillingham	2.4km

7	Dock Road, Chatham	1.8km
8	Corporation Street (Rochester) to Waterfront Way (Chatham)	2.5km
9	Peninsula Way (Chattenden) to Sans Pareil roundabout (Wainscott)	4.0km
10	Brompton Farm Road to Watling Street, Strood	1.8km

4.9. Concept designs were also developed for the following priority walking routes:

Route number	Route
5	Canterbury Street to High Street, Gillingham
8	Maidstone Road, Chatham

4.10. These designs formed the basis of the LCWIP consultation undertaken between January and March 2024. A prioritisation and costing exercise was then undertaken to complete the final stages of the LCWIP. This will assist in the identification of a programme for the delivery of improvements across the lifetime of the Plan.

4.11. More detail on the LCWIP process and the work undertaken is provided in the technical report appended to this report.

5. Options

5.1. Option 1 - To approve and adopt the LCWIP as a strategic, prioritised plan for the delivery of sustainable transport infrastructure across Medway and work with local, regional and national stakeholders to identify funding opportunities. This is the recommended option.

5.2. Option 2 -To not approve and adopt the LCWIP and continue to progress improvements to walking and cycling infrastructure with no overarching plan or prioritisation process in place.

6. Advice and analysis

6.1. The LCWIP aligns with national legislation and guidance and supports the principle of sustainable growth that underpins Medway's emerging Local Plan. It also supports Medway's local policies and strategies in relation to transport, active travel and climate change and will operate alongside Medway's Public Rights of Way Improvement Plan, Bus Service Improvement Plan, Sustainable School Travel Strategy and emerging River Strategy.

- 6.2. Investment in walking and cycling infrastructure across Medway will provide a wide range of community benefits, including improved health and wellbeing, access to services and the potential for better air quality through reduced transport emissions.
- 6.3. The LCWIP provides a ten-year plan for the delivery of cycling and walking interventions that acknowledges the existing network and identifies preferred routes and core zones for further development, as well as a prioritised programme of infrastructure improvements for future investment.
- 6.4. Active Travel England uses a 'Capability Rating' to assess how effectively local authorities plan, design, and deliver active travel schemes. The methodology for the rating focuses on local leadership, planning, and delivery record. The capability system encourages local authorities to enhance these areas and secure better outcomes and future investment. Adopting the LCWIP is likely to benefit Medway's rating and place the Council in a good position to secure further funding and support from Active Travel England.
- 6.5. In line with our Child Friendly Medway principles, active travel to school initiatives and School Streets programme, the LCWIP will focus on creating a safe environment for walking and cycling for our children and young people in Medway.
- 6.6. A Diversity Impact Assessment (DIA) is included at Appendix B. The assessment has established no adverse impact on protected characteristics and, overall, a positive impact on a wide range of groups across Medway.

7. Regeneration, Culture and Environment Overview and Scrutiny Committee

- 7.1. The Committee considered the report on 21 January 2025 and the draft minutes of the discussion are set out below:
- 7.2. Officers presented the report to the Committee and explained that the plan demonstrates a commitment to cycling and walking routes and provides a framework for the delivery of a new network which allows Medway to attract funding.
- 7.3. Officers informed the Committee that most interventions were supported during the consultation process except for the cycle route in Rainham and it was acknowledged that the designs were high level and subject to further work.
- 7.4. Members expressed concerns regarding the safety of the Rainham cycling route and officers explained that this route had generated a number of comments which were welcomed as part of the early stages as this was a concept design identified as a priority using the Department for Transport propensity to cycle tool and would develop over time.

- 7.5. Members queried how the Plan would be funded, and officers explained that implementation of the Plan would require external funding, grants and active travel funding and in order to attract external funding the Plan is required.
- 7.6. Members requested that schemes are not introduced at the cost of slowing down the movement of traffic across Medway and that the correct balance of safety for pedestrians, cyclists and road users was paramount. Members encouraged officers to be innovative and consider recreational routes for cycling such as the old Dockyard railway scheme as well as a pedestrian and cycle river crossing from Medway City Estate to Chatham.
- 7.7. Decision:
- a) The Committee commented on the Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan (LCWIP) and supporting documentation and note that the Cabinet will be asked to agree the Plan in the Spring of 2025.
- b) The Committee noted the results of the consultation as set out in the report and background papers.

8. Risk management

- 8.1. Without an agreed LCWIP in place, the following risks have been identified:

Risk	Description	Action to avoid or mitigate risk	Risk rating
Delivery of priorities and objectives in the One Medway Council Plan, Local Transport Plan and emerging Local Plan	Lack of a strategic plan for infrastructure improvements to meet targets and outcomes in the One Medway Council Plan, Local Transport Plan and emerging Local Plan	An agreed LCWIP will provide a strategic plan for the delivery of walking and cycling infrastructure, which supports Medway's existing and emerging policy objectives for active travel	A II
Insufficient funding to deliver significant improvements to walking and cycling routes in Medway	An LCWIP is the Department for Transport's (DfT) preferred method for local authorities to plan and deliver on walking and cycling targets. No strategic infrastructure plan in place may impact on Medway's ability to	An agreed LCWIP will ensure Medway is well-placed to access funding from central government via the DfT and their executive agency responsible for walking and cycling, Active Travel England (ATE).	B II

	secure capital funding for active travel infrastructure improvements		
Inability to demonstrate wider support for walking and cycling improvements	No published record of support for improving Active Travel networks	Public and Stakeholder consultation has been undertaken and reported as part of the LCWIP process, which demonstrated support for the principle of improving walking and cycling routes in Medway	B III

Likelihood	Impact:
A Very likely B Likely C Unlikely D Rare	I Catastrophic II Major III Moderate IV Minor

9. Consultation

- 9.1. Consultation with residents and key stakeholders was part of the LCWIP development process and took place over six weeks in early 2024. A summary of the consultation process, including responses, can be found in the Medway LCWIP Consultation Technical Note, which is included in the background papers.
- 9.2. Overall, the LCWIP was positively received by residents, with most of the potential interventions on the prioritised routes supported by 50% or more of those responding to the consultation. There was strong support for improving conditions for walking such as widening pavements and reducing street clutter. There was also support for segregated cycling facilities but less support for shared use facilities, which highlights the need to consider the provision of more space for cycling on Medway's network. Cycle Route 2 in Rainham generated significant interest with most responses not supportive of the interventions proposed.
- 9.3. The consultation outcomes will be taken into consideration when schemes are progressed for each route. The potential interventions set out in the LCWIP will be subject to further development and detailed design, and it is possible that measures proposed at the concept stage will be refined, modified or removed from the final schemes. Consultation and engagement will be

undertaken as part of the detailed design process and residents will be encouraged to take part in developing the schemes in their communities.

- 9.4. Ongoing engagement with schools through the School Travel Plan and LCWIP delivery will ensure that our children and young people continue to have a voice. Their feedback will help inform the development of our walking and cycling infrastructure, particularly near to schools, that supports their travel needs, whilst aligning closely with our Child Friendly Medway principles.

10. Climate change implications

- 10.1. Medway's Climate Change Action Plan identifies transport as one of its key priorities for combatting climate change. Transport is the largest greenhouse gas emitting sector in the UK, accounting for around 26% of total emissions.
- 10.2. The LCWIP supports modal shift aspirations and the associated improvements to air quality, carbon dioxide emissions and congestion. The adoption of Medway's LCWIP aligns with Medway's ambitions to achieve Net Zero emissions by 2050.

11. Financial implications

- 11.1. The LCWIP provides a long term, prioritised plan to develop the cycling, walking and wheeling network across Medway and as such does not commit the Council to any additional expenditure at this stage. Whilst significant capital funding would be required to deliver infrastructure improvements, an adopted LCWIP will strengthen the case for investment through partnership working, external grants and, where appropriate, Section 106 contributions from new developments.

12. Legal implications

- 12.1. The adoption of the LCWIP is not a mandatory or statutory requirement and there are no legal implications to be considered.

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Appendices

Appendix A – Medway LCWIP (public-facing version)
Appendix B – Diversity Impact Assessment

Background papers

- [Medway LCWIP \(technical report\)](#)
- [Design Technical Note](#)
- [Concept Designs](#)
- [Consultation summary report](#)

- [Consultation technical note](#)
- [Route Prioritisation Scoring Matrix](#)
- [Active school travel guide](#)
- [School Travel Plans](#)