



<b>Report to Cabinet</b>	<b>Forward Plan reference number:</b> FP/439/03/16
<b>Date of Cabinet Meeting:</b> 21 June 2016	<b>County Divisions affected by the decision:</b> All divisions
<b>Title of report: Adoption of Cycling Strategy</b>	
<b>Report by Councillor Eddie Johnson, Cabinet Member for Highways and Transport</b>	
<b>Responsible Director: Andrew Cook, Director for Commissioning: Transport and Infrastructure</b>	
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## **1. Purpose of report**

- 1.1 A draft Cycling Strategy has been produced and has been the subject of consultation. This report asks the Cabinet to adopt the strategy.

## **2. Recommendations**

- 2.1 To adopt the Strategy in the form at appendix D.

## **3. Background and proposal**

- 3.1 The Essex Cycle Strategy has been produced to give ECC an overarching set of principles relating to cycling and to demonstrate why cycling is important and how to enable and promote cycling in Essex. The strategy also provides a framework for the development of cycle networks and infrastructure including setting out the ambition for enhanced cycle standards, to improve facilities and promote safety. The strategy is aligned with the Government approach to increasing investment in walking and cycling, and will help to provide a framework for future bids to new funding expected from 2016/7.
- 3.2 Increasing cycling across Essex can have wider benefits, as well as transport benefits, in terms of contributing to reduced congestion, improving connectivity and improving choice. Increasing 'Active Travel' can help improve access to jobs and skills for journeys between 2 and 5kms. There are also clear health benefits in terms of reducing obesity, heart disease and other non- communicable diseases.

- 3.3 The Strategy is intended to:
- Enable – provide a framework for achieving transformational funding, introduce best practice in design guidance and provide leadership through an ECC cycling advocate, who will be a Councillor.
  - Promote – Develop a Cycle Essex brand, support local initiatives, develop high profile events.
  - Provide – a coherent cycle network(s), ‘continental’ standard cycling facilities (this reflects often cited Dutch and Danish approaches to promoting cycling) and ‘quietways’ (these are routes through quieter streets and estates away from heavy traffic), training and access.

The strategy document is split into three sections:

**Section 1:** Explains why cycling is important to Essex, summarises its main benefits and highlights its importance to Essex County Council’s seven key Outcomes.

**Section 2:** Sets out the nine areas of strategic action that we believe are necessary to deliver the growth in cycling we want to see as a local authority.

**Section 3:** Summarises the monitoring regime we will adopt to assess the effectiveness of the Strategy and the Performance Indicators that will be used to track progress. This section also outlines potential funding options.

In general the consultation responses were extremely positive. Nine areas of the strategy were covered in the consultation, namely:

Proposal 1: An Essex Cycling Advocate

Proposal 2: Transformational funding

Proposal 3: ‘Best Practice’ Design

Proposal 4: A ‘Cycle Essex’ Brand

Proposal 5: High Profile Events

Proposal 6: Increased Support for Local Initiatives

Proposals 7/8 Coherent Cycle Networks/Continental standard cycle facilities and Quietways

Proposal 9: Training and access

- 3.4 A consultation was undertaken between 3 September and 29 October 2015 on the draft Cycling Strategy, which included an online questionnaire, which was publicised in the local press. A stakeholder workshop was held and was attended by over 50 participants. In addition to the consultation report (Appendix A), an ECC response to the issues raised in the consultation is attached in Appendix B. There have only been minor amendments to the strategy as a result of the public consultation, as respondents were generally supportive of the ECC approach.
- 3.5 A delivery plan has been developed to implement the Strategy to plan future delivery, coordinate activities and support the Essex Cycling Advocate. Government are currently consulting on their Cycling and Walking Investment Strategy, which is a key priority for the Prime Minister.

- 3.6 ECC intend to apply for funding and continue to support the development and maintenance of cycle infrastructure across the county, and to compliment this by working with partners to deliver cycle training, maintenance and improved personal travel planning. This will have the effect of opening up cycling to those who would like to make their travel more active, by giving Essex resident's greater choice in how they travel. Moreover improvements in cycling will also help to encourage visitors and leisure use.

#### **4. Policy context and Outcomes Framework**

- 4.1 This decision relates most closely to the aim in *a Vision for Essex 2013-17* developing and maintaining the infrastructure that allows our residents to travel and our businesses to grow. It also aligns with the Commissioning Strategy and Outcome: People in Essex experience a high quality and sustainable environment and to the following indicators:

- Levels of Air Pollution: as the local economy continues to grow, traffic volumes will increase and the volume of new housing will accelerate. By offering greater choice by enabling more cycling, this will help to mitigate traffic and congestion increases. Furthermore, improving cycling infrastructure, including new routes to new housing developments will contribute towards reducing air pollution.
- Children in Essex get the best start in life - Travelling to school by walking or cycling can help encourage healthy growth and development, maintain a healthy weight, reduce anxiety and stress, and improve muscular strength, endurance and flexibility in children.
- People have aspirations and achieve their ambitions through education, training and lifelong learning - Cycling gives young people the opportunity to travel to schools and colleges of their choice, as well as to the library, and to other social opportunities.
- Sustainable economic growth for Essex communities and businesses - Reducing road congestion and journey times for residents and businesses, through improved local connectivity and accessibility to key points of attraction for work, business and other trips.
- People in Essex can live independently and exercise choice and Control over their Lives - Having a bike offers people who cannot drive a motorised vehicle the opportunity to travel and access opportunities when they want.
- People in Essex enjoy good health & wellbeing - More physically active residents - greater activity levels reduce the risk of cardiovascular disease, obesity, stroke and depression.
- People in Essex experience a high quality & sustainable environment - Modal shift from car to bike means reduced congestion, and reduced air pollution and cleaner and quieter streets.

- People in Essex live in safe communities and are protected from harm - Reduced congestion, cleaner air. Cycling is arguably safer than driving when the health benefits and reduced risk to third parties is factored in.

## **5. Financial Implications**

- 5.1 Government have announced their intention to increase spending on walking and cycling to approximately £10 per head by 2025, although it is not yet clear how this will be achieved, but mostly likely it will be from a number of different sources including the Local Growth Fund and forthcoming Access Fund for Sustainable Travel which has replaced the Local Sustainable Travel Fund.
- 5.2 ECC currently spends approximately £3 per head to support cycling, through a combination of physical measures, and promotion, information and travel planning. Cycling in ECC is funded from a mixture of Local Highways Panels, developer contributions (S106 and in the future CIL), Local Growth Funding and funding on promotion, sports and health related initiatives.
- 5.3 However, given that the strategy will provide the overarching policy framework for cycling in Essex, it does not provide a specific funding framework. Rather, funding of schemes and measures to enable the strategy will be dependent on bids made to funding bodies, from local plans in the form of CIL or s106 contributions or obligations, and business cases for specific schemes such as through the Local Growth Fund. The strategy provides a coherent suite of policies and approaches to position ECC to bid for funding to meet Governments ambition to increase cycling and therefore the policy framework, is intended to align with the Governments ambition. It is difficult to estimate the amount of Capital and Revenue funding which will be achieved (through successful bidding), however, Governments ambition is to increase the amount spent on cycling and walking, to this end, the Infrastructure Act 2015, gives cycling a similar strategic investment plan to roads and rail.

## **6. Legal Implications**

- 6.1 ECC is not required by law to have a cycling strategy. The purpose of the strategy is to guide the provision of investment in cycle facilities and to help secure external funding.

## **7. Staffing and other resource implications**

- 7.1 There are no staffing, property or other resource implications as a result of this decision, as it is delivered within existing resources.

## **8. Equality and Diversity implications**

- 8.1 Section 149 of the Equality Act 2010 creates the public sector equality duty which requires that when ECC makes decisions it must have regard to the need to:
- (a) Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and other behaviour prohibited by the Act
  - (b) Advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.
  - (c) Foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not including tackling prejudice and promoting understanding.
- 8.2 The protected characteristics are age, disability, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, gender and sexual orientation.
- 8.3 The equality impact assessment indicates that the proposals in this report will not have a disproportionately adverse impact on any people with a particular characteristic.

## **9. List of Appendices**

Appendix A – Consultation report  
Appendix B – Response to consultation  
Appendix C – Equality impact assessment  
Appendix D – Draft Cycling Strategy for adoption

(available at [www.essex.gov.uk](http://www.essex.gov.uk) if not circulated with this report)

## **10. List of Background Papers**

Consultation responses