

	<b>Cabinet Member Decision Report</b>
	<b>Report from the Corporate Director of Communities and Regeneration</b>
	<b>Cabinet Member for Environment, Infrastructure and Climate Action</b>
<b>Brent Active Travel Implementation Plan 2024-2029 – Draft for Consultation</b>	

<b>Wards Affected:</b>	All Wards
<b>Key or Non-Key Decision:</b>	Non-Key
<b>Open or Part/Fully Exempt:</b> <small>(If exempt, please highlight relevant paragraph of Part 1, Schedule 12A of 1972 Local Government Act)</small>	Open
<b>List of Appendices:</b>	Appendix A: Brent Active Travel Implementation Plan 2024-2029 – Draft for Consultation
<b>Background Papers:</b>	None
<b>Contact Officer(s):</b> <small>(Name, Title, Contact Details)</small>	Tim Martin Transportation Planning Manager Spatial Planning 020 8937 6134

## 1.0 Executive Summary

1.1 This report sets out details of the Draft Brent Active Travel Implementation Plan 2024-2029 and outlines the next steps in its development. This includes undertaking an eight-week period of public consultation and wider stakeholder engagement to commence in mid-November 2023.

## 2.0 Recommendation(s)

2.1 That the Cabinet Member for Environment, Infrastructure and Climate Action, having consulted with the Leader:

- i) Grants permission to undertake an eight-week period of public consultation and wider stakeholder engagement to commence in mid-November 2023.
- ii) Notes that, following comments received during public consultation, a final Brent Active travel Implementation Plan will be brought to Cabinet for adoption in Spring 2024.

## 3.0 Detail

### 3.1 Contribution to Borough Plan Priorities & Strategic Context

3.1.1 The Draft Brent Active Travel Implementation Plan aligns with the following Borough Plan priorities:

- Making the borough cleaner and greener,
- Establishing thriving communities, and
- Creating a healthier Brent.

3.1.2 The Borough Plan includes a commitment to removing the barriers people face to becoming physically active. This includes making our green spaces and walking and cycling routes more accessible, friendly, inclusive, and well-maintained; delivering enhanced active travel infrastructure; and designing out crime and anti-social behaviour.

3.1.3 The Draft Brent Active Travel Implementation Plan responds to the challenges that many of our residents have told us they face by seeking to make active travel a meaningful and crucial element of people's daily journeys. It aims to address the barriers to active travel by making our streets safer and more inclusive for walking and cycling; improving the quality and visibility of our walking and cycling infrastructure; and equipping our communities with the confidence and means to walk and cycle. This, in turn, will enable us to create more sustainable, healthier and better-connected places where people aspire to live and work.

3.1.4 The draft plan also links to and aligns with the priorities and ambitions of a number of other Council plans and policies including:

- **Inclusive Growth Strategy:** Identifies the need for a range of important infrastructure improvements and supporting measures to be made including an improved public realm; the provision of secure and dry cycle parking; cycle lanes and pathways segregated from cars; loans for bicycle purchase and bicycle hire schemes; and travel strategies for schools and local workplaces.
- **Joint Health and Wellbeing Strategy:** Outlines how the creation of healthy places (including having safe, clean places in which to exercise) and helping people to stay healthy (including encouraging more physically activity) is key to addressing long-standing health inequalities in the borough and improving the health and wellbeing of Brent's residents. Increasing useable green spaces (e.g. through the creation of 'pocket parks') and improving access for people with a disability to places, parks and events are key strategy commitments.
- **Brent Local Plan:** With a focus on achieving 'good growth', the Plan requires new development to have good access to public transport and to reduce reliance on private cars; and new/improved walking and cycling routes to encourage more trips by active modes of travel. Policy BT1 (Sustainable Travel Choice) in particular sets out how the Council will prioritise active and sustainable travel over private motor vehicles.

## 3.2 Background

- 3.2.1 It is well documented that walking and cycling have multiple benefits for both individuals and society as a whole, particularly in terms of improving health and wellbeing, safety, the environment, the economy and promoting equality of opportunity. Despite this, the proportion of people travelling by active forms of transport, particularly cycling, in Brent does not always compare favourably with some parts of London.
- 3.2.2 The Draft Active Travel Implementation Plan 2024 - 2029 outlines the measures and interventions that the Council and its partners are proposing to deliver over the next five years with the overarching aim of improving conditions for active travel in the borough and to enable more people to walk or cycle. The plan sits alongside the Brent Long Term Transport Strategy (LTTTS) and supersedes the Brent Cycling Strategy 2016 and the Brent Walking Strategy 2017.

### **Plan Structure/Content**

- 3.2.3 Details of the structure and content of the draft plan are set out below:

#### **Section 1: Introduction and Overview**

- 3.2.4 Section 1 sets out what the draft plan is and why we need one - highlighting the need for increased efforts to address long-standing issues around congestion, poor air quality and road safety which continue to blight some of our most vulnerable communities; whilst securing a healthier, more sustainable and more inclusive future for all those who live, work or visit the borough - in line with the Council's wider public health, climate and inclusive growth ambitions. The draft plan highlights that investing in healthy, active modes of travel, such as walking and cycling, is key to addressing these issues, whilst also ensuring that our ongoing recovery post-Covid is green and inclusive. The section concludes by outlining our vision to make active travel the natural first choice for everyday journeys in Brent.

#### **Section 2: Active Travel in Brent**

- 3.2.5 Section 2 of the draft plan provides an overview of the latest trends for walking and cycling in Brent, sets out our achievements to date and outlines the potential for and barriers to increasing levels of active travel in the borough. It concludes by setting out the overarching priorities for active travel going forward.
- 3.2.6 The draft plan highlights how the Council and its partners have been working hard to improve conditions for active travel in the borough by delivering critical improvements to transport infrastructure; raising awareness of the various benefits of walking and cycling; and providing support and training for people looking to change their travel behaviour. As a result, walking and cycling currently account for around one-third of all trips in Brent – mirroring the figure for Greater London as a whole and significantly above the average for outer London.
- 3.2.7 Despite this, there is significant potential to increase levels of walking and cycling in the borough, with data from TfL indicating that up to 60% of trips in

outer London boroughs such as Brent are capable of being walked or cycled. However, the draft plan highlights that if this potential is to be realised, we need to address a number of barriers to everyday active travel, including the volume and speed of traffic, road danger and personal security concerns; and lack of appropriate infrastructure.

3.2.8 Informed by the various challenges and opportunities identified, and to build on our achievements to date, the draft plan identifies three core priorities for active travel in Brent. These are to:

- 1. Make our streets safer and more inclusive for walking and cycling**
- 2. Improve the quality and visibility of our walking and cycling infrastructure**
- 3. Equip our communities with the confidence and means to walk and cycle**

### **Section 3: Delivering Improvements**

3.2.9 Section 3 of the draft plan sets out the active travel delivery programme - the measures and actions required to address the various issues and challenges and to achieve the plan aims. It outlines how these could be funded and highlights the important role of a range of partners - including Brent's communities - in ensuring their successful delivery.

3.2.10 Details of the proposed measures and interventions forming the delivery programme are set out on pages 25-43 of the draft plan. They include:

- The introduction of measures aimed at reducing motor vehicle dominance and to give greater priority to pedestrians and cyclists – particularly those less able to get around. Amongst the priorities include proposals for new/expanded school streets schemes; further 20mph zones; road crossing/junction improvement schemes; and footway decluttering.
- The provision of new well-connected and accessible active travel routes linking key parts of the borough, as well as the delivery of improvements to our existing walking and cycling infrastructure. Priorities include the need to improve pedestrian and cycle access over physical barriers such as major roads, railways and waterways as a means of reducing severance and connecting our diverse communities; and to deliver improvements to cycle parking and wayfinding across the borough – with a focus on expanding the range of facilities available and increasing provision where demand and active travel potential are greatest.
- The delivery of a comprehensive programme of support, advice, training and community events to raise the profile of and remove the socio-economic barriers to active travel. Proposed measures include targeted community engagement, training and behaviour change initiatives, with a particular focus on supporting those who experience the greatest barriers to walking and cycling (e.g. under-represented groups such as women, BAME communities and families); and working with Brent's schools and

businesses to develop and implement bespoke travel plans. We also propose to improve access to bikes for our residents and businesses through the expansion of bike lending/hire schemes and building on the success of Brent's Bikes for Business programme.

3.2.11 A summary table of key actions – outlining timescales for delivery, likely funding sources, and responsibility for delivery is included in Appendix A to the draft plan (see pages 49-51).

3.2.12 Funding for implementing the active travel delivery programme is expected to come from a range of sources, including from Central Government, the Mayor and Transport for London and the Council (mostly highway maintenance funding). However, ongoing pressures to sources of public finance caused by the recent Covid pandemic mean that we will need to prioritise spending and explore new sources of funding, including developer and other third-party funding. A summary of the principal funding sources available is set out in Figure 3.5 on page 45 of the draft plan.

3.2.13 Responsibility for implementation of the delivery programme will be shared between the Council's Transportation Planning, Healthy Streets and Parking and Highways Management teams, with close involvement from colleagues working in our Public Health, Climate Change and Communications teams. We also recognise the need for and benefits of close working with a wide range of external partners and stakeholders, including TfL, developers and neighbouring boroughs – particularly to maximise opportunities for funding and to ensure the successful delivery of joined-up schemes. In addition, and to ensure that active travel schemes and initiatives bring about tangible benefits to those areas in which they are introduced and don't disadvantage others, we will also work closely with the many diverse communities within Brent.

#### **Section 4: Assessing Progress**

3.2.14 Section 4 details the targets and indicators to be used to measure progress in delivering the plan and how it will be monitored and reviewed. The plan targets are taken from the Brent Long Term Transport Strategy and include a commitment to:

- Reducing overall traffic levels in the borough by a quarter;
- Increasing walking, cycling and public transport mode share to 80%;
- Eliminating all deaths and serious injuries from road collisions;
- Achieving net zero CO2 emissions from road transport.

3.2.15 The plan will be closely monitored to ensure delivery remains on track, with progress towards the various targets and indicators reported each year. A wider review of the plan will be carried out after five years.

#### **4.0 Stakeholder and ward member consultation and engagement**

- 4.1 An internal officer-level steering group, comprising staff from across Spatial Planning, Regeneration, Healthy Streets & Parking, Highways Management, Public Health, Climate Emergency, Strategy & Partnerships and Communications & Engagement has been established for the purposes of developing the plan to ensure that the latest developments and policy position across the wider Council are taken into account.
- 4.2 It is proposed that the draft plan will be consulted on for an eight-week period commencing mid-November 2023. This will include consultation and engagement with Members, various stakeholder groups and the wider public. Feedback received during the consultation process will be analysed and, where appropriate, incorporated into the final version of the plan to be published in Spring 2024.
- 4.3 A Consultation and Engagement Plan is currently being developed setting out our approach to consultation. This is likely to include proposals for:
- An online questionnaire via Citizen Lab.
  - Face-to-face community outreach engagement.
  - A Member and internal stakeholder workshop.
  - Notification via Members Bulletin.
  - Conversations with a range of external stakeholder organisations, including statutory stakeholders, partner organisations, community and interest groups.
  - Publicising the consultation more widely via the Brent Magazine, social media and the Brent Council website.

## **5.0 Financial Considerations**

- 5.1 A key source of funding for implementing many of the measures in the Delivery Plan is TfL's Healthy Streets funding allocation, which comprises a mix of core, discretionary and strategic funding programmes. However, the Covid-19 pandemic has resulted in TfL facing acute funding pressures, which are likely to continue in the short-medium term. As a result, the Council will need to prioritise spending and explore new sources of funding. A summary of the principal funding sources is set out in Figure 3.5 on page 45 of the draft plan.
- 5.2 Costs associated with the development, publication and ongoing monitoring of the Active Travel Implementation Plan, as well as for planned consultation/engagement, will be met through existing staff budgets.

## **6.0 Legal Considerations**

- 6.1 Consultation should be carried out in accordance with the, so called, "Gunning Principles", namely:
- Consultation must be undertaken at a time when proposals are still at a formative stage;

- Sufficient reasons for any proposal must be provided in order to allow proper and intelligent consideration and response;
- Adequate time must be given for consideration and response;
- The decision maker must give conscientious consideration to the responses.

## **7.0 Equality, Diversity & Inclusion (EDI) Considerations**

- 7.1 The public sector equality duty set out in Section 149 of the Equality Act 2010 requires the Council, when exercising its functions, to have due regard to the need to eliminate discrimination, harassment and victimisation and other conduct prohibited under the Act, and to advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations between those who share a protected characteristic and those who do not share that protected characteristic. The protected characteristics are: age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation.
- 7.2 An equalities assessment of the draft plan is currently being undertaken, the results of which will be published shortly. Any recommendations/requirements will be taken on board and incorporated in the draft plan ahead of public consultation.

## **8.0 Climate Change and Environmental Considerations**

- 8.1 Supporting and encouraging active travel – in particular increased uptake of cycling and walking, is seen as key to helping resolve the climate emergency and addressing poor air quality. Amongst the key actions identified in the Brent Climate and Ecological Emergency Strategy and the Draft Brent Air Quality Action Plan include plans for the introduction of Healthy (Low Traffic) Neighbourhoods; the creation of new school streets schemes; the delivery of bike hangars; and working with schools to develop sustainable travel plans. These and other similar interventions figure prominently in the Delivery Programme as set out on pages 25-43 of the Draft Brent Active Travel Implementation Plan.

## **9.0 Human Resources/Property Considerations (if appropriate)**

- 9.1 None.

## **10.0 Communication Considerations**

- 10.1 A communications plan to support the engagement is being drafted.

**Report sign off:**

**Zahur Khan**

Corporate Director Communities and Regeneration