



**Cabinet  
24 April 2017**

**Report from the Strategic Director  
Regeneration & Environment**

Wards Affected: All Wards

**Brent Walking Strategy 2017 – 2022**

**1. Summary**

- 1.1. This report explains the steps taken to develop the Brent Walking Strategy 2017 – 2022 which seeks to reflect the priorities and objectives of the Brent Borough Plan 2015 – 2019, the Long Term Transport Strategy and the Mayor's current and emerging Transport Strategy, and recommends its approval so it can be adopted as a policy in the borough.

**2. Recommendations**

That Members:

- 2.1. Note the steps taken to develop the Brent Walking Strategy 2017 – 2022;
- 2.2. Approve the Brent Walking Strategy 2017 – 2022 as set out in Appendix A, subject to 2.3 below; and
- 2.3. Delegate authority to the Strategic Director Regeneration & Environment, in consultation with the Lead Member for Environment, to approve final design of the Brent Walking Strategy 2017 – 2022.

**3. Background**

- 3.1. The Brent Long Term Transport Strategy (LTTS) was approved by Cabinet on 24 August 2015. The LTTS provides strategic direction for investment in transport throughout the borough over a 20 year period (2015 – 2035).
- 3.2. The Brent Walking Strategy 2017 – 2022 (The "Strategy") forms one of several supporting strategies which will be used to inform how the long term transport aspirations from the LTTS are being met.

#### **4. Purpose of the Strategy**

- 4.1. The Strategy has been developed to:
  - 4.1.1. Provide a transparent framework from which works to increase walking in the borough will be implemented; and
  - 4.1.2. Prioritise investment for walking throughout the borough.
- 4.2. Officers consider that the Strategy will provide a basis for future Local Implementation Plan (LIP) annual spending submissions to Transport for London (TfL) and assist with bids for other alternative funding that becomes available.
- 4.3. The Strategy's vision, objectives and action plan have been formulated following consultation with residents and key stakeholders regarding walking in the borough.
- 4.4. The Strategy reflects the priorities and objectives of the Brent Borough Plan 2015 – 2019, and the Mayor's current and emerging Transport Strategy.
- 4.5. The Strategy's objectives and actions if implemented will also complement and support the LTTS as well as aspirations for improving public health and air quality in Brent.
- 4.6. Progress towards achievement of the Strategy's targets will be monitored and conveyed to the lead member through annual reports at the end of the financial year in order to demonstrate clearly whether the objectives are being met. This will ensure the continued direction of travel is maintained. The action plan will be amended where necessary in order to meet targets in subsequent years. A mid-Strategy report will be prepared for Cabinet as an update to progress achieved by the Strategy at its mid-point.
- 4.7. Brent is committed to delivering on the objectives identified and meeting the actions set but is mindful of risks related to funding levels and staff resource. Any changes will compromise delivery of the objectives by the timescales given.
- 4.8. The Strategy will be reviewed in its entirety every five years to enable inclusion of new findings, research and issues that have emerged since its inception, as well as to examine the targets set and review them as necessary.

#### **5. Public Consultation**

- 5.1. An initial public and stakeholder engagement consultation was undertaken between August and October 2015 to understand existing levels of walking in Brent and what issues needed to be addressed to encourage more walking in the borough. Responses to this engagement were monitored to ensure the diverse nature of Brent was fully represented within the results.

- 5.2. Based on the results, three objectives were developed that are designed to make the vision for walking in the borough a reality:
- Objective 1: Provide a better environment and improve the experience of walking within the borough, ensuring it is accessible and inclusive for all
  - Objective 2: Promote walking as a healthy and sustainable way to travel as well as to increase personal activity
  - Objective 3: Improve the perceived and actual safety and security of pedestrians
- 5.3. These three objectives form the basis of the Strategy alongside a series of actions within an action plan. These actions have arisen from analysis of consultation responses which identified barriers to walking and where improvements could be made. The action plan will be updated annually to ensure progress is being made.
- 5.4. A draft of the Strategy went out for public consultation from 1<sup>st</sup> to 30<sup>th</sup> September 2016 and 11<sup>th</sup> November to 23<sup>rd</sup> December 2016. The consultation exercise involved an on-line and paper questionnaire, promoted to stakeholders and interest groups, and to the public via emails. Brent's website, libraries and sports centres also took part in the promotion of this consultation.
- 5.5. The consultation received 134 responses and all comments submitted during the consultation process were assessed for incorporation into the final draft of the Strategy. These can be viewed in Appendix B.
- 5.6. The numerical survey results can be seen in Appendix C.

## **6. Consultation Analysis**

- 6.1. The vision, objectives and action plan received strong support from respondents. A minority of respondents disagreed with actions 4 and 14 (17% and 15% respectively), relating to the enforcement of parking restrictions and the expansion of 20mph zones. However, there was majority support for these actions (66% for both) and so they have been retained and will be implemented in accordance with current practice on a site by site basis.
- 6.2. Respondents were asked to identify if there were any objectives and/or actions that they felt were missing in addition to any further comments they had. The following is a summary of topics raised:
- Pavement condition: Improve the condition of pavements to remove trip hazards.
  - Pavement obstruction: Remove obstructions on the footway such as advertising boards on high streets.
  - Street cleanliness: Reduce fly tipping and remove litter to make pavements clean and attractive to walk on.

- Anti-social behaviour: Increase actions against anti-social behaviour to make walking on Brent's streets a safer activity.
- Footway parking: Ensure that there is sufficient space on footways for walking and access for those with pushchairs.
- Cycling on footways: Prevent cyclists from using footways to increase pedestrian safety.
- Promotion of walking groups: Set up and promote social walking groups to create more opportunities for walking.

6.3 Appendix B sets out all comments received, showing a comparison point (where available) to the consultation document and highlighting where comments have been incorporated into the final Strategy (Appendix A). It also provides an explanation where it has not been possible to take comments forward.

6.4 Appendix B also shows editorial changes to the final Strategy. These changes have been made to ensure that: Text is in plain English and is easier to interpret; references to supporting documents are made where necessary and are up to date; key ideas (such as an Air Quality Management Area) have been explained so that these make sense to readers in the context of the Strategy. The action plan has also been updated to include specific outputs which better reflect the commitment to achieving the Strategy's vision.

## **7. Conclusion**

7.1 Following the revisions as a result of the consultation, it is considered that the Strategy, as shown in Appendix A, is now a strategic document that is accessible and fully reflects the consultation results, the LTTS and the Mayor's current and emerging Transport Strategy. Therefore, officers recommend that the Strategy is adopted as policy by Cabinet.

## **8. Financial Implications**

8.1. There are no direct financial implications arising as a result of the adoption of the Strategy as it employs strategies and policies to which Brent Council is already committed to. However, it may provide a good basis for bidding for further funding in the future.

8.2. Any costs linked to implementing the Strategy would be met from existing resources. Should any additional funding requirement arise, then this would be subject to budget availability and ratification by Cabinet, before proceeding.

## **9. Legal Implications**

9.1. There are no direct legal implications associated with the adoption of the Strategy.

## **10. Diversity Implications**

- 10.1. The consultation material was made available to all groups. The responses received reflect Brent's diversity with comments received from all ethnic groups and all ages (with the exception of those age 15 and under).
- 10.2. Older age groups, namely those covering the ages 45-64, were overrepresented in the responses received when compared to Brent's demographic make-up. The same was the case for those from a White<sup>1</sup> or Bangladeshi background.
- 10.3. There are no known diversity implications associated with the Strategy.
- 10.4. This report is accompanied by an Equality Impact Assessment which can be seen in Appendix D.

## **11. Staffing / Accommodation Implications**

- 11.1. There are no implications for Council staff or Council accommodation arising from the Recommendations contained within this report.

## **12. Background Papers**

- 12.1. None

## **13. Contact Officers**

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<sup>1</sup> White includes those who identified themselves as White: English/Welsh/Scottish/Northern Irish/British and White: Irish (including traveller/gypsy)