

Part A

Report to: Cabinet

Date of meeting: Monday, 28 February 2022

Report author: Senior Democratic Services Officer

Title: Sustainable Transport Strategy Task Group - final report

1.0 Summary

- 1.1 This report provides Cabinet with the final report and recommendations of the Sustainable Transport Strategy Task Group. The full report is attached as Appendix 1.
- 1.2 The report was approved by Overview and Scrutiny Committee at its meeting on 31 January 2022. An extract of the relevant minutes is attached as Appendix 2.

2.0 Risks

- 2.1 No direct risks to the council have been identified as a result of the task group's recommendations.

3.0 Recommendations

3.1 that Cabinet approves the task group's recommendations:

1. The priority for the implementation of the strategy should be to reduce the number of short trips (under 2 miles) that are driven in Watford. This should be a determining factor in how actions contained in the strategy are prioritised.
2. In recognition of the close geographical relationships with neighbouring districts, ongoing partnership work should continue to be developed with areas that border Watford.
3. To build on the popularity of the bike share scheme, the council should explore with neighbouring authorities and other stakeholders how the scheme could be expanded beyond the borough's boundaries.
4. In considering whether there are any areas in Watford that would benefit from becoming a low-traffic neighbourhood, the highest priority should be working with and listening to residents and local stakeholders. Low traffic

neighbourhoods could be considered if they have extensive community support designed to address a defined local issue.

5. The strategy, or associated documentation, should include a target to have a travel plan in place for every school in the borough and proactively work with schools and Hertfordshire County Council to achieve this.
6. Further work should be undertaken with local businesses and other stakeholders to improve transport links to employment areas that are not easily reached without a car to consider how access could be improved.
7. Recognising that accepting the need for wider change is different to making personal behavioural change, further work is needed to consider how to grow confidence in the alternatives to travelling by car.

Further information:

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Report approved by: Carol Chen, Group Head of Democracy and Governance

4.0 **Detailed proposal**

4.1 At its meeting on 21 October 2021, the Overview and Scrutiny Committee agreed to establish a task group to feed in to the development of the Sustainable Transport Strategy.

4.2 At that meeting, the membership of the task group was agreed. The following councillors were appointed:

Councillor Amanda Grimston (Chair), Councillor for Meriden Ward

Councillor Simon Feldman, Councillor for Stanborough Ward

Councillor Tom Osborn, Councillor for Nascot Ward

Councillor Glen Saffery, Councillor for Woodside Ward

Councillor Dennis Watling, Councillor for Callowland Ward

4.3 The agreed terms of reference set out the areas of focus for the work as follows:

- **Neighbourhoods** including street traffic filters and mini transport hubs.
- **Active travel** including walking and cycling routes.
- **Car parking and car clubs** including how to encourage greener travel.
- **Travel schemes** including the HERT link and park and ride.
- **Community engagement** including reward schemes and engagement plans.

- **Monitoring** including the oversight of the implementation of the strategy.

4.4 The task group met virtually on four occasions in November and December 2021. During the course of the meetings, the task group received presentations from Watford Borough Council and Hertfordshire County Council officers on the above areas and discussed the proposals contained within the draft strategy.

4.5 As well as the recommendations set out above, the task group's report also includes a summary of members' overall response to the strategy:

The Sustainable Transport Strategy is a timely and ambitious strategy for Watford. The aims are commendable and will make Watford cleaner, more sustainable and healthier.

The borough is closely connected to the districts surrounding it. Strong and continued partnership with Hertfordshire County Council and neighbouring districts will be crucial in enabling residents to make greener transport choices. This partnership will also be the foundation of the ongoing work to secure county-wide and national funding streams by demonstrating the deliverability of schemes. The reach of the strategy affords the opportunity to effect change in travel habits beyond the borders of the borough to lead to a less congested, more sustainable and more active town and wider region.

Watford Borough Council will need to continue to work together with residents to enable them to make changes in their travel habits and to make alternatives to travelling by car more accessible for everyone in all areas of Watford. Ongoing communication, listening, and engagement with residents and businesses remain fundamental to the success of the strategy.

5.0 **Implications**

5.1 **Financial**

5.1.1 The Shared Director of Finance comments that it should be noted that delivery of the strategy will be dependent upon external funding. Any budget implications for delivery of the strategy, not currently within existing budgets, will be brought forward as part of the normal budget setting process.

5.2 **Legal Issues** (Monitoring Officer)

5.2.1 The Group Head of Democracy and Governance comments that if the recommendations are approved they will be incorporated into the Sustainable Transport Strategy.

5.3 **Equalities, Human Rights and Data Protection**

5.3.1 There are no specific implications.

5.4 **Staffing**

5.4.1 There are no staffing implications to this report.

5.5 **Accommodation**

5.5.1 There are no accommodation implications in this report.

5.6 **Community Safety/Crime and Disorder**

5.6.1 There are no community safety implications in this report.

5.7 **Sustainability**

5.7.1 Improving the sustainability of travel in Watford is the focus of this report.

Appendices

Appendix 1 - Final report of the Sustainable Transport Strategy Task Group

Appendix 2- Extract of minutes of Overview and Scrutiny Committee, 31 January 2022

Background papers

There are no specific background papers for this report. All background information used during the task group's work is referenced in the final report.