

**CABINET MEMBER FOR
PLANNING, INFRASTRUCTURE
AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT**

XX December 2023

Kent Cycling & Walking Infrastructure Plan

Timetable	
Meeting	Date
Planning, Infrastructure and Economic Development Policy Advisory Committee	07/12/23
Cabinet Member for Planning, Infrastructure and Economic Development	By 31/12/23

Will this be a Key Decision?	No
Urgency	Not Applicable
Final Decision-Maker	Cabinet Member for Planning, Infrastructure and Economic Development.
Lead Head of Service	Karen Britton (Head of Spatial Planning & Economic Development)
Lead Officer and Report Author	Tom Gilbert (Principal Planner).
Classification	Public
Wards affected	All

Executive Summary

Kent County Council (KCC) is consulting on a Kent Cycling & Walking Infrastructure Plan (KCWIP). The consultation on the KCWIP runs from 1 November 2023 to 10 January 2024.

This report summarises the KCWIP consultation (see background document 1), and it recommends that members agree a formal response to the consultation, as drafted by officers and appended to this report in Appendix 1.

Purpose of Report

Recommendation to Cabinet Member

This report makes the following recommendations to the Cabinet Member for Planning, Infrastructure and Economic Development; That

1. The response to the consultation at Appendix 1 of this report be approved.
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Kent Cycling & Walking Infrastructure Plan

1. CROSS-CUTTING ISSUES AND IMPLICATIONS

Issue	Implications	Sign-off
Impact on Corporate Priorities	<p>The four Strategic Plan objectives are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Embracing Growth and Enabling Infrastructure • Safe, Clean and Green • Homes and Communities • A Thriving Place <p>We do not expect the recommendations will by themselves materially affect achievement of corporate priorities. However, they will support the Council’s overall achievement of its aims as set out in section 3 [preferred alternative].</p>	Karen Britton – Head of Spatial Planning & Economic Development
Cross Cutting Objectives	<p>The four cross-cutting objectives are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Heritage is Respected • Health Inequalities are Addressed and Reduced • Deprivation and Social Mobility is Improved • Biodiversity and Environmental Sustainability is respected. <p>The report recommendations support the achievements of the four cross cutting objectives by ensuring that plans from a neighbouring authority do not materially harm the council’s ability to achieve these objectives.</p>	Karen Britton – Head of Spatial Planning & Economic Development
Risk Management	Already covered in the risk section.	Karen Britton – Head of Spatial Planning & Economic Development
Financial	The cost of the consultation response is managed within current resource and budget.	Adrian Lovegrove - Head of Finance
Staffing	We will deliver the recommendations with our current staffing.	Karen Britton – Head of Spatial

		Planning & Economic Development
Legal	There are no legal implications arising from this report.	Russell Fitzpatrick (MKLS (Planning))
Information Governance	The recommendations do not impact personal information (as defined in UK GDPR and Data Protection Act 2018) the Council processes.	Lauren McNicol - Information Governance Team
Equalities	The recommendations do not propose a change in service therefore will not require an equalities impact assessment.	Equalities and Communities Officer
Public Health	We recognise that the recommendations will not negatively impact on population health or that of individuals.	Sarah Ward - Housing and Inclusion Team Leader
Crime and Disorder	There are no implications to Crime and Disorder	Karen Britton - Head of Spatial Planning & Economic Development
Procurement	The recommendation has no immediate impact on budget headings or expenditure in the current year.	Karen Britton - Head of Spatial Planning & Economic Development
Biodiversity and Climate Change	<p>The implications of this report on biodiversity and climate change have been considered and the KCWIP consultation fully aligns with:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Action 1.1 Update the Integrated Transport Strategy, and work towards a Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan to prioritise walking, cycling, public transport, and electric vehicles. • Action 1.2 Deliver policies that enable infrastructure for: Low carbon transportation, Active travel. <p>Of the Biodiversity and Climate Change Action Plan.</p>	Biodiversity and Climate Change Manager

2. INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

2.1 Kent County Council (KCC) is currently consulting on the Kent Cycling & Walking Infrastructure Plan (KCWIP). The consultation runs from the 1st November 2023 to 10th January 2024.

2.2 The KCWIP is part of the Government's Local Cycling & Walking Infrastructure Plan process. It has a 10-year timeframe but is a 'living document' in that it will be subject to regular review. This process was developed by the Department for Transport between 2016 to present. These plans are to be used as the primary strategies for walking & cycling investment decisions. They also involve the development of a local cycling and walking infrastructure plans at a district or borough level to support the work of the Local Plan. The key outputs of this process as described by the DfT are threefold:

- a network plan for walking and cycling which identifies preferred routes and core zones for further development.
- a prioritised programme of infrastructure improvements for future investment
- a report which sets out the underlying analysis carried out and provides a narrative which supports the identified improvements and network.

2.3 At present Maidstone Borough Council is preparing for the development of its own Local Council Cycling & Walking Infrastructure Plan (LCWIP) to cover the Borough. This will be complementary to the KCWIP once developed.

2.4 This consultation is the second stage of consultation, but the first public consultation on the KCWIP. The first stage was a closed stakeholder consultation to which the Council did respond in July 2023.

Consultation content

2.5 The consultation document deals with two principal issues. Firstly, priority cycling routes proposed for the county, and secondly proposed walking and wheeling zones. These can be located on pages 10 to 16 of background document 1.

2.6 The priority cycling routes are those that have been identified to best support travel by that mode and will be prioritised for investment. Within Maidstone Borough KCC have identified a route between Maidstone East Railway Station and Sittingbourne Railway Station via Detling, Hartlip, Kemlsey & Sittingbourne. A detailed route map has been attached to this report in Background document 2.

2.7 The proposed walking and wheeling zones are 2km radius areas from 15 identified town centres where intervention to encourage walking and cycling are proposed. None have been identified for Maidstone Borough.

Maidstone Borough Council response

2.8 The proposed full response on behalf of Maidstone Borough Council to the KCWIP consultation can be found in Appendix 1. However, set out below is a summary of that response.

2.9 In short, the proposed response makes the following points:

- Maidstone Borough Council would like to see Maidstone town centre as a walking zone in line with its adopted strategies.
- The proposed zones and routes do not appear to factor in projected growth and the Council feels that this should be the case now that the Local Plan Review is at an advanced stage.
- The proposed cycling routes need to be amended to support cycling to the rural service centres as stated in the adopted Maidstone Integrated Transport Strategy and Maidstone walking & Cycling Strategy.

What happens next?

2.10 The KCWIP document suggests that following the consultation a consultation report will be produced and published. It is planned then intended for the document will be adopted by KCC in Spring 2024. The document will then be used to secure funding for the proposals.

3. AVAILABLE OPTIONS

- 3.1 Option 1: That the draft response to the consultation be approved. This would allow the response to be sent by the submission deadline of 10 January 2024.
- 3.2 Option 2: That the draft response be approved subject to further comments and changes. Depending on the extent and timing of the receipt of these comments, this would allow the response to be sent by the submission deadline of 10 January 2024.
- 3.3 Option 3: That the draft response is not approved. However, this would mean the response would not be sent and the Council's views on the KCWIP would not be provided to KCC.
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4. PREFERRED OPTION AND REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

- 4.1 Option 1: That the draft response to the consultation be approved. This would allow the response to be sent by the submission deadline of 10 January 2024.
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5. RISK

- 5.1 The risk associated with the recommendation, including the risks should the Council not act as recommended, have been considered in line with the Council's Risk management Framework.
- 5.2 If agreement is secured, per the recommendations, then we are satisfied that the risks associated are within the Council's risk appetite and will be managed as per the Policy.

6. CONSULTATION RESULTS AND PREVIOUS COMMITTEE FEEDBACK

6.1 The matter was considered by the Planning, Infrastructure and Economic Development Policy Advisory Committee on 7 December 2023 with support expressed for the report recommendation, taking into account the Committee's comments on the draft response. The response has also been shared with Maidstone Cycle Campaign Forum for its views.

The response at appendix 1 to this report has been amended to take into account the views expressed by both bodies.

7. REPORT APPENDICES

The following documents are to be published with this report and form part of the report:

- Appendix 1: Draft Response to Kent Cycling & Walking Infrastructure Plan consultation.
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8. BACKGROUND PAPERS

- Background document 1: Kent Cycling & Walking Infrastructure Plan: Consultation Document - [Kent Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan | Let's talk Kent](#)
- Background document 2: Kent Cycling & Walking Infrastructure Plan: Cycling Route 14 Maidstone to Sittingbourne - [Kent Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan | Let's talk Kent](#)