

Report of: Director of City Development

Report to: Executive Board

Date: 18 November 2015

Subject: White Paper response – Cycling facility development in Leeds

Are specific electoral Wards affected? If relevant, name(s) of Ward(s):	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
Are there implications for equality and diversity and cohesion and integration?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
Is the decision eligible for Call-In?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
Does the report contain confidential or exempt information? If relevant, Access to Information Procedure Rule number: Appendix number:	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No

Summary of main issues

1. This report responds to the Full Council request:

“Council therefore calls on officers to prepare a report for Executive Board on the development of cycling facilities in Leeds, including in particular how the Council can work collaboratively with its partners, including the Sport Leeds Board, to ensure the success of world class sporting events in the city continues to be built on.”

2. Work is ongoing with the development of a city cycle strategy as well as a number of facility developments both relating to highways improvements and cycle hubs. There are numerous cycling development initiatives underway within the city in an effort to support more people cycling.
3. British Cycling stated priority remains the development of a closed circuit cycle track. Plans are now well developed with the University of Leeds to deliver a new facility.

Recommendations

4. Executive Board is recommended to:

- i) Note the report;
- ii) Receive a report on the Cycling Starts Here strategy at a future Executive Board.

1. Purpose of this report

- 1.1 To provide a response to the white paper motion outlining the development of cycling facilities in Leeds.

2. Background information

- 2.1 Following the recent White paper motion at Full Council officers were asked to prepare a report for this Board on the development of cycling facilities in Leeds, including in particular how the council can work collaboratively with its partners, including SportLeeds Board, to ensure the success of world class sporting events in the city continues to be built on.
- 2.2 Carrying on from the tremendous success of the grand depart in Leeds, considerable work has been on going with partners to develop cycling opportunities in Leeds. A “Cycling Starts Here” Programme Board has been established to oversee the coordination of cycling development opportunities which is currently overseeing the development of an overarching cycling strategy and plan for the city.
- 2.3 As has been reported in previous Executive Board reports a tremendous amount of work has already been put in place to develop and promote cycling opportunities and this work continues, including for example:
 - The ongoing development of the Leeds cycle network, through City Connect;
 - The development of cycle hubs in 3 locations across the city, including the introduction a bike library at Fearnville;
 - Delivery of Skyride (7000 participants) and Skyride local events (the current programme will finish beginning of November 2015);
 - Delivery of cycling opportunities for women including lead ride programme (Breeze), Health 4 All project and soon to have specific support through the National Governing Body Place Pilot to appoint a women’s activator post with a focus on Cycling in priority communities;
 - Delivery of Ride leader training for example in March this year at the Fearnville hub, 16 people completed the Level 1 Ride Leader course delivered by British Cycling with funding from LCC and West Yorkshire Sport; the ride leaders where from local clubs including Alba Rosa and 3rd sector organisations such as ZEST, Black Health Initiative and The Works;
 - Continue to teach young people to ride through Bikeability, the recently awarded contract will see over 6500 young people have access to Bikeability training a cross Leeds. Leeds has recently had confirmation that Bikeability Plus places will be made available,(figures to be confirmed), this will include sessions to teach balance ability and led rides
 - As part of the go:cycling initiative, provided by the WYCA and LCC Highways and Transportation, over 200 adult cycling training engagements have been delivered in Leeds since April 2015.

2.4 The partnerships developed through SportLeeds have enabled the successful delivery of much of the development programmes. Of particular interest is the development of cycling facilities in the city, above and beyond the investment being made within the City Connect programmes. The Council has been working very closely with British Cycling and partners within SportLeeds in looking at the future cycle facility priorities in the city. In terms of facility development this work has underlined the need for the development of a closed circuit cycle track as well as locally based hubs for cycling.

3. Main issues

3.1 The white paper motion suggested that the city should consider the introduction of a Velodrome in the City. Consultation with British Cycling confirms that their stated priorities are to deliver one close road circuit, one national standard BMX Track and one outdoor Velodrome. The development of good quality cycling sports facilities and investment in wider cycling infrastructure remains a key focus for the city. Specifically in relation to the Velodrome it should be noted:

- The costs of providing a specialist indoor Velodrome are significant. The most recent indoor Velodrome/Arena was Derby and this cost over £30m to build. British Cycling's view is that that a Closed Road Circuit can be ridden by all level of abilities and within reason can be used by any type of bike, and therefore it is a better legacy facility than an indoor Velodrome, which requires specialist coaching and training as well as fixed wheel track bikes. All the UK indoor Velodromes and the modern outdoor Velodromes operate an accredited riders system, therefore participants have to have a good level of competency to ride.
- British Cycling propose that the city needs to consider supporting an outdoor velodrome. Outdoor Velodromes have recently been built in York, which includes a closed circuit track, (2014) and Middlesbrough (2015). An outdoor Velodrome could complement the plans for the Closed Road Circuit at the University and the cycle hub plans at Fearnville Leisure Centre and also the Mountain Bike Trails in Middleton Park but consideration would need to be given by the landowner to the capital costs and the need for a sustainable business and management plan. British Cycling were also keen to point out it is important that the city as a whole (working with British Cycling) also invests in the programmes and people that encourage and support 'participation' and help people get the most out of their cycling.

3.2 Putting the Velodrome proposal in context there is a huge amount of cycling development work that is ongoing within the city and that has been reported to this Board as part of the tour De France cycling legacy update in January 2015. Building on what was then reported and to illustrate progress some examples are set out below;

- Cycling is a focus sport in 2015 for the Active Schools (Children's Services/City Development) and the Sport and Active Lifestyles Teams and as such Officers are helping to develop clear pathways from grassroots, through to performance

exit routes and wider recreation opportunities. Both teams are working with key partners (internal and external) to establish a coordinated approach to the delivery of Cycling across the City.

- The Local Strategic Transport Fund (LSTF) “Access to Education” project will be continued in 2015/16 across five secondary schools and their feeder primary schools and the 3 universities in Leeds. In these schools it provides a model for engaging with pupils and their parent/ guardians to show case sustainable travel behaviour on the school journey
- Sportivate is a £56million Lottery funded London 2012 legacy project. The programme gives 14-25 year olds who are not particularly “sporty” access to 6 – 8 weeks of free coaching in a range of sports. A good example of this scheme supporting Cycling includes the Leeds BMX club which have two Sportivate projects which were delivered earlier this year and will see 20 – 25 young people from both the David Young Academy in Seacroft and the Co-Operative Academy in Burmantofts get access to a fleet of bikes and skill development training.
- Adaptive cycling takes place throughout the week at the John Charles Centre for Sport, the sessions are staffed and suitable for adults and children over the age of 5; there are a variety of bikes available to use including quads, trikes, hand cycles, mountain trikes and tandems. Elements of adaptive cycling are also available at Herd Farm, Lineham Farm and Yeadon Tarn, with work currently taking place to expand and grow the offer at these sites
- Leeds has introduced a series of cycle measures over the last 25 years; a number of schemes were introduced including a number of substantial rural routes in partnership with Sustrans, cycle parking was introduced throughout the city centre and other district centres and a process of cycle auditing was also introduced whereby all highway schemes are subject to a cycle audit, to ensure that the needs of cyclists are considered. In 2009 Leeds City Council’s Executive Board approved the Leeds Core Cycle Network, a network of 17 largely radial routes, 7 of which have now been implemented. In 2013 the Department for Transport announced the Cycle City Ambition Grant (CCAG) which amounted to a step change in capital funding. The Department were impressed by Leeds level of ambition which stated that over the next 10 years (from 2013) Leeds would develop; a network of 6 Cycle Superhighways (including the one in the initial bid), complete the Leeds Core Cycle Network, and the development of a City Centre Cycling Loop – *the Inner Tube*.
- Leeds (along with Bradford) was successful in obtaining £20 million to implement:-
 - Leeds to Bradford cycle super highway (14 miles long)
 - Public realm streetscape improvements through the centre of Stanningley
 - Leeds City Centre Cycle City Loop; improving the cycle connectivity of the city centre
 - High quality resurfacing of the Leeds Liverpool Canal towpath between Armley and Shipley

- High quality cycle parking in Leeds City Centre and at key points on the superhighway
 - 20 mph schemes in the areas adjacent to the route.
 - A new organisation is proposed to bring together partners to engage with communities in encouraging the take-up of cycling
- After a successful contracting process this huge scheme started site works in January 2015 and is due for completion by the spring/summer of 2016, including 14 miles of Super Highway and 38 x 20mph schemes. The majority of the towpath improvement works are now complete.
- On a separate but related matter cycle parking has already provided over 350 spaces in the city centre, including a dozen using the “car port” system, which provides attractive cycle parking at locations where footway width meant we had not previously been able to provide cycle parking.
- Leeds have been successful in securing funding for phase 2 of City Connect. In Phase 2 Leeds will benefit from;
 - an additional 7km of super cycle highway to the North and South of Leeds City Centre
 - Improvements to City Centre cycle access in Leeds
 - Neighborhood improvements to provide access for pedestrians and cyclists
 - Activity to enable access to a bike and encouragement to ride
 - Consultation on phase two will start in late Autumn 2015 and run until summer 2016. More detail on consultation opportunities will be released soon.

3.3 Work has also been ongoing to develop 3 cycle hubs within the city, these being:

Fearnville Bike Hub

This is being managed and activity delivered through Cycle Pathway CIC (a community investment company) with the support of LCC and key external partners such as go cycling, there is currently a 2 year plan for the development of the hub; and is the site for the first sponsored Yorkshire Bike Library Scheme in Leeds. There are 180 bikes being prepared to lend to the local community with support programmes of activity to help biking confidence e.g. Bikeability, aimed at specific target groups such as girls and women with links to wider interventions including British Cycling’s Sky Ride Local and Breeze. Fearnville is a great example of the planning and joining-up of activities and programmes with a share of resources to make an impact at a local level.

Middleton Bike Hub

Parks and Countryside and Sport and Active Lifestyles services are in discussion with British Cycling to develop the former golf course and club house into a mountain biking (all levels of tracks from entry to competition), BMX and cyclo cross venue; currently site plans and proposals are being completed with a feasibility study due to

be commissioned by the end of October. The “off road” cycling will link to activities and space at the John Charles Centre for Sport, for example, the adapted bikes programme and future potential use of the road circulating the facility for developing biking confidence.

Weetwood Bike Hub

Of particular note is the work being led by University of Leeds. Their proposal to build a 1.5km closed circuit track is now well developed and also includes significant improvements to the on-site pavilion. The project is still at pre tender stage but the track and associated facilities will be Regional standard and available for community use. The project will also help service not only cycling but also Triathlon, cementing Leeds as the best city in the UK for Triathlon. In addition, the facility will offer the opportunity to develop competitive hand cycling an identified gap in current provision. An update from the University is outlined below:

“University of Leeds, in partnership with British Cycling, is progressing plans to develop a 1.6k closed loop cycle track at the Boddington Sports Fields, owned by University of Leeds.

The plans are currently at feasibility stage and external consultation with wider stakeholders will take place during October to determine local and regional demand for the track.

It is envisaged that the facility will be available for use by university students, local cycle clubs, local schools plus for a range of sports events.

The new facilities will also include a redevelopment of the existing pavilion, which will include changing facilities and social space for groups using the cycle track.”

- 3.4 Cycling events within the city continue to underpin the wider ambitions to get more people cycling. The 2015 Skyride event again proved to be hugely popular with over 7000 active participants. Furthermore the news that Leeds will once again be hosting the Tour De Yorkshire in 2016 presents opportunities to showcase cycling nationally as well as build on opportunities to promote cycling to women. Officers have also been working with British Triathlon to submit a funding bid to Sport England to support the development of Triathlon on the back of the 2016 World Triathlon Series in Leeds in 2016. The approach will specifically target cycling, running and swimming.
- 3.5 The bike library at Fearnville is one of a number of bicycle re-cycle schemes across the city including Meanwood Urban Valley Farm, The Works Skate Park, Peddlers Arms and Leeds Bike Mill.
- 3.6 Moving forward the “Cycling Starts Here” programme Board has been established to oversee the development of a city plan for cycling development. This group is chaired by Cllr Harrington and includes officers from LCC, British Cycling and representation from the Leeds cycle Forum. The Board is still at an early stage but is in the process of considering a draft cycling strategy for the city.

3.7 A more comprehensive update on cycling development will be brought forward in due course, together with the draft City “Cycling starts here strategy”.

4. Corporate Considerations

4.1 Consultation and Engagement

4.1.1 Consultation has taken place with University of Leeds, the “Cycling Starts Here” programme board and British Cycling. The Executive Board member for Health and Wellbeing and Sport has also been consulted.

4.2 Equality and Diversity / Cohesion and Integration

4.2.1 The development of the closed circuit track referenced in this response is led by the University Of Leeds. Wider developments relating to cycling that are governed by Leeds City Council continue to develop and will be subject to the appropriate screening as and when proposals are brought forward.

4.3 Council Policies and Best Council Plan

4.3.1 The work on Cycling Starts Here contributes to the following Council objectives

- Tackling health inequalities (and the joint health and wellbeing strategy 2013-18)
- Child friendly city
- Raising the profile of Leeds nationally and internationally
- Building cohesive and harmonious communities

The proposals being developed also underpin or contribute to a number of the council’s breakthrough projects in particular those that relate to “hosting world class events on a global stage” and “Reducing health inequalities through healthy lifestyles”.

4.3.2 The cycling legacy work also supports the Leeds Sport and Active Lifestyles Strategy ‘Leeds to become the most active big city in England’ with three primary outcomes of:

- Improving health and wellbeing through sport and more active lifestyles
- Widening access to sport
- Nurturing success in sport across the city

4.4 Resources and value for money

4.4.1 There are no specific implications.

4.5 Legal Implications, Access to Information and Call In

4.5.1 There are no specific implications.

4.6 Risk Management

4.6.1 Nil

5. Conclusions

- 5.1 The development of opportunities to cycle remains a priority for this council. Whilst the construction of a Velodrome is not currently a priority there are a number of facility developments and wider cycling development work underway that will create more opportunities for the wider community of Leeds to cycle safely. Executive Board will note that progress across a range of initiatives is ongoing and that a city cycle strategy is currently being produced. The latest development of the cycling Hub at Weetwood in particular presents exciting opportunities to encourage more people to cycle.

6. Recommendations

- 6.1 Executive Board is recommended to:
- i) Note the report;
 - ii) Receive a report on the Cycling Starts Here strategy at a future Executive Board.

7. Background documents¹

- 7.1 None.

¹ The background documents listed in this section are available to download from the Council's website, unless they contain confidential or exempt information. The list of background documents does not include published works.