

Contact Officer: Leigh Webb

KIRKLEES COUNCIL

ECONOMY AND NEIGHBOURHOODS SCRUTINY PANEL

Tuesday 8th December 2020

Present: Councillor Harpreet Uppal (Chair)
Councillor Martyn Bolt
Councillor Richard Eastwood
Councillor Yusra Hussain

Co-optees Eilidh Ogden
Andrew Bird

In attendance: Councillor Peter McBride – Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Regeneration
Councillor Paul Davies – Cabinet Member Culture and Environment
Councillor Naheed Mather – Cabinet Member Greener Kirklees

Apologies: Chris Friend (Co-Optee)

1 Membership of the Committee

Apologies were received from Chris Friend (Co-optee).

2 Interests

There were no declarations of interest.

3 Minutes of the Previous Meeting

That the minutes of the meeting held on 6 October 2020 be agreed as a correct record.

4 Admission of the Public

All items were considered in public session.

5 Public Question Time

No questions were asked under this item.

6 Deputations/Petitions

No deputations or petitions were received.

7 Active Travel

The Panel received a report setting out details of the current influences on Kirklees Council's vision for an Active Travel Strategy along with some of the next steps to developing the Strategy.

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The report set out the Major Project Team programmes and projects that are underway, and that incorporate walking and cycling provision. In addition, the council has several service areas or teams where cycling as an activity is promoted:

- Development of a school transport strategy
- Road safety team
- Place Partnership Profiles– active travel
- Behaviour Change Work
- E-bike and E-scooter- council fleet of 4 e-bikes and national e-scooter trial (alongside EV and charging points)

It was reported that there are several additional projects in various stages of investigation or development which have arisen because of planning applications being progressed and funding being secured, from work carried out by partners, e.g. Sustrans or from work the Council is involved in to improve Public Rights of Way or urban paths, including:

- Meltham Greenway
- Calder Valley Greenway- Mirfield extension
- Dalton to Deighton Greenway-Phase 1
- Spen Valley College - Links to Spen Valley Greenway
- Brookroyd Gardens - links to existing cycle route
- Wilton Park Cycle Route
- Spen Valley Greenway - East Extension
- Meltham Greenway - Phase 2
- Town Investment Plan (Dewsbury Town Plan 2021)

Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plans (LCWIPs) are being developed for the region, to help the Combined Authority and its partner councils prioritise future investment in walking and cycling infrastructure in West Yorkshire, enabling more people to walk and cycle for everyday journeys. LCWIPs will help inform future investment in provision for cycling and walking, and form part of a future connectivity pipeline across all modes of transport serving the Leeds City Region, as well as potentially helping to influence local planning processes. Future investment in walking and cycling, informed by these LCWIPs, will help to deliver the policies and targets of the West Yorkshire Transport Strategy 2040.

John Lewis, Chair of the Kirklees Cycling Campaign, was invited to the meeting to respond to the report and input into the item from the Group's perspective. A copy of the response had been provided Panel members in advance of the meeting.

During discussion of this item, the Panel highlighted the following issues and comments in relation to the development of an active travel strategy:

- There is room for improvement in respect of linkages. It should be a priority to develop linkages outside the major highway construction projects.
- Wider engagement is needed with both the cycling community and non cycling community

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- Secure cycle parking and changing facilities are needed to encourage behavioural change.
- There needs to be a balance between connectivity for cars/cyclists and walkers.
- Off road solutions are much more preferable for non cyclists as a means of accessing town centres and avoiding busy main roads

RESOLVED –

That the comments and views of the Panel be considered as part of the development of an Active Travel Strategy

8 Air Quality - Update

The Panel received a presentation setting out progress in respect of air quality and initiatives to improve air quality levels. The presentation included information relating to:

- Air Quality monitoring update from the Annual Status Report (ASR)
- Air Quality Action Plan progress
- Ongoing and future Air Quality project Delivery
- Covid impact on Air Quality (lockdown 1)

With regard to progress against the Air Quality Strategy Action Plan adopted in 2019, the presentation highlighted the following initiatives and actions:

- Created and recruited to a new Air Quality Delivery Team - The need for resource support in order to achieve the aims of the plan was quickly identified. The council has created a delivery team of project officers, team leader and operational manager to work with, engage and support partners in their commitments to deliver a program of works contained within the Action Plan.
- Declared a Climate Emergency- January 2019- Following the declaration of a Climate Emergency work was commenced to deliver Carbon reductions across the district. There is an important link between the Climate Emergency and Air Quality to bring about environmental improvements.
- West Yorkshire Low Emission Strategy- A regional West Yorkshire Low Emissions Officer was appointed to evaluate the progress of the West Yorkshire Low Emission Strategy (WYLES). This is increasing local authority partnership working to undertake a review of the regional actions required to improve air quality for all residents.

It was reported that in addition, the following work is ongoing with other lead service areas on holistic approaches which contribute towards improving air quality:

- Council Fleet conversion to Electric, installation of EV chargers, trials of other electric vehicles and equipment
- Taxi licensing, Active Travel, Highways, Major Projects, Planning, Public Health
- Collaborative working with WYCA and neighbouring authorities through attendance of zero emission and EV infrastructure working groups

During discussion of this item, the Panel acknowledged the link between active travel and air quality; advised on the need for further education and work with

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schools to reduce school run traffic and prevent idling outside schools; and the importance of infrastructure measures to encourage the use of electric vehicles and cycles.

The Chair referred to the issue of incentivising taxis to switch to electric to encourage a greener, less polluting fleet.

RESOLVED –

That the presentation be noted.

9 Waste Service - Update

The Panel received a presentation setting out information relating to the delivery of waste services during Covid and an update in respect of the Resources and Waste Strategy Update.

With regard to performance it was reported that 99.72% of collections had been undertaken without complaint.

In respect of the issue of bulky waste it was acknowledged that there had been some delays. It was reported that plans were underway for the introduction of a booking system around bulky collections.

During discussion of this item, the Panel highlighted the importance of educating residents with clear and concise information about which items can be recycled and how. Furthermore where there are delays or changes, ongoing communication with residents at an early stage is essential

RESOLVED- That the Panel places on record its appreciation for all the hard work and excellent performance of the waste service during the Covid Period.

10 Work Programme

The Panel's Work Programme for 2020/21 and forthcoming items/activities was submitted.

The Chair informed the Panel that a report on the implementation of the Grant Schemes during Covid would be submitted to the January meeting of the Panel, following a request from Councillor Smaje.

RESOLVED –

1. That the work programme be noted.
2. That major highway schemes should be considered by this Panel in advance of the Cabinet making decisions