

## ITEM: CYCLING DELIVERY PLAN

**Report Author:** Gordon Oliver      **Position:** Principal Transport Policy Officer  
**Telephone:** 01628 796097      **Email:** gordon.oliver@rbwm.gov.uk

**1. Purpose of the Report**

**1.1 To inform the Cycle Forum about the Government's Draft Cycling Delivery Plan and agree how the Royal Borough and its partners should prepare for its implementation.**

**2. Supporting Information**

2.1 The Department for Transport published its draft Cycling Delivery Plan in October 2014 and subsequently undertook informal consultation with local authorities and other cycling delivery partners ([www.gov.uk/government/consultations/cycling-delivery-plan-informal-consultation](http://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/cycling-delivery-plan-informal-consultation)).

2.2 The delivery plan is based around four key themes, which are described below.

2.3 **Theme 1: Vision, leadership and ambition:** The draft plan sets out the government's 10 year strategy on how they plan to increase cycling and walking across England. It includes an ambition to double cycling levels by 2025 and increase the percentage of school children aged 5 to 10 years walking to school to 55% by 2025.

2.4 The Government is proposing to set up partnerships with local authorities, where - in exchange for signing up to a series of actions to deliver changes in cycling and walking - local authorities will receive access to supporting tools and incentives, including knowledge sharing, priority access to funding and sector expertise.

2.5 In forming a partnership with government, local authorities would be expected to:

- Set a clear and specific vision for their area outlining how cycling and walking will be increased and supported over a defined period;
- Develop a local walking and cycling delivery plan;
- Appoint a local cycling and walking champion;
- Demonstrate a commitment to door-to-door journeys, and to creating safe cycling and walking provision through cycle and pedestrian proofing new transport infrastructure and developing a planned and funded cycling and walking investment programme;
- Demonstrate that their walking and cycling plans include steps to meet the needs of people from hard to reach groups (including disabled people, older people and others) where those needs are different from those of other people.

2.6 **Theme 2 – Funding:** The Plan sets out an aspiration to achieve funding for cycling equivalent to £10 per person per year by 2020/21. This is the minimum amount recommended by the All Party Parliamentary Cycling Group in their 'Get Britain Cycling' report and some way below current levels of expenditure by leading nations such as the Netherlands, where spending is closer to £30 per person for infrastructure alone. Current spend is estimated at £5 per head, including revenue funding for initiatives such as Bikeability.

- 2.7 The Plan highlights opportunities for local authorities and Local Enterprise Partnerships to use Local Growth Fund bids to support infrastructure improvements. It also indicates that there will be a long-term funding commitment from central government to provide advice and expertise to local authorities on:
- Access to finance;
  - Project and programme management;
  - Engaging LEPs, businesses and charities;
  - Scheme delivery; and
  - Other aspects of developing and managing a successful cycling network.
- 2.8 Other sources of funding identified include:
- Local Transport Plan Integrated Transport Block
  - Local Transport Plan Maintenance Block
  - Funding for cycle proofing the strategic road network
  - Social impact bonds
- 2.9 **Theme 3 - Infrastructure and planning:** In August 2013 the Prime Minister announced his intention to "cycle proof" the road network - in other words, to ensure that cyclists are considered at the design stage of new and improved road infrastructure, which in turn benefits pedestrians too.
- 2.10 Government expects local authorities to take steps to cycle proof their local roads and to avoid bringing pedestrians and cyclists into conflict.
- 2.11 There are a number of areas that government, through its Cycle Proofing Working Group, will address in order to realise our cycle proofing ambitions:
- Providing best practice information for creating cycle-friendly streets;
  - Ensuring transport professionals are trained and able to design infrastructure that works for cyclists;
  - Ensuring that professionals understand how to improve cyclist provision whilst considering the needs and safety of other road users;
  - Promoting good design and greater delivery of cycling infrastructure, building on existing materials and best practice guides;
  - Completing the consultation and finalisation of the revised Traffic Signs and Regulations General Directions for 2015;
  - Carrying out a six month review into how the planning system supports cycling and walking provision. The review will report back with specific, realistic recommendations for how application of the existing planning framework can be improved when it comes to walking and cycling.
  - Infrastructure improvements such as improved pedestrian and cyclist access to facilities and wider cycle storage and parking.
  - Strengthen requirements for cycling and walking in franchise specifications for rail operators and in refurbishments of stations and new stations delivered by Network Rail
- 2.12 **Theme 4: Safety and perceptions of safety:** Concerns over safety are often cited as one of the main reasons why people do not cycle or walk. The DfT is therefore developing a programme of work to address cycle safety issues to reduce the rate of

those killed or seriously injured on the roads, and to address the perception that cycling is not safe.

2.13 The Delivery Plan sets out a number of actions to address safety concerns:

- Addressing cycle safety issues by engaging with other government departments, freight and cycling representative groups, and vehicle manufacturers
- Endeavouring to extend funding for Bikeability beyond 2015/16;
- Creating safe walking and cycling routes to schools;
- Develop behaviour change projects to promote cycling and walking as normal, accessible activities available to all;
- Maximising the potential for electrically assisted pedal cycles;
- Reviewing the current legislative to ensure the law reflects current concerns whilst being consistent and proportionate;
- Implementing a project to look into cycle crime and measures to tackle this.

2.14 It is interesting to note that there is no mention in this section to the role of infrastructure and street design in creating safe environments that feel safe to those that use them.

2.15 **Consultation** - The Department for Transport has undertaken informal consultation on the draft document, holding a series of regional workshops to which local authorities and other stakeholders were invited.

2.16 The DfT has yet to publish the outcome of the consultation. However, the main issues raised at the South-East England regional workshop related to the lack of information on the amount and availability of funding and the need for clarity about whether walking was / should be part of the document as it appeared to have been included as something of an afterthought and did not even feature in the title of the document. There was widespread dissatisfaction with the draft Delivery Plan amongst local authorities and cycling interest groups and there was a general feeling that preparation of the document had been rushed.

2.17 **Expressions of Interest** – The draft Delivery Plan invited local authorities to make expressions of interest to local authorities who would be interested in setting a long term ambition for walking and cycling in their area, and who, as part of that ambition would like to work in partnership with government to secure its delivery.

2.18 The Royal Borough has not yet submitted an expression of interest and is waiting for the final version of the Cycling Delivery Plan to be published. It is hoped that this will provide greater clarity as to the scope of the partnership, the criteria to be used in assessing applications, and the likely commitments as a result of participating in such a partnership. This will enable the Council to make a more informed decision.

2.19 In particular, clarification would be welcomed on the following points:

- Whether the scope of the Delivery Plan includes walking as well as cycling;
- How projects would be funded (e.g. grant or borrowing) and whether this will be new funding or a reallocation of existing funds;
- The level of expected match funding from local / third party contributions;
- Whether priority will be given to cities, as has been the case with previous funds;

- The resource implications for local authorities in terms of bidding for funding, delivering schemes, monitoring and reporting performance;
- The implications of not participating in the initiative.

### **3. Conclusions**

- 3.1 The Draft Cycling Delivery Plan provides an acknowledgement from Central Government that more needs to be done to improve conditions for walking and cycling. However, it fails to make firm commitments to provide the funding that is necessary to deliver this, and it lacks detail about the mechanisms for securing any funding that does become available.
- 3.2 Nevertheless, it would be prudent to make preparations so that the Royal Borough is well-placed to secure funding when the final version of the Delivery Plan is published. The outputs from the Cycling Workshops held between November 2013 and March 2014 could provide the basis for a future Cycling Delivery Plan.

### **4. Recommendation**

#### **4.1 It is recommended that members of the Cycle Forum:**

- **note the contents of the report**
- **support any future expressions of interest / applications for funding**