

ENVIRONMENTAL OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE HELD: 23 FEB 2012

Start: 7.30pm

Finish: 9.35pm

PRESENT:

Councillors: Mrs Blake (Chairman) Pratt (ViceChairman)

Councillors: Mrs Atherley Mee
Ainscough Ms Melling
Baybutt R A Pendleton
Delaney Mrs Pollock
Gartside Pye
Hennessy Savage
Hodson Mrs Stephenson
McKay

Officers: Borough Economic Regeneration and Strategic Planning Officer
(Mrs J Traverse)
Planning Officer (Mr D Carr)
Principal Overview and Scrutiny Officer (Mrs C A Jackson)

In attendance: Ms J Dickinson (Environmental Safety Officer, Edge Hill University)

23. APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence were submitted on behalf of Martin Trengove of West Lancashire Community Voluntary Service (CVS) and his colleague, who were due to give a presentation (Item 7(b) CVS – Community Projects). Members noted that Mr Trengove had offered to attend a future meeting of the Committee to provide an update in relation to the VISIT Project.

24. MEMBERSHIP OF THE COMMITTEE

In accordance with Council Procedure Rule 4, Members noted the termination of Councillor M Pendleton and the appointment of Councillor R A Pendleton for this meeting only, thereby giving effect to the wishes of the Political Group.

25. URGENT BUSINESS

There were no items of urgent business.

26. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

27. DECLARATIONS OF PARTY WHIP

There were no declarations of a Party Whip.

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28. MINUTES

RESOLVED: That the Minutes of the meeting of the Environmental Overview and Scrutiny Committee held on 3 November 2012 be received as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

29. CYCLING IN WEST LANCASHIRE

Members considered the following items.

30. EDGE HILL UNIVERSITY - CYCLING INITIATIVES

Members received a presentation from Ms Julia Dickinson, Environmental Safety Officer, Edge Hill University. The presentation 'Cycling Initiatives at Edge Hill University' was supported by a series of slides as contained on pages 103 to 113 of the Book Reports.

In her presentation, Ms Dickinson, explained the background to the University cycling initiative that is encouraging students who live within 5 miles of the Ormskirk campus to use alternative transport to help reduce the number of cars on campus and in turn help to reduce the environmental impact.

As part of the initiative the University has brought in a package of measure to improve the structure and culture in relation to car dependency at the University.

She went on to explain the initiatives and policies that had been introduced, including:

- Traffic Management Plan that included restricting car parking permits on the campus to those living outside a 5km zone.
- Working being undertaken with the Carbon Trust in relation to carbon management.
- Encouraging "Shared use" of cars and raising the profile of cycling on campus.
- Infrastructure improvements have also included the provision of safe storage for cycles, including Sheffield and Butterfly stands at the Ormskirk Campus and the provision of Bykebins.
- Green lane entranced created off St. Helens Road for use by cyclists and pedestrians only.

Ms Dickinson then went on to explain the promotional events that had been held including "Green Week"; Travelwise Roadshow and a Well-being week to promote the benefits of cycling and facilities being offered.

In conjunction with Lancashire County Council (LCC) staff had been encouraged to consider Cycling to Work. Advice and help on travel alternatives was also offered.

Members were shown a snapshot of the Travel page on the University's web-site which gave information on Cycling, the facilities and discounts offered by a local cycle shop as well as a bicycle repair service.

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Ms Dickinson concluded her presentation by outlining future proposals related to cycling and sustainability including:

- Travel Survey 2012 to measure and assess the initiatives that have been introduced.
- Walking and cycling map to provide detailed information to get to the University.
- Cycle routes – on-going work with LCC on travel between Ormskirk Town Centre, the bus/rail stations and the campus.
- Cycle parking outside key buildings – to include the provision of additional Sheffield stands.
- Cycle promotion days – bicycle maintenance days; provision of breakfast for cyclists who travel.
- Interest Free Loans – for employees to purchase cycles and related safety equipments.

Members raised questions/comments in relation to:

- Allocation of Parking Permits and special circumstances.
- Improvement in percentages of people cycling to the campus since the introduction of the initiatives.
- Methodology of the approach to cycling at the University.
- Grant funding and association with LCC.
- Postcode analysis and use in the wider community, particular with businesses.
- Benefits associated with working with the Carbon Trust
- Choice of 5 mile radius around the campus to support and encourage cycling at the University.
- Incentives associated with the car sharing initiative.
- Continued investment in cycling through infrastructure additions/changes at the Ormskirk campus.
- Monitoring of park permit entitlement.
- Impact on Ormskirk Town Centre parking as a result of changes to car parking permit entitlement at the University.
- Education and training initiatives related to cycling.
- Working up Travel Plans with LCC

Ms Dickinson responded to questions.

Members were encouraged by what the University is seeking to undertake in relation to cycling at the Ormskirk campus and that they would be revisiting the impact of their initiatives, through a Travel Survey, later in the year. In respect of the latter, it was suggested that an additional question to add to the survey could be, "Where do people park?" Ms Dickinson noted the recommendation.

RESOLVED: A. That the presentation be noted.

- B. That the Environmental Co-ordinator Edge Hill University be thanked for her attendance and the excellent presentation.

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- C. That it be noted that the representative from Edge Hill University took on board the comments from the Committee to request them to include the question "Where do people park?" in their future Travel Survey.
- D. That, subject to the agreement of the University, that the results of the Travel Survey 2012, be shared with the Committee, as part of the review into 'Cycling in West Lancashire'.

31. COMMUNITY VOLUNTARY SERVICES (CVS) - COMMUNITY PROJECTS

This item was not considered.

32. CYCLING IN THE BOROUGH

Consideration was given to the information provided on behalf of the Borough Planner presented by the Council's Planning Officer, Dominic Carr (DC) that updated Members on issues previously raised during the course of the review which was supported by a handout circulated and contained on pages 113 to 118 of the Book of Reports.

The update covered:

Cycling Routes

The Planning Officer explained that there were several cycle maps available relating to West Lancashire. These included cycle maps for Ormskirk and Skelmersdale; the Lancashire Cycle Guide and a new Local Sustainable Transport Fund (LSTF) Cycle Map for West Lancashire and Sefton as part of that Project. Members considered the map showing the existing and proposed cycle routes.

He further explained the networks that were being developed in West Lancashire and Sefton and the interactive maps that would be available on-line, in early summer.

Skelmersdale Pilot and other LTP3 Initiatives

It was reported that as part of Lancashire LTP3 the County Council have identified an opportunity to improve the public realm and access within Skelmersdale and that this may include improvements to the cycle and pedestrian network.

He went on to explain the proposed pilot scheme, in conjunction with LCC, which was in its infancy and the review that is expected to take place in relation to S106 agreements in Skelmersdale.

Improvements to Ormskirk Town Centre using S106 and LTP funding

It was reported that in relation to the above WLBC are working with LCC to look at a range of ways to improve links for cyclists and pedestrians between Ormskirk Town Centre and Edge Hill University. By seeking improvements, that are likely to include new cycle lanes and links to the train/bus station and junction improvements, it is hoped that there will be an increase in cycle usage amongst students as well as providing an improvement to the cycle network for residents.

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Local Sustainable Transport Fund (LSTF)

The update included a recap of the Sefton and West Lancashire successful bid (£1.55 million) to improve and promote sustainable links to the visitor economy. Highlighted:

- Extension of Cycle Hire into West Lancashire, including locations at Scarisbrick (Morris Dancers); Burscough Bridge and Ormskirk rail/bus station.
- Marketing and Development - VISIT (Visit Using Sustainable Integrated Transport).
- In conjunction with LCC, examination of a number of routes over a 4 year period, to include the identification of one large scheme, plus a range of smaller schemes coming forward, each year.

Skelmersdale Vision

The update in relation to this item focussed on the proposals within the Vision to reconnect the town centre with surrounding communities, by the provision of new footpaths and cycleways. It was recognised that this was an important issue particularly in relation to the development of Skelmersdale Town Centre.

Cycling to Work Scheme

The background to the introduction of these schemes was explained, including the incentives to encourage employees to use bikes as an alternative means of transport.

Safe Cycling in West Lancashire

Members considered the information provided by a resident in respect of Forward Cycling Lines at Road Junctions in relation to cycle safety. It was explained that the details had also been passed to LCC as the Highway Authority for consideration and their response was also considered.

Finally, the ongoing promotion and support of cyclists in West Lancashire was highlighted which included:

- Improved links in Ormskirk town centre to Edge Hill University.
- The use of LTP3 and S106 money for improvements in Skelmersdale town centre.
- Improvements to the visitor economy in the north and western parts of the Borough.

As a result of the update Members raised questions/comments in relation to:

- Linear parks in Skelmersdale and access improvements.
- Mapping and the review that LCC are undertaking associated with Tourism.
- Economic regeneration of areas and planning links.
- The involvement of Members to seek local knowledge when planning cycle network links.
- Advantages/disadvantages of the accessibility of electric powered cycles, including health and access for the elderly.

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- Topography issues when planning routes.
- Opportunities for cycle routes linking Skelmersdale to Ormskirk, via Scarth Hill and between Burscough and Ormskirk, via Mill Dam Lane and further into the Borough linking cycling routes into Sefton and the coast.
- Provision of suitable cycling storage facilities at bus/rail stations.
- Opportunities to link the cycle hire facilities/access points, associated with tourism, to the wider business community.
- Engaging with local community groups, including Parish and Town Councils and coastal partnerships, interested in sustainable transport and widening access in West Lancashire through the promotion of cycling.
- The Travel Plan for West Lancashire College, Skelmersdale and proposals related to sustainable transport coming through in processes linked to the development of Skelmersdale Town Centre and the opportunity to undertake a post-code analysis.
- Reinforcing cycling options as an integral part of the Vision for Skelmersdale.
- Cycling infrastructure, particularly at junctions including forward cycling lines and priority setting of traffic lights.
- Cycling hiring locations, including making use of established park/ride areas and areas at local stations.
- Facilities available to cyclists at bus/rail/interchange stations, including access for disabled cyclists and cycle storage.
- Access and difficulties transporting cycles on buses and trains.
- Opportunities for accessing other funding for environmental improvements.

The Planning Officer (DC) responded to questions and made an undertaking to provide the link to the interactive maps, when available.

RESOLVED: That the following recommendations be included in the final review report:

- (1) That Lancashire County Council (LCC) give due consideration to the following:
 - 1.1 when considering highway changes, consider making the following adjustments:
 - a) Cycle priority signals at traffic lights.
 - b) Cycle priority through traffic.
 - c) Cycle junctions improvements.
 - 1.2 when reviewing the cycling network in the Borough and, prior to any future exercise, seek the views of Ward Councillors in respect of proposed cycle routes or maintenance of existing routes.
 - 1.3 when examining widening access within the Borough through its proposed cycle hire initiative also look at the possibility to extend this to the hire of electric powered cycles.

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- 1.4 when considering the Travel Plans for West Lancashire College, Skelmersdale, give due consideration to any cycling options coming through the Skelmersdale Vision Project.

33. PROJECT PLAN

Member reviewed the Project Plan.

RESOLVED: That the review of the Project Plan be noted.

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Chairman