

Report to	Performance Scrutiny Committee
Date of meeting	25th November 2021
Lead Member / Officer	Councillor Brian Jones, Lead Member for Waste, Transport and the Environment / Emlyn Jones, Head of Planning, Public Protection and Countryside Services
Report author	Mike Jones, Traffic, Parking and Road Safety Manager
Title	Sustainable Transport Plan

1. What is the report about?

- 1.1. To provide Committee with an update on the development of the Council's draft Sustainable Transport Plan and associated work activities.

2. What is the reason for making this report?

- 2.1. To provide information regarding the purpose for the Sustainable Transport Plan and the various work streams covered by the Plan, to enable Committee to provide observations and recommendations to support the delivery of the Plan.

3. What are the Recommendations?

- 3.1. That Committee notes the contents of the draft Sustainable Transport Plan, and provides observations and recommendations to support the delivery of the Sustainable Transport Plan.
- 3.2 That Committee confirms that it has read, understood and taken account of the Well-being Impact Assessment in Appendix A as part of its consideration.

4. Report details

Introduction

- 4.1 In 2019 the Council passed a motion to declare a climate and ecological emergency.

- 4.2 In the current Corporate Plan, the *Connected Communities* priority included the project “*Better enable people to travel to work, education and services*”. The scope of this project was very broad which made it difficult to identify specific interventions that would make a difference, despite further research that was undertaken.
- 4.3 Following discussion at the Corporate Programme Board in October 2020 and July 2021, it was decided that because of the issues with the above project and the need to make carbon reduction central to any transport-related projects then we should instead focus on developing a Sustainable Transport Plan.
- 4.4 A Sustainable Transport Plan is not a statutory requirement, but is being based on similar plans that other local authorities have produced. For example, Wrexham County Borough Council produced a *Sustainable Urban Mobility Plan*. We have chosen the title “Sustainable Transport Plan” to reflect that the Plan will not purely be focused on urban areas.

Purpose of the Plan

- 4.5 It's important to note that there is much important work planned and already taking place right across different Council services to encourage greater use of greener transport modes. The Sustainable Transport Plan will be an effective way of detailing those activities in one place and will therefore help to identify any potential gaps. This will have a number of benefits:
- It enables us to easily communicate to our residents, businesses and visitors what we're doing as a Council to encourage greener travel.
 - It embodies the *One Council* approach, as although different services are involved in delivering various tasks, they can still be effectively coordinated and delivered.
 - It can help support funding bids in specific areas by helping to demonstrate the bigger picture and the joined-up approach that the Council is taking.
- 4.6 It is also important to note that the Plan naturally integrates with the various transport-related activities being undertaken as part of the corporate carbon reduction programme. The Climate Change Programme Manager is a member of the Sustainable Transport Plan project team.
- 4.7 The scope of the Sustainable Transport Plan extends beyond the scope of the corporate carbon reduction programme because the latter is rightly focused on the

actions the Council will need to take to reduce its own carbon footprint across all areas not just transport. The Sustainable Transport Plan also includes the actions we intend to take in discharging our duties as Local Planning Authority and Local Highway Authority i.e. to encourage our residents, businesses and visitors to travel in a more sustainable way.

Structure of Sustainable Transport Plan

- 4.8 The format for the Sustainable Transport Plan is to be an accessible, clear and concise document that can easily be read by the general public. The Plan contained within Appendix B contains purely the draft text (Appendix B is excluded from publication by virtue of Paragraph 14 of Part 4 of Schedule 12a of the Local Government Act, 1972)>The actual document that we use for consultation will be in full-colour and will include graphics to make it an appealing and attractive document to read.
- 4.9 The content of the Plan has been developed by a range of officers across different Council services over the past year. This work also built upon much of the work previously undertaken as part of the “Better enable people to travel. . .” project.
- 4.10 The Plan will describe the policy context for why we have produced the Plan and how it will fit in within a regional context and with national policy. For example, the Welsh Government publicised its new transport policy Llwybr Newydd earlier this year. The Plan is intended to align with that policy albeit whilst not losing sight of the specific needs for Denbighshire.
- 4.11 As is the case with Llwybr Newydd, the Plan has a 20-year vision but also includes priorities for the next 5 years. These priorities have been developed into a list of actions for each specific work area.
- 4.12 The areas of work that have been included within the scope of the work include Electric vehicle charging, Active Travel, Taxi charging, Business travel, Bus, Flexi bus services/demand responsive transport, Car share schemes, Community car clubs, Bus Priority/Traffic Management and integration between transport modes.
- 4.13 It is proposed that the Plan is published in April 2022 after incorporating the feedback from the February 2022 public engagement exercise as detailed in Paragraph 8.3.

5. How does the decision contribute to the Corporate Priorities?

- 5.1 As referred to in Paragraphs 4.2 and 4.3, the idea of developing a Sustainable Transport Plan stemmed from the “Better enable people to travel. . .” project contained within the Corporate Plan (under the Connected Communities priority”) and the Council’s declaration of a climate and ecological emergency.

6. What will it cost and how will it affect other services?

- 6.1 The cost of producing the Plan itself is relatively low and will be incorporated within the service budget. The Corporate Programme Board has allocated a revenue base budget increase of £26k to contribute towards a post within the Traffic, Parking and Road Safety Section. This post holder will be responsible for implementing some of the tasks listed within the Plan and for the overall monitoring of progress of the tasks.
- 6.2 Many of actions contained within the Plan will rely on significant amounts of capital funding in order for them to be implemented. There is grant funding available for such projects but there will be a need for match-funding contributions from the Council. This is the same process for how we currently bid for capital funding towards projects and requires the details of each scheme to be submitted in the form of a business case to the Strategic Investment Group (SIG) so that each scheme can be discussed on a case-by-case basis.

7. What are the main conclusions of the Well-being Impact Assessment?

- 7.1. The Sustainable Transport Plan has many potentially positive impacts owing to the focus on sustainability and carbon reduction. Some work streams are better developed than others which means that there will be a need to keep the Well-being Impact Assessment (WIA) updated as those work streams develop further.

8. What consultations have been carried out with Scrutiny and others?

- 8.1. The Corporate Priority of connected communities and the “Better enable people to travel. . .” project came about as a result of the County Conversation and subsequent workshops.

- 8.2. The project brief for the Sustainable Transport Plan was presented to the Corporate Programme Board in October 2020 and July 2021.
- 8.3. Once the views of Scrutiny have been incorporated into the draft Sustainable Transport Plan; we will undertake a public engagement exercise consisting of both online and face-to-face engagement in January and February 2022. This feedback will then be incorporated into the final version of the Plan.

9. Chief Finance Officer Statement

- 9.1. As stated above the Corporate Plan Board approved the allocation of £26k to help fund the new post required, with the balance coming from service resources.
- 9.2. Any new schemes requiring additional DCC funding would need to go through the annual budget process. Capital schemes in particular need to be considered individually. However, it is also important that the schemes are included in the Capital Horizon Scanning Exercise which will eventually inform the Medium Term Capital Plan in order for future funding requirements to be planned in advance.

10. What risks are there and is there anything we can do to reduce them?

- 10.1. The risks associated with producing a Sustainable Transport Plan are low providing that the actions listed within the Plan are realistic and achievable. This is because there is a risk that a failure to achieve stated actions could create some slight reputational damage.

11. Power to make the decision

- 11.1. Section 21 of the Local Government Act 2000.
- 11.2. Section 7.4.1 of the Council's Constitution outlines Scrutiny's powers with respect to policy development and review.