

Report to	Cabinet
Date of meeting	22 nd November 2022
Lead Member / Officer	Cllr. Barry Mellor / Emllyn Jones
Report author	Mike Jones
Title	Draft Sustainable Transport Plan

1. What is the report about?

1.1. This report is about Denbighshire County Council's Draft Sustainable Transport Plan. It includes the reasons for developing a Sustainable Transport Plan, how it has been developed, the content of the Plan, and details of forthcoming engagement on the Plan.

2. What is the reason for making this report?

2.1. To provide Cabinet with an opportunity to review the content of the draft plan and to provide their observations, ahead of the production of the final version of the Draft Sustainable Transport Plan, which will be issued as part of forthcoming public engagement in early 2023.

3. What are the Recommendations?

- 3.1. That Cabinet notes the contents of the Draft Sustainable Transport Plan, included in Appendix A to this report. That Cabinet provides observations and recommendations to support the preparation of the final draft of the Sustainable Transport Plan in readiness for forthcoming public engagement on the Plan.
- 3.2. That Cabinet notes that following the public engagement exercise, and any amendments that may result, the final version of the Sustainable Transport Plan will be presented to Cabinet for discussion and final approval in mid-2023.

- 3.3. That Cabinet confirms that it has read, understood and taken account of the Well-being Impact Assessment in Appendix B as part of its consideration.

4. Report details

Introduction

- 4.1 In 2019 the Council passed a motion to declare a climate change and ecological emergency.
- 4.2 The new 2022 Corporate Plan, includes a number of key objectives relevant to transport and particularly sustainable forms of transport. These key objectives are “A greener Denbighshire”; “A better connected Denbighshire”; “A healthier and happier, caring Denbighshire”; and “A prosperous Denbighshire”.
- 4.3 The idea to produce a Sustainable Transport Plan evolved from an earlier project that had been part of the previous Corporate Plan, titled “Better enable people to travel to employment, education and services”. Owing to some issues with the scope of the former project and following discussions at the Corporate Programme Board in July 2021, it was decided to close the former project and instead focus on the production of a Sustainable Transport Plan.
- 4.4 The production of a Sustainable Transport Plan isn’t a statutory requirement, but it is based on similar types of plan that some other local authorities have produced. For example, Wrexham CBC produced a *Sustainable Urban Mobility Plan*. We have chosen the title “Sustainable Transport Plan” to reflect that our Plan won’t just be focused on urban areas of Denbighshire.
- 4.5 The Plan has been developed by officers from a number of different Council services, reflecting the cross-cutting nature of transport.

Purpose of the Plan

- 4.6 As a Council we have embarked on a major programme of work aimed at the Council becoming a net carbon zero council and an ecologically positive council by 2030. This programme is overseen by the Council’s Climate and Ecological Change Programme Board. Some of the transport-related projects that are already underway include the replacement of fossil-fuelled DCC fleet vehicles

by Electric Vehicle (EV) equivalents and the provision of EV charging points in Council offices and depots.

- 4.7 The scope of the Climate and Ecological Change Programme is necessarily broad and covers much more than just transport. It includes projects to reduce carbon emissions from other Council-owned assets, projects to reduce supply chain emissions, projects to absorb and store atmospheric carbon (sequestration) and projects to protect and enhance our local ecology.
- 4.8 The Climate Change programme relates to carbon emissions resulting from the delivery of Council services. However, we also have important duties as both the Local Planning Authority and the Local Highway Authority to implement projects and policies that encourage greater use of sustainable forms of transport as an alternative to more polluting forms.
- 4.9 The Draft Sustainable Transport Plan lists all of these transport-related activities in one place. In other words, it includes those transport-related activities we're undertaking under our Climate and Ecological Change programme, but it also includes those projects and policies that we're undertaking to encourage our residents, businesses and visitors to travel more sustainably.
- 4.10 The Sustainable Transport Plan will be an effective way of detailing those transport-related activities in one place and will also help to identify any potential gaps in what we're doing. 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.

Structure of Sustainable Transport Plan

- 4.11 The Draft Sustainable Transport Plan is included in Appendix A to this report. The Plan will be bilingual. Although it will predominantly be published as a PDF document, a limited number of hard copies will be produced and it will be

printed as a “reversible document” with welsh language on one side and English language on the other.

4.12 To align with the Wales Transport Strategy, “Llywbr Newydd”, the Sustainable Transport Plan has a 20 Year Vision along with priorities for the next 5 years. The intention is that these priorities would later be succeeded by another set of priorities for the 5 years after that i.e. from Year 6 onwards. To give adequate time to develop and engage upon the next set of priorities, these would start to be developed from Year 4 of the Sustainable Transport Plan onwards.

4.13 These priorities are to increase the use of active travel for everyday journeys; to increase the use of passenger transport for everyday journeys; to increase the amount of public electric vehicle charging points across Denbighshire; to increase travel choices for our residents, business and visitors; and to reduce transport-related carbon emissions that result from the delivery council services (by Denbighshire County Council).

4.14 Appendix C shows the proposed engagement on the Plan for early 2023.

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

5.1. The Sustainable Transport Plan will help contribute towards our key objectives of a greener Denbighshire; a better connected Denbighshire; a healthier and happier, caring Denbighshire; and a prosperous Denbighshire.

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

6.1. The cost of developing the Sustainable Transport Plan have been met from within the Traffic, Parking and Road Safety’s revenue budget.

6.2. Many of the projects listed within the Plan are infrastructure projects which typically require significant capital investment. There are a number of central government grants available for the implementation of transport projects. These are typically specific to certain policy objectives. For example, the Welsh Government make grants available for building active travel routes, improving the highway network for public transport and for improving walking and cycling routes to schools. Similarly, the UK government have grants available to cover some of the costs associated with the installation of electric vehicle charging

points. 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 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 more developed than others which means that there will be a need to keep the WIA updated as those work streams develop further.

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

8.1. A report providing an update on the development of the draft Sustainable Transport Plan was taken to Performance Scrutiny Committee in November 2021.

8.2. A presentation on the draft Sustainable Transport Plan was given to both CET and SLT in March 2022.

9. Chief Finance Officer Statement

9.1. It is welcome that the service have produced the plan within existing service resources. It should be recognised, however, the risk that funding from all sources will be more limited in the future due to the worsening financial position facing the public sector. This includes availability of external funding from UK or Welsh Government. As noted in Section 6, it will be important that future projects follow the latest capital approval processes

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. We have a statutory duty to expand and enhance our active travel network under the Active Travel (Wales) Act 2013.