

BRIDGEND COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL

REPORT TO CABINET

REPORT OF THE CORPORATE DIRECTOR - COMMUNITIES

31 October 2017

ACTIVE TRAVEL (WALES) ACT 2013 – INTEGRATED NETWORK MAP

1. Purpose of Report.

- 1.1 To provide an update to Cabinet on the Active Travel (Wales) Act 2013, and to seek approval to submit to Welsh Government (WG) the Integrated Network Maps (INM) that have been prepared in accordance with the legislation and Welsh Government guidance.

2. Connection to Corporate Improvement Plan / Other Corporate Priority.

- 2.1 The duties placed on the Council through the Active Travel (Wales) Act, and the development of active travel routes, in particular routes which connect to key destinations such as education or employment facilities, can contribute to the achievement of the following corporate improvement priorities and their supporting aims identified in the 2017-18 update to the Corporate Plan (2016-2020):

- **Priority One – Supporting a successful economy:**
 - To create conditions for growth and enterprise; and
 - To create successful town centres
- **Priority Three – Smarter Use of Resources:**
 - To make the most of our physical assets, including school buildings

- 2.2 Discharging the duties of the Act will assist the Council in meeting its obligations under the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015, and will also contribute towards addressing priority issues such as childhood obesity and mental wellbeing, encouraging and promoting life-long physical activity and promoting low-cost and accessible activities such as walking and cycling.

- 2.3 The continuous improvement and provision of facilities for pedestrians and cyclists required by the Act will contribute to the development of the cycle route network in the County Borough. It is also a major element in the Council's Local Transport Plan, Walking and Cycling Strategy, and the Rights of Way Improvement Plan (RoWIP).

3. Background.

- 3.1 The Active Travel (Wales) Act 2013 came into force on 25th September 2014, and one of the duties of that Act makes it a legal requirement for local authorities in Wales to map and plan for suitable routes for active travel. A report outlining the implications of the Act for the Council and seeking authorisation to undertake a consultation exercise in respect of the ERMs was submitted to Cabinet in May 2015 and is included as a background document for this report.

- 3.2 Active Travel is defined as walking or cycling for everyday journeys with a purpose, for example journeys to access employment, education, retail, health or transport services and other similar amenities. The legislation requires that two maps will need to be prepared: an Existing Routes Map, which was submitted to Welsh Government in January 2016 and approved in August 2016, and an Integrated Network Map (INM) which is to be submitted by 3rd November 2017. A report advising Cabinet of the submission of the ERM to WG was prepared in February 2016 and is included as a background document for this report.
- 3.3 The provisions of the Act only apply to certain settlements as designated by the Welsh Government, where it is believed that there is potential for active travel. There are nine such designated settlements in the county borough. The direction designating localities can be found here: <http://wales.gov.uk/docs/det/publications/141002geographicalapplicabilityoftheactivetravelacten.pdf>.
- 3.4 The map which the Council is now required to prepare is the INM which shows the proposed active travel routes and related facilities to be developed in the county borough. This report sets out the work that has been undertaken to develop the INM, and will seek approval to submit the draft maps to Welsh Government for approval.

4. Current Situation / Proposal.

- 4.1 The INM can take the form of a single map or several maps depending on the area covered. In order to provide the necessary detail, and taking account of the number of settlements identified in the county borough, a total of 16 maps have been prepared for submission in line with the guidance issued by the Welsh Government.
- 4.2 The process for preparing these maps included six key stages. Stage 1 referred to the collection and interpretation of the information required to underpin the preparation of the maps, and capturing this information in a digital format. This included data related to future development sites, routes and facilities identified through the ERM public consultation, location of key destinations, school catchment areas and barriers to active travel such as railway lines, rivers, bridges and A-roads or motorways. This work was completed in December 2016.
- 4.3 Stage 2 involved journey mapping and the identification of key active travel routes and desire lines. As part of this process, the aims of the active travel networks were established and separate processes then had to be followed in order to identify key routes for pedestrians and cyclists. The walking proposals were developed by identifying key walking attractors, existing barriers to walking and the Council's footway maintenance classification. These were then combined to assist in the identification of routes that could be developed or improved for pedestrians. To select the cycling proposals, trip departure and destination points were captured and desire lines were created between them. These desire lines were then converted to designated route alignments to become the cycle proposals contained within the draft INM. This was completed in March 2017.
- 4.4 For Stage 3, the Council commissioned consultants to undertake audits of the proposed routes to assist in the prioritisation of the INM proposals. An initial set of audits were undertaken in March 2017 to assist in the preparation of the draft INM

proposals, the final set of audits were undertaken in September 2017. These audits were used to provide an indication of whether the proposals contained within the draft INM could be upgraded to meet the standards set out in the Design Guidance issued in respect of the Active Travel (Wales) Act 2013.

- 4.5 The identification of schemes and the preparation of the draft INMs were carried out in Stage 4, and this was completed in May 2017. This involved the digital mapping of all of the proposals and the preparation of the supporting information, such as the type of proposal and the nature of the works proposed.
- 4.6 Upon completion of the draft INM, and following the necessary translations, Stage 5 sought to validate the draft proposals and a 12-week public consultation was undertaken to ascertain whether stakeholders and the general public agreed with the proposals contained within the INM. An online survey ran from 12th June 2017 to 1st September 2017. This was supported by a series of public engagement events held in each of the designated settlements, and lessons delivered within a number of schools over the same period. These consultation methods together generated a total of 375 responses. In addition, 6 responses were received via email and 57 responses were received via social media. A full consultation report is included as a Appendix D to this report.
- 4.7 The final stage, Stage 6, relates to the preparation of the final INM and prioritisation of the proposals. During this stage of the process, the responses to the public consultation were assessed and, where appropriate, amendments to the draft INM were made. A total of 23 separate amendments to the INM were made as a result of the consultation, details of which are included in the conclusion of the consultation report.
- 4.8 Copies of the final draft INMs, the supporting INM information and the updated ERMs that are to be submitted to Welsh Government are included with this report as Appendix A, Appendix B and Appendix C respectively. For submission to Welsh Government, the final maps will need to be produced through their online mapping system and therefore will vary in appearance from those attached to this report although the content will remain the same.

5. Effect upon Policy Framework & Procedure Rules.

- 5.1 There is no effect upon Policy Framework or Procedure Rules.

6. Equalities Impact Assessment.

- 6.1 An Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) screening form was completed as part of the previous Cabinet Report seeking approval to submit the draft ERMs to Welsh Government for approval. This EIA has been updated for this report and a copy of the screening form, approved by the Equalities Officer, has been included as Appendix E to this report.

7. Financial Implications.

- 7.1 In 2017/18, the Welsh Government allocated £10,000 to the Council under its Local Transport Fund programme to contribute towards the cost of preparing and consulting on the Active Travel Maps. Of that funding, £8,500 was utilised to

commission consultants to audit the proposed active travel routes, whilst the remainder of the funding will be used to contribute to the internal resources required to undertake the other preparatory works to enable submission of the maps to WG, to arrange welsh translations and print the necessary documents.

8. Recommendation.

8.1 It is recommended that Cabinet:

- (a) note the report and;
- (b) approve the Integrated Network Maps (taking account the outcome of the consultation) and authorise the submission of the Integrated Network Maps to Welsh Government to satisfy the requirements of the Active Travel (Wales) Act 2013 .

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Background documents:

Report to Cabinet– Active Travel Act Existing Routes Map (16-02-16)

Report to Cabinet – Active Travel (Wales) Act 2013 (12-05-15)