



sustainable thriving achieving

East Dunbartonshire Council

www.eastdunbarton.gov.uk

DELEGATED DECISION

A delegated decision is sought in respect of the undernoted.

Date of Delegated Decision: 7 April 2021

Signature: G. Cornes, Chief Executive

REQUEST FOR DELEGATED DECISION 4 MARCH 2021

PNCA/025/21/AL

**DEPUTE CHIEF EXECUTIVE - PLACE,
NEIGHBOURHOOD & CORPORATE ASSETS**

CONTACT OFFICER:

**ALISON LAURENCE, TEAM LEADER – LAND
PLANNING POLICY
TEL: 0141 578 8619**

SUBJECT TITLE:

**COMMENCEMENT OF THE ACTIVE TRAVEL
STRATEGY**

1.0 PURPOSE

- 1.1** The purpose of this Report is to set out the work programme for a new Active Travel Strategy for East Dunbartonshire and to seek approval for the commencement of the Strategy and in particular the early engagement.

2.0	<u>RECOMMENDATIONS</u>
2.1	It is recommended that the Committee:- a) Notes the work programme for the Active Travel Strategy and; b) Approves the commencement of the Active Travel Strategy and early engagement.

THOMAS GLEN

DEPUTE CHIEF EXECUTIVE – PLACE, NEIGHBOURHOOD & CORPORATE ASSETS

3.0 **BACKGROUND/MAIN ISSUES**

- 3.1 The Land Planning Policy Team is commencing work on a new Active Travel Strategy for East Dunbartonshire. The Local Transport Strategy was approved in March 2020 (PNCA/024/20/CM), which included action 7 ‘Produce a new Active Travel Strategy’.
- 3.2 Producing an Active Travel Strategy will ensure that the Council has an evidenced strategy, based on data and public engagement, which sets out a coherent, coordinated and deliverable action plan to increase opportunities for active travel and deliver on the Transport Planning Objectives set out in the Council’s Local Transport Strategy.
- 3.3 This report sets out the rationale for the Active Travel Strategy, Methodology, Early Engagement and Next Steps.

Rationale

- 3.4 The rationale for producing a new Active Travel Strategy (ATS) relates to a range of key drivers and benefits which are set out in the following paragraphs.
- 3.5 The Council currently has an ATS 2015-2020 and many projects within this have been completed or are underway. This includes projects such as the Wester Way, improvements for walking and cycling through the Kirkintilloch Town Centre Masterplan, feasibility and design of the Lenzie to Bishopbriggs link, feasibility of an East Dunbartonshire loop route and delivery of a number of behaviour change initiatives among others. A new ATS will carry on the work progressed through the first ATS and to identify new projects which can deliver on the Transport Planning Objectives of the Local Transport Strategy. The following table sets out the Transport Planning Objectives and the priorities for the ATS:

Local Transport Strategy Transport Planning Objectives	Active Travel Strategy Priorities
Increase modal shift towards more sustainable modes of travel for both travel to work/study and leisure trips	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Everyday walking and cycling• Link in walking and cycling with public transport• Behaviour change initiatives alongside infrastructure
Reduce inequality by providing high quality access for all	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Gender inequalities• Transport poverty and access to bikes• Disabled people• Young and older people• Access to jobs
Reduce emissions through reduced vehicle mileage in East Dunbartonshire	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Focus on air quality areas and town centres• Increasing trips to and through these areas by walking and cycling
Facilitate sustainable economic growth by improving connections across our boundaries and between our communities	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Visitor economy• Accessing local shops and business by walking and cycling
Improve health by increasing walking and cycling rates	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Access to green network and open space for culture, leisure and sport• Physical and mental health• Preventative health benefits
Improve safety on all modes of transport	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Vulnerable road users• Links with equalities

- 3.6** At a national level, Scottish Government policy through the second National Transport Strategy prioritises transport interventions that: reduces inequalities; takes climate action; helps deliver inclusive economic growth; and improves our health and wellbeing. Active travel contributes to all four of these NTS2 priorities and the national Active Travel Framework sets out specific active travel objectives and outcomes which will require delivery from local authorities in order for the national active travel vision to be achieved. Further to national policy, the first phase of the second Strategic Transport Projects Review has been published which includes 20 recommendations across a number of themes to be delivered in the short term to help with a green recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic. Active travel features highly within these recommendations including: Development and delivery of active travel freeways; reallocation of road space for active travel; and influencing travel choices. These recommendations will require to be delivered by local authorities due to the nature of roles and responsibilities of roads authorities.
- 3.7** Setting out the strategy and action plan for projects for East Dunbartonshire will allow the Council to feed into work at a regional level, including through the Council's City Deal project, and ensure that connections into neighbouring areas, especially Glasgow can be improved. This work can feed into ongoing development of a regional active travel network which is under consideration for inclusion within the second Regional Transport Strategy.
- 3.8** It is a key requirement of funding partners that projects for which funds are sought are linked to a strategy which is based on evidence and strategic aims. A main purpose of this project is therefore to provide the Council's delivery teams with clear plans for the future for projects based on an evidence base to allow them to access funds to continue to deliver high quality active travel projects within our communities.
- 3.9** Whilst COVID-19 has resulted in a health and economic crisis, an opportunity emerged in terms of a significant increase in walking and cycling across East Dunbartonshire. Public interest has increased and new community groups focused on active travel have been established in East Dunbartonshire, as have new businesses catering to cycling. Active Travel also has significant benefits in terms of health and wellbeing.
- 3.10** At the meeting of East Dunbartonshire Council on 25 February 2021, a decision was made to 'As part of the refresh of the Corporate Asset Management Plan, requests a report back to Council for consideration, identifying and prioritising the required maintenance and potential upgrades of the council's off-road path network to support Active Travel across the council area'. This requirement will be incorporated into the Active Travel Strategy methodology (through the network audit and options appraisal processes, see paragraph 3.13), as well as work on the Corporate Asset Management Plan.
- 3.11** The ATS will be a key element of work on a Climate Action Plan for East Dunbartonshire. Transport is the second largest source of greenhouse gas emissions in East Dunbartonshire and active travel has a key role in improving air quality and reducing emissions through reducing vehicle mileage in East Dunbartonshire. Work has now started to prepare a Climate Action Plan for the Council. The new Plan will include a net zero emissions reduction target for East Dunbartonshire as a whole, and active travel and transport changes will be critical in achieving this emissions reduction target. The initial stage in developing the Climate Action Plan will be a listening exercise, inviting people across our communities to discuss their concerns about climate change, how it is already affecting them, and what action they think the Council needs to take to respond to the climate challenge. Transport questions will form a part of the survey and discussions.

- 3.12** The Local Transport Strategy therefore stated that: A new Active Travel Strategy will therefore require the Council to deliver an ambitious approach, committing to delivering safe and accessible walking and cycling connections to town centres, areas of employment and public transport links, as well as projects to facilitate behaviour change. Various steps in the process to develop a new Active Travel Strategy will be used to identify appropriate and ambitious locations for delivering segregated walking and cycling routes to ensure people of all ages and abilities can travel in a sustainable and healthy way.

Work Programme

- 3.13** A robust and thorough process will be followed in developing a new Active Travel Strategy. The following key stages will take place:

Stage	Main Activities	Indicative Timescale
Data gathering, research and analysis	<p>The following activities are planned:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Policy review to ensure alignment with national, regional and local policy. • Review and collation of findings from East Dunbartonshire Travel Survey, Economic Recovery Plan consultation, Climate Conversation. • Review of active travel data in LTS Background Report and relevant updates since this report was published. • Review of ATS 2015-20 • Field work to carry out a network audit and map existing routes and maintenance requirements and scope out new routes for walking and cycling. • Option generation through discussions with internal teams and external stakeholders in addition to ideas from local residents through a period of early engagement 	Commenced – Ongoing across Spring and Summer 2021
Early Engagement	Details of this stage are noted from paragraph 3.15	May – September 2021
Options Appraisal	<p>Following the Scottish Transport Appraisal Guidance (STAG) approach, the options gathered through the above stages will be sifted to arrive at a draft list of projects for inclusion in the Draft ATS. Factors which will be considered will include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Benefits in delivering LTS Transport Planning Objectives • Strategic Environmental Assessment • Equalities Impact Assessment 	Autumn 2021 – Spring 2022

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Deliverability • Overall priority of the option in achieving all of the above 	
Draft ATS	Production of Draft ATS to include Action Plan	Spring 2022
Consultation	A period of consultation will be carried out on a draft ATS to gather thoughts on the developed proposals from local residents and interest parties as a whole.	Autumn 2022
Final ATS	Approval and adoption of the final ATS taking into account the consultation feedback.	Early 2023
Monitoring	A set of indicators (similar to existing ATS and LTS monitoring plans) will be set out which includes baseline figures. Interim reporting will also be set out to the Transport Working Group and PNCA Committee where appropriate.	Post ATS Adoption

- 3.14** Timescales are noted as indicative given the nature of a 2 year timescale, current unpredictability of the COVID-19 pandemic and pending changes to committee cycles, general work programmes and policy direction relating to COVID-19 and elections in 2021 and 2022. Updates on progress will be provided to future Transport Working Groups and Committee meetings.

Early Engagement

- 3.15** The early engagement will involve extensive option generation with local communities and stakeholders. The aim is to find out what local people consider to be their priorities for walking, cycling and wheeling, focused on the following:

- What type of infrastructure or assistance would encourage you to walk, cycle and wheel more for everyday journeys?
- Where specifically would you like to see changes made on the network?
- Where do you want to walk, cycle and wheel to?
- What barriers are in place stopping you from doing this?
- Where do you want to walk, cycle and wheel to for leisure and recreation, including accessing open and green spaces?
- What links are missing for you to make more trips by walking, cycling and wheeling?

- 3.16** It is intended that the benefits of this approach is that it will:

- Inform the network review evidence base
- Include local people from the start which can help as the strategy development progresses and individual projects start to be delivered. Early buy-in and ownership is important in this regard.
- Collaborative approach with all stakeholders should reduce comments and required changes moving from Draft ATS to final ATS.

- 3.17** This early engagement will be a positive and open discussion with local people on what the Council can do to encourage all of the above. It will be open for a significant period of time to encourage as many people to use the existing network and to engage with the Council to help make improvements to it.
- 3.18** This engagement will take place through activities such as:
- Ideas Map – This will allow local people to use an online tool to mark ideas and routes they would like to see on a map.
 - Survey – This will be embedded within the ideas map and gather data to add to information already gathered through the climate conversation, East Dunbartonshire Travel Survey 2020 and LTS consultations.
 - Online discussions and sessions
 - Online meetings with community councils and active travel groups
 - Direct emailing and online meetings with a range of transport stakeholders
 - Work with schools (to be determined given current priorities for schools)
 - Competitions and events – to be developed.
- 3.19** Publicity will include:
- Branded social media campaign
 - Poster Campaign
 - Newsletter
 - Direct emailing to community groups
 - Local Press
 - Website
 - Work with schools to promote (to be determined given current priorities for schools)
 - Work with leisure centres to promote

Next Steps

- 3.20** Officers are working on organising activities with the aim of an engagement period across summer, from May to September 2021.
- 3.21** Activities are being planned based on COVID-19 restrictions being in place, however there is the potential that face to face (with social distancing) activities may be able to take place later in the consultation period. Risk assessments will be carried out.
- 3.22** In advance of the engagement commencing, subject to agreement, a Transport Working Group will be held. Technical Notes will also be used to update Members.

4.0 IMPLICATIONS

The implications for the Council are as undernoted.

- 4.1 Frontline Service to Customers** – None
- 4.2 Workforce** (including any significant resource implications) – None
- 4.3 Legal Implications** – None
- 4.4 Financial Implications** – Any options/actions generated through this process will be judged to be operationally deliverable based on current funding available.

4.5 Procurement – None

4.6 ICT – None

4.7 Corporate Assets – None

4.8 Equalities – Will be included within a full Equality Impact Assessment appended to future PNCA Committee Reports

4.9 Other – None

5.0 MANAGEMENT OF RISK

5.1 The risks and control measures relating to this Report are included within **Appendix 1**.

6.0 IMPACT

6.1 ECONOMIC GROWTH & RECOVERY – Access is key to economic growth in an area. Improving this access by active travel can help promote sustainable economic growth and ensure a cleaner, greener recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic can be achieved.

6.2 EMPLOYMENT & SKILLS – Improving the opportunity for enhanced active travel can open up employment for people by improving their ability to access employment, training and learning opportunities.

6.3 CHILDREN & YOUNG PEOPLE – Children and young people will benefit from improved active travel networks by increasing their opportunities to engage in physical activity with associated benefits for mental health and wellbeing. Poor air quality also disproportionately affects younger people so a wider public modal shift will make East Dunbartonshire a safer, more pleasant environment for children and young people to live.

6.4 SAFER & STRONGER COMMUNITIES – Those who walk, cycle and wheel on Scotland's roads are amongst the most vulnerable road users. It is a priority that improved active travel infrastructure encourages more people to participate, but they must be made safe to do so. This will be a key priority of the ATS.

6.5 ADULT HEALTH & WELLBEING – Walking, cycling and wheeling is an easy way to incorporate physical activity into a daily routine and provide the associated physical health benefits for the individual. Being active and accessing green and open space also provides benefits for mental health and overall wellbeing. In addition, a wider public modal shift would improve local air quality with the associated health benefits this can bring to wider public health.

6.6 OLDER ADULTS, VULNERABLE PEOPLE & CARERS – Having accessible active travel networks in place for all users is important for maintaining independence allowing all users to experience the benefits provided by walking, cycling and wheeling. Poor air quality also disproportionately affects older people so a wider public modal shift will make East Dunbartonshire a safer, more pleasant environment for older people to live.

6.7 STATUTORY DUTY – None

7.0 POLICY CHECKLIST

7.1 The Impact Assessment Checklist is attached as **Appendix 2**

8.0 APPENDICES

8.1 Appendix 1 – Risk Assessment

8.2 Appendix 2 – Impact Assessment Checklist