

MOVEMENT STRATEGY

Cleaner and Greener Advisory Committee - 19 April 2022

Cabinet - 21 April 2022

Report of: Deputy Chief Executive and Chief Officer - Planning & Regulatory Services

Status: For Decision

Also considered by:

- Cleaner and Greener Advisory Committee - 19 April 2022
- Cabinet - 21 April 2022

Key Decision: Yes

This reports support the Key Aim of The Council's commitment to Net Zero 2030.

Portfolio Holder: Cllr. Margot McArthur

Contact Officer(s): Claire Pamberi, Ext. 7221; Helen French, Ext. 7357; Carlyn Kan, Ext. 7264

Recommendation to Cleaner and Greener Advisory Committee:

That it be recommended to Cabinet to adopt the Movement Strategy

Recommendation to Cabinet:

To adopt the Movement Strategy

Reason for recommendation: To support sustainable movement within Sevenoaks District and work towards the Council's commitment to Net Zero 2030 made in November 2019 to reduce carbon emissions.

Introduction and Background

- 1 Sevenoaks District Council (SDC), as part of its many functions, is required to consider a number of issues, which influence movement across our District. This includes, amongst other things, drafting the right planning policies for our Local Plan, determining the right priorities in our Air Quality Action Plan, working towards our aims of achieving net zero carbon emissions by 2030 and supporting resident's needs through our Community Plan.

- 2 It became clear as Officers, Members and Stakeholders discussed various issues concerning movement that our approach and needs across the District should be better understood. The aim of this Strategy is to co-ordinate all the issues and needs to ensure that movement across the District is easier, healthy, safe, low carbon and sustainable. It is important as an Authority that we proactively support movement of people, goods and services across our District that is active, efficient and accessible, through all our policies and plans.
- 3 We have therefore devised a Movement Strategy to help identify our priorities towards movement and set out how we aim to monitor and achieve these aims.

Purpose

- 4 The Strategy aims to make it clear that the Council wants to work proactively in the right partnerships and set clear priorities regarding all movement. The document also sets clear priorities for us to work towards and sets goals that are achievable and measurable.
- 5 As part of our Net Zero 2030 commitment it has already been agreed that the Council will be a “community leader” and encourage low carbon measures across the District through education, best practice, incentives, policy and opportunities. This includes working collaboratively with Kent County Council (KCC), Parish and Town Councils, Local Interest Groups and the Local Government Association.
- 6 The Movement Strategy follows on from this and proactively sets out the key issues and priorities for sustainable movement and transport for the District. This includes reducing the need to travel, promoting active travel, improving the cycling and walking network, encouraging the use of low emission vehicles and making it easier to access and use public transport.
- 7 The Movement Strategy relates to, and is supported by, other SDC strategies and plans which will help to deliver the vision, including:
 - Net Zero 2030
 - The Local Plan
 - Air Quality Action Plan
 - Local Transport Plan
 - Low Emission and Electric Vehicle Strategy
 - Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plans
 - SDC Travel Plan

Movement in Sevenoaks District

- 8 Sevenoaks District is located in West Kent with 4 towns, where approximately half of residents reside, and a large rural area. The District is well connected to the strategic road network with major transport links provided by the M25, M26, M20, A21, A21 and A25. Train stations throughout the District provide services into London in under an hour. The bus services are primarily focused on the Towns with less provision in the rural areas and the frequency and routes have suffered during the pandemic. There is poor coverage of the National Cycle Network with only one route connecting Penshurst Place to Tonbridge.
- 9 The urban and rural areas of the District present different challenges for movement. The urban areas suffer from congestion and air quality issues on the local highway network and within town centres. The rural nature of the District can isolate residents contributing to loneliness and making it difficult for some people to access services without a car.

Supporting Evidence

- 10 To understand the strengths and weaknesses of the existing movement network we have looked information that has been collated from our residents and external sources. We have looked at previous consultations for Council plans and strategies, such as the Local Plan consultations, to understand the main issues and concerns, residents and visitors, have already expressed.
- 11 We have also referred to the Sevenoaks District Strategy for Transport 2010-2026 that undertook a thorough assessment of the entire District's transport provision identified strengths, weaknesses and areas of improvement.
- 12 We have discussed the Movement Strategy aims with other departments across the Council and with Kent County Council to understand their issues, priorities and opportunities, and incorporated these into the strategy where appropriate.

Movement Strategy Priorities

- 13 The Strategy sets out 4 priorities for movement for the next 5 - 10 years.

Health and Wellbeing

- 14 As a Council, we are committed to improving the health and wellbeing of our communities. The Strategy sets out ways that movement can contribute to this aim. For example, we will encourage projects and schemes that make it easier and safer for people of all ages and abilities to move around by foot. This may be through physical infrastructure changes, planning policies, improving signage and connections, and promoting active travel.

Cycling and Walking

- 15 We are committed to improving the cycling and walking network across the District. We will work with partners to improve cycling infrastructure and have committed to delivering Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plans (LCWIPs) for the District.
- 16 We are making the most of funding opportunities and are currently awaiting the outcome of the Department for Transport's Active Travel Fund project allocations. Kent County Council invited local authorities to submit walking and cycling improvement schemes for their consideration to progress to Central Government's Active Travel Fund. We submitted three bids to KCC, with one, Sevenoaks East-West cycling route, being chosen by KCC to be submitted for the Active Travel Fund in addition to a KCC public right of way improvement project for Otford-Kemsing.

Public Transport

- 17 As part of our aims, the Movement Strategy highlights our desire to work with partners to deliver a high quality, innovative and connected public transport system. We will work proactively with infrastructure providers such as Network Rail, South Eastern, TFL and bus providers to ensure that we achieve the best services for our District. This includes attending meetings, being a part of the conversation and influencing decisions. We will enter into formal partnerships where necessary and also attracting funding where we can. We will also work with transport providers and the community rail partnerships in operation across the District to deliver improvements to the public transport environment. It is important that the users of the public transport feel safe and it is easier to connect between places of interest and other modes of transport.

Sustainable Movement

- 18 We support sustainable movement in many forms. We will promote sustainable developments, which reduce the need to travel and support local services and facilities. We will actively support the role electric vehicles play in decarbonising transport and reducing emissions. We will embrace suitable new technologies and innovations, as well as, new sustainable transport solutions and opportunities such as electric car clubs and ebikes.
- 19 We will produce a Travel Plan for the Council, which will be centred on reducing carbon emissions from work related travel and embracing sustainable movement and solutions. We will also encourage businesses, schools and other organisations to develop their own travel plans.

Partnership working

- 20 We have already made it clear that Sevenoaks District Council is not the transport authority. However, we do have an important role to play, to ensure positive changes and by influencing decisions, to help meet the needs of our community.
- 21 We have already started discussing the priorities in the Movement Strategy with transport providers, stakeholders and highways authorities who are keen to work with us to improve movement across the District.
- 22 They are keen to work with us to bring forward new ideas and innovations, and a number have already introduced us to possible funding streams. In highlighting this issue, and making it clear to our partners what our priorities are, we have already become a part of the wider transport and movement conversation and have attracted funding. It is clear that this is a big subject covering a number of issues, and we will have to work with partners to achieve success.
- 23 The type of organisations we will be working with are:
 - KCC Transport Innovations Team and Highways
 - National Highways
 - Kent Climate Change Network
 - Bus infrastructure providers inc KCC and TFL
 - Airspace stakeholders
 - Rail infrastructure providers and Local Community Rail Partnerships
 - Town and Parish Councils
 - Local schools and community groups
 - Local businesses and landowners
- 24 In particular, schools have a considerable impact on movement across our District and we are keen to work with the community, our partners and schools to influence better, safer and healthier modes of transport.
- 25 In addition to this, it should be understood that our role here is not just about providing physical infrastructure, which we will encourage where needed, but it is also to work with our partners to provide training and behavioural change.

Success Measures

- 26 After considering the main priorities of this Movement Strategy, it is also considered important to ensure that our outcomes and successes can be recognised and measured. As part of the Strategy, we have therefore also highlighted a number of measures and outcomes that we would expect to see following the adoption of this Movement Strategy.

Table 1: Movement Strategy Success Measures

Measure	Expected method of measurement
Increase in active travel	This can be measured by the Government's annual walking and cycling statistics, which sample the proportion of adults that walk and cycle, the frequency of and time spent walking and cycling.
Improvement in air quality	This will be measured through the Air Quality Action Plan and associated monitoring.
Increase in EV charging points	This will be measured through the Net Zero 2030 work and delivering the Low Emission and Electric Vehicle Strategy.
Improved health and well being	This will be measured through the Community Plan and Local Plan. This will look at life expectancy and other information that considers health and wellbeing such as obesity.
Improved safe cycling Infrastructure	The success of this measure would ensure that there would be the implementation of safer cycling infrastructure across the District. We are currently in the process of carrying out the first Local Walking and Cycling Infrastructure Plan, which helps identify safe and convenient cycling routes across the Sevenoaks Urban Area. The implementation would therefore help us meet our priority of cycling infrastructure and would encourage active travel.
Successful Partnership working	We are already working in partnership and will continue to report on the outcomes of this partnership working. This could be in the form of new agreements, further funding or proactive attendance at meetings to ensure that our priorities are met.
Innovation and Technology	Sevenoaks District Council are considered to be a seriously different council and have always embraced new ways of serving our community. In achieving this success, we would expect to see Sevenoaks District Council attracting and implementing up to date and new technology.
Funding received and given	In delivering the Strategy, the Council would aim to attract as much funding as possible to help meet our priorities. In addition to this, the Movement Strategy will also influence where money is spent through our grants and our Community Infrastructure Levy to ensure that our priorities are met.
Increased use in Public Transport	This can be measured by our Transport providers and partners.

Measure	Expected method of measurement
Improved transport experience	This includes influencing and helping to fund station improvements, better legibility around stations and helping to improve connectivity between modes of transport. We will be working with the community rail partnerships to deliver improvements.
Active Stakeholder engagement	This involves Members and Officers being prepared for meetings, influencing decisions, and supporting and championing our priorities at every opportunity.
Training and sharing best practice	We will work with other stakeholders to provide training for the community to ensure that they understand and have the skills to use the transport available to them.

Reporting and Review

- 27 The Movement Strategy will be reviewed through the Net Zero 2030 work as it is linked to the Net Zero Actions. The Strategy will be kept up to date and revised when needed and within 5 years.
- 28 Progress on achieving the aims within the Movement Strategy will be reported as part of the Net Zero 2030 reporting.

Next Steps

- 29 Officers will continue to work with partners to deliver the aims within the Movement Strategy. We will also identify new partners and projects.

Other options Considered and/or rejected

Not Applicable

Other Options Considered and/or Rejected

The Council have made a commitment to Net Zero 2030 and the Movement Strategy is part of this delivery.

Key Implications

Financial

Funding for delivering the Movement Strategy will be met through utilising existing budgets where possible, working in partnership with others, and by applying for external funding opportunities.

Legal Implications and Risk Assessment Statement.

No legal implications have been identified.

Equality Assessment

The decisions recommended through this paper have a remote or low relevance to the substance of the Equality Act. There is no perceived impact on end users.

Net Zero Implications

The Movement Strategy will have a positive impact on the Net Zero 2030 commitment by supporting the action for low carbon travel.

Conclusion

The Movement Strategy is required to help us co-ordinate all the issues regarding Movement, which are dealt with across the Council and our District. It also supports our Health and Wellbeing and Net Zero ambitions.

It lays out clear priorities for us as an Authority to support sustainable movement and also provides a clear structure for us to pursue these priorities as well as monitor our success.

This document will help to improve our relationships with partners and secure funding for our District and we ask that it be adopted.

Appendices

SDC Movement Strategy 2022

Background Papers

None

Richard Morris

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