

Chichester District Council

CABINET

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Engagement response to WSCC's Route K of the Chichester City Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan

1. Contacts

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2. Recommendation

- 2.1 That Cabinet supports the WSCC public engagement and consultation regarding Route K of the Council's Chichester City Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan and indicates a preference for Option 2 and Option A of the proposals.**

3. Background

- 3.1 Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plans (LCWIP) are set out in the Government's Cycling and Walking Investment Strategy as a strategic approach to identifying the walking and cycling infrastructure needed at a local level. The Council adopted the Chichester City LCWIP as council policy in April 2021.
- 3.2 WSCC, as the local highway authority, is responsible for design, consultation and delivery of the schemes/routes contained in the LCWIPs across West Sussex. All the West Sussex district and borough authorities have adopted LCWIPs or similar documents and as such the total number of West Sussex LCWIP schemes is approximately 70. WSCC has said that they will seek to bring forward between one and three LCWIP schemes per year. As such WSCC has prioritised the 70 schemes and Route K of the Chichester City LCWIP is in their highest priority for delivery. Route K runs the length of Westgate between the Orchard Street and Sherborne Road roundabouts and from the west side of the Fishbourne Road East pedestrian railway bridge to the A27 underpass on Fishbourne Road East (see Appendix 1). The West Westgate section (west of the Sherborne Road roundabout to east of the pedestrian railway bridge) is proposed to be delivered as a S106 committed scheme by the Whitehouse Farm developer.
- 3.3 Given that Route K is a high priority for WSCC's scheme delivery, they have worked up options as concept designs as to how Route K might be delivered. These concept designs are the subject of a WSCC public engagement and consultation exercise which ran from 27 June 2023 to 7 August 2023. The aim of the public engagement is so that WSCC can get the community's input into the feasibility designs, understand constraints, and see whether there is majority support before proceeding further with

the scheme. This paper is intended to provide the basis for the Council's response to WSCC's engagement and consultation.

- 3.4 WSCC has made a submission to Active Travel England (ATE) to raise WSCC's ATE rating to ATE Level 1 which will allow them to bid for capital grant monies from ATE in due course. There are currently no formal timelines for development and delivery of Route K, nevertheless the scheme is likely to take several years to be delivered. It remains possible that the scheme is delivered in sections, e.g., Westgate and (separately) Fishbourne Road East.
- 3.5 Route K is an entirely separate scheme from the scheme also being brought forward by WSCC and National Highways (NH) for Chichester to Emsworth ('Chemroute'). Nevertheless, the two schemes meet at the A27 underpass at the Western end of Fishbourne Road East and as such Route K is important in making Chemroute coherent and providing consistency in provision of infrastructure for walkers, wheelers and cyclists. WSCC is currently bidding for monies from NH to enable the re-design of Chemroute following earlier consultation.
- 3.6 The roundabout at the junction of Orchard Street and Westgate (i.e., the eastern most extent of Route K) will be converted to a Dutch style roundabout (walking and cycling friendly) under a S106 commitment for the Whitehouse Farm development. The work will be complete by Spring 2024.
- 3.7 The WSCC engagement and consultation is provided as a series of plans (see Appendices 1 to 6). The plans show two options for both the eastern and western sections of Westgate (i.e., four options in total) which are detailed in Appendices 3 to 6. Note the section between the underpass at Fishbourne Road East and the railway crossing has only one option.
- 3.8 As this is the very earliest stage of Route K as a proposal, WSCC has not carried out any transport modelling to understand the impact of the scheme on the areas' traffic movements. This modelling work is likely to come forward as the scheme is worked up into further detail and subject to a further public consultation. The Council's comments on the scheme may therefore evolve as more details emerge and the community's views on the possibility of Route K becomes better understood.

4. Outcomes to be Achieved

- 4.1 To support the continued development of Route K by WSCC and to state a preference for specific options presented by WSCC.
- 4.2 To continue to work with WSCC for the development, consultation and delivery of schemes contained in the Council's Chichester City LCWIP.
- 4.3 This work supports the Council's Climate Emergency Declaration, the Corporate Plan Vision for the district 'where carbon emissions are minimised' and that we will promote the expansion and connection of an integrated network of walking and cycling routes. The promotion of infrastructure to support walking, wheeling and cycling supports Local Plan policy and actions in the Council's Climate Change Action Plan and Air Quality Action Plan.

5. Proposal

- 5.1 To consider WSCC's design proposals for Route K including the four options (Appendix 3 - 6) and to state a preference for two options. The officer recommendation is Option 2 and Option A for the following reasons:

Option 2 provides the same design features as are proposed on Fishbourne Road East (where there are no options just one proposed design) and so gives consistency to the design features of the proposed route across its length (but not at the more constrained eastern section of Westgate where that is not possible). Option 2 also provides a segregated cycle path which we believe will be most attractive to cyclists of all confidence levels and will be most acceptable (safe) to children attending Bishop Luffa rather than Option 1 where they remain on the highway with buses and other motorised transport.

Option A may be more favourable to residents living in the narrow eastern section of Westgate as it continues to allow access from Orchard Street and so is favoured for that reason. In contrast, Option B creates a one-way eastwards route which would be more restricting to residents and businesses.

6. Alternatives Considered

- 6.1 The alternatives would be to not support the scheme, not to support particular aspects of design or to propose an alternative design. As Route K is contained in the Council's LCWIP then it is already a matter of policy. Given the ambition of the Council for increased provision of walking, cycling and wheeling infrastructure, it is proposed to support the scheme. The Council does not have officers who are expert in the provision of alternative highway design whereas WSCC, as the highway authority, employs professionally qualified highways engineers. Supporting the scheme to delivery is also likely to add to the likelihood of NH investing in Chemroute as Route K links Chemroute to the centre of Chichester.

7. Resource and Legal Implications

- 7.1 The further development of Route K will be within current staff and financial resources and there are no legal implications.

8. Consultation

- 8.3 WSCC has carried out two stakeholder briefing sessions, a drop-in session at County Hall, a full social media campaign and put leaflets through the doors of properties on the route. WSCC's 'Yourvoice' internet page for the engagement and consultation is interactive with the ability for consultees to drop annotated 'flags' along the route to provide comments as well as a separate link for the consultation questions.
- 8.4 The Council has repeated some of WSCC's social media messages and hosted banners, leaflets and marketing materials advertising the Route K engagement and consultation exercise in various locations.

9. Community Impact and Corporate Risks

- 9.1 There are various risks around the delivery of Route K, these include that the majority of the community rejects the scheme such that WSCC does not develop it further, that it is only part funded or not funded at all and so is only part delivered or not delivered in its entirety. Nevertheless, Route K is a priority for WSCC to deliver and is this Council's adopted policy from its LCWIP. It is not within the Council's specific remit to deliver Route K alone.
- 9.2 There are risks in supporting certain options (as is proposed) associated with the scheme when, at the current time, the wider community's views and opinions on the scheme and its options are not known. The Council could thereby recommend options that are not favoured by the community. It should be noted that during the development of the Council's LCWIP, public engagement was undertaken with representation by parish and local councillors, stakeholder groups, residents and businesses, therefore there is some understanding of the route in the community already. For instance, Westgate Residents Association has previously communicated a desire to reduce traffic volumes on Westgate. Nevertheless, this report acknowledges that the current public engagement and consultation is at the earliest conceptual design stage such that the Council's views may change as the design for Route K firms-up in time. As such this risk is minor and manageable.
- 9.3 Modal shift towards non-car modes (walking, wheeling, cycling) is modelled in the Local Plan (LP) transport modelling at 5% across the plan period. The delivery of meaningful schemes, such as Route K, is important in seeking to achieve modal shift and shifting local journeys to non-car modes in line with the LP modelled 5%.
- 9.4 WSCC is seeking to achieve ATE Level 1 such that it is able to bid for ATE capital funds. There is currently no certainty in the funding source for Route K though it remains a priority for WSCC to deliver.

10. Other Implications

	Yes	No
Crime and Disorder		✓
Climate Change and Biodiversity Subject to schemes being delivered then the related infrastructure should enable a greater number of trips to be made by foot and bike with a commensurate reduction in carbon emissions.	✓	
Human Rights and Equality Impact		✓
Safeguarding and Early Help		✓
General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR)		✓
Health and Wellbeing The Council has made a commitment to 'help our communities be healthy and active'. The adoption of an LCWIP should enable CDC to be more competitive in bidding for monies for walking and cycling infrastructure delivery. A more coherent and safer network of walking and cycling routes should enable a more active lifestyle with related benefits to physical and mental health.	✓	
Other		✓

11. Appendices – please note that colour versions are available online

- 11.1 Appendix 1 - Route K overview plan
- Appendix 2 – Fishbourne Road plan
- Appendix 3 – Westgate Design Option 1
- Appendix 4 – Westgate design Option 2
- Appendix 5 – East Westgate design Option A
- Appendix 6 - East Westgate design Option B

12. Background Papers

- 12.1 None.