

ENVIRONMENT CABINET MEMBER MEETING

Agenda Item 66

Brighton & Hove City Council

Subject:	Walking Network - Improvements		
Date of Meeting:	6 November 2008		
Report of:	Director of Environment		
Contact Officer:	Name:	Abby Hone	Tel: 29-3813
	E-mail:	abby.hone@brighton-hove.gov.uk	
Key Decision:	Yes	Forward Plan No. <i>ENV4305</i>	
Wards Affected:	All	St. Peter's & North Laine, Regency	

FOR GENERAL RELEASE

1. SUMMARY AND POLICY CONTEXT:

- 1.1 To inform the Cabinet Member for Environment of proposed consultation on the Walking Network capital programme works and request permission to consult on the scheme plans as proposed in this report.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS:

- 2.1 (1) That the Cabinet Member gives approval for officers to conduct public consultation with key stakeholders and residents on the Walking Network proposals detailed in this report. Members will be informed of the outcome of consultation and permission to proceed with the scheme will be sought at a future Environment Cabinet Member Meeting following public consultation.

3. RELEVANT BACKGROUND INFORMATION/CHRONOLOGY OF KEY EVENTS:

- 3.1 The proposal for a Walking Network was agreed by Policy & Resources Committee as part of a package of capital schemes in the current Local Transport Plan 2006/7-2010/11. The scheme will contribute towards achievement of the LTP objective to increase walking trips by 10% by 2011. The schemes will also contribute to the city council's Economic Strategy 2005/08 objectives and the objectives of the Tourism Strategy 2008/18.
- 3.2 The principle of the Walking Network is to create a more accessible and safer pedestrian environment in which people feel confident and safe to move in. The proposals aim to enhance key pedestrian routes in the city centre by making improvements to existing footways and crossing points on the public highway.
- 3.3 Priority routes were identified by using pedestrian activity data to identify a hierarchy of streets and public spaces. These routes incorporate areas of the city, which are at the economic and retail heart of Brighton & Hove and the Walking Network therefore seeks to create greater legibility of Brighton & Hove for both visitors and residents.

- 3.4 The Walking Network scheme is scheduled to be implemented during 2009 and will form part of a wider series of projects designed to improve pedestrian facilities in the city.
- 3.5 LTP funding for the project is divided over 2 financial years. £730k is available in 2008/09 and £500k is available in 2009/10.
- 3.6 The following areas have been identified for improvements over the two financial years:

Black Lion Street

Pedestrian crossing improvements to provide improved accessibility to the seafront and east-west movement across the southern end of Black Lion Street.

Kings Road (Northern footway from Middle Street to Brills Lane)

Accessibility and pedestrian movement will be increased along the length of the route through improvements to the footway surfacing, kerb re-alignment, raised loading bay and taxi rank. Entry and exit treatments at crossing points will be enhanced to improve pedestrian access and safety for all users.

4. CONSULTATION

- 4.1 To date, the following departments have been consulted internally: Highway Engineering, Highway Operations, Conservation, Transport Planning.
- 4.2 The Legibility Steering Group, an internal cross-departmental group whose remit is to review public realm enhancement designs, has been consulted on the proposed locations, materials and street design.
- 4.3 If approval to consult is granted external consultation will be undertaken through a staffed public exhibition in a central venue. In addition, local residents, key stakeholders and businesses will also be consulted.

5. FINANCIAL & OTHER IMPLICATIONS:

Financial Implications:

- 5.1 Any costs associated with consulting on this scheme will be covered by the allocation of funding to Pedestrian Networks within the Local Transport Plan. This amounts to £730K in 2008-9 and a further £500k in 2009/10.

Finance Officer Consulted: Karen Brookshaw

Date: 14/10/08

Legal Implications:

- 5.2 Section 2 of the Local Government Act 2000 gives authorities power to promote the economic, social or environment well being of their communities. This project can be perceived to fall under promotion/improvement of the social and

environmental well being of members of the community. The Highways Act 1980 allows for the creation of a walkway and permits restrictions to be placed on such i.e. time/hours of use. It imposes a duty of maintenance on highway authorities in respect of those highways.

Lawyer Consulted:

Liz Culbert

Date: 15/10/08

Equalities Implications:

- 5.3 The consultation exhibition will be held in a venue conforming to Disability Discrimination Act regulations. It will be manned at specific advertised times to allow the visually impaired to discuss the scheme with Officers.
- 5.4 The scheme will increase accessibility for residents and visitors, particularly for the mobility impaired. Improving awareness and provision for walking will increase the overall transport choice for residents and visitors, particularly for those without access to private motorised transport.

Sustainability Implications:

- 5.5 The consultation element has no sustainability implications.
- 5.6 Creating a better pedestrian environment along the Walking Network will encourage people to walk instead of using less sustainable means of transport thus reducing carbon emissions, improving health, and reducing congestion.

Crime & Disorder Implications:

- 5.7 There are no crime and disorder implications associated with the consultation stage.
- 5.8 Increasing the number of pedestrians, and the associated passive surveillance, has been shown to improve public safety and the perception of safety.

Risk and Opportunity Management Implications:

- 5.9 There are no significant risks attached to the consultation stage of the project.
- 5.10 During the implementation stage user audits will be carried out to ensure the safety of the designs.

Corporate / Citywide Implications:

- 5.11 The Walking Network improvements will improve the appearance, accessibility and legibility of the commercial areas around The Lanes, contributing towards the council priorities to *'protect the environment whilst growing the economy'* and *'reduce inequality by increasing opportunities.'*

6. EVALUATION OF ANY ALTERNATIVE OPTION(S):

- 6.1 Progressing the scheme with minimal external consultation was rejected due to the scope and location of the scheme. The improvements will affect the busiest parts of central Brighton and affect a large number of users and it was therefore felt that to ensure the scheme benefited everyone a city-wide consultation was required.

7. REASONS FOR REPORT RECOMMENDATIONS

- 7.1 The Walking Network improvements will target key points in the city that are heavily used by pedestrians but fail to offer adequate pedestrian facilities. This project will benefit local businesses, residents throughout the city, and visitors by creating a more attractive, accessible and legible route through The Lanes retail area and increasing the sense of connection between The Lanes and the seafront.
- 7.2 By granting approval to consult on the plans the Cabinet Member will allow Officers to amend the design in line with the views of local people and present an improved final design to the Member in the New Year.

SUPPORTING DOCUMENTATION

Appendices:

1. Appendix A – Pedestrian Improvement Scheme Map: Middle Street to the Thistle Hotel

Documents In Members' Rooms

None

Background Documents

1. Local Transport Plan 2006/7-2010/11
2. Public Life Public Space