

East Herts Council Report

Executive

Date of Meeting: 24 November 2020

Report by Executive Member for Environmental Sustainability

Report title: Sustainable Travel Town Bids

Ward(s) affected: All Ware, All Hertford, All Bishop's Stortford,

Summary

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR EXECUTIVE, it be recommended to Council that:

- (a)** In principle, East Herts Council supports the aspirations of LTP4 and the Sustainable Travel Town criteria
- (b)** East Herts Council will, in principle, support towns wishing to submit bids for Sustainable Travel Town status

1.0 Proposal(s)

- 1.1 That East Herts Council support the aspirations within Hertfordshire Council Councils Local Transport Plan 4 (LTP4) and the principles relating to the conditions for Sustainable Travel Town

2.0 Background

- 2.1 As part of the delivery of the Local Transport Plan (LTP4) adopted by Hertfordshire County Council (HCC) in 2018 a Sustainable Travel Town programme has been developed by HCC.

- 2.2 Organisations across Hertfordshire were invited to submit an outline bid to become a Sustainable Travel Town to HCC. A total of eight bids across Hertfordshire were received.
- 2.3 Across East Hertfordshire three bids were submitted by interested parties, covering the towns of Bishop's Stortford, Ware and Hertford.
- 2.4 East Herts Council has been asked to support the bids made. There are numerous conditions that the council will need to support and prioritise and needs to consider whether *in principle*, the aspirations are supported. This is likely to be a long term programme spanning a number of years.
- 2.5 The Hertfordshire County Council panel is due to meet in December 2020. Successful bidders will be notified following the meeting.
- 2.6 All submissions are required to have the support of the district council where the council is not the promoter. This is essential as many of the key elements required, such as car parking enforcement, car parking charges and spatial planning, are the responsibility of the council and would in all likelihood require the council to amend its policies.
- 2.7 Once a scheme has been selected by the HCC Panel, a memorandum of understanding will be developed between HCC and the successful applicant(s) which will establish the agreed principles of the types of measures districts councils will need to support as part of the Sustainable Travel Town programme. Following this, a comprehensive project plan will be developed with the district councils to establish the aims of the scheme, and support the towns with the programme of delivery and the monitoring and reporting arrangements.
- 2.8 Hertford Town Council met to discuss the conditions directly with HCC officers and portfolio holder. They made a written

response to HCC which can be found at **Appendix B**.

3.0 Reason(s)

3.1 Due to the numerous conditions (which can be found at **Appendix A**) consideration needs to be given to the willingness and ability to *in principle* support all conditions such as Parking requirements:

- To ensure that there is no free parking in town centres.
- To ensure that there is no net gain in parking spaces both on-street and in off-street facilities.
- To demonstrate how existing parking restrictions will be enforced, and to support the implementation of new restrictions where these will make conditions more attractive for pedestrians, cyclists or buses.

3.2 and Planning requirements:

- To deliver car-free development wherever possible, and to reduce parking standards in all other new developments where it can be clearly demonstrated that car-free cannot be delivered.

4.0 Options

4.1 The council could choose not to support the aspirations, but this would result in the town bids being unsupported and therefore not meeting the basic criteria

4.2 The principles align with the corporate plan:

Sustainability at the heart of everything we do

- We will make changes to how the council manages its own premises, people and services

- We will use our regulatory powers to promote action by others
- We will influence and encourage others to be more environmentally sustainable

4.3 Officers are asked to have open dialogue and discussion with HCC to reach an acceptable list of criteria for the programme

5.0 Risks

5.1 In the current economic climate, it may be considered that there is a conflict with our Corporate Plan ambitions. Businesses may see the removal of free parking in the town centres as a barrier to growth. For this reason in principle support is recommended.

Encouraging economic growth

- We will develop new sources of income
- We will support businesses growth
- We will create viable places

5.2 The decision to charge for all car-parking (no free time), including on street parking which is currently free may not be popular with residents. It is unclear if this charging policy would also apply to disabled users or whether exemptions would be possible.

5.3 On the flip side, it may increase income from parking charges and enable more investment in growing the local economy. And/or provide revenue to deliver or subsidise sustainable transport measures to aid their viability.

6.0 Implications/Consultations

6.1 The council has been approached by Hertford Town Council

and the Ware Neighbourhood Planning Group, requesting that we support their bids. The Bishop's Stortford bid was submitted by Shaping Stortford on behalf of East Hertfordshire District Council.

- 6.2 The member Parking Task and Finish group is making recommendations that support the sustainability agenda and will encourage more walking and cycling as the preferred methods of travel where possible.

Community Safety

Yes/No

Data Protection

Yes/No

Equalities

Yes/No

No differences between residents in the protected characteristics in terms of car use, public transport use, economic position (and thus impact of reduced free parking)

Environmental Sustainability

Yes/No

LTP4 and the Sustainable Travel Town principles contribute to environmental sustainability through encouraging more sustainable means of transport

Financial

Yes/No

There will need to be changes to signage across the District as well as new signage and means of charging where free on street parking currently exists. This is to be determined. It is expected that costs will be recovered from the additional charges.

Health and Safety

Yes/No

Human Resources

Yes/No

Human Rights

Yes/No

Legal

Yes/No

Specific Wards

Yes/No

7.0 Background papers, appendices and other relevant material

7.1 **Appendix A** – STT – District/Borough Criteria

7.2 **Appendix B** - Letter from Hertford Town Council to Hertfordshire County Council

Contact Member

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