



CABINET 25TH NOVEMBER 2020

SUBJECT: GWENT HEALTHY TRAVEL CHARTER

REPORT BY: INTERIM CORPORATE DIRECTOR COMMUNITIES

--

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 This report is to allow Cabinet to consider the Gwent Healthy Travel Charter, which has been developed by public sector organisations in Gwent and led by Aneurin Bevan University Health Board.
- 1.2 The Charter follows a model, originally developed in the Cardiff Public Services Board (PSB) area, to encourage staff and visitors to sites to use healthy modes of transport and provide a focus for a consistent approach to sustainable travel.

2. SUMMARY

- 2.1 The Gwent Healthy Travel Charter has been developed by the Gwent Sustainable Travel Group, led by Aneurin Bevan University Health Board. All public sector bodies in Gwent and a number of other publicly funded organisations have been given the opportunity to sign up to the Charter.
- 2.2 The Charter was formally launched during Wales Climate Week, 2nd to 6th November 2020, and Caerphilly CBC indicated their willingness to be part of the launch. The purpose of this report is to introduce the Charter more fully to Cabinet and allow consideration of the commitments and targets and how they might apply to the activity of the local authority.
- 2.3 The Charter sets out a number of commitments and four targets for the period 2020-2023. This timeline is the same as the Caerphilly PSB well-being plan and the Council's Corporate Plan.
- 2.4 Partners across Gwent worked in collaboration to develop the commitments, which cover the following areas:
 - Communication & leadership
 - Walking, cycling & public transport
 - Agile working
 - Ultra-low emission vehicles

2.5 A baseline survey of staff working in the Gwent region took place in February this year with 669 responses given by Caerphilly employees, out of 4,373 across the region. The baseline survey was used to set four targets:

- **Reduce** the proportion of journeys commuting to and from work made by car from 87% to 77%.
- **Increase** the proportion of staff who use public transport to travel to and from work from 3% to 8%.
- **Increase** the proportion of staff who work from home 1 or more days per week from 14% to 25%
- **Increase** the proportion of vehicles used during the day which are ultra-low emission from <1% to 5%
-

The intention is that the survey will be repeated annually to measure progress.

2.6 Caerphilly CBC has a long commitment to sustainable transport initiatives and staff travel and has already put in place many of the actions set out in the Charter. Most recently Cabinet have committed to providing an electric vehicle charging infrastructure for Council fleet vehicles. Staff work patterns have significantly altered due to the current pandemic with increasing use of teleconferencing, more staff working away from offices and reduced travel to and from meetings. As the targets were developed at the start of this year they may need alter to reflect changed working patterns, however this should not prevent the local authority's commitment to the principles of the Charter

3. RECOMMENDATIONS

3.1 That the Gwent Healthy Travel Charter is adopted by Caerphilly County Borough Council and that the local authority supports the commitments and targets.

4. REASONS FOR THE RECOMMENDATIONS

4.1 To demonstrate Caerphilly County Borough Council's ongoing commitment to healthy and sustainable travel.

5. THE REPORT

5.1 Caerphilly CBC already has a strong track record in implementing sustainable transport initiatives, and already has in place many of the actions set out in the Charter, most notably:

- Cycle to work scheme established in 2010
- Car share scheme established in 2009
- Designated car share spaces at main sites since 2010
- Pool bike scheme established in 2008
- Electric pool bike at Ty Penallta since 2019
- Showers, secure cycle storage and lockers at main sites
- Mileage rates for cycling to meetings since 2010
- Mileage rates for car sharing to meetings
- Salary sacrifice scheme for ultra-low emission vehicles (ULEVs) in 2011
- Cycle maps project in partnership with Sustrans, 2014

- Development of Active Travel routes with partners
- Review of Council fleet to develop greater use of electric vehicles
- Programme for Procurement 2018-2023 Environment Strategic Theme- sustainability risk assessments 2018
- Numerous sustainable travel events and promotions including cycle training for staff, cycle to work promotional days, promotion of active travel routes, promotion of ULEV lease vehicles for staff etc.

5.3 The current pandemic has significantly impacted on staff work and travel patterns, much of this positively in terms of staff travel. This has included increasing use and availability of videoconferencing, increasing numbers of staff working in an agile way, currently from home, and reduced staff travel to and from meetings.

5.4 It is acknowledged that under usual conditions that vast majority of staff still travel to work singly in cars and despite the initiatives above, changing this behaviour has been very difficult. Actual journeys to work have reduced significantly due to the pandemic, the increase in agile working is unlikely to see a return to pre-COVID levels, however as the target to reduce travel to work by car is a proportional one it may be difficult to reduce.

5.5 Increasing the numbers of staff who use public transport will be difficult in the short term and difficult to predict beyond that. However, increasing the proportion of staff who work from home should be easy to achieve given changing travel patterns. The promotion of agile working longer term has been aided by the significant uptake in supportive technology over the past few months.

5.6 The Electric Vehicle Strategy and Action Plan should make the target to increase the proportion of ULEVs used during the day possible. The targets in the Charter are aspirational and at a Gwent level, the intention being that each signatory will contribute to the targets by their individual actions. For this reason the targets should be supported.

5.7 **Conclusion**

The Gwent Healthy Travel Charter continues the longstanding commitment the local authority has to sustainable travel. Initiatives have been regularly implemented since 2008, when the first pool bike scheme came into being. Becoming a signatory alongside other regional partners will allow the sharing of best practice in sustainable travel and the development of further activity in collaboration with other partners working to the same aim.

6. **ASSUMPTIONS**

6.1 An assumption is made that staff and visitor travel and working patterns will remain relatively stable over the 3-year timeline of the Charter commitments and targets. Targets may need to be revised by the Gwent Sustainable Travel Group, particularly in the light of changing travel patterns during the current pandemic and changes to working practices that have brought benefits to the Charter organisations, for example agile working and less use of offices as fixed locations.

7. **LINKS TO RELEVANT COUNCIL POLICIES**

7.1 **Corporate Plan 2018-2023.**

The Gwent Healthy Travel Charter contributes towards the Corporate Well-being Objectives in the following ways:

Objective 1 - Improve education opportunities for all- promotion and communication around health and sustainable travel will continue under the Charter commitments

Objective 4 - Promote a modern, integrated and sustainable transport system that increases opportunity, promotes prosperity and minimises the adverse impacts on the environment- directly supports this Objective.

Objective 5 - Creating a county borough that supports a healthy lifestyle in accordance with the sustainable Development Principle within the Wellbeing of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015- directly supports this Objective in terms of vehicle emissions, stewardship of the natural environment and its use for active travel, and greater physical activity.

8. WELL-BEING OF FUTURE GENERATIONS

8.1 The report contributes to the following Well-being Goals: -

- A prosperous Wales
- A resilient Wales
- A healthier Wales
- A globally responsible Wales

The report is consistent with the five ways of working as defined within the sustainable development principle in the Act:

- Long Term – protecting the environment through healthy and sustainable travel improves health and protects natural resources
- Prevention – greater physical activity by staff protects physical and mental health
- Integration – integrating activity with partners such as Sustrans, Natural Resources Wales and Public Health Wales supports their organisational objectives.
- Collaboration – the Gwent Healthy Travel Charter is working across a range of originations, see background papers.
- Involvement – staff communication has been and will continue to be a part of healthy travel initiatives.

9. EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS

9.1 An EIA screening has been completed in accordance with the Council's Strategic Equality Plan and supplementary guidance. No potential for unlawful discrimination and/or low level or minor negative impact has been identified, therefore a full EIA has not been carried out.

10. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

10.1 There are no direct financial implications resulting from this report.

11. PERSONNEL IMPLICATIONS

11.1 Work is currently underway to enhance the Cycle to Work Scheme to increase the choice available to employees enabling them to gain access to a wider choice of cycles. Part of this will be an increase in limits to allow electric cycles to be considered. A further report will be provided to Cabinet.

12. CONSULTATIONS

12.1 The report has been sent to the consultees listed below and all comments received have been included in the report.

13. STATUTORY POWER

13.1 Local Government Act 1972
Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015

Author: Kathryn Peters, Corporate Policy Manager, peter@caerphilly.gov.uk

Consultees: Cllr Sean Morgan, Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Economy and Enterprise
Cllr John Ridgewell, Cabinet Member for Environment and Infrastructure
Mark S Williams, Interim Corporate Director- Communities
Sue Richards, Head of Education Planning, Strategy and Finance
Liz Lucas, Head of Customer and Digital Services
Lynne Donovan, Head of People Services
Marcus Lloyd, Head of Infrastructure
Robert Tranter, Head of Legal Services and Monitoring Officer
Clive Campbell, Transportation Engineering Manger
Mike Headington, Green Spaces and Transport Services Manager
Sarena Ford, Senior Communications Officer
Paul Cooke, Senior Policy Officer

Background Papers: <https://www.healthytravel.wales/gwent>

Appendices:

Appendix 1 Gwent Healthy Travel Charter