

## Draft letter of support: Bristol Cycling Centre – Levelling Up Fund

### Darren Jones MP (Bristol North West)

- I am writing in support of the bid to the Levelling Up Fund from Bristol City Council for the **Bristol Cycling Centre**.
- It will be based in the Bristol North West constituency but will benefit neighbouring constituencies, local authority areas and the wider region.
- A successful LUF bid will enable the Council to construct, own and operate a new purpose-built regional cycling centre incorporating a competition standard cycling track at Avonmouth and Lawrence Weston, a ward within my constituency.
- The designs have been developed in close partnership with Sport England and British Cycling and will provide a much-needed new facility for this part of the city.
- The Quality of Life 2020-21 survey found that 35% of residents in Avonmouth and Lawrence Weston stated that they play sport once a week compared with the Bristol average of 41%. The ward also has a lower rate of those who do enough regular exercise per week, with 59% of residents achieving this compared with the Bristol average of 68%.
- Lawrence Weston also suffers from higher-than-average levels of obesity with 27% of residents being obese compared with the Bristol average of 17% whilst a minority of residents are satisfied with the provision of activities for children/young people. Satisfaction with leisure facilities and services is also significantly lower than the Bristol average.
- A new Cycling Centre will be key element in the city's strategy to increase the number of people cycling. I welcome the fact it will cater for all ranges of physical abilities and ages and attracts people from across a diverse range of socio-economic groups including many people from areas of deprivation. The addition of a sporting activity will further broaden participation among these groups across Bristol North West and beyond.
- This project and the proposed recreational use is also consistent with the open space policies of the Lawrence Weston Neighbourhood Development Plan and the relevant emerging policies in the local plan review.
- The Centre has strong local support and will provide opportunities for local community engagement and for people to volunteer and gain skills across a range of areas that may be useful for future employment.
- I also welcome the fact that once the new site is in operation, the space will offer more health based activities and also an opportunity to visit Social Prescribing with GP's and Health Care providers.
- As the bid details, it is envisaged that that the Cycling Centre could partner with other services and interventions relating to health including social isolation, mental health, injury rehabilitation etc.
- The Centre will also provide additional social value by through work experience and volunteering opportunities to young disabled and able-bodied people, older people and care leavers.

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