

**TO: ENVIRONMENT, CULTURE & COMMUNITIES OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY PANEL  
24 SEPTEMBER 2013**

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**SUSTAINABLE MODES OF TRANSPORT  
Director of Environment, Culture and Communities**

**1 PURPOSE OF REPORT**

- 1.1 This report presents an overview of the work being undertaken to encourage sustainable modes of transport for the Panel's information.

**2 RECOMMENDATION(S)**

- 2.1 **That the Environment, Culture and Communities Overview and Scrutiny Panel notes the report.**

**3 REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATION(S)**

- 3.1 To inform the Panel of the work being undertaken on sustainable modes of transport.

**4 ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED / ADVICE RECEIVED FROM  
STATUTORY AND OTHER OFFICERS / EQUALITIES IMPACT ASSESSMENT /  
STRATEGIC RISK MANAGEMENT ISSUES / CONSULTATION**

- 4.1 Not applicable.

**5. SUPPORTING INFORMATION**

Introduction

- 5.1 Sustainable modes of travel are generally described as ones which may improve either or both of the following;
- (a) the physical well-being of those who use them;
  - (b) the environmental well-being of the whole or a part of their area
- 5.2 Sustainable travel contributes to achieving the Council's Vision, the National Transport Goals and the Council's Local Transport Plan objectives.
- 5.3 Under the Education and Inspections Act 2006 the Council has a duty to promote sustainable travel to schools.
- 5.4 Sustainable transport measures do not seek to penalise car use. However, given that 2 out of every 3 trips made are less than five miles in length, there are opportunities for encouraging more local trips to be made sustainably, freeing the network for those trips where the car is the best or only option.

Infrastructure Improvements

## Unrestricted

- 5.5 The Council encourages sustainable travel through a combination of infrastructure improvements and behaviour change initiatives.
- 5.6 Infrastructure improvements include;
- (a) additions and improvements to the borough's network of cycle paths, focusing on access to key destinations such as schools, employment, and leisure amenities and facilities
  - (b) bus priority measures that reduce journey times for bus users which help make it a more attractive alternative
  - (c) improvements at bus stops, such as raised kerbs for step-free access to buses
  - (d) improvements specifically targeted at facilitating walking and cycling to school, which include traffic calming, walking and cycling links, parking management
- 5.7 These improvements are funded through the Council's Integrated Transport Capital Programme and from developer contributions secured via the planning process.

### Behaviour Change Measures

- 5.8 There is now credible evidence that 'soft measures' which seek to effect travel choices through information and encouragement can provide very favourable cost to benefit ratios.
- 5.9 Behaviour change measures the Council currently employs include;
- (a) working with schools to develop Travel Plans which encourage more walking and cycling, supported by incentive schemes, walking bus training, cycle training and general road safety awareness training
  - (b) working with businesses to develop Travel Plans to encourage more sustainable commuting
  - (c) annual promotional events such as Bike Week, Liftshare week and the Car Free Challenge
  - (d) Providing information such as cycle maps, leaflets and on-line content
  - (e) Providing a free-to-use car sharing database
- 5.10 These improvements are funded through the Council's revenue budget which is offset, in part, by developer contributions.

### The Local Sustainable Transport Fund

- 5.11 In 2011 the Government announced the creation of a Local Sustainable Transport Fund (LSTF) and invited local authorities to bid for a share of £560million to implement local transport measures. Successful bids had to satisfy the Department for Transport's criteria to reduce carbon emissions and encourage economic growth.

## Unrestricted

In response to this, officers submitted a successful bid for £1.6 million of funding, containing a combination of revenue and capital schemes linked to the town centre regeneration. We are currently in year two of the three year funding period.

5.12 The LSTF Infrastructure improvement schemes are;

- (a) Bus station improvements - the bus station will be remodelled to provide easier access for buses and pedestrians, and an improved waiting environment for bus users. This work is scheduled for early in the new year.
- (b) Urban Traffic Control Management – updating the systems that help manage traffic flow through our busiest junctions, thereby increasing capacity and reducing journey times. This work represents accelerated progress on the Council's existing action plans.
- (c) Real Time Bus Information – securing software and hardware which enables us the provision of real time bus arrival information at key locations and via a web site. We are in the process of procuring a system and it is planned to be operational in 2014/15.

5.13 The LSTF behaviour change schemes are;

- (a) Creating Travel Plan Networks for the Southern and Western Business Areas – working with large employers and their staff to share transport resources (such as shuttle buses to the rail station) manage common parking issues and encourage sustainable commuting options
- (b) Personal Travel Planning – approximately 3,000 residents in areas identified as being the most likely to consider alternative travel choices have been spoken to at the doorstep to discuss travel habits and provide information, advice and incentives to encourage more sustainable transport options
- (c) 'Bike It' programme – the employment of a Sustrans officer to work with 20 schools in the borough on a range of events and initiatives to encourage more cycling (and walking and scooting) to school
- (d) Sky Ride Local – a partnership with British Cycling and Sky to deliver a series of 20 led cycle rides across the borough, catering to a range of experience and age groups, with the aim of encouraging greater uptake of cycling for both leisure and utility trips whilst introducing residents to the network of cycle paths

5.14 A marketing theme called 'Travel Sense' has been created to coordinate the LSTF programme elements, and this theme is being extended to all sustainable transport measures.

### Outcomes

5.15 The success of the work carried out to encourage sustainable travel habits is largely measured by an annual survey of transport mode uptake, published as the Travel in Bracknell Report. Although many factors beyond our local control will influence the

uptake of certain modes of travel, the Travel in Bracknell Report provides our best tool for assessing trends.

- 5.16 Some specific measures, such as the branding and promotion of key cycle corridors, are more closely monitored through before and after surveys. Travel to school modes are monitored by an annual school census.

#### Bus Patronage

- 5.17 Bus patronage levels have increased by just over 5% since the baseline year of 2004/5. Levels in 2011/12 (the most recent figures available) increased by 2.7% compared to 2011/12, the first such increase since 2008/9.

#### Pedestrians

- 5.18 Pedestrian numbers grew steadily from 2001 to 2009 but have fallen back to 2001 levels in the last couple of years. Child pedestrian levels however have increased steadily since 2008, most likely due to the work done on School Travel Plans. The school census data for Bracknell Forest shows that sustainable journeys to school have increased from 61% in 2007 (the first year of the census) to 69% in 2013 for primary school pupils, although sustainable travel among secondary school pupils has reduce by 4% to 76%. This compares favourably to the national averages of 54% and 74% respectively.

#### Cyclists

- 5.19 Cycling levels can be particular influenced by weather conditions. The annual cycle survey is conducted over a two day period and in 2012 the weather on these two days was poor. This may be the reason for a significant decrease in cycle numbers in 2012. The previous four years of data had shown a steady increase in cycle numbers, with 2011 being the second highest year since 2001.

#### Rail patronage

- 5.20 Passenger numbers at the four stations in the borough have increased by 11% since 2001. Significantly there has been a steady increase in the numbers alighting in the borough over the past four years, with commuting in to Bracknell during the morning peak exceeding outbound journeys.

#### LSTF

- 5.21 Evaluation of the LSTF projects has not yet been completed.

#### Background Papers

- (1) Bracknell Forest Council's Local Sustainable Transport Fund Bid  
(2) Travel in Bracknell Report 2012

#### Contact for further information

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