



Meeting: Transport Working Party

Date: 23 January 2014

Wards Affected: All Wards

Report Title: Smarter Choices and Sustainable Travel

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1. Introduction

- 1.1 This report concerns the Local Sustainable Transport Fund (LSTF) and Smarter Choices initiatives which are primarily there to encourage travel by sustainable means.
- 1.2 The purpose is to inform members of the current Government policy and how the ministers are proposing to view the Strategic Economic Plans.
- 1.3 Baroness Susan Kramer (Transport Minister) has stated an expectation for a variety of sustainable travel proposals in schemes and projects, this would include both hard and soft measures.
- 1.4 These measures can include new or improved pedestrian, cycle, and public transport connections, as well as behavioural change initiatives (allowing the user to make 'smarter choices') such as travel planning, incorporated into, developed alongside or carried out independently of highway schemes.
- 1.5 The Government has recently announced an additional LSTF opportunity and is encouraging local authorities and local enterprise partnerships (LEP) to strongly consider sustainable travel opportunities to enable economic growth.

2. General

- 2.1 Under the current round of LSTF the Authority is implementing a new ferry service, improved bus service connection, cycleway, supporting workhubs and, alongside these projects, working with a travel planner and using marketing to support sustainable travel amongst residents and commuters in particular.

- 2.2 At a recent conference Baroness Kramer said she would be looking at the LEP's Strategic Economic Plans (SEP) to ensure there was commitment to spend on sustainable transport schemes.
- 2.3 In December the Department for Transport announced £78.5million funding for 2015/2016 as a further round of LSTF revenue funding. This will support capital investment by the LEP and will be a competitive process. All applications will need the support of the LEP. This further emphasises the need for the LEP and local authorities to support sustainable travel initiatives.
- 2.4 Other Authorities that have made investment through LSTF have developed travel planning websites, improved walking and cycling environments, provided education on travelling by sustainable modes, enhanced bus networks and upgraded bus and rail station infrastructure.
- 2.5 The Authority will need to prepare a bid for this funding opportunity that promotes sustainable travel and focuses on economic gain whether that be through reduced journey times, ease of access to employment and education, improved health or a combination of these and other factors.
- 2.6 It is apparent from the guidance for the LSTF and the speech given by Baroness Kramer at the recent conference that sustainable travel initiatives should be given high priority. This funding represents a rare opportunity for revenue and although it is intended to support a capital element this is not essentially as long as it demonstrates benefits and is in accordance with the SEP.
- 2.7 Suggested that increased choices is much better than demand management techniques, whereby walking, cycling and public transport are genuine alternatives and are not at a disadvantage to the car. This does not require any changes to the highway network that would adversely affect the car and it can be included as a choice but that other options are available.
- 2.8 Where pedestrian and cycle enhancements have been focused on place rather than simply the delivery of infrastructure, they have been most successful.

3 Consultation

- 3.1 The DfT are strongly supporting investment in sustainable travel, particularly revenue based promotion and behavioural change initiatives. However it should be aligned with the LEP's SEP and any capital investments sought from the Single Local Growth Fund.

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No Appendices, Additional Documents or Background Papers available