

Report to	Lead Cabinet Member for Transport and Environment
Date	22 February 2009
Report By	Director of Transport and Environment
Title of Report	Draft Sustainable School Travel Strategy
Purpose of Report	To agree the measures included in the draft action plan appended to the report

RECOMMENDATION:

The Lead Cabinet Member for Transport and Environment is recommended to approve the draft Sustainable School Travel Strategy and action plan.

1. Financial Appraisal

1.1 The cost of implementing the draft Action Plan will be met from grant funding of £115,694 received from the Department for Children, Schools & Families (DCSF) and Department for Transport (DfT) towards the implementation of a Sustainable School Travel Strategy for the County.

2. Supporting Information

2.1 The Education and Inspections Act 2006 places a duty on local authorities to promote sustainable travel to school and develop a Sustainable School Travel Strategy. The DSCF and DfT have provided grant funding, available up to March 2011, to enable the implementation of measures and initiatives identified from the development of the strategy.

2.2 The County Council has been actively engaging with schools since 2001 to develop initiatives and measures to promote safer, sustainable and healthier travel on the school journey through the development of travel plans and the delivery of road safety education. The development of the draft strategy, in response to this duty, provides an opportunity to bring together the current initiatives and measures available to pupils to encourage sustainable school journeys, as well as develop an action plan outlining what additional measures we intend to deliver to promote sustainable travel to school in the county over the next two years.

2.3 The successful delivery of the draft Strategy will involve a range of key stakeholders, as set out in Appendix 1, and will cut across other services delivered by the County Council including Extended Schools, 14- 19 Transport Access, healthy Schools, School Admissions, Special Educational Needs, the Youth Council and the Play Strategy. Officers from these teams in the Children's Services Department have been involved in the development of the draft Strategy and its action plan.

2.4 The draft Sustainable School Travel Strategy will be a daughter document to the evolving third Local Transport Plan. Therefore, the draft strategy and action plan will need to be reviewed to consider the new national goals for transport together with the objectives for transport which will be set out in LTP3.

3. Comments/Appraisal

3.1 The measures and initiatives identified in the draft Sustainable School Travel Strategy have been identified using a 'needs assessment'. This assessment was undertaken to understand the travel and transport needs that children, young people and families have in the county in relation to the school journey. This was collated from the information contained within the travel plans that have developed by schools in the county.

3.2 These measures and initiatives have been translated into a draft action plan at Appendix 2 to the report. The draft action plan outlines what we intend to deliver to help improve access to information concerning sustainable travel options for families along with new measures and initiatives to promote safer, sustainable and healthier travel on the school journey. The measures and initiatives will also positively impact on national and locally important agendas such as tackling obesity, tackling climate change, improving access to education, reducing congestion and improving road safety.

3.3 Consultation on the draft strategy was undertaken with all schools in the county, including Head teachers and the Chair's of Governing Body's, together with local councillors and relevant outside organisations. The outcomes of the consultation are set out in Appendix 3 to the report. Overall there was general support for the content of the strategy and the draft action plan. A number of comments were received and the draft strategy has been amended as appropriate to reflect these comments.

3.4 The Education and Inspections Act 2006 also required a summary of the draft Sustainable School Travel Strategy to be published alongside the School Admissions booklet, which has been identified in the draft action plan. The County Council has already developed parent/carer friendly booklets, which includes the most relevant information concerning school travel. These have been distributed to schools and public places within the county, including libraries, children centres and the family information service.

4. Environmental Issues

4.1 The Strategy and its action plan includes measures and initiatives which will contribute towards reducing the number of vehicles used for the school run therefore reducing vehicle congestion, and in turn reducing CO₂ emissions in the county.

5. Conclusion and Reason for Recommendation

5.1 The draft Sustainable School Travel Strategy sets out how the County Council will, in accordance with the duty in the Education and Inspections Act 2006, set out the County Council's approach to delivering measures and initiatives that will encourage safer, sustainable and healthier travel on the school journey for families in the county. The strategy will contribute towards tackling health, transport and environment issues and will involve cross-departmental working in order to successfully deliver the draft strategy's action plan

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BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS

Draft Sustainable School Travel Strategy, November 2009