

SOUTH CAMBRIDGESHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

REPORT TO: Leader and Cabinet 11th September 2008
AUTHOR/S: Chief Executive/ Housing Futures Project Manager

TRAVEL FOR WORK PLAN 2008-2011

Purpose

1. To consider and approve a new Travel for Work Plan that aims to achieve the following vision:

To promote a wide range of sustainable travel choices for our existing and future employees, elected members and visitors, in order to support their travel needs, reduce our environmental impact from travel and to make the most efficient use of resources in delivering services to our customers and providing leadership to our local communities.

2. This is a key decision because:
 - it raises new issues of policy, or is made in the course of developing proposals to amend the policy framework, or is a decision taken under powers delegated by the Council to amend an aspect of the policy framework.
 - it requires the appointment of additional permanent staff for which there is no budgetary provision.
 - it is of such significance to a locality, the Council or the services which it provides that the decision-taker is of the opinion that it should be treated as a key decision.

and it was first published in the April Forward Plan.

Executive Summary

3. The imbalance between supply of and demand for car parking spaces at South Cambridgeshire Hall has been a constant issue since the offices were first occupied in May 2004.
4. It was agreed by the Executive in September 2007 that there should be an investigation of both short and long term parking solutions and associated resource issues. At the same time a new Travel for Work Plan was to be developed to offer longer term options to meet agreed objectives in relation to sustainable travel to and within the organisation.
5. A Travel for Work Plan is essentially a package of measures, initiatives and promotions aimed at developing and encouraging sustainable travel.
6. This report sets out the detailed objectives, key stages and outcomes of the Travel for Work project and how this has enabled the development of a new Travel for Work plan that is attached as an appendix.

Background

7. A Travel for Work Plan is essentially a package of measures, initiatives and promotions aimed at developing and encouraging sustainable travel. Quite simply, it aims – wherever possible and practical – to reduce the amount we drive in favour of more walking, cycling, public transport, car sharing as well as smarter and flexible ways of working.
8. The Council published its first award winning Travel for Work Plan in June 2000 and this was updated following the office relocation to Cambourne from Cambridge in May 2004.
9. However, many of the actions incorporated in the Travel for Work Plan have either not been implemented or regularly monitored and reviewed or been effective in meeting the objectives of the plan.
10. The imbalance between supply of and demand for car parking spaces at South Cambridgeshire Hall has been a constant issue since the offices were first occupied in May 2004. Further the council's emerging role in terms of community leadership and 'place shaping' have produced new demands on the accessibility of the council and its ability to host major events, meetings and conferences.
11. In particular the targets to reduce the number of lone driver journeys to South Cambridgeshire Hall at Cambourne and the removal of the 24 'sacrificial' car parking spaces identified at the time that planning permission for these offices was granted has not been achieved within the timescale envisaged in the 2004 Travel for Work plan.
12. The position in relation to Travel for Work and related car parking issues was considered by the Executive in September 2007 when it was agreed that there should be an investigation of other short term parking solutions and associated resource issues in terms of both staffing and financial implications. At the same time a new Travel for Work Plan was to be developed to offer longer term options to meet agreed objectives in relation to sustainable travel to and within the organisation

Considerations

13. Following the identification of a project manager in October 2007 a Travel for Work Project Steering Group was set up comprising key officers from across the council. A project plan was developed and agreed with the following objectives:
 - To develop a new Travel for Work Plan that will incorporate a package of measures aimed at promoting sustainable travel options and reducing reliance on single occupancy car travel by staff, members and visitors to South Cambridgeshire Hall.
 - To review use of designated car parking areas at South Cambridgeshire Hall and maximise opportunities for short-term alternative provision within Cambourne Business Park as agreed by Cabinet in September 2007.
 - To identify the resource requirements for the development and implementation of a new Travel for Work Plan.
 - To investigate potential for maximisation of the site around South Cambridgeshire Hall for car parking and/or dual use facilities e.g. for recreational use by staff and visitors and enable the Council to host key events as part of its community leadership and 'place shaping' role.

- To identify long term occasional overflow parking facilities either within the site boundary of South Cambs Hall or on the Business Park.
14. The Travel for Work project steering group was chaired by the Planning Services Portfolio Holder with the Chief Executive as project sponsor to demonstrate both senior management and political commitment to the process. The project steering group met at monthly intervals between November 2007 and May 2008 and the project was delivered in accordance with the agreed timescale.
15. The key stages within the project are as follows:
- Gathering information
 - Review of car parking facilities and their management
 - Communications and raising awareness
 - Developing the Travel for Work Plan
 - Next steps

16. **Gathering Information**

Site audit – this was to assess the ease with which the council’s offices can be accessed by different modes of transport, and the space and facilities provided for this.

Travel surveys – these provided an essential foundation for a travel plan as they provided data on the present travel patterns of staff and elected members and collected information on what would most help these stakeholder groups to travel differently. It also offered a good way to start engaging staff and elected members in the idea of a travel plan and the reasons behind it.

Desktop review of the 2004 Travel for Work Plan – this was to understand what has worked well and what lessons need to be learnt to ensure the successful implementation of a new Travel for Work Plan.

Audit of related policies - It was important to assess at the outset which policies are already encouraging sustainable travel, and conversely which ones threaten to undermine a travel plan. A travel plan should include actions to strengthen the helpful policies and to remove damaging ones.

Travel audits – this was a consideration of all elements of business travel undertaken within the organisation and also visitors to South Cambridgeshire Hall and an analysis of pre-existing data such as mileage claims as well as additional survey work e.g. of visitors to reception over a specified period of time.

17. **Review of car parking facilities and their management**

The conditions attached to the planning permission for the Council’s offices in relation to on site car parking provision required that a Travel for Work plan be submitted, agreed and implemented and that the number of car parking spaces be reduced ‘over time’ in accordance with the 24 sacrificial spaces identified on the approved plans.

The new Travel for Work plan does not include a specific target date for the reduction in overall on site car parking provision but the successful implementation of the new plan will enable decisions to be made about future levels of parking provision, including reducing the number available on site, as part of the plan’s monitoring and

review mechanisms. Any reduction in demand for parking by staff, councillors and visitors achieved will need to be assessed against the likely increase/decrease in demand for use of the offices by members of the public and to host partnership and other major events and availability of alternative modes of travel.

Car park management policy – reviewed to increase the number of reserved car parking spaces for car sharers and people with disabilities and incorporation of visitor car parking within the main car park with improved signage.

Short term overflow parking – secure a temporary facility by way of a one year lease of a car park opposite the Business Park Marketing Suite. The lease commenced in May this year.

Long term permanent and/or occasional overflow car parking – investigation of options to increase on site car parking provision to improve the accessibility of the council's offices to members of the public.

The proposal that has been submitted for planning consent will facilitate the provision of 21 additional spaces the majority of which will be accommodated at the rear of the building along with improvements to the amenity area for staff use.

The improvements to the amenity area will be achieved through a new landscaping scheme that will make better use of the available space and provide a more attractive environment than exists at present with more soft and less hard landscaping features.

The additional car parking spaces to be provided at the rear of the building will initially be for everyday use but could be re-designated as overflow parking for occasional use if demand for parking can be reduced in accordance with the Travel for Work targets. An appropriate barrier and/or lockable bollards could segregate these spaces to prevent daily use and the car parking area could then be made available for recreational use by staff when not in required as overflow parking in the future.

18. Communications and raising awareness

Regular features have been included in the Chief Executives Weekly Message to staff, Scene the staff magazine and InSite to help promote the travel for work project.

A stall was set up in the street area during March to help publicise travel for work and to seek views of staff on the options for increasing on site car parking and improvements to the amenity area at the rear of the council offices.

All staff were invited to submit ideas for a name for the Travel for Work Plan with a mystery prize for the winning entry as decided by the Travel for Work project steering group – Travel Link.

A launch event is proposed for the new Travel for Work Plan to further engage staff and elected members in the proposed measures and initiatives that will be key to the successful implementation of the plan.

19. Developing the Travel for Work Plan

Identification of objectives, targets and indicators - drafted once the baseline information provided through the site assessment, surveys and travel audits were available.

Identification of measures and an implementation action plan - these include both incentives and disincentives for certain modes of travel and 'quick wins' as well as actions to achieve longer term goals.

20. **Summary of outcomes**

The temporary car park facility opposite the marketing suite on the Business Park was secured with effect from 1 May 2008 – this is activated on days when there a significant number of visitors are anticipated, including council meetings such as Cabinet, Full Council and Planning Committee.

The proposal for additional permanent on site parking facilities that incorporates improvements to the amenity area for the benefit of staff has been submitted for planning approval – the application should be determined at Planning Committee on 3 September. Subject to planning consent and the outcome of a tendering process works should commence in the autumn and be completed by the end of the year.

A desktop review of the 2004 Travel for Work Plan identified the following to be addressed as part of the development of a new Travel for Work Plan:

- the plan had not been actively promoted, monitored or reviewed.
- there had been no evaluation of the effectiveness of the measures and incentives included in the plan
- whilst some positive work has been done since 2004 this has generally not been part of an overall co-ordinated and well promoted strategy and has relied heavily on the promotional work led by the Cambourne Business Park Travel for Work Adviser
- no lead officer had been identified to drive the process and take responsibility for implementation of the plan
- the plan and its targets have not been embedded in the performance management systems within the council
- the plan has not had any political leadership prior to the establishment of the Travel for Work project
- the performance targets set were not realistic and have not been achieved
- the action plan includes a degree of overlap/duplication and responsibility for taking forward actions and timescales is not clear – any new action plan should be SMART
- a new plan will need to ensure it links to and complements the wider Cambourne Business Park Travel for Work Plan and reflect best practice from elsewhere
- the resources available to deliver the plan were not specified
- there was no exploration of risks to the successful implementation of the plan and how they will be managed
- the focus was on staff and any new plan should consider what measures and incentives could be offered to reduce travel by car and the number of solo car journeys by members and visitors as well as staff. It will also need to consider modes and frequency of travel by staff (and members) on council business.

A staff travel survey was carried out in February 2008 and there was a 40% response – a free prize draw was offered as an incentive with a folding bike as the prize.

An elected member travel survey was carried out in March 2008 with a 37% response rate.

The key findings from the travel surveys were:

- the main mode of transport is lone car driving at 73% for both staff and members
- car sharing was the second highest mode of transport for both members 20% and staff 11%
- use of public transport was low at only 8% of staff and no elected members mainly due to the bus journey time being too long and lack of any service to Cambourne from many areas
- only 4% of staff walked to the council offices
- only 3% of staff and 7% of elected members cycled to the council offices

A travel audit of business mileage has showed that this has reduced for both elected members and staff over the last three years.

A site assessment was carried out in early 2008 to identify the accessibility of the council's offices by the various modes of transport and how existing facilities and policies act either positively or negatively in terms of encouraging the use of more sustainable forms of transport either for getting to work or traveling on council business.

A travel for work plan has been developed based on the baseline information gathered as part of the site assessment, travel surveys and travel audits and relevant good practice guidance that has been applied to the local context.

Next steps

21. It will be important to put in place effective monitoring and review mechanisms for the new Travel for Work Plan and to have in place an awareness raising and marketing campaign to retain a high profile for the plan both within and outside the organisation.
22. A key requirement will be for the Travel for Work Plan to have a champion both at a political and senior officer level within the organisation to provide to drive the plan forward and ensure that it is well resourced and managed.
23. It is therefore suggested that the Planning Services Portfolio Holder and that the Head of Revenues be awarded this cross cutting brief with the Corporate Manager – Planning and Sustainable Communities as the Executive Management Team (EMT) champion. It is also recommended that a Travel for Work Plan Steering Group should meet at least quarterly to monitor progress against the targets and actions and refresh the plan annually to ensure that it remains fit for purpose.

Financial Implications

24. The legal costs incurred by Development Securities in respect of the lease for the short term car park facility of £5,000 plus disbursements of £140 together with new signage for the council's car park of around £1,500 have been accommodated within the 2007/08 Estimates.
25. A budgetary provision has been made within the 2008/09 Estimates for the £10,000 premium for the lease of the temporary overflow car park from Development Securities. It is understood that this sum will be used to fund Travel for Work initiatives across the Business Park and, therefore, the council will be a key beneficiary of this additional investment.

26. The report on car parking at South Cambridgeshire Hall that was considered by the Executive on 13 September 2007 estimated the costs of providing additional long term permanent and/or occasional overflow parking would be in the region of £10 to £50k depending on the extent to which improvement of the amenity provision was included within any proposal.
27. Based on the final proposal that has been submitted for planning consent the estimated cost is likely to be in the region of £50k. However, in the event that this provision is not sufficient once tenders have been received a supplementary provision will need to be sought for inclusion in the capital estimates for 2008/09 to enable the works to be implemented by the end of this year.
28. In terms of taking forward the Travel for Work Plan it will be important that it is adequately resourced. At present no specific budget has been allocated for this purpose within the approved Estimates for 2008/09. However, the Inspire Project Officer post has been identified as a potential staffing resource for supporting the implementation of the Travel for Work Plan at least within the current financial year. This would enable available resources to be redirected to an agreed corporate priority area.
29. The future staffing and financial resource requirements set out within the plan would need to be reviewed by the new Travel for Work Steering Group and, if necessary, a bid will need to be made through the service planning process.
30. Other incidental costs incurred as part of the Travel for Work project including new lockers for staff and the prize draw for the staff travel survey have been met through making best use of existing budgets e.g. sustainability.

Other Implications

31.	Legal	The terms of the one year lease for the temporary overflow car park facility within the Business Park were reviewed and agreed by the council's Senior Lawyer.
	Staffing	The implementation and review of the TfW plan will be led by the Head of Revenues and supported by a steering group that will comprise key officers from across all services as well as corporate areas of the Council. It is anticipated that a TfW co-ordinator role will be needed to assist with the actions within the TfW plan and the Inspire Project Officer post has been identified as a potential resource for 2008/09. Any future staffing resources will need to be included as a bid in the service planning process.
	Risk Management	A risk log and a risk evaluation matrix were both developed as part of the Travel for Work project plan.
	Equal Opportunities	The Travel for Work Plan and the suggested objectives, measures, targets and actions have been developed with regard to relevant good practice guidance.

Consultations

32. The project steering group provided a forum for staff from across the organisation to get involved in the development of the new Travel for Work Plan. The members of the steering group included:

HR Manager
 Senior Planning Assistant
 Strategic Sustainability Officer
 Communications Officer
 Finance Project Officer
 Project Manager (Affordable Homes)
 Customer Service Officer

A union representative was invited to be a member of the project steering group but no nomination was received.

33. The Cambourne Business Park Marketing Manager was also involved in the project through circulation of agendas and minutes of the steering group and separate meetings held to discuss progress and common issues.
34. There was consultation with Development Securities and Atis Real in respect of the options for the increase in on site car parking facilities ahead of the submission of the planning application in May 2008.
35. A consultation was held with staff based at Cambourne on three proposals to increase on site parking. Having taken into account the comments received the project steering group agreed that the preferred option should be that which will enable the provision of an extra permanent and additional occasional use car parking spaces to help address existing demand from staff, member and visitors.
36. It was considered that the final preferred option will help make the building more accessible to more members of the public which is key as the Council seeks to promote its community leadership role. At the same time it provides a good opportunity to improve on the quality and design of the existing amenity space and will hopefully benefit staff as well as the Council as a whole.
37. There were also consultation processes held with staff on the following:
 - the name for the Travel for Work plan
 - views on what would encourage travel to work and/or on council business by alternative modes of travel to the car as part of the staff travel survey
 - improvements to existing changing facilities including provision of new lockers
38. All elected members were invited to participate in a travel survey that was designed to capture existing patterns and modes of travel to the council offices and how alternative modes to the car could be further encouraged.
39. The members of the Planning Committee have been provided with a copy of the draft aims and objectives and proposed action plan for the Travel for Work plan as background papers to the planning application for the additional on site car parking spaces that will be considered on 3 September. This will also demonstrate the Council's commitment to meet its obligations in respect of the condition attached to the planning consent for these offices that a Travel for Work plan is agreed and implemented. Any comments made can be reported verbally at the meeting.

Effect on Service Priorities and Corporate Objectives for 2008/09

40.	Work in partnership to manage growth	The Travel for Work plan includes a series of measures and policy objectives to reduce the environmental impact of travel by
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Deliver high quality, value for money and accessible services	staff and others both to work and for business purposes.
Enhance quality of life and build a sustainable South Cambridgeshire	<p>The benefits are numerous at an organisational, local and global level:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • increased health, fitness and productivity • greater efficiency leading to cost-savings • the potential for better work-life balance • reduced amounts of traffic and congestion • fewer impacts on the local environment, such as air pollution • fewer impacts on the global environment, such as emissions of climate change gases

Recommendations

41. To approve the Travel for Work plan and the associated package of measures to reduce the environmental impact of staff and others who travel to the council offices and on council business.
42. That the Planning Services Portfolio Holder be designated as the political champion for taking forward the Travel for Work plan.
43. That any staffing resources required to ensure effective implementation of the new Travel for Work plan in future years be considered as part of the service planning process for 2009/10.
44. That the additional permanent on site parking spaces and associated improvements to the outside amenity area for staff be implemented, subject to the necessary planning consents.

Background Papers: the following background papers were used in the preparation of this report:

Car Parking at South Cambridgeshire Hall	Report to Cabinet 13 September 2007
SCDC Travel for Work Plan 2004	
Cambridgeshire Travel for Work Strategy	Cambridgeshire County Council
Sackville House Travel for Work Plan	Cambridgeshire County Council/PCT
The Essential Guide to Travel Planning	Department of Transport
Travel Plan Guidelines	Travel for Work Partnership
The Travel Plan Resource Pack for Employers	Association for Commuter Transport
Making Travel Plans Work	Department of Transport

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