



## **COUNCIL CABINET PART 2**

### **19 September 2007**

Report of the Directors of Regeneration and Community and  
Corporate and Adult Services

# **Council's Travel Plan - Overview of Objectives, Progress and Priorities for 2007/08**

## **SUMMARY**

- 1.1 Council Cabinet approved the development of Journeyscope, the Council's Travel Plan in 2003 and whilst progress has been made, the project has not been able to fully accomplish its objectives due to considerable constraints, including funding, support on practical decisions and difficult HR implications.
- 1.2 Delivering an action plan for the Council's Travel Plan is a key outcome in the Corporate Plan under the priority "reducing the level of carbon emissions" and project resource has been identified in Corporate Human Resources, temporarily funded by the original travel plan resource, to manage the staff travel related priorities.
- 1.3 These priorities focus on developing a package of measures aimed at encouraging staff to use alternatives to single occupancy car journeys. These potential measures include both new employee benefit incentives as well as reviews of existing policies and provisions, which are not considered to be consistent with our environmental objectives.
- 1.4 We propose to begin communication with staff and other stakeholders, raising awareness of high level objectives, reviving some of the initiatives that have been developed from earlier work, highlight some of the incentives that are being developed and identify some of the other measures under consideration.
- 1.5 We will undertake appropriate consultation as part of the project. This will include consultation with trades unions and staff representatives on proposed changes to existing provisions, as well as a staff travel survey.
- 1.6 We will submit further reports as appropriate, as any key policy recommendations or budget implications are identified.

## **RECOMMENDATION**

2. To note plans in place to restart the Council's Travel Plan project and priorities identified for 2007/8.

<b>REASON FOR RECOMMENDATION</b>
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- 3.1 Producing an action plan for the Council's Travel Plan is key outcome 3.1f in the Corporate Plan 2007/8, under the Council's priority "reducing the level of carbon emissions".
- 3.2 It is an action in the Smarter Choices Strategy element of the Local Transport Plan, the Air Quality Improvement Action Plan, the Corporate Climate Change Programme and the Council's Environmental Policy.
- 3.3 The Council needs to lead by example and has to establish its own staff travel plan as a requirement for advising other city employers in travel planning.

<b>SUPPORTING INFORMATION</b>
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**4.1 Journeyscope – Original Work on Travel Plan**

In April 2003, Council Cabinet approved a final report and action plan compiled by consultants for the development of the Council's Travel Plan, branded Journeyscope.

- 4.2 A project structure and work programme was developed by the Travel Plan Cross-Service Working Group and was discussed at the Corporate Joint Committee - CJC in June 2003. Trades union involvement was encouraged.

- 4.3 The high level objectives of the Travel Plan in relation to staff were:

- to develop a package of measures aimed at minimising travel impacts on the environment, principally by encouraging adoption of alternatives to single occupancy car use
- to focus on commuter journeys and business travel

- 4.4 The consultant's report recommended six core work streams:

- measures to increase the attractiveness of using alternative transport modes, in particular bus use, cycling and car sharing
- promotion of the value of occasional use of alternative modes
- management of travel in the course of work
- management of car parking
- review of car user allowances
- homeworking and flexible day-working systems.

**4.5 Progress**

A number of Task Groups and User Groups were established to address the various themes, and progress was made in generating objectives and ideas for action.

4.6 However, progress was limited in implementing practical changes due to difficulties securing funding, resources and support on key practical decisions. A number of complex human resources policy issues were also identified for some of the potential measures relating to parking, car use and allowances.

4.7 Given these constraints, the project was taken as far as it could be.

### 4.8 **Taking the Project Forward**

In order to address some of the practical HR issues, and enable the Travel Plan action plan to move forward, a project post has been created in Corporate HR, using funding from the travel plan post that has been vacant for some time.

4.9 A small project management team has been established and work is now underway on planning. Subject to the approval of the Climate Change Board, this project will report into the Climate Change Programme.

### 4.10 **Objectives and Communication**

The project will take forward the initial work done on forming detailed objectives and developing an action plan to achieve these.

4.11 First priority will be to communicate the project. This will focus on raising awareness of high level objectives with staff and other key stakeholders, will highlight some of the incentives that are being developed and identify some of the other measures under consideration. A communication plan is being developed for the project.

4.12 This paper will be discussed with the Conditions of Service Working Party in October and will then be discussed at the Planning and Transportation Overview and Scrutiny Commission and Climate Change Overview and Scrutiny Commission in November.

4.13 We will develop a consultation plan which will include appropriate consultation with trade unions and staff representatives. It is proposed to also carry out a further staff travel survey towards the end of 2007. The survey will enable us to benchmark views and behaviour against the original data gathered in 2002 and will also be used to raise awareness of and shape the measures being developed to make commuting by bus and cycle more attractive. The survey will also provide some baseline data for the climate change programme.

### 4.14 **Measures and Initiatives Under Consideration**

There are a number of salary sacrifice opportunities which relate to commuting and, as a priority, we are seeking to implement appropriate schemes through a third party provider. These will enable employees to benefit from tax efficiencies available under current income tax rules.

4.15 Two schemes are planned for launch in April 2008, one which will enable employees to purchase bus season tickets for commuting and one which will enable the lease of cycles to be used for commuting. Significant savings can be

achieved through these schemes as employees save on personal income tax by paying monthly from gross salary. Derby City Council will also save on employer's national insurance on the amount of salary that the employee sacrifices.

- 4.16 Discussions are underway with local bus operators to maximise the attractiveness of the bus packages available to staff to enable us to incentivise an increase in the use of buses for commuting.
- 4.17 The consultant's report recommended the introduction of both positive measures and disincentives to encourage a shift in commuting behaviour. Two such measures are currently in scope which were discussed in the initial Task Groups. These are the introduction of charging for staff car parking in the city centre and a review of current business mileage allowances, moving away from current national agreement rates and adopting the lower HM Revenue and Customs approved rates.
- 4.18 The consideration of these two measures will require consultation with trades unions and staff representatives and be the subject of a further report at such time that options have been scoped and discussed. Work on these issues is scheduled for Autumn 2008, following the launch of the salary sacrifice schemes.
- 4.19 We will present a follow up paper in due course once a detailed action plan has been developed and key policy recommendations and budgetary implications have been identified.

#### **OTHER OPTIONS CONSIDERED**

- 5.1 The other option considered was not to take forward the Travel Plan. There is support for the development of the Travel Plan from members and staff as a way of improving travel choices for getting to work.
- 5.2 Also, this will help to encourage other businesses in the city to develop travel plans.

#### **For more information**

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<b>Background papers:</b>	None
<b>List of appendices:</b>	Appendix 1 – Implications

<b>IMPLICATIONS</b>
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**Financial**

1. No new financial implications to meet development of an action plan. Further consideration will be given to possible initiatives and separate report will address these.

**Legal**

2. The Council, as an employer, has a duty to consult with employees and their representatives on any proposed changes to terms and conditions. Trade unions are aware of high level proposals and more detailed discussions will be undertaken at the appropriate time.

**Personnel**

3. None in this report

**Equalities impact**

4. Potential impact – every effort will be made to ensure fair and equal access to initiatives within the constraints of the project. The aim is to have a positive benefit by increasing viable travel choices for staff.

**Corporate objectives and priorities**

5. Producing an action plan for the Council's Travel Plan is key outcome 3.1f in the Corporate Plan 2007/8, under the Council's priority "reducing the level of carbon emissions".

It is an action in the Smarter Choices Strategy element of the Local Transport Plan, the Air Quality Improvement Action Plan, the Corporate Climate Change Programme and the Council's Environmental Policy.