

**REPORT OF DIRECTOR OF DEVELOPMENT**

**SCRUTINY BOARD (DEVELOPMENT)**

**DATE: 20<sup>th</sup> February 2007**

**SUBJECT: TRAVELWISE CAMPAIGN UPDATE**

**Electoral Wards Affected:**

All

**Specific Implications For :**

Ethnic Minorities

Women

Disabled People

**1 PURPOSE OF REPORT**

- 1.1 This report provides information on the development of the Council's TravelWise campaign to promote sustainable methods of travel, and highlights key achievements and progress in Leeds since 2004.

**2 BACKGROUND**

- 2.1 The Council promotes sustainable travel behaviour across the city under the umbrella organisation of the National TravelWise Association. The TravelWise Team are based in the Transport Policy Section, Development Department, and currently consist of four (full time equivalent) posts and a student placement working with a wide range of clients to increase the use of more sustainable travel modes.
- 2.2 TravelWise activity promotes the 'Smarter Choices' sustainable travel choice agenda which is an integral part of the Local Transport Plan (LTP). TravelWise contributes to LTP Objectives, in particular, those concerning Delivering Accessibility, Tackling Congestion and Better Air Quality. TravelWise are responsible for delivering LTP Core Strategy Approaches C1, C5, C6 and C7 on sustainable travel. (See Appendix 1)
- 2.3 Increasing the take-up of sustainable methods of travel in the face of nationally increasing car use is a formidable challenge, and requires TravelWise to use new and innovative ways to 'sell' the benefits to an increasingly car dependent public. It is generally accepted that change is only possible using a mixture of incentives and disincentives in conjunction with providing high quality transport infrastructure to support walking, cycling, appropriate car use, and public transport. TravelWise works closely with Transport Policy colleagues to create conditions which will encourage a shift of travel behaviour towards more sustainable modes.
- 2.4 This report highlights what TravelWise are doing to influence the travel behaviour of employees, students, school children, and residents in Leeds. A brief description of each initiative is provided along with its benefits and the opportunities it presents to

reduce people's dependence on single occupancy car travel. Alongside transportation objectives in the LTP, the TravelWise agenda is also being driven by efforts to reduce CO2 emissions and improve air quality. 'Active travel' (i.e. walking and cycling) also helps by improving general health and reducing obesity, and contributes to social inclusion by improving access to services and alternative modes of travel.

### **3 INFORMATION ON TRAVELWISE PROJECTS AND INITIATIVES**

#### **Travel Plans**

- 3.1 The single biggest growth area for sustainable travel has come in the development and implementation of travel plans, and resources have been channelled to meet this demand. The TravelWise team has been strengthened from a base of 2 permanent and 2.5 temporary staff, to 4 permanent staff and one student placement. The increasing work load has resulted in additional assistance been received from The Aire Valley Leeds Transport Solutions Officer (Metro based), the Planning Division, and internal secondments.

#### School Travel Plans

- 3.2 Work continues on the Department for Transport (DfT) national target to have every school with a travel plan by 2010. Two full time equivalent posts support schools to develop their own travel plans to an agreed standard and receive grant funding for new infrastructure at the school. By April 2006 (end of Phase 3) a total of 104 schools had been recommended for the grant award, and a further 43 schools are expected to have their travel plans recommended for the grant this financial year. Currently 51% of schools in Leeds either have a travel plan or are developing a travel plan.
- 3.3 Individual schools decide what their DfT grant award is spent on in conjunction with the TravelWise team, but this is typically cycle parking facilities, pedestrian waiting shelters, or improved access measures e.g. new gateways or paths.
- 3.4 New schools constructed under the Private Finance Initiative (PFI) and British Schools Foundation (BSF) process have been advised on sustainable travel and access opportunities during the planning stages with some success in influencing school site layout to encourage sustainable transport.

#### Workplace, Residential and Other Travel Plans

- 3.5 In the last few years there has been a significant increase in the number of travel plans required to accompany Planning Applications. Planning related travel plans have also become more demanding and targeted to have a real and lasting influence on travel behaviour to sites. Travel Plans now usually contain modal split targets, monitoring costs and in some instances financial penalties for failing to meet targets. The plans are evaluated by the TravelWise Team as part of the Planning consultation. In the last 12 months travel plans have been processed at 85 new development sites. Approximately 175 workplaces, colleges, universities, residential, mixed-use developments and leisure attractions in Leeds have or are developing travel plans.
- 3.6 A new area for planning related travel plans has been the introduction of residential travel plans to cover new housing developments. DfT guidance on measures at residential development have been used to condition developments to supply, for example, sustainable travel information, access to Leeds City Council Car Club WhizzGo and, in conjunction with Metro, residential Metrocards.

- 3.7 The Planning Strategy and Policy Team are currently developing new policy guidance – Supplementary Policy Document (SPD) on “Public Transport and Travel Plans” - that will consolidate and formalise the Authorities approach to travel planning through the development process.

#### Corporate Travel Plan

- 3.8 CMT approved a corporate staff travel plan strategy in February 2005. The travel plan working group is chaired by the Head of Transport Policy and coordination undertaken by the TravelWise manager. Progress has been slow due to limited resources. It has been recognised that meaningful progress would be difficult without a dedicated officer to take the project forward. Approval has been received recently to create a temporary corporate travel plan officer post (3 years) to implement the travel plan across the Council.

#### **TravelWise Initiatives**

- 3.9 Delivering a travel plan involves implementing a series of measures and initiatives and promoting a range of travel options to employees, pupils, students and residents. Promoting sustainable travel modes requires a suitable physical environment, and TravelWise is involved in identifying obstacles and proposing capital scheme solutions to improve conditions on the journey to school or work, for example. Improvements to the school journey are known as Safer Routes to School schemes.
- 3.10 The promotion of the sustainable modes, know as ‘soft measures’ or ‘Smarter Choices’ are a vital part of the overall campaign. The following list of ‘Smarter Choices’ measures is not exhaustive, but includes the most important initiatives that the Leeds TravelWise campaign supports and delivers on an ongoing basis.

#### Walking Initiatives

- 3.11 A number of initiatives have been progressed in relation to schools:- Walking buses, Walk on Wednesday (WoW), Park and Stride, five minute walk zones. In workplaces,, initiatives have included:- Walking the Way to Health, Lunchtime walks pack. General promotion includes use of the media, a TravelWise leaflet and the Leeds Festival of Walking (last held in 2005).

#### Cycling Initiatives

- 3.12 Cycling initiatives in schools have involved cycling promotion, guided cycle rides and skills training in conjunction with the Road Safety Promotion Team, local cycle maps showing safe cycle routes to school and school cycle policy development. Cycle promotion has also taken place in Workplaces including, Bike Buddy (Road Safety), bikers breakfasts Inland Revenue tax efficient cycle scheme and Bike2Work promotion. General promotions include the Leeds Cycle Map, cycle information leaflet series, Leeds Bike Week, TravelWise leaflet, Give Cyclists Room promotion and free cycling promotion items.

#### Car Sharing

- 3.13 Leeds City Council’s car sharing scheme (carshareleeds.com) was launched in July 2003. The scheme is available to all residents (within or travelling to Leeds) free of charge. After a slow start, while membership was building to a level of critical mass, the scheme has now begun to gain momentum and membership is growing steadily. Individual membership stands at 1680 and the number of private groups has risen to 12, and 39% of members have matched a trip. Carshreleeds.com is promoted primarily to workplaces using a variety of media including a sign up display and promotional items at employer travel fairs. Billboard posters and bus rear advertising

were both used in 2006. In 2007 the scheme will be promoted at congested areas on the highway network using temporary information boards.

#### Leeds City Council Car Club - WhizzGo

- 3.14 Since the launch of the car club in July 2004 the number of cars available to members has grown from an eight to nineteen, and membership has grown steadily to over 600 individuals. The cars are available from £4.20 per hour inclusive of all costs e.g. fuel, tax, insurance and basic mileage.
- 3.15 The car club provides its members with access to cars for hire by the hour from local parking bays. Car clubs fit into the city's transport strategy by providing a further dimension to travel choice and reducing members overall car mileage. This works by making cars available for people to use when they need one. Experience shows that when people are not tied-in to using their private car for all journeys they become more aware of the alternative transport options and consequently make more journeys by public transport, walking and cycling.
- 3.16 There are plans to expand the car club further and Phase 3 of the WhizzGo parking bay expansion scheme is in progress. WhizzGo's national launch in Leeds has been followed by a nation-wide expansion programme into London, Liverpool, Manchester, Sheffield, York, Newcastle and other cities.

#### Public Transport

- 3.17 Public transport has a major role to play in offering sustainable transport options to the public. Leeds City Council TravelWise continues to work closely with our partners in Metro who have the primary responsibility for promoting public transport services. This partnership extends to joint work on travel plans, the yellow bus scheme, residential and company Metrocards schemes, and the coordination of the West Yorkshire Travel Plan Network. Leeds TravelWise continues to publicise public transport to support the work done by Metro.

#### West Yorkshire Travel Plan Network (WYTPN)

- 3.18 Leeds TravelWise was closely involved in the development and launch of the WYTPN across the West Yorkshire region in conjunction with Metro, and hosted a major launch event in the Town Hall in December 2005 to introduce the Network to 70 businesses. The WYTPN is a West Yorkshire wide network for organisations promoting travel plans and free membership is awarded to organisation that agree to i) take part in annual monitoring of employee travel, ii) agree an annual action plan of travel plan measures, and iii) agree to be contactable through the network. Membership across West Yorkshire is approximately 110 organisations, of which 70 are based in Leeds.
- 3.19 Travel for Work Partnership: Metro have coordinated a successful funding bid to Yorkshire Forward which will result in the appointment of four travel plan officers to i) increase the take up of employment by new job seekers by providing free travel, and ii) reducing CO2 emissions through successful travel plans. The project is due to start in April 2007 and will provide Leeds TravelWise with some additional staff resource to further implement and develop travel plans across the region.
- 3.20 Aire Valley Leeds – Travel Solutions Officer: Since April 2004 the Aire Valley Leeds Travel Solutions Officer (employed by Metro using SRB funding) has been working part-time in the Leeds TravelWise team to work with, and allocating grant funding to, companies in AVL developing travel plans. This work has included assisting travel planning obligated businesses. New resources have been developed to promote

travel planning and businesses joined up to the WYTPN. The SRB funding and post will end at the end of March 2007.

- 3.21 The growth in travel plan work has put pressure on the team's ability to deliver an annual events programme which has been an integral part of TravelWise activity over the last seven years. TravelWise still coordinate the publicity of National Bike Week, under the name of Leeds Bike Week on a smaller scale, and hosts at least three cycle events, including one big event at a Leeds school. Events are also planned for World Environment Day, National Liftshare Day, and School Walking Week.
- 3.22 Annual events which are no longer supported due to resource pressures include European Mobility Week / In Town Without My Car (last held in 2005), and Leeds Festival of Walking (last held in 2005).

### **Monitoring**

- 3.23 TravelWise coordinate the annual West Yorkshire Snapshot Travel to Work Survey which has taken place every March since 2003. The survey measures the modal share of employee's journey to work in companies with travel plans to establish the influence of travel plan measures on travel behaviour. The survey demonstrates that organisations with travel plans have slightly higher levels of sustainable travel activity than non travel plan organisations. The survey has grown in size year on year and in 2006 over 35,000 individuals took part. The results are reported in the West Yorkshire Local Transport Plan Progress Reports.

## **4 CONCLUSIONS**

- 4.1 The profile and standing of the national TravelWise campaign has grown significantly over the last three years, and TravelWise activity has been fully integrated into the objectives of the current LTP.
- 4.2 The increased demand for TravelWise services, support and advice has resulted in an expanded team structure and the Department continues to monitor the resources allocated to TravelWise in order to meet this growth area.
- 4.3 The 'Smarter Choices' agenda is recognised nationally as a valuable policy tool to engender change in travel behaviour towards less environmentally damaging methods of travel. The Council are committed to supporting the work of TravelWise.

## **5 RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 5.1 The Members of the Scrutiny Board (Development) are requested to note the contents of this report.

## **6 BACKGROUND INFORMATION**

- 6.1 Further information on TravelWise can be found at [www.travelwise.org](http://www.travelwise.org)

# APPENDIX 1

## West Yorkshire Local Transport Plan

### Shared Priority : Tackling Congestion – Core Strategy Approaches

- C1 Encourage modal switch to public transport by: - encouraging more travel by bus and rail and improving ticketing and information;
- C2 Manage the demand for travel by: - management of car parking and reallocation of road space;
- C3 Make the best use of existing capacity by: - urban traffic management and control and the provision of information;
- C4 Improve the highway network by: - selective improvements and general highway maintenance;
- C5 Encourage more cycling and walking by: - dealing with existing barriers, promoting the benefits and integration with public transport;
- C6 Promote Smarter Choices by: - workplace travel planning measures and car club schemes; and
- C7 Promote sustainable land use planning policies and practices.