

**TRAVEL PLAN – ADDITIONAL INFORMATION  
(Report by Head of Technical Services)**

**1. INTRODUCTION**

- 1.1 This report should be read in conjunction with the report entitled Travel Plan on the agenda for the meeting of the Cabinet on 19th October 2006 and the report of the Overview and Scrutiny Panel (Service Support) which has the same title.

**2. COMMENTS MADE BY THE EMPLOYMENT PANEL AND EMPLOYEE LIAISON ADVISORY GROUP**

- 2.1 The Employment Panel and Employee Liaison Advisory Group considered the Council's draft Travel Plan at their meetings on 20th September 2006. Arising from which, the following comments were made:-

**(a) Employment Panel**

Members of the Employment Panel suggested:-

- ◆ that the provisions of the approved Plan should apply equally to Members and Officers;
- ◆ that consideration should be given to the scheduling of Member meetings in the evenings to allow use of the town centre car parks when they are least busy; and
- ◆ that further research be undertaken to ascertain why the majority of employees appear to have a preference for travelling alone by private car.

**(b) Employee Liaison Advisory Group**

The Group made the following comments:-

- ◆ that the planned provision for cycle parking did not meet the requirements of the Core Strategy, which the Council would apply to other developers;
- ◆ that the Plan represented a decrease in shower provision. More should be provided;
- ◆ more than the planned four spaces should be made available for motor cycle parking;
- ◆ there were implications for the proposals relating to essential user payments in terms of changing contractual conditions;
- ◆ that the provision of four/six pool cars was insufficient to replace the essential car user allowance;
- ◆ that the provision of loans for season tickets should be endorsed;
- ◆ that managers should be required to introduce home working across the Council;
- ◆ that, following a survey of staff, formal comments would be finalised on the Plan; and

- ◆ that notice of changes to the allocation of car parking could be given to employees via the intranet.

### **3. CONSULTATION PROCESSES**

- 3.1 All Council employees have had the opportunity to participate in an annual travel for work survey since 1999 and the data collected provides a valuable resource indicating how use of different travel modes have changed over time. The survey is prepared and managed independently of the Council and provides reliable and objective data and will be used to monitor the year-on-year impact of the Travel Plan. Results of the 2006 survey, undertaken during the week ending 6 October, will be available shortly.
- 3.2 Concurrently with the travel for work survey the Employee Liaison Advisory Group has promoted a survey of employees based at Pathfinder House/Castle Hill House to elicit their intentions when parking is not available on the site. This follows the publication of an intranet notification that parking at the headquarters site will be progressively withdrawn from January 2007 to facilitate archaeological excavations.
- 3.3 The results of the Employee Liaison Advisory Group survey, when they become available, will provide a limited commentary on the Travel Plan because of the narrow target audience and the focus of the questions. The Pathfinder House site accommodates only 32% of the Council's employees and less than one in two of these employees, about 200, currently have access to on-site car parking.
- 3.4 The reasons why individuals chose to use a car, and prefer to travel alone, are well documented. For many, practical alternatives are available and it is considered more productive to promote those alternatives and encourage and support behavioural change rather than undertake further research as proposed by the Employment Panel.

### **4. TRAVEL ALLOWANCES**

- 4.1 The Council retains the national schemes for casual and essential user car allowances. Any local variation to the scheme, and many councils have done this, will have to be negotiated with employees and the Head of Personnel and Payroll has initiated this process.
- 4.2 Payments to Members are based on the casual user rates. The Members Remuneration Panel may wish to review this at an appropriate time.

### **5. DESIGN ISSUES**

- 5.1 The Employee Liaison Advisory Group identified a number of design issues relating to provision for cycle and motor cycle parking and shower facilities. The detailed design of the building is still in progress and when completed will comply with the standards required by the Council's planning policies.
- 5.2 Shower provision in the building is being reviewed and will be increased to a level appropriate to the anticipated cycle usage.

## **6. CAR SHARING**

- 6.1 The Overview and Scrutiny Panel recommended that increased incentives should be given for car sharing. The most helpful benefit is the provision of parking, either through the allocation of spaces in 'private' car parks associated with the Council's premises, or through financial support for using charged public car parks.
- 6.2 The Panel acknowledged that it would not be appropriate for the Council to provide universal concessions to employees and Members within charged public car parks. However, if the principle of providing financial support for non-car travel modes is supported the provision of discounted car park season tickets for use by car sharers could be considered. The £175 annual cost of a five-day season ticket, for example, could be reduced to £150 for employees entering into a car sharing agreement.

## **7. CYCLE SCHEME**

- 7.1 Although not reflected in the comments of the Panel and Advisory Groups the reference in the Travel Plan to the Cycle for Work scheme has generated considerable employee interest and would be well received.
- 7.2 It is proposed that the Council contract with Cyclescheme Limited who operate the scheme through local independent cycle retailers. The company administer the scheme and the cost to the Council would be –
- loss of interest on the capital provided to purchase the cycles
  - processing of invoices from the company
  - administering salary deductions.
- 7.3 Provide that individual purchases are capped at below £1,000 the Council would be covered by a group Consumer Credit Licence. However, it is proposed that purchases under the scheme be capped at £500. The lease arrangement is treated as a 'salary sacrifice' for the employee and is free of income tax and national insurance. The Council benefits from not paying the employer's national insurance contribution on the employee's salary sacrifice.

## **8. POOL CARS**

- 8.1 The principle of pool cars has the support of the Panel and Advisory Groups and has previously been approved by Cabinet, subject to them being self-financing. The provision of pool cars will become an imperative as employees embrace the principles within the Travel Plan and stop using their private cars for travel to work.
- 8.2 Availability of pool cars will encourage reductions in financially supported business travel which will eventually make them self-financing. The Cabinet are requested to support the procurement of four pool cars on an 'invest to save basis'. The opportunity will be taken to have a mix of fuel type and size of vehicles.
- 8.3 It is proposed that virement from forecast under spending in the current year be used to provide £4,000 to enable four cars to be provided from January

2007. The vehicles would be procured on a six-month contract rental giving rise to a minimum unavoidable MTP bid for £4,000 in 2007/08 to support the residue of the six-month rental term.

- 8.4 However, Cabinet are requested to support a full year trial in 2007/08 requiring an MTP bid of £16,000 to enable an evaluation of take-up and reduction in mileage allowance payments.

**9. INCENTIVES & CONCESSIONS**

- 9.1 Mention has already been made of the Cycle for Work scheme which provides a tax efficient incentive that encourages reduced car usage. Tax concessions are also available for schemes which support employees' purchases of season tickets for public transport. Further work needs to be done on this and will be the subject of a report to a future meeting of Cabinet.

- 9.2 For those employees who cannot easily use alternatives to the private car and cannot car share there is a need to find car parking. In the medium term the need will be met by increased public car parking provision and the employees will be similarly placed to other employees of town centre businesses. In the short term possible sites for employee 'park & ride' or 'park & walk' sites are being investigated to compensate for the reduction of on-site parking.

**10. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 10.1 In the longer term, and subject to an agreement being achieved with regard to travel allowances, the potential exists for the Travel Plan to be self-financing. The preceding paragraphs have identified three areas that require financial support through to the end of 2006/07 –

|                          | <b>2006/07<br/>Revenue</b> | <b>2007/08<br/>Revenue</b> | <b>2006/07<br/>Capital</b> | <b>2007/08<br/>Capital</b> |
|--------------------------|----------------------------|----------------------------|----------------------------|----------------------------|
| Car Sharing              | £1k                        | £2k                        |                            |                            |
| Cycle for Work           | £1k                        | £3k                        | £20k                       | £30k                       |
| Pool Cars                | £4k                        |                            |                            |                            |
| Pool Cars - Unavoidable  |                            | £4k                        |                            |                            |
| Pool Cars – Year balance |                            | £12k                       |                            |                            |
| <b>Total</b>             | <b>£6k</b>                 | <b>£21k</b>                | <b>£20k</b>                | <b>£30k</b>                |

- 10.2 Cabinet are requested to support the use of virement from existing budgets to fund capital and revenue expenditure in 2006/07. The 2007/08 expenditure will be the subject of an MTP bid.

**11. CONCLUSION**

- 11.1 Cabinet has received comments from the Overview and Scrutiny Panel (Service Support), Employment Panel and Employee Liaison Advisory Group. Sections 3 to 10 of this report further develop the principal themes on which comments have been made and are provided to assist Cabinet in their deliberations on the draft Plan.

- 11.2 The need to start archaeological excavations on the Pathfinder House site in January 2007 brings forward the time when parking capacity on the site will be reduced. The phasing of the loss of parking will not be known until further planning is completed by the archaeologists. The consequence of not making an early start, however, is potential disruption to the development programme which could have significant financial implications.
- 11.3 Early implementation of the Travel Plan has its own financial implication requiring the use of virement in the current year and new provision in the MTP for 2007/08.

## **12. RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 12.1 It is recommended that Cabinet approve
- (a) support and agree the measures proposed in Sections 6, 7 and 8 of this report; and
  - (b) note the use of virement from existing budgets to support the necessary expenditure in 2006/07.

## **BACKGROUND PAPERS**

Reports to Employment Panel and Employee Liaison Advisory Group – 20th September 2006.  
Draft District Council's Travel Plan.

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