

TRANSPORT FOR LONDON

BOARD

SUBJECT: PERFORMANCE OF THE SMARTER TRAVEL SUTTON PILOT PROGRAMME

DATE: 3 FEBRUARY 2010

1 PURPOSE AND DECISION REQUIRED

- 1.1 This report updates the TfL Board on the performance of the pilot Smarter Travel Sutton (STS) programme. The TfL Board received a report in February 2009 on the performance of the programme at the end of its second year.
- 1.2 STS was London's first integrated transport behaviour change programme. It was launched in September 2006, with a budget of £5 million over three years. It was delivered in partnership with the London Borough of Sutton.

2 BACKGROUND

- 2.1 Smarter travel interventions are becoming increasingly prevalent in the transport sector, either as stand-alone programmes or integrated into wider strategies. This is due to a growing body of evidence of their relative value for money and effectiveness in encouraging cycling, walking and public transport use.
- 2.2 Smarter travel can make a cost effective and measurable contribution to the Mayor of London's transport objectives, in particular improving transport opportunities and quality of life for Londoners, reducing climate change emissions and supporting the 2012 Games and its legacy. The draft Mayor's Transport Strategy (MTS) states:

"TfL's existing smarter travel initiatives demonstrate that it is possible to increase rates of sustainable travel in Outer London by providing tailored advice and working with employers, schools and other partners."

- 2.3 The Department for Transport (DfT) funded three similar programmes in the towns of Worcester, Peterborough and Darlington. These ran for a five year period and were awarded £3.3 million each, which was supplemented with local funding. On average, these pilot programmes reduced the mode share of motorised car trips by an average 5.3 per cent and increased the combined share of walking and cycling trips by between 11 per cent and 19 per cent.

3 THE SMARTER TRAVEL SUTTON PROGRAMME

- 3.1 STS was a three year pilot programme, delivered in partnership with the London Borough of Sutton. It aimed to explore the potential for an integrated programme of smarter travel projects to promote more sustainable patterns of travel in the borough, including the promotion of cycling, walking, car clubs and

public transport use. The STS programme had a main target of reducing the mode share of resident car trips by at least five per cent by September 2009. In addition, it had three further key aims to:

- (a) ensure every school had a travel plan by March 2008;
- (b) secure workplace travel plans to cover 15,000 employees by March 2009; and
- (c) offer personalised travel advice and information to all residents by October 2007.

3.2 The STS programme worked with local organisations, in particular schools and businesses, to secure the adoption and implementation of travel plans and related initiatives; and directly with residents of Sutton to increase use of sustainable modes of transport. These are known respectively as Business to Business (B2B) and Business to Consumer (B2C) strategies.

Working with schools

3.3 The key objective of school travel planning was to bring about a change in attitudes and travel behaviour in the whole school community, including staff, pupils and parents.

3.4 Sutton has 68 schools and was the first London borough to complete all of its school travel plans, one year ahead of the London target of 2009 and two years ahead of the DfT's nationwide target of 2010. Schools were also encouraged to apply for TfL's accreditation scheme for high quality school travel plans, which has three levels: bronze, silver and gold. By September 2009, 39 of Sutton's schools had achieved accredited status, which is the highest proportion for any London borough. Three of these are at gold level, which is the highest number of any London borough.

Working with employers

3.5 Over the past three years, the STS programme has encouraged and supported employers to develop travel plans. The aim of workplace travel planning has been to reduce peak-time car trips in Sutton by helping employees to find solutions to their transport problems.

3.6 The target of 15,000 employees to be covered by a travel plan by March 2009 represents approximately 65 per cent of the total number of employees eligible to be covered by a travel plan (i.e. businesses of four or more people). Sutton has only six businesses that qualified to be a part of TfL's travel planning scheme for organisations with 250 or more employees. Consequently, much of the travel planning work was with small and medium sized enterprises (SMEs).

3.7 Travel Plan Networks (TPNs) were developed in the two district centres of Sutton and Cheam for SMEs. These enabled businesses and STS to collaborate and pool resources for initiatives to encourage sustainable patterns of travel for work related trips. A total of 125 businesses were engaged in the two travel plan networks.

3.8 By September 2009, 16,000 Sutton employees were covered by travel plans implemented in Sutton.

Working with residents

- 3.9 Targeted and cost effective marketing, promotion and information were key elements of the pilot STS programme over its three years. This included offering personal travel advice to every household in the borough, which was completed in 2007, holding events and festivals, and delivering advertising campaigns.
- 3.10 Each spring and summer STS visited school fairs and high street events; and also held its own one day family festival, which was attended by 6,900 residents in 2009. These were an ideal opportunity to provide a very large number of local residents with information on transport options. In total, STS reached 27,000 residents at events during 2009.
- 3.11 The STS programme continued to seek better value for money each year. This included introducing performance-related contracts based on attendance at events and the innovative use of free advertising space for the Catch Up With the Bicycle campaign.

Piloting new approaches

- 3.12 The STS programme was also an opportunity to pilot new approaches to encouraging cycling, walking and bus use. The most notable of these was the Active Steps pilot project, delivered by NHS Sutton and Merton, in partnership with TfL and the London Borough of Sutton.
- 3.13 Health studies indicate that people may be more likely to listen to their GP than to government advice. Active Steps tested the feasibility of this 'channel' of engagement to increase levels of cycling and walking. Active Steps employed qualified physical activity and healthcare professionals to provide motivational interviews, which were followed with a twelve week programme of supporting information, incentives and materials to encourage participants to cycle or walk.
- 3.14 As of September 2009, 1,062 Sutton residents had been engaged in the programme. Of these:
 - (a) 61 per cent reported a permanent change in the way they travel;
 - (b) 87 per cent reported feeling generally healthier;
 - (c) 43 per cent reported having lost weight; and
 - (d) 52 per cent reported having reduced their car use.
- 3.15 As a consequence of the performance of the pilot initiative, NHS Sutton and Merton has decided to roll-out similar cycling and walking programmes to targeted communities and as part of health checks for the over forties.

4 MONITORING PERFORMANCE

- 4.1 The outcomes of the STS programme are tracked through its monitoring framework and compared with a control area in the neighbouring borough of Croydon. A number of different data sources are collected annually in September to provide a robust evidence base for the performance of STS. These are set out overleaf.

4.2 Quantitative data

- (a) automated traffic monitoring data;
- (b) cycle count data;
- (c) bus patronage data; and
- (d) site specific monitoring of workplace and school travel plans recorded in TfL's i-Trace database.

Qualitative information

- 4.3 The results of an annual telephone attitudinal and self reported behavioural survey, consisting of a random sample of 1,500 Sutton residents and 500 residents in the Croydon Control area.

5 YEAR THREE RESULTS

- 5.1 The main findings from the quantitative and qualitative data from Year Three are set out below:
 - (a) A six per cent reduction in car mode share in Sutton. Comparing the 2005/06 London Travel Diary Survey (LTDS) baseline with 2009 survey data indicates that the mode share of trip stages by car (as driver and passenger) has declined from 58 per cent to 52 per cent. In contrast, car mode share increased in the control area (from 48 per cent to 56 per cent). This is an encouraging result and suggests that the STS programme has had a tangible influence on local trips, promoting a shift to cycling, walking and public transport.
 - (b) Analysis of traffic counter data also suggests that car traffic in the borough continues to show a downward trend, as it does in the control area and across outer London. The decline does not appear to have substantially steepened with the onset of the recession in 2008, suggesting a more general long-term trend. Overall traffic is 3.2 per cent less than in the baseline year in Sutton, with a 3.7 per cent decline in the control area.
 - (c) This highlights the fact that the automatic traffic counters, used to track traffic, are located on strategic roads in the borough and will be likely to include through-traffic from out of the borough and outside the direct influence of STS. It is important to note that the STS programme was not accompanied by measures to manage road space. As such, as local journeys are transferred from car to other modes, it is possible that the road capacity released has been subsequently taken up by other car users, or by through-traffic in the borough. This indicates the importance in the longer term of introducing measures to 'lock in' the benefits of smarter travel programmes.
 - (d) A 75 per cent increase in average recorded cycle trips at counter locations in Sutton since April 2007. In comparison, on the TLRN as a whole, there has only been a 13 per cent increase over the same period. Cycle counts in the control area have also shown a decrease of 12 per cent in the average daily flow in Year Three compared to Year One. The data also demonstrates sharper seasonal peaks in cycling in Sutton than in the

control area or on the TLRN. This may reflect the success of the tactical decision to focus the promotion of active travel in the spring and summer months.

- (e) In addition, when comparing STS with similar programmes outside London, it is notable that the order of increase of cycling in Sutton is almost threefold the average of a 27 per cent increase in cycling recorded across the six national Cycling Demonstration Towns over a five year period¹.
- (f) There has been an increase of just over 16 per cent in bus patronage on monitored routes in Sutton. There is also an underlying trend of growth in patronage that is also evident in the control area. However, again, the rate of growth is greater in Sutton than the control, with a growing divergence between the two areas from the baseline year. The data on observed behaviour is supported by the self-reported behaviour in the survey, with Sutton residents consistently reporting higher frequencies of bus use than those in the control area. Again, this suggests that the STS interventions are magnifying an underlying trend.
- (g) The mode share of walking has also increased in Sutton since STS began. Comparing LTDS data from 2005/06 with our survey in 2009 shows the mode share of walking² has increased from 19.4 per cent to 22 per cent.

5.2 The attitudinal survey of residents demonstrated positive changes in awareness and perceptions of alternative transport options and attitudes to car use. These can be important indicators of the likelihood of achieving future change in actual travel behaviour. Compared with the baseline year (2005/06), there has been a statistically significant increase in the number of Sutton residents agreeing with the statements:

- (a) *'There are a lot of bus routes near to me'*, which increased from 54 per cent to 71 per cent 'strongly agreeing' over the three years of the pilot. This is greater than the change seen in the control;
- (b) *'There is provision for cyclists in my area'* increased by four percentage points; and
- (c) *'The benefits of walking and cycling outweigh the convenience of using a car'* increased from 25 per cent to 30 per cent over the three years.

6 CONCLUSION

6.1 STS has achieved its three output objectives and the monitoring data indicates STS has exceeded its main target to reduce the mode share of car trips by at least five per cent. In addition, the programme has demonstrated a significant positive impact on increasing cycle trips in the borough.

6.2 The programme has also been successful in terms of engaging a wide number of stakeholders and gaining public support. Partners including the Metropolitan Police Service, the NHS and the Sutton Chamber of Commerce have been active in the delivery of STS projects. The annual telephone survey also

¹ Analysis and synthesis of evidence on the effects of investment in six Cycling Demonstration Towns, November 2009

² Walk stages to access or egress other modes of transport used in the same trip have not been included in the calculation of mode share.

showed that a large majority (81 per cent) of respondents consider that STS is an appropriate investment for TfL and the London Borough of Sutton to make.

- 6.3 STS still continues in Sutton following the completion of the pilot three year phase. It has now been taken into the heart of the transport delivery team, which integrates town centre improvements, in particular for cyclists and pedestrians, with smarter travel initiatives. The partnership established by STS remains strong in Sutton, with the NHS, Metropolitan Police Service, Chamber of Commerce, schools and businesses continuing to work collaboratively with the London Borough of Sutton in the delivery of smarter travel initiatives.

7 SHARING LESSONS FROM STS

- 7.1 The STS pilot programme has been a success for the London Borough of Sutton, which is exploring whether the techniques applied by STS can be equally effective in other areas of public policy and local service delivery. These include increasing levels of recycling and reducing the incidence of crime and anti-social behaviour.
- 7.2 A detailed report on lessons from the delivery of the STS pilot, including the use of behavioural change science, planning, delivery and monitoring methodological issues, is available on the STS website, www.smartertravelsutton.org. The report has been widely circulated to the transport profession in London and its use will be encouraged to inform the development of new Local Implementation Plans (LIPs).
- 7.3 TfL is applying the lessons from STS to a number of programmes, including the Cycling Superhighways, the 2012 Games travel demand management strategy and the Smarter Travel Richmond upon Thames (STR) programme.
- 7.4 The Smarter Travel Richmond (STR) programme in particular, which was launched in March 2009, has been substantially influenced by the lessons from the STS programme. It aims to increase the proportion of walking, cycling and public transport trips by five per cent over three years.
- 7.5 There is potential for the integrated approach to smarter travel to be delivered in every London borough. The requirement to develop new LIPs in 2010, in conjunction with the simplified and pooled funding of local transport schemes, gives boroughs the opportunity to plan and deliver integrated smarter travel programmes. The Integrated Programmes Delivery Directorate will be working in collaboration with boroughs to deliver effective local smarter travel programmes.

8 SUSTAINABILITY

- 8.1 This paper highlights the benefits of smarter travel programmes in successfully achieving mode shift to walking and cycling. These transport tools can help to support the promotion of healthy, green forms of transport in London and underpin sustainable transport strategies.

9 RECOMMENDATION

9.1 The TfL Board is asked to NOTE the report.

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