AGENDA ITEM 7

TRANSPORT FOR LONDON

BOARD

SUBJECT: SMARTER TRAVEL SUTTON UPDATE

DATE: 10 FEBRUARY 2009

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1 PURPOSE AND DECISION REQUIRED

1.1 This paper updates the Board on the performance of the Smarter Travel Sutton (STS) pilot programme at the end of its second year.

1.2 The Board is asked to note:

(a) the early success of the programme in increasing levels of cycling and public transport usage amongst London Borough of Sutton (LBS) residents (the target of the project) by providing small scale infrastructure, information on, and promotion of, the available transport options;

(b) in year 2, cycling in the borough has increased by 50 per cent, bus patronage is up by 7.2 per cent and the level of traffic is down by 1.4 per cent;

(c) TfL has also observed emerging changing attitudes to walking, cycling and public transport amongst LBS residents;

(d) the potential contribution and added value smarter travel initiatives can make to area based and corridor transport programmes delivered by the Boroughs in future under the new approach to Local Implementation Plan (LIPs) funding; and

(e) the lessons learnt from the monitoring of the initiative that will be applied to future smarter travel initiatives.

2 BACKGROUND

2.1 STS is an innovative three year transport programme, working in partnership with the LBS. It aims to explore the potential for an integrated programme of smarter travel projects to promote more sustainable patterns of travel in the borough, including promotion of cycling, walking and public transport use. The STS programme and the work of TfL's Smarter Travel Unit was reported to the Board on 30 July 2008.

2.2 The STS Year 2 results cover the period September 2007 to September 2008 and provide early evidence that the programme is delivering positive outcomes. They highlight some of the challenges in tracking changes in travel behaviour. These lessons will be applied to the delivery of the final year programme in LBS during 2009 and in the implementation of smarter travel initiatives in London more widely.

2.3 Traditionally smarter travel measures have been applied either on a pan-London basis (such as school travel planning) or on a site specific basis to address particular congestion or wider transport problems (such as workplace travel planning). STS is a £5m, three year pilot integrated Smarter Travel programme, which includes targeted marketing campaigns, information and travel planning in schools and workplaces, as well as investment in Car Clubs, alternative fuel vehicles and cycle security and safety measures. The programme has four key aims:

(a) to reduce car use by LBS residents at least 5 per cent by September 2009;

(b) ensure all schools have a travel plan by March 2008;

(c) secure workplace travel plans to cover 15,000 LBS employees; and

(d) offer personalised travel advice and information to every LBS household by October 2007.

2.4 This is TfL's first integrated behavioural change programme and one of the largest in the world. Both the objectives and the means of delivery are aligned with the Mayor's objectives as set out in "Way to Go!", in particular "to help people out of their cars by persuasion, not persecution". The overall objective of STS is to promote voluntary uptake of cycling, walking and public transport amongst residents. The project's success to date has also depended crucially on a positive collaboration between TfL, LBS, local businesses, schools and community organisations. The project plays part of a wider effort by LBS to create sustainable living in outer London.

2.5 STS will be followed by the launch of a similar programme in Richmond in March 2009. The lessons emerging from the LBS programme are being applied to the development of the Smarter Travel Richmond programme, and disseminated more widely to London boroughs.

2.6 The Department for Transport (DfT) is also funding three demonstration Smarter Travel Town programmes and the Scottish Executive has selected seven towns and cities to host integrated smarter travel programmes.

2.7 In Year 2 (September 2007 - 2008), the STS programme focused on health and active travel in addition to its core travel planning activities. This followed research which showed health is a potentially powerful motivational factor to increase levels of cycling and walking.

2.8 The annual monitoring report records progress across the programme each year. Progress is determined in a number of ways, which are set out in this paper as follows:

(a) Section 3 details how the programme has delivered on key outputs for travel planning and awareness raising;

(b) Section 4 describes the monitoring framework used for the programme;

(c) Section 5 reports on a range of outcomes demonstrated by quantitative monitoring data, and the results of a residents' attitudinal survey on the programme; and

(d) Section 6 outlines some of the methodological issues that have been

identified in the monitoring.

2.9 The benefits for the project's key delivery partners, in particular LBS, local businesses, the Police and the local NHS Primary Care Trust (PCT) are also noted in this report.

3 SMARTER TRAVEL SUTTON YEAR 2 PROGRAMME OUTPUTS

Programme Outputs: Schools

3.1 LBS 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. Some schools in LBS are achieving up to a 16 percentage point reduction in car use for journeys to school (the London average is six percentage points).

3.2 Quantitative data recorded at schools shows that Cheam Primary School, for example, has reduced car use from 35 per cent of all trips to 23 per cent. Brookfield Primary has successfully cut car use from 28 per cent to 17 per cent and Holy Trinity School has cut car use from 38 per cent to 21 per cent of school run trips. In addition, the Wandle Valley School in LBS, which works with students with special educational needs, successfully reduced home to school supervised taxi use by 50 per cent through its travel plan, delivering significant cost savings for LBS. It has also used the bikes provided through the Travel Plan to provide motivation for positive behavioural change among students.

Programme Outputs: Workplaces

3.3 Workplace travel planning is now well established in STS. At the end of Year 2, over 13,000 employees had been covered by completed travel plans, representing 88 per cent of the end of programme target of 15,000 eligible employees. Two Travel Plan Networks had also been created, covering 80 small and medium sized enterprises. While results are not yet available from individual travel plans, one local major employer, Reed, has reported reducing its costs as a consequence of the travel plan by cancelling the leasing of car parking spaces.

Programme Outputs: Marketing and Promotion

3.4 STS promotes travel information and services, such as cyclist training. Independent evaluation of the advertising showed high levels of awareness, understanding and self reported behaviour change amongst car drivers. The advertising also helped STS become the 'most recognised Council initiative' (LBS commissioned MORI survey). It was Highly Commended at the Association of Commuter Transport (ACT) Travelwise Awards 2008, and is shortlisted for the London Transport Awards 2009.

3.5 Promotion has included a series of family focused events, such as 'Move it at the Manor' (July 2008) and 'Give Your Car the Day Off' (September 2008), reaching over 20,000 residents with information on transport options and services including car clubs and cyclist training.

Programme Outputs: Pilot Projects and New Innovations.

3.6 The STS programme aims to test new approaches to Smarter Travel. In Year 2 of the LBS programme these have included:

(a) Car Clubs - The LBS Car Club is run by Streetcar (which operates c.70 per cent of London's car clubs fleet). By September 2008 it had 237 members and 16 vehicles. The vehicles are in use half of the time, which is considered to be a good level of utilisation;

(b) Cycle Parking – c.200 secure cycle parking stands were installed across LBS. A trial of the new 'Plantlock' type stands is being tested in LBS, which is a combination of a planter with secure cycle parking;

(c) Smart Water – The provision of new cycle parking has been complemented by the use of SmartWater security marking for bikes. STS has provided over 400 SmartWater marking kits and LBS police have been pro-actively targeting "hotspot" areas for cycle theft. The initiative has contributed to a 17 per cent reduction in cycle theft in the borough, based on data provided by LBS Police;

(d) Active Steps – Active Steps is a pilot health referral programme run by LBS and Merton NHS Primary Care Trust (SMPCT), in partnership with TfL and LBS. The programme was launched in September 2008 and will run until September 2009;

Health studies have demonstrated that people may be more likely to listen to their GP than to government advice. Active Steps is testing the feasibility of this 'channel' of engagement to increase levels of cycling and walking. Active Steps employs qualified exercise instructors and healthcare professionals to provide motivational interviews, which are followed with a 12 week programme of supporting information, incentives and materials to encourage participants to cycle or walk;

This project has the potential to deliver financial benefits to the NHS in terms of reducing future requirements for the treatment of people with chronic health conditions related to inactivity. The programme aims to assess the benefits of such targeted initiatives, and the findings will be used to inform discussions with the NHS about the funding of future projects;

(e) Sports and Active Travel Projects – Building on the health theme of the programme, STS has formed partnerships with both of the local football clubs (Carshalton AFC and Sutton United). This has resulted in joint publicity and promotion of active travel in LBS. In addition, Tackling Transport, an incentives and rewards based programme to encourage families to walk or cycle with their children to weekend football "mini-leagues", was successfully launched in September 2008. The results will be published in the end-of-programme report; and

(f) Electric Vehicle Charging Points – Two electric vehicle charging points were introduced in the Borough to encourage a wider use of cleaner electric vehicles in LBS.

Programme Outputs: Legacy

3.7 The principal aim of STS has been to explore the potential for voluntary travel behaviour change amongst LBS residents through the application of integrated smarter travel measures. An additional and unexpected benefit has been the transformative impact of the project on the planning and delivery of transport by LBS.

3.8 A review and reorganisation of the LBS transport service has taken place, focussing in particular on how transport schemes are delivered. In future years, the delivery of smarter travel projects in LBS will be integrated with the delivery of LIP funded schemes, maximising value for money and ensuring that an STS legacy is realised. The embedding of the STS approach in the day to day delivery of transport in the borough may turn out to be one of the most important benefits of the project.

4 MONITORING FRAMEWORK

4.1 The outcomes of the STS programme are tracked through its monitoring framework and compared with a control area identified in neighbouring Croydon. A number of different data sets are collected annually in September. This includes quantitative data gathered from a number of sources that provide robust information on borough-wide and site specific travel behaviour. This data is gathered in a number of ways, including:

- Automated traffic monitoring data;
- Cycle count data;
- Bus patronage data; and
- Site specific monitoring of workplace and school travel plans recorded in TfL's i-Trace database.

4.2 In addition to the quantitative data, the report includes data based on the results of an annual attitudinal and self reported behavioural survey. This is based on a random sample of 1500 LBS residents and 500 residents in the London Borough of Croydon control area. This provides a useful 'snapshot' of current attitudes to travel and transport, using standardised techniques alongside others.

5 YEAR 2 RESULTS – QUANTITATIVE AND QUALITATIVE DATA

5.1 The main findings from the quantitative and qualitative data from Year 2 are as follows.

Quantitative data

- Cycling levels in LBS are 50 per cent higher than they were in year 1, while cycling trips have declined in the control area;
- LBS's cycling level also compares favourably with Outer London more generally, where the levels of cycling have remained virtually constant over the study period;
- Bus use in LBS has increased by 13 per cent since the start of the programme, compared with a 9 per cent increase in the control (during Year 2 alone, bus use in LBS increased by 7.2 per cent and 6 per cent in the control); and
- Car mode share for school journeys in LBS fell by 5.1 percentage points in 2007/08, which outperforms an average of 4.8 percentage point decline across outer London.

5.2 These results indicate a promising impact on local trips, with increases in walking, cycling and bus use in LBS during year 2 of the programme. As these trips are likely to be those made by LBS residents, these results suggest that the STS programme has had a tangible impact on the behaviour of local people.

5.3 In addition, school and workplace travel plan data demonstrates that car trips are being reduced at particular sites in the borough (e.g. key schools such as Cheam, Brookfield and Holy Trinity Primaries). In parallel, traffic levels across the borough have fallen by around 2 per cent, mirroring the drop in the control area and generally in line with the average fall across Outer London. Therefore the growth in use of sustainable modes has not yet translated into a direct impact on traffic levels across the borough, which is only declining in line with outer London trends. This is not surprising as it is likely that the road capacity released is subsequently taken up by other car users, or by through-traffic in the borough.

5.4 This highlights the need for more fine-grained analysis in future to understand how local impacts on traffic aggregate at a borough level. In addition, it demonstrates the importance in future programmes of complementary action where possible to 'lock in' the benefits of smarter travel initiatives, for example through traffic management or parking measures. There is now a need for smarter travel to be delivered on a wider scale and in concert with major projects such as the Cycle Highways.

Qualitative data

5.5 The attitudinal survey of residents demonstrated small, but positive changes in attitudes to car use. These are important indicators of the likelihood of achieving actual change in travel behaviour in future years.

- 46 per cent of LBS residents report that cycling is a suitable way to get fit, in contrast with only 38 per cent in the control. (This question was asked for the first time in 2008, therefore no comparison to Year 1 can be made);
- 32 per cent of LBS residents consider walking and cycling to be a practical way to travel, in contrast with only 19 per cent in the control;
- The number of people considering cycling for short journeys as a practical local alternative has increased from less than 20 per cent to over just over 30 per cent with a greater awareness of provision for cycling;
- There has been a three percentage point reduction in LBS residents' agreeing that driving is cheaper than public transport. This positive reduction has not been seen in the control; and
- LBS residents have reported a 2 per cent point reduction in car use over the two years to a modal share of 50 per cent. Residents from the control have reported a 7 per cent reduction, starting from a higher baseline of 59 per cent and resulting in a higher overall mode share of 52 per cent.

5.6 The results of the attitudinal surveying give rise to a number of questions for the STS programme. Where there are positive responses identified, in a number of cases similar responses were reported in the control area. This raises a number of methodological issues discussed below.

6 METHODOLOGICAL ISSUES

6.1 The attitudinal surveying delivered a number of results which are not consistent with the quantitative data. The residents' attitudinal survey reported a decrease in bus use in LBS, for example, while a 13 per cent increase was seen in practice. Therefore the attitudinal surveying requires careful scrutiny and is one of the areas that is being improved during the course of the project and in developing the monitoring strategy for the Smarter Travel Richmond project.

6.2 In particular, the attitudinal surveying provides a useful 'snapshot' of current attitudes to transport, but is a less effective means of tracking actual transport behaviours. A further issue is that the choice of the control area for STS was not ideal for two reasons. First, it is directly adjacent to the borough and therefore likely to be impacted on by the STS messages. Second, the socio-economic characteristics of the borough are not well matched to LBS, raising the likelihood that residents' responses to external influences, such as the credit crunch, may be significantly different and making interpretation of the data more challenging. Finally, surveying took place in September 2008, when fuel prices were at a peak. Concerns about fuel prices may well have had an effect on the survey responses as a whole and particularly in the control area.

7 CRIME AND DISORDER

7.1 STS has made a positive contribution to reducing reported crime in LBS through investment in cycle parking and the SmartWater bike security marking project. These projects will continue throughout 2009.

8 EQUALITIES

8.1 STS has targeted its health and active travel advice at selected LBS households on lower incomes, including by producing walking, cycling and public transport travel information for people moving into social housing. All of the programme's communication and initiatives are reviewed to ensure accessibility for all groups, and legibility for people with visual impairments.

9 RISK MANAGEMENT IMPLICATIONS

9.1 All project risks are managed as part of the programme's overall management. There are no major risks to TfL arising from the project at present.

10 CROSS MODAL IMPLICATIONS

10.1 The LBS programme contributes to increasing residents' awareness of all of the transport options available to them. It therefore potentially increases the return on investment in walking, cycling and public transport infrastructure by increasing usage.

11 PARTNERSHIP

11.1 The project has been delivered by local strategic partners, including the Primary Care Trust, the Police, businesses and schools. While the involvement of partners is making a measurable contribution to the Mayor's transport goals, STS has also had direct benefits for these groups.

11.2 LBS has made budget savings in at least one school by substantially reducing the needs for taxi provision. The Police have also reported a significant reduction in cycle crime due to the programme's investment in security measures. Businesses are likely to make significant savings, as demonstrated

by one major local employer who reduced requirements to rent car parking space. The Sutton and Merton Primary Care Trust is also benefiting from investment in the Active Steps project that has the potential to improve the long term health of residents.

11.3 One of the challenges is to identify how to capture these partner benefits and use them to support Smarter Travel measures going forward.

12 CONCLUSION AND LOOKING FORWARD TO YEAR 3

12.1 STS aims to reduce car use and increase walking, cycling and public transport use through the integrated delivery of Smarter Travel projects, as well as to understand the scope for this approach.

12.2 STS is performing well against its objectives, having already achieved two of four headline objectives by September 2008. The programme also remains well placed to deliver a 5 per cent reduction in car trips by September 2009.

12.3 The monitoring of individual's travel behaviour and then confidently attributing this behaviour to the influence of specific smarter travel measures, has demonstrated a number of methodological challenges that have been outlined in this paper. These lessons have already been captured for the monitoring of future programmes, in particular the Richmond smarter travel programme.

12.4 The quantitative evidence suggests higher public transport usage and cycling in LBS, in contrast with the control area. These trends will be monitored closely in 2009 and reported fully in the end of project report.

12.5 STS will complete its workplace travel planning programme in 2009 and results from individual travel plans will be available and included in the end of programme report. The early successes of school travel planning will continue with accelerated numbers of schools obtaining Accredited travel plan status (a benchmarking scheme for schools which meet particularly high standards).

12.6 Promotional activities in 2009 will focus on providing active travel information, much of it under the Active Steps approach, through workplaces, schools, events and medical professionals.

12.7 A number of lessons have been learnt throughout the first two years of STS about the process of delivering integrated transport behavioural change programmes. In particular, these have highlighted:

- The need to focus efforts on specific demographic groups – broad-spectrum campaigns have limited impact;
- The importance of aligning the timing of smarter travel initiatives with other interventions and investment in infrastructure, such as new cycle routes;
- The importance of ensuring robust methods for securing attitudinal data; and
- The benefits of ensuring that the management of the smarter travel programmes is integrated with the management and delivery of parallel transport programmes, such as those funded via LIPs.

12.8 The forthcoming Smarter Travel Richmond programme is already benefiting from these insights, which have influenced the design of the programme, its

monitoring strategy, and management. They will also shape the third year of the STS programme, and other smarter travel projects across London.

12.9 The next evaluation point will be in September 2009 and the results will be available for the Board in early 2010.

13 RECOMMENDATION

13.1 The Board is asked to NOTE:

(a) the early success of the programme in increasing levels of cycling and public transport usage by providing small scale infrastructure, information on, and promotion of, the options available to residents;

(b) emerging changing attitudes to walking, cycling and public transport;

(c) the potential contribution and added value smarter travel initiatives can make to area based and corridor transport programmes delivered by the boroughs in future; and

(d) the lessons learnt from the monitoring of the initiative that will be applied to future smarter travel initiatives.

14 CONTACT

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