

**REPORT TO SOUTH AYRSHIRE SUSTAINABILITY FORUM
OF 3rd December 2008**

SUBJECT: Progress of South Ayrshire Council's Sustainable Travel Plan

1. Purpose.

The purpose of this report is to inform Sustainability Forum partners of the progress of the first six months of the implementation of the Sustainable Travel Plan, and to detail planned actions for the forthcoming year, and the medium and longer term.

2. Background.

South Ayrshire Council's Sustainable Travel Plan supports the Sustainable Travel objective of the Sustainability Forum and sets in place actions and targets (see Appendix 3) to help deliver on the carbon reduction objective, making good South Ayrshire Council's commitment under the Scottish Climate Change Declaration and the targets set out in the Council's Carbon Management Plan (see Appendix 4).

The Plan was formally launched on the 21st April 2008, utilising diverse marketing material specifically developed to focus on the healthy aspect, monetary savings and carbon savings associated with walking, cycling, taking public transport and car sharing to work.

Arrangements were made to ensure that every employee was issued with their own copy of the "Up&go little book of green travel", detailing the why and how of sustainable travel. Simultaneously, a cycle to work scheme was launched and administered by the Council's Human Resources department, providing a vehicle for Sustainable Development to further the sustainable travel aims, through offering a Cycle To Work (CTW) welcoming pack to all those signing up to the CTW scheme. A Walk To Work scheme was also launched by Sustainable Development, and employees signing up were given a welcoming pack containing health information, a pedometer, walk umbrella and other items. Together with a commitment from the Council's Leisure Services, and match funding from Strathclyde Partnership for Transport (SPT), the welcoming packs contained good quality items and literature, together with:

- a free shower pass to enable employees to use the leisure centre showers after cycling to work (this arrangement circumvents the lack of showering facilities in most public buildings).
- A free class pass for a month, after employees had cycled or walked for 25 miles (which is counted either via a bicycle mileometer, or walk pedometer, given free to those signing up to the walking or cycling schemes). This capitalised on employees' health efforts and allowed access to such classes as yoga, pilates, aerobics, tai chi and bodytone.
- A free fitness level test before and after the 25 and 50 mile targets have been achieved to encourage employees' health efforts.

In addition to this, regular events, competitions and benefits were organised, with the intention of raising awareness and keeping the information live in the employee domain (see Appendix 1).

3. Considerations

The Sustainable Travel Plan seeks to reduce carbon emissions through employee commute, business travel, fleet usage and procurement and service delivery. In achieving this, the Plan would go some way to meeting the targets outlined in the Council's Carbon management Programme (see Appendix 4) to reduce the Council's overall carbon emissions by 20% by 2012/13 from a 2005/06. Appendix 3 outlines the specific targets as set out in the Council's Travel Plan.

The sustainable travel campaign has been active for six months. To date, the implementation of the plan has relied on a number of soft options to raise awareness, build a reputation and gain some relatively easily achieved aims, with a comparatively small capital outlay, aided by match funding from SPT.

It is anticipated that forthcoming employee travel surveys will show little change in the short term towards a more sustainable travel to work ethos. This is not indicative of failure: it is recognised that behavioural change requires taking a psychological approach, the committing of significant resources, and recognition of the benefits of a long term, all-encompassing plan which may require deployment of diverse policies.

Changes within the SPT set up, and the funding for sustainable travel may result in there being less availability of funding in the immediate future. However this may be compensated for by ongoing changes in other organisations, for example within the Energy Savings Trust.

4. Next Steps

Appendix 1: *Events, competitions and projects undertaken to raise awareness of sustainable travel within South Ayrshire Council* details progress and actions to date, along with some quantification of the actions. It also details partners that were involved, and services that the actions impacted on. Appendix 2: *2008/2009 plan and timetable* sets out the intended actions for the short, medium and longer term. It is intended that an annual report be produced on the achievement of targets.

The next initiative to be implemented will be a car-sharing scheme for South Ayrshire Council employees, scheduled to tie in with SPT's launch of their car sharing scheme. It is anticipated that other Ayrshire authorities will also be involved, and possibly Community Plan partners. There is potential to work with the Energy Savings Scotland advice centre to deliver this along with an eco-driving awareness message.

5. Recommendations

Partners are invited to consider the actions set out and approve the suggested approach to representing the Sustainability Forums involvement with the SOA review process.

Person to Contact:

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Date. 3rd December 2008