

# **Sustainable Travel to School Strategy**

A report by the County Transportation Manager to the Highways Advisory Board on 10th July 2007

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## **Introduction**

1. A report was considered by this Board on 1st May 2007 (Item 5) on the Education and Inspections Act 2006 and its implications for Kent County Council. A key requirement of the Act is for Kent to produce a Sustainable Travel to School Strategy. This report seeks Member approval for a consultation draft of this strategy.

## **Background**

2. The Education and Inspections Act 2006 places a general duty on local authorities to promote the use of sustainable travel and transport on the journey to school. Section 508A of the Act, in force from April 2007, requires local education and transport authorities to develop a strategy for the sustainable travel and transport infrastructure within the authority so that the travel and transport needs of children and young people are better catered for.

## **Sustainable Travel to School Strategy – Key Elements**

3. The strategy comprises a statement of the authority's overall vision, objectives and work programme for improving accessibility to schools. The accessibility strategy should build on, and be developed in the context of the authority's community strategies and Local Transport Plan (including its accessibility plan and bus strategy). The strategy is intended to be an important source of information to parents on the travel options available to them when expressing their preferences for particular schools in the admissions round.
4. In developing its strategy, the local authority should consider how improvements can help to deliver other objectives, including environmental improvements (from reduced levels of congestion and pollution), health benefits (from increased levels of walking and cycling) and enhanced child safety and security.
5. The strategy should be evidence-based, including an assessment of the accessibility needs and problems of the local authority's area and demonstrate how a range of interventions can address these problems. The strategy should set out the accessibility priorities over a time frame that fits the LTP cycle.
6. The Education (School Information) (England) Regulations 2002, amended with effect from 1<sup>st</sup> June 2007, requires local authorities to publish their Sustainable Travel to School Strategy on their web-site by 31 August each year, starting in 2007. Local authorities must monitor the implementation of their strategy and revise these annually as they feel necessary.
7. In response to this requirement, Kent Highway Services have established a Steering Group, including representatives from CFE and Commercial Services to oversee the development of a Consultation Draft of the Kent Sustainable Travel to School Strategy. This will be consulted on internally during July and August 07 and will be published as a draft for external consultation on the kent.gov site in time for the DfES deadline of 31<sup>st</sup> August 2007. The September 2008 revised version, will therefore constitute the final strategy.

# Sustainable Travel to School Strategy

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## **Conclusion and Recommendations**

8. Members are asked to support the development of Kent's Sustainable Travel to School Strategy and to agree for this to be finalised in draft form for consultation under delegated powers and to be published as a draft at the start of the new school year in September 2007, as required by the Act.
  
9. Members are invited to view a copy of the Draft Strategy (hard copies will be available at this Board meeting, or alternatively copies can be made available in paper or electronic format by contacting Graham Tanner). Comments to be considered as part of the published draft, should be received by 31<sup>st</sup> July 2007.

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