

Report to: **Cabinet**

Date of meeting: **23 April 2019**

By: **Director of Communities, Economy and Transport**

Title: **Scrutiny Review of the effectiveness of School Travel Plans**

Purpose: **To provide Cabinet with the opportunity to comment on the report of the Scrutiny Review of the effectiveness of School Travel Plans**

RECOMMENDATIONS:

Cabinet is recommended to:

- 1. note and welcome the report of the Place Scrutiny Committee; and**
 - 2. advise the County Council that, in considering the report of the Scrutiny Committee, the Council be recommended to welcome the report of the Scrutiny Committee and to agree the response of the Director of Communities, Economy and Transport to the recommendations and their implementation as set out in the action plan attached as appendix 1 to this report.**
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1. Background

1.1 The Place Scrutiny Committee at the meeting on 13 September 2018 agreed to establish a Review Board to undertake a Scrutiny Review of the effectiveness of School Travel Plans. The scope of the Review encompassed the monitoring of School Travel Plans secured through the planning process, and the existing information in relation to school travel initiatives and guidance in relation to school travel available to access for schools, parents and carers.

1.2 The Review Board was comprised of three members of the Place Scrutiny Committee: Councillors Claire Dowling, Nigel Enever and Godfrey Daniel.

1.3 At the Place Scrutiny Committee on the 19 March 2019 the report of the Review Board and recommendations to Cabinet for comment, and Council for approval, was presented.

2. Supporting information

2.1 The Scrutiny Review of School Travel Plans is welcomed by the Communities, Economy & Transport Department. School Travel Plans are an important consideration in the planning process, and are often a condition applied to planning applications, so it is important that they are effective when applied.

2.2 Planning applications for new schools often draw negative reaction from local residents, principally around the unwanted effects of school 'drop off' and 'pick up' times. An increase of pupils may equate to an increase in the number of cars, congestion and inappropriate parking, all of which can impact negatively on a community.

2.3 The Department's response to the Review Board's recommendations and action plan are set out in Appendix 1. The Communities, Economy and Transport Department fully supports the proposed recommendations, and is grateful for the work of the Review Board. They are pragmatic and deliverable and will strengthen their application when applied to future applications.

3. Conclusion and reasons for recommendations

3.1 The Scrutiny Review has highlighted a number of issues regarding the current approach to ensuring School Travel Plans are effective. It is recommended that the Cabinet agree to the implementation of the action plan as detailed in Appendix 1.

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LOCAL MEMBERS

ALL

BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS

None

Appendix 1

PLACE SCRUTINY REVIEW OF THE EFFECTIVENESS OF SCHOOL TRAVEL PLANS – ACTION PLAN			
SCRUTINY RECOMMENDATION	DIRECTOR’S RESPONSE AND ACTION PLAN	TIMESCALE	
R1	The Board recommends that schools continue to return data on pupils’ modes of travel through the school census, to enable schools which have travel plans to monitor these with a consistent set of data.	Officers will continue to encourage schools to complete this question and can analyse the data and present it in a GIS format, on request.	Ongoing
R2	The Board recommends that Communities, Economy and Transport Officers encourage schools to nominate a senior post-holder to have responsibility for the review of the School Travel Plan, and for this to be included in the School’s Development Plan.	This will be included in the updated guidance for school travel planning, which will be published on Czone.	May 2019
R3	The Board recommends further promotion of the active travel initiatives offered by the Active Access for Growth Programme 2017-2020 to educational establishments.	This is part of the existing ESCC Active Access for Growth Programme. The next event schools can participate in is Sustrans ‘The Big Pedal’, which will be launched on 25 th March 2019.	Ongoing
R4	The Board recommends that future external funding be sought to support active travel with schools and other organisations, alongside signposting to schools of other funding streams which they can apply for, to support these types of measures.	A new programme is being developed during 2019, which will be scalable according to the external funding that ESCC and other key partners, including schools, can secure in the future.	July 2019
R5	The Board recommends the Planning Team include a Condition requiring a new or revised (as appropriate) School Travel Plan, including a stipulated review period. Consideration should also be given to including an Informative, encouraging schools to nominate a senior post-holder to undertake responsibility for its review, and for this to be included in the School Development Plan.	Where considered necessary and appropriate, a condition requiring the revision/submission of a School Travel Plan will be imposed on planning permissions for new schools or expansions to existing schools which result in an increase in pupil/staffing numbers. The Planning Team will, through the imposition of Informatives, encourage schools to identify a nominated person to regularly review its Travel Plan.	Ongoing

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R6	The Board recommends that the Communities, Economy and Transport department ensure that advice and guidance to develop School Travel Plans and Walking Buses is available electronically, on CZone (the Intranet for schools) and the East Sussex County Council website.	This is currently being updated and will be published via ESCC website and Czone.	May 2019
R7	The Board encourages staff to continue to co-ordinate work in relation to active travel, to support the delivery of key departmental objectives relating to the economy, planning, the environment and health.	This is undertaken through numerous programmes of work including:- <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Delivery of cycling and walking infrastructure schemes included in ESCC local Transport Capital Programme. • Delivery of ESCC current travel behaviour change programme - ‘Active Access for Growth’. • Supporting district and boroughs in the development of their Local Plans, and ensuring policies will enable active travel will be a key element of future development. • Input into other key departmental strategies relating to the economy, environment and health. 	Ongoing