

SCRUTINY COMMISSION FOR RURAL COMMUNITIES	Agenda Item No. 6
23 NOVEMBER 2009	Public Report

Report of the Executive Director of Operations

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PROVISION OF CYCLING OPPORTUNITIES IN THE RURAL AREAS

1. PURPOSE

To enable the Commission to scrutinise the Council's actions to provide cycling opportunities to rural areas including opportunities to encourage cycling between villages and to schools, improve cycleways, cycle stands and options for re-charging points for electric bikes etc.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

1. To scrutinise the options provided by Travelchoice for cycling.
2. Recommend Travelchoice develop an action plan for rural areas.
3. Recommend Travelchoice collate ideas for larger infrastructure improvements (e.g. route enhancements etc) and provide to Transportation and Development for inclusion in Long Term Transport Strategy.
4. A further report on the wider Travelchoice project results to be provided in January 2010.

3. BACKGROUND

- 3.1 In 2004, the Council successfully applied for £3.24m revenue funding from the Department for Transport (DfT) and Peterborough became one of three Sustainable Travel Demonstration Towns. The remit was to deliver a package of Smarter Choices measures to encourage greater use of walking, cycling, public transport and car sharing in Peterborough. Smarter Choices measures centre around providing information, incentives and confidence to people to encourage use of sustainable transport rather than large scale infrastructure improvements. However a capital Local Transport Plan programme ran alongside the revenue project to ensure that once we had encouraged people to change their mode of travel they had a good experience in doing so. The DfT funding was specifically aimed at the urban area of Peterborough as this was deemed to have the biggest potential for change.
- 3.2 Prior to the project launch, a baseline behavioural survey was undertaken to determine current mode choices, opinions, perceptions and the potential for change. In late 2008, the same in depth survey was repeated to determine the change. Over the 4 year period, a 9% reduction in car trips per person was noted (with subsequent increases in walking, cycling and public transport). The full results can be viewed online at www.travelchoice.org.uk.
- 3.3 The DfT has a team of experts and statisticians working to compile a report summarising all three Sustainable Travel Demonstration Towns and comparing the behavioural data to actual counts (e.g. traffic counts, screen line data etc) to determine if the two correspond. Early indications show they do. It is expected this report (due to be published in mid November) will showcase the work carried out in Peterborough, for other local authorities to learn from. As it is a technical report, lessons from Peterborough will also be used to inform future national transport policy.
- 3.4 Finally, a report summarising the project carried out in Peterborough, including successes and lessons learnt is currently being completed and will be provided to Members in January.

- 3.5 Following the end of the project in March 2009, Travelchoice was mainstreamed into core Council business and as a result Travelchoice now includes the whole of the unitary boundary, including rural areas and villages.
- 3.6 It should be noted that whilst car use in the urban areas decreased, over the same period car use in rural areas increased. It is therefore an objective for Travelchoice to look at how we can address this.
- 3.7 **What is already in place in rural areas to encourage cycling?**
- Good going pledge and reward scheme offering discounts at cycle shops
 - School travel plan support and grants - Newborough has recently experienced an increase in cycling from 1% to 7% from 2008-2009.
 - Peterborough Cycle Map
 - Adult cycle training (first lesson free)
 - Series of seven rural cycle guides
 - Cycle buddy scheme
 - Inner Tube cycling e-newsletter
 - Interchange posters provide information about walking/cycling routes (due to be put up at Castor, Ailsworth and Glinton bus stops).

How can these be expanded?

- Please see attached list of ideas and presentation given at the Rural Working Group

4. LINKS TO CORPORATE PLAN, SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITY STRATEGY AND LOCAL AREA AGREEMENT

- Peterborough's Environment Capital aspirations
 - NI 175 Access to services and facilities using public transport, walking and cycling
 - NI 198 Sustainable modes of travel to school
- NI2 percentage of people who feel they belong to their neighbourhood
- NI167 Congestion: average journey time during the morning peak
- NI186 Per Capital CO₂ emissions
- SSC04a % of people who agree Peterborough is a good place to live, work and play
- Health agenda
 - Active travel contributes to reducing obesity and general health and wellbeing

5. CONSULTATION/KEY ISSUES

- Following the Rural Working Group meeting on 30 September 2009, a list of possible ideas has been circulated to members along with a request for further ideas. These ideas will be collated and prioritised by the Travelchoice Team with other transport colleagues. An action plan will be devised and feedback provided to the group.
- Travelchoice would like to extend this request to the Scrutiny Commission for Rural Communities. The list of initial discussion points is attached for comment and further ideas.

6. BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS

- Socialdata Final Behavioural Research Report March 2009

Used to prepare this report, in accordance with the Local Government (Access to Information) Act 1985

7. APPENDICES

- List of discussion points for ideas for rural areas – submitted to members of the Rural Working Group with minutes.