



Travelling to School

06 December 2005

Report to the City Council

Travelling to School



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Preface

By Councillor Bruce Lines
Lead Review Member



There are few things more important than the safety and well-being of our children. How people get to school isn't just a matter of dealing with congestion on our roads. It's also about healthier lifestyles for our children, and creating safer streets and a more pleasant environment.

It would be easy to pre-judge and over-simplify the problems experienced around how people get to school. Many people use their car as part of a longer journey for which there isn't a viable alternative through public transport. Walking and cycling - without question, the healthiest and most environmentally-friendly options - are too easily replaced by the convenience of a car.

But each school (and its parents and pupils) is different. The complex reality is that if we want to have any impact, it's a matter of influencing the travel decisions people make as individuals and giving people practical alternatives that suit their needs and lifestyles. This takes time and thoughtful and creative investment of money.

We have, in doing this review, seen many practical examples of things that are being and can be done by schools, the Council and partners. The School Travel Plan approach acknowledges the individuality of schools and provides scope for different solutions in different areas of the city, whilst bringing these different agents together. As members representing diverse communities and neighbourhoods, this allows us a realistic chance of finding answers that will suit the situations in our wards and continually re-evaluating them.

Where we struggle is with our ability to carry on doing things in this way. School Travel Plans are mainly run with fixed-term funding, which is currently scheduled to run out three years before the Government target of every school having a Plan has to be met. Even were it to last until every school has a Plan, there would still be a question about how we would continue to adapt to changes in the future.



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I would like to thank my fellow Councillors on the review group for their involvement and participation in this review. I would also like to extend our thanks to those who have helped us to conduct the review, particularly Helen Budge and Tim Hickey from the School Travel team, Travel West Midlands, Mike Paley from Push Bikes and other officers from the Transportation Strategy and Scrutiny teams.

I do consider what we have seen in this review to be a positive start to addressing the problems of congestion around schools. A third of Birmingham schools already have plans in place. This provides an important base for encouraging the rest to develop and support plans and I hope that we will continue to develop the way that schools plan for how people will travel to them in the future.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Paul Hickey".



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Summary

This review forms part of the Transportation and Street Services Overview and Scrutiny Committee's continuing theme of work to support the corporate goal of 'Tackling Congestion'. Members were keen to examine issues relating to the congestion associated with how children get to school and to identify ways in which it might be reduced.

There is a perception that the higher levels of traffic experienced during school term times is caused simply by a high proportion of parents driving their children to school. This perception sits alongside often reported trends such as the increase in car use and increasing obesity in children. These are of importance to the City Council in a number of roles that it performs, as Highway Authority, Local Education Authority and its governance responsibilities for the health of Birmingham residents.

In examining the facts behind the perceptions around this subject, the key issue is the high degree of diversity in travel patterns between schools. This is affected by a multitude of factors including whether the school is primary or secondary, whether it is faith-based or a community school, where the school is located in Birmingham and the access to public transport around it.

To successfully reduce congestion associated with schools involves getting people to change their individual travel decisions and behaviours. This is a very complex process, but the review did find that positive steps are being made to address congestion around school through the process of School Travel Planning.

School Travel Plans provide a tailored approach to tackling congestion and encouraging people to use more sustainable modes – walking, cycling and public transport. However, the review also found that time-limited funding of core elements of the Council's activities to tackle congestion is not appropriate. The potential for congestion around schools will not end when all schools have travel plans and it is important that travel plans continue to evolve and develop accordingly.

The recommendations of this review are built upon supporting the progress that has been made so far. Having local solutions to diverse local problems is a key part of addressing the complex issue of congestion. The recommendations are also aimed at ensuring that this approach continues to deliver results as it is extended across the city.



Summary of Recommendations

	Recommendation	Responsibility	Completion Date
R1	Central Government should be lobbied to continue revenue funding for School Travel Advisors through mainstream funding.	Cabinet Member for Transportation and Street Services	1 April 2006
R2	Irrespective of Government proposals for extending temporary funding for School Travel Advisors beyond 2008, a plan should be written and considered for integrating School Travel Advisors into the core staffing of the City Council. The results of the consideration of any plan should be reported to the Committee and should cover how: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The natural synergy that exists between school travel planning and advice and promoting sustainable and safe travel can be maximised; • Commitments for existing School Travel Plans will be maintained; and • School Travel Plans will continue to be extended to schools across the city. 	Cabinet Member for Transportation and Street Services	31 January 2006
R3	Commencing in May 2006, there should be an annual report to this Committee, demonstrating: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Progress towards the Government target of all schools in the city having a School Travel Plan by 2010/11; and • Whether surveys of schools after introducing travel plans show any shifts in the mode of travel. 	Cabinet Member for Transportation and Street Services	31 May 2006
R4	Members should receive regular information on School Travel Plans and Safer Routes to School schemes within their wards, along with how they can obtain more detailed information should they require it.	Cabinet Member for Transportation and Street Services	31 January 2006
R5	The Council should continue to seek value for money in supporting promotional activity for sustainable modes of transportation. The Cabinet Member is requested to provide examples to the Committee in the future of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How promotional activity has resulted in changes to modes of travel by school children; and • Where it has been decided that promotional activity does not represent value for money. 	Cabinet Member for Transportation and Street Services	30 September 2006



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	Recommendation	Responsibility	Completion Date
R6	<p>The exploration of the potential for using dedicated bus services for a particular school(s) in the city should be considered as part of the ongoing development of School Travel Plans.</p> <p>Specific details of modal shift towards bus use in these schools should be reported to the Committee as part of the report on progress (R3).</p>	Cabinet Member for Transportation and Street Services	31 March 2006
R7	<p>Progress towards achieving these recommendations should be reported to the Transportation and Street Services Overview and Scrutiny Committee no later than its October 2006 meeting.</p> <p>Subsequent reports on progress will be scheduled by the Committee on a regular basis thereafter until all are completed.</p>	Cabinet Member for Transportation and Street Services	31 October 2006



1 Background to the Review

1.1 Introduction

- 1.1.1 People who regularly travel by roads at peak times will be acutely aware of the difference in traffic outside of school term times. At these times, road journey times decrease markedly whilst reliability in being able to plan journey times increases also.
- 1.1.2 The perception here is that the difference in traffic is caused by parents taking their children to school. However, the picture is actually more complex. An element of the difference out of term time must logically be because parents of some school age children take holiday from work at these times as well. However, it can be expected that there is also an element of specific journeys being made to take children to school. Also many journeys are simply deflected by one parent dropping children off on their way to work or another activity (such as shopping).
- 1.1.3 Recent road use statistics from the Department for Transport (DfT) show that there was an increase in annual vehicle miles of over a tenth during the period from 1990 to 2004¹. Of this, a significant contribution can be expected to be from private cars. The other main increase is in use of vans.
- 1.1.4 The reasons behind the growth in using the car are many and complex. One of the root causes is that people earn more money relative to previous generations and accordingly many expect to be able to spend that on owning and running a car. Not only are they more likely to own a car, but they are more likely to have more than one in their household. The traditional notions of mum walking the children to school are increasingly being replaced by mum, dad or even grandparents using the family 4x4 to drop them off outside school on their way to work.
- 1.1.5 Many children do still get to school by walking (especially primary school children) or by bus (particularly secondary schools). However, when as a society we are confronted by increasing numbers of inactive, overweight and obese children and road congestion, it is clear that we need to consider what we can do.

¹ Department for Transport: National Travel Survey, 2004.



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- 1.1.6 These issues concern the City Council on a number of fronts:
- As the Highway Authority, it has overall responsibility for traffic under the Traffic Management Act 2004;
 - As the Local Education Authority, it is the Council's schools that are part of the focus of the congestion;
 - Councils have responsibility for the health of their citizens as part of their governance role.

1.2 How the Review was Conducted

- 1.2.1 This review has set out to examine the issue of congestion associated with the way children get to school and to look at how it might be reduced. It was conducted by Councillors Mohammed Azim, Kath Hartley, Bruce Lines and Neville Summerfield.
- 1.2.2 In conducting the review, members have looked at:
- Government and Council policy in relation to travelling to school and its likely future direction;
 - How the Council has approached the process of introducing School Travel Plans;
 - What we know about how pupils travel to school in Birmingham;
 - National examples of best practice in measures to encourage people away from the car;
 - The work being undertaken by Travel West Midlands to address issues of anti-social behaviour on their services and with schools;
 - How the Council might more effectively encourage cycling to school.



2 Issues and Policy

2.1 Problems with Increasing Car Use

2.1.1 Some of the specific problems and consequences associated with children being driven to school are derived from the consequent general increases in road traffic:

- An increased likelihood of road accidents, particularly in the vicinity of schools where there are specific dangers;
- An increase in traffic pollution (noise and air);
- A congested road network, with users less likely to get to their destination at their planned time;
- Increased demand for parking provision near schools.

2.1.2 There are also 'lifestyle issues' associated with children being driven to school:

- Children take less exercise as part of their daily routine and are more likely to be overweight (and therefore may suffer the health problems associated with this);
- Children that are driven to school are less likely to use public transport, cycle or walk in later life. This becomes a vicious circle, as they then do not encourage their children to use public transport, cycle or walk.

2.1.3 The issues with increasing car use are relatively straightforward in principle. There is a finite amount of road space and congestion results from demand exceeding capacity at a given time. To reduce congestion, the basic options are:

- Increase the **amount of road space** available (such as building more roads);
- Increase the **capacity of road space** by using it more efficiently;
- Decrease the **amount of vehicles** on the road at a given time;
- Decrease the **number of people** travelling; or
- A **combination** of actions within these four elements.



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- 2.1.4 The reality is that these are all extremely complex to achieve in practice. Options for building more roads are physically limited in urban areas and unpopular, as well as being potentially expensive.
- 2.1.5 Some of the reasons that it is difficult to address the problem of increasing car use include:
- The car is **convenient, usually quicker**, and minimises the distance that needs to be walked;
 - The mode by which children travel to school is an **individual decision**, usually for parents;
 - In many cases the car journey to take children to school is **part of a longer journey**;
 - Car **ownership is rising** alongside incomes. If you have a car you're more likely to use it (although the relationship between traffic and economic growth is weakening²);
 - It is possible that **longer distances** will be travelled to school;
 - There are a number of widely-held perceptions among parents that children are **not safe** to travel alone.
- 2.1.6 In one respect, the congestion associated with children being taken to and from school is not dissimilar to other forms of congestion. It is the same as when a number of people decide to travel to a specific location at the same time, such as large events, football matches and conferences. Where it differs is in its frequency: schools operate five days a week, and for nearly 40 weeks a year.

2.2 The National Policy Picture

- 2.2.1 The Government has specifically targeted school travel through the public policy agenda in recent years. The emphasis of Government strategy encompasses:
- Consulting on changing behaviour;
 - Incorporating sustainable travel into the curriculum.
- 2.2.2 The Government is:
- Providing capital grants to schools via School Travel Plans;
 - Providing revenue grants to support a network of School Travel Plan Advisors in each local authority;
 - Changing the law so local authorities can pilot new approaches;
 - Producing a Public Health White Paper;

² Penny Jones, Divisional Manager with responsibility for the School Transport Bill, DfES at "School Travel Planning: How Can Local Authorities Provide a Realistic Alternative to Car Usage" Westminster Briefing, 21st June 2005.



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- Supporting the process via Local Transport Plans (LTPs) and Local Public Service Agreements (LPSAs).
- 2.2.3 In turn, they are looking to Local Authorities to provide:
- Expert support to schools;
 - Capital investment in, for example, footpaths and cycle ways;
 - Co-operation with local transport bodies to provide support for after school activities, such as breakfast clubs.
- 2.2.4 There is also much proposed change within the developing 'Extended Schools' agenda. This will involve primary and secondary schools being open 0800 to 1800 hours, 365 days a year. Given that this will mean radically changed use and patterns of use of schools, some of these changes can be expected to impact upon traffic and congestion.

2.3 City Council Policy and Strategy

- 2.3.1 Travelling to school is covered by the Local Transport Plan (LTP) for the West Midlands. The LTP target is "no reduction in the ratio between the total number of pupils and the total number of car journeys to school between baseline and 2010/11." However, with the use of School Travel Plans, Birmingham is striving to reverse this trend. The additional target is "100% of schools with school travel plans by 2010/11."

- 2.3.2 The City Council's policies relating to travelling to school are outlined in the 'Visions' 20-year transport strategy for the city (2000). The following specific policies relate to this:

- *Policy 14:* The City Council will actively promote / support campaigns

and activities to increase awareness of the impact of travel mode choice (e.g. TravelWise week);

- *Policy 17:* A *Safer Routes to School* programme will be developed in partnership with schools;



Walking is good for your bones! The first pupils to arrive by walking at Chilcote Primary School get to complete a jigsaw of bones in the human body.



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- *Policy 18:* The City Council will actively support measures to reduce road traffic accidents (training for walking and cycling through links to schools is particularly mentioned);
- *Policy 19:* Traffic calming may be introduced to address specific problems and in response to requests from local residents/community groups;
- *Policy 24:* The City Council will work with all relevant parties to ensure that people are aware of and encouraged to use improved public transport;
- *Policy 25:* The City Council continues to support the provision of transport services to meet special needs;
- *Policy 41:* The City Council will actively support measures to reduce car dependency in the context of maintaining accessibility;
- *Policy 58:* The City Council will seek to develop a cycle friendly infrastructure on the highway network including links to trip generators such as schools.

2.3.3 Additionally the *Cycling Strategy* and the *Walking Strategy* are key strategies that influence travel to school.

2.3.4 Responsibilities for issues relating to travelling to school within the City Council are divided between Education and Transportation Strategy:

- *Education:* Relating to the Admissions Policy, in terms of obligations to provide transport to school, particularly for Special Educational Needs, but also regarding the provision of free bus passes;
- *Transportation Strategy:* Relating to the Council's obligations for road safety and how these are partly delivered through the Safer Routes to School programme and School Travel Plans.



3 School Travel Planning

3.1 School Travel Plans

3.1.1 A School Travel Plan (STP) sets out how parents and children can travel to school using safer and more sustainable methods of transport. The scheme is centrally funded by the Department for Education and Skills (DfES) and Department for Transport (DfT) in two streams:

- Fixed-term salary (revenue) grants for four officers within Transportation Strategy to prepare travel plans and work with schools to implement them.
- Capital grants for each school that participates.

The City Council additionally employs two officers on the established staff to manage this process as well as the Safer Routes to School programme which is a complementary initiative.

3.1.2 So far, this latter category has brought around £475k into Birmingham schools (out of around £15m made available by the Government since 2004). This represents, on average, £5k for a primary school and £10k for a secondary school, based on a lump sum for each school plus £5 or £10 per pupil.

3.1.3 This money can only be spent on capital projects within the school, such as:

- Waiting shelters for parents;
- Cycle sheds / lockers;
- Changes to entrances to make them safer for pedestrians.

3.1.4 The DfT has stated that is their objective that all schools should have an active School Travel Plan by 2010/11.

3.1.5 32 STPs were authorised in Birmingham last year and a further 87 have been authorised this year. This means that around a third of children in Birmingham schools are covered by STPs.



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3.1.6 Producing a School Travel Plan can lead to funding for highway measures through the Safer Routes to School programme. This is a separate scheme for funding capital measures outside the school. These can include:

- Street lighting;
- Changes to crossings;
- Other actions to reduce speed;
- TROs (Traffic Regulation Orders).



Look for the sign: A sign to let drivers know they're on the Walking Bus route.

This requires wider consultation, including local residents.

3.1.7 School Travel Plans do not attempt to change the mode used by school staff and teachers. This is felt to be a potentially contentious subject: the STP process requires the support of staff and teachers in order to succeed. Given that teachers for example, may travel further to work and have to carry a large number of books to and from school, using public transport, walking or cycling in these circumstances may not be a viable option.

3.2 The Planning Process

3.2.1 The process for developing a School Travel Plan is as follows:

- The School Travel team may contact schools directly or (more commonly), schools may approach the team to start the process;
- An officer will visit to the school to set out the process, explain the benefits, the work involved and how any specific problems could be tackled;
- Governors, parents, teachers and pupils are all consulted during the preparation of the plan;
- Over the course of the planning process, information provided by the school is shaped to meet all the requirements of a Plan. This must be written to include specific elements, including surveys, consultation and objectives linked to targets in order to qualify for the DfT funding;



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- The final Plan consists of a profile of the school and the travel issues, results of the consultation and targets. The information is entered on-line, where the plan was initially generated.
- 3.2.2 This process ensures schools and teachers understand the work involved and that it is not a 'quick fix' and does require significant input. Lack of enthusiasm is not considered to have been a significant barrier, as schools have volunteered to have travel plans.
- 3.2.3 Consultation is a key part of ensuring that the plans are evidence-based. Surveys are filled in on-line by children, often as part of an ICT lesson. Parents' views in particular are useful in identifying the cause of any reluctance to walk their children to school e.g. safety concerns.
- 3.2.4 STPs must have clear targets. The DfT requires that among the targets for the plan, one must be for modal shift (i.e. changing mode of travel). Over the past year, the targets have been made sharper. Dates and people responsible are now set against each target.
- 3.2.5 Once a School Travel Plan has been completed, it is project managed by the School Travel Plan team. Each measure or target has a named person responsible and key to the success of the plan is ensuring that the measures have been completed. A re-survey of all schools is undertaken in February of each year (to minimise any seasonal variations).



Can I give you a lift?: The car isn't the only way that parents can take their children to school.

3.3 Promoting School Travel Plans

- 3.3.1 The School Travel Plan team comprises two permanent officers, supported by four School Travel Plan Advisors originally on fixed-term contracts to March 2006. Each of the latter is attached to an area of the city so that they can gain and maintain good local knowledge. The DfT and DfES have recently announced that the revenue grant (to fund salaries for School Travel Advisors) will continue to 2008. However, there is no indication of revenue funding beyond this for the on-going workload. Capital funding to schools for sustainable travel infrastructure (e.g. cycle parking) will also continue until 2008.
- 3.3.2 The team has close links with a range of other teams, external bodies and specific initiatives:
- Road Safety Team;



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- Walking and Cycling Officers;
 - Operation Safer Travel – Travel West Midlands (TWM);
 - Centro;
 - Inner City Road Safety Demonstration Project;
 - ‘Healthy Schools’ initiatives (School Travel Plans are promoted as part of this).
- 3.3.3 The Road Safety team works closely with the School Travel Plan team and have joint ownership of projects. Road Safety Officers have ensured that the measures set out in school travel plans have been included in their work programme, which has meant that conflict in priorities has not been encountered so far. Walking and Cycling Officers, whilst they have a wider role in promoting more walking and cycling, also have key links to the School Travel Plan team.
- 3.3.4 There are also initiatives which run alongside School Travel Plans. These are currently focused on primary schools, as there are more gains to be made (secondary pupils are more likely to travel by sustainable modes, and most congestion complaints tend to be around primary schools).
- 3.3.5 An example of this is *Pace Not Race*. This is an incentive scheme aimed at Primary Schools, built around the tortoise and the hare story. Children collect stamps in a passport as they walk to school and claim a small prize at the end of term. A pilot project for this was started in April 2005. Individual schools have also come up with initiatives and incentive schemes.

3.4 Road Safety Measures

- 3.4.1 The Council's performance in relation to the road safety of children is measured by the Government as part of the Best Value Performance Indicators. Indicator BV99(i) measures:
- “(The) Number of children (aged under 16 years) killed or seriously injured (KSI) in road traffic collisions.”*
- Source: Best Value Performance Indicators, ODPM, 2005/6*
- 3.4.2 Historically, Birmingham City Council has performed well in relation to road safety indicators. Current performance shows a downward trend in the number killed and seriously injured which if continued at the same rate will achieve the Government target by 2008. The target is “to reduce deaths and serious injuries over the next ten years by 40% overall and 50% for children”.



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- 3.4.3 Many of the traffic calming measures introduced near schools, particularly from the 1990s are felt to have contributed to the impact upon reducing accidents. The stated view of the Royal Society for the Prevention of Accidents (RoSPA) is that traffic calming measures are successful in improving road safety and have been effective in Birmingham.³
- 3.4.4 The Council's policy is that where speed reduction measures are necessary the measures should preferably be 'horizontal' (e.g. chicanes, mini-roundabouts, build-outs) rather than 'vertical' (e.g. speed humps, cushions or tables). Additionally, the use of vertical calming measures is subject to consideration on priority routes for the emergency services.
- 3.4.5 In terms of road safety it is a characteristic that very few accidents are associated with the school run: most occur in leisure time. Where there are accidents, road safety measures are prioritised. Many of these accidents occur in inner city areas and are felt to be related to the availability of play areas for children.
- 3.4.6 Accidents around schools tend to be where the schools are situated on main roads and do not usually occur at school start and finish times. In the case of the former, this is simply due to the higher level of traffic activity on those roads, and possibly also due to higher speeds being involved.
- 3.4.7 Road safety cameras are the responsibility of the West Midlands Police. They fall into two categories:
- Those where there is an identified **safety issue** (expressed in terms of a given number of accidents over a period of time on a stretch of road), or
 - Those where there is an identified **community concern** over speeds and safety on the road, resulting in a request for cameras.

³ Linda Morrison-Allsopp, Road Safety Project Manager, RoSPA, at a meeting of the Transportation and Street Services Overview and Scrutiny Committee, 11 July 2005.



4 Practical Solutions

4.1 Introduction

- 4.1.1 The DfT and DfES have set out best practice measures to particularly encourage more walking and cycling to school in *Travelling to School: A Good Practice Guide*. This sets out the following objectives:
- To increase the number of pupils walking and cycling to school;
 - To encourage bus use;
 - To promote car-sharing, especially where walking, cycling or public transport are not feasible;
 - To promote sustainable travel and road safety in the classroom.
- 4.1.2 In the course of the review members also discussed some of these issues in more detail with groups and officers involved in promoting sustainable travel and Travel West Midlands.
- 4.1.3 This section highlights some of the best practice guidance available to local authorities. It is important to stress that none of the best practice represents a complete solution in itself. Translating a School Travel Plan into action involves tailoring a combination of measures to the situation that applies to that particular school.
- 4.1.4 The following chapter shows case studies specifically from Birmingham. Some case studies outside Birmingham are shown in Appendix 1.

4.2 Increasing Walking to School

- 4.2.1 In encouraging people towards sustainable modes of travel, the emphasis is very much upon walking and cycling. Promoting these modes not only helps to address issues relating to congestion, but also helps to encourage healthier lifestyles and the taking of exercise.
- 4.2.2 A lot of work is already being done by schools, local transport and educational authorities, parents and other agencies to make walking or cycling to school a viable option for pupils and parents.



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- 4.2.3 Changing travel modes is about changing individuals' behaviour. It isn't surprising therefore that initiatives are most effective when they are tailored to a particular school's needs and are 'owned' by pupils, parents, teachers, local residents and the local authority.

Traffic Calming and Safer Routes to School

- 4.2.4 Traffic calming measures around a school can reduce casualties and make the area a safer place for pupils to enter and leave. It is important to stress that although there is a wide range of measures for traffic calming, there is no generic solution or formula for this. The individual needs of each school have to be considered to determine the most appropriate course of action.
- 4.2.5 The DfT advocates the use of 20mph zones around schools as a traffic calming measure. They do, however, recognise that such zones must remain a local decision and that a different approach may be needed for schools on major roads.
- 4.2.6 Pupils can also become involved in designing traffic calming measures, which can be a useful way of raising awareness of the zones and building greater ownership – if people understand the reasons for the zones they are more likely to appreciate them.

'Walking Buses' and 'Park and Stride'

- 4.2.7 Walking Buses are organised and run by volunteers and involve children being collected along a pre-arranged route at an agreed time. If children live too far away to walk, parents can arrange to drop them off at a particular point. The children usually wear high visibility vests for safety. As well as being a healthy and sustainable way to get to school, there is also a social aspect to it. There are 16 walking buses operating currently in Birmingham.

- 4.2.8 'Park and Stride' is a variation upon this, whereby there are designated places for parents to park, from which there is a walking route to the school. This helps reduce congestion in the immediate vicinity of the school.



Rolling out the red carpet! Children walking to school in style at the national launch of International Walk to School Week, which took place in Birmingham in October 2004.



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- 4.2.9 There are numerous examples of walking buses operating successfully in many parts of the country. Research by University College London into walking buses in Hertfordshire found that about half the pupils walking would previously have been driven to school⁴.
- 4.2.10 They also found that, in general, walking buses have a life of about three years without external intervention. This is because children start participating at five years old but by the time they reach eight they no longer want to put on the high visibility jackets and be 'restricted' by the bus. As a result, their parents no longer volunteer to walk with the bus. Schools therefore need to be aware that this is likely to happen so that they can put measures in place to ensure the service continues.

4.3 Increasing Cycling to School

- 4.3.1 Many of the best practice actions towards increasing cycling highlighted by the DfT are similar to those for increasing walking in that they relate to improving safety. An example is the Cycle Train - a similar concept to the walking bus, with a group of parents and pupils cycling to school together along a designated safe route.
- 4.3.2 However, measures to increase cycling to school are broader than only those relating to safety and do also require significant investment. Mr. Mike Paley from Birmingham cycling lobby *Push Bikes*, highlighted five key steps to encouraging cycling:
- **Training and proficiency** to prepare cyclists for busy roads on their route to school;
 - **Secure cycle storage**, both at school and at home;
 - **Safer routes to school** in terms of the type and number of vehicles on the route and how they travel together;
 - **Personal security**, particularly relating to perceptions of this; and
 - **Promoting awareness** of cycling as a mode of travel and actively promoting leisure cycling.

Mr. Paley explained that these measures need to be part of a sustained effort to encourage cycling.

- 4.3.3 Sustrans⁵ has identified a number of factors that were felt to play a significant role in establishing high cycling levels and increasing the proportion of pupils that cycle to school. These included speed control measures and specific road infrastructure improvements, but also promotional activity and facilities for cycle storage.

⁴ "Walking Buses in Hertfordshire – results from a postal survey", Centre for Transport Studies, University College London.

⁵ Sustrans report: "What are the key factors for increasing the percentage of pupils travelling to school?",



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4.3.4 However, the report also noted that "several schools have high levels of cycling without any apparent intervention having been made". These include areas where there is a local culture and tradition of cycling and where it is flat. There were also cases where the reasons for the high proportion were unknown.

4.3.5 Sustrans identified that the majority of schools with a higher than average level of cycling had:

- New or improved cycle storage (77% of the schools); and
- Proactive Head Teachers or other 'champions' in the school (45%).



Making space for walking and cycling: How Quinton Church Primary School used STP funding to create safe space for pedestrians and cycles on a driveway.

4.3.6 Cities in the UK that have been more successful in encouraging cycling to school have taken on voluntary Public Service Agreement (PSA) targets from Government in respect of cycling. York was cited as an example of a UK city with a high proportion of cycling to school.

4.3.7 Drawing comparisons with other cities, particularly abroad, were not felt to be helpful. There are many factors that can affect the number of people cycling. Abroad, there are significant cultural differences in attitudes towards cycling and the countries that have traditionally had the highest proportions of people cycling (Holland and Denmark) are essentially very flat countries. They also have very different street scenes and layouts. The emphasis here needs to be upon finding a solution that works for the circumstances in Birmingham.

4.3.8 Cycle training is conducted by the Road Safety Unit in Transportation Strategy, with the cost of training paid by the Education and Culture Directorate. The budget for cycle training in 2005/06 is £26k which includes the hiring of two tutors and all cycle resources.

March 2003.



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- 4.3.9 In September 2005 the road safety team commenced a trial of the new cycle standards over a six week period. This trial will provide training for up to 190 children in 19 schools at a cost of just under £10k. This will deliver training up to 'Level 3' for secondary school children and up to 'Level 2' for primary school children ('Level 3' of national standards is the level at which they are able to handle busy roads). The results of this trial will be reported to the Cabinet Member in December.

4.4 Encouraging Bus Use

- 4.4.1 In *Best Practice for Increasing Bus Use for Journeys to School*, the DfT advocates closer working between passenger transport and education teams to improve efficiency and make better use of existing services through more co-ordinated planning. A single contracting department has probably a greater buying power and may, therefore, be able to secure better terms from transport operators.
- 4.4.2 Local authorities can encourage bus use by offering concessionary fares for pupils. For example, a quarter fare scheme operates in parts of West Sussex and surveys at one school show that this has led to an increase in bus use from 60 to 300 trips per day.
- 4.4.3 Until January 2002, 53 bus services were subsidised by the Passenger Transport Authority (PTA) across the West Midlands. However, a number of these services were under-used and as a consequence, the Joint Committee of Leaders took the decision to transfer the responsibility from the PTA to Local Education Authorities. Birmingham LEA took the decision not to subsidise bus operators to run these services which were felt to encourage pupils to travel further to school. The remaining five services continued on an entirely commercial basis.
- 4.4.4 Free bus passes are provided by the LEA. Birmingham's provision is more generous than the statutory requirement, and 2,500 passes are issued annually. The cost for 2004/5 was £410k. The distance at which pupils are provided with free travel is:
- Under 8 years of age: 1 mile;
 - 8 to 11 years of age: 1½ miles;
 - Over 11 years of age: 3 miles.
- 4.4.5 The LEA also has the power to provide assistance (free or partial) for pupils who are considered to require assistance to attend school. In Birmingham, this is used to provide assistance for pupils with special educational needs, irrespective of the distance to school. Contractors provide vehicles appropriate to the needs of the individual children – vehicles with tail-hoists, minibuses and cars. Currently, around 4,000 pupils receive assistance on 800 routes.



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- 4.4.6 Some schools and colleges already run dedicated services for pupils who are not entitled to free statutory school transport. The DfT acknowledges that schemes such as this can result in greater willingness for parents to allow their children to use the bus and significantly aid congestion around the schools. However, the services generally require public subsidy and problems with pupil behaviour have been experienced.

Pupil Behaviour on Buses

- 4.4.7 The behaviour of pupils travelling on buses before and particularly after school is cited as an issue underlying why people are reluctant to travel on buses with school pupils and why they are not prepared to allow their children to travel on the bus to school⁶.
- 4.4.8 Perspective is important here. It should be remembered that problems of pupil behaviour and other anti-social behaviour are not confined to buses, but are part of a wider societal problem.
- 4.4.9 Travel West Midlands (TWM) takes this matter seriously. TWM's key initiative to tackle problems such as this is *Operation Safer Travel*. This is a joint approach with the West Midlands Police, seeking to address wider problems such as fare evasion, vandalism, theft, abusive behaviour and smoking on buses. Measures used include:
- Increased use of CCTV;
 - Liaison with the Police and 'Gateway checks';
 - Marketing and promotion;
 - Community relations.
- 4.4.10 Part of *Operation Safer Travel* is the *SMART Schools Project*. The emphasis here is in tune with the general School Travel Plan approach: solutions are adapted to the local circumstances and problems. Schools are provided with a 'menu' of initiatives, including:
- Interactive presentations to children in school and working in assemblies;
 - 'Show reels' of real CCTV footage;
 - Articles in school newspapers / magazines and leaflets and other information being made available to children in school;
 - The 'Bus Familiarisation Project' – aimed at Year 6/7 pupils, who may be using the bus alone for the first time;
 - Letters to parents;
 - Working with the Police and local councils;
 - Recognition and rewards for positive work.

⁶ Safety of children and pupil behaviour on the journey to school are part of the forthcoming Scrutiny review of *Anti-Social Behaviour in Schools*, being conducted by the Education and Lifelong Learning Overview and Scrutiny Committee.



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- 4.4.11 The SMART Schools Project worked with 31 schools in the West Midlands in 2004. Encouraging Head Teachers to be more proactive and confront problems is felt to be the key. However, it is important to note that outside of school hours schools do not have responsibility for the pupils. Their role in the process has to be orientated around being able to get the message across to their pupils.
- 4.4.12 TWM seeks to tackle particular issues of pupil behaviour by working directly with the schools concerned. Examples were given to members of two secondary schools in Wolverhampton where there were problems with the behaviour of pupils on buses. In one case, the school arranged for teaching staff to accompany pupils travelling home on buses. In the other, pupils were shown CCTV footage of their behaviour.
- 4.4.13 Such interventions are important, and can be very effective. However, TWM did stress that they need to be part of a sustained and co-ordinated programme to tackle the pupil behaviour.

4.5 Promoting Car Sharing

- 4.5.1 Car sharing tends to be a solution adopted informally by families, largely in response to their personal circumstances and work times (rather than as a part of a deliberate effort to reduce congestion). Formal car sharing schemes are still small in number and levels of use are correspondingly relatively low.

- 4.5.2 Efforts to promote car sharing need to be focused on identifying others who would be prepared to share their car or take it in turns to take children to school. The internet is one tool used to address this and this can provide for relatively cheap solutions.



Inside the bike sheds: Cycle storage facilities put in place at Turves Green Boys Technology College using STP money.



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- 4.5.3 There are a number of parental concerns that need to be tackled in this area, particularly relating to safety (who is driving and how safe a driver they are).
- 4.5.4 Shareajourney.com is a web page that promotes car sharing, not only for school travel, but also for commuters and travel to events. The idea is that it encourages people to work together and suggests ways to make it fairer (including sharing the cost). Schools pay a fee to register with the site enabling prospective car sharers to register their details and the database matches similar journeys. It is then up to the parents to make the arrangements, complete any checks and decide whether or not to proceed with the car share.

4.6 Promoting Sustainable Travel in Schools

- 4.6.1 Schools are encouraged to promote sustainable travel through National Curriculum subjects, with 'sustainable living' being a theme running through all Key Stages. Four subjects have specific statutory requirements for teaching about sustainability:
- **Science:** Energy resources and the difference between renewable and non-renewable resources;
 - **Geography:** Understanding issues relating to the environment and the consequences of traffic volume;
 - **Citizenship:** The effect of personal travel choices upon the environment and developing transport policies that reflect the needs of communities;
 - **Design and Technology:** Evaluating the effectiveness of designs and how things are made.
- 4.6.2 There are also examples of schools promoting the theme of sustainable travel through carrying out projects in other subjects. This is often done as part of raising awareness in a 'walk to school week' or similar event, designed specifically by the school.

4.7 Other Effective Measures

School Champions

- 4.7.1 The importance of having 'champions' in schools to help drive forward change was identified not only from DfT guidance, but also by a number of witnesses and organisations that members spoke to in the course of the review.



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- 4.7.2 The enthusiastic commitment of a single teacher, governor or parent can often carry the effective implementation of a School Travel Plan. It is a critical part of getting local ownership. Many aspects of the plans are long-term and involve a change in attitude amongst pupils and parents. The continued drive and motivation of an individual can be the difference between whether or not the plan achieves its desired outcomes.

Staggering School Hours

- 4.7.3 Staggering the start and finish times of schools can alleviate pressures on local transport and ease congestion on nearby roads. It can also make it safer for pupils to walk or cycle to school. In areas where school buses are provided, it can cut costs by allowing the same number of buses to provide the service to more pupils.
- 4.7.4 Within the planning process where schools are close to other schools, they are encouraged to have joint travel plans. This enables them to work together and in the same direction in what they are trying to achieve. There are also limitations to what can work with staggering school times. Some parents may not be in favour because they have children at different schools.

Support from Local Businesses

- 4.7.5 Some local authorities have also started to work with local businesses when implementing their School Travel Plans. This can prove beneficial to the business by reducing congestion and improving their image in the eyes of the local community.
- 4.7.6 A common example of this involves businesses with car parks close to schools. Obtaining agreement from the businesses for parents to park on their car parks can often reduce congestion in the immediate vicinity of the school. Additionally, there may be certain ways of improving access that can be agreed. This can have benefits for the businesses also, in that parents collecting pupils from school may combine this with spending money in the business.
- 4.7.7 Some local authorities have also obtained sponsorship from local businesses for measures in STPs. This can provide a small but important source of additional funding.



5 Travelling to School in Birmingham

5.1 Patterns of Pupil Travel

- 5.1.1 Modes of travel to school are part of daily behaviour. One of the fundamental elements of the Council's approach to planning for school travel is to understand the characteristics and nature of this behaviour. This is done through pupil surveys.
- 5.1.2 Pupil surveys are conducted electronically through the Young Transnet website. Pupils are asked how they (i) travel to school and (ii) how they would like to travel to school. The responses indicate that
- Primary school children mostly walk to school (54%), with the car (40%) being a clear second choice;
 - Primary school children mostly travel less than 1 km (54%), with 80% travelling less than 2 km;
 - Secondary school children mostly walk to school (34%), with the bus (27%) and car (26%) being the main alternative choices;
 - Secondary school children most commonly travel 2 km to school, although 36% travel more than 3km.
- 5.1.3 It is also important to recognise that increasing use of cars is part of a national trend: total road traffic has grown by 70% in the last 20 years⁷. There are however further variations within this between schools:
- Denominational schools can have pupils travelling greater distances, with consequent effects upon their parents' choice of mode of travel;
 - The availability of public transport affects choice: secondary schools accessible through main bus corridors can expect to have significant proportions of pupils travelling by bus;
 - There are differences between schools in inner and outer urban areas.

⁷ Penny Jones, Divisional Manager with responsibility for the School Transport Bill, DfES at "School Travel Planning: How Can Local Authorities Provide a Realistic Alternative to Car Usage" Westminster Briefing, 21st June 2005.



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- 5.1.4 Where parents take their children to school, there is a key difference between primary and secondary schools in how they are dropped off. With a primary school there is a greater tendency for parents to stay to see the child to a point where they are safe. This means that if they travel by car, the car will be parked longer. In a secondary school, parents generally drop the children off and go straight away.
- 5.1.5 There are, in addition, differences in the problems faced by inner and outer city schools: road safety tends to be a bigger issue in the former. There is also less modal shift to be achieved in inner-city areas as greater numbers of pupils walk to school already.

5.2 Case Studies in Birmingham

- 5.2.1 DfT guidance provides a number of illustrations of how particular best practice actions have been implemented in schools around the country. Looking at two case studies where School Travel Plans have been implemented in Birmingham schools provides a helpful illustration of the local picture. These two examples illustrate the great variations that exist between schools. This degree of variation is no more apparent than in a city the size of Birmingham.
- 5.2.2 The examples also serve to demonstrate the detail of the approach that is taken through the School Travel Planning process. The nature of the problems that the process is seeking to address is of great complexity. By tackling them on a micro-level, some highly practical solutions can be developed, with a consequently higher level of local buy-in.

5.3 St Francis' School, Bournville

- 5.3.1 St. Francis' is a voluntary-aided Church of England primary school and nursery, with pupils aged from three to eleven years. There are nearly 250 pupils, 98% of whom live within three kilometres (nearly two miles) of the school.
- 5.3.2 The school is located in a residential cul-de-sac in Bournville. Traffic in the vicinity is highly concentrated at the start and end of the school day and many parents drove their children to school before the travel plan was introduced.
- 5.3.3 Conditions were assessed as being good for walking and cycling, with 72% of children living within easy walking distance (although only 40% actually walked to school).
- 5.3.4 Measures introduced as a result of the School Travel Plan and Safer Routes to School include:
- A walking bus, with support from the Road Safety team;



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- Widening the pedestrian access through the side gate and path;
- Introduction of a crossing point at Heath Road (a slightly raised coloured strip, soon to be upgraded to a zebra crossing);
- Closing the gates of the school to parents' vehicles, making the area safer for children to walk and cycle.

5.3.5 The key learning points from the experience at St. Francis' are:

- A re-survey shows an increase in the number of children walking all or part of the way to school (41% to 58%) since the School Travel Plan was introduced;
- Numbers of children using the walking buses vary from day to day. A number of parents walk their own children across the common, using the car park at Rowheath. There is no shortage of parent volunteers for the walking bus;
- There is a continual need to monitor and promote walking buses. St Francis was the first school in Birmingham to undertake a walking bus scheme, which initially failed. The re-launch was successful, although numbers have dwindled again;
- The most successful way of getting parents to change travel behaviour is to convince the children – 'pester power';
- However, some parents still drive into the cul-de-sac and drop children off outside the gates, turning in the road to exit;
- Consultation has been important. With some persuasion at first, most parents were supportive of the closing of the school gates to traffic. There have also been residents' meetings in summer 2003 and summer 2004.



Making cycling a practical alternative: Modern, open cycle storage introduced at Four Dwellings Primary School, Quinton.



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5.4 Wyndcliffe School, Small Heath

- 5.4.1 Wyndcliffe Primary School is a state primary school in an urban area. There are around 750 pupils and most live within one kilometre (less than a mile) of the school. The school is on two sites on a cul-de-sac, meaning car drivers must turn around at the end of the road to get out. The traffic in the area around the school is very busy.
- 5.4.2 Conditions for pupils walking and cycling to school were assessed as being poor. There is a bus stop within 300 metres of the school. Prior to implementing the plan, 66% of pupils walked to school and 30% came by car. However, 35% expressed a preference to cycle to school.
- 5.4.3 Measures introduced as a result of the School Travel Plan and Safer Routes to School include:
- Setting up a breakfast club, sponsored by Greggs;
 - Purchasing a cycle store with funds from the School Travel Plan;
 - Providing cycle training, although as a non-capital project, funding wasn't available for this. Street wardens and Push Bikes members were involved in providing the training;
 - Pedestrian training was also provided for both children and parents;
 - A *Walking to School* incentive scheme (involving collecting stamps in a 'passport', resulting in a prize after 30 stamps) was introduced just after Easter 2005 and has proven very popular with 80% take up.
- 5.4.4 The key learning points from the experience at Wyndcliffe are:
- The school received a lot of support with the School Travel Plan as Wyndcliffe was one of the first schools in Birmingham to implement one. Officers in Transportation Strategy were able to learn from this experience;
 - Cycling to school has subsequently increased *from zero* to approximately 15 pupils a day. Children must have completed the training, and parents must accompany them at first. Local Small Heath Street Wardens helped to train the children and offered ways to keep bikes safe and secure;
 - Congestion is less of a problem in the morning as children arrive over a longer period of time, particularly as a result of the breakfast club;
 - More publicity for parents would help to persuade more to walk to school – although children are the best means of encouraging parents.



6 Conclusions and Recommendations

6.1 Are we doing enough?

- 6.1.1 In many respects, when looking at subjects in isolation the answer to this question will often be "No". The City Council has an extremely diverse range of responsibilities. How the Council responds to any one of the issues within those responsibilities is a matter of the priority afforded to that issue. Whether the Council is doing enough was a key question for this review.
- 6.1.2 There are a few realities to be observed here. The Council could always spend more money on activities such as promoting walking, cycling or bus use (either generally as a mode of travel or in relation to travelling to school). Getting the most return for the money that we spend as a City Council is essential. Sometimes, however altruistic and positive the goal that we are trying to attain, the cost of getting there outweighs the benefits in comparison to spending that money on something else.
- 6.1.3 Members have, through previous Scrutiny Reviews, expressed concern about the effectiveness of the promotion of public transport. These are not issues that can be readily solved overnight. We have to accept the scale and complexity of the issues relating to travelling to school. It is very much the case that broad, overall actions result in a 'scattergun' approach and a lot of wasted effort (and potentially money).

6.2 Localised Problems, Local Solutions

- 6.2.1 There are very few blanket solutions to any issues within Birmingham, which is why we hear the phrase 'one size doesn't fit all' so often. With such a complex and locally variable issue as how people choose to travel to school a flexible approach is needed.



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- 6.2.2 The STP process provides this. It encourages schools to be engaged in identifying the exact nature of the problems they face and developing solutions that are clearly related solving them. DfT targets are for all schools to have a School Travel Plan by 2010/11. Within Birmingham the Council has made a significant start upon this with nearly a third of schools having a plan in place.
- 6.2.3 However, the way in which the STP process has been introduced by the Government has been as a 'project' rather than as a core part of transportation strategy and planning. This approach to funding is very much focused on the short term and this creates uncertainty.

Conclusions

1. *Due to the great number of variations, the individuality of schools and the degree of grass-roots buy-in required to make solutions successful, the School Travel Planning process offers the best approach to addressing travel problems relating to schools.*
2. *The current approach to funding school travel planning is short term. Should Government funding cease from March 2008 the Council will be left with insufficient capacity to continue this work into the future and achieve the 2010/11 target of travel plans for all schools.*
3. *Irrespective of Government's means of funding, we feel that this activity is part of the ongoing work of Transportation Strategy, not a 'project' with limited duration.*
4. *The Government may indeed acknowledge this. However, in reality, any request for additional mainstream funding is likely to be met with a requirement to meet it through existing resources which would mean reducing time spent on other activities.*

	Recommendation	Responsibility	Completion Date
R1	Central Government should be lobbied to continue revenue funding for School Travel Advisors through mainstream funding.	Cabinet Member for Transportation and Street Services	1 April 2006
R2	Irrespective of Government proposals for extending temporary funding for School Travel Advisors beyond 2008, a plan should be written and considered for integrating School Travel Advisors into the core staffing of the City Council.	Cabinet Member for Transportation and Street Services	31 January 2006

The results of the consideration of any plan should be reported to the Committee and should cover how:

- The natural synergy that exists between school travel planning and advice and promoting sustainable and safe travel can be maximised;
- Commitments for existing School Travel Plans will be maintained; and
- School Travel Plans will continue to be extended to schools across the city.



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	Recommendation	Responsibility	Completion Date
R3	Commencing in May 2006, there should be an annual report to this Committee, demonstrating: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Progress towards the Government target of all schools in the city having a School Travel Plan by 2010/11; and • Whether surveys of schools after introducing travel plans show any shifts in the mode of travel. 	Cabinet Member for Transportation and Street Services	31 May 2006
R4	Members should receive regular information on School Travel Plans and Safer Routes to School schemes within their wards, along with how they can obtain more detailed information should they require it.	Cabinet Member for Transportation and Street Services	31 January 2006

6.3 Promoting Sustainable Travel

- 6.3.1 It is important that the Council continues to support and promote initiatives to increase use of sustainable modes of transport, both as a general part of transport policy, but also particularly in relation to travelling to school.
- 6.3.2 The benefits of encouraging sustainable modes of transport among school children are that it increases the likelihood that they will continue them into later life. This also provides an opportunity to try to change the habits of parents through 'pester power'.
- 6.3.3 STPs allow sustainable travel to be promoted locally, targeting sustainable modes that people say that they would prefer to use. However, the Council also has a general role in promoting the use of sustainable means.
- 6.3.4 The reality of this is that promoting sustainable modes of travel on a widespread basis is likely to require significant input in time and resources from the Council in order to have an impact.

Conclusions

5. *We saw evidence of the importance of rigorous appraisal that the City Council is getting value for money from its promotional activities. Establishing a clear link between promotional spend and increased participation is essential.*

	Recommendation	Responsibility	Completion Date
R5	The Council should continue to seek value for money in supporting promotional activity for sustainable modes of transportation. The Cabinet Member is requested to provide examples to the Committee in the future of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How promotional activity has resulted in changes to modes of travel by school children; and • Where it has been decided that promotional 	Cabinet Member for Transportation and Street Services	30 September 2006



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Recommendation	Responsibility	Completion Date
activity does not represent value for money.		

6.4 Encouraging Bus Use

- 6.4.1 Through its other work, the Committee has observed that bus travel in the West Midlands is generally in decline, with a high degree of transfer to rail and light rail. It is important that an objective of public transport policy is that this decline is not only arrested, but ultimately reversed.
- 6.4.2 A peripheral issue cited by bus users is the disinclination to use the bus at school times because of the behaviour of school pupils. TWM has a robust programme in place to tackle this through Operation Safer Travel. Continuing to apply this is the key.
- 6.4.3 There are (as can be seen from the best practice shared by the DfT) many different tools and approaches that local authorities can use to try to achieve a shift in how people travel to school. With any list of best practice solutions it is often the case that some solutions appear attractive initially. However, on further examination some of these are not felt to be helpful in our particular circumstances.
- 6.4.4 One issue that has been suggested in the past is to have yellow school buses, similar to those used in the USA. Such schemes have been introduced elsewhere in the UK, but they are felt to be of marginal use in the Birmingham area. Where they have worked successfully in the UK it has been in rural areas, where public transport provision is less than it is within the West Midlands area.
- 6.4.5 Another option considered by members was the feasibility of offering pupils in Birmingham schools free bus / train travel to school (with subsidised travel for parents of under 11s accompanying them to school). This would be aimed at making the use of public transport directly more attractive than the car by being considerably cheaper.
- 6.4.6 Opinion amongst members was however divided as to whether this would result in wholly positive effects. One possible consequence might be that it would encourage pupils to travel further to school.

Conclusions

- 6. *The approach of Travel West Midlands of working with individual schools where there are problems with pupil behaviour is positive and fits well with the individually-tailored approach of STPs.*
- 7. *The wider management of issues relating community safety – including tackling visible signs of deprivation – is an important factor in encouraging people to walk, cycle and take the bus. The issue is wider than simply influencing how people travel to school, but important to note here.*



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8. *Whilst some bus users cite the behaviour of children as a reason for not wishing to use the bus at 'school times', it is unlikely that this has a significant impact upon the number of people using the bus overall. The decline is due to wider reasons.*
9. *The nature of the bus service environment in Birmingham, with its regular commercial services on key routes is unlikely to prove conducive to the US-style 'yellow bus' service being considered in other parts of the UK. However, there may be areas on the edges of the city where this option may work.*

	Recommendation	Responsibility	Completion Date
R6	The exploration of the potential for using dedicated bus services for a particular school(s) in the city should be considered as part of the ongoing development of School Travel Plans. Specific details of modal shift towards bus use in these schools should be reported to the Committee as part of the annual report on progress (R3).	Cabinet Member for Transportation and Street Services	31 March 2006

6.5 Progress on Implementation

- 6.5.1 The Cabinet Member is requested to report on progress to the Committee as part of the general process of tracking recommendations.

	Recommendation	Responsibility	Completion Date
R7	Progress towards achieving these recommendations should be reported to the Transportation and Street Services Overview and Scrutiny Committee no later than its October 2006 meeting. Subsequent reports on progress will be scheduled by the Committee on a regular basis thereafter until all are completed.	Cabinet Member for Transportation and Street Services	31 October 2006



Appendix 1 Case Study Examples

Case Study: Menzies High School, Sandwell MBC

In trying to solve the traffic problems outside Menzies High School, Sandwell Metropolitan Borough Council used a 'planning for real' exercise to make sure they implemented the most appropriate design.

The children were treated as stakeholders in the scheme and were asked to write an essay on how they get to school. They drew maps of their route to school, showing any hazards and suggesting solutions. A fieldwork exercise followed where vehicles were surveyed and recorded and safety problems identified and photographed. The children then wrote reports based on their results and these were examined by SMBC when designing the traffic calming measures. The measures introduced have led to a more organised system for dropping off by car and less conflict between various forms of transport.

Case Study: Leicester City Council

Leicester City Council has used specially designed paving slabs to show the preferred route for children walking to school. Each school's markers are in different colours and designs include dinosaur footprints, stars and lightening flashes. They show safe places to cross the road and at each junction the paving slabs are marked 'ready', 'steady', 'stop'. This, and a variety of other measures, has made parents feel that it is safer for children to walk to school and there has been a reduction in the number of recorded accidents.

Case Study: Nottingham Emmanuel School

To encourage more pupils to cycle to school, Nottingham Emmanuel School worked in partnership with local authorities to improve the nearby cycle paths. A roundabout on one of the main routes to school was remodelled so that cyclists have two lanes while cars have one. Prominent signs have also been installed warning motorists of the cycle routes.

At the same school, parents who bring their children to school by car are not allowed on the school site at the start or end of the day. Instead, they must drop them off at one of the three 'drop and go' sites around half a mile from the school, from which the children walk.

Case Study: Huntingdon School, York

At Huntingdon School, the pupils' views prompted a refurbishment of the cycle sheds. Sustrans helped pay for a local sculptor to design an attractive shed. The school used the project as a teaching resource, giving slide presentations to arts students to explain the aims of the project and the artist's work. The refurbishment cost £15,000 which was partly funded by the school and the city council. Two hundred cyclists now cycle to school each day, an increase of twenty per cent.

Case Study: Temple Moor High School, Leeds

Temple Moor High School in Leeds runs an intensive programme of on-road cycling training for its pupils. In addition, the school has devised a cycle permit scheme whereby pupils can only cycle to school if:

- Their bikes are in a roadworthy condition;
- They ride sensibly and follow the highway code;
- They take approved cycle training, where available;
- They lock their bikes securely in the approved parking area using D-type locks;
- They do not ride them at school except for the journey.

Parents are asked for signed consent and informed that they are responsible for insuring their children's bikes. This ensures that parents, and pupils, are aware of the liability and insurance issues associated with pupils cycling to school.



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Case Study: Burnholme Community College

Students at Burnholme Community College also need a cycle permit if they want to use the purpose built secure cycle shed at the school. One of the conditions of receiving the permit is that the bikes must be roadworthy. At the beginning of each year, children from years 8 and 9 carry out the bike MOT under staff supervision. The brakes, tyres, steering, chain wear are checked and the saddle and wheels are tested to make sure they are secure. The school also has a workshop area for pupils who want to carry out running repairs or fix punctures.

Case Study: Woodford Halse Church of England Primary School, Northamptonshire

This school has 14 pupils who use the cycle train on a regular basis. A team of parent volunteers co-ordinates the service and it has received some sponsorship from local businesses.

Case Study: Buckinghamshire County Council

Buckinghamshire County Council won the International Walk to School Award for its 'Go for Gold' Scheme. This scheme was designed to:

- Encourage pupils and parents to walk to school;
- Reduce car trips;
- Reduce congestion;
- Reduce pollution;
- Promote healthier lifestyles.

Each participating school (there are now over 70) has a designated exclusion zone around it, according to its location and age of pupils. Pupils who have walked to school from outside the zone receive stickers which can be exchanged for small rewards such as free swimming sessions. Over a three-year period, many Buckinghamshire schools have experienced a sustained shift from car travel to walking.

Example: Worcestershire County Council

In Worcestershire, the £2 million spent on supporting socially necessary bus services is now combined with the home to school transport budget of £8 million and the social service transport budget of £3 million. This takes advantage of natural synergies between these activities.

Case Study: Sandringham School, St Albans

This school has developed a Safer Routes to School module as an optional course for Year 9 pupils. The course covers topics such as 'how to influence public attitudes' and health and road safety issues. As well as helping the pupils to develop excellent graphical presentation skills, teachers have commented that it has been a very good way of spreading the word and influencing travel habits amongst pupils.

Case Study: Kesgrave High School

Kesgrave High School promotes cycling and walking with careful timetable planning. Lessons have been made longer and fewer subjects are covered each day to minimise the weight of books and other equipment pupils must bring into school.