

## Environment Select Committee

06 September 2018



### Surrey Transport Plan Low Emissions Transport Strategy and Associated Developer Guidance

**Purpose of report:** To inform, update and involve Members in the development of the Surrey Transport Plan, in particular in relation to reducing air pollution and carbon emissions from transport and facilitating sustainable transport options.

#### Introduction

1. This paper outlines the updates to the air quality and carbon emissions reduction strands of the Surrey Transport Plan and proposed supplementary advice documents on car clubs and travel planning for new developments.

#### Low Emissions Transport Strategy

2. Generally air quality in Surrey is relatively good, compared to large urban conurbations. However, in some areas, monitoring has identified that the average annual level of certain pollutants (primarily Nitrogen Dioxide (NO<sub>2</sub>)) is higher than the Government's National Objective. Transport is the prime factor for all of Surrey's declared air pollution areas. Furthermore, vehicle fuel efficiency has significantly improved in recent years, but overall carbon emissions from transport have only decreased slightly because overall mileage has increased.
3. To ensure the Surrey Transport Plan (STP) is kept up to date, the council has produced a 'Low Emissions Transport strategy' (LETs) (Annex A) which takes account of transport innovations and government policy changes. It rationalises the previously separate climate change and air quality strategies. The aim of the LETs is to reduce harmful emissions from road transport across the county and work with partners to achieve legal compliance for air quality locally.
4. The LETs (Annex A) sets out the council's approach to reducing emissions, covering challenges and opportunities (Chapter 2), key themes for activity (Chapter 3), ongoing and future delivery areas and funding (Chapter 4) and indicators for monitoring progress (Chapter 5).

#### Key themes of opportunities

5. Key themes of activity (Chapter 3) have been developed<sup>1</sup>. These reflect the council's statutory obligations and the most effective areas of influence:
  - i. Transport networks and infrastructure, including:

<sup>1</sup> The structure of policy themes has been revised since the publishing of the strategy for public consultation. The final strategy will be updated along with revisions following feedback.

- a. capital schemes in support of modal shift to walking, cycling and public transport
  - b. installation/facilitation of electric vehicle charge points
  - c. energy efficiency of streetlights for reduced carbon emissions.
- ii. Local and Strategic Planning activities, including:
    - a. Advice to Local Planning Authorities on transport impacts of new developments
    - b. Strategic planning for example supporting boroughs and districts with transport modelling for Local Plans and working collaboratively on cross-boundary projects such as Heathrow expansion;
- iii. Travel behaviour change, including:
    - a. Road safety and active travel promotion
    - b. Car clubs
    - c. Community campaigns, for example TravelSMART (funded between 2012 and 2016)
    - d. Raising public awareness to influence behaviour of vulnerable people at times of peak air pollution
- iv. Council's own operations, including:
    - a. emissions reduction via council fleet procurement
    - b. staff business travel modes and mileage

### **Action by the council**

- 6. Ongoing activity led by the county council in support of emissions reduction includes:
  - a) Development of Local transport strategies for each borough and district and delivery of major schemes including walking, cycling, bus corridor improvements and connectivity with rail.
  - b) Road safety and active travel team support for school travel planning focusing on walking/scooting and cycling including Bikeability and current delivery of the Surrey Schools Air Quality programme, funded by Defra, in schools in or near Air Quality Management Areas (AQMAs).
  - c) Transport Studies team traffic modelling support to Guildford Borough Council, to address Defra's identification of air quality non-compliance on the A331 (Blackwater Valley relief road).
  - d) SCC's staff travel plan, energy efficiency in council buildings and embedding environmental considerations across the council's major projects.
  - e) Development related travel plans for new developments including workplaces, housing developments and other institutions (see Travel Plan Good Practice Guide at Annex B).
  - f) Engagement with Heathrow Airport Ltd to influence masterplan design and secure conditions to mitigate emissions impacts on residents.
  - g) Expanding the car club network providing easy access car hire instead of owning a private car particularly linked to high density development in urban centres (see Car club guidance at Annex C).
  - h) Highways Asset management: street lighting energy management has reduced consumption and associated carbon emissions and there are further opportunities, subject to capital investment, with LED lighting.

- i) Surrey Rail strategy identifies potential interventions that SCC and partners can either develop directly or can support third parties to develop to ensure that rail in Surrey supports environmental and economic objectives for the County, in the context of population growth.
  - j) Electric buses at Guildford Park and Ride – funding is in place for the extra cost of replacing Park and Ride buses with electric buses in Guildford.
  - k) Electric vehicle charging infrastructure – the council has installed 12 charge points across its estate for staff use and on-highway for three electric car club vehicles<sup>2</sup>.
7. Furthermore, the council is part of the Surrey Air Alliance. This is a working group of borough /district Environmental Health Officers and county council officers for transport and public health. The focus is on improving data to inform the evidence base and to take collaborative action to improve air quality locally and in most cases there will be simultaneous benefits to carbon emissions reduction.

### **Indicators for monitoring**

8. Finally, a feasible and meaningful range of indicators (Chapter 5) are proposed to monitor the impact of the strategy including the number of AQMAs, health impacts of air quality (informed by new modelling) and levels of carbon emissions from road transport.

### **Supporting guidance documents**

9. Alongside the Low Emissions Transport strategy, two guidance documents are presented to the Committee:
- i. The Travel Plan Good Practice Guide (Annex B) is to ensure that sustainable transport is incorporated into the planning process for large developments and is promoted to site users.
  - ii. The ‘Car Club Guide’ (Annex C) is to facilitate the efficient expansion of car clubs, focusing on supporting the sustainability and feasibility of town centre high density and mixed use development.

<b>Travel Plan Good Practice Guide</b>
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10. The Travel Plan Good Practice Guide replaces previous guidance produced in 2010 and is intended for use by developers, their agents and their consultants. The document has been updated to reflect current planning policies at both local and national level, and sets out what SCC requires from development-related travel plans.
11. The guide describes travel plans in relation to the planning process, including thresholds above which travel plans are required, details of how they are secured and the information they should contain.
12. Since travel plan progress must be measured to ensure compliance with planning approval, the guide also describes how developers will need to undertake

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<sup>2</sup> A strategy for the future expansion of the network and potential for council procurement of Electric vehicles is presented alongside this paper.

monitoring and submit reports and the amount of travel plan audit fees developers will be expected to pay. To help developers produce effective travel plans, examples of on-site measures have been included, and a reminder checklist has been included to facilitate the travel plan procedure for developers. Examples of travel survey questionnaires have also been included.

#### **Car Club Guidance**

13. The Car Club Guidance (Annex C) is for use by developers and their transport consultants in considering setting up a car club as part of a new development. It will also be used by Transport Development Planning Officers and Local Authority Planning Officers in assessing the viability of a car club as a transport mitigation measure.
14. The guidance outlines the key benefits of car clubs to developers, residents and local communities, and sets out the factors that influence the potential for a car club to be successful in a new location.
15. The guidance explains how a network of car club cars is being developed in Surrey. It sets out how car clubs are secured and delivered through the planning process, the likely number of car club cars required and the estimated costs to the developer. It advises on best practice for car club parking, low emission vehicles and monitoring use.

#### **Financial Implications**

16. There are costs associated with the health impacts of poor air quality and the mitigation measures to reduce emissions. The county council's approach to investment in transport infrastructure and projects takes an integrated approach, considering environment, economic and health aspects and there is no funding specifically allocated to air quality improvement or carbon emission reduction on a stand-alone basis. Air quality and carbon impact must be a key strand, given sufficient weight, in funding prioritisation processes.
17. Officers will seek to ensure that any proposed investment cases developed in response to the LETs are financially sustainable for the council. In many cases there are positive cases for investment in cleaner technology if a longer term perspective can be adopted.
18. Car club expansion is on a financially sustainable basis, through the rigorous application of criteria to determine appropriate expansion sites and the procurement of a best value supplier, most recently for the period 2015 to 2019, to operate the car club in partnership with the council.
19. The council seeks to secure an auditing fee from developers in support of post-occupation monitoring of the implementation of travel plans. This contributes towards an officer post to advise developers, consultants and occupiers and to monitor implementation of the plan. The scale of fees ranges from £4,600 to £6,150 per site and threshold criteria based on scale and type of development are applied.

#### **Health and Environmental Implications**

20. Surrey residents are impacted by air pollution, with poor air quality contributing to cardiovascular disease, respiratory illness and lung cancer. Climate change has wide ranging impacts on health and the environment ranging from increased flood risk in Surrey to affecting food supply stability, natural hazard risks and more, across the world. At the same time, active travel modes support health and wellbeing by increasing physical activity in an affordable and potentially habitual way.
21. Reducing emissions from vehicles, via a combination of vehicle technology and behaviour change towards reduced car driving and increased active travel, could significantly improve health.

## Consultation

22. Appropriate consultation has been undertaken across all three documents presented in this report:

### **Low Emissions Transport Strategy**

23. The Low Emissions Transport Strategy consultation has been undertaken in line with statutory requirements and initial feedback is being analysed.
24. A 12 week public consultation period from 4 June to 26 August 2018 is running in parallel with the Electric Vehicle Strategy consultation. Publicity has included:
  - A dedicated public web page and Surrey Says platform
  - Emails alerts
  - Social media posts (Twitter and Facebook)
  - Posters in libraries
  - Article in Surrey Matters
  - Adverts on external SCC website and intranet
25. A summary of feedback from the public consultation is attached as Annex D. The strategy will be amended as appropriate, ahead of submission to Cabinet in October.

### **Travel Plan Good Practice Guide**

26. Views have been sought on the Car Club Guidance strategy and the Travel Plan Good Practice Guide from a relevant group of stakeholders, including developers, transport consultants, the council's preferred car club operator and borough and district councils. Resulting amendments include clarification of planning and highway authority responsibilities, explanation of key transport terminology and further advice on the role of site Travel Plan Co-ordinator. Furthermore, a list of possible remedial measures to be implemented by developers or occupiers has been added.

### **Car Club Guidance**

27. The guidance has been developed in partnership with the council's preferred car club operator. Further consultation is being undertaken with boroughs and districts, developers and transport consultants. The guidance will be finalised as

appropriate, ahead of submission to Cabinet, to ensure it best meets the needs of stakeholders.

## Conclusions

28. Surrey faces a number of transport-related air pollution issues that impact on the health and wellbeing of residents locally and contribute to climate change. In bringing together the Climate Change Strategy and the Air Quality Strategy, we aim to address emissions-related pollution in a coordinated and strategic way. The strategy has been produced simultaneously with revised Car Club Guidance and Travel Plan Guidance, and the complementary Electric Vehicle Strategy. These documents update the Surrey Transport Plan and enable the council to take an informed approach to supporting clean economic growth and a healthy environment across Surrey.
29. This area of work is developing very quickly with increasing interest from both government and the public, and all documents will be kept under review and updated as and when needed.

## Recommendations

30. The Environment Select Committee is asked to:
  - i. note the content and policies presented in the draft Low Emissions Transport strategy, Travel Plan Good Practice Guide and draft Car Club Guide documents,
  - ii. make recommendations to Cabinet, regarding the proposed strategy and guidance documents.

## Next steps

The comments received during the public consultation and feedback from the Select Committee will be reviewed and used to develop a final version of the Low Emissions Transport Strategy to be submitted to the Surrey County Council Cabinet in October 2018.

Following formal approval, the Low Emissions Transport Strategy will be adopted as part of the Surrey Transport Plan.

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### Sources/background papers:

Annex A: Low Emissions Transport Strategy (Draft for public consultation)

Annex B: Travel Plan Good Practice Guide

Annex C: Car clubs guidance



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