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**Meeting:** Sustainable Communities Overview and Scrutiny Committee

**Date:** 16 November 2010

**Subject:** Central Bedfordshire LTP Sustainable Modes of Travel to Schools and Colleges: A Strategy for Central Bedfordshire (SMoTS)

**Report of:** Cllr Nicols, Portfolio Holder for Sustainable Development

**Summary:** The report summarises the content of the Central Bedfordshire's Sustainable Modes of Travel to Schools and Colleges Strategy which will form part of the third Local Transport Plan for Central Bedfordshire.

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**Advising Officer:** Gary Alderson, Director of Sustainable Communities

**Contact Officer:** Nick Shaw, Sustainable Transport Officer (Young People)

**Public/Exempt:** Public

**Wards Affected:** All

**Function of:** Council

## CORPORATE IMPLICATIONS

### Council Priorities:

The Sustainable Modes of Travel to Schools and Colleges Strategy (SMoTS) and the Local Transport Plan (LTP), of which it is part, will help contribute towards the creation of sustainable communities and the effective management of needed growth across the authority, as part of the development of Central Bedfordshire as an economic powerhouse. This will be achieved by providing the capacity to accommodate an increase in travel demand through the creation of more efficient use of transport networks and the provision, promotion and education about alternatives to car travel for journeys to schools.

### Financial:

Will help inform the allocation of the Integrated Transport Budget received through the Local Transport Plan process.

### Legal:

The LTP is a statutory document which the authority is legally required to produce.

### Risk Management:

No direct implications

**Staffing (including Trades Unions):**

No direct implications

**Equalities/Human Rights:**

An Equalities Impact Assessment is being produced for the LTP, of which the SMoTS will form part.

**Community Safety:**

The SMoTS seeks to reduce the impact of car based trips for the school run on local communities including the number of road traffic accidents.

**Sustainability:**

The Strategy seeks to encourage more sustainable forms of travel for journeys and reduce the number of car journeys to, from and between schools.

**RECOMMENDATION:**

- 1. That the Sustainable Communities Overview and Scrutiny Committee endorse the objectives, methods of intervention and proposed policies of the SMoTS as part of the wider Local Transport Plan and provide comments to inform the final draft.**

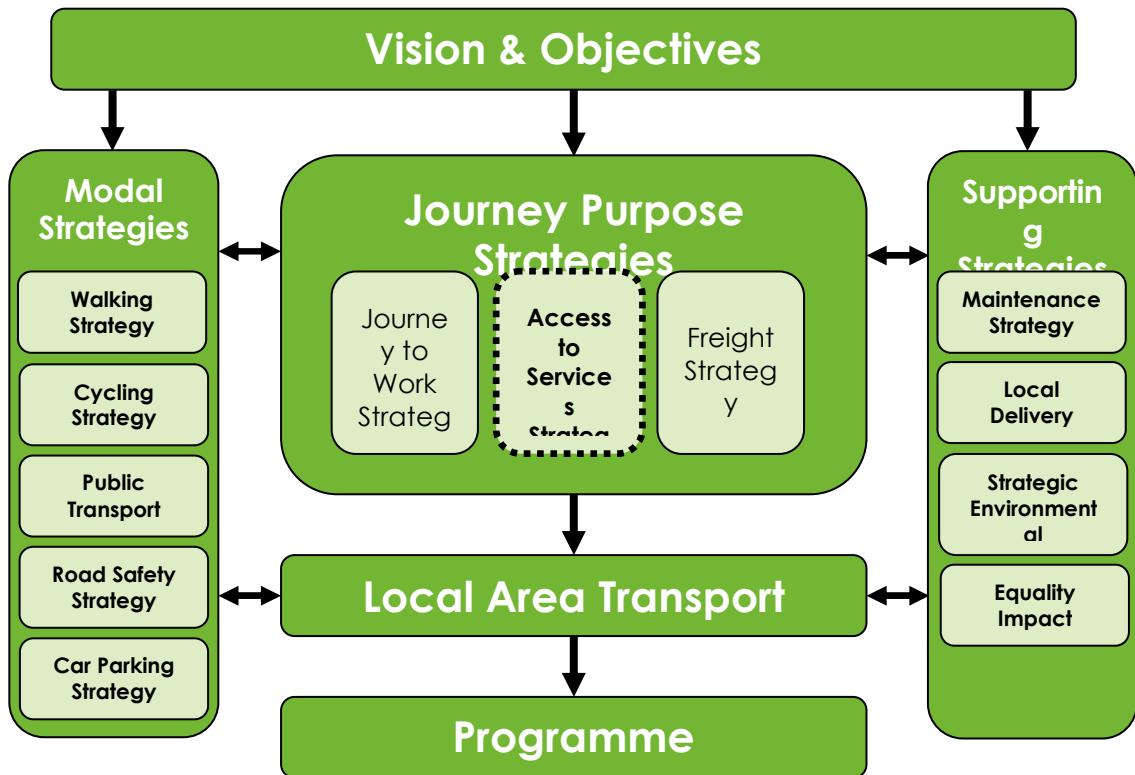
**Background**

1. This Report focuses on access to Schools and Colleges which forms part of the Access to Services element of the Local Transport Plan. The document forms a strategic approach to the management of issues relating to school journey trips across the authority and provides a framework for the identification of site specific measures through the Local Area Transport Plans, which in effect will form the implementation plans for the LTP.

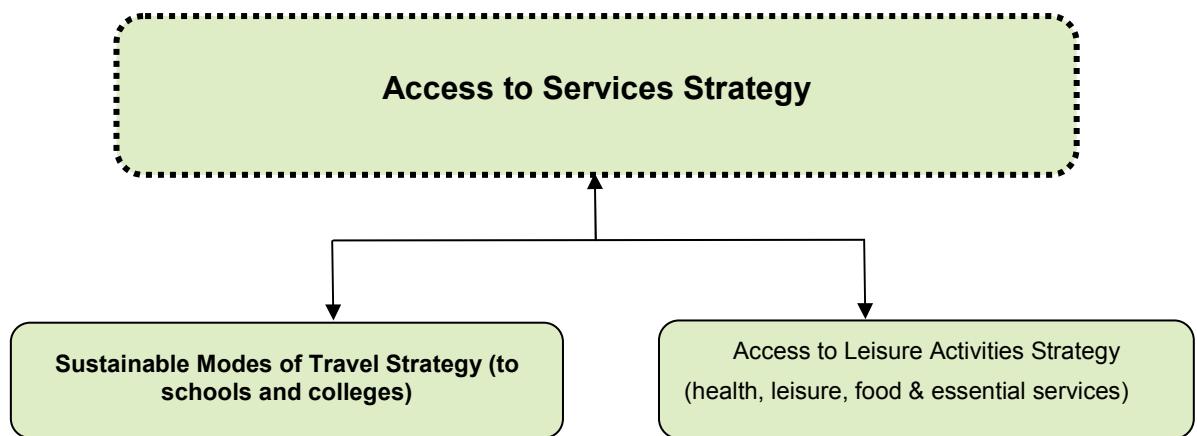
**Sustainable Modes of Travel to Schools and Colleges: A Strategy for Central Bedfordshire****2. Overview**

The SMoTS forms part of the 'Access to Services Strategy' within the LTP as highlighted in Figure 1, below.

**Figure 1. Structure of the Local transport Plan**



**Figure 2: Composition of the Access to Services Strategy**



### **3. Role of the Sustainable Modes of Travel to Schools and Colleges Strategy (SMoTS)**

The SMoTS provides a strategic approach to managing journeys to schools in the context of evolving national and local transport objectives, and wider priorities of the authority.

It forms a framework for the identification of specific interventions within the Local Area Transport Plans through which Council priorities may be achieved.

A summary of the objectives of the SMoTS and the areas of intervention to achieve these objectives, and more specific policy approaches to managing commuting trips in Central Bedfordshire is set out below.

A copy of the Consultation Draft of SMoTS, which forms the evidence base to the identification of key commuting issues, is included at **Appendix A**.

### **4. The proposed objectives of the SMoTS are to:-**

1. **Headline Objective: Increase the number of pupils travelling to schools and colleges using sustainable modes of transport.**
2. To promote sustainable modes and routes to schools and colleges
3. Improve the quality of the walking and cycling environment
4. Improve passenger transport services to, from and between educational establishments
5. Improve the safety and perceived safety of walking, cycling, car sharing and travelling by bus
6. Increase awareness of the benefits of active travel modes

### **5. Areas of Intervention:**

To achieve the objectives of the SMoTS, areas of intervention have been identified, which address both the demand and supply side of transport.

The demand side of transport focuses on reducing the need to travel particularly by car, whilst the supply side of transport refers to improving the travel options available to make specific trips on the network.

The broad areas of intervention in the SMoTS include:

1. The provision of improved infrastructure to form a comprehensive and coherent series of routes to educational establishments.
2. Training to increase confidence of parents pupils and staff.

3. Promotional activities to raise awareness of the benefits of sustainable transport options and increase the attractiveness of travelling by sustainable mode.

**6. In terms of infrastructure and service provision the strategy proposes to focus action through the following themes:**

1. **Organisation, Management & Development:** This will ensure the appropriate structures and management are in place to deliver the strategy and action plan. ‘Ownership’ of the strategy by all stakeholders will be important. Similarly, it will be important to ensure that good collaborative working is established across relevant initiatives and partnerships.
2. **Travel Plans and Accessibility:** This puts travel plans at the heart of the strategy and seeks ways of ensuring that they are truly live and active documents.
3. **Learning and Skills for Children and Families:** This seeks to build travel considerations into the wider educational agenda, and to ensure that the transport implications of the initiatives such as the 14-19 curriculum and extended services are identified. It also considers the requirements of children with special educational needs.
4. **Operational Quality, Efficiency and Safety:** This draws together a number of current initiatives and member-led aspirations to achieve improvements in safety, efficiencies in procedures and operations, and to promote sustainable travel behaviour.
5. **Information and Marketing:** This draws together measures to better allocate information and promote sustainable school travel. This includes an information hub.

These policy areas are in no particular priority order.

**7. The SMoTS proposes the following policies to be adopted on the basis of the objectives/action areas established within the Strategy:**

1. All schools and colleges to have an up-to-date travel plan in place
2. All new school developments and developments on school sites are accompanied by travel plans as a compulsory element and that these are enforced through the planning process
3. All new schools to be provided with appropriate facilities to facilitate safe dropping off for bus users
4. The implications of school closures and expansions on school travel and safety issues should be explicitly considered
5. All new school developments to be situated on roads with 20mph speed limits

6. All new school developments to have 'School Keep Clear' markings with appropriate Traffic Regulation Orders
7. All new school developments to have separate pedestrian and cycling entrances to the school site
8. All new school developments to have cycle parking facilities for pupils, staff and visitors in-line with CBC's Cycle Parking Guidance
9. All schools to have 20mph speed limits where appropriate
10. All school keep clear markings to have no stopping orders
11. Implementation of speed limits and SKC markings to be rolled out through the Safer Routes to School programme
12. All schools and colleges to develop their own cycling policy (School Cycling Policy guidance located in Appendix)

### **Conclusion and Next Steps**

8. The SMoTS once finalised, will be incorporated into the final version of the Local Transport Plan which will be considered by the Sustainable Communities Overview and Scrutiny Committee and Full Council in time for the adoption date of the Plan at the start of April 2011. This will give Members a further opportunity to review the content of the Strategy prior to approval.

### **Appendices:**

Appendix A – Sustainable Modes of Travel to Schools and Colleges: A Strategy for Central Bedfordshire – Consultation Draft (August 2010)

*[Attached separately]*

**Background Papers:** None

**Location of papers:** Priory House, Chicksands.