

**Report to the  
Transport for South Hampshire Joint Committee**

**Date:** 21 June 2010

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**Subject:** Transport for South Hampshire Reduce Strategy Independent Peer Review

**Purpose of the Report**

To outline the findings of the Independent Peer Review.

**Recommendations**

- 1. That the Joint Committee notes the Transport for South Hampshire Reduce Strategy Independent Peer Review.**
- 2. That the Joint Committee delegates authority to the Senior Management Board to modify the Reduce Strategy to take account of the Peer Review and consult with key stakeholders prior to formal adoption.**
- 3. That the Joint Committee authorises officers to seek appropriate funding sources to deliver the Reduce Strategy, as part of the overall Transport for South Hampshire Reduce – Manage – Invest strategy.**
- 4. That the Joint Committee authorises officers to work closely with Urban South Hampshire Local Planning Authorities to ensure that the Reduce Strategy is incorporated as appropriate into their Local Development Documents.**
- 5. That the Joint Committee agrees to develop a pilot Smarter Choices programme for delivery within the sub-region.**

**Introduction**

- 1. At the Joint Committee on the 30 September 2009, members considered a report on the Transport for South Hampshire Reduce Strategy. Members resolved to commission an independent specialist peer review.**

The objective of this piece of review was to provide validity to the Strategy and recommend any necessary changes.

2. In December 2009, Professor Phil Goodwin was appointed to undertake this review. He is a leading academic on the transport interventions proposed within the Reduce Strategy. A copy of his review is attached as Appendix 1. For reference, a copy of the summary of the Reduce Strategy considered by the Joint Committee in September 2009 is attached as Appendix 2.
3. The Peer Review generally supports the work undertaken to date in developing the Strategy and the Reduce Strategy and confirms that the South Hampshire sub-region would be suitable location for the application of such a strategy. It has considered in detail a number of important aspects of the Strategy and these are considered in more detail below. These predominantly focus on the Smarter Choices aspect of the Reduce Strategy, as this element has the greatest implications in terms of funding, resources and delivery.

#### **Funding and Resources**

4. The Peer Review has considered a number of aspects relating to funding for a Smarter Choices programme. These include:
  - (i) whether the proposed levels of funding would be adequate to deliver the levels of behavioural change assumed in the Strategy;
  - (ii) the sort of spending profile that should be applied to deliver the greatest level of success; and
  - (iii) staff resource implications.
5. The Reduce Strategy considered the cost of implementing a pilot project in Southampton (which in broad terms covers approximately one quarter of the South Hampshire population) at £1.6 million to £2.3 million per annum. Applying this across the sub-region would equate to an annual cost in the region of £6 million to £9 million. The Peer Review indicates that whilst this level of funding is slightly less than that applied in the three Sustainable Travel Towns and less than half that assumed in the 2004 Smarter Choices study, it would be possible to achieve the levels of behavioural change included in the 2004 study, if additional capital funding is provided through the Invest and Manage Strategy for supporting measures (eg cycle lanes, pedestrian facilities, bus service improvements etc) and investment in Reduce is towards the upper end of the range assumed (ie £9 million per annum).
6. Whilst the Peer Review has recommended a spending profile for the most effective delivery of the Reduce Strategy, over the 2011 to 2027

period, based on experiences from the. This starts at £5 million in year one increasing to incrementally to £15 million in Year three. It then remains at this higher level for five years, before reducing to a 40% maintenance level (£5 million-£6 million per annum).

7. The Peer Review also considers the overall staffing levels that would be required to deliver the Reduce Strategy, based on experiences from the Sustainable Travel Towns. It recommends that staff levels in the range of 30 to a maximum of 60 people would be needed during the most intensive part of the programme, declining to less than half of that in the maintenance period. Whilst this would not be a net increase, as the three constituent TfSH authorities already employ people to deliver many Reduce Strategy initiatives (eg travel planning), the Peer Review makes it clear that “recruitment or designation will need to be planned and organised with thought, not merely added as an afterthought to existing responsibilities”.

### **Reduced Funding Scenarios**

8. Whilst the increased levels of funding proposed for the Reduce Strategy are still relatively small percentage of the overall investment programme outlined in “Towards Delivery”, the current more challenging funding climate means that it may be difficult to secure the necessary levels of funding required to deliver a sub-regional wide Reduce Strategy programme. The Peer Review has considered a reduced funding scenario from two different angles:
  - (i) what is the relative merit of spending reduced levels of funding on Reduce, Manage and Invest measures; and
  - (ii) where should funding be prioritised within the Reduce Strategy.
9. The Peer Review strongly recommends that in any overall cut back in funding, the funding for the Reduce Strategy should be retained, particularly as even with the increased level of funding proposed, it still only forms a relatively small part of the programme and many other measures, particularly in the Invest category, will lead to increases in traffic flow, even if this wasn’t the intention. The Peer Review has made a general warning that a common experience of “Invest” based strategies is that traffic growth outpaces the expansion of capacity.
10. In terms of a reduced level of funding for the Reduce Strategy, which is a realistic scenario, the Peer Review has suggested two potential options. One is to focus on the urban and inner-suburban areas with an emphasis on location based travel plans. The other recommendation is to apply the full programme of measures, but only in a part of the sub-region. It is recommended that the latter option may be more appropriate, as it will

demonstrate more clearly what an intensive application of Smarter Choices measures can achieve, which would help provide the case to secure funding to deliver measures over the rest of the sub-region. This report has a recommendation for a pilot scheme to be developed on this basis.

11. It should be noted that it should be possible to apply many of the Land Use Planning elements comprehensively across the sub-region, as these can be adopted as a policy initiative in the Local Planning Authority's Local Development Frameworks. This report includes a recommendation to take this work forward.

### **Benefit: Cost Ratio of Reduce Strategy Measures**

12. The Peer Review has considered in some detail the Benefit: Cost Ratio (BCR) for Reduce Strategy measures in Annex B. The overall conclusion is that the BCR would be in double figures and only local safety schemes are likely to have BCRs that exceed this.

### **Interaction with Invest and Manage Programmes**

13. The Peer Review has considered the interaction between the Reduce, Manage and Invest strategies. The clear message is that the common areas between these strategies need to be managed together in a consistent way. There needs to be an awareness that some policies may lead to outcomes that may counter the Reduce Strategy.

### **Potential Funding Opportunities**

14. Smarter Choices measures rely on Revenue as well as Capital funds for supporting infrastructure. Revenue funding has been difficult to secure for transport projects. The Urban Challenge Fund may provide a future opportunity, as Smarter Choices are highlighted as a potential intervention. In a separate agenda item, the TfSH consultation response to the Urban Challenge Fund has highlighted the need for revenue funding to be made available.
15. Other potential funding could be to swap parking revenues with capital monies, particularly for the city unitaries. This would be more difficult within two tier areas.
16. This report contains a recommendation for officers to seek appropriate funding opportunities.

## **Taking the Reduce Strategy Forward**

17. It is recommended that the Reduce Strategy is now amended to take into account the findings of the Peer Review. It is then proposed that a consultation takes place with key stakeholders prior to full adoption of the Strategy. If the consultation requires any significant further changes, these will be reported back to the Joint Committee.
18. A number of other recommendations are made to take the Strategy forward in the meantime. These include seeking funding opportunities, developing a pilot programme and working with Local Planning Authorities to ensure appropriate policies are included within Local Development Frameworks.

Section 100 D - Local Government Act 1972 - background papers

**The following documents disclose facts or matters on which this report, or an important part of it, is based and has been relied upon to a material extent in the preparation of this report.**

NB the list excludes:

1. Published works.
2. Documents which disclose exempt or confidential information as defined in the Act.

TITLE

LOCATION

None