

CHESHIRE EAST COUNCIL

Cabinet Member for Environment

Date of Meeting:	1 st July 2013
Report of:	Head of Public Protection and Enforcement
Subject/Title:	Local Sustainable Transport Fund Business Travel Planning – Partnership Agreement
Portfolio Holder:	Cllr David Topping

1.0 Report Summary

- 1.1 The report seeks authorisation to establish a Partnership Agreement with the South Cheshire Chamber of Commerce and Industry (SCCCI) to support the delivery of the business travel planning element of the Local Sustainable Transport Fund (LSTF) programme.
- 1.2 The Partnership Agreement has a value of £22,000 per annum with an end date of 31 March 2015 in line with the LSTF funding period. The Agreement will be fully funded by the grant from the Department for Transport (DfT).

2.0 Recommendations

- 2.1 To agree the establishment of a partnership arrangement with the South Cheshire Chamber of Commerce and Industry (SCCCI).
- 2.2 To authorise the Borough Solicitor or an authorised signatory within Legal Services to sign the Partnership Agreement and to implement and monitor the Agreement until 31st March 2015.

3.0 Reasons for Recommendations

- 3.1 The SCCCI is a “not for profit” organisation which supports and promotes the local business community through representing the views of the businesses, providing information and advice, and facilitating activities for the benefit of the local business community.
- 3.2 The SCCCI is uniquely placed to facilitate business engagement, joint working and collaboration on travel planning activities in Crewe. They have existing networks and partnership structures already in place, which are sustainable beyond the funding period. It is anticipated that the involvement of the SCCCI will help to secure the buy-in and ownership from the business community.
- 3.3 The Council have appointed an LSTF Project Officer to lead the business travel planning activities. The Project Officer will work closely with the SCCCI by “hot desking” from their offices, utilising a SCCCI email account when communicating with the business community.

- 3.4 The SCCC I will support the Council's Project Officer in initiating, co-ordinating and facilitating business engagement on travel planning activities. The SCCC I team will help to raise awareness and promote business travel planning to major employers and local businesses. The team includes skills, knowledge and expertise in business development and engagement, events and marketing, partnership working / liaison and international trade.
- 3.5 The SCCC I also have a number of well established communication tools and channels which are familiar to the business community. Through the Partnership Agreement, the Council's Project Officer will have access to these tools when promoting and encouraging the take-up of travel planning activities. The communication channels include a web portal, magazine, e-newsletter, existing networking events and business awards.
- 3.6 The primary aim of the partnership is to encourage increased levels of walking, cycling, public transport and car sharing for the journey to work amongst major employers and local businesses. If successful this will reduce the levels of congestion that are currently hindering the local economy and help to unlock the growth potential of the town. Tackling congestion and improving accessibility will make Crewe a more attractive location for business investment and job creation.

4.0 Wards Affected

- 4.1 All Crewe wards

5.0 Local Ward Members

- 5.1 All Crewe wards

6.0 Policy Implications

- 6.1 The delivery of LSTF measures supports the "All Change for Crewe" regeneration programme to unlock the growth potential of Crewe in a low carbon way. The LSTF will deliver sustainable transport solutions and enable smarter travel choices for those who live and work in Crewe – focusing on the major employment sites within the Crewe urban area.
- 6.2 Encouraging increased levels of walking and cycling will have positive health benefits through increased active travel, as well as tackling congestion and improving air quality. The LSTF programme promotes access to jobs, apprenticeships, skills and training opportunities, particularly for those Not in Employment, Education and Training (NEET).

7.0 Financial Implications

- 7.1 The value of the Partnership Agreement with SCCC I is £22,000 per annum. The Partnership Agreement will be fully funded through the LSTF and the associated costs will be claimed from the Department for Transport (DfT) on a quarterly basis. The Partnership Agreement makes clear that if DfT grant

funding was to end, that the Partnership Agreement would cease and could no longer be funded.

7.2 The resources to be allocated by the partners to the Partnership are:

Partner	Resource	Value
Chamber	Staff (as outlined in Partnership Agreement). Each member of staff is to be available for half a day each week to conduct partnership matters.	Equivalent to £15,000 per annum (reimbursed by the Council)
Chamber	Communication Tools such as Magazine Space; E-Newsletter; Chamber Portal; Network lunches; Social media	Equivalent to £5,000 per annum (reimbursed by the Council)
Chamber	Overheads including hot desk; IT support; printing; stationery; postage	Equivalent to £2,000 per annum (reimbursed by the Council)
Council	Provision of Project Officer and budget for delivery of partnership objectives	N/A

7.3 The Agreement will end on 31st March 2015, although the benefits of business travel planning are expected to be sustained beyond the funding period through the SCCCI partnership structure.

8.0 Legal Implications

8.1 Advice has been sought from Audit and Legal on the relevant criteria that needed to be addressed in order to be able to enter into a partnership and the appropriate form of agreement to govern the partnership arrangement.

8.2 The partnership agreement defines the roles, responsibilities and liabilities of each partner and set outs the aims and objectives of the partnership. Payments to SCCCI under the agreement are expressed as being payable quarterly in arrears and the Council can give one months' written notice to terminate should DfT funding cease. This ensures that the Council is not committed to the agreement should the funding cease to be available.

8.3 The Partnership Agreement has been drafted by the Council's Legal Services Team and is attached as Appendix 1 to this report.

9.0 Risk Management

9.1 To manage the implementation of the Partnership Agreement, quarterly meetings will be held to manage and monitor performance to ensure that the aims and objectives of the Partnership are being discharged effectively.

- 9.2 The business travel planning activities undertaken through the Partnership Agreement are branded as part of the All Change for Crewe regeneration programme, which is a private sector-led public/private partnership. This approach enhances the public awareness of delivery projects and schemes being delivered through All Change for Crewe.

10.0 Background

- 10.1 Business travel planning forms an important delivery scheme within Theme 1 (Access to Employment, Skills & Apprenticeships) of the LSTF programme. The major travel generators in Crewe include large employers, health care providers, education providers and the retail park – many of whom experience problems of accessibility, congestion and overspill parking which hinder the operation of their sites.
- 10.2 To address these challenges, the LSTF will encourage take-up of business travel planning activities to help manage trips by all modes of transport, but with a particular focus on encouraging increased levels of walking, cycling, public transport and car sharing. The aim is to facilitate partnership working and collaboration through a Smarter Travel Partnership enabling an area-wide approach to travel planning and critical mass to ensure the success of new initiatives and achieve modal shift.
- 10.3 A crucial benefit to the Council in establishing the Smarter Travel Partnership within the Chamber's existing partnership arrangements is sustainability beyond the funding period – which the DfT expect local authorities to be able to demonstrate. Following a period of pump-priming, it is envisaged that the partnership would become a membership organisation with associated annual subscription fees collected from local businesses to ensure ongoing financial sustainability.

11.0 Access to Information

The background papers can be inspected by contacting the report writer:

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