

## WEST DUNBARTONSHIRE COUNCIL

### Report by Acting Director of Housing, Regeneration & Environmental Services (Land and Environmental Services)

Community Safety and Environmental Services Committee: 4 April 2007

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**Subject: Travelling Green - National Launch**

#### **1. Purpose**

- 1.1** The purpose of this report is to inform the Committee of the funding received from the Scottish Executive to make preparations to launch West Dunbartonshire Council's 'Travelling Green' project in all schools in Scotland.

#### **2. Background**

- 2.1** Young people, especially school children, need to be active for all sorts of good reasons: for improved health, to develop social skills and to be more engaged in the classroom. The 'Travelling Green' project is designed to encourage children and young people and their parents to feel more confident about walking to and from school, and so increase their levels of daily physical activity.
- 2.2** In addition to the health benefits of walking on the school journey, there are road safety benefits. Children can practise pedestrian skills, learn risk assessment, develop awareness of hazards and safety features and become responsible and independent pedestrians. This will all contribute towards achieving the Government target of a 50% reduction in the number of children killed or seriously injured on the roads by 2010.
- 2.3** The 'Travelling Green' project was part of a research project carried out in 2001 by West Dunbartonshire Council and NHS Greater Glasgow (Health Promotion Unit). The aim was to discover if children could be encouraged to walk as part of their journey to school, and to test an intervention method designed to involve parents and their children in making decisions about how they travelled to school. Children at Primary 5 stage were involved as they are at the age when they are beginning to be more independent.
- 2.4** The results from the research indicated that the intervention (curricular activities, pupil resources and resources for parents) had been successful. The number of children walking to school had increased, with a corresponding decrease in the number of children coming to school by car. The average distance walked to school by the children was almost 800 metres per day. This represents 12 minutes of walking, and if this were repeated on the journey home, this would correspond to almost achieving half of the recommended 1 hour of moderate physical activity necessary to benefit health.

**2.5** The resources for 'Travelling Green' were further developed between 2002 and 2005 by West Dunbartonshire Council (Roads and Education). In 2003 the project won a Scottish National Transport award for Road Safety. The project is included in the Health Promoting School Communities Development Plan. There are now 20 schools participating in the project in West Dunbartonshire.

### **3. Main Issues**

**3.1** Following the ongoing success of the Travelling Green project in West Dunbartonshire, in 2006, a proposal was put forward to the Scottish Executive for a national rollout of the 'Travelling Green' project and resources. This proposal was put forward by a partnership between West Dunbartonshire Council, Scottish Health Promoting Schools Unit and Sustrans.

**3.2** In November 2006, funding for the national rollout of the project was announced under the Scottish Executive's funding for 'Tackling the School Run'. This funding is for £200,000 and includes the updating of the resources in line with educational developments, production of resources for all primary schools in Scotland, and national training for School Travel Coordinators and Road Safety Officers.

**3.3** The updating of the West Dunbartonshire resources to become national publications and national training is being carried out by the Road Safety Team (Road Safety Officer and Assistant Road Safety Officer).

**3.4** The resources were to be updated and printed before 31 March 2007. The first training day has been delivered, with 3 further training days later in 2007.

### **4. Personnel Issues**

**4.1** Much of the additional work required is being undertaken outwith normal working hours, in order to avoid detriment to West Dunbartonshire Council's road safety programme.

### **5. Financial Implications**

**5.1** A grant offer for £200,000 has been offered by the Scottish Executive and accepted by West Dunbartonshire Council.

**5.2** In addition to resource production costs, the Council will reclaim staff salary costs against this grant, for the time spent working on the national rollout.

### **6. Risk Analysis**

**6.1** There is no risk assessment required to be carried out as part of this activity.

**7. Conclusion**

**7.1** West Dunbartonshire Council is achieving national recognition for its excellent 'Travelling Green', initiative and it is hoped that all schools in Scotland will now benefit from the project initially developed by the Council.

**8. Recommendation**

**8.1** It is recommended that the Committee note the award of grant and that the project is being delivered to a very short timescale.

**8.2** It is recommended that the Committee note the national recognition achieved by the Council for the 'Travelling Green' project.

**Ronald M Dinnie**

**Acting Director of Housing, Regeneration and Environmental Services (Land & Environmental Services)**

**Date: March 2007**

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**Appendix:** None

**Background Papers:** None

**Wards Affected:** All