TRAVEL PLAN PLUS

Travel <u>R</u>eduction <u>A</u>ttainment <u>V</u>ia <u>E</u>nergy-efficient <u>L</u>ocalities <u>PLAN</u>ning

Local Travel Plan Networks: Expert Perspectives

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ABSTRACT

The aim of this report is to examine the interview response of mobility management experts and Local Travel Plan Network (LTPN) practitioners across the six partner countries. This will follow on from the literature review and will make recommendations to the Draft Implementation Guide for the Partners to follow.

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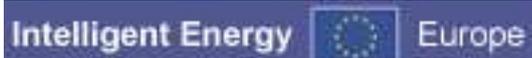
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Executive Summary

The aim of this report is to examine the interview response of mobility management experts and LTPN practitioners to determine the most recent developments in the sector. It is designed to be read together with the literature review based on a review of existing academic, professional and government literature. The focus of the literature is developments in Local Travel Plan Networks (LTPNs), with most evidence based on experience from the United States of America where these concepts originated and the United Kingdom, where these concepts were first adapted, as an example of policy transfer. The interviews expand upon this knowledge base, building further knowledge of USA and UK experience whilst also developing an understanding of the current state of play in the other European partner countries. This two-pronged approach provides the foundations for effective policy transfer through TRAVEL PLAN PLUS.

Overall, the expert interviews highlighted the need for an action-based approach which is actually in line with the funding agency's focus on implementation. Interviewees reinforced the need for a standardised monitoring framework, which allows for contextual objectives. This supports the TRAVEL PLAN PLUS thorough evaluation based on zero state and post implementation data; and an implementation guide. Identified current shortfalls in monitoring and evaluation, to highlight the cost saving of LTPNs to organisations, and carbon reduction potential to government bodies are business cases which can easily be interlined with the TRAVEL PLAN PLUS approach of energy reduction.

In terms of policy transfer, contextual aspects, such as national and regional culture and policy and the geographical and communication situation underpinning the proposed LTPN site need to be considered. Wherever practicable the LTPN should be integrated into existing organisational operations and efforts should be made for national and regional policy barriers should adapt to mobility demands at the implementation sites.

1. Introduction

A Local Travel Plan Network (LTPN) is a spatially-related network formed of a group of organisations working collectively to reduce the transport impacts generated by employee, customer and other organisational activities within a given area. A local-area-based travel plan can provide the basis for LTPN, where a travel plan is: "a general term for a package of measures tailored to meet the needs of individual sites and aimed at promoting greener, cleaner travel choices and reducing reliance on the car… …It involves the development of a set of mechanisms, initiatives and targets that together can enable an organisation to reduce the impact of travel and transport on the environment, whilst also bringing a number of other benefits to the organisation as an employer and to staff" (EEBPP, 2001). The involvement of a number of organisations results in shared resources and ideas to maximise impact. For further details on forms of LTPNs and their propagation across Europe and the USA see D2.1a State of the Art: Literature Review (TRAVEL PLAN PLUS, 2009).

TRAVEL PLAN PLUS stands for Travel Reduction Attainment Via Energy-efficient Localities PLANning. The project aims to establish travel plan networks at four EU sites to deliver energy savings.

The objectives of the proposed TRAVEL PLAN PLUS project are to:

1. Promote energy efficiency through the use of Local Travel Plan Networks (LTPNs) across the EU.
2. Develop a framework to aid and promote the implementation and dissemination of LTPNs in a systematic way.
3. Implement four LTPNs in representative locations across the EU.
4. Monitor and evaluate these LTPNs to determine both their impacts on transport behaviour and energy reduction and the barriers to implementation in a range of contextual circumstances.
5. Provide recommendations for developing an effective policy framework to encourage and support the widespread adoption of LTPNs across the EU.
6. Raise awareness across Europe of the significant energy efficiencies available through the implementation of LTPNs.

TRAVEL PLAN PLUS comprises six partners from Hungary, the Netherlands, Spain, Sweden and the United Kingdom (UK), with expertise in mobility management. The purpose of this report is to review the status quo across the partner countries and identify good practice to be adopted during the implementation phase and beyond. Findings form an important part of the State-of-the-Art Review (SOTA) of Local Travel Plan Networks (LTPNs) (D2.1). The SOTA review, together with a theoretical framework based on 'Policy Transfer (D2.2) informs the Draft Implementation Guide (D2.3), which is of practical value for the LTPN implementation sites.

1.1   Structure of this Report

Section 2 sets out the aim of the research; Section 3 details of the methods; Section 4 draws out the key findings from the expert interviews; and Section 5 the impact on TRAVEL PLAN PLUS.

2.   Aim of the Expert Interviews

The aim of this research is to provide up to date expert information to help assess the potential of LTPNs across a number of European destinations and to inform an effective framework for implementation and subsequent monitoring and evaluation regime. This report draws on knowledge from mobility management and LTPN implementation experts across each of the TRAVEL PLAN PLUS partner countries and supporting individuals / organisations outside the European Union. These experts are policy makers, shapers and implementers at national, regional or local level, working primarily for consultancies or governmental organisations and universities.

3.   Method

Face-to-face or telephone in-depth interviews were undertaken with 20 experts. Interviewees were selected by each project partner, based on: the objectives of TRAVEL PLAN PLUS; careful study of the literature in the area; and partner's detailed knowledge of transport policy and travel plans. All interviews followed an Interview Guide to ensure that common information was gathered across the project partners, allowing for rigorous analysis of results. A copy of the standardised questions are included in Appendix A. Furthermore, standard definitions were provided for travel plans and LTPNs as included in Appendix B.   A small number of interviews were received a written response to the Interview Guide because of research and implementation timescales and / or to provide a uniform organisational perspective.

4. Expert Interview findings

4.1 Experience of those interviewed

LTPN experts from each of the partner countries plus an expert based in the United States of America (USA) contributed with their knowledge. Interviewees represented three of the four TRAVEL PLAN PLUS target groups: i.e. policy shapers; policy makers; and policy implementers.

The interviewees represent national, regional and local government bodies, consultancies and academics. All have extensive knowledge of the subject matter and many have been involved in travel planning, local travel plan networks and mobility management for many years, some since the initial introduction of these 'softer measures' in their respective countries.

4.2 Background information

4.2.1 The current role of Travel Plans and LTPNs across partner countries

This section provides information on the current state of play in each of the five Partner countries, namely: the UK, Netherlands, Sweden, Hungary and Spain, as well as in the United States.

Travel plans in the United Kingdom were first officially recognised in 'A New Deal for Transport Better for Everyone' (Department for Transport, 1998) as being part of a move away from building more roads towards a policy of managing demand. Included in each round of Local Travel Plan guidance, they form part of a package of 'soft measures' (Cairns et al. 2004) and are supported in policy terms in 'The Future of Travel' (Department for Transport, 2004) and by the Climate Change Project Review. Interviewees identify them as being a tool for reducing carbon emissions globally in response to the Eddington (2006) and Stern (2007) reports while at a local level their benefits have been highlighted in the Sustainable Travel Towns.

Nationally schools have received investment to support travel plan development, in the form of School Travel Advisers and capital grants to support implementation (Department for Transport / Department for Education and Skills, 2003). In the case of other organisations, the majority of travel plans are developed in response to a planning condition, though voluntary examples exist. With national guidance, local authorities have the autonomy to develop the approach applied locally, so specific, expectations, requirements and support available varies across the nation; something which is emphasised by all the UK interviewees.

> *"It depends on the local authority, their approach and attitude towards sustainable transport and level of support from local councillors. Some are very forward thinking, enthusiastic, keen to get them delivered, they can see the benefits, easing congestions, so spending less money on traffic schemes and so on.*

However, some authorities, haven't bought into it, as they don't really see the true benefits"

Metropolitan areas are identified by one interviewee as 'hotspots of activity because there you can get groupings of people together'. A number of Local Travel Plan Networks have been developed across the UK, including a Transport Management Organisation (TMO) in Aberdeen and a Business Improvement District (BID) in Southwark in London. Interviewees report a growing strategic awareness of the LTPN concept.

In the Netherlands travel plans and equivalent measures have existed for a longer period of time; one interviewee is aware of traditional travel plan activity about 20 years ago. Owing to the lack of plan implementation emphasis has shifted to employing mobility management measures to achieve win-win situation backed by regulation:

"Approximately 20 years ago Travel Plans were promoted. This led to a real boost in the development of travel plans. The big problem was the implementation. As all focus was on developing travel plans, there were no triggers for companies to implement them. The awareness of problems and chances was too low for them to come into action. Another reason for not implementing was that threat for legislation disappeared. At that time most interest in mobility management disappeared".

The current basis for this is 'Smart Travelling in Seven Steps' developed by KPVV. Since 2001 development has been facilitated through regional task forces working with organisations to implement measures encouraging sustainable travel choices and supporting access to work. Involving companies collectively is viewed by interviewees as being the most effective way of achieving this as there is a greater mass of companies involved in solutions. This approach results in covenants to reduce the transport impacts being made across a region or locality and results in a number of regional differences. This has been supported through the provision of alternatives and restrictions on car parking spaces and policy initiatives, such as "Anders betalan voor Mobiliteit" (Alternative ways for Mobility). The overall aim of these initiatives is a regional reduction in peak hour car traffic of 5%, with covenants agreed at regional and more focussed localities, in line with the geographical scale of business districts. Though travel plans in the conventional sense are not necessarily used as part of this process; implementation investment relies on the success of these task forces.

In Sweden there is evidence of recent policy transfer having occurred in terms of travel planning, with one interviewee including reference to UK academic literature and another an experience of a visit to the Netherlands which led to the implementation of citizen focussed travel plans followed by organisational adoption.

"During the study visit in the Netherlands I saw potential in working strategically with traffic and the environment and not only with noise and emissions and with mobility management in general and specifically with travel plans found a method to work."

The existing LTPNs discussed have been driven by a number of key factors including strong national legislation to minimise carbon dioxide emissions and by land owner

desire to maximise space. This has been coupled with government support for mobility management measures as a means of pre-empting a large population increase. On balance, the approach developing seems similar to the Dutch example with the Swedish Road Authority working with organisations to achieve win-win situations through the implementation of measures. From the examples given there seem to be advances in negotiating alternatives to the car, yet one interviewee identifies scope to define the development control approach in a similar fashion to the UK:

> *"The problem is not to have the companies making a travel plan but rather to implement it. In order to succeed, the companies and the person in charge at the site need to understand both the effects and the potential for good results that are possible and also what is needed in order to have an successful change of habits within the company."*

Travel plans are a new concept in Hungary, though the interest in TRAVEL PLAN PLUS and other European-funded mobility management project should facilitate the introduction of LTPNs and other such methods and practices. This interest is highlighted by that fact that over one hundred cities, towns, districts and regions are involved in the international campaign of Mobility Week every year, and through the extension of supporting infrastructure for cycling, especially in cities. Additionally, Hungary has a long tradition of having an, well served public transportation system, providing for local, regional and inter-regional needs. This is driven by an identified social need and the expectation to reduce traffic volumes, increase traffic safety, and make environmental conditions better, so providing better living standards. There is a current emphasis on education with a focus on educating school-aged people about safe and sustainable mobility.

In Spain recent changes in policy emphasis have increased the profile of mobility management measures. Of the regions, Catalonia is seen as being 'a pioneer', as it was the first to introduce a Mobility Law (in 2003). This law underpins the introduction of travel plans and networks; it emphasises the need for consensus; and it introduces and management framework with impact on different spatial scales. As a result, mobility agreements have been developed in over 20 Catalan cities including Barcelona. These are designed to engage all key stakeholders in the strategic development of mobility management across a geographic area (normally a city or municipality).

The definition of the Transport Management Organisations, introduced in Catalonia differ from the USA definition. In Catalonia, they facilitate participation and debate amongst these stakeholder and allow citizens to influence mobility management decision-making. Transport Management Organisations have been introduced in a number of Catalonian municipalities. Hence:

> *"Neither one would work without the other. The networks are relations, making people conscious, the debate, discussion, agreements and finding solutions, while the travel plans are the solutions of the more concrete problems."*

The law regulates the need for industrial sites exceeding a specified area, number of organisations and number of employees to influence traffic choices. The GESMOPOLI project aims to do this at six industrial estates, measures introduced include mobility

boards, mobility managers/coordinators and travel plans. Mobility agreements and transport management organizations have been agreed in each of the participating industrial estates. These LTPNs have been enabled through an appointed travel manager, producing detailed travels plans, approach is influenced by the stakeholders involved and their motivations.

One interviewee is a LTPN expert from the USA. Originally the approach there was driven by Local Air Quality Strategy and therefore regulations state that organisations with more than a minimum number of employees must develop and implement a plan with targets to reduce the impact of generated travel.   As part of the regulation these companies are also committed to monitoring the impact of these plans. In terms of LTPNs this concept is widely adopted as a measure to reduce trip numbers and/or improve site access. There are therefore a large number of TMAs in existence.

> *"In the US we have something called TMA's; Transportation Management Associations. Usually one will be formed in a small geographic area to try and get several employers together to implement these [mobility management] programmes".*

In general, over time the level of support for softer or smarter measures has tended to be cyclical and therefore the approach adopted has had to alter to accommodate this shifting position (demonstrated in particular by the interviewees from the Netherlands and USA).   This is in part driven by the form of the measure and the contextual environment in which it is applied.

4.2.2   Motivations for organisations to develop Travel Plans and LTPNs

In terms of motivations, the two main streams which engage companies in travel plans are voluntary and regulated, though this does vary by country.   The main direct motivation for UK organisations are planning conditions for expansion, relocation or access improvement:

> *"The main reason you see travel plans implemented is due to the planning process. They have got a planning condition attached to what they have to do. Very rarely do you get voluntary requests for help with travel plans".*

In the Netherlands the desire to negotiate a win-win situation with organisations to reduce transport impact underpins all stages of the process. Therefore the focus is on companies with the most to gain from engaging in the process. Additional rewards for these companies are made in the form of new mobility management-related investment:

> *"Organisations must see a win-win situation before they will introduce mobility management. In other words, the economic factor is important. Another one is the lack of parking places, which make it a more "forced" choice to introduce mobility management.   Recently however I see more and more examples where employment benefits coupled to mobility management give a higher flexibility to the employees (with regard to modal split, time) which contributes to higher employee satisfaction."*

In the USA the situation in some areas is regulated, though other motivational factors have a key influence on how successful a plan is.

Voluntary examples exist, often driven by physical restrictions such as parking availability and severe access problems which are having an economic impact. Improved access is recognised as benefiting recruitment, staff well being and customer attractiveness, these motivations make it easy to tie in a travel plan with other organisational commitments:

> *"Usually they will do it voluntarily if they have a reason; such as a parking problem, or trying to compete for employees. We definitely saw that in the Silicon Valley area with many of the hi-tech firms offering programmes like bus passes. The famous one was [a company that] had its own bus service free for employees. For a lot of employers in more suburban areas the motivation isn't necessarily there. They aren't always motivated by the more green issues. They might be interested in getting a new interchange junction off the freeway. That would be an infrastructure issue."*

This USA example, demonstrates the potential for policy transfer, as these are all potential issues for organisations across the TRAVEL PLAN PLUS partners countries.

New developments are identified by some as being a key focus in terms of ensuring companies are well supported with sustainable access alternatives but also to maximise physical design and land-use, which means land owners can release car parking spaces for other, more lucrative business uses:

> *"The municipality was engaged in a project regarding energy savings in buildings. The property owner at the site expressed interest in reducing the use of cars among the companies in the area. This was both for environmental reasons and to free space for car parking to be able to fit in more companies as tenants in the area."*

Furthermore, new developments provide an opportunity to convene a network.

More recently, corporate social responsibility and wider environmental impact issues have encouraged some organisations to engage in the travel plan process, incorporating it into business efficiency improvements. However, there is some disagreement between interviewees as to whether as many organisations are recognising this and taking responsibility for broader external impacts, particularly given the current economic difficulties being experienced by many.

4.2.3 Barriers preventing organisation develop Travel Plans and LTPNs

The barriers to travel plan and LTPN implementation are related to a general lack of recognition of the impact of travel behaviour, combined with a desire by companies not to take responsibility for generated, unsustainable choices:

> *"The problem is nobody wants to pick up the tab for transport. But who else will? Transport is virtually central to everything we do, but no one wants to pay for it."*

This is recognised at all levels: policy and planning, operational organisational level and at a personal level:

"The government is hooked on technical change more than behavioural change interventions. And things such as travel plans are extremely undervalued at the moment."

"The companies do not see themselves as having a role regarding travelling behaviour among their employees."

"The lack of ecologic sensibility, both at individual and administrative level. The consumption society makes people value their current situation more than their future. There is not enough awareness about sustainability."

The consequence of this is that mobility management measures are not sufficiently embedded in practices and as a result are under resourced.

"If all the travel plans that had been secured [by the planning process] in the last decade had secured monies and [co-ordinators] employed, we wouldn't have the issues we have got [to deal with today]."

As a result, the perceived cost of developing a travel plan is highlighted as the main barrier. One of the causes is the need for an effective business case

"If there is a lack of realisation of the benefits of travel plans business will not look at them. So we need a robust business case."

Mobility management and travel plans need marketing to raise the profile of sustainable travel to match that of other choices such as a more sustainable waste management and energy use in the built environment:

"The Department for Transport has published research into people's attitudes to climate change. What it was saying was; we [understand] the whole recycling and energy use thing, but we haven't 'got' transport yet. We have acted well with many things environmentally but not yet with the whole transport thing."

However, this needs to be done in a way which meets the audience's needs:

"Another barrier can be the reasoning that is used to make [organisations] do a travel plan. Especially if this reasoning is only focused on the interests of the society at large and on making elaborate plans instead of thinking and acting."

4.2.4 The role of Government in organisational development of Travel Plans and LTPNs

Nationally, governments have provided organisations with guidance, funding and staff support. They play a role in awareness raising, publicity campaigns and communicating regional and local good practice. They have an important role in subsidising alternatives to private cars and also dictate regulations for company related transport options. However, such actions often end up working against reducing the energy impact of the transport system.

"Legal restrictions prevent changes in travel cost compensation / taxation in favour of public transport". There is some evidence from Sweden where these have been overcome: in one business park parking space permits are being exchanged for annual

public transport passes; and at another public transport passes are cross subsidised from parking levies.

Additionally national governments mould activity at a regional and local level, though regional and local level autonomy does vary between countries. From the interviews, most national governments provide guidance on how mobility management measures are implemented to be adapted to local situations. Whilst appreciating regional differences in terms of geography and provision this has led to variation within and particularly between regions:

> *"Catalonia is a pioneer in many senses. We have the Mobility Law since 2003 and we should not forget that we are first to have a decree of generated mobility for new establishments".*

> *"In areas where there is less congestion impact it can be difficult to get political buy-in and to persuade employers to voluntarily consider travel planning; usually in the more northern areas (away from the main conurbations). Many of these areas are also trying to develop the local economies and travel plans can be seen to impede this."*

Where travel plans and mobility management measures are well established, this is backed up by central government documentation, though again how this has transferred to regional and local situations does vary. The UK, the Netherlands and the USA have all experienced times when these measures have slipped down the agenda which in turn impacts upon provision. On the whole however there is the trend of a greater take up of a travel plan / mobility measures approach across Europe, for example recent advances in Sweden and Spain.

In terms of communication of the concept, in the UK there is plenty of guidance on travel plans but not so much on LTPNs, and existing literature is identified as needing a means of pulling it together to make it manageable for organisations. In the Netherlands the focus is different and guided by 'Smart Travelling in Seven Steps .

Considering funding provision interviewees in the Netherlands and Sweden stressed the need to fund implementation rather than plan completion, whereas schools in the UK receive a capital grant for Travel Plan completion:

> *"Many years ago, companies got money for developing a travel plan. This lead to much paper but not much action. This happens in a growing number of countries, which we are not happy about."*

Both the Netherlands and Sweden countries provide support in terms of regional/local personnel to work with organisations to promote the concept and central point for information are recognised as particularly effective in the Netherlands.

In the UK there is much current emphasis on supporting schools through School Travel Advisers and less for other organisations, though this is reported to have transferred into good practice for all organisations, interviewees identified the need for more dedicated personnel.

> *"There is not much [up front] financial benefit to employers – [in the same way that there is for Schools for example]".*

"When we started working with workplaces we used our learning and experience gained in with the schools to go out and work with people on their plans".

This could be further improved through more effective channels for locally-based travel planners to feed into national policy. Previous support had been seed funding for travel plan co-ordinators, though discontinuity of central funding and a situation where the local authority had not bought into the concept resulted in a withdrawal of support:

"For the first couple of years when there was the funding for the post of travel plan co-ordinator. Then when the time came that ran out… I think the government idea was that, once embedded it would become part of the local authority [remit]. But that has never happened; the funding went and so did the posts."

Sustained investment to support local needs and also to provide realistic alternatives to the car through tax breaks and more competitive pricing are seen as priorities for mobility management and indeed social inclusion success across European countries:

"The cost of driving a car, relative to coming to work on public transport is diverging, getting further apart. It's getting more expensive to use public transport rather than coming to work in the car, and that is fundamentally wrong."

The role of regulation is clearly a key organisational motivator. Conversely, the lack of recognition at policy level and restrictions on support for alternatives is identified as a barrier and can work against local attempts. Indeed the transport implication of development can be played down at times when other priorities, such as house building, and attracting businesses are given precedence:

"There has not been an heavy interest in this issue from the leaders of [the] municipality. The politicians have had a will not to disturb the companies moving [here] making an establishing within the municipality as attractive as possible and not having any demand on how the where to facilitate there solutions for travelling".

4.3   Planning and Design Issues for LTPNs

4.3.1   The conditions which support a LTPN

Geography and communication are identified as the underlying conditions determining LTPN success. There is broad agreement across interviews that LTPNs are suited to areas where there is a large number of organisations, ideally with a pre-existing transport infrastructure supporting choice. Central business districts or business parks with restricted access points are identified as optimal, in that space is at a premium and organisations are likely to experience shared problems and would thereby be looking for shared solutions.

"The success is largely based on geography, the employers that are downtown, and in anywhere that you have to pay to park, these are the places that are successful. The geography means that there is already a good infrastructure which provides cheaper travel alternatives, relative to parking…Even in suburban

areas we have found that the worksites that are closer to rail etc, and have valuable options for employees, are more successful."

An existing relationship between companies and strong communication also determine effectiveness in collective response to traffic-related problems:

"As far as I understand it, LTPNs can be of use in business areas with a strong internal organization and dealing with some major topics related to mobility or accessibility. If one of these circumstances is absent it is doubtful for me whether LTPNS can survive without external support."

Whilst some interviewees believe that a number of large organisations are most suited to a LTPN in terms of investment, other interviewees highlight the potential to engage small organisations, as collectively they could justify travel plan action:

"We set up an 80:20 rule; with about 350 organisations we didn't want to have to be in contact with all of them; so we thought let's look at the staff who work for the top twenty organisations; that's at least 80% of the staff."

"When working with smaller companies the format with a group or network has an advantage for the smaller companies because it takes fewer resources from each company."

A number of interviewees highlight the need to look at all local transport infrastructure users, such as customers and suppliers as well as employees but also local residents and the wider community.

"Any area where there are problems and causing problems, not just business areas, but leisure and retail areas are also important. They should be geographically and not thematically based - so everyone suffering and contributing to congestion issues should be involved in the solution."

There is also debate between the scale at which LTPNs should be applied, both in terms of what is preferential for organisations but also political role definition and justification of responsibilities to avoid duplication of provision.

"I just think that if we're not too careful that they will get out of hand, huge, you'll end up perhaps having a TPN for London. What would be the point of that? There'd be so many people working on it, but would anything actually be achieved?"

"Larger scale corridor networks are being formed, to generate economies of scale provide much more potential for much greater levels of benefit - to get [business] engagement up a notch or two."

4.3.2 The conditions which support a traditional travel plan

Geography and communication also underlie when a travel plan is preferred to a LTPN. Most interviewees suggest that geographically isolated organisations are most suited to travel plans. Also suggested are large organisations with multiple sites, as a unified approach across the sites would enable the company to embed the Travel Plan in organisational business strategy:

"Where there is a large organisation without other organisations around to share the plan, or where other organisations would not be willing or suitable to be involved, (it may be that if an organisation has a number of offices around the country or even internationally), then a single travel plan for the organisation across all of it's sites (adapted to each site as appropriate) may be important to provide a coherent approach across the organisation."

There is the argument as LTPNs are always better because of the efficiency gained. However, the counter argument is that individual travel plans are a pre-requisite to a LTPN:

"I think that [organisational] travel plans should be set up before a network is attempted - to ensure that the site specific issues are dealt with. Otherwise there is a danger that smaller site-specific issues can be brought to the network which can waste time. The network should be able to concentrate on the large issues that are too big to be considered in the site-specific plans."

4.3.3 Monitoring and evaluation of travel plans and LTPNs, present state and future recommendations

To justify the future investment and adoption of travel plans, LTPNs and mobility management measures, monitoring and evaluation needs to communicate more clearly what can be achieved in terms of the economic benefits for businesses and achieving policy objectives for government. These main drivers for improving monitoring and evaluation are:

1. Demonstrating cost savings with an effect on the bottom line for organisations;

2. Demonstrating the ability to reduce carbon emissions to government.

Each of these are linked with the objectives of TRAVEL PLAN PLUS. Furthermore, marketing and communication of LTPNs needs to be tailored to these demands.

This emphasis stems from identified weaknesses in existing monitoring and evaluation across all countries and the need to provide a business case for travel plan development:

"Currently monitoring seems to be patchy and piecemeal."

"Monitoring of mobility management was always very weak in the Netherlands".

"In many cases they are not monitored…. Monitoring of the administration would be necessary… It should not be possible to invest important sums of money and then let them be lost."

"We do need more hard evidence to add to the business case to get companies involved. We need to do more work in this area to develop this business case."

Two forms of monitoring are recommended by interviewees; there is general support for the before and after methodology, however some organisations have bypassed this by using a cost benefit approach:

> *"The UK Highways Agency has developed a methodology that calculates the trip savings at the peak hour from traffic counts; people counts; travel surveys etc and converts those into journey savings. It then looks at the existing level of congestion on the wider road network around the travel plan network area and the nearby strategic road network. It applies the saved trips to the existing congestion level and the difference is the impact of the LTPN. This methodology calculates the journey time savings and converts them to a monetary value using standard Department for Transport figures. With this methodology there is no need to take 'before and after' measurements, which can be affected by many other factors. This calculation shows a 13:1 Benefit Cost Ratio (BCR)for the Cambridge Science Park which is a significant. Other schemes showed BCRs of around 4:1"*

This method also provides a clear monetary figure to engage organisations. However, identifying the full benefits of a travel plan to an organisation can be difficult given the cross departmental implications:

> *"Business travel they only see as the cost of say the rail ticket, not the true cost overall of the business trips. It all ends up being attributed to a different cost centres within the business without them realising: the taxi paid for by cash; the meal, on expenses; and so on. There is also the time use element of it; if instead of driving, could you have gone on the train and worked productively?"*

There is an identified need to further understand the impacts that specific measures can have and in which geographical and organisational context: One interviewee also highlights efficiency gains through segmenting organisations to target assistance to those most receptive to change and process adoption:

> *"It looks at big organisations and their propensity to be interested in the whole issue of travel planning. She has looked at these businesses to see, who their leaders are, do they have a sustainability report; and research into aspects of their business like that. If I can get that information then I can begin to target the organisations where I've got a reasonable chance to what I've got to say rather than those that might not."*

While there is backing for greater external support to assist organisation with monitoring, a number of interviewees highlighted the need to integrate travel plans into general organisational processes, thereby monitoring of travel plan would become part of an existing organisational process. This could be achieved through inclusion in existing environmental management systems, such as ISO 14001 to consider environmental improvement or into existing organisational strategy such as human resources, in terms of recruitment and staff attendance:

> *"It does apply as an HR issue; for example at BT: I think 99% of their women staff who leave work to have babies come back to BT because they can work from home; whereas nationally it's only around 50%. You have to speak the HR language to HR managers; or the language of finance to the finance directors."*

In the UK guidance on monitoring does exist and in the Netherlands, Sweden and the USA there is a standardised system for assessing mobility management progress. Interviewees from all countries identify staff surveys as the main monitoring method;

these can be complemented by automatic traffic counts, automatic number plate recognition, manual counts and monitoring usage of alternatives Monitoring in the USA is regulated with a staff survey completed annually and the interviewee views the current approach as satisfactory. The key indicator used there is car or car equivalent – where mode choice is transferred to a proportion of car use to compile a single comparable figure. The Swedish Road Administration developed an evaluation tool 'SUMO' which has also been adopted in the Netherlands. SUMO is used to assess mobility management outputs and outcome at a national/regional level. In the Netherlands the taskforce monitors covenants. Furthermore a number of organisations in Sweden have adopted the CERO approach to evaluation, this is an evaluation tool which uses backcasting to define targets and measures to achieve change. In the UK existing monitoring is determined by objectives of individual travel plans. Though given the criticism that the UK focus is on travel plan completion, this part is seen as under-resourced and may not be followed up.

A standard, centrally compiled approach is highlighted as the next step, using common metrics to allow for benchmarking:

> *"Hopefully, you would get a more consistent approach across organisations; otherwise it becomes more difficult to compare things across different sites. The key thing is consistency of data. What you're measuring might change; your outcomes that you want might be a bit different; but the actual collection of the data should be consistent."*

The recent introduction of iTrace in London is a step towards this in the UK. Also given that organisational motivations and objectives are context-based, there is a need to monitor satisfaction with travel modes available, (though the USA experience suggest this might be difficult) and wider benefits as well as focusing on the core indicators:

> *"It would be nice if you did have measures: such as the social impact, so you could tie it in, for example… if someone had considered taking a job on a business site, but didn't own a car, so couldn't get there easily enough, but once a LTPN had gone in, perhaps they could then general access improvements on offer, that can be measured…. If it's easier for the individual to get to work, then it's not so stressful for them, they're taking less time off, better employment retention rate; they and their families health might be improved; if they are walking or cycling to work; you could measure how much of that is due to the individual or the travel plan. There are huge, wide, benefits that would be really interesting to have measured, but at the moment I don't see that monitoring frameworks would go for that."*

In terms of further monitoring for LTPNs, one interview thinks this depends on the formality of the network, as less formal networks are less likely to have separate objective-based targets. Aside from this there is the view is that LTPNs should be monitored against objectives in a similar fashion to travel plans and again the focus needs to be implementation. If central monitoring systems are in use these need to be expanded to incorporate LTPNs, ideally at an early stage of their development, rather than post hoc.

4.4 The Performance of Travel Plans and LTPNs

4.4.4 The performance of travel plans and LTPNs to date

The ability to comment on the performance of travel plans and LTPNs is linked strongly to existing monitoring, so while interviewees did identify good practice, this is largely qualitative and not necessarily comparable between organisations, given a lack of common metrics.

> *"We are still not getting the data collected in a consistent manner to enable us to actually claim this works; we have the matrix to say; such and such; and these interventions have delivered this and this."*

The improvements in monitoring practice should overcome this, though some indicators such as carbon monitoring may be difficult to calculate using a unanimously acceptable method.

> *"There is a developing 'feel' for CO2/energy savings - but we are making assumptions on vehicle types - and origin and destination data. A national standard for collection of CO2 would be helpful to enable collection of data in the same format and the same level of accuracy across all travel plans."*

Again the impacts achieved through travel plan is seen as variable, and dependent upon the will to implement measures:

> *"Where done properly with commitment and following a process they have been very successful. Evidence shows that 5-50% modal shifts are possible – both here and in US and Holland. The big issue is quality and ensuring the plan is implemented and not 'sitting on the shelf.' Overall travel plans have not been as effective as they should have been."*

Perhaps as a result of all interviews being involved in travel planning and mobility management there is the general feeling that they are a positive process in developing awareness, understanding and change, though interviewees stress the need for a continuity in terms of funding and consistency in ongoing support. Motivational factors play a key role in how successful travel plans are, with problem-based travel plans being most successful. A locally-based travel plan champion to push forward the concept, geography and spatial planning are all seen as central to success, though again the ability to understand what measures work in which context is required:

> *"In the industrial area of Portland (Oregon) [the TMA is] located close to a lot of residents, [meaning] that the TMA has had a really hard time. [However] the leader of that TMA is really committed to this and has worked really hard which makes a big difference. Where some [measures] have been ineffective in Portland is down to the geography."*

Interviewees identify a growing awareness of travel plans and their potential benefits across organisations, though recognition is again highlighted as a barrier.

Over the long term mobility management measures have had a demonstrable impact organisational practice with progress in flexible working, flexible transport provision and improved staff wellbeing:

"If you look back several years one has to conclude that much has been achieved. More flexibility in working hours, differentiation in travel expenses in relation to mode of transport used, large amount of travel information is available etc."

The barriers such as regulations in terms of providing employee remuneration and support for using sustainable alternatives have responded somewhat, though progress is generally slow (this varies by country) – removing the expectancy of perks, such as a company car and parking space is a hurdle yet to be overcome.

There is debate, primarily amongst UK interviewees as to whether Travel Plans should become a legal requirement:

"I feel that government should make it a legal requirement for organisations to have travel plans – we could be much further on if this had been the case."

"Currently, the view is taken that behavioural change measures are most effective when they are undertaken willingly when the benefits are appreciated. Ultimately, short of very draconian measures, there is little that can be done on a nationwide level to force people to make fewer journeys by single occupancy car. For this reason travel plans are not required by legislation or regulation, other than for planning, in England."

Though the general feeling amongst interviewees from the Netherlands is that travel plans may be part of overall mobility management they feel the emphasis should be on implementation of measures to reduce the transport impact.

It is argued that marketing of mobility management measures needs to focus more on the positive than the negative to get a widespread organisational appreciation of the concept and integration into core organisational process is argues to be part of this:

"I don't feel confident with the terminology, as I don't think it is the language that fits business. It's just something about travel planning that I struggle with… One of the things we always say when we are out talking to people is that we are not anti-car… it could eventually get to the stage that it is all about social balance, new ways of flexible working and so on."

4.4.5 The case for LTPNs

Providing that conditions supporting LTPNs are satisfied, i.e. strong pre-existing communications and that the companies are also located in a defined geographic location LTPNs are seen as advantageous in terms of resources, investment, and political influence. The collective nature maximises idea-sharing; provides a wider audience and cost savings, which allows organisations to jointly maximise available space and access options.

"Benefits in working in a group (LTPN) is that the participants can share ideas and it is easier to get enough market for new services such as local transport service, bikes to lend, car sharing or equipment for tele-meetings or video conferences".

"It can be useful to work as a collective lobby to a local council to make a business case; for a re-direction of a bus route; or a new bus stop or two. Individual businesses would struggle to achieve that by themselves."

This also extends to marketing ability, although there instances when an individual company may be able to communicate more effectively than a cross-organisational working group. On the other hand this could be overcome by having a LTPN committee with representatives across the board.

The joint approach can be very efficient in achieving objectives. However, this relies heavily on a shared vision across a large number of organisations, perhaps in response to redevelopment or a shared problem:

> *"The dream is to work with a group with homogenous ambitions, willing to put in the same level of work and where the decision to participate in the process is anchored at the board of the companies to handle the problem with some companies are seen as "free riders" of others in the group."*

> *"Cumbersome process and conflicting interests make it difficult to point the noses of all involved in the same direction to solve a problem they all have in common".*

This requires effective management supported by a pro-active champion to overcome a risk of inertia, and sustain interest, especially when large numbers of organisations are involved:

> *"LTPNs are harder to co-ordinate [than ordinary travel plans]. Getting a group together is relatively easy but getting participation and achieving company buy-in is more difficult. It is important to establish a workable structure and partnership agreement that gives everyone something of what they want. If this can be achieved then companies are much more likely to contribute resource and energy".*

Successful examples of LTPNs exist in USA in the form of TMAs, though this approach is seen as being in it's infancy in Europe. The most successful TMAs are those with greater investment:

> *"The most successful TMA's will usually have a large membership base that pay dues and they are able to support it in that way. Or there are grants; Metro gives each of these TMA's about $25,000 a year which is a lot of help towards their funding."*

As with travel plans monitoring is vital and should be considered at this stage to prevent a repetition of what has happened with travel planning. The TRAVEL PLAN PLUS monitoring framework will assist with this.

4.5   The Future of LTPNs

4.5.6   The development of LTPNs over the next five / ten years

Into the future there is agreement that there will be growing demand for mobility management measures and the implementation of travel plans and LTPNs are expected to play a role in this. For this to happen there needs to be a greater high level support, continuity in funding and local provision, otherwise the concept will fail:

> *"Lack of leadership and support will prevent them being developed successfully. We are asking these plans to be developed. I don't think we can expect businesses to undertake this alone as they have other calls on their time and resources. They are not going to do it without support and we need to take the lead on this."*

Though the need for organisational *'ownership'* of the problem, or at least part of the problem, is also required to achieve success.

With the expected expansion, effectiveness will improve in response to greater understanding of which mobility measures work best dependent upon national, regional and local political form, geography, spatial planning and organisational factors, achieved through monitoring:

> *"The future is that governments and companies [will] understand each other better. Governments will know better what triggers companies and what they will need in order to become active in mobility management. Companies will know what (im)possibilities governments have. Within five years a joint perspective will be developed about the win-wins of mobility management: gains for governments; gains for companies; gains for employers."*

The travel planning and mobility management concept is seen as fluid with a need to adapt to situations. This is exemplified in how the Dutch approach has changed over time. Similarly, the Californian approach has softened owing to a backlash against regulation while the broader changing focus from congestion to corporate social responsibility and carbon emissions to incorporating employee wellbeing and health and the move from working as single organisations to working collectively further illustrate this. To survive there is the view that travel planning needs to adapt further. Specifically, it should look at all land users in a geographical area and integrate this approach into everyday practice at an organisational and personal level. In terms of spatial scale there are questions as to what is realistic, should the concept be extended to include a greater area, would this provide further benefits in terms of economies of scale or would it become unmanageable in terms of communication and provision?

Notes of caution are that in a recession engaging organisations in mobility management is more of a challenge and there needs to be a greater focus on implementation:

> *"In the current situation with the economic drawback the will to invest is lowered but at the same time companies have an increased interest to cut costs."*

There is fear in the travel plan profession that organisations will increasingly focus of core activities, not recognising or taking responsibility for generated traffic, especially without a clear business case for their introduction. Indeed, this is also the situation if measures are not proven to meet local and central political objectives. Furthermore, written travel plans and LTPNs per se do not mean implementation and developing win-win situations with visible implementation is essential:

> "It is only useful to implement if it really solves an existing problem for a company or local government organisation. Commitment from a broad social perspective point of view, without any assignable winners, only knows losers."

4.5.7 The role of government and other organisations in the future of LTPNs

As the role of travel plans, LTPNs and mobility management measures develops national government is seen as needing to lead by example, promoting the need to recognise and take responsibility for generated traffic and the wide reaching impacts:

> *"The best promotion begins with applying the plan in your own organisation. The administrations should not only create legislation for mobility management and wait for it to work. These policies must be implemented, promoted, supported and if necessary be sanctioned. Without a real effort of the public administration (state and autonomous), the networks will not achieve any true landmarks."*

This should be facilitated through: investment for support, implementation, monitoring and to subsidise alternative modes; advice and marketing; and updating regulations to support organisations encouraging sustainable travel options:

> *"[Government] could introduce legislation whereby if you are using your own vehicle for business travel in a vehicle over a certain carbon dioxide emission level, you will not get paid business mileage. You could change payment costs for cycle to work. Really controversially you could pay benefit for not taking up car parking spaces or reduce benefits if you use them. So you could offer free rail travel to offset cost of car parking but [currently] you are not allowed to give employees a free season ticket as that is seen as [a taxable] benefit in kind. That kind of issue, central government could address. Local government could do a similar sort of thing if it wanted to."*

Government also plays a role in defining what support is available at what level (and which organisations are responsible at each). The purpose of this is to avoid duplication, encourage cooperation and provide organisations completing travel plans with continuity and a uniform message.

Local governments are responsible primarily for the on the ground development of mobility management measures. In the future there is a desire among the interviewees for more personnel to support the whole process and consequently more resources to encourage implementation and monitoring. To facilitate this career progression needs to be a possibility for staff retention, supported with training and education programmes across the partner countries. With this in mind there is also the demand to 'raise the bar' on what is acceptable, to improve the standard of what is expected, accepted and delivered.

> *"The transport assessment [process is] a complete fabrication… As long as those documents are acceptable; you are never going to get improvements."*

Furthermore, consultants and academics should provide expertise with local and national and international impact and consultants be more involved in the development, implementation and/or monitoring of these measures.

Organisations, particularly large trip generators with a service role and high profile employees, such as the large supermarkets, need to provide leadership for other companies. Organisations can potentially be supported by trade unions, the Chamber

of Commerce and other organisational representatives, though this is dependent upon them seeing the benefits of these measures and providing a consistent view.

Considering the wide ranging potential benefits, bodies and charities responsible for health and wellbeing; social inclusion; the environment; and transport can support progress and ought to share in the outputs and outcomes of mobility management measures. In terms of provision transport operating companies and mobility related services should benefit from and provide for generated demand. There is also a role for vehicle research and design to promote efficiency and improved ergonomics across all modes.

5. Expert impact on TRAVEL PLAN PLUS

The expert interview findings have confirmed much of what TRAVEL PLAN PLUS set out to achieve. In particular, the need for a standardised monitoring framework which allows for contextual objectives; a thorough evaluation based on zero state and post implementation data; and an implementation guide. The potential for TRAVEL PLAN PLUS to feed into the current gaps in the business and policy cases should be maximised through highlighting the cost saving, and carbon reduction potential from the implementation site. Each of these can be linked to energy reduction.

Increased understanding of how geography and communication underpin the success of LTPNs is essential. Whether organisations are expected to have a travel plan prior to LTPN involvement should be influenced by the current system at each of the implementation sites. In terms of sustainability there should be attempts to integrate the process into core organisational activity and while this implementation project in energy driven, wider benefits should be considered in terms of organisational relevance and to highlight the overall potential of this approach.

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Acknowledgement

APPENDIX A: The Questions

We are interested in the views of Travel Plan experts and LTPN practitioners across Europe as to the future potential for Local Travel Plan Networks. Accordingly, we have prepared the following questions. Clearly, these questions are by no means exhaustive and interviewers should feel free to ask for additional information if they think it may be useful.

Personal experience

1. When and how did you first hear about the travel plan concept?

2. What led to your involvement in travel plans generally and LTPNs in particular?

3. What is your experience of travel plans and LTPNs?

4. What is your current role relating to travel plans and LTPNs?

Background information

5. How important would you say Travel Plans LTPNs are as a concept in your country currently, and how has this changed over time? Are there regional/local variations and if so, why?

6. What do you think are the important events/policies etc influencing the development of travel plans/LTPNs in your country?

7. What do you feel are the main reasons for organisations developing travel plans, and how have these changed over time?

8. What have been the main barriers preventing the introduction of mobility management/travel plans/LTPNs?

9. How has central/local government made it easier for organisations in your country to introduce travel plans/LTPNs? How does this differ from other countries which you have experience of?

Planning and Design Issues for LTPNs

10. Where can LTPNs be most effectively used? Why is this?

11. Where/when would a more conventional travel plan be most effectively used? Why is this?

12. In which ways, if any, are travel plans monitored? What is measured and how? How could monitoring be improved? Thinking about how travel plans are monitored, what else would need to be monitored for LTPNs?

The Performance of Travel Plans and LTPNs

13. How do you feel travel plans have performed until now? E.g. improving access to work; improving the local environment; achieving social goals; reducing congestion; reducing energy consumption; meeting their objective/s generally. How effective have they been in achieving this?

14. Do you think LTPNs could be more effective than conventional travel plans? If so, in what circumstances? If not, why not? What do you already know about LTPNs? Are there any reports with information about the best ways to operate them and how well they have performed? Are they available publicly/can we obtain copies?

The Future of LTPNs

15. How do you see travel plans/LTPNs developing over the next five/ten years? What will prevent organisations developing travel plans/LTPNs in the future? How should local governments encourage organisations to develop travel plans/LTPNs in the future?

16. How should central governments encourage organisations to develop travel plans/LTPNs in the future?

17. Which other organisations could encourage/support travel plans/LTPN development? How?

18. Do you think that the concepts of travel plans/LTPNs are useful ones, or are we wasting our time trying to make them work when we should be doing other things?

Appendix B: Definitions

Definitions of key concepts have been included to maintain consistency between interviews and countries, and interviewers should explain these to the interviewees if it is thought necessary. If these definitions need adapting, to reflect national / local situations please send a list of alternative definitions used. These are:

Travel Plan.

A travel plan can be defined as being "*a general term for a package of measures tailored to meet the needs of individual sites and aimed at promoting greener, cleaner travel choices and reducing reliance on the car… …It involves the development of a set of mechanisms, initiatives and targets that together can enable an organisation to reduce the impact of travel and transport on the environment, whilst also bringing a number of other benefits to the organisation as an employer and to staff.*"

LTPN.

A Local Travel Plan Network is a network or group of organisations that have come together to share resources and ideas for developing a travel plan in their local area.