

<b>CABINET</b>	Paper No.  <b>7(4)(b)</b>
Meeting date: 5 May 2009	
From: Corporate Director – Environment	

**SMART CUMBRIA – A BRIEF OVERVIEW BY ECONOMY & CULTURE SCRUTINY PANEL**

**RESPONSE BY CORPORATE DIRECTOR - ENVIRONMENT**

**1.0 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

1.1 *This report provides a response by the Corporate Director – Environment to the recommendations of the Economy & Culture Scrutiny Panel overview report into Smart Cumbria.*

**2.0 STRATEGIC PLANNING AND EQUALITY IMPLICATIONS**

2.1 *The development of smart cards for transport has been an objective of the Local Transport Plan and supports the wider goals of the Council Plan. It supports LAA indicator NI175 to improve access to services and facilities by public transport. Greater use of public transport should help Cumbria to meet its target for a reduction in CO<sub>2</sub> emissions (NI 186).*

2.2 *An expansion of NoWcard to deliver additional products as part of a Smart Cumbria initiative will require the identification of significant funding for an extended period, either from internal budgets or via external funding. Detailed funding requirements and timescales will be dependant on the confirmation of individual projects.*

2.3 *The roll-out of Smart Cumbria will have implications for the delivery of Council functions across several service departments and an appropriate Corporate lead will be required for potentially a very significant project spread over several years.*

2.4 *There are no equality implications at this time.*

### **3.0 RECOMMENDATION**

- 3.1 ***Cabinet is asked to endorse the response by the Corporate Director – Environment to the Scrutiny Panel’s report in considering a way forward.***

### **4.0 BACKGROUND**

- 4.1 This section comprises the responses by the Corporate Director – Environment to the six recommendations.
- 4.2 The report provides a succinct overview of the current status of the NoWcard project and the potential for future use of smart cards in Cumbria.

#### **Recommendation 1**

- 4.3 Opportunities to extend Smart travel to young people via the NoWcard transport smart card with stored travel rights (STR) should be explored as a matter of priority in the form of a pilot exercise in Cumbria.

#### ***Response***

- 4.4 NoWcard, using CIVITAS EU funding, has established an STR trial scheme for young people (16-24) in the Preston city region. The results to date have demonstrated that certain technical issues still require to be resolved before STR can be rolled-out further in the NoWcard area, although the generality of the system is functioning well.
- 4.5 Agreement is required from the operator to replicate the Preston scheme in Cumbria, particularly to offer a discount on adult fares. Initial discussions in this regard have been undertaken. However, this project can be taken forward relatively soon with minimal additional technical input, and is recommended as a priority. It is proposed that in conjunction with the development of the University of Cumbria a trial is undertaken in Carlisle.
- 4.6 The project would require resources, both financial and staff to take forward.

#### **Recommendation 2**

- 4.7 Opportunities to extend the NoWcard – (integrated) transport smart card to include train travel for students should be explored with the train operators with a view to undertaking a trial programme. Potential sources for additional funding should also be sought.

#### ***Response***

- 4.8 The current passenger train operators in Cumbria do not have a franchise commitment to introduce smart ticketing, although more recent franchise awards have this as standard. Only a small pilot project is currently in place (Windsor – Staines). Further schemes are under development. Northern has been approached regarding a pilot project on the Cumbrian Coast Line

that could involve University of Cumbria students and/or other discrete groups such as Sellafield workers. Smart operation would be limited to the extremity of the Coast Line until the wider rail network is smart enabled.

- 4.9 Funding would be required for project management as well as provision of ITSO ticket machines for train staff and booking offices. There is the opportunity for synergy with other evolving rail pilots (eg. Scotland). It is considered that the opportunity be explored as part of the Energy Coast Master Plan.

### **Recommendation 3**

- 4.10 A medium and long term strategy (vision) for the continued development of the NoWcard technology, implementation and support programme, which will include a cash carrying capability for other non-transport services and purchases, needs to be developed jointly with other stakeholders.

### ***Response***

- 4.11 The NoWcard platform provides Cumbria County Council and other stakeholders with an opportunity to develop smart services beyond the current national concessionary fares scheme for the elderly and disabled.
- 4.12 A Business Plan has recently been prepared for the NoWcard partnership covering a range of options to develop smart ticketing and other products.
- 4.13 Use of the STR for non-transport products is being rapidly developed by the credit card organisations (Visa, Mastercard and Barclaycard) for use in small purchases. This is being rolled-out across various retail chains and in London is offered in partnership with Transport for London's Oyster card. Use of STR for small fees for local authority services should be possible if it was agreed that the development of NoWcard incorporated such services. As many services are provided by the district councils, a move to smart-enable access to such services requires agreement at the highest level (see Recommendation 5).

### **Recommendation 4**

- 4.14 The first use of the cash carrying facility should be for travel rights to be stored for non-concessionary bus passengers as season tickets and for individual fares.

### ***Response***

- 4.15 As discussed above, STR should be technically capable of expansion in the NoWcard area later in 2009. STR is ideal for the payment of single or return fares or day-tickets. The current STR trial for young people in Preston has established a 10% discount off the full fares. Season tickets do not usually use STR, as STR provides a continuous payment method, even for daily travel. However smart cards can be used as weekly or monthly season tickets (eg. Megarider), but these will usually be issued by the commercial operator. However Cumbria County Council could issue smart seasons for use on its own supported services as part of the development of its fares

policy. It is recommended that this is actively pursued and reported as part of the review of the supported fares structure.

### **Recommendation 5**

- 4.16 Given the likely timescales for implementation, the County Council should enter into discussions with the district councils and other parking organisations at an early date to examine the use of the stored cash facility to make paying parking charges easier for the citizen and less costly to administer for the parking authority.

#### ***Response***

- 4.17 Off-street car parking is not a County Council function. However, the NoWcard system can provide a secure framework for the district councils and other organisations to eventually move to smart parking payment.
- 4.18 An appropriate avenue to take this and other multi-authority projects forward should be through the Cumbria Improvement & Efficiency Partnership (CIEP), particularly having regard to the significant capital costs of such equipment. It is recommended that this be explored as part of the Transport Framework for the Lake District proposals.

### **Recommendation 6**

- 4.19 Opportunities for new sources of funding for the delivery of Smart Cumbria need to be identified as a matter of priority.

#### ***Response***

- 4.20 All extensions of NoWcard to deliver Smart Cumbria require an element of capital funding and have an ongoing revenue cost, although this can be recovered from users. Initial costs have been identified in the NoWcard Business Plan but will be revised as individual projects are developed.
- 4.21 It will also be important to identify appropriate Project Management skills and resources to take these projects forward over the coming years.

## **5.0 OPTIONS**

- 5.1 The Scrutiny Panel report suggest a number of projects to take Smart Cumbria forward. The deliverability of these projects will need to be considered in the light of available resources and a deliverable plan phased over a number of years. The proposal to extend STR to young people in Cumbria on local buses is relatively straightforward and is recommended as a priority, subject to resources.
- 5.2 Cabinet may decide to take no action.

## 6.0 RESOURCE AND VALUE FOR MONEY IMPLICATIONS

- 6.1 Development of Smart Cumbria projects will have implications for both funding and project management for the County Council and other stakeholders.
- 6.2 The option for Cabinet to agree to the Corporate Director that Environment's comments to the Scrutiny recommendations include a number of actions that have resource implications for 2009/10. These are to be resourced from existing staff and Nowcard support staff. There will be longer term financial implications which will be addressed through future budget considerations and the Nowcard business plan.

## 7.0 LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 7.1 There are no legal implications at this time.

## 8.0 CONCLUSION

- 8.1 The NoWcard project has been an outstanding example of local authority cooperation and also cooperation with the private sector. It is now opportune to consider the future use of the technical platform that it provides and to consider priorities for the implementation of Smart Cumbria, starting with STR for young people.

**Rob Terwey**  
**Head of Transport & Spatial Planning**

*13 March 2009*

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## APPENDICES

No appendices

Electoral Division(s): All Cumbria

Executive Decision

Yes	<input type="checkbox"/>
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Key Decision

<input type="checkbox"/>	No
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If a Key Decision, is the proposal published in the current Forward Plan?

<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	N/A
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Is the decision exempt from call-in on grounds of urgency?

<input type="checkbox"/>	No
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If exempt from call-in, has the agreement of the Chair of the relevant Overview and Scrutiny Committee been sought or obtained?

		N/A
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Has this matter been considered by Overview and Scrutiny?  
If so, give details below.

Yes	
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Has an environmental or sustainability impact assessment been undertaken?

	No	
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Has an equality impact assessment been undertaken?

	No	
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***N.B. If an executive decision is made, then a decision cannot be implemented until the expiry of the eighth working day after the date of the meeting – unless the decision is urgent and exempt from call-in and the Head of Member Services and Scrutiny has obtained the necessary approvals.***

### **PREVIOUS RELEVANT COUNCIL OR EXECUTIVE DECISIONS** ***[including Local Committees]***

Cabinet – 5 February 2008

### **CONSIDERATION BY OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY**

Economy & Culture Scrutiny Panel 8 December 2008  
4 March 2009

### **BACKGROUND PAPERS**

NoWcard Business Plan 2009 - 2014.

### **RESPONSIBLE CABINET MEMBER**

Alan Clark, Cabinet Member for Highways and Transportation.

### **REPORT AUTHOR**

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