

PLACE MAKING AND INNOVATION EXECUTIVE ADVISORY BOARD

21 October 2019

- * Councillor Angela Gunning (Chairman)
- * Councillor Gordon Jackson (Vice-Chairman)

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| * Councillor Jon Askew | * Councillor Masuk Miah |
| * Councillor Christopher Barrass | * Councillor Maddy Redpath |
| * Councillor Ruth Brothwell | * Councillor Will Salmon |
| * Councillor Graham Eyre | * Councillor Patrick Sheard |
| Councillor Liz Hogger | Councillor Chris Blow |
| * Councillor Diana Jones | Councillor John Rigg |

* Present

Councillors Chris Blow and John Rigg were also in attendance.

PMI19 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE AND NOTIFICATION OF SUBSTITUTE MEMBERS

An apology for absence was received from Councillor Liz Hogger. No substitute was in attendance.

PMI20 LOCAL CODE OF CONDUCT AND DECLARATION OF DISCLOSABLE PECUNIARY INTERESTS

There were no disclosures of interest.

PMI21 MINUTES

The minutes of the Executive Advisory Board held on 23 September 2019 were not accepted as a correct record owing to amendments required to PMI14 – Bedford Wharf – Plaza Landscaping, Forward Plan and EAB Work Programme. The changes are detailed below in italics:

BEDFORD WHARF - PLAZA LANDSCAPING

- ~~It was confirmed that as part of the S106 agreement the Council was obliged a restorative landscaping scheme. The Executive had expressed concern at its meeting in January that the public were consulted on what they would like to see and have. Without a scheme the Council was unable to move forward and could not start taking contributions which would help facilitate future development and mould the Guildford townscape around Bedford Wharf. The entrance to the station was opposite Walnut Bridge and with high footfall the Council wished to create a safer and more pleasant route for pedestrians. The Council wanted to work with Solum so that their development fitted with Walnut Bridge. *It was confirmed that as part of Walnut Bridge Planning condition (not S106) the council was obliged to deliver a restorative landscaping scheme.*~~
- The Board noted that Solum was moving forward, the planning conditions were being discharged and works would start next year. *The landscaping works had to be in place within 6 months of the completion of the consent of the proposed bridge.*
- The masterplan was in response to a planning application whereby the Council was trying to engage with the public to identify what should be in the public realm. It was confirmed that the Council had secured £1 million pounds of funding *towards public*

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~~art at Guildford Station. It was therefore an opportunity to influence the project with Solum as we had not yet discharged those conditions.~~

- The Board considered *it was of great concern a shame* that if the scheme would not be completed until June 2022 that the Council was not using that time to look at a broader masterplan which encompassed all of Bedford Wharf.

EXECUTIVE FORWARD PLAN

The Board strongly recommended that the Strategic Town Centre Masterplan was included in the Forward Plan and was actioned as soon as possible.

The Board noted that the Stoke Park Masterplan was due for consideration by Executive at its meeting on 24 September 2019 and the Place Making and Innovation EAB on 21 October 2019. [post-meeting note: The Stoke Park Masterplan was no longer on the agenda for the Place-Making and Innovation EAB meeting on 21 October].

The Board also noted that the Guildford Crowdfunding Proposal was no longer on the agenda for Executive at its meeting on 24 September 2019.

EAB WORK PROGRAMME

The Board noted its work programme and recommended that a briefing on the Town Centre Masterplan was included as well as it ultimately being considered by the Executive.

The Board also noted that the Special Planning Documents (SPDs) to support the Guildford Local Plan should now be in development and, in light of its role in placemaking and the Council's commitment to openness and transparency, strongly requested sight of, and involvement in, these at early drafting stage, rather than once completed and put out to consultation.

PMI22 PUBLIC BIKE SHARE SCHEME FOR GUILDFORD

The EAB received an update and presentation on the project to deliver a public bike share scheme in Guildford. Donald Yell, the Council's Principal Transport Planner, introduced the item. A public bike share scheme for Guildford was identified in the current Council's Corporate Plan. This EAB's predecessor, the Borough, Economy and Infrastructure EAB had previously considered the project and the potential for a public bike share scheme in September 2017, which was prior to a feasibility study being undertaken. The Executive also considered a report in July 2018 which gave interim findings from the feasibility study. Subsequent work carried out included a route assessment study which looked at the cycle routes that bike share users would be most likely to use. Progress with commissioning the scheme had been complicated by the pre-existing scheme at the University of Surrey. Discussions with the university and operator of the scheme were continuing but that information was commercially sensitive. On that basis, a special and private meeting of the Place-Making and Innovation EAB had been scheduled on Thursday 5 December 2019 to discuss these issues further. [Post-meeting note: This item has been rescheduled for the Joint EAB meeting on Thursday 9 January 2020, where it will be considered in private.]

The Board received a presentation from Mark Strong, Managing Consultant for 'Transport Initiatives' who [with consultancy Urban Movement] had undertaken the feasibility study work and also the route assessment study. Transport Initiatives had worked on cycling and walking initiatives across the country as well as on a number of bike share schemes including Guildford. A public bike share scheme is open to the public and could be used for a variety of journey purposes. There were numerous elements to consider in setting up a bike share scheme system including the fleet of bikes, the membership, the back office to

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deal with the membership, the maintenance and redistribution of the bikes, as well as a payment system. The first large-scale and the largest bike share scheme in the country was launched by Transport for London in 2010 in London. There have recently been a number of changes in the market and there are different models of schemes, albeit this is somewhat fluid. There are docked systems, dockless systems, hybrid systems, location-based systems and workplace-based systems. The bikes can be pedal bikes or electrically assisted bikes (e-bikes). In docked and hybrid systems with docking stations, these can be physical docks or alternatively virtual hubs. There were generally two types of membership; a pay as you go option and a membership option with say an annual fee which usually includes a given period of time for using the bikes at no extra cost allowed each day.

Smart bikes could be hired through dedicated bike share apps. Geo-fencing can be used to restrict where bike share cycles can and cannot be parked in dockless or hybrid schemes, which can reduce the risk of street clutter and obstructions and can also be used to define the area in which the cycles can be ridden.

The Board noted that the number of users and trips taken in bike share schemes in the UK had grown over time. The gender split of bike share users is much more even than for general cycling. About 15% of trips have switched from drivers and it also reintroduces people to cycling and encourages people to cycle more often. There has been significant variation in the usage of schemes. More recent schemes, with better bikes and technology, is attracting users.

A publicly funded scheme such as has been considered by Guildford Borough Council involving a concession with an operator which can be integrated with wider transport strategies and allow for clear management and reporting structure. The scheme could be revenue neutral or have a profit share. A successful scheme required planning and had associated benefits and can create a virtuous circle for cycling with users of a bike share scheme adding their voices to press for cycle infrastructure improvements. Risks as well as requiring enough initial investment.

Transport Initiatives assessed the bike share potential in the urban area of Guildford using their methodology involving eight key factors:

- Key destinations/attractions
- Propensity to cycle
- Potential for increased cycling
- Main cycle routes
- Significant areas of future development
- Public transport / Park & Ride
- Levels of cycling
- Population density

A red, amber and green system was used for identifying the likelihood of usage. Docking hubs should ideally be distributed around a 5 minutes' walk from the adjacent hub or hubs. It was noted that the existing University of Surrey scheme had a total of nine docking hubs. Based upon the assessment, the scheme was recommended to be developed in a phased manner. A Phase A scheme covering the town centre and west Guildford, together with the existing University scheme, would provide 200-225 bikes. A Phase B scheme could be introduced later. This would cover North Guildford plus additional hubs within the Phase A area. The exact location of the hubs would be left to the operators working with the Council and landowners. Two docking hubs were proposed to be located at Slyfield Industrial Estate following stakeholder.

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A route assessment feasibility study had also been undertaken to identify the most likely routes that bike share users would take in making journeys and to identify improvements required to make those routes fast, safe and convenient for a variety of users, particularly those less experienced cyclists. Research and stakeholder input informed this. As identified in the report, the route assessment study could be used as evidence base for policy for cycle network improvement in the Local Plan Part 2 Development Management Policies.

The Board was requested to note and provide comment on:

- The Council's revised proposal to deliver Phase A of the Guildford BC bike share scheme
- The consultant's recommendations for the size of the Phase A scheme and the location of docking hubs
- The consultant's draft plans for the Guildford cycle network as identified in the route assessments feasibility study

The Board discussed the presentation and made the following comments:

- Supported the scheme and particularly the proposal for e-bikes owing to the hilly topography of some parts of Guildford thereby assisting people who were not that fit. Suggested providing integrated parking at hubs for people using their own bikes owing to lack of bike parking provision overall in Guildford.
- *Mark Strong confirmed that the provision of additional cycle parking had been considered as part of the cycle route assessment and was dependent upon the type of scheme adopted. A hybrid scheme could for example provide additional cycle parking which could also be used for general cycle parking.*
- Considered that there were significant differences between Guildford and Brighton which compromised the comparative evidence drawn from Brighton's bike share scheme in the report. Brighton is significantly different to Guildford, given Brighton has the seaside promenade along which to cycle which was on flat level ground as well as other tourist attractions to help generate profit for the operator. Centre of Guildford was on a hill and an e-bike proposal was therefore preferred as standard bikes could result in one-way trips downhill resulting in increased operational costs.
- *Mark Strong stated that hilliness was not the only factor to consider in respect of the usage of a scheme. E-bikes can help users tackle hills and also extend the length (range) of journeys made.*
- Concerned about the dangers of encouraging cycling on cobble stones in wet weather as well as the cost of providing docking hubs with electrical charging for e-bikes would be considerable.
- *Mark Strong confirmed that the bike share cycles are robust with wide tyres so they would not get stuck between the cobbles and were built to be more robust in general.*
- Concerned about the appropriateness of having two docking hubs located at Slyfield Industrial Estate, given the volume and speeds of traffic in this area.
- *There is an existing cycle route to Slyfield. It was confirmed that this was a strong request which had come directly from the stakeholders that these docking hubs should be included in Phase A of the scheme.*
- Asked whether there was there a mechanism inbuilt into the GPS system which could prevent cyclists from using the High Street which was pedestrianised between Quarry Street and North Street Monday-Friday 11am – 4pm, Saturday 9am – 6pm and Sunday 12 noon – 5pm.
- *Mark Strong confirmed that electric motors could be automatically throttled on and off, so for instance the system could be configured to reduce the speed of a bike going through a park.*

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- Supported the principle of the bike share scheme and considers that the scheme has the potential to be sponsored.
- *Mark Strong confirmed that sponsorship was normally arranged by the operator with approval from the Council.*
- Questioned the percentages given on page 19 of the report in relation to bike share and what it was a percentage of? Given it had a high score of over 50% in the town centre it was important to know how certain the Council was about how many people in Guildford were going to use the bikes given the high costs of the scheme?
- *Mark Strong confirmed that the figures were given out of 100 and was an arbitrary score but was on par with other areas and was a way of measuring them against each other.*
- The bar charts showing bike share use in Brighton and Cardiff were notably high, but those areas were also big university towns. Did the figures given for these towns include the bike share schemes at the universities or had those numbers been removed because the universities had their own bike share schemes? With an ageing population in Guildford and the top half of the town centre being pedestrianised, did we have the numbers to support the percentages provided?
- *Mark Strong confirmed that the Council did envisage a combined scheme with the university that would be available to both students and the rest of the public. There are no examples of places that have one scheme for a university and a separate scheme for the rest of the town or city as it would be a disincentive if the operators could not access the student market. There are places with more than one scheme, but the schemes can operate across the market and are not divided in the manner of a university scheme and a separate scheme for the rest of the town. This was why the Council was in discussions currently with the university.*
- Sought clarification regarding page 25, which showed a map colour coded according to bike share location. Were the red dots showing the places where people were most likely to use bike share in relation to businesses and yellow dots where people were most likely to use bike share in relation to places of leisure?
- *Mark Strong advised that the maps therefore provided reassurance to both the Council and potential operators that the suggested docking hub locations will allow for a scheme to cater for users to undertake a variety of journey purposes. Commuting for example is only one sixth of all journeys.*
- Considered that the e-bike did not work like an electric scooter and effort had to be put into cycling uphill.
- *Mark Strong stated that e-bikes provide for about 85% of the health benefits of standard pedal bikes. He noted that if a bike were powered constantly by an electric motor, as opposed to be activated by pedaling, then it would be considered an electric moped and would not therefore be suitable for a bike share scheme. 'Wheels for Wellbeing' was a group which had found that e-bikes were very good for people with neurological conditions such as MS and Parkinson's Disease and had proven to extend peoples' mobility range. E-bikes were not suitable for everyone and required people to have some mobility power.*
- What survey research had been undertaken to understand whether or not people in Guildford who do not regularly cycle would use a bike share scheme, and, if so, how? Would like to be reassured that it was a scheme that people would use.
- *Advised that Transport Initiatives had not carried out a general public opinion survey.*
- In the context of the Council's recently declared climate emergency, considered that the scheme must be able to demonstrate carbon neutrality. Would like to understand the scheme's carbon footprint given the significant scheme infrastructure and the activities associated with battery swapping on e-bikes and the redistribution of bikes by vans, whilst recognizing that there may be some carbon savings from reduced use of cars by scheme users.

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- *Mark Strong said that it was very difficult to assess the parameters of, and amount of use required, in order to achieve a carbon neutral bike share scheme. Carbon impact of each journey made on a bike share scheme depends on what mode of transport the user would otherwise have used. Quoted research that embodied carbon for a very high-end private bike was 10% of that for a car. Most bikes were made in China and Taiwan, very few bikes were made in the UK apart from the Brompton bike. In general, the carbon cost of cycling was much lower than that of driving as well as the associated health benefits.*
- *It was also advised that the redistribution of bikes did not necessarily need to be carried out using a van but rather could be undertaken by using a bespoke cargo bike. Electric vans could also be used, and these could be recharged with electricity from a green energy provider.*
- *Asked whether it was a possibility to introduce an e-bike helmet hire scheme, given that users of the bike share scheme would not own cycle helmets given that they do not own bikes themselves?*
- *Mark Strong advised that the wearing of cycle helmets by users of bike share schemes is a contentious issue. Bike share schemes in Australia have been closed due to the impact of a compulsory requirement to wear a cycle helmet. Helmets had to be sterilised before being rented out again because of the risk of infection. In London there are bike share users who carry their own helmets around. The Council could choose to look at a subsidised scheme for the provision of cycle helmets. Important to recognise that bike share schemes have a better safety record than private bikes, perhaps due to the bikes being well maintained and all having working lights on, and or perhaps due to drivers giving a wider berth to the users of bike share schemes. Places with higher cycle helmet wearing have higher cycle casualty issues. Helmet wearing is one of the means by which cycle safety can be improved. There has only been reported Killed or Seriously Injured in the Brighton scheme, which was a seriously injured, and there has been only one fatality in the Transport for London scheme since 2010. An ambassador scheme was provided in Brighton to accompany the opening of their scheme to help support people to use the scheme.*
- *Asked what lessons had been learnt from the schemes which had closed in places like Southampton and Reading?*
- *In terms of bike share schemes that had closed, Blackpool was given as an example where bikes were not used in the winter which therefore reduced revenue, in addition the bikes were not well made. Reading received capital funding through the 'Local Sustainable Transport Fund' in the early 2010s and then ran out of money as the Council had no back up plan for when there was no longer funding. They also owned the bikes which placed responsibility on the Council for maintenance. The model proposed for Guildford is instead that the Council would buy the services of the bikes, with the bike share operator owning the bikes rather than the Council. The dockless schemes in Southampton and Manchester were run by Chinese firms which introduced a large number of low value bikes, costing around \$100 each to produce, with no redistribution or maintenance. The councils had to assume the responsibility for clearing up these schemes.*
- *What is the relationship with Surrey County Council, considering the state of Guildford's roads particularly the lack of separation between bikes and general traffic and the generally poor state of the road surfaces on carriageway edges where cycle lanes? Is there agreement with Surrey County Council and have we discussed with Surrey County Council whether they will be upgrading these roads and cycle paths?*
- *Donald Yell advised that the Surrey County Council officers who deal with cycling were interested in the potential for Guildford Borough Council to bring forward a scheme and that there are various schemes that are being brought forward by Surrey County Council and Guildford Borough Council's Major Projects Team to improve facilities for cyclists in Guildford. There is a lot more that could be done as is*

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demonstrated by the work that Transport Initiatives have done on a potential Guildford cycle network.

- Considered that the Council seems to have taken it for granted that the scheme would have an e-bike fleet. Had a cost benefit analysis been undertaken of using a mixed fleet of standard bikes and e-bikes? Given the scheme cost a total of £830,000, this equated to 175 bikes which was a cost of £4,700 per bike.
- Had the Council weighed up use cases for different kinds of bikes? For example, an e-bike could be used for going up a hill, but a standard bike would only be acceptable for a journey along the river in Guildford.
- *In terms of cost, the Council was proposing to buy a scheme, not just a fleet of bikes. A bike share scheme was a package and included all the back-office support including managing transactions and maintenance.*
- In relation to the distribution of the proposed docking hubs, it appeared that Onslow was located in the middle of the Phase A area but had no hubs. It was important to have a more evenly distributed scheme throughout all the areas as they seemed to be clustered and a lot of people would miss out on a good opportunity. For example, parents travelling onwards to work after dropping their children off at school could use a bike to get to the rail station.
- *It was agreed that it was difficult to find a place which was a centre in Onslow for a docking hub as it appeared to be a highly residential area. Docking hubs needed to be in a central location that is known, , where there is a throughput of people for instance outside of a shop, a parade of shops, a community or a post-office. If not, docking hubs could be prone to vandalism.*
- Should the Council get secondary schools involved in this scheme?
- Operators vary in terms of age limits. *In Brighton bike use was regulated by a height limit not an age limit. E-bike usage also had an age limit of 14. This is not necessarily the same as a commercially identified age limit. Promotion and engagement is important in order to achieve a successful bike share scheme. Achieving public buy-in of a bike share scheme is very important.*
- Did any of the schemes include bikes with provision for child seats?
- *Because of economies of scale, the bikes all tend to be of one style. They do not tend to have different adaptations, such as child seats, included owing to the costs involved and such innovations not making commercial sense. In the Paris scheme, there has been experimentation with providing child bikes, but only in a limited area and in the summer.*
- In paragraph 5.3 there was an assumption that the Council was going to use e-bikes but would investigate the use of other bikes separately in the next phase. What did Transport Initiatives expect to learn?
- *In Watford, the Council is starting with standard bikes and then later adding e-bikes. Donald Yell noted that Transport Initiatives' advice had been that options for a part or full e-bike system should be explored with potential bike share operators as part of the procurement process. However, the previous administration preferred to advance a scheme on the basis of a fully e-bike fleet, and that was the basis of the Council's bid to the Local Enterprise Partnership.*
- Can the docking hubs be moved, in part or in full?
- *Docked schemes with electrical connections would be quite difficult to move but if a scheme was implemented with swappable batteries, the docking hubs could more easily be moved. Flexibility of locations of docking hubs is important for instance where a site is being redeveloped and there is no longer a demand in that location.*
- What does the £830,000 buy? Would a bike share provider work on the basis that they would take their profit out of the revenue for operating the bikes? If Guildford Borough Council is paying for the infrastructure, what are the risks for the Council if the scheme fails and what would the scheme cost to run per year?

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- *The proposed funding of a Guildford scheme is not dissimilar to that for similar schemes in similar places, such as for that in Watford. Rough figures given for Brighton and central Manchester schemes.*
- *Donald Yell explained that the Council's working assumption to date has been that a Guildford scheme would be commissioned by way of a concessions contract as opposed to a services contract. This would buy a bike share scheme for 3-5 years with the potential for a 2-year extension. The concessions contract would transfer the risk for operating the scheme to the bike share company who are contractually obliged to provide the bike share scheme of set size and cover any revenue losses. The estimated size of the Phase A scheme was shown in Table 4 in Appendix 2. The Council had £530,000 in funds on the provisional capital programme and £300,000 had been provisional agreed from the Local Enterprise Partnership.*
- The Board recommended that market research was undertaken which officers would discuss further with senior officers and the Lead Councillor.

PMI23 EXECUTIVE FORWARD PLAN

The Board queried why the Bike Share Scheme was scheduled for consideration by the Executive at its meeting on 22 October. This was the day after this meeting and left no time for the Boards comments to be fed back to the Executive. Officers explained that it had been anticipated that the item would be considered at this meeting but had in fact since been re-scheduled for consideration by the Executive at their meeting in January 2020.

PMI24 EAB WORK PROGRAMME

The Board noted that the EAB and Overview and Scrutiny Work Programme meeting had been cancelled and would be re-scheduled shortly. [post-meeting note: The EAB and Overview and Scrutiny Work Programme meeting had now been rescheduled to Monday 11 November 2019].

The Board also noted that the Supplementary Planning Documents (SPDs) to support the Guildford Local Plan should now be in development and, in the light of its role in placemaking and the Council's commitment to openness and transparency, strongly requested sight of, and involvement in, these at early drafting stage, rather than once completed and put out to consultation.

The meeting finished at 9.00 pm

Signed

Date

Chairman