

Place-making and Innovation Executive Advisory Board Report

Ward(s) affected: Burpham, Christchurch, Friary & St Nicolas, Holy Trinity, Mellow, Onslow, Shalford, Stoke, Stoughton and Westborough

Report of Director of Planning and Regeneration

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Public Bike Share Scheme for Guildford

Executive Summary

The purpose of this report is to provide the Place-making and Innovation Executive Advisory Board (EAB) with an update on the project to deliver a public bike share scheme in Guildford.

Previous consideration by EAB in September 2017

The Borough, Economy and Infrastructure EAB considered the project and the potential for a public bike share scheme in September 2017. The Board supported the proposal to undertake a feasibility study to consider the matter further, and made a number of suggestions with respect to the scope of the study and the preparation for a potential Guildford Borough Council-commissioned bike share scheme (hereafter the Guildford BC bike share scheme or Guildford BC scheme).

EAB's suggestions have been taken into account in taking the project forward.

The feasibility of a bike share scheme

A report to Executive in July 2018 presented an interim feasibility report dated March 2018, undertaken by consultants Transport Initiatives and Urban Movement. The interim feasibility study work informed a funding bid to the Enterprise M3 Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP) for £600k, to complement £530k on the Council's provisional capital programme. This 2018 funding bid to the LEP was unsuccessful.

Further feasibility study work has subsequently been undertaken by the consultants. Key findings and recommendations are:

- A Guildford BC bike share scheme is feasible, either as a standard or an electric bike ('e-bike') system.
- Options for a part or full e-bike system should be explored with potential bike share operators as part of the procurement process.
- A hybrid model for the scheme is likely to serve Guildford best, which would involve cycles mainly being parked at docking hubs, but also allow for the use of

'virtual' docking hubs on a permanent or temporary basis e.g. where space is limited or for special events.

- The scheme should be commissioned by way of a concession contract to operate a scheme in Guildford for 3-5 years with the potential for a 2 year extension.
- The operator will be responsible for all operational matters, including maintenance and redistribution of cycles.
- The operator will be expected to cover all revenue costs and will be responsible for seeking sponsorship.
- The scheme should be compatible with the University bike share scheme and operate in partnership with it, in order to achieve either one scheme or compatible schemes which are interoperable.
- The scheme is recommended to be developed in a phased manner, with Phase A covering the town centre and west Guildford including the University of Surrey campuses, and Phase B covering north Guildford and also provide additional docking hubs within the Phase A area.

A second funding bid was made in 2019 to the LEP, this time for a reduced capital sum of £300k, which together with the £530k on the Council's provisional capital programme gives a total provisional capital budget of £830k. The revised proposal is to deliver Phase A of the Guildford BC bike share scheme based on a fully e-bike fleet, docking hubs with the option for the scheme to also be operated in a 'hybrid' mode, and a suite of complementary measures to provide appropriate signing and lining around docking hubs. A potential Phase B of the scheme, for which the Council would have an option to purchase at a later date, would allow the scheme to be expanded.

The LEP provisionally approved the 2019 funding bid in June 2019 and a draft contract is, as of October 2019, in preparation.

Route assessments and the Guildford cycle network

A route assessments feasibility study has 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.

The consultant's proposals for a Guildford cycle network is presently in draft and two plans are provided in Appendices 3 and 4.

Given that the capital budget available for a Guildford BC bike share scheme has reduced, a smaller amount, perhaps in the region of £50k, is now proposed to be allocated for complementary measures focused on signing and lining around docking hubs.

The outputs of the route assessments feasibility study is proposed by officers to be used in the evidence base to inform the preparation of a policy on the improvement of the cycle network for the part 2 of the new Local Plan (Development Management Policies).

Progress with commissioning of a potential bike share scheme

The commissioning of a Guildford BC scheme has been complicated by the existence of

the University scheme. Officers have been in discussion with the University and the operator of the University scheme regarding the commissioning of a Guildford BC scheme and these discussions are continuing and commercially sensitive.

Recommendation to Executive Advisory Board

That the Executive Advisory Board is requested to note and provide comment on:

- The Council's revised proposal to deliver Phase A of the Guildford BC bike share scheme, as set out above and in paragraph 5.3.
- The consultant's recommendations for the size of the Phase A scheme and the location of docking hubs, as set out in Appendix 2.
- The consultant's draft plans for the Guildford cycle network as identified in the route assessments feasibility study, as described in section 6 and Appendices 3 and 4.

Reason(s) for Recommendation:

To inform the further development of the project to deliver a public bike share scheme in Guildford., which is a scheme in the Council's Corporate Plan 2018-2023.

1. Purpose of Report

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to provide the Place-making and Innovation Executive Advisory Board (EAB) with an update on the project to deliver a public bike share scheme for Guildford.
- 1.2 This follows the meeting of the predecessor Borough, Economy and Infrastructure EAB in September 2017 which considered the potential for a public bike share scheme. The Board supported the proposal to undertake a feasibility study to consider the matter further, and made a number of suggestions with respect to the scope of the feasibility study and the preparation for a potential bike share scheme.
- 1.3 The Executive also received a report on the bike share scheme in July 2018, which included an interim feasibility report. The Executive report addressed a number of the suggestions made by the EAB. It set out the scale and scope of a then proposed Guildford BC scheme.

2. Strategic Priorities

- 2.1 The recommendation supports the delivery of the priority from the Corporate Plan 2018-2023 for: Making travel in Guildford and across the borough easier. Specifically, the plan identifies a project to introduce a public bike share scheme (including electric bikes) in Guildford.

3. University bike share scheme

- 3.1 The consideration of a potential Guildford BC bike share scheme has taken place in the context of the commissioning and establishment of a University of Surrey bike share scheme.
- 3.2 In 2017, the University entered the Santander Cycles University Challenge, a competition by Santander Bank to support the development of two university focused bike share schemes. The competition was held in partnership with Nextbike UK Ltd, a bike share operator. Although the University was not the overall winner, as a runner-up in the competition it was awarded £75k from Nextbike to help set up a University of Surrey scheme.
- 3.3 The University and Nextbike entered into a contract in December 2017. The University scheme launched in summer 2018 with 50 manual bikes at eight docking hubs, three on the Stag Hill campus, four on the Manor Park campus including at the Surrey Sports Park and one serving the Surrey Research Park. An additional docking hub has since been opened at the Guildford Business Park. The contract term for the University scheme is five years from June 2018.

4. Bike share feasibility study

- 4.1 A bike share feasibility study was commissioned from Transport Initiatives and Urban Movement in 2018.
- 4.2 A report to Executive in July 2018 presented an interim feasibility report dated March 2018.
- 4.3 Further feasibility study work has since been undertaken by the consultant. Key findings and recommendations are:
 - A Guildford BC bike share scheme is feasible, either as a standard or an electric bike ('e-bike') system.
 - Options for a part or full e-bike system should be explored with potential bike share operators as part of the procurement process
 - A hybrid model for the scheme is likely to serve Guildford best, which would involve cycles mainly being parked at docking hubs, but also allow for the use of 'virtual' docking hubs on a permanent or temporary basis e.g. where space is limited or for special events.
 - The scheme should be commissioned by way of a concession contract to operate a scheme in Guildford for 3-5 years with the potential for a 2 year extension.
 - The scheme should be compatible with the University bike share scheme and operate in partnership with its, in order to achieve either one scheme or compatible schemes which are interoperable.
 - The scheme is recommended to be developed in a phased manner, with Phase A covering the town centre and west Guildford including the University of Surrey campuses, and Phase B covering north Guildford and also provide additional docking hubs within the phase A area.

- 4.4 The consultant's initial assessment of bike share potential is provided in Appendix 1. This has been used to indicate those areas of the town which have greatest potential for bike share.
- 4.5 Appendix 2 provides further explanation of the consultant's proposal for Phases A and B of the scheme. Plan 3 shows the proposed Phase A and Phase B areas. Table 4 provides the suggested range of scheme size that could be expected. Plan 4 shows the suggested locations of docking hubs in the Guildford BC Phase A scheme and the locations of docking hubs in the University scheme both existing and planned. The suggested scheme extent and phasing is based on the initial assessment of bike share potential and also stakeholder input.

5. Capital funding for a Guildford BC bike share scheme

- 5.1 A capital proposal for £530k for the Guildford BC bike share scheme was added to the Council's General Fund Capital Programme provisional list in February 2018.
- 5.2 The interim feasibility work was used to inform a funding bid in 2018 to the Enterprise M3 Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP) for £600k, which was to complement the £530k on the Council's provisional list. In view of the launch of the University of Surrey bike share scheme in summer 2018, the 2018 funding bid to the LEP assumed that the Guildford BC scheme would involve the upgrading of the University bike share scheme to e-bikes. This 2018 funding bid to the LEP was unsuccessful.
- 5.3 Following further work on the feasibility study, a second funding bid was made to the LEP in February 2019 (revised in April 2019), this time for a reduced capital sum of £300k, which together with the £530k on the Council's provisional capital programme gives a total provisional capital budget of £830k. The revised proposal is to deliver Phase A of the Guildford BC bike share scheme based on a fully e-bike fleet, docking hubs with the option for the scheme to also be operated in a 'hybrid' mode, and a suite of complementary measures to provide appropriate signing and lining around docking hubs. A potential Phase B of the scheme, for which the Council would have an option to purchase at a later date, would allow the scheme to be expanded.
- 5.4 The LEP provisionally approved this second funding bid in June 2019 and a draft contract is, as of October 2019, in preparation.

6. Route assessments and the Guildford cycle network

- 6.1 Board members of the EAB in September 2017 suggested the need for infrastructure improvements to be enacted in conjunction with a Guildford BC bike share scheme, particular to ensure cyclists could avoid the gyratory system.
- 6.2 The consultant was separately commissioned to identify the most likely routes that bike share users would take and to identify improvements required to make those routes fast, safe and convenient for a variety of users, particularly those less experienced cyclists. A stakeholder engagement workshop was held in summer 2018.

- 6.3 The consultant's proposed Guildford cycle network is presently in draft. Draft plans are presented in Appendices 3 and 4. The draft plans are to be revised following engagement in summer 2019 with the Guildford Bike User Group (G-BUG) as representatives of the local cycling community. A presentation on this study work was given to G-BUG's open meeting in June 2019, with the lead councillor and other councillors also attending.
- 6.4 Further engagement will be required with Surrey County Council, the Local Highway Authority and Local Transport Authority, regarding the draft plans for a proposed Guildford cycle network, as prepared by the Council's consultants. It should be noted that Surrey County Council maintains a Guildford Local Cycling Plan, which was prepared in 2015-16 and has been the subject of some amendment since. This can be accessed at Surrey County Council's 'Guildford cycling plan' webpage (at <https://www.surreycc.gov.uk/roads-and-transport/sustainable-travel/cycling/plans/guildford>) which links to the online plan, to an online suggestions webpage and also provides a chronology of the plan's development and occasional 'latest news' relating to this.
- 6.5 The Guildford BC bike share scheme as envisaged in 2018 was to have allowed for an investment of £150k in supporting signage and highway improvements. As described in paragraph 5.2 above, the Council's 2018 funding bid to the LEP was unsuccessful. The present Guildford BC Phase A bike share scheme proposal, following the successful 2019 funding bid to the LEP, has a lower capital budget which allows for a smaller investment, perhaps in the region of £50k, for complementary measures focused on signing and lining around docking hubs.
- 6.6 It is now proposed by officers that the outputs of the route assessments feasibility study could be used in the evidence base to inform the preparation of a policy on the improvement of the cycle network for the part 2 Local Plan (Development Management Policies). Such a policy could supersede the policy (M6) and accompanying Proposals Map in the 2003 Local Plan which shows specific routes for which cycle improvements would be supported. Evidence for such a policy will also draw on Surrey County Council's Guildford Local Cycling Plan, most particularly for the rest of the borough outside of the Guildford urban area.

7. Progress with commissioning of a Guildford BC bike share scheme

- 7.1 The commissioning of a Guildford BC scheme has been complicated by the establishment of the University bike share scheme which launched in summer 2018. This scheme is described in section 3 above.
- 7.2 Officers have been in discussion with the University and the operator of the University scheme regarding the commissioning of a Guildford BC scheme.
- 7.3 These discussions are continuing and commercially sensitive.
- 7.4 It is currently proposed that a report on the project will be taken to a meeting of the Executive in January 2020.

8. Consultations

- 8.1 Representatives of number of groups took part in a stakeholder engagement workshop for the bike share feasibility study. There was also a stakeholder engagement workshop for the route assessments feasibility study work, as described in section 6 of this report.

9. Equality and Diversity Implications

- 9.1 The commissioning of a Guildford BC bike share scheme will have due regard to the aims of the Public Sector Equality Duty (Equality Act 2010).
- 9.2 This duty has been considered in the context of this report and it has been concluded that there are no equality and diversity implications arising directly from this report.'
- 9.3 A screening Equalities Impact Assessment for the project will be undertaken in due course and, if appropriate, a full Equalities Impact Assessment.

10. Financial Implications

- 10.1 As described in section 5, the commissioning of a potential Guildford BC bike share scheme has a provisional capital budget of £830k, comprised of:
- £530k in the Council's General Fund Capital Programme provisional list, and
 - £300k provisionally approved by the LEP in 2019.
- 10.2 The revenue spend for the project to date is £73,744 (from 2017/18 financial year to the end of Quarter 2 2019/20 financial year). Of this, £9,675 has been spent in 2019/20 to date, of which £6,000 was the application fee to the LEP.

11. Legal Implications

- 11.1 There are a variety of legal aspects of a potential Guildford BC bike share scheme. These include:
- The procurement of a Guildford BC bike share scheme
 - Legal agreements for the use of land, including highways land, for docking hubs and for complementary measures focused on signing and lining around docking hubs.
- 11.2 Legal implications will be considered further as and when a report is taken to the Executive seeking a new mandate for the commissioning of a potential Guildford BC bike share scheme.
- 11.3 No specific legal implications apply to this report.

12. Human Resource Implications

- 12.1 During the commissioning process, the Major Projects Team will have capacity to oversee and project manage the work with support from other relevant teams across the Council.
- 12.2 Once the scheme has been implemented, the consultant has suggested that allowance should be made for 0.1 FTE of officer time to support the scheme.
- 12.3 Consideration will need be given to where the responsibility of the future contract management of the scheme will lie within the Council's corporate structure.

13. Conclusion

- 13.1 This report has provided the EAB with an update on the project to deliver a public bike share scheme in Guildford.
- 13.2 In setting the scope of the feasibility study and in undertaking preparatory investigations for a potential Guildford BC scheme, officers have taken into account the EAB's suggestions from September 2017.
- 13.3 Feasibility study work has informed a successful funding bid to the LEP. A total provisional capital budget of £830k is now available to deliver Phase A of the Guildford BC bike share scheme.
- 13.4 The commissioning of a Guildford BC scheme has been complicated by the existence of the University scheme. Officers have been in discussion with the University and the operator of the University scheme regarding the commissioning of a Guildford BC scheme and these discussions are continuing and commercially sensitive.

14. Appendices

Appendix 1: Initial assessment of bike share potential

Appendix 2: Suggested scheme extent and phasing

Appendix 3: Draft plans for Guildford cycle network, as proposed by Transport Initiatives and Urban Movement in the Route Assessments Feasibility Study

Appendix 4: Draft plans for Guildford cycle network, as proposed by Transport Initiatives and Urban Movement in the Route Assessments Feasibility Study

Two plans:

- Guildford Cycle Network, showing Core cycle network, Local cycle network and Greenway (dated June 2019)
- Guildford Cycle Network: route typologies, showing Segregated cycle tracks, Greenway shared paths, Urban paths, and Quiet streets (dated June 2019)