

Summary Sheet

Council Report

Cabinet and Commissioners' Decision Making Meeting – 12 September 2016.

Title:

Sustrans 'Bike It' Project Extension for 2016/ 2017

Is this a Key Decision and has it been included on the Forward Plan?

No, but has been included on the Forward Plan

Strategic Director Approving Submission of the Report:

Damien Wilson, Strategic Director of Regeneration & Environment

Report Author(s):

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Ward(s) Affected:

All Wards

Executive Summary:

To seek exemption under Standing Order 38 from the provisions of Standing Order 47 (contracts valued at less than £50,000) prior to awarding a contract to Sustrans Ltd for the delivery of the 'Bike It' project in Rotherham during the 2016/ 17 financial year. Sustrans are the sole provider of the 'Bike It' project in the UK with no known competitors offering a similar package. In Rotherham this successful project has resulted in combined cycle to school trip rates to participating schools increasing from a negligible amount to an average of 12%. Finance is already available from the Sheffield City Region to enable the project to continue.

Recommendations:

That an exemption be granted under Standing Order 38 from the provisions of Standing Order 47 (contracts valued at less than £50,000) on the basis that Sustrans are the sole supplier of 'Bike It' project services.

List of Appendices Included:

None

Background Papers:

RMBC Corporate Plan 2016-17
South Yorkshire Local Transport Plan 2011- 2026.

Consideration by any other Council Committee, Scrutiny or Advisory Panel:

No

Council Approval Required:

No

Exempt from the Press and Public:

No

Title: Sustrans 'Bike It' Project Extension for 2016/ 2017

1. Recommendations

- 1.1 That an exemption be granted under Standing Order 38 from the provisions of Standing Order 47 (contracts valued at less than £50,000) on the basis that Sustrans are the sole supplier of 'Bike It' project services.

2. Background

- 2.1 On 26th May 2016 Sheffield City Region, was awarded £2.5m from the Department for Transport's Sustainable Travel Transition Year Fund to deliver a number of sustainable transport projects during the 2016/17 financial year. Within Rotherham, this funding allows a number of projects to continue which were previously funded through the Local Sustainable Transport Fund 2 (LSTF2) including the cycle hub and services, cycle parking, a walking project and 'Bike It'. Contracts are in place to continue both the cycle hub/ services, and cycle parking project, the walking project will be delivered in house. A new contract is required for the 'Bike It' project and it is recommended that the current contractor, Sustrans, be awarded the work.
- 2.2 Last financial year the 'Bike It' project was funded through LSTF 2. This funding concluded at the end of March 2016 and Sustrans (who delivered this project) have continued to temporarily fund the 'Bike It' project in Rotherham using their reserves in anticipation of further potential funding being awarded by the DfT. Confirmation of this continued funding was received by all Local Authorities in South Yorkshire on 26th May 2016.
- 2.3 Sustrans continue to be the sole provider of the 'Bike It' project in the UK. There are no known alternative organisations offering a similar package. In order to continue the project for this financial year an exemption from the provisions of Standing Order 47 would be required before the end of September 2016. If this is not possible, the £40,000 grant for the project would potentially be repayable to the DfT and the 'Bike It' project in Rotherham would end.
- 2.4 Sustrans are also delivering the 'Bike It' project in the other South Yorkshire authorities and elsewhere. These authorities are also in a similar position and have been seeking exemptions to standing orders to continue the project in their districts and take advantage of the funding award for the transition period between 1st August 2016 and 31st March 2017. Whilst Doncaster MBC is the lead authority for this part of the Transition Fund package, historically it was agreed that each local authority was responsible for procurement of services within their area for all elements of the package. Each local authority is at different stages of the procurement process and indeed Standing Orders differ between Councils. However should additional funding become available for this project in the future, consideration will be given to procuring 'Bike It' by one Council on behalf of the four South Yorkshire authorities.
- 2.5 The 'Bike It' project delivers a range of activities (as detailed in Section 3 below) working in partnership with schools to promote the benefits of cycling and to encourage students and their parents to cycle to school. This helps to tackle obesity and improve health, reduces congestion particularly around schools, promotes a strong community and helps to improve air quality.

2.6 This contributes to a number of priorities in the Council's Corporate Plan including:

Every child making the best start in life.

A strong community in a clean, safe environment

Extending opportunity, prosperity and planning for the future.

2.7 Encouraging cycling also contributes towards the aims and objectives of the Local Transport Plan, the targets of the City Region and is a key theme in the emerging Borough Transport Strategy.

3. Key Issues

3.1 The key issue is to seek exemption under Standing Order 38 from the provisions of Standing Order 47 (contracts valued at less than £50,000) prior to awarding a contract to Sustrans Ltd for the delivery of the 'Bike It' project in Rotherham during the 2016/ 17 financial year. Sustrans are the sole provider of the 'Bike It' project in the UK with no known competitors offering a similar package.

3.2 If approved by Cabinet, Sustrans will deliver this project under a contract via RMBC's Transport and Highways Design Service. Sustrans will be required to produce regular delivery reports and project delivery meetings will be scheduled during the 2016/17 financial year.

3.3 The 'Bike It' project began in Rotherham in April 2012 and Sustrans have worked with 21 schools to date across Rotherham.

3.4 The project is aimed at younger children and seeks to increase the number of school journeys undertaken by bicycle or by any other non-motorised means. Ultimately, the combined aim of 'Bike It' and other associated cycling initiatives in Rotherham's schools (such as Bikeability cycle training), is to encourage pupils and parents to accept cycling as a 'life-long' alternative to car travel.

3.5 The 'Bike It' project seeks to raise awareness of cycling, develop skills and encourage children to take action in their own lives and increase the number of school journeys undertaken by bicycle. It is delivered via a Sustrans 'Bike It' Officer who works directly with local schools.

3.6 Typically a 'Bike It' officer who delivers the project will:

- Identify enthusiastic schools in collaboration with the local authority.
- Advise head teachers and governing bodies on cycling issues, helping schools to develop and link the project to their school travel plans, and cycle policies.
- Organise and deliver a range of practical school activities and events linked to numerous aspects of cycling i.e. safety, healthy living, maintenance (Dr Bike service), puncture repair workshop and other exciting sessions.
- Deliver a range of classroom lessons linked to the National Curriculum (lesson plans in Maths, English, Science, Geography, History, PE, Art, Engineering, Personal Health and Social Education / citizenship) and also work with school staff to embed cycling into the curriculum, assisting with ideas and future lesson plans.

- Establish after-school cycle clubs for students for leisure cycling, with additional training and cycle maintenance and investigate the possibility of establishing cycle clubs in schools for the local community as part of the extended schools programme.
 - Involve and engage with parents via parent maintenance and cycling skills sessions, and organising family bike rides out of school time.
 - Encourage schools participation in the Sustrans School Mark accreditation scheme, which helps to enhance sustainability of the project, encouraging schools work towards Bronze, Silver and Gold awards.
 - Provide ongoing training opportunities and support for school champions, who are responsible for driving the project in the school with support from head teachers.
 - Create a lasting legacy once the specialist support ends by handing the project over to the school's own management so that the project and cycling initiatives become self-sustaining and continue through an action plan written by schools and agreed with the Authority and Sustrans.
- 3.7 'Bike It' results to date have been impressive with combined cycling to school trip rates at participating schools increasing from a negligible amount to an average of 12%.

4. Options considered and recommended proposal

- 4.1 There is an option to tender this project. However, as Sustrans are the sole supplier of 'Bike It', only one response would be received and the tendering process would build a further delay into the contract award. In turn this would result in the likelihood of the grant being unspent and potentially being repayable to DfT.
- 4.2 There is an option to cease delivery of the 'Bike IT' project. In this instance, the grant funding for the project would then potentially be repayable to DfT and the benefits to Rotherham would be lost.
- 4.2 It is therefore recommended that an exemption be granted under Standing Order 38 from the provisions of Standing Order 47 (contracts valued at less than £50,000) prior to awarding a contract to Sustrans Ltd for the delivery of the 'Bike It' project in Rotherham during the 2016/ 17 financial year.

5. Consultation

- 5.1 Consultation has been undertaken with neighbouring authorities who are in a similar position and have been seeking an exemption to their standing orders.

6. Timetable and Accountability for Implementing this Decision

- 6.1 Funding is available for this project up to 31st March 2017; therefore the project would be delivered by Sustrans up to this date. Project delivery would commence immediately. Sustrans would engage with additional schools in the 2016/17 financial year.

7. Financial and Procurement Implications

- 7.1 The 'Bike It' project will cost approximately £40,000. This will be funded by external grant funding awarded by the Department for Transport's Sustainable Travel Transition Year Fund. Funding claims and project spend will be reported to the Local Transport Plan Central Team who manage the Sustainable Travel Transition Year Fund for Sheffield City Region.

8. Legal Implications

- 8.1 Standing Order 38 provides that a particular contract can be exempted from the requirement to tender. The report outlines the reasons why it is not felt to be appropriate to tender for the specified service, on the basis that Sustrans is the sole provider of the 'Bike It' project in the UK.

9. Human Resources Implications

- 9.1 This project is externally funded and will be delivered by Sustrans who are an external organisation. As in previous years, officers in the Council's Transport and Highways Design team will manage the delivery of the project.

10. Implications for Children and Young People and Vulnerable Adults

- 10.1 'Bike It' promotes and encourages cycling to school. This helps to improve the health of school children and reduces congestion and traffic around schools.

11. Equalities and Human Rights Implications

- 11.1 None

12. Implications for Partners and Other Directorates

- 12.1 This project contributes towards Public Health objectives by encouraging cycling to school which improves the health and fitness of students and helps to reduce obesity within the borough.

13. Risks and Mitigation

- 13.1 If an exemption to standing orders for the 'Bike It' project is not granted, the project would not continue with the loss of specialised personnel from Sustrans. The grant for this element of the Sustainable Travel Transition Year Fund would therefore be unspent and then potentially be repayable to the DfT.

14. Accountable Officer(s)

- 14.1 Andrew Shearer, Transport Planner, Regeneration and Environment.

Approvals Obtained from:-

Strategic Director of Finance and Corporate Services:-
Jonathan Baggaley (Finance Manager on behalf of the Strategic Director).

Director of Legal Services: -

Ian Gledhill (Solicitor and Commercial Team Manager on behalf of the Director).

Head of Procurement: -

Lorna Byne (Senior Procurement Category Manager on behalf of the Head of Procurement).

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