

ROTHERHAM BOROUGH COUNCIL – REPORT TO MEMBERS

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| 1. | Meeting: | Cabinet Member for Regeneration and Development |
| 2. | Date: | Friday 5th April 2013 |
| 3. | Title: | Sustrans Bike It |
| 4. | Directorate: | Environment and Development Services |

5. Summary

To outline the results from the Sustrans Bike It project in Rotherham and to recommend funding the project for a further 2 years from April 2013 to March 2015.

6. Recommendations

That Cabinet Member endorses funding the Sustrans Bike IT project for a further 2 years (until March 2015) from the Local Sustainable Transport Fund and the associated Contract with Sustrans, the sole provider of Bike IT, is exempted from Standing Order 47.6.3 (requirements for contracts valued between £20,000 and £50,000).

7. Proposals and Details

Bike It has been operational in 12 Schools across Rotherham since its introduction in April 2012 (Council Minute refers).

The project seeks to raise awareness of cycling, develop riding skills and encourage children to take action in their own lives. It aims 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 schools such as Bikeability cycle training, is to encourage pupils and parents to accept cycling as a 'life long' alternative to car travel.

12 schools are currently actively engaged in the Bike It project.

- Wath C of E Primary
- Herringthorpe Junior's
- St Thomas C of E Primary
- Wath Central Primary
- Dalton Listerdale J and I
- West Melton Primary
- St Anns J and I
- Aston Hall J and I
- Anston Greenlands J and I
- Wickersley Northfield Primary
- Dinnington Comprehensive
- Our Lady St Josephs Primary (Wath)

The selected schools are spread across the Borough although there is a distinct cluster in Wath, Swinton and West Melton to complement other sustainability initiatives such as the Eco Vision, Eco Schools and the Local Sustainable Transport Fund in the Dearne Valley.

Bike It results to date have been impressive with over 8300 positive cycling experiences being delivered during the first 9 months of the project. A copy of Sustrans Interim December 2012 performance report for Rotherham is attached at Appendix A.

As a result of the success in 2012/13, the following schools have expressed an interest in the Bike It project although only six can be accommodated in 2013/14, when the current Bike It schools will transfer from full time engagement to part time:

- Badsley Moor Junior School
- St Josephs Catholic Primary, Dinnington,
- Swinton Fitzwilliam
- Thurcroft Infant School
- Bramley Grange Primary
- Anston Park
- Broom Valley Community School
- Brampton Ellis CofE Infant School

8. Finance

Cabinet Member agreed to allocate £50K from the LTP Quality of Life central budget to fund the first year of Bike It in 2012/13. Funding for subsequent years was not confirmed but a further £40K from the central LTP budget and £10K from Rotherham's LTP allocation was provisionally made available. However, there are now considerable budget pressures on LTP funding in 2012/13 and these are likely to continue into 2013/14 and beyond. Therefore, wherever possible, alternatives to LTP funding are being sought.

Funding is available from the Local Sustainable Transport Fund because some projects originally included in the bidding process to DfT may not be moving forward – most notably £800K associated with Digital Region. Bid partners have therefore agreed to consider funding Bike It from LSTF. Therefore, subject to future satisfactory performance by Sustrans, £50K per annum from LSTF could be allocated to fund Bike It projects in Rotherham during 2013/14 and 2014/15. Partners in Sheffield, Doncaster and Barnsley who also operate Bike It projects with Sustrans are likely to make similar funding arrangements via LSTF.

Sustrans are the sole provider of Bike It type projects in the UK and there are no known competitors. Therefore, Cabinet Member is asked to approve an exemption from Standing Order 47.6.3 (requirement for contracts valued between £20,000 and £50,000) to enable direct award of the Bike It Contract for 2013/14 to Sustrans, 2 Cathedral Square College Green Bristol BS1 5DD. Any contract offered in 2014/15 will be subject to market testing and will be subject to tender if any competitors emerge that have developed products similar to Bike It.

9. Risks and Uncertainties.

Any new projects that were not included in the original LSTF bid must be assessed to ensure that they meet LSTF key objectives to increase business productivity, widen labour markets, empower our communities to make smart travel choices and connect people to jobs and training, whilst at the same time reducing carbon emissions. The Bike IT project will eventually deliver against these objectives when current school children move into the labour market with a better understanding of transport choice and sustainability. As such, Bike It leaves a strong and lasting legacy - a further objective of LSTF - but it might not rate as well as competing transport projects that immediately deliver against key LSTF objectives. Available LSTF funding could therefore be allocated to other projects. However, taking into account the amount of funding that is available, it is likely that the Bike It project will be funded within LSTF and outline approval has already been agreed.

10. Policy and Performance Agenda Implications

The promotion of cycling in schools helps progress Corporate themes relating to transport, sustainability and health - particularly obesity. Promotion of cycling is a key theme in the third Local Transport Plan 2011-16 and in projects and outcomes associated with the Local Sustainable Transport Fund.

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