

To: City Executive Board

Date: 9 February 2017

Report of: Scrutiny Committee

Title of Report: Cycling Review Group – progress update

Summary and Recommendations

Purpose of report: To present the recommendation of the Scrutiny Committee on the Cycling Review Group – progress update

Scrutiny Lead Member: Councillor Andrew Gant, Chair of Scrutiny

Executive lead member: Councillor Alex Hollingsworth, Board Member for Planning and Regulatory Services

Recommendation of the Scrutiny Committee to the City Executive Board:

That the City Executive Board states whether it agrees or disagrees with the two recommendations set out in the body of this report.

Introduction

1. The Scrutiny Committee established the Cycling Review Group in 2014/15 and appointed Councillor Louise Upton as Chair. The Review Group reported to the City Executive Board in September 2015 and made nine recommendations. The Scrutiny Committee requested an update report in order to monitor progress against agreed recommendations and considered this update report on 6 December 2016. The Committee would like to thank the Direct Services Chief Operations Manager and Contracts Manager for presenting the report and answering questions.

Summary and recommendation

2. The Contracts Manager presented the report. She explained that they had followed the wish list of cycling improvement schemes submitted by the Cycling Review Group and had completed the achievable higher-priority items. There were a couple of projects still to complete in the current financial year; to amend

the entrance signs to the city to say 'a cycling city' and to install bike pumps around the city.

3. The Committee voiced support for the use and pooling of Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) money to pay for cycling improvement schemes around the city and noted the need to promote the spending of CIL money in this way to ward councillors. The Committee heard that the City Council could deliver works but would need the advice of the County Council, as the highways authority, for any changes to roads or footpaths.

Recommendation 1 – That guidance is provided to elected members on the use of CIL funding allocated to ward budgets to fund cycling improvement schemes, including guidance on the pooling of these resources.

4. The Committee asked why cycle symbols marks on the Cowley Road had not been replaced and commented that this had made the road more hazardous. Officers said that the County Council was planning to resurface the road so it made sense to wait for this work to be completed first. The Committee noted that the County Council had recently announced that the road would not be resurfaced until 2018. The Committee asked whether it would be possible to replace the cycle symbols anyway given that people had already waited 2 years for the County to resurface the road and felt that a further significant delay would be unacceptable. The Committee found that this work would require County Council approval and that the County Council had previously instructed the City Council not to replace all the cycle symbols in the road due to issues in the past.
5. The Committee noted that the capital funding for cycling improvement schemes is due to end next year. The Committee commended the improvements delivered to date and indicated support for the continuation of this funding into future years if possible. The Committee asked the Chair of the Finance Panel to give active consideration to this during the budget review. The Committee questioned whether any unspent funding could be used to pay for cycle symbols on Cowley Road and heard that some money was still available but had been provisionally allocated to a different scheme.

Recommendation 2 – That the replacing of cycle symbols on the Cowley Road is the priority for any unspent capital funding for cycling improvement schemes in 2016/17, subject to County Council approval.

6. The Committee questioned whether the Council's Abandoned Vehicle Officer had power to remove abandoned bicycles from university or college-owned land, which could free up some much needed cycle parking spaces in and around the city centre. The Committee found that a contract with the University of Oxford was still in discussion and had not yet been agreed. It was thought that this was due to problems in securing the support of all the individual colleges.

Recommendation 3 – That the City Council contacts the Vice-Chancellors of both universities to request their intervention to achieve the delegation of the power to remove abandoned vehicles on University or College-owned land to the City Council.

Name and contact details of author:-

Andrew Brown on behalf of the Scrutiny Committee
Scrutiny Officer
Law and Governance
Tel: 01865 252230 e-mail: abrown2@oxford.gov.uk

List of background papers: None

Version number: 2.0

This page is intentionally left blank