

## **SLOUGH BOROUGH COUNCIL**

**REPORT TO:** Neighbourhoods and Community Services Scrutiny Panel

**DATE:** 25<sup>th</sup> June 2018

**CONTACT OFFICER:** Misha Byrne – Access Fund Project Manager  
**(For all Enquiries)** (01753) 474 081

**WARD(S):** All

### **PART I** **FOR COMMENT & CONSIDERATION**

#### **CYCLE HUBS**

1. **Purpose of Report**

To update the Neighbourhoods and Community Services (NCS) Scrutiny Panel on the level of activity experienced by the Cycle Hubs and future plans for the service.

2. **Recommendations**

The NCS Scrutiny Panel is requested to note the information in this report and make recommendations as to how the service could increase usage of bicycles in the future.

3. **The Slough Joint Wellbeing Strategy, the JSNA and the Five Year Plan**

3a. **Slough Joint Wellbeing Strategy Priorities**

The provision of the Cycle Hub and the resulting increased use of bicycles as opposed to private transport supports the following priority of the Slough Joint Wellbeing Strategy:

- Improving mental health and wellbeing

3b. **Five Year Plan Outcomes**

The provision of the Cycle Hub also supports the following Five Year Plan outcomes:

- Our people will be healthier and manage their own care needs

#### 4. **Other Implications**

(a) **Financial**

There are no financial implications to this report.

(b) **Risk Management**

There are no risk management implications for the information in this report.

(c) **Human Rights Act and Other Legal Implications**

There are no legal implications to the information in this report.

(d) **Equalities Impact Assessment**

The production of this report has not required an Equalities Impact Assessment.

#### 5. **Supporting Information**

5.1 At its meeting on 4<sup>th</sup> April 2018, the NCS Scrutiny Panel received a written response to a question it raised regarding the Cycle Hub service. This reported that (as of 15<sup>th</sup> March 2018) the figures for usage in the 2017 – 18 financial year were as follows:

- 126 bicycles used from the Cycle Hire service
- 125 bicycles used the Cycle Hub service

Members were concerned that these figures were lower than they had expected, and as a result requested this report be presented at the next meeting. This report will discuss the history of the service, the current nature of the service and the resulting levels of usage and plans for the future of the service. The NCS Scrutiny Panel will then be asked to clarify their views on how to raise take up rates for bicycle hire in Slough.

##### **History of the service**

5.2 The Cycle Hire and Hub service was started and established with funding from the LSTF between 2012 to 2016 where capital costs were paid up-front and expanded with a series of capital contributions from third parties.

5.3 The operation and maintenance of the scheme was provided by Groundworks under contract. The costs of maintaining and operating the scheme was envisaged to be cost neutral to the council with the scheme to be run by Groundworks and their costs recouped through securing sponsorship for the scheme. Unfortunately Groundworks found it considerably challenging to secure sponsorship during the period of management and have found it difficult to promote and expand the user base.

5.4 The user base has remained consistently low during this time at or around the latest figures reported.

## **Current state of service**

- 5.5 Due to the difficulties securing sponsorship for the scheme, Groundworks have reported the ongoing maintenance and operation of the scheme is challenging and that they have not been able to focus attention on promoting or increasing the scheme user base. Revenue from usage was never expected to fund all operating costs and so the success of the scheme is inherently dependent on sponsorship. The difficulties with operating and revenue costs have been reported for similar cycle schemes operated by other local authorities.
- 5.6 Slough has secured revenue funds from the Department for Transport to help in expanding the scheme and increasing the user base. These funds are specifically for promoting cycling and walking in the area and a proportion of this will be used to promote the scheme until the end of the funding in 2020.

There are currently;

- 11 docking stations across the borough
- 172 docking points
- 51 bikes in operation
- 80 secure spaces for bikes in the hub

## **Future of the service**

- 5.7 The ongoing operating cost remains a concern for any operating model; whether or not a contract to an external operator exists or there are plans to bring operations in house.
- 5.8 The sponsorship of the scheme could be a game changer and it may be attractive to corporate sponsors considering the planned economic development and growth of the borough.
- 5.9 There are some planned pilot schemes which could considerably expand the usage from community groups or unemployed and young people seeking access to employment and education. This could significantly increase the value the scheme offers to the community although this usage is not expected to generate more revenue.
- 5.10 There is little planned change until the year 2020 with only the contract with the scheme operator due for renewal in October.
- 5.11 Beyond 2020 there is a need to consider the emerging point to point model of cycle hire as has been piloted in some cities and already in operation in the Far East and cities such as Berlin and Amsterdam.

## **6. Comments of Other Committees**

No other committees at Slough Borough Council have considered this report.

## **7. Conclusion**

The NCS Scrutiny Panel is asked to consider current provision and how this could be altered in future to increase the usage of alternatives to private transport.

The NCS is asked to consider the factors and provide views on possible future scenarios for increasing uptake.

8. **Appendices Attached**

'A' - Breakdown of Cycle Hire Bikes and Docking Points by Location

9. **Background Papers**

None