



PORTFOLIO HOLDER DECISION NOTICE

INDIVIDUAL DECISION BY THE PORTFOLIO HOLDER FOR ENVIRONMENT

TOPIC - BIKEABOUT

PROCEDURAL INFORMATION

The Access to Information Procedure Rules – Part 4, Section 22 of the Council's Constitution provides for a decision to be made by an individual member of Cabinet.

In accordance with the Procedure Rules, the Legal Services Manager, the Chief Executive and the Strategic Director: Resources are consulted together with Chairman and Vice Chairman of The Overview and Scrutiny Committee and any other relevant overview and scrutiny committee. In addition, all Members are notified.

If five or more Members from those informed so request, the Leader may require the matter to be referred to Cabinet for determination.

Contact Officers:

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SUMMARY

- Bikeabout is Winchester City Council's bike hire scheme.
- The City Council has been running a bike hire and bike loan scheme for over 10 years. This scheme was initially funded through the MIRACLES project and jointly run by Hampshire County Council and Winchester City Council. Bikes were hired at a competitive price for either half a day or a whole day. Customers also left a deposit to ensure safe return of the bike.
- The scheme has recently been run by the Tourist Information Centre. (TIC) Over the last 3 years, the bike hire scheme has had around 230 hires with the majority of hires being over the summer months. Users of the scheme have been both local residents and tourists to the city who are looking to get out and explore the local area. Many of these have little idea about where they can cycle, so the team at the TIC currently provide suggestions of local routes including the Viaduct Way and circular routes out to Easton and Avington.

- The majority of bike hires occur during the summer months when the TIC and its staff are at their busiest. Bike hires can take a staff member off the TIC desk for around 20 minutes. The TIC staff members all have basic cycling knowledge but, due to the nature of the business, there have been incidents where the TIC have had to pay for taxi journeys to pick up Bikeabout users who have had issues with their bikes.
- In line with its Council Strategy, the City Council continuously reviews the services it provides and looks for opportunities to identify different ways of working which are likely to deliver innovative, effective and cost effective responses to local needs.
- The only other bike hire facility in the City of Winchester is run by Bespoke Biking who are based in the Brooks Shopping Centre. This is a non-profit community interest company with a passion for cycling and community involvement. They carry out bike maintenance, repairs, run courses and also deal with bike hire.
- On a two year trial basis, the City Council would enter into an agreement with Bespoke Biking to take over the running of Bikeabout. The City Council would provide the current Bikeabout bikes (being 10 hybrid bikes, 4 Pashley bikes and 2 electric bikes) together with a yearly sum of £2500. Bespoke Biking would then use the funding to continue to provide Winchester with a bike hire facility.
- If the two year trial was successful, the City Council would hand over the bikes to Bespoke Biking at nil cost in order for them to continue running a bike hire service for the city. The City Council, therefore, would no longer be involved in the bike hire scheme and Bespoke Biking would be able to carry on without being bound to the City Council. Albeit there would be no requirement for Bespoke Biking to continue after the two year successful trial.
- It will be agreed that as part of the agreement between the City Council and Bespoke Biking City Council staff will be able to use the bikes for work use during the trial, free of charge, subject to availability and advance booking. After a successful 2 year trial, and as a show of goodwill, Bespoke Biking have also agreed to allow City Council staff to continue to use the bikes for work purposes, to promote sustainable travel throughout the City. The City Council, would of course, keep promoting Bespoke Biking for cycle hire through our Tourist Information Centre.

DECISION

- That the Corporate Head of Regulatory in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Environment, be authorised to agree terms and enter into an agreement with Bespoke Biking for two years to deliver the Bikeabout scheme

- The terms of the scheme will be set out in an agreement with Bespoke Biking.
- At the end of this trial period, if successful, the City Council will hand over the Bikeabout bikes to Bespoke Biking to assist it in continuing to run a bike hire for Winchester.

REASON FOR THE DECISION AND OTHER ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED AND REJECTED

- With the tourist information centre refurbishment imminent, space for retail areas is in high demand. The Bikeabout bikes take up a considerable amount of space and although the hires do bring in some income, the scheme does not cover its costs.
- The TIC staff members all have basic cycling knowledge but the cycling experts at Bespoke Biking are more knowledgeable and much better placed to run cycle hire.
- Bespoke Biking would take on all responsibilities of the cycle hire.

RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS:

- The £2500 per year will be funded by the Community Transport budget that funds Bikeabout currently.
- The 16 Bikeabout bikes vary in age from 3 years to 13 years old and all have decreased in value since their purchase. Their exact current value is not known, but an estimate of under £2500 could be made if each bicycle halves in value in the first year and continues to drop by 10% in each subsequent year.

CONSULTATION UNDERTAKEN ON THE DECISION

- Portfolio Holder for Environment
- Tourist Information Centre Manager
- Bespoke Biking

FURTHER ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED AND REJECTED FOLLOWING PUBLICATION OF THE DRAFT PORTFOLIO HOLDER DECISION NOTICE

n/a

DECLARATION OF INTERESTS BY THE DECISION MAKER OR A MEMBER OR OFFICER CONSULTED

None.

DISPENSATION GRANTED BY THE STANDARDS COMMITTEE

n/a

Approved by: (signature)

Date of Decision: 06.04.2018

Councillor Warwick – Portfolio Holder for Environment

APPENDICES:

None