

BIKEABILITY CYCLE TRAINING

To: Economy and Environment Committee

Meeting Date: 13th July 2017

From: Graham Hughes, Executive Director – Economy, Transport and Environment

Electoral division: All

Forward Plan ref: Not applicable **Key decision:** No

Purpose: To update the Committee, and to seek approval for short term and long term proposals for funding Bikeability cycle training.

Recommendation: Committee are asked to:

- a) Support the proposal to fund the expected funding shortfall for the Bikeability scheme in the short term;
- b) Request that officers seek alternative funding for the Bikeability scheme through sponsorship or other funding streams in the longer term; and,
- c) Agree to receive further updates on both the funding situation and the uptake of training.

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1. BACKGROUND

- 1.1 Free cycle training in primary schools has been offered in Cambridgeshire since the 1970s. In 2009 the County Council moved from volunteer led cycle training managed by the Road Safety Team, to Bikeability training, promoted by Cycling England, funded by Government, delivered in accordance with national standards, and managed by the Cycling Projects Team.
- 1.2 The delivery model is an outsourced one which incurs very minimal amounts of internal staff costs, contrasting with the previous model which required a number of posts devoted solely to the scheme. In essence there is no budget for staff time. All funding received is used directly to fund delivery.
- 1.3 The current training provider, Outspoken, has proved to be an enthusiastic and reliable supplier, which has enabled a very hands off approach from County staff to ensure costs can be focussed wholly on training provision.
- 1.4 Each year an estimate of training places is made, and submitted to The Department for Transport (DfT) as a bid. Up until 2016/17 DfT had always met the number of required places. There was a funding shortfall in 2016/17 of £9,000.
- 1.5 In recent years the numbers trained have been increasing steadily, and currently the number trained per year exceeds 6,000.

2. MAIN ISSUES

- 2.1 The DfT has decided to top slice the Bikeability budget to provide another initiative called Bikeability Plus which seeks to complement training with other activities such as bike rides and bike maintenance. Cambridgeshire is one of the recipients of Bikeability Plus funding. Nationally demand for the remaining pot of Bikeability has risen year on year, and so DfT cannot now guarantee that every local authority gets their desired level of funding. Priority has been given to new schemes, rather than established ones like our own.
- 2.2 Although there will still be DfT funding, it may not now cover all of our costs. For each £45 training place, the shortfall is likely to be up to £10, but this is likely to vary year to year. For 2017/18 the total shortfall is expected to be up to £60,000 based on the previous year's uptake.
- 2.3 Cycle training is an established part of the school programme in primary schools, and given that the DfT have made a long term commitment to some level of funding, it would be difficult to cease the training programme. The training gives young people a life skill, and very much supports the Council's objective around helping people live healthy and independent lives.
- 2.4 At the meeting of the Economy and Environment Committee in March, a proposal to charge schools for Bikeability was discussed, and the proposal was not favoured. At that meeting it was unanimously resolved to:
 - a) Note the report;

- b) Request that officers seek alternative funding for the scheme through sponsorship or other funding streams; and,
- c) Agree to receive a further report outlining the outcome from discussions on sponsorship.

- 2.5 Some initial work has taken place to engage potential sponsors which has proved useful in terms of fact finding. It is clear that exposure and coverage are key considerations. There is also a view that given the many other channels for marketing and promotion, new sponsors are likely to want to sign up for very short term deals initially, to test the market, thus it will be hard to secure sponsorship that ties sponsors to say annual commitments initially, with sponsors preferring a monthly arrangement.
- 2.6 Sponsors are keen to explore opportunities such as banners outside schools and exposure in Council Tax booklets, which confirms that a more co-ordinated approach to sponsorship within the Council is needed longer term. This has already been acknowledged as part of the Transformation Programme. Within the Programme, guidelines for seeking sponsorship are being compiled as one of a number of work streams.
- 2.7 Seeking sponsorship now for Bikeability in isolation, is to some extent premature in advance of the guidance being completed by the Transformation Team, however opportunities to find sponsorship will still be pursued. If it is not possible to find sponsorship in this financial year then it is proposed to fund the shortfall from Economy, Transport and Environment (ETE) underspend.

3. CONCLUSION

- 3.1 For 2017/18 it is proposed to continue seeking opportunities for sponsorship funding, whilst working closely with The Transformation Team as their guidelines are finalised. If insufficient funding is raised through sponsorship then for this year only, the cost of the scheme can be covered from within the ETE budget
- 3.2 Working with the Transformation Team on a longer term basis, and coordinated with other Council services seeking potential sponsorship funding, efforts to secure long term sponsorship arrangements for Bikeability will be pursued. If no such opportunities are found, it is proposed that further consideration should be given to the long term future of the scheme and the potential to charge parents for the service or seek ongoing funding from Council resources.

4. ALIGNMENT WITH CORPORATE PRIORITIES

4.1 Developing the local economy for the benefit of all

More people cycling contributes to a healthier population, improved productivity, reduced traffic congestion, reliability of journey times and adds capacity into an already constrained road network, all of which contributes to economic wellbeing.

4.2 Helping people live healthy and independent lives

Currently many people feel unsafe cycling, although cycling is potentially a form of economic, reliable transport that allows them to access employment or training and hence independence, and the opportunity to incorporate active travel into their lives.

4.3 Supporting and protecting vulnerable people

It is proposed that Bikeability cycle training would still be offered to all schools across the County irrespective of geography or school size. A long term solution to sustained funding is being sought.

5. SIGNIFICANT IMPLICATIONS

5.1 Resource Implications

Carrying on the cycle training for the current financial year will cost up to £60,000. This can be covered within the existing ETE budget for this year only but longer term solutions will be needed.

5.2 Statutory, Risk and Legal Implications

There are no significant implications within this category.

5.3 Equality and Diversity Implications

There are no significant implications within this category.

5.4 Engagement and Consultation Implications

There has been discussions with our supplier Outspoken and some potential sponsors, but no engagement with schools.

5.5 Localism and local member engagement

All divisions would be impacted by these proposals. To date the Member involvement has been confined to discussions at Spokes (before the local elections) and at the Committee itself.

5.6 Public Health Implications

The Transport and Health Joint Strategic Needs Assessment (T&HJSNA) references the importance of providing free opportunities for people in areas of high deprivation to be physically active.

Source Documents	Location
None	

Implications	Officer Clearance
Have the resource implications been cleared by Finance?	Yes Name of Financial Officer: S Heywood

Has the impact on Statutory, Legal and Risk implications been cleared by LGSS Law?	Yes Name of Legal Officer: F McMillan
Are there any Equality and Diversity implications?	No Name of Officer: T Oviatt-Ham
Have any engagement and communication implications been cleared by Communications?	Yes Name of Officer: C Birchall
Are there any Localism and Local Member involvement issues?	No Name of Officer T Oviatt-Ham
Have any Public Health implications been cleared by Public Health	Yes Name of Officer: T Campbell