

## Slough Borough Council

<b>Report To:</b>	Cabinet
<b>Date:</b>	27 <sup>th</sup> February 2023
<b>Subject:</b>	E-Scooters and e-Bikes trial and scheme
<b>Lead Member:</b>	Cllr Mohammed Nazir, Transport & The Local Environment
<b>Chief Officer:</b>	Richard West
<b>Contact Officer:</b>	Savio DeCruz
<b>Ward(s):</b>	<u>ALL</u>
<b>Key Decision:</b>	YES
<b>Exempt:</b>	NO
<b>Decision Subject To Call In:</b>	YES
<b>Appendices:</b>	<b>A:</b> E-Scooter Rental Trial Evaluation <b>B:</b> Equality Impact Assessment <b>C:</b> Map of permitted riding areas in Slough

### 1. Summary and Recommendations

- 1.1. This report sets out the current status of the e-scooter trial rental scheme in Slough and includes an evaluation of the trial to date. Noting the popularity of the scheme previously, the proposal is to restart the trial, subject to a tendering exercise and the award of a new contract to the successful bidder. The new contract will include the provision of both e-scooters and e-bikes for public hire.

#### Recommendations:

Cabinet is recommended to:

- a) Approve the restart of the e-scooter scheme in Slough, extended to include e-bikes, for a period of up to 4 years, to cover the national trial period up to May 2024 and any agreed trial extension by the Department for Transport (DfT) and subsequently the remainder of the 4-year term subject to the full legislation of e-scooters.
- b) Approve the commissioning of a provider for the e-scooter/e-bikes trial.
- c) Delegate authority to the Executive Director for Place and Community, in consultation with the Lead Member for Transport and the Local Environment, to approve the award of contract and final scheme operations.
- d) Note that a follow-up report will be brought back to Cabinet after the national trial ends, to provide updates on the remaining trial period and any legislative and operational changes required by the DfT.

Reason:

The operation of the current local trial ended on 30<sup>th</sup> November 2022. This date was in line with the end of the contract with the provider at the time, Neuron Mobility. There is an opportunity to restart this popular scheme, in line with the most recent extension to the national e-scooter trial dates by the DfT to May 2024. Beyond this date, once the national trial evaluation has concluded, the Government plans to introduce legislation to regulate e-scooters<sup>1</sup>. However, the Government has yet to confirm the timelines for the national trial end date and the change of law to permit use.

Therefore, a new four-year contract to enable e-scooter and e-bike usage in Slough is recommended. The contract duration will cover the national trial period to May 2024 and beyond to when legislative changes have been made. In addition, the new contract specification will incorporate lessons learned from the local and national trial evaluations to date (between October 2020 to November 2022) and specify improvements for users and non-users with the continued emphasis on safety. Any legislative changes the government sets and any recommendations for operational changes will be presented again to Cabinet in a follow-up report to also include a full trial evaluation.

## **Commissioner Review**

*“Commissioners note the report.”*

### **2. Report**

#### **2.1. Introductory paragraph**

The DfT invited local authorities to participate in a national e-scooter trial in July 2020. Slough's participation in the national trial commenced in October 2020 and after a competitive tender exercise, the Council awarded a concession contract to the selected e-scooter operator, Neuron Mobility with a contract end date of 30<sup>th</sup> November 2022. The DfT subsequently extended the trial end date from 30<sup>th</sup> November 2022 to the latest date now set to 31<sup>st</sup> May 2024.

A new tender exercise must now be undertaken to procure an operator to offer short term hires of e-scooters and e-bikes in the borough. Continuing in the national trial would require meeting the same conditions agreed previously with the DfT including a maximum fleet size (300 e-scooters) and the already defined trial area (see Appendix C for permitted riding areas).

Once Government legislation has been introduced to legalise e-scooter use, Slough's participation in a nationally run trial will transition to a borough-led e-scooter/e-bike scheme. While the Government's new legislation will determine operational standards, there may be an opportunity at this point to increase the scope of the local scheme to include, for example, additional e-scooters or e-bikes to the fleet or expand the riding areas to include the entire borough.

This report sets out the current status of the e-scooter trial rental scheme in Slough and includes key findings from the local and national evaluations. Whilst the national evaluation will inform the longer-term policy position of the Government, the local evaluation draws on safety, ridership levels and implications for users and also non-users. A key policy

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<sup>1</sup> <https://lordslibrary.parliament.uk/e-scooters-the-road-ahead/>

challenge remains the illegal use of private e-scooters which can contribute to a negative perception of this mode more widely and potentially skews some survey results.

Options for the future of a combined e-scooter and e-bike scheme have also been presented.

## **2.2. Objectives**

The development of the necessary contract to restart the e-scooter scheme will contribute to the realisation of the following borough objectives.

### **2.2.1. SBC Corporate Plan Objectives**

- A council that lives within our means, balances the budget and delivers best value for taxpayers and service users by ensuring that the correct governance and procurement processes are in place to provide robust and clear adherence to the requirements
- An environment that helps residents live more independent, healthier and safer lives by reducing congestion on the network, reducing reliance on cars and providing a reliable and low-cost transport option
- Enhanced quality of place for residents, employees and visitors, making a visible difference to people's lives in terms of connectivity, access to shopping facilities, places to eat, improved journey quality and help the quality of the local environment in the area

### **2.2.2. Local e-scooter trial Objectives**

- Offer an alternative to making short journeys by car and reducing the number of single occupancy journeys by private vehicles, prioritised in the Local Transport Plan (LTP)
- Expand the choice for short journey connectivity to/from transport hubs, (addressing connectivity and accessibility issues)
- Provide an alternative travel option where other transport services may be difficult to access (addressing accessibility and equity issues).
- Offer an introduction to active travel by providing users with greater confidence to try out alternate options (addressing: public health objectives to encourage active travel)
- Provide information and evaluation data to guide future development of future mobility schemes (addressing wider national objectives relating to environment, health and economic outcomes)
- Align with the Low Emission Strategy, the Carbon Strategy, and the Local Plan (currently being updated)
- Contribute overall to improving local, regional and national social, economic and environmental outcomes

Under-pinning all Transport and related policies is a commitment to deliver modal shift, meaning facilitating a shift from private car to more environmentally sustainable modes of transport. The evaluation demonstrates that broadly the scheme to date has met its objectives while also supporting the Borough's Corporate Strategy and contributing to the national objectives.

As the scheme has matured, and in light of the evaluation and findings, including evaluation recommendations and references to safety in the SD on trial participation from September 2021, an additional revised trial objective *'To provide a safe mode of public*

*transport*’ will be added. At the time of the original tender, Neuron Mobility was selected due to their demonstrable commitment and experience where safety is prioritised. Riding reports including collision reports have been collated and submitted on a monthly basis to the Department for Transport.

A fully revised set of scheme objectives will be presented to Cabinet in the follow-up report, after legislation has changed to fully legalise the use of e-scooters and after final evaluation.

## 2.3. Evaluation

### 2.3.1. Data Capture

Two sources of survey data were captured and analysed. These findings were also considered within the context of the DfT’s national trial evaluation (dated December 2022). The two surveys included:

- (i) An online survey, issued by Neuron Mobility concluded in May 2021 and targeted e-scooter users. 100 unique responses were received.
- (ii) Issued by SBC’s Transport team, the second online survey ran between March and August 2022. Over 600 responses were received of which 86% were Slough residents. Exactly a third of respondents had used the Slough rental e-scooters while two thirds had not.

### 2.3.2. Key findings

The evaluation Appendix A) assesses the e-scooter trial’s performance against the Council’s original trial objectives. This covers the period from October 2020 to 30<sup>th</sup> November 2022. An analysis of the available data showed that the e-scooter scheme has helped the Council to meet the scheme objectives and contributes to wider objectives.

The surveys provided insights into the impact of the trial, as follows:

Theme	Data Source	Result
Usage	<i>Neuron Mobility trip data</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Overall the scheme was used very well with over 290,000 trips made in 2021.</li> </ul>
	<i>SBC Survey</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Half of all trips were for commuting journeys.</li> <li>49% of respondent’s would not be persuaded to use an e-scooter.</li> </ul>
	<i>SBC Survey</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>At the time of the survey, 40% of respondents did not feel that e-scooters should be encouraged relative to cars. The reasons being the need for group travel, carrying young passengers, luggage and longer distance travel.</li> </ul>
Trip Distance	<i>Neuron Mobility trip data</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The average walking distance per trip is 0.8 miles. The average trip distance for e-scooters in Slough is 1.24 miles, indicating purposeful journeys that would potentially would not have been walked.</li> </ul>
Modal Shift – alternate modes to private car	<i>Neuron Mobility survey data</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>38.4% of trips displaced car journeys, with 20% of trips were combined with public transport or car journeys.</li> <li>Based on Neuron Mobility’s data, over 200,000 car trips have been replaced e-scooter trips.</li> </ul>

	<i>SBC survey data</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 28% of users would otherwise have walked, where one sustainable mode is replaced by another. Greater work to encourage walking for short journeys to reinforce health benefits may be required.</li> <li>• 49% of respondents said that nothing would ever persuade them to ride an e-scooter. There is scope to expand the appeal of micromobility through extending options i.e. an e-bike hire scheme.</li> </ul>
Perception of Safety – users	<i>Neuron Mobility survey data</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 94% of respondents felt they understood the rules of riding safely indicating that information on how to use the e-scooters was clear. Rider penalisation should be introduced to target poor behaviour after investment in rider education.</li> </ul>
	<i>SBC survey data</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 58% of respondents have no safety concerns about using the e-scooters compared to 36% with concerns.</li> </ul>
Perception of Safety – non-users	<i>SBC survey data</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A mandatory parking model is welcome, with designated marked locations and penalties for non-compliant parking introduced. Pavement cluttering remained a key issue. Perceptions around safe use are complicated by the continued growth of private e-scooter use where user behaviour cannot be managed. The key safety concerns reported related to where scooters are used (on pavements at times, who is using them (young people/children accessing the e-scooters) and Parking (abandoned e-scooters).</li> </ul>
	<i>DfT National Evaluation</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Managing impacts on vulnerable road and pavement users - Partnership working is necessary with local disability forums to address the suitability of where e-scooters are parked.</li> </ul>
Value for Money (addressing equity issues)	<i>SBC survey data</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• More respondents (42%) believed that the scheme provided good value for money than those who thought otherwise (36%). Other participating Local Authorities have introduced loyalty discounts, free pass promotions, concessions, pre-pay and subscriptions.</li> </ul>

### 2.3.3. Sustainability

The success of the e-scooter scheme in Slough to date has shown extensive uptake of this mobility offer offering a zero emission travel option at point of use. In addition, Neuron Mobility operated electric vans to move the e-scooters around and service the fleet with both the van and e-scooters run on entirely renewable energy.

Within the local evaluation, there is evidence to indicate that e-scooters have, in some cases, replaced cars as the mode of choice for many short trips made within the borough. This is expected to contribute to a significant reduction in congestion on the road network, and reduction in CO<sup>2</sup> emissions, where journeys by e-scooter replace car or bus travel. Using this self-reported modal shift figure (38.4%) an indicative analysis, estimating the number of car kilometres used overall (based on the number and distance of trips recorded) shows that during the trial period over 66 tonnes of CO<sub>2</sub> have been saved at point of use and over 200,000 car trips were replaced by e-scooter trips<sup>2</sup>. However,

<sup>2</sup> e-scooter km travelled x car displacement rate x 160g per km

although the results show a reduction in emissions due to modal shift away from cars, it is of note that from the same survey findings showed that a third of e-scooter trips replaced walking trips which contradicts wider objectives to increase the numbers walking and cycling. The proposed inclusion of e-Bikes in the re-start of the scheme will offer an additional sustainable mode. Of note, the Council has committed to strengthen Active Travel infrastructure in the borough and preliminary designs for the A4 Cycle route are due to be presented to Cabinet in March. Coordination of infrastructure improvements, behaviour change incentives and facilitation is necessary to grow confidence in a relatively new scheme.

#### **2.3.4. Safety**

To date, Neuron Mobility reported that there have been 60 rider-only collisions and slight injuries (no hospital treatment reported), 1 moderate injury (outpatient), one severe injury (inpatient) and one fatality. Since 2019, a total of thirty-one deaths involving e-scooters, one in 2019, three in 2020, thirteen in 2021 and fourteen in 2022 (to early December) have been reported.<sup>3</sup> Of these, three fatalities were recorded in host trial boroughs, including Slough. A policy challenge remains the illegal use of private e-scooters, and the DfT has indicated that legislation to enable private e-scooter use may be introduced. Council communications have been issued to advise that private e-scooter use remains illegal except on private land and while educational measures have been deployed, greater enforcement is required.

Improvements to Safety continue to be a key focus for the trial. Neuron Mobility and the Council worked closely to promote safe riding and parking including three safety awareness events per year with Thames Valley Police. Messaging to reach all-users was increased to ensure first time riders understood how to ride responsibly, and helmets offered to all users. However, the survey results indicate that the majority of riders believed they understood the safety rules. Sanctions are therefore essential to enforce responsible riding including increased number of bans, or increased fines for misuse.

Survey responses from non-users have raised concerns about e-Scooters left carelessly on pavements, causing obstacles to pedestrians. Mitigation measures will be covered within the contract preparation for the re-start of the scheme and will consider fixed docking stations at specific locations.

#### **2.3.5. National Trials evaluation**

The national evaluation of e-scooter trials conducted by Arup for the Government shows that Slough has the 8<sup>th</sup> highest utilisation of the trials across the nation (out of 32 trials), indicating that the town is an attractive location to operate a scheme and to use e-scooters. The grand total of trips nationally was 14.5m over an 18 month review period. The evaluation covers a wide range of factors in considerable detail. Regarding safety, 5% of e-scooter users experienced a collision, due mainly to rider error, inexperience and lack of training.

#### **2.3.6. Consultation with public bodies**

The Transport team and Neuron have engaged frequently with Thames Valley Police since the start of the trial to discuss safety and enforcement. This has included joint campaigns, stakeholder events and direct responses to public concerns. Training events have been held to inform the public of safe e-scooter use and to eradicate misuse, via the use of technology and education. Neuron have also partnered with TVP in a local 'day of action'

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<sup>3</sup> PACTS – Parliamentary Advisory Council for Transport Safety, March 2022

with one-on-one engagement with riders. Lessons learnt from all of these initiatives will inform the measures we will maintain and develop in ongoing partnership with TVP and the successful bidder in the tendering exercise.

The Transport team has engaged with the Royal National Institute for the Blind (RNIB) in order to better understand the safety implications, and we are looking at making improvements to the scheme based on their recommendations. Further engagement with the RNIB will be undertaken.

### 2.3.7. Summary

Noting the data collated from the operation of the scheme, and the related findings from the various surveys, the e-scooter scheme has been highly successful, certainly in terms of popularity of usage, and has contributed significantly to meeting the various objectives of the scheme. Lessons have been learnt throughout the period of operation, and improvements have been made by Neuron in partnership with the Council. There is now a particular focus on further measures to address safety concerns.

In proposing to restart the scheme, the expectation is that the popularity and safety of the scheme will continue, and that further enhancements will be made, including, notably, the provision of e-bikes as an additional mode to support choice for the public, and to further realise the objectives. Liaison with all relevant public bodies will continue.

## 3.1. Options considered

The e-scooter trial scheme was suspended on 30<sup>th</sup> November 2022 due to the end of the existing contract with the outgoing supplier. Regarding the future of e-scooter use in Slough, the following options have been considered:

Option	Description
A	Continue the preparations for the award of a new contract, to include a percentage revenue return, in order to restart the e-scooter scheme at the earliest opportunity. This is expected to be from Spring 2023.
B	Continue the preparations as in option (A), but also including e-bikes within the proposed hire scheme.
C	End of the trial outright and not to continue with any contract plans.

Based on the evaluation, e-Scooters are well used in the borough and recognised as a low cost and accessible form of transport. The scheme contributes to meeting the Council's objectives. The evaluation report also indicates high use, good adherence to safety and the potential for e-Scooters to change travel behaviour in favour of sustainable modes.

**Option A** would restart the e-Scooter trial, as operated previously, with a revenue return now included in the proposed new contract. This would entail inclusion of a revenue return in the proposed new contract.

Advantages: this would build on the success of the scheme to date, noting the popularity, and restoring an alternative, low-cost, easily understood, sustainable form of transport for public use across the borough. This would further contribute to the realisation of the Council's objectives, including generation of income, progress towards modal shift and all the related social and environmental benefits. Continuing with the tendering exercise for a new contract is necessary to ensure a successful, safe and self-funding scheme to be introduced.

The disadvantage here is that this does not include the additional benefits that would arise from the inclusion of e-Bikes in a new scheme. Hence **option A is not recommended**.

**Option B** would restart the e-Scooter trial, as in Option A, with the addition of e-bikes within the proposed e-scooter contract preparations. This would provide an additional sustainable mode of transport, which would further support the scheme objectives. The disadvantage here is that the popularity of e-bike usage is unknown, since there has been no e-bike scheme in Slough to evaluate to date. Furthermore, inclusion of e-bikes in the contract preparations could potentially delay the re-start of the scheme. Noting the additional benefits expected, however **option B is recommended**.

**Option C** would not restart the e-scooter trial scheme in Slough. Some residents who are opposed to e-scooters on road safety grounds might see this as an advantage, however these issues can be addressed in changes to the specification and better enforcement. Disadvantages of this option are failure to draw on the known popularity of the scheme, and no contribution to the various policy objectives set out above. **Option C is not recommended**.

## **3.2. Background**

### **3.2.1. History of trial / DfT approvals / timeline**

The DfT approved an e-scooter trial which commenced in Slough in June 2020. This was part of an emergency response to meet the transport and mobility needs of local areas and people whilst supporting a green recovery from the impacts of COVID-19. In July 2020, the DfT made regulations allowing trials of e-scooters.

The e-scooter operator, Neuron Mobility, was chosen after an open and competitive process that evaluated applicants' ability to meet safety standards, their experience and commitment to high operating standards. Neuron were initially contracted to work with the Council in October 2020.

As the trial progressed, the DfT extended the trial scheme to October 2021, then March 2022, then November 2022 and most recently to May 2024. The recently ended contract with Neuron had been extended to November 2022, after an exemption was permitted by the Council's Procurement team.

Before the announcement of the latest national trial extension by the DfT, to May 2024, officers had been working to the November 2022 date. This informed the end date for the contract between the Council and Neuron Mobility UK, the operator, which ended on 30<sup>th</sup> November 2022.

The Transport Service undertook an evaluation process, to assess user and non-used satisfaction with the scheme, the scheme's value to residents and also to take forward learning from the previous contract arrangement to apply to any new contract arrangement.

Due to the success and popularity of the scheme, the Transport Service was formally requested to propose a further exemption to extend the contract. This was considered by all relevant departments and was agreed in principle. Neuron Mobility were invited to extend the trial until the summer of 2023 however they declined this invitation. Hence, the Transport Service formally suspended the trial, and all e-scooters were removed from the public highway by Neuron Mobility at the end of November 2022.



Subject to Cabinet approval, it will be possible to restart the trial scheme in Slough once a tendering exercise has been completed and a new contract has been awarded. The DfT has confirmed that the Council can re-join after the current break in the trial.

Allowing for completion of the existing procurement exercise, and the award of a new contract, the likely date for a new contractor to be appointed is Spring 2023, with mobilisation of the scheme to commence as soon as practically possible after the award.

### **3.2.2. Inclusion of e-bikes in the proposed contract**

In line with the DfT's national trials, the recently conducted trial scheme in Slough only included e-Scooters. The evaluation of the trial in Slough to date (see Appendix A) also only relates to this form of transport.

Given that the Slough trial has recently been suspended, and preparations are underway to facilitate the restart of the scheme, there is now an opportunity to include e-Bikes in the new contract, and hence to provide an additional mode of transport for public use. It is proposed, to fully explore the inclusion of e-Bikes within the new contract.

Noting that the evaluation relates mainly to e-scooters, there is currently no recent evidence available to support the introduction of e-Bikes in Slough. The benefits and disadvantages of e-Bikes will therefore be comprehensively reviewed, and only included in the new contract as long as this will not de-stabilise the success (financial and otherwise) of the e-Scooter scheme.

The evaluation does, however, recommend the use of e-bikes as part of the provision of micromobility options, in addition to e-scooters. This will increase the range of accessible travel options and maximise use of active travel infrastructure. A wider choice of mode will broaden the overall appeal of micromobility, and will also further strengthen the Council's aims to facilitate a safe and sustainable transport network. Furthermore, the use of e-bikes on the public highways is already fully legalised. Hence, the recommendations in this report cover the inclusion of e-bikes in the proposed restart to the scheme.

## **4. Implications of the Recommendation**

### *4.1. Financial implications*

4.1.1. The contract with Neuron Mobility UK which ended on 30<sup>th</sup> November was a zero-cost contract to the Council. There were some basic running costs (under £10k annually) to the Transport service, but these were covered by a DfT grant. Beyond 2022/23 no grant is available. Officer time to support the scheme's continuation will be covered by the proposed income from the new contract, via a revenue share requirement.

4.1.2. The proposed new contract to cover the extension of the trial and the subsequent post-trial period, is also a zero-cost contract to the Council. There will, however, be a requirement in the new tender documentation for a revenue share by the operator, to give the Council up to 7.5% of the revenue to the Council. This has been proposed following discussions with legal and procurement officers. The total amount of this return is subject to the success of the scheme and the number of e-scooter hires made by users.

- 4.1.3. An estimate of income from the scheme of around £37.5k/annum is expected, based on a projected £500k contract value per annum. There is an expectation that this will increase based on expansion of the service. However, these figures are illustrative only and not based on actual verified data of past volumes and the pricing structure of the previous contractor.
- 4.1.4. For each financial year from 2023/24 the expected income will be used to cover the annual costs of £3.5k, leaving an expected £34k surplus revenue. Future income received by SBC as part of the revenue share arrangement will be assessed on an ongoing basis. Projected subscription revenue achievable may vary and also take longer to build to the level assumed so should be viewed with some caution.
- 4.1.5. An additional income is expected from the inclusion of e-bikes within the scheme. The revenue percentage is expected to be in line with the percentage for e-Scooters, but this will be fully considered in the preparation of the ITT. There is still a need, however, to fully assess the likelihood of financial viability of an e-bike hire scheme, and hence its likely take-up by operators seeking to run the e-scooter scheme.

## 4.2. *Legal implications*

4.2.1. The DfT made regulations in July 2020 to allow trials of e-scooters as part of a green approach to local travel and to mitigate the impact on public transport as people recommenced travel following the lockdown restrictions arising from the Covid-19 pandemic. The regulations for e-scooters apply in a similar way to e-bikes and are deemed to have a similar road presence and visibility as these. However, during the trials, e-scooters continue to be classed as motor vehicles and therefore there must be insurance in place and a driving licence to use one.

The operation of the e-Scooter scheme must comply with the Vehicle Special Order (VSO), to cover the completion of the trial. The VSO is granted to the Council by the DfT, and must be complied with by the operator.

4.2.2. A permanent Traffic Order (PTRO) under the Road Traffic Act (1988) is in place which authorises the use of e-scooters on all parts of the public highway for which Slough Borough Council is the traffic authority. This PTRO will remain in place subject to the e-Scooter trial re-starting in Slough. Should the trial not be re-started, the PTRO will be revoked.

4.2.3. The DfT published updated guidance in February 2022. This sets out requirements that local authorities may wish to consider including in their own trials, including:

- Number of e-scooters to be provided in trials
- Availability of training or helmets
- Specific areas where e-scooters can be parked to avoid e-scooters becoming an obstruction of other road users and pedestrians, particularly those with disabilities
- The use of geo-fencing to limit the trial area within the borough or to prevent use outside the trial borough's area
- The sharing of data between the local authority and e-scooter operator

Additional requirements have been added to those trials that are extended beyond November 2022. These include:

- a requirement for local authorities and operators to review current safety measures and consider improvements, including lower speed limits for new riders, parking incentives and penalties, safety events and publicity initiatives. Measures should also include those to improve the perceptions around e-scooter safety.
- Increasing the uptake and use of e-scooters by providing mandatory training for new users and offers of in depth rider training.
- Encouraging helmet use, including provision of helmet, encouraging use of own helmet and incentivising use.
- Reducing illegal use of e-scooters and anti-social behaviour by improving user identification and reducing illegal use within the rental scheme, including twin riding, pavement riding and parents unlocking e-scooters for children.
- Provision of user data to the police.
- Improving parking bays
- Continuing to monitor and evaluate the trial.

The Council has a duty under s.39 of the Road Traffic Act 1988 to carry out studies into accidents arising out of the use of vehicles and in the light of those studies, to take such measures as appear to be appropriate to prevent such accidents, including the dissemination of information and advice relating to the use of roads, the giving of practical training to road users, the construction, improvement, maintenance or repair of roads and other measures in exercise of powers for controlling, protecting or assisting the movement of traffic on roads.

#### 4.3. Risk management implications

<i>Description of risk</i>	<i>Risk/Threats/Opportunities</i>	<i>Proposed future controls</i>
Community Support	Unfavourable response to the re-start of the scheme. Questioning by residents about consistency and the benefits / reliability of the rental service.	Further, comprehensive public engagement through feedback and Comm's messaging. Assessment of total number and type of complaints.
Scheme delivery team capacity	Inclusion of e-bikes in the ITT content is likely to cause some delay in completion of the ITT.	Additional requirements will be factored into a revised project plan.
Road safety	Potential further accidents involving e-Scooters.	There will be an emphasis in the ITT on safety measures, vehicle specification, improvement plans etc. Furthermore, thorough risk assessments and appropriate interventions will be required from bidders for the new contract.
Legal	Legal action as a result of road safety concerns.	The Insurance team has provided recommended levels of liability for the operators. This information will be included as a requirement in the contract.  Further requirements and recommendations in Government guidance will be considered and incorporated into the new contract.

		Data sharing requirements in the contract will allow for further monitoring and evaluation and close liaison with the police to assist with enforcement.
Finance	<p>The target revenue return of up to 7.5% of income is subject to performance of the scheme and final terms.</p> <p>There is also a risk that the e-Bike scheme will not be as financially viable as the e-Scooter scheme, and this could potentially reduce the overall income level ultimately received.</p>	<p>The revenue return requirement will be re-considered prior to finalising the ITT content.</p> <p>Inclusion of the e-Bike scheme will be fully reviewed and only finalised once all checks and assurances have been made. The contract will be tailored accordingly.</p>

#### 4.4. Environmental implications

##### 4.4.1 Positive impacts expected

The e-scooter scheme is expected to reduce congestion and therefore to reduce carbon emissions and improve air quality across the borough. The environmental impacts are expected to be of benefit to all residents and visitors to Slough.

#### 4.5. Equality implications

4.5.1. An Equalities Impact Assessment (EQIA) has been carried out on the operation of the e-scooter scheme to date in Slough, and on the anticipated impacts related to the proposed restart of the scheme. This is provided as **Appendix B** to this report.

The overall findings are as follows:

- a) There are positive impacts from the e-Scooter trial and the proposed restart of the scheme for all groups identified *including users and non-users*
- b) The e-Scooter trial has led to specific benefits for all who the e-scooter service in Slough, but amongst non-users the impacts are both positive and negative.
- c) The e-scooters are relied upon by certain protected groups more than others. For example, younger people tend to use the e-scooters more than older people in Slough, and people with disabilities are more likely to be non-users than those without disabilities.

The positive impacts for all relate to:

- An improvement in the local air quality, supporting those most at risk from the impacts of pollution. Data from surveys conducted in Slough indicate that an estimated 670,000 fewer car miles have led to 66,000 tonnes of CO<sup>2</sup> saved and an improvement of air quality in Slough's AQIAs.

- A reduction in congestion and an improvement in the amenity of the town. An estimated 209,000 car trips have been avoided by people choosing e-scooters instead.

Examples of the positive impacts for specific groups, for users of the scheme, include:

- A more affordable travel option for people with low incomes and those without access to a car.
- Improved access to services, places of work and education, shops, healthcare, and other destinations.
- Greater modal choice and independence for those who do not have easy access to other transport services.

Examples of the negative impacts include:

- Pregnancy and maternity: There may be some specific impacts for this category, again relating to pavement access and the ability to push a pram / buggy around an improperly parked e-scooter. As such they are more likely to be affected by improper parking and dangerous riding of the e-scooters.
- People with sight disabilities and the elderly are also more likely to be affected by improper use (including poor parking) of e-Scooters and e-Bikes on the public highway.
- Exclusion from the trial due to barriers in terms of accessibility, affordability, language, and requirement for a smartphone, bank account or driving licence.
- Physical ability of older people to use e-scooters, and also the increased implications relating to accidents in terms of physical resilience and recovery.

The action plan in the EQIA specifically includes commitments to improvements in safety measures, for example in response to the needs of the elderly, people with disabilities and parents of young children, relating to e-Scooters and e-Bikes constituting obstacles when left on the public highway. This will be covered in the contract preparations and in ongoing monitoring and response. Solutions are expected to include docking bays, geo-fencing or alternative measures to improved parking controls, particularly in areas of high pedestrian use. All such measures will be subject to DfT guidance, ongoing public engagement, and financial viability, however safety requirements will be paramount.

A full, more detailed list of expected impacts of the e-Scooter trial – positive and negative is included in the EQIA document (Appendix B). This assessment includes the likely impacts of e-bikes within the scheme.

Subsequently, this assessment will be reviewed regularly and will seek to mitigate against any potentially adverse impacts with specific reference to protected groups who are disproportionately affected by the scheme. This will included ongoing engagement specifically with all relevant protected groups.

#### 4.6. *Procurement implications*

The Council has an obligation to ensure procurement activity is carried out in accordance with (a) the Council's constitution; (b) the Contract Procedure Rules; and (c) the Public Contract Regulations (PCR) 2015.

A procurement business case to develop a new contract for the continuation of the e-scooter trial scheme, and the extension of the scheme subject to full legalisation of e-scooter usage by the DfT, was approved by the Procurement Board in October 2022.

The Transport Planning team will continue to engage with the Procurement team in the preparation of the Tender documentation. This will now include reference to e-bikes.

#### *4.7. Workforce implications*

##### 4.7.1. Scheme management

The operation of the scheme including the physical management and maintenance of e-scooters and e-bikes, as well as the contracts with individual users, are the responsibility of the operator.

The internal management and administration of the scheme will continue to be covered by the Transport Planning team. The team will work with Finance colleagues in preparation for the inclusion of the Revenue return from the operator. The team continues to operate at and beyond capacity, and the resourcing requirements will need to be reviewed continually as the scheme progresses.

#### *4.8. Property implications*

##### 4.8.1. None

## **5. Background Papers**

SD: Suspension of E-Scooter Trial, issued 3<sup>rd</sup> November 2022

SD: E-scooter Trial Extension, (notification of continued participation, including data and evaluation after one year of operations. Issued September 2021

## **6. Appendices**

**Appendix A: E-Scooter scheme Evaluation Report**

**Appendix B: Equality Impact Assessment**

**Appendix C: Map of permitted riding areas in Slough**