

Subject: E-Scooter Trial

Report to: **Economic Development Committee** – 14th November 2022
ELT – 2nd November 2022

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Executive Summary

The report is an update to Members on the progress made with the Department for Transport led E-Scooter trial.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- 1) to note progress of E-Scooter trial
- 2) to note extension of the trial to 31st May 2024

1 BACKGROUND AND INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 In July 2020 the Government announced local authorities could apply to become an E-Scooter trial area. This followed a public consultation that ran from 18 May 2020 to 2 June 2020. This consultation is part of the 'Future of transport regulatory review' for which the Government are running a call for evidence, which includes seeking evidence on micromobility vehicles (including e-scooters), flexible bus services, and mobility as a service.
- 1.2 The feedback from the consultation set the rules for e-scooters and their users. The trials are being used to assess whether e-scooters should be legalised in the UK.
- 1.3 Before the Government can decide whether to fully legalise them and determine the rules that should apply, they need to understand their impacts. That means gathering evidence on their safety, how people use them, whether the potential benefits can be realised, and how to manage the downsides. Therefore, controlled trials will run in many places.
- 1.4 E-scooters offer the potential for clean and inexpensive travel that can also help to ease congestion on the roads – especially short journeys which would otherwise be undertaken by car.
- 1.5 Trials began in September 2020 and initially could run for up to 12 months, the DfT have since extended the end date allowing trials to run for 3.5 years.
- 1.6 After Member sign off (at the Great Yarmouth Transport and Infrastructure Members Group), the Great Yarmouth Borough Council E-Scooter Trial application was submitted to the Department of Transport on 28th August 2020 and approved on 19th October 2020.

Submission was made as part of the Town Deal Connectivity Delivery Group.

- 1.7 Progress of the trial is reported to the Great Yarmouth Transport and Infrastructure Members Group as well as the Town Deal Board.
- 1.8 Confirmation has been received by NCC Highways Department that the e-scooter trial in Great Yarmouth can be managed locally, there is involvement needed by NCC Highways in terms of permission or delegated decisions.
- 1.9 Two stakeholder engagement sessions were held, 19th and 24th November 2020, including stakeholders from local disability and vulnerable user groups. The stakeholder engagement helped inform the trial and was used as evidence for amending TRO's.
- 1.10 A Members engagement session, for wards affected by the e-scooter trial service area, was held on 1st December 2020 and both Leaders were in full support.
- 1.11 Following an options appraisal on E-Scooter providers presented to ELT on 16th September 2020, Ginger were appointed as the provider for the Great Yarmouth trial.
NPLaw have made amendments to identified TROs to allow E-Scooter use along cycle paths.

2 PROJECT PROGRESS TO DATE

- 2.1 The trial launched 30th March 2021.
- 2.2 Please see below some statistics for the trial from launch up until 24th October 2022:
 - Total unique riders: 13,400
 - Total Ginger app sign-ups: 18,700
 - Total mileage: 220,000 miles (that's scooting around Earth eight times!)
 - Total CO2 emissions saved: 58 tonnes
 - % of point to point rides (from launch): 83% overall since launch, 87% this past month
 - Most popular bays are: Crown Road, Southtown Road and the Train Station parking bay (when looking at 2022 data)
 - The busiest Great Yarmouth rider has 530 journeys under their belt, they are on our Free Rides for Heroes program
 - Total Bays: 72 (additional bays can be added where needed based on feedback and demand)
 - Users banned: 22
 - Warnings issued: 92 warnings issued by text
 - Only three serious incidents reported (serious incident defined as an accident that required medical attention)
- 2.3 Since launch Ginger have been instructed to move 12 parking bays based on feedback

- received by local residents. Ginger are able to implement these changes within 24 hours of instruction. We will continue to act on feedback throughout the trial to ensure its safety and effectiveness.
- 2.4 Dismount zones have been implemented in the Market Place, Victoria Arcade, St George's Park, Great Yarmouth Seafront Beach side promenade, Marine Parade running alongside Pleasure Beach, St Nicholas Car Park, Pleasure Beach Gardens, the A47 and Gorleston High Street.
 - 2.5 Ginger have launched an 'end journey photo' feature within the app. This means that all journeys can now only end when the user takes a live photo of their scooter to show its end state. This is to promote positive user behaviour for good, upright parking and to ensure users leave the vehicles in a roadworthy state. It will help Ginger identify any problem parkers or damaged vehicles earlier, allowing the fleet managers to respond faster.
 - 2.6 To help support issues around inclusion and access for 16-18 year olds it was agreed that the trial would include this age group to give a cheap, convenient, green form of access for commuting to college and/or work. 16-18 year olds must still have a valid driving licence and do have to go through an additional verification process to access the app.
 - 2.7 Working in partnership with NCC's *Bikeability Project*, a number of e-scooter safe use training sessions will be held for 16-18 year olds.
 - 2.8 Ginger have extended their *Free Rides for Heroes* offer, which provides free journeys on Ginger scooters for NHS and other key workers, indefinitely. The scheme was originally set to close on 31st December 2021. The campaign has been tremendously successful so far with Ginger having provided free scooter journeys to well over 1,000 key workers nationwide.
 - 2.9 Nplaw have amended the temporary TROs in place for the trial; the TROs are now permanent allowing e-scooter use in all cycle and shared-use lanes.

3 FEEDBACK AND RESPONSES

- 3.1 Reports of misuse have reduced considerably over the course of the trial as users become more comfortable with the e-scooters. Ginger are receiving very few reports of misuse and complaints in comparison to the high usage.
- 3.2 There have only been two reports of serious incidents involving an authorised trial e-scooter: a) a Ginger user collided with a six-year-old child on a bicycle, the child was uninjured but there was slight damage to the bicycle, the Ginger user did not stop but was

- later identified by Ginger and banned from future use, b) a user fell from the e-scooter which resulted in a broken wrist, and, c) a user fell from the e-scooter resulting in a fractured elbow.
- 3.3 Ginger report back to the Department for Transport on any incidents reported to them involving a suspected privately owned e-scooter.
 - 3.4 Ginger respond to all reports of misuse and are able to identify the user by time, date and location. Warnings or bans are issued depending on the severity of the misuse. Ginger will continue to react to all reports of misuse, complaints and requests.
 - 3.5 There has also been some very positive feedback, including requests for additional e-scooters and bays, particularly within the residential areas of Bradwell and Gorleston for commuter use.
 - 3.6 GY Police are continuing with their operation, 'Operation e-Scooter', carried out to raise awareness of legalities of e-scooters. On average one privately-owned e-scooter is seized per month. This is an ongoing operation and the Police will continue to report back to the Officer Working Group on progress.
 - 3.7 Privately-owned e-scooters are illegal to use on public land and if caught, the rider could face a £300 fine, their e-scooter confiscated and points on their driving licence if they have one. The police will continue to relay this message.
 - 3.8 Communications will continue by both GYBC and GY Police around safety and proper use of the e-scooters.
 - 3.9 The agreed messaging for the trial is around a resident/commuter focus rather than a tourism focus. The messaging will comprise social distancing, green transport, alternative method for short journeys and commuting.
 - 3.10 The Officer Working Group comprises GYBC, NCC Highways, Ginger, GY Police, Great Yarmouth Town Centre Partnership and GYTABIA, which gives a good opportunity to engage with prominent town centre stakeholders.
 - 3.11 Officers recognise it is not easy to differentiate between a Ginger e-scooter and a privately-owned e-scooter as they are all mostly black. This can be confusing to members of the public, especially when reporting misuse. Ginger first trialled placing reflective tape on all trial e-scooters to make them easier to identify. Feedback received was that this was not enough to differentiate between Ginger and privately-owned, therefore, Ginger have now added new 'wraps' to all of the e-scooters which are much bigger and white to stand out against the black e-scooter. Moving forward this will help Ginger deal with

issues/complaints around trial e-scooters. Ginger are continuing to revise branding to ensure Ginger e-scooters are recognisable and stand out as part of a trial.

- 3.12 Great Yarmouth Police have provided the following feedback: Actual reports to us of misuse are still low; they have been working with their Roads Policing Teams to devise a Norfolk wide approach to E-Scooters; Police Communications Team has been working with GYBC Communications Team and NCC Communications Team to devise a strategy with Police taking the lead around privately owned E-Scooters; all officers have now been sent a guide to the legalities of E-Scooters, and; reports of anti-social behaviour relating to E-Scooters can be feedback to the Police via 101 or via their website by hitting the *report it now* button on the front page.

4 FLEET SIZE AND EXTENSION TO THE TRIAL

- 4.1 There is a desire from members of the public to increase the fleet size and have more parking bays, particularly in the more residential areas of Bradwell and Gorleston. The Department for Transport trial has approved 100 e-scooters within the Great Yarmouth trial, we currently have all 100 live e-scooters being used. Ginger have proposed raising the number of e-scooters to 250. Not all 250 e-scooters will be deployed unless demand is proven, this does mean, however, that wear and tear on e-scooters is kept to a minimum and other e-scooters are available to replace those taken away from the trial for repairs.
- 4.2 Following approval from the Economic Development Committee on 31st January 2022, GYBC, in partnership with Ginger, have applied for a project adjustment to enable the fleet number to be increased. The request was initially rejected as not enough data was provided about the percentage of the existing fleet being in use, Ginger will continue to work with DfT to enable to approval of the request as soon as possible.
- 4.3 GYBC Officers will continue to work in partnership with GY Police and Town Centre Partnership to identify appropriate E-Scooter parking bays, ensuring where possible bays fall within CCTV network.
- 4.4 The Queen's Speech in May this year announced the Government's intention to introduce legislation on the future of transport in the new parliamentary session as part of a Transport Bill. DfT anticipate using powers to create a new independent low-speed, zero emission vehicle (LZEV) category, and to subsequently create regulations that will legalise e-scooters under new rules, as well as proposing new powers for local transport authorities to manage rental operations for pedal cycles, e-cycles and e-scooters through a rental permit scheme.

DfT will continue to engage with local authorities while legislation is being developed and will also consult publicly before any secondary regulations for e-scooters and the rental schemes are made.

4.5 The move towards a new regime means that the trials continue to have significant value, as well as providing a practical example of how better regulation can encourage responsible use. DfT continue to gather trip data and monthly incident reports to inform policy development.

4.6 Department for Transport have announced that all e-scooter trials have been extended to 31st May 2024. The extension will be restricted to existing trial areas only and will allow DfT to gather further evidence where gaps are identified, building on the findings of the current evaluation.

5 FINANCIAL CONSIDERATIONS AND IMPLICATIONS

5.1 The trial poses no financial implications to the Council. All costs associated with the trial will be accepted by Ginger.

6 RISK IMPLICATIONS

6.1 No risk to GYBC. No commitment to the provider beyond the trial period.

6.2 Provider will produce a risk assessment and continue to monitor risks associated with the trial.

7 EQUALITY IMPLICATIONS

7.1 The trial is available to anyone over 16 years of age who have a full or provisional driving licence.

7.2 The trial will not discriminate outside of the above restrictions.

7.3 Disability and vulnerable user groups will continue to be engaged with throughout the life of the trial.

8 CONCLUSION

8.1 This report is an update to Members on the progress of the E-Scooter Trial in Great Yarmouth.