
To: Business, Economy and Enterprise Scrutiny Board (3)

Date: 9 February 2022

Subject: Regional Active Travel update from TfWM

1 Purpose of the Note

- 1.1 The Business, Economy and Enterprise Scrutiny Board (3) have requested an update from Transport for West Midlands (TfWM) on regional progress towards increasing active travel.

2 Recommendations

- 2.1 The Business, Economy and Enterprise Scrutiny Board (3) are recommended to:
- 1) Note the updates provided
 - 2) Champion the continued investment in active travel within Coventry
 - 3) Identify any recommendations for the Cabinet Member or representative on the TfWM Transport Advisory Committee

3 Information/Background

3.1 Starley Network Update

The Starley Network is the vision for cycling across the West Midlands, which includes both the existing network and the planned future network, which is identified in the West Midlands Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan (LCWIP) as well as the LCWIP of the Local Authorities who have published them (Birmingham, Sandwell and Solihull). It is the aim that other local authorities will follow suit through the development work of the Local Authority Capability Fund to build on the local connector LCWIP routes.

The West Midlands LCWIP was updated in June 2021, moving from phased delivery to delivery specified within 1, 4 and 10 years, as required by Department for Transport (DfT). The longer routes are still expected to be delivered in phases,

and these have been split over years where appropriate.

The Active Travel Fund and the Transforming Cities Fund investment have allowed accelerated delivery of LCWIP schemes, including the Binley Road route in Coventry. The Full Business Case for Binley Road was endorsed by WMCA Board in September 2021. There is an ask for this scheme in the region's application for Active Travel Fund Capital 2021-22, for which we are currently awaiting a decision.

The Mayor of the West Midlands, Andy Street, has appointed Adam Tranter as the region's first Cycling & Walking Commissioner; one of his key objectives is to accelerate the delivery of the Starley network and improve the quality of infrastructure across the region. It should be noted that Coventry's plans for the Binley cycleway are very much the benchmark of the quality we're aiming for across the West Midlands.

3.2 **Bike Life Update**

Bike Life is the biggest assessment of cycling in cities and urban areas across the UK and Ireland. The 2019 Bike Life Report was published in March 2020, and the next report is expected in Spring 2022. The 2022 report will expand to include walking and a measure of

neighbourhood connections to local services such as education and grocery shops. From the 2019 report, many West Midlands residents support the delivery of measures that allows for safer cycling, e.g. 76% think space should be increased for people socialising, cycling and walking on their high street, and 65% support building more cycle tracks, even if that means less room for motor traffic.

3.3 **West Midlands Cycle Hire Update**

The West Midlands Cycle Hire scheme has been operational within the West Midlands since March 2021. There are a total of 1,350 pedal and 150 e-bikes in 8 regional locations across the 7 West Midlands Metropolitan Authorities. Scheme sponsorship is currently being sought to support the scheme financially.

Scheme usage within Coventry to-date has been positive, with Coventry's usage outperforming other locations. Some key stats / observations from Coventry, since scheme launch have been detailed below for reference:

- Number of docking stations – 38
- Number of available bikes – 265 pedal bikes, 42 e-bikes
- Total pedal rides – 73,071
- Total e-bike rides – 2,891
- Average hire duration – 23 minutes
- Average distance travelled – 2.28km
- 91% of Coventry scheme usage comprises an A-B journey, whereby the customer returns the bike to a different location from where they hired. This indicates that the scheme is well used for utility / commuting trips, and again this is higher than the scheme-wide average.

- Coventry Rail Station and Gosford Gate docking stations have been particularly wellused
- 96% of bikes within Coventry are returned to docking stations, representing positivecustomer behaviours. Again, this compares favourable to other regions, where additional staff resourcing is required to return informally parked bikes to docking stations.

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