

# Brighton & Hove City Council

## Transport & Sustainability Committee

## Agenda Item 52

**Subject:** New Beryl BTN Bike hire hubs

**Date of meeting:** 05 December 2023

**Report of:** Executive Director Environment, Economy & Culture

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**Ward(s) affected:** All

**For general release**

### **1. Purpose of the report and policy context**

- 1.1 To seek approval for shortlisted sites for new Bikeshare hubs where consultations via the Traffic Regulation Order (TRO) amendment process or Footway licensing have passed the threshold of objections which permits decisions by officers under delegated powers.

### **2. Recommendations**

- 2.1 The Committee agrees to proceed with the proposal in Traffic Regulation Order TRO – 43b – 2023 (Outer) for Graham Avenue only, having taken into consideration all the duly made comments and to withdraw the Northeast Drive carriageway site proposal.

### **3. Context and background information**

- 3.1 The reorganisation of the City's Bikeshare Scheme was approved by the November 2020 Environment, Transport and Sustainability Committee following a report including a detailed Business Case which confirmed a scheme was viable without public subsidy.
- 3.2 The Business Case recommended that thirteen hubs should be added to the existing hub network at locations to ensure sufficient city-wide coverage would maximise opportunities for cycling uptake.
- 3.3 The Framework Contract signed in December 2022 commits Beryl to a bid price for thirteen new sites to address the accessibility issue. These were shortlisted in a hub network review considering 84 new site suggestions completed on behalf of the Council by consultants in March 2022. Beryl has agreed to deliver the shortlisted sites at the prices in their successful contract bid but has the right to veto future sites. (See Appendix 1).

- 3.4 Four of those sites have carriageway designs proposed. TRO – 43a – 2023 (CPZ) deals with two sites in the controlled parking zone where there were no objections. These 6 sites will now proceed to installation.
- 3.5 Nine other shortlisted sites are off the carriageway, on or behind, footways, park or private land. None of the footway sites proposed have so far reached the threshold for objections and installations will proceed during the Winter and Spring periods.
- 3.6 The Scheme hire zone became City-wide by 30 September 2023, but some areas do not have access to a conveniently located hub. North Portslade is one of two Wards with no hubs. (The other is Woodingdean, where a hub has been consulted on and will be installed in the week commencing 04 December on Warren Road). Hangleton & Knoll Ward has one hub currently activated at The Grenadier and another site at Millview Hospital awaiting installation. Both are in the southern half of the Ward.
- 3.7 If a shortlisted site is not agreed, a new site from the network review 'long list' will be selected in order of agreed priority. This may, or may not be, in the same Ward as the previous site.
- 3.8 A report to the 06 February 2024 Committee will provide a full update on the reorganisation process.

#### **4. Analysis and consideration of alternative options**

- 4.1 Two sites were proposed by TRO amendment TRO-43b – 2023 for bikeshare hubs on the carriageway in locations outside the CPZ at Graham Avenue, Mile Oak, and Northease Drive, Hangleton. (See Appendix 2)
- 4.2 At Graham Ave, alternative sites on the verge opposite the junction with Chalky Way were considered by the review and reviewed by Beryl once they signed the new Contract. The footway is narrow at this point and use of the verge next to the kerb would mean parked bikes would narrow the effective width on the footway. This pedestrian route is very busy at school journey times and bikes could potentially obstruct wheelchair and buggy access. The verge behind the footway contains several utility service plates which would prevent tarmacking an area for a hub.
- 4.3 An alternative site in the car park of Portslade Sports Centre was also investigated. However, this car park is already very busy and used extensively by both the Leisure Centre customers and visitors to the school. Officers do not believe a hub at this site will work due to the competing demands for that area by users of the adjacent Leisure Centre and school.
- 4.4 Two other footway site options near the Northease Drive site were considered. A site at the Hangleton Lane end of St Helen's Park was ruled out because it would obstruct service plates for underground utilities. Another site at the entrance to Greenleas Recreation Ground on Hangleton Way was considered too vulnerable to vandalism because it is less visible from the road and nearby houses and is unlikely to get the same footfall.

The parade of shops further north on Hangleton Way near the Devil's Dyke Cycle trail was considered, but the potential sites here are not visible from the road, meaning bikes would be more vulnerable to vandalism. The Operator agreed the Northease Drive location at the bottom of the hill would be more likely to encourage the use of ebikes to climb the hill to the trail entrance. Sites on private land were not considered at this stage.

- 4.5 The chosen carriageway site (in common with practice at all carriageway sites) was independently road safety audited. No concerns were raised by the auditors.

## **5. Community engagement and consultation**

- 5.1. The site on the carriageway at Northease Drive has received thirty-three objections and one comment in favour. (See Appendix 3 for summary of comments).
- 5.2 Objectors believe adjacent businesses (particularly the nearby wellbeing clinic) will suffer if adjacent parking is reduced. Some people do not accept there is demand for cycling locally. The objectors do not believe most clinic users will be able to cycle. They suggest alternative sites and believe there are safety issues with the chosen site. Some misunderstand the TRO amendment consultation process and suggest it is an attempt to impose a hub by stealth. Wider parking issues in Northease Drive were raised as well as the impact on people with children, the disabled and the elderly.
- 5.3 On Wednesday 25 October, Hangleton & Knoll Ward members and officers made a site visit to meet business owners and residents to listen to their concerns. The members support the concept of a hub to serve this area but have reservations about loss of parking. They heard concerns raised about access for those using cars to access classes and treatments such as mothers with babies or those with chronic illnesses, and residents of the street who may find parking outside their homes impacted by the loss of two spaces outside local shops. Cllr Hewitt has since submitted a formal objection to the carriageway site.
- 5.4 Both North Portslade Ward members were consulted on the design for Graham Avenue prior to consultation. Cllr Atkinson chose to do some preliminary informal consultation with residents in May. He raised some concerns about vandalism, parking, and demand forecasts. He also passed on a few messages of support for the proposal and a comment on the initial design which led to measurements being checked and revised. No formal objections to the TRO amendment from either of the Ward members were received.
- 5.5 One supporting comment was received, but twenty-two objections in the form of an organized petition from residents of a nearby block (Appendix 4) were also submitted. The consultation was extended by a week to allow for the fact that letter deliveries were delayed by access issues to this 'over fifty-five's' block, which faces the proposed site on the opposite side of Graham Ave. It also has an onsite car park but does not have space to allocate each

flat a car parking space. There is unrestricted on-street parking outside the main entrance.

- 5.6 Residents are concerned that staff and visitors to the block already find it difficult to park during the week when the car park at Portslade academy cannot be used by the public. They are concerned that loss of parking could impact on disabled access to a block where many are registered disabled. However, any individual resident (who has a blue badge) can apply for a disabled bay if they would feel it would be of use to them.

## **6. Conclusion**

- 6.1 The site secured on private land means there is no need to proceed with the Northease Drive carriageway site. This will allow the installation of a slightly smaller hub behind the footway in the same location outside Oscar's on the Green.
- 6.2 The carriageway site at Graham Ave remains the best option for a hub to serve the main employers and community amenities in this area because of narrow footways and high footfall at busy times on Chalky Way. Predictions of low demand in Mile Oak do not consider how the scheme's e-bikes will transform cycling access in hilly areas. Disabled bays are designed to prevent the sort of parking problems the residents' petition describes. Any residents with a blue badge can request a disabled parking bay at the entrance to the block which submitted the petition.

## **7. Financial implications**

- 7.1 Costs associated with the installation of a new Bikeshare Hub will be met from the Brighton Bikeshare Replacement Programme capital budget. The budget of £0.557m for this financial year and £0.215m for 24/25 is funded by borrowing with loan and interest repayments over the lifespan of the assets.
- 7.2 As reported to Environment, Transport & Sustainability Committee on the 24<sup>th</sup> November, the borrowing charged to revenue budgets for the programme is estimated to be £0.234m for which there is £0.038m budget available. An estimated £0.163m Operational Surplus is anticipated to also support the revenue budgets, the profit share will start to be received in the new financial year. Any significant variation will be reported as part of the normal budget monitoring process.
- 7.3 This revenue position excludes any potential grant funding that could reduce capital borrowing or support revenue costs. It also excludes any sponsorship funding which has been a feature of the existing scheme but at this stage is not certain.
- 7.4 There are inherent financial risks with any commercial operation. The operational costs could vary depending on the approach of any operator and any efficiencies they can bring. Revenue is highly dependent on user take up, number of trips and the fee structure, particularly for e bikes.

Name of finance officer consulted: John Lack    Date consulted: 24 Nov 23

## **8. Legal implications**

- 8.1 The Traffic Management Act 2004 places a duty on local traffic authorities to manage the road network with a view to securing, as far as reasonably practicable, the expeditious, convenient and safe movement of all types of traffic.

The Council regulates traffic by means of traffic regulation orders (TROs) made under the Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984 which can prohibit, restrict or regulate the use of a road, or any part of the width of a road, by vehicular traffic. The amendment TRO (TRO – 43b- 2023) received sufficient objections to bring the proposals before Committee for a decision.

Name of lawyer consulted: Katie Kam            Date consulted (22/11/23):

## **9. Equalities implications**

- 9.1 A full Equalities Impact Assessment for the scheme was completed as part of the reorganisation process. It focuses on groups under-represented in cycling and requires the Operator to run annual promotional campaigns to increase participation. It identifies areas where more user data is required, suggests how this will be collected and sets out requirements for the operator to communicate the wider benefits of the scheme to non-users.

## **10. Sustainability implications**

- 10.1 The Bikeshare Framework Operator Specification sets out the Council's Sustainability requirements for the Scheme. The Operator is a B-Corp company and has recently achieved ISO14001 Standards.

## **11. Other Implications**

### **Social Value and procurement implications**

- 11.1 The Bikeshare Framework Operator Specification sets out the Council's social value requirements for the scheme in line with current policy.

### **Crime & disorder implications:**

- 11.2 The Bikeshare Operator and the Council conduct ongoing engagement with local 'community champions' from community organisations and work with local businesses and Sussex Police to address vandalism, accidental damage, and misuse of the fleet. Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) in the Framework are designed to minimise obstructions of footways and carriageways.

### **Public health implications:**

- 11.3 The detailed business case attached to the November 2020 Environment, Transport & Sustainability Committee report sets out an assessment of the health and wellbeing benefits to scheme users from cycling and the wider city in terms of reductions of congestion, carbon emissions, air and noise pollution and demand on local health services.

## **Supporting Documentation**

### **1. Appendices**

1. Shortlist of new bikeshare hub sites.
2. TRO – 43b – 2023 (Outer) Plans.
3. Summary of objections to Northease Drive carriageway site.
4. Petition from residential block in Graham Ave, Mile Oak

### **2. Background documents**

1. ETS report November 2020
2. Detailed business case – Appendix 1 of November 2020 ETS report