



Belfast City Council

Report to:	Development Committee
Date:	21 August 2012
Subject:	DRD Active Travel Projects
Reporting Officer:	John McGrillen, Director of Development, ext 3470
Contact Officer:	Keith Sutherland, Planning and Transport Policy Manager, ext 3578

1.	Relevant Background Information
1.1	The Regional Development Minister Danny Kennedy announced on the 7 th August that Belfast City Council was one of four local councils to be successful in securing funding for Active Travel Demonstration Projects. The Council has secured £700,000 funding for a Belfast Public Bike Hire Scheme for 30 docking stations and 300 bikes.
1.2	The Council submitted two proposals for consideration by DRD. The second bid to develop new infrastructure to facilitate active travel in North and West Belfast by using Council parks and linking to existing cycle path infrastructure was unsuccessful. The Public bike hire bid also contained a proposal for a larger scale public bike hire scheme of 50 docking stations and 500 bikes however, DRD considered the smaller scale as appropriate to initiate the bike hire scheme in Belfast.

2.	Key Issues
2.1	The development of a Public Bike Hire scheme is identified as a potential partnership project in the Council's Investment Programme 2012-2015. The Council proposes to develop a public bike hire scheme to encourage and facilitate active travel in Belfast.
2.2	The bid was based on an Outline Business Case for a Belfast Public Bike Hire scheme commissioned by the Strategic Investment Board in conjunction with the Department for Regional Development and Belfast City Council completed in July 2011. The Outline Business Case suggests that a public bike hire scheme would be viable for Belfast based on experiences and evidence from other cities
2.3	The bid will cover the costs of the physical infrastructure for a mid sized 3 rd generation scheme (300 bikes and 30 stations). The 3 rd generation scheme will be characterised by: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Public access bikes situated on public spaces with a standard, robust bike design;• A network of docking stations and bikes throughout city centre locations;• A self service model; and

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Flexible rental periods with tariffs to encourage short-term rentals.
2.4	The Outline Business Case recommended that docking stations are located no more than 300-500 metres apart at key strategic locations in the city centre. Comparative studies indicate a conservative registration or uptake of between 2% to 4% of the population could be achieved. Based on a population of 268,300 in Belfast this would imply the potential for a registration or uptake of between circa 5,500 and 11,000. The scheme will allow users to either pay an annual membership fee or pay for short-term use (1-3 days). There is usually no charge for use of the bikes under 30 minutes and a small incremental charge is applied for rental periods over 30 minutes.
2.5	It is proposed that the scheme will be developed and implemented in conjunction with programmes to support the public bike hire scheme and promote its usage. Programmes will be carried out to work in partnership with communities linked to the Council's Bike Club initiative and Active Belfast Programme. It is intended the Council will target major employers through DRD Workplace Travel Forum to encourage commuting by bike and use of the scheme. Also work in partnership with Sustrans on the Bike It initiative to target schools and other community/workplace based initiatives.
2.6	The next step is for the Council to establish a formal project team with DRD and develop a partnership with key stakeholders to deliver the scheme. A key issue will be the resolution of the operating structure for the scheme and to secure ongoing resources to cover running costs and maintenance.
2.7	The timetable for the delivery of the scheme is to March 2015 and further work is already underway to inform the most appropriate commercial and contractual options to operate the scheme. A report to update members on the delivery options will be brought back to committee in the near future.

3	Equality and Good Relations Considerations
3.1	There are no Equality and Good Relations considerations attached to this report.

4.	Recommendations
4.1	Members are requested to note the announcement for the funding of physical infrastructure for the Public Bike Hire Scheme and that a further report will be brought back to Committee in respect of the delivery and the operating structure for the scheme.

6.	Decision Tracking
Update Report	
Timeframe October 2012	Reporting Officer: Keith Sutherland

7.	Key to Abbreviations
OBC - Outline Business Case	

8.	Resource Implications
There will be resource implications in relation to the running and maintenance of the scheme.	