

**Decision Session – Executive Member for
Transport**

14 March 2023

Report of the Director of Transport, Environment and Planning

Micromobility Trial Update

Summary

1. This paper provides an update and review of the micromobility trial in York since the trial launched in October 2020.

Recommendations

2. That the Executive Member for Transport notes:
 - a. The Department for Transport (“DfT”) has recently published its ‘National evaluation of e-scooter trials report’ covering data up to December 2021. The evaluation report examines how and why rental e-scooters are used, and by whom, as well as safety, mode shift, environmental and wider social impacts.
 - b. The Transport Bill has been postponed and details on the timing of its planned legislation on the Future of Transport, including for micromobility, are yet to be announced.
 - c. Another report will be presented to the Executive Member for Transport Decision Session once further details of the legislative changes impacting micromobility are announced.
 - d. The micromobility trial in York continues to be successful to date, with 2022 being the most successful year in terms of growth in e-scooter and e-bike usage.
 - e. As agreed at the Executive Member for Transport Decision Session on 19th July 2022, the Council will continue with the micromobility trial until 31st May 2024.

Background

3. The Department for Transport (DfT) is coordinating regulated micromobility trials that allow people in certain areas of England to rent an e-scooter. The trials have the objectives of informing future policy (including legislation), helping gather evidence on their impacts, contributing to the understanding of the effectiveness of COVID-19 policy responses, and learning implementation lessons.
4. The decision for York to participate in the DfT's e-scooter trials was made on the 8th September 2020 at the Executive Member for Transport Decision Session. The trials were designed to support a 'green' restart of local travel and help mitigate the impact of reduced public transport capacity, providing a sustainable mode of transport around the city.
5. The Council entered into a concessionary arrangement with TIER Operations Ltd to deliver the trial following a competitive tender exercise, with the trial commencing in York in October 2020. The e-scooters have been introduced in a phased approach, gradually increasing the service area and the number of e-scooters available. The service area includes provision at the University of York, York Hospital, York St John's University, and several city centre locations. This has also expanded into other areas of the city including Clifton, South Bank and Hull Road, with plans to continue expansion past the outer ring road, starting initially in Poppleton, Haxby and Wigginton.
6. The decision to extend the trial to include e-bikes was made in January 2021 at the Executive Member for Transport Decision Session, and to expand the service area beyond the outer ring road, in May 2021.
7. Under the DfT proposal the trials were originally due to last for a period of 12 months until October 2021, in order that a report on the trials could be drafted and sent to ministers to draft legislation for the use of both hired and private e-scooters. However, the DfT approved an extension of the trial to run until 31st March 2022. On the 22nd June 2021, at the Executive Member for Transport Decision Session, the Council approved the continuation of the micromobility trial in York, in line with this DfT extension.
8. Following this, the DfT approved a further extension of the trial to run until the 30th November 2022. On the 14th February 2022, at the Executive Member for Transport Decision Session, the Council approved the

continuation of the micromobility trial in York, in line with the DfT extension.

9. In May 2022, in the Queen's Speech, it was announced that the Government intends to introduce legislation on the future of transport as part of a Transport Bill. It is anticipated that this will address the future of e-scooters including creating a new low-speed zero-emission vehicle category and introducing legislation for Local Authorities to manage rental operations for share schemes (bikes, e-bikes, e-scooters).
10. On the 28th June 2022, the Council received a further letter from the DfT advising that Ministers had approved an 18 month extension to the trial until the 31st May 2024. The extension of the trial by the DfT allows additional time for all trial areas to reach expected capacity of e-scooters and for the DfT to gather additional data to inform future legislation.
11. At the Executive Member for Transport Decision Session on 19th July 2022, the Council agreed to continue with the micromobility trial in line with the DfT guidance in York until 31st May 2024. The Council agreed that the current operator, TIER, would remain the sole provider in York until the end of the trial period on 31st May 2024.
12. On 15th December 2022, the DfT published its 'National evaluation of e-scooter trials report'. The report is an independent evaluation of the e-scooter trials covering data up to December 2021. The report, which was commissioned by the DfT, was produced by Arup, NatCen, and Valtech and examined how and why rental e-scooters are used, and by whom, as well as safety, mode shift, environmental and wider social impacts. The report does not cover private e-scooter use; however, it is recognised that private use is widespread and that this may affect the perceptions of the trials on behalf of non-users and the recording of safety data.
13. At the time of writing, the proposed Transport Bill has been postponed and details on the timing of the Government's planned legislation are yet to be announced. It is proposed that another report will be presented to the Executive Member for Transport Decision Session once further details are announced.

DfT Micromobility Trial Update

14. This report presents the first update on the micromobility trial in York since the Executive Member for Transport Decision Session in July 2022.

15. The DfT micromobility trial in York continues to be successful to date. This has been facilitated by the delivery partner and operator, TIER, who have brought a high quality, safety-focused, collaborative, and inclusive approach to managing micromobility in the city and the measured way in which the trial has been undertaken.
16. The availability of this new mode of transport in York has proven popular, evidenced by the high levels of usage of e-scooters and e-bikes throughout the trial. As of February 2023, there have been 350,000 total trips, 42,000 total riders, and a cumulative ride distance of over 900,000km. Currently, there are 500 active e-scooters and 150 active e-bikes in York. TIER, as agreed are looking at rolling out further e-bikes and e-scooters throughout the next year with an upper agreed limit of 1000. TIER forecast a peak of 900 active vehicles in 2023, including 600 e-scooters and 300 e-bikes.
17. 2022 has been the most successful year of the trial to date in terms of growth in e-scooter and e-bike usage across York. Throughout 2022, there had been 184,981 total trips, and 23,198 total riders using TIER's vehicles, with a monthly peak of 4976 riders in October 2022. The total rides in 2022 account for over half of total rides since the trial began, demonstrating the significant growth throughout 2022. The riders per rider in 2022 was calculated at 7.97, and 25% of rides in the year were with a monthly subscription.
18. Since the trial launched in October 2020, TIER have received 369 comments from residents. The top three reasons for complaints are reports of pavement riding, tandem riding, and irresponsible riding. Upon receipt of a complaint, TIER identifies the rider and issues a sanction. Since launch, TIER have issued 151 warnings and blocked 57 accounts.
19. The following sections below provide an update on key areas of the trial such as safety, parking, environmental impacts, and accessibility.

Safety

20. The initial brief from the Council for the micromobility trial placed a strong focus on safety including:
 - a. Measures to mitigate the spread of COVID-19 in a shared asset;
 - b. Helmets provided with each e-scooter and e-bike;
 - c. Geo-fenced service areas to ensure the e-scooters cannot operate in prohibited areas and that the maximum speed is reduced in certain areas where there is a risk of conflict with pedestrians;

- d. Allocated parking areas to reduce street clutter and related risks and to control where e-scooters and e-bikes are parked;
 - e. Having a mechanism to ensure the rider is old enough to use the e-scooter;
 - f. Having a clear way of identifying each individual e-scooter or e-bike so residents can report issues with usage such as pavement riding and tandem riding and responsible riding can be monitored.
21. Several safety features are in place in the York micromobility trial. To ensure vehicle safety, e-scooters have to pass a series of tests and be of approved specification in order to receive a Vehicle Special Order (“VSO”) under section 44 of the Road Traffic Act 1988 by the Vehicle Certification Agency and be permitted to be used on the public highway.
22. Geofencing is used to automatically restrict the use of TIER e-scooters outside of the approved trial zone. TIER also proactively limit vehicle speed in dense pedestrian areas, parks, nearby schools, no-ride zones, and in areas that CYC and other interest groups deem appropriate. To ensure user safety, speed reductions are applied gradually to prevent a sudden stop.
23. TIER have also undertaken a number of safety campaigns including in-person training, guidance and anti-drinking and riding campaigns. TIER tailor their in-app anti-drinking and riding communications so that they can remind riders about the dangers of drinking riding when they are most likely to consider it, without it becoming general background ‘app noise’. Drink riding communications include both regular reminders and the new interactive DUI test.
24. Over the festive period and New Year’s Eve (22nd Dec 2022 – 1st Jan 2023), TIER increased the frequency of their in-app messaging, prompting riders who may have had a drink to take a taxi. In addition to this, the DUI game was deployed on two key dates (30th and 31st December, 9pm until 5am) to act as a further deterrent for riders. TIER will be running a series of safety training events in Spring and Summer 2023 and will be distributing promotional materials and codes to encourage usage.
25. The number of incidents and accidents has been relatively low. There have been 18 accidents during the trial between October 2020 to March 2023) of which 14 resulted in injuries. Where riders have been seen to be using the e-scooters without the proper license requirements or have been riding the e-scooters in an inappropriate manner, riders have been

either given a warning or had their account blocked if required. In total, over the course of the trial, TIER have issued 151 warnings and blocked 57 accounts.

26. Throughout the trial, TIER have provided helmets on the e-scooters inside a black box on the stem of the vehicle. These are no longer provided on every scooter due to poor usage. Similar to cycling, helmets are not a legal requirement but wearing a helmet is encouraged. TIER will continue to distribute helmets to those who participate in safety training events.

Parking

27. Within York, a mandatory parking model has been adopted whereby users are only permitted to park vehicles within designated parking bays which are marked both in TIER's smartphone app and with physical street markings. Using geofencing technology, riders cannot end their journeys until the e-scooter or e-bike is detected as parked within a designated parking bay.

28. Within the TIER app, a built-in map is provided for users which displays no parking, mandatory and incentivised parking zones. At the time of writing, there are 141 mandatory parking bays in York located across thirteen wards including:

- Acomb
- Clifton
- Dringhouses and Woodthorpe
- Fishergate
- Guildhall
- Heworth
- Holgate
- Hull Road
- Huntington and New Earswick Ward
- Micklegate
- Rawcliffe and Clifton Without
- Rural West York
- Westfield

29. TIER are responsible for identifying, designing, and implementing potential parking bay locations. As part of their scoping process, TIER assess the suitability of parking locations against a wide range of criteria derived from experience and best practice. Consideration of accessibility

and equality is a key part of any assessment conducted by TIER. This is to ensure that parking locations are located and designed in a way that ensures equal access to public space for all pedestrians, including those with mobility restrictions. TIER are required to submit any proposals and designs for additional parking bays that are located on adopted highway and/or council property to the Council for further review by officers and consultation with ward councillors. Following this, a decision is made to either approve or reject each proposal.

30. In 2023, TIER have set a target to increase the number of parking bays across York to 180. Beginning in early December, TIER have been undertaking a large-scale scoping exercise to identify proposals for additional suitable parking bays across York. A particular focus has been placed on identifying suitable parking locations in areas with high demand for e-scooters and that are currently underserved with suitable parking bays, such as Huntington and Acomb. TIER will also focus on improving the density of parking bays in the city centre to make the service more convenient to users. Furthermore, TIER plans to expand its parking provision to wards beyond the outer ring road, starting initially in Poppleton, Haxby and Wigginton.
31. The Council has received the first round of parking bay proposals and is in the process of undertaking an extensive officer-led review and ward councillor consultation to assess the suitability of these proposals.

Environmental Impacts

32. Shared micromobility can be an important contributor to transport decarbonisation encouraging mode shift from private cars, improving air quality, and reducing congestion. This is particularly pertinent in York with the Council committed to reducing carbon emissions to net zero by 2030 across the City of York. Due to their small size and low energy demand, micromobility such as e-scooters and e-bikes are considered as a space efficient and low carbon alternative for mobility in cities.
33. E-scooters provide a flexible and green alternative mode of travel for shorter trips, particularly first and last journey trips connecting to transport hubs and local attractions. The average ride duration in York is 12 minutes and the average distance per ride is 2.7km.
34. TIER e-scooters are equipped with swappable batteries that can be changed on the spot rather than transporting entire scooters back and forth to TIER's warehouses. This allows for greener operations, with less

service trips for charging and deploying scooters. All TIER vehicles used for operations are electric and TIER are a climate-neutral e-scooter operator.

35. TIER calculate that e-bike and e-scooter trips in York have replaced 146,000km of car trips contributing to a reduction of 24,326 kgCO₂e. Total avoided CO₂e emissions are calculated by comparing the emissions savings per passenger per kilometre between a car and a TIER e-scooter or e-bike using life-cycle analysis (LCA).

Accessibility

36. In November 2021, the Executive approved an action plan to improve City Centre Access. This was developed after extensive public and stakeholder engagement. Access to mobility aids was identified as being one of the barriers for people with disabilities being able to travel longer distances independently. An action was agreed to work with TIER to explore the roll out of mobility aids at key points across the city. The council has no formal contract with TIER to request or instruct a service. However, the council continues to highlight the benefits of introducing a mobility aid as part of the TIER service in York.
37. At the Executive Member for Transport Decision Session on 22 March 2022, an update was provided on the progress of the action plan implementation. Since this update, TIER is continuing to engage with national disability organisations and groups to understand the needs of disabled people in accessing and adapting vehicles. TIER are also piloting a rental programme for wheelchair-accessible e-scooters in France to understand how their adapted scooters can improve accessibility for wheelchair users. TIER have partnered with OMNI, a French start-up, who have developed a solution that allows a wheelchair to attach to an e-scooter through a universal fixing.
38. The council will continue to work with TIER to explore the potential for providing wheelchair-accessible e-scooters across York.

Consultation

39. A wide range of stakeholders have been engaged throughout the micromobility trials. Two such examples are the University of York and York Hospital who have been consulted throughout and are supportive of the trial. The University are interested in how the trial can support student travel across campus, into the city centre and reduce car travel, whilst the

Hospital are also interested in how e-scooters and e-bikes support patient and staff travel given limited parking.

40. TIER consult with other groups including York Sight Loss Council to ensure the service does not adversely impact those with a visual impairment. North Yorkshire Police are consulted on a regular basis to improve the service and tackle any issues caused by the service. Local landowners such as Sustrans have also been consulted throughout to ensure appropriate authority and feedback on use of the e-scooters and e-bikes is obtained.
41. Bi-monthly updates are given at a stakeholder meeting with parties such as those just listed, in order to inform of new plans, current uptake and actions from their feedback.
42. Internal to the Council, Transport Systems, Transport Policy, Network Management, Street-works Planning and Parking Services teams have been consulted and kept informed of the trial operations.
43. As identified in section 29, TIER are required to submit any proposals and designs for additional parking bays that are located on adopted highway and/or council property to the Council for further review. First, an officer team has been assembled to review whether there are any potential safety, conservation, or land ownership issues which may impact the suitability of each proposed parking proposal. Next, any proposed parking locations that receive approval following officer review will be submitted for consultation with local ward councillors. This provides an opportunity for ward councillors to share local knowledge, raise objections, and suggest changes or modifications to design proposals. Only parking locations that have been approved following this process will be implemented by TIER.

Council Plan

44. The trial contributes to the City of York's Council Plan priorities of 'getting around sustainably' and towards creating 'a greener and cleaner city'. The micromobility trial also supports the council's aim to become net zero by 2030 by encouraging the shift from private cars to more sustainable and low-carbon transport alternatives.

Implications

Financial

45. There has been no direct cost to the council from the micromobility trial with costs being met by the operator. There are no financial implications arising from the recommendations in this report.

Human Resources (HR)

46. There are no implications around the decisions in this report.

Equalities

47. The Council recognises its Public Sector Equality Duty under Section 149 of the Equality Act 2010 (to have due regard to the need to eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other prohibited conduct; advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it and foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it in the exercise of a public authority's functions. The latest version of the Equalities Impact Assessment is attached.

Legal

48. TIER entered into a concessionary arrangement with the Council to deliver the trial under which the Council entrusted the delivery of the scooter and e-bike hire service to TIER. These arrangements are in accordance with the Council's obligations in respect of procurement under the Public Contracts Regulations 2015 and the Contract Procedure Rules.
49. The concessionary arrangements with TIER ensure that product liability insurance is in place that covers injury and damage as a result of defective scooters and have third-party liability insurance to cover damage and injury to third parties caused by scooters ridden by their customers.

Crime and Disorder

50. There are no implications around the decisions in this report.

Information Technology (IT)

51. There are no implications around the decisions in this report.

Property

52. There are no implications around the decisions in this report.

Other

53. There are no other implications identified.

Risk Management

54. The trials risks and issues are recorded within CYC and TIER risk registers and managed by the CYC Transport team and TIER respectively.

Contact Details

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Report Date 03/03/2023
Approved

Specialist Implications Officer(s):

Financial Implications: Patrick Looker, Finance Manager

Equalities Implications: Cathryn Moore, Corporate Business Partner (Legal)

Legal Implications: Cathryn Moore, Corporate Business Partner (Legal)

Wards Affected: All wards

All

For further information please contact the author of the report

Background Papers:

Decision Session - Executive Member for Transport: 8 September 2020 –
https://democracy.york.gov.uk/documents/s141992/Micromobility%20trials_Transport%20decision%20sessionv0.3.pdf

Decision Session - Executive Member for Transport: 18 January 2021 –
<https://democracy.york.gov.uk/documents/s145187/Update%20on%20the%20E-scooter%20trials%20report.pdf>

Decision Session – Executive Member for Transport: 11 May 2021 –
<https://democracy.york.gov.uk/documents/s149589/Update%20on%20the%20E-scooter%20and%20e-bike%20trials.pdf>

Decision Session – Executive Member for Transport: 22 June 2021 –
<https://democracy.york.gov.uk/documents/s150508/Review%20of%20Escooter%20and%20Ebike%20trials%20to%20date.pdf>

Decision Session – Executive Member for Transport: 14 February 2022 -
https://democracy.york.gov.uk/documents/s156481/E_Scooter%20Report.pdf

Decision Session – Executive Member for Transport: 22 March 2022 -
<https://democracy.york.gov.uk/documents/s157821/City%20Centre%20Access%20update%20Report.pdf>

Decision Session – Executive Member for Transport: 19 July 2022 -
<https://democracy.york.gov.uk/documents/s160769/EMDS%20July%202022%20eScooters%20.pdf>

DfT National evaluation of e-scooter trials report -
<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/national-evaluation-of-e-scooter-trials-report>

Executive: 18 November 2021 -
<https://democracy.york.gov.uk/ieDecisionDetails.aspx?AllId=60466>

Annexes

Annex A – Equalities Impact Assessment

List of Abbreviations Used in this Report

CO₂e – Carbon Dioxide Equivalent

CYC – City of York Council

DfT – Department for Transport

VSO – Vehicle Special Order