
Meeting of Executive Members for City Strategy and Advisory Panel

8 September 2008

Report of the Director of City Strategy

York Cycling City

Summary

1. To advise Members of progress in developing the York Cycling City project since the announcement of the successful bid in June 2008. The report highlights the key points of the bid, the proposed governance structure for delivering the project and sets out the next actions to be implemented in moving the project forward. Members will be asked to note the content of the report and approve the proposals for moving the project forward. In addition an update on progress towards the cycling target is included and actions to help meet it that have been put in place during the last two years.

Background

2. Cycling England announced in January 2008 that it had funding available to support the development of one cycling city and 10 cycling towns (York was considered as a town for the purposes of the bid on the basis of population size). Cycling England set out a list of criteria the bid was expected to address.
3. 74 bids were received by Cycling England and 17 local authorities were invited for interview. The interviews were held on 28th May in Birmingham from the BikeRescue Project and Ruth Kelly (MP) made the announcement of York's success on Thursday 19th June.

The successful bid

4. The bid that was submitted to and accepted by Cycling England contains a set of aims, objectives and targets, developed with input from cyclists, officers across the council and stakeholders; details are attached as Annex 1. The bid is based on partnership working with stakeholders to deliver these targets and is an essential element of the bid.
5. The bid was based on a set of criteria from Cycling England that requested details of ambitions, objectives, identified problems and how they could be overcome as well as successful initiatives that had already been introduced. The bid was supported by the involvement and partners and stakeholders. A significant amount of consultation was undertaken to understand how and where they could contribute to the development and delivery of the project. The

stakeholders have therefore signed up to the proposals within the bid and are fully supportive of the ambitions and aims contained within it.

6. The funding allocated to York amounts to £20 per head of population and totals £3.68million over the two and a half year period. The allocation is made on the basis of match funding by the Council and stakeholders which needs to be demonstrated to Cycling England and DfT over the life of the project. The guidance indicates that £4 per head should be spent in 2008/09, and £8 per head in the two subsequent financial years. This equates to £500,000 in year one and £1,590,000 in years two and three.
7. A detailed action plan was also submitted with the bid that sets out the proposals for delivering schemes and initiatives in each year, the breakdown between capital and revenue and from where it is proposed the contribution will come. The bid was accepted on the basis of the action plan, however Cycling England recognise that there will be some flexibility in the programme as schemes are delayed and others that fit the strategy are brought forward. A revised version of the action plan is attached as Annex 2 (the plan needs further revision in light of the recent documentation from the DfT setting out the allocation available for each year). It has been scaled back slightly (primarily the removal of the bridge into the York Central development, allocated funding £1.1m) in light of the reduction in the funding now available to CYC. The exact composition of the action plans is still to be finalised but it is not expected that there will be significant alterations to the action plan submitted as part of the bid.
8. The action plans are designed to meet the aims, objectives and targets set out in Annex 1. The targets in the cycling city bid have been set higher than those contained in the Local Transport Plan (LTP) due to the additional funding available. Progress toward the current LTP target is shown in Annex 3.

Moving the project forward

8. A governance structure has been proposed that will enable a number of individual projects to be delivered concurrently by the council and stakeholders, with the council maintaining overall control and responsibility for delivery and budgets. See Annex 4, attached
9. The officers, Members and stakeholders who will form the Strategy Group has not yet been determined but it is envisaged that the size of the group would not exceed 8-10 persons.
10. The Strategy Group will meet on a regular basis (it is envisage that the Group would meet six times per year, although this has still be finalised) and determine high-level issues of strategy, delivery and funding allocations. The Project Manager will act as the day-to-day contact for the Strategy Group and the Project Delivery Groups. When the Project Manager is not available the first point of contact will be Transport Planning Unit. It is proposed that the Project Delivery Groups will consist of a small number of stakeholders and officers (at least one Officer will be required for every group). These groups will focus on delivery and will report progress to the Strategy Group via the Project

Manager. It is proposed that capital projects the delivery group will consist primarily of council officers.

11. As well as reporting directly to Cycling England on the progress of the Cycling City project it is proposed to bring regular reports to EMAP.
12. A project worksheet/action plan has been developed for each element of the cycling town initiative which will set out responsible officers/stakeholders and responsibilities, key milestones and actions with target dates for completion, budget and funding for each year. It is proposed that financial responsibility will remain with the project manager and the delivery groups will submit requests for work orders through the project manager.
13. As part of the process of agreeing the strategy and action plan, Cycling England made a visit to York on Wednesday 20th August (evening) and Thursday 21st (all day) for discussions and site visits with officers, stakeholders and Members with a view to assisting in the refinement of the strategy and action plans and providing advice and guidance on key areas of the cycling city project.
14. The Council has received a formal grant offer from the DfT and will be required to enter into a 'management agreement' with Cycling England, which will set the basis of the working relationship between the two bodies. It is anticipated by Cycling England that most delivery activity will not commence until they have agreed the work programme but planning and marketing are legitimate activities to undertake before agreement.
15. As part of the management agreement with Cycling England the Council will set up a Cycling Forum. This will provide stakeholders with a direct means of communication with the Cycling City project manager and the Steering board. The exact composition of the Forum has yet to be confirmed but will be a partner and stakeholder group in which to raise issues, concerns and provide feedback on the project.
16. A stakeholder meeting will held at in early September with all the partners and stakeholders who have been involved in developing the bid to inform them of progress since the announcement of the successful bid and provide feedback from the Cycling England visit. It also explained the proposed governance structure and gauged level of commitment to membership of the delivery groups and who might want to participate.

Cycling England/DfT Funding

17. Funding from Cycling England will be claimed retrospectively on a quarterly basis. Cycling England has a fixed budget for each year that can be moved between cycling towns (if one under spends) but not between years. It will therefore be essential that York is in a position to bring forward schemes. The funding is to match Council, stakeholder or developer contributions. The project funding is available until March 2011 and spend against cycling schemes from April 2008 is eligible for inclusion as match funding against Cycling England.

Next actions

18. As part of the funding agreement between the Council, Cycling England and the DfT, the Council will produce a refined strategy, a detailed first year action plan and an outline action plan for years two and three that must be agreed by Cycling England. It is only after the strategy and the action plan have been signed off that the Council will be able to start claiming its funding allocation. Officers have indicated to Cycling England that the Strategy and Action Plan will be submitted by the end of September 2008. Projects can start to be implemented e.g. planning/scheduling, before then but funding cannot be claimed until these documents have been agreed.
19. The appointment of a Project Manger is a critical part of the project delivery. A job description has been written and is currently awaiting a grading assessment. When the grading and salary have been agreed the post will be advertised. The post will be funded through the Cycling England allocation. No other provision for additional staff resources was included in the bid.
20. As part of the development of the bid a substantial amount of consultation was undertaken with stakeholders and cycle groups that informed the type and nature of the individual elements of the accepted successful bid. However, what is less clear are the reasons people no longer, or have never cycled. A questionnaire is being developed which will be aimed at non-cyclists. This will help inform the strategy and the action plans in years two and three. It is likely that the questionnaire results will not be available for the year one action plan and there is a danger of not delivering any project elements if action is delayed until the results are collated. The detail of the questionnaire is still being finalised.
21. The bid included a cycling festival to be held in each of the three years. The date for the first festival was proposed to be 20th and 21st September, however due to existing commitments of key stakeholders and a delay in confirming a police presence it has been delayed. It is now proposed that the launch will take place early October when the Strategy and Action plan have been agreed by Cycling England. The festival will take place in spring (dates to be confirmed) to ensure that sufficient time and resources are allocated to the planning and delivery of the projects first large scale public event.
22. The Cycling England Team has indicated that, although not classified as a city for bid purposes and will not be referred to as a cycling city in any national promotion or publicity material, the Council has the option of referring to itself as a cycling city rather than a cycling town. It is currently proposed to brand York as a cycling city.

Consultation

21. A significant amount of consultation was undertaken as part of the development of the cycling town bid. We have consulted with both the general public and local stakeholders in York to identify the challenges, problems and consider what needs to be done to address them. 300 questionnaires were sent out through a variety of routes and 60 of these returned completed, a 20%

return rate. An open meeting for stakeholders in cycling was held on 11 March 2008, where 26 people attended, including representatives from Sustrans, CTC, local cycling clubs and the voluntary sector. This consultation identified the following recurring issues:

- General participation has dropped
 - Our extensive routes don't quite join up
 - 'Sustainable' bigger buses are seen as more dangerous
 - Cycle thefts reached record levels
 - Some early momentum for cycling has been lost
 - Danger spots on our narrow streets that critically affect the willingness of people to make their journey by bike
 - Parents, worried for the safety of their children, discourage them from cycling
 - Low levels of participation amongst those in economic or social disadvantage
 - Concern for physical activity, health and increasing obesity levels
22. Following notification of our successful application and an invite to interview, two further meetings with stakeholders were held on 12 and 15 May. This helped identify their skills, experience and if they could be involved in delivering the projects outlined in the bid to ensure we have the resources in place and are ready to deliver the cycling projects. Consultation with stakeholders will continue as the project progresses
23. It is proposed to undertake further consultation aimed at non cyclists and lapsed cyclist as to why they do not cycle with the intention of using the results to inform future action plans.

Corporate Priorities

24. The project, if successful, would contribute to the following Corporate Priorities:
- Reduce the environmental impact of council activities and encourage, empower and promote others to do the same. *There is considerable scope for encouraging a shift from car use to cycle use for people throughout the city.*
 - Increase the use of public and other environmentally friendly modes of transport. *The proposals will make cycling into the city centre more attractive for current and potential cyclists and have the potential to increase levels of cycling.*
 - Improve the health and lifestyles of the people who live in York, in particular among groups whose levels of health are the poorest. *The scheme will encourage more people to cycle with the added benefits of improved health. Cycling is also an ideal mode of transport for people on low-incomes whose health may be poorer.*
 - Improve our focus on the needs of customers and residents in designing and providing services. *These proposals would help cater for all types of cycles and cyclists as they focus on children and a number of hard to reach groups as well as providing general improvements in cycling facilities.*

- Improve the way the Council and its partners work together to deliver better services for the people who live in York. *The potential cycle park at the former Lendal Sub Station will be achieved by partnership working between the public and private sectors. The project delivery groups will provide the means for officers and stakeholders to work together.*
25. Local Transport Plan (LTP): The scheme would contribute to several of the aims of the recently submitted LTP, namely:
- To reduce the need to travel, especially by car, and encourage essential journeys to be undertaken by more sustainable modes;
 - To improve economic performance in a sustainable manner;
 - To reduce the levels of actual and perceived safety problems;
 - To enhance opportunities for all community members, including disadvantaged groups, to play an active part in society;
 - To improve the health of those who live or work in, or visit, York;
 - To reduce the impact of traffic and travel on the environment, including air quality, noise and the use of non-renewable resources.

Implications

26. This report has the following implications:
- **Financial** – The grant is to match fund contributions from the Council, developers and stakeholders. The grant cannot be carried forward into future years, any underspend would be reallocated to another cycling town project and will be lost to the York cycling city project.
 - **Human Resources (HR)** – An additional post for the Project Manager will be created within Transport Planning.
 - **Equalities** – The project will deliver a range of improvements to facilities and training that will provide residents and visitors to York with travel options to reach key services around the city.
 - **Crime and Disorder** – There are no implications at present
 - **Property** – There are no implications envisaged.
 - **Legal** – The grant from the DfT is made under Section 31 of the Local Government Act 2003 and the Council is required to enter into a funding arrangement with the DfT in order to be able to access the grant.
 - **Information Technology** – There are no implications.

Risk Management

27. In compliance with the Council's Risk Management Strategy the main risk that has been identified in this report could lead to the inability to meet the council's objectives (Strategic).

28. Measured in terms of impact and likelihood, the risk score for the recommendation is less than 16 and thus at this point the risks need only to be monitored, as they do not provide a real threat to the achievement of the objectives of this report.

Recommendations

29. That the Advisory Panel advise the Executive Member to:
- i. Note this report and the progress made to date on the cycling city project and the cycling target, and
 - ii. Endorse the next steps to the further development of the cycling city project as set out in paragraphs 18-22.

Reason: To enable progress to continue and ensure delivery of all the elements of the project.

Contact Details

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Report Approved



Date

19 August 2008

Specialist Implications Officer(s)

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Wards Affected: All

All

For further information please contact the author of the report

Background Papers:

Letter from DfT 29th July 2008 – Funding arrangements for the Cycling Cities and Towns project.

Annexes:

Annex 1 – Aims, Objectives and Targets

Annex 2 – Cycling Town Project Costings 2008/10

Annex 3 - Progress Towards Cycling Targets

Annex 4 – Cycling Town Implementation Structures