

**Report for:** Cabinet – 16 September 2025

**Item Number:** 21

**Title:** Seeking approval to procure new dockless e-bike hire service contracts

**Report authorised by** Barry Francis – Corporate Director of Environment and Resident Experience

**Lead Officer:** Maurice Richards – Head of Transport and Travel

**Ward(s) affected:** All

**Report for Key/  
Non-Key Decision:** Key Decision

**1. Describe the issue under consideration**

- 1.1. This report seeks authority to approve the Council undertaking a formal procurement exercise for the provision of dockless e-bike hire services, which should enable the Council to enter into appropriate contractual agreements with an appointed operator(s).

**2. Cabinet Member Introduction**

- 2.1. Promoting sustainable and active travel is a cornerstone of our commitment to creating a greener, healthier borough for all residents. The dockless e-bike scheme has proven to be a massively popular addition to our transport landscape, with residents embracing this new way to travel in ever-increasing numbers (Appendix A). This incredible success has, however, highlighted issues with inconsiderate parking, which can impact pedestrians and the accessibility of our pavements. In response, we have been proactive in managing the service, rolling out an exponentially growing network of mandatory parking bays across the borough to ensure the scheme operates in an orderly way. To build on this foundation and ensure the long-term success and sustainability of the service, it is now essential that we undertake a formal procurement exercise. This will allow us to secure the best possible service and contractual terms for the borough, ensuring our residents benefit from a well-managed, reliable, and valuable transport option for years to come.

**3. Recommendations**

It is recommended that Cabinet:

- 3.1. Approves the Council undertaking a formal procurement exercise for the provision of dockless e-bike hire services, with the purpose of appointing operator(s) to officially operate these services in the borough.
- 3.2. Notes that following the completion of the procurement process to appoint up to two

service providers in the borough, the contract award decision will be returned to cabinet for approval.

#### **4. Reasons for decision**

- 4.1. The purpose of the procurement exercise is to secure new and improved agreements with appointed operator(s), to govern the operation of these services.
- 4.2. A key objective of this approach is to achieve warranted levels of revenue generation from these services. This will support Council staffing and resourcing costs – for the on-going management of these services – and will provide sufficient recompense for the re-allocation of kerbside and carriageway space – to provide dedicated parking locations for these services.
- 4.3. In accordance with the Council's Contract Standing Orders, the awarding of contracts – anticipated to be valued in excess of £500,000 – must be subject to a competitive tendering process, as they are above threshold.
- 4.4. To carry out a procurement exercise would ensure there is competition between prospective bidders, assuring openness and provide opportunities for any operator in the market to bid on this opportunity.
- 4.5. Since dockless e-bike hire services began formally operating in Haringey as part of an initial pilot/trial scheme, dockless e-bikes have become an established mode of transport in the borough, with substantial user and journey figures, which have continued to increase over time. New arrangements would allow the Council to support the provision of these services, which is in accordance with broader transport and active travel policies.

#### **5. Alternative options considered**

- 5.1. The Council attempting to negotiate new agreements with dockless e-bike hire service operators.
  - 5.1.1. The Council could attempt to negotiate new agreements with either the incumbent operators, or new operators. However, this would not provide an open opportunity for other operators in the market to bid to operate these services, while this may hinder the ability for these agreements to deliver the desired outcomes for the Council. Nevertheless, due to the anticipated value of contracts, this option may be prohibited.
- 5.2. The Council not entering into agreements with dockless e-bike hire service operators / do nothing
  - 5.2.1. If the Council were to not enter into agreements with operators, it is likely that these services would still be in operation, but without any form of management or governance from the Council. This absence of agreement may result in a poor overall service, with no input or accountability from the Council to maximise benefits (including revenue generation) and mitigate issues, with the potential for reputational damage to the Council.

#### **6. Background**

Dockless Bikes / Micromobility

- 6.1. Dockless hire bike services have been in operation in London, and the UK, since 2017, providing a new, sustainable mode of active travel.
- 6.2. In contrast to docked hire bikes, dockless bikes do not require physical docking infrastructure, and are theoretically able to be parked anywhere on the highway.
- 6.3. Over time, the vehicles in the market have almost exclusively evolved to become e-bikes – bikes featuring electric functionality, such as pedal assist – in addition to using geolocation technology.
- 6.4. Since their introduction to the UK market, this market has not been subject to regulation or any legislative framework. This means that services are permitted to operate without the express permission of local authorities.
- 6.5. There have been instances where local authorities have taken enforcement action against dockless bike operators through using powers under the Highways Act (1980) to remove vehicles from the highways, should they be deemed to be causing obstruction. Further, action has also been through the issuing of fixed penalty notices to operators who deploy bikes in an obstructive manner. However, this level of response requires substantial enforcement resource, including CCTV monitoring, and can generate litigious outcomes.
- 6.6. In the absence of a regulatory model, local authorities have been entering into individual arrangements with dockless e-bike operators, to take a managed approach to dockless e-bike usage. This has typically been achieved through agreements – either memoranda of understanding (MOUs) or contracts – which include various specifications, such as fleet caps, parking rules and operational requirements.
- 6.7. While this has established a more regularised environment for these services, it has consequently led to fractured, non-contiguous and disparate operations throughout London, with rules and approaches differing across borough boundaries.
- 6.8. In London specifically, there have been proposals for pan-London arrangements – to establish a consistent approach across boroughs – without coming to fruition.
- 6.9. In December 2024, the Government announced – as part of its English Devolution White Paper – plans for regulation of this sector. The Department for Transport has begun consultations on these plans, but it is not envisaged that legislation will be introduced for a few years.
- 6.10. The proposed approach to regulation is to introduce a licensing system, whereby operators would require a licence to operate (and operating without a licence would be a criminal offence); powers for a licensing system would be given through legislation; the highest tiers of local government, throughout the UK, would have responsibility for issuing licences (and, for London, this would be Transport for London); local highways authorities within a licenced scheme would have responsibility for parking provision.
- 6.11. Until regulation is introduced, the situation remains unchanged, with operators free to enter the market and local authorities responsible for engagement with them.

#### Haringey

- 6.12. The Council has adopted various strategic plans and policies, which have outlined the

requirement to deliver dockless e-bike services. This includes the Walking and Cycling Action Plan (2022) and the Corporate Delivery Plan 2022-2024 and 2024-2026.

- 6.13. In 2023, the Council carried out a procurement exercise to appoint dockless operators to deliver these services. The decision to proceed with these services – on a trial basis – was approved by Cabinet in September 2023; these services officially commenced in March 2024, with the Council agreeing MOUs with each appointed operator. The operation of these services, as part of the trial, was approved to last for 18 months, until September 2025.
- 6.14. Throughout this period, the Council has introduced a number of parking locations throughout the borough, in accordance with the chosen hybrid parking approach. This includes physically marked parking bays and virtual parking bays – which are visible on the respective operator's mobile app. Parking is also permitted where a user ends a journey but is more than 100m away from either type of parking location.
- 6.15. From the start of the services operating under the trial, the Council permitted a number of locations for parking on the footway. A subsequent batch of additional footway parking locations were introduced in September 2024 (Phase 1).
- 6.16. The first carriageway parking bays were introduced in January 2025. Work is underway to increase this number throughout the remainder of 2025. These locations have been reallocated from existing carriageway parking bays, in accordance with reallocation of road-space principles of the Walking and Cycling Action Plan (2022).
- 6.17. As part of the Haringey Deal, Haringey Council consulted with multiple stakeholders including the Commonplace Engagement page, ASC Joint Partnership Board - The Old People's Reference Group and the dockless inbox which all residents can email into. The result of these consultations showed a trend which included: dockless bikes obstructing the pavements, antisocial behaviour on bikes and non-compliant parking near disabled bays. The results of the consultation has been used to improve the operation and deliver of the scheme, including the implementation of fixed parking bays at the top 50 non-compliant and busiest bay (Appendix B).
- 6.18. The wide coverage of consultation has been key in the design of the second phase of 100 carriage way parking bays covering the highest non-compliant parking bays, the most overcrowded bay areas to relieve pressure, key corridors in the borough and the borough boundaries. Based on further feedback we will engage in phase three of the dockless carriageway bays.
- 6.19. The funding to cover the design and implementation of these parking bays has come from an allocation of Transport for London's Local Implementation Plan funding specifically for use for micromobility parking. We aim to install more carriageway bays so there will always be a bay every 100m in Haringey to stop non-compliant parking.

#### Future / New Procurement

- 6.20. Ahead of the existing arrangements ending in September 2025, the Council must decide whether to proceed with new arrangements, or to cease partnering with operators altogether.
- 6.21 Yet, due to the absence of regulation or legislative framework, it is likely that services would continue in the borough, providing a reputational and commercial risk to the

Council due to the absence of governance, while the Council would miss out on the opportunity to generate revenue from entering into new arrangements.

- 6.22. Owing to the anticipated total value of new agreements, Council governance would require a full procurement exercise to be undertaken. As such, it is proposed that the procurement will be carried out as an open tender process.
- 6.23. By undertaking a new procurement exercise, the Council can devise an updated specification and contract, based on its experience and learnings, including engagement with other London boroughs. This will include enhanced commercial arrangements and stronger service level agreements and operational requirements.
- 6.24. In anticipation of a new procurement exercise, the Council has carried out pre-market engagement, which has indicated sufficient interest from interested operators in the market, while the findings can be used to inform the specification and contract.

## **7. Contribution to the Corporate Delivery Plan 2024-2026 High Level Strategic Outcomes**

- 7.1. Strategy and policy measures set out in this report support various outcome areas of the Corporate Delivery Plan 2024-2026. The proposals will contribute to:
  - Responding to the climate emergency, A zero carbon and climate resilient Haringey
  - Better air quality in Haringey
  - Improved access to alternative means of transport to private motor vehicle to support more sustainable transport choices

## **8. Carbon and Climate Change**

- 8.1. Dockless e-bike hire services contribute positively to carbon emission reduction and mitigate climate change, through supporting and encouraging residents to use a sustainable mode of transport.

## **9. Statutory Officers' comments**

### **Finance**

This report seeks approval for LBH to undertake a formal procurement exercise for the provision of dockless e-bike hire services, with the purpose of appointing operator(s) to officially operate these services in the borough.

It is projected that the full cost of this proposal will be met from the 2025/26 TfL - Local Implementation Plan (LIP) award to LBH and this is captured under capital scheme number 309. Of the total 2025/26 LIP allocation to LBH, £94k is earmarked towards Dockless Cycle Parking.

It is pertinent to ensure that the total cost associated with this proposal is being managed within the earmarked funding.

### **Legal**

- 9.1. The Director for Legal and Governance (Monitoring Officer) has been consulted in the

preparation of this report.

- 9.2. The contract must be procured in accordance with the Procurement Act 2023 (where applicable) and the Council's Contract Standing Orders.
- 9.3. Cabinet has power to approve commencement of a procurement for contracts valued at £500,000 or more (CSO 2.01b ).
- 9.4. The Director of Legal and Governance confirms that there are no legal reasons preventing Cabinet from approving the recommendations in this report.

### **Strategic Procurement**

- 9.5. Strategic Procurement has been consulted in the preparation of this report and will support the procurement of suitable operators

### **Equality**

- 9.6. The Council has a Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED) under the Equality Act (2010) to have due regard to the need to:
  - Eliminate discrimination, harassment and victimisation and any other conduct prohibited under the Act.
  - Advance equality of opportunity between people who share protected characteristics and people who do not.
  - Foster good relations between people who share those characteristics and people who do not.
- 9.7. The three parts of the duty apply to the following protected characteristics: age, disability, gender reassignment, pregnancy/maternity, race, religion/faith, sex and sexual orientation. Marriage and civil partnership status applies to the first part of the duty. Although it is not enforced in legislation as a protected characteristic, Haringey Council treats socioeconomic status as a local protected characteristic.
- 9.8. The decision proposed in this report is to approve the Council undertaking a formal procurement exercise for the provision of dockless e-bike hire services, which should enable the Council to enter into appropriate contractual agreements with an appointed operator(s).
- 9.9. Dockless e-bike hire services offer an alternative mode of transport to existing modes, such as private Internal Combustion Engine vehicles. These services provide a sustainable form of transport, helping to lower emissions and help to improve air quality. Poor air quality is particularly harmful to pregnant women, disabled people and older people. Infants and young children are also disproportionately vulnerable to breathing in polluted air than adults due to their airways being in development, and their breathing being more rapid than adults. As such, the decision will have a positive impact on residents with these protected characteristics.
- 9.10. As a result of the procurement, it is intended that more than one operator will operate dockless e-bike hire services in the borough. This would help to reduce monopolisation within the market, providing options related to aspects such as pricing for customers.

This should have a positive impact for all residents, but particularly those of a lower socioeconomic status, ensuring greater accessibility to and affordability of dockless e-bike hire services (Appendix c).

- 9.11. The potential increase in dockless e-bike parking bays on the carriageway throughout the borough may lead to a reduction of on-street parking options for other vehicles, due to the reallocation of carriageway parking space. It is not envisaged that any disabled parking would be impacted by these changes. Yet, a reduction in standard parking bays may negatively impact residents who rely on on-street parking availability due to not having access to off-street parking.
- 9.12. Owing to their dockless nature, these services may negatively impact accessibility in the borough. These impacts arise from inconsiderate use of the bikes, through pavement riding and obstructive parking. These impacts may have a greater impact on elderly people and disabled people, particularly those who are mobility impaired. To mitigate these impacts, increased provision of dedicated parking locations for dockless e-bikes, providing more parking options throughout the borough, should provide better management of this issue.
- 9.13. The proposed decision is anticipated to have a neutral impact on all other protected characteristics because these groups are not impacted specifically because of their characteristics.

## **10. Use of Appendices**

Appendix A – Lime and Forest Monthly Data

Appendix B – Commonplace Final Report

Appendix C – Demographic Report from Lime