

**REPORT TO THE STRATEGIC DIRECTOR, PLACE TO PROPERTY AND  
REGENERATION BRIEFING**

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**TO  
THE STRATEGIC DIRECTOR PLACE**

**ON**

**Monday 28 March 2022**

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**TITLE: Proposal for Extension of the Trial Period of the E-scooter Trial**

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**RECOMMENDATIONS:**

That the Lead Member:

1. Approves that Salford City Council grants the e-scooter trial that is scheduled to end on 31<sup>st</sup> March 2022 an extension to end on 30<sup>th</sup> November 2022, to match the DfT's extended E-Scooter trial period, together with any further extensions to the trial period the DoT may subsequently proposes.
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**EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:**

A trial of rental e-scooters was proposed by the Department of Transport (DfT) and available to any local area that expressed an interest. Salford City Council and Transport for Greater Manchester (TfGM) submitted to DfT a successful proposal for an e-scooter trial in Salford in September 2020. Following a comprehensive two-stage selection process giving consideration to a range of factors including safety, understanding of local issues, data sharing, and vehicle design, Lime were selected by the Council to operate the trial.

Usage to date has been strong, particularly since COVID-19 lockdown measures have eased, with over 180,000 trips being made by 50,000 unique users covering a distance of more than 325,000 km. Despite high usage, anti-social behaviour and vandalism levels have remained low, parking compliance within designated zones is extremely high, and there have been no serious incidents reported. This is thanks to a highly collaborative working relationship between the Salford City Council, TfGM, Lime, Greater Manchester Police, and several charities and not-for-profit groups.

DfT have confirmed that trials will be extended from 31 March 2022 to 30<sup>th</sup> November 2022, by which time the DfT expect that legislation for the use of e-scooters will be in place. This report details a recommendation to extend the trial beyond its current end date of 31 March 2022 to 30<sup>th</sup> November 2022, to match the DfT's extended E-Scooter trial period, together with any further extensions to the trial period the DoT may subsequently proposes.

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## **BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS:**

Salford Rental E-Scooter Trial: Briefing Report 28<sup>th</sup> September 2020

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**KEY DECISION: NO**

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## **DETAILS:**

### **1.0 BACKGROUND**

- 1.1 The DfT originally proposed the trial of e-scooters in early 2020, inviting local authorities to express interest in operating a trial scheme. Salford City Council along with TfGM proposed a trial to take place starting in October 2020.
- 1.2 The trial was initially proposed in three phases, phase 1 being wholly on University of Salford campus, phase 2 extending to Media City with use on public highways and phase 3 extending the area of operation from the University of Salford, Salford Quays to the boarder with Manchester City Centre and all areas in between.
- 1.3 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.
- 1.4 The trial was subsequently extended from 1<sup>st</sup> October 2021 to 31 March 2022 so that further time could be given to considering the interim DfT report by ministers before drafting legislation. With any trials wanting to continue operating after this date to be operated as a pilot scheme.
- 1.5 It was agreed by Strategic Director, for Place at the Property and Regeneration briefing in September 2021 that the trial could continue as previously agreed.
- 1.6 The Strategic Director, for Place also agreed for an expansion in the e-scooter trial area to encompass Weaste and Seedley wards to allow use of the e-scooters in and around Salford Royal Hospital. This additional phase was

launched in mid-October 2001 and has seen an increase in the overall use of the e-scooters.

- 1.7 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 Salford e-scooter trial has improved accessibility between the University of Salford, central Salford, and MediaCityUK, enabling student, residents and visitors to easily get around the borough and stimulating a green restart to the local economy.
- 1.8 In the UK, e-scooters may only be used if rented through a DfT-approved trial, such as the Lime trial in Salford. Privately owned e-scooters may only be used on private land with the landowner's permission and the use of privately owned e-scooters in the public domain is illegal, punishable by penalty points and fines of up to £300.
- 1.9 Several safety features are in place in the Salford trial, including 'geofencing' that automatically restricts the use of Lime e-scooters outside of the approved trial zone, as well as allowing slow-speed for use in areas where e-scooters share pedestrianised areas and no-ride zones to be enforced within the trial zone.
- 1.10 Users are also required to end their journeys within designated 'virtual parking docks' which are marked both in Lime's smartphone app and with physical street markings. All virtual dock locations and the extent of the trial zone has been agreed between the Council, TfGM and Lime. Lime e-scooters are speed limited to 12mph (3.5mph lower than the DfT requirement) and automatically reduce speed to 6mph in slow-speed zones.
- 1.11 Rental e-scooters may only be used on non-motorway roads, in cycle lanes, or on shared-use spaces. Pavement riding is illegal. Further roads have been restricted within Salford where it has been seen as unsafe or dangerous for e-scooter riders.
- 1.12 Users must be at least 18 years of age and hold at least a provisional driving license, which is verified in Lime's smartphone app. Software is in place to detect dangerous or illegal riding on Lime e-scooters and users can receive warnings or permanent bans for such behaviour. This is complemented by Lime's local operations team and a number of Lime Ambassadors who patrol the trial zone.
- 1.13 In addition to a comprehensive DfT monitoring and evaluation programme, TfGM and the University of Salford's Sustainable Housing and Urban Studies Unit and Healthy Active Cities research groups are also conducting evaluations of the trial focussing on local issues to provide greater insight into the impacts of micro mobility schemes in the city-region. The University of Salford have concluded an interim report of their study on users of the e-scooters and are looking to follow this up with a further study to be carried out later in the year.

- 1.14 Lime currently operates up to 300 e-scooters at any one time, although this figure will always be lower due to e-scooters being recharged or retained for routine maintenance.
- 1.15 Initially Salford City Council were the only authority within Greater Manchester to trial the use of e-scooters. Rochdale have since followed Salford's lead and set up a similar scheme in March 2021, also partnering with Lime.
- 1.16 With permanent legislation expected to be introduced later in 2022, as part of a wider shared mobility programme TfGM have begun development work to understand whether a Greater Manchester-wide e-scooter rental scheme would be appropriate. Local authorities and will be consulted in due course to understand what form such a scheme may take if a decision is made to proceed. No decisions have yet been made on this and any such scheme is subject to future changes in legislation.

## **2.0 OVERVIEW OF TRIAL PERFORMANCE**

- 2.1 The availability of this new mode in Salford has proved very popular, evidenced by high levels of usage and independent research conducted by the University of Salford and supplements restricted public transport capacity in the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic, while offering a way to travel that is naturally socially distanced.
- 2.2 Since October 2020, the trial has expanded in phases, starting with the University of Salford Peel Park campus, and now covering a 14km<sup>2</sup> area to the east of the city bounded by the Manchester-Salford border, the River Irwell, and east to the Salford Royal Hospital.
- 2.3 To date, more than 180,000 trips have been made in Salford through the scheme, by over 50,000 users, covering a distance of more than 325,000km. Lime has reported that of the daily trips over 90% are made by existing users. Showing that some users are using the e-scooters as a regular preferred mode of transport.
- 2.4 There has been a high utilisation rate of 3.7 trips per vehicle per day, which compares favourably with more established micromobility sharing schemes such as the Santander Cycle Hire scheme in London that has utilisation rates of around 2.4 per e-scooter per day. The average distance for trips is 1.5km, while the average duration is around 19 minutes, an average speed of 6kph.
- 2.5 The scheme requires users to end their journeys in designated 'virtual docks', enabled through on-board GPS tracking, and parking compliance has been over 90%. We are looking into making parking bays more visible to indicate that they are for hired e-scooters to help further promote parking compliance.
- 2.6 As part of the trial where the use of e-scooters were permitted on a shared footway with the permittance of pedal cycles, we were advised that a new TRO would be required for the use of e-scooters. Experimental TRO's were created

in November 2020 which allowed the use of e-scooters on the shared footways within the trial areas. The ETROs are due to expire in May 2022 and if the trial is extended the ETROs will need to be extended or made permeant to facilitate the use of e-scooters until the end of the trial period or until permeant legislation is introduced.

- 2.7 The most popular routes are between Middlewood Locks and Chapel Street, as well as between the University of Salford's Fredrick Road campus and Manchester City Centre boarder. We are working with Lime Peel, to increase parking locations in and around Salford Quays to try and encourage more trips to Salford Quays. Once the Trafford Road cycleway works are complete this will also allow further trips to be made to Salford Quays.
- 2.8 Lime have agreed with Salford Royal Hospital to operate the e-scooters within the campus. The new expanded area will give hospital works and patients an additional travel option to the hospital, as well as opening up further areas for use. Following discussions with the hospital they are looking to promote the use of e-scooters in March when the weather improves.
- 2.9 The trial has had only a few minor issues, with regards to theft, vandalism and antisocial riding. Lime have a team of rangers, who constantly monitor the e-scooters a, collect e-scooters when their battery needs recharging, as well as moving any e-scooters not parked correctly back to the correct parking locations. Lime have managed to recover e-scooters taken out of the trial zone with the aid of the GPS tracking within each e-scooter. 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.
- 2.10 We have had only a handful of complaints from members of the public. These seem to stem from April/May 2021 onwards, and reflect the extended operational areas, the increase in the number of e-scooters being made available along with the reduction in stay at home requirements. Lime has responded to complaints and reduced the number of e-scooters in certain areas at certain times of the day to reduce issues with member of the public.
- 2.11 The complaints seem to be very general in nature, rather than any specific incidents, mainly regarding pavement riding and a few issues with the pavement parking. While riders are given information as to how to ride the e-scooters and where to ride them, it is difficult to enforce the issue of pavement use.
- 2.12 It should also be noted that while we have had complaints about inappropriate e-scooter use, when these when looked into a majority of the complaints are linked to privately owned e-scooters, rather than the Lime scooters (which are white rather than the more common black models). All of the e-scooters have a 3 or 4 digit number so that any issues with a specific e-scooter can be reported back to Lime directly. Any person reporting a complaint are asked to make a note of the time and location of any specific incidents and feed the back to Lime directly to be investigated.

- 2.13 SCC's ETA cycle lane schemes and other on street improvements, have provided further traffic free routes that e-scooter riders can also utilise. Lime are additionally working on post ride pavement detection software, which will allow specific messaging to be directed at any riders that are seen to be riding on pavements.
- 2.14 On a review of the e-scooter parking locations carried out it was found that the majority of e-scooters were parked appropriately, with a few instances of e-scooters being parked outside of the bays. SCC have and are continuing to work with Lime to try and identify further parking locations which are appropriate, being on a wide footway where they will not be placed within the natural path of pedestrians using the footway to cause an obstruction.
- 2.15 We have seen only one accident associated with the e-scooter use. This was involved a rider who was riding in traffic at the junction of New Bailey Street and Chapel Street. While the rider was knocked off the e-scooter, the incident was minor in nature.
- 2.16 Lime and the University of Salford have organised first ride events for new students in September 2021. The first ride events have helped students to familiarise themselves with the e-scooters as well educate them to the laws surrounding the use of the e-scooters on the road.
- 2.17 SCC have worked with trading standards, where we have found that private companies are operating an e-scooter business within Greater Manchester. This has helped to educate the private business to the requirements of the usage of e-scooters on the public highway and reduce the number of private e-scooters operating in Salford.
- 2.18 Greater Manchester Police have also focused on the use of private e-scooters on the public highways. A number of e-scooters have been seized by GMP, with targeted media campaigns to highlight the fact that the usage of private e-scooters is illegal without the landowners' consent.
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## KEY COUNCIL POLICIES:

- Salford 2025, a Modern Global City.
  - Transport in Salford 2025
  - City Centre Transport Strategy to 2040
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## EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT AND IMPLICATIONS:

- The scheme has been designed and operated in accordance with highways design standards and Disability Discrimination Act (DDA) legislation.

- A Community Impact Assessment (CIA) was completed in October 2020 and will be updated to reflect any changes to the scheme since then if an extension is granted.
  - A working group with members of TfGM's disability reference group meet at regular intervals to discuss and address any concerns raised.
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## **ASSESSMENT OF RISK:**

**SOURCE OF FUNDING:** Trial costs and any costs incurred by SCC are covered by the operator (Lime). As this is an extension of the trial the risk has been previously assessed and has not had any negative implications for SCC in the first year of operation.

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## **LEGAL IMPLICATIONS Supplied by:**

Tony Hatton, Principal Solicitor, / Richard Purcell, principal Solicitor.

A legal agreement was signed prior to the operation of the e-scooters on adopted highways in January 2021. This has been drafted with Council's solicitors and Lime's Legal team. As part of the legal agreement with Lime the trial was approved on the basis of a period of 12 months from 1<sup>st</sup> October 2020. The Legal agreement will need to be extended to take account of any potential extension of the trial.

Where e-scooters operate on shared footways TRO's have been amended to include the use of e-scooters on the shared space. The TRO's were implemented under an experimental order running for 18 months from November 2020 and will need to run until May 2022, therefore no extension will be required as part of the extension.

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## **FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS Supplied by:**

Natalie Birchall

The report outlines, SCC proposal to trial e-scooters in partnership with the appointment of Lime Scooters. All costs will be covered by the partner and there will be no impact on the city council's budget.

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## **PROCUREMENT IMPLICATIONS Supplied by:**

Anthony Hilton

The trial was originally procured under a tender basis, with operators required to outline the basis of their proposal for the scheme. 5no operators were then chosen to present a detailed overview of their proposal to run the scheme.

As the report states, the e-scooter rental trial with Lime Scooters is a DfT approved scheme at zero cost to the Council, therefore at this stage there are no direct

procurement implications. A transparent process has been undertaken in order to select the partner for the duration of the trial period. At the conclusion of the trial period, should there be an ongoing requirement longer term, then a procurement process is likely to be required. It is therefore important that Lime Scooters understand from the outset that the successful delivery of the trial will in no way result in them automatically being awarded ongoing contracts, should this be a longer term requirement. They would be required to engage in a transparent procurement process if required.

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**HR IMPLICATIONS Supplied by:**

Lime employee members of staff with a proportion of the staff sourced locally. As part of the original agreement with Lime, Lime have agreed to comply with anti-slavery legislation.

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**CLIMATE CHANGE IMPLICATIONS Supplied by:**

The scheme will provide a more sustainable transport option in line with the council's climate change aspirations.

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**OTHER DIRECTORATES CONSULTED:**

N/a

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**WARDS TO WHICH REPORT RELATES:**

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