

READING BOROUGH COUNCIL

REPORT BY DIRECTOR OF ENVIRONMENT AND NEIGHBOURHOOD SERVICES

TO:	TRAFFIC MANAGEMENT SUB-COMMITTEE		
DATE:	3 NOVEMBER 2016	AGENDA ITEM:	17
TITLE:	CYCLING STRATEGY POLICY UPDATE - REMOVAL OF UNCLAIMED BICYCLES		
LEAD COUNCILLOR:	COUNCILLOR TONY PAGE	PORTFOLIO:	STRATEGIC ENVIRONMENT, PLANNING AND TRANSPORT
SERVICE:	TRANSPORTATION AND STREETCARE	WARDS:	BOROUGHWIDE
LEAD OFFICERS:	EMMA BAKER	TEL:	0118 937 4881
JOB TITLE:	SENIOR TRANSPORT PLANNER	E-MAIL:	EMMA.BAKER@READING.GOV. UK

1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to set out a policy for the removal of abandoned bicycles from the public highway, forming an addendum to the Cycling Strategy 2014. The proposed policy outlines our intention to donate any unclaimed bicycles to local recycling schemes - helping to free up cycle parking spaces and minimising waste.

2. RECOMMENDED ACTION

- 2.1 That the Sub-Committee agree to adopt the proposed policy update, subject to consultation seeking expressions of interest from local groups or organisations, who are able to recycle the bicycles for the purpose of making them accessible to those in need at affordable prices or for the delivery of local cycle initiatives.

3. POLICY CONTEXT

- 3.1 The Local Transport Plan (LTP) is a statutory document setting out the Council's transport strategy and policy. Reading Borough Council's third Local Transport Plan (LTP3) for the period 2011-26 was adopted by the Council on 29 March 2011.
- 3.2 The Cycle Strategy 2014: Bridging Gaps, Overcoming Barriers & Promoting Safer Cycling, was adopted by the Council on 19 March 2014, as a sub-strategy to the Local Transport Plan and is aligned to wider policy

documents. The strategy includes detailed policies regarding the design principles for delivering infrastructure and route improvements for cyclists on the public highway, as well as policies to encourage and promote cycling, such as improving cycle security through partnership working with Thames Valley Police.

4. THE PROPOSAL

4.1 The Cycling Strategy outlines our intention to promote and encourage cycling as an attractive and normal travel choice for local journeys through a number of design principles and policies, including increasing 'cycle parking facilities to enable to people to park closer to more key destinations' to support future growth in cycling. In parallel, it is important to ensure efficient use of existing cycle parking facilities by regularly monitoring usage, through monthly cycle parking counts and routine inspections, helping to highlight bicycles that have been left for long periods of time or abandoned. Abandoned bicycles not only create unnecessary street clutter, but are also at increased risk of cycle theft, including the removal of one or more components.

4.2 The Refuse Disposal (Amenity) Act 1978 outlines our responsibility to remove vehicles classified as abandoned from the public highway. The current procedure for removing abandoned bicycles involves identity tags being secured to bicycles that appear to have been abandoned outlining our intention to remove the bicycle within 7 days. It should be noted that every effort is made to contact the owner to advise them that their bicycle will be removed if there is evidence of the owner's identity.

4.3 An abandoned bike is defined as meeting one or more of the following criteria:

- Secured to a Council bicycle rack and is in un-roadworthy condition.
- Secured in an inappropriate place (illegally parked or chained to street furniture) and is in un-roadworthy condition.
- Reported by a member of the public and assessed as un-roadworthy or is in a dangerous position.
- The bicycle has not moved for a reasonable period of time (several weeks).

4.4 An un-roadworthy bicycle is defined as having one or more of the following:

- Flat front and rear tyres
- Missing wheel
- Missing seat
- Buckled wheels
- Bent forks
- Seized/damaged brakes
- Rusted chain/gears
- Missing chain

- 4.5 Bicycles not recovered by the owner after 7 days are removed and held securely for a minimum of 30 days. At this point, any unclaimed bicycles have previously been donated to the national cycling charity - CTC, whom delivered a key element of our Local Sustainable Transport Fund programme until March 2016. CTC redistributed the bicycles to three local recycling projects managed by Reading Bicycle Kitchen, Reading College and University of Reading.
- 4.7 This report proposes to continue donating any unclaimed bicycles to local recycling schemes that have the ability to return the bicycles to a roadworthy condition. We will seek to identify organisations/groups who are willing to recycle the bikes for the purposes of either making them accessible to those in need at affordable prices, particularly those seeking education, employment, training and skills opportunities, or to reuse the bicycles for initiatives encouraging cycling for local journeys.
- 4.8 Future funding opportunities supporting the objectives of the Cycling Strategy will continue to be sought, including those aimed at improving cycle security, such as the existing bike marking programme delivered by Thames Valley Police, and initiatives supporting improved accessibility to education, employment, training and skills.

5. CONTRIBUTION TO STRATEGIC AIMS

- 5.1 The delivery of the projects outlined in this report help to deliver the following Corporate Plan Service Priorities:

- Keeping the town clean, safe, green and active.

6. COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT AND INFORMATION

- 6.1 The opportunity to receive any abandoned bicycles will be promoted through informal consultation processes, including a press release or targeted correspondence to those that have previously received unclaimed bicycles. Organisations will be invited to submit an expression of interest setting out how they intend to use the bicycles.
- 6.2 The proposed policy addendum was discussed with representatives from local cycling groups at the Cycle Forum meeting on 19th October.

7. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 7.1 The removal of unclaimed bicycles will be completed in accordance with the Refuse Disposal (Amenity) Act 1978, Chapter 3, Section 3 and 4.

8. EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT

8.1 In addition to the Human Rights Act 1998 the Council is required to comply with the Equalities Act 2010. Section 149 of the Equalities Act 2010 requires the Council to have due regard to the need to:-

- eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct that is prohibited by or under this Act;
- advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it;
- foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it.

8.2 The Council has carried out an Equality Impact Assessment scoping exercise and considers that the proposals do not have a direct impact on any groups with protected characteristics.

9. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

9.1 None relating to this report.

10. BACKGROUND PAPERS

10.1 Cycling Strategy 2014 & Implementation Plan, Strategic Environment, Planning and Transport Committee Report, 19th March 2014.

10.2 Cycling Strategy Implementation Plan 2016/17, Traffic Management Committee Report, 15th June 2016.