

DECISION-MAKER:	CABINET
SUBJECT:	Southampton E-Scooter Trial Extension
DATE OF DECISION:	18 OCTOBER 2022
REPORT OF:	COUNCILLOR EAMONN KEOGH CABINET MEMBER FOR TRANSPORT AND DISTRICT REGENERATION

<u>CONTACT DETAILS</u>			
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STATEMENT OF CONFIDENTIALITY	
NOT APPLICABLE	
BRIEF SUMMARY	
<p>The hired e-scooter trial (“the trial”) in Southampton is scheduled to finish on 30 November 2022. The Department for Transport (DfT) have invited Southampton City Council (SCC) to extend the trial to 31 May 2024. This report provides an update on the operation of the trial and seeks approval to further extend it until 31 May 2024.</p>	
RECOMMENDATIONS:	
	(i) To approve the renewal of the Vehicle Special Order (VSO) for Southampton’s e-scooter trial until 31 May 2024, in accordance with the Department for Transport's proposed new end date.
	(ii) To approve the extension of Voi’s contract for an initial 12 months to 30 November 2023 to enable Voi to continue operating the trial beyond the current end date of 30 November 2022.
	(iii) To delegate authority to the Executive Director for Growth, following consultation with the Cabinet Member for Transport and District Regeneration and Section 151 officer to implement and amend the details of the e-scooter trial within the parameters established by the VSO and the DfT, and to approve a further extension to Voi’s contract from 1 December 2023 to 31 May 2024 following a performance review.
REASONS FOR REPORT RECOMMENDATIONS	
1.	To facilitate the ongoing collection of data and information that will inform national legislation for e-scooters and support the ongoing independent data validation.

2.	The trial has demonstrated there is a demand for a rental e-scooter service in Southampton with over 61,000 users having collectively made over 802,000 trips.
3.	To understand how new innovations from the Future Transport Zone programme will interact with the e-scooter service, for example the Mobility-as-a-Service app, and to continue to refine the service to improve uptake, safety and efficiency.
4.	To allow flexibility in response to new innovations and service models developed by SCC, Solent Transport, the DfT or Voi. For example, a review of operating hours.
5.	The contract will be extended extension with Voi for 12 months to the end of November 2023. The contract with Voi can only be extended for periods of up to one year. This will also allow an opportunity to review Voi's performance before a further extension to the end of May 2024. This provides the Council with greater flexibility to vary the arrangement as may be required based on its ongoing evaluation of the trial.
ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED AND REJECTED	
6.	End the trial in November 2022. This was rejected as it would not facilitate ongoing data collection. It would also slow the progress made in micromobility in Southampton and remove opportunities to improve and refine the service.
DETAIL (Including consultation carried out)	
7.	In March 2020, Solent Transport was awarded £28.8m of funding from the DfT's Future Transport Zones (FTZ) programme to implement a programme of trials of innovative approaches to transport across the Solent area, from 2020/21 to 2023/24.
8.	As part of the government's response to COVID-19, and to support a 'green' restart of local travel to help mitigate reduced capacity on public transport, the DfT fast-tracked and expanded trials of rental e-scooters. The DfT considered that e-scooters offered the potential for fast, clean and inexpensive travel which could ease the burden on transport networks and allow for social distancing. Funding from the FTZ programme was reallocated to facilitate the project.
9.	Trials enable essential insights for the DfT and councils as to how rental e-scooters contribute to the transport mix in urban centres. Following the trials, it is anticipated that the DfT will assess whether these vehicles should be legalised in the UK as part of the new Transport Bill.
10.	The Isle of Wight scheme was the first part of the Solent project to launch in November 2020, with the operator Beryl. Southampton and Portsmouth subsequently launched in March 2021 and are both with the operator Voi.
11.	The DfT is only permitting the trialling of rental e-scooters. The use of privately owned e-scooters on the public highway remains illegal.
12.	Trial e-scooters are classified as motor vehicles, and the relevant motor vehicle insurance is provided by the trial operator. E-scooters must also meet standards for vehicle construction and approval as set out by the DfT's trial requirements.

13.	<p>The aim of the trial is to build robust evidence about the benefits, public perceptions, and wider impacts of e-scooters to inform legal changes that may be necessary beyond the e-scooter trial period. Key areas that the council, the DfT and the operator Voi have been gathering information on include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Safety outcomes for e-scooter users and what influences this. • Interaction with, and effect on, other road users. • Public perceptions of the e-scooters, including impacts for people with disabilities and related groups. • Nature of modal shift and new journeys that have been enabled. • Characteristics of users and how uptake and outcomes differ for different groups. • Local Authority perception of effects on their transport system and public environment.
14.	<p><u>Key Statistics</u></p> <p>As of 15 September 2022*:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number of unique users: 61,270 • Number of active vehicles: 1,459 vehicles • Number of parking locations: 199** • Total distance travelled: 1,955,117 km • Total rides: 802,711 rides • Average ride time: 13.1 minutes • Average distance travelled: 2.4 km • Rides/e-scooter/day: 1.9 • CO₂ equivalent saved: 177 tonnes*** • Car trips replaced: 329,112 • Litres of gasoline not burnt: 75,685 <p>*Statistics are provided by Voi from their e-scooter ride data, extrapolated from the ride data and from their user surveys.</p> <p>** On the public highway</p> <p>***Voi's estimate for carbon savings is based on their carbon calculator, which was validated by Dr. Manos Chaniotakis, lecturer in Transport Modelling and Machine Learning at UCL. It is based on trip data, local mode shift percentages collected via Voi's surveys, the government's emission factors for cars and buses, and their e-scooter's lifetime carbon emissions based on a Life Cycle Assessment tool developed by Ernst & Young. Emission savings are calculated in CO₂ equivalent units, meaning they factor in all GHG.</p> <p>Voi's national summer 2022 in-app user survey received responses from 443 Southampton users, with 35% of respondents saying they would have used a car or taxi for their last journey if scooters had not been available. The corresponding figure from their summer 2021 survey had been 41%.</p>
15.	<p>SCC have undertaken a survey between 29 August 2022 and 19 September 2022. The results for which will be used to compare with the Voi survey results and identify areas where the service is performing well or where improvements can be made. Once analysed the results will be made available on the SCC website.</p>

16.

Trial Features

The e-scooters and project approach have a range of features and terms of use to ensure their safe use, including but not limited to:

- Lights and indicators.
- Insurance for every ride, including third party, provided by the operator.
- Heavy to mitigate risk of e-scooters being picked up and moved inappropriately or thrown.
- Meets DfT minimum standards including unique identification plates for every vehicle.
- Speed limited to 12.5mph (the DfT limit is 15mph).
- Geofencing capability to allow No Ride Zones (NRZs) and slow zones to reduce speed in higher risk areas.
- GPS tracked, and riders identified by Voi from accounts to enforce against inappropriate riding.
- Need for provisional or full license before being approved to use the trial e-scooters.
- Kick stand to avoid e-scooters toppling over.
- “Parking Cop” to ensure suitable parking, with consequences for poor parking including a ban.
- Ride like Voila training and education and mandatory training requirement to ensure all users are briefed on the behavioral requirements for riding a Voi E-Scooter.
- Strict reporting and banning policy to discourage inappropriate riding. Voi encourages use of their e-form (<https://report.voi.com/>) where possible, but they can also be contacted by phone on 0800 376 8179 or by email at support@voiapp.io. If the unique registration plate number is not available, then Voi endeavours to determine the identity of the rider based on the time and location the e-scooter was being ridden or parked.
- Parking assessments to ensure the location is suitable, taking into consideration Equality Safety and Impact Assessment (ESIA) mitigations.
- Continued review of the scheme to ensure new risks and safety concerns can be addressed due to the trial nature of the project.
- Safety events to provide direct training and distribute free helmets.
- Encourage use of helmets in-app.
- Ongoing issue resolution and maintenance for e-scooters.
- Regular engagement with impacted groups including hosting disability roundtable events and direct engagement through the Voi dedicated City Success Manager.
- Operating hours limited to 4am-10pm to reduce risk of drink riding with sobriety testing on the app starting at 9pm to further mitigate this risk.
- Open and regular communication with Hampshire Constabulary and Southampton City Council community groups and community cohesion teams.
- Voi support to Police for enforcing illegal use of rented e-scooters.
- Co-design of E-scooter parking racks with the Royal National Institution for Blind People (RNIB).

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continued development and innovation (e.g., e-scooter noise and pavement riding detection). Colour scheme of Voi e-scooters is designed to be recognisable and being more distinguishable to visually impaired people.
17.	<p><u>Parking</u></p> <p>When determining parking locations, a consultation is carried out under Part VIIA Section 115E of the Highways Act 1980. This requires contacting all frontagers and placing a public notice on site. The consultation period is 28 days. Representations are considered before a decision is taken on issuing a consent to the e-scooter operator for parking facilities.</p>
18.	<p>E-Scooter parking is currently located on the footway. An extension to the trial will allow improvements to be made, including the review of all existing parking locations against their usage, and reviewing options to move parking from the pavement onto road space where safe and appropriate.</p>
19.	<p><u>Enforcement</u></p> <p>Voi employs a range of tools to tackle anti-social behaviour and misuse of e-scooters. In addition to the measures referenced above to mitigate risk, Voi has implemented a “three-strikes” policy, whereby a user reported for an offence is first banned for 7 days and is required to complete its online traffic school. Following a second strike, the user is banned for 30 days. Finally, a further offence results in the user being permanently banned from using the e-scooters. A ban can be applied for a range of offences including, but not limited to, allowing an underage rider to use an e-scooter, pavement riding, and twin riding. As of 15 September 2022: 1437 temporary bans for inappropriate riding and 13 permanent bans have been issued to Southampton e-scooter trial users.</p>
20.	<p><u>Safety</u></p> <p>Voi uses the DfT categorisations for accidents, which are defined as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Damage only: An accident in which only the vehicle, other vehicles or surrounding infrastructure are damaged. Slight injury: An injury of a minor character such as a sprain (including neck whiplash injury), bruise or cut which are not judged to be severe, or slight shock requiring roadside attention. This definition includes injuries not requiring medical treatment. Serious injury: An injury for which a person is detained in hospital as an “in-patient”, or any of the following injuries whether or not they are detained in hospital: fractures, concussion, internal injuries, crushings, burns (excluding friction burns), severe cuts, severe general shock requiring medical treatment and injuries causing death 30 or more days after the accident.
21.	<p>The 361 accidents reported to Voi during the trial to date (up to 15 September 2022) can be categorised as follows: 183 damage only, 155 slight, and 23 serious. Independent analysis commissioned by Solent Transport and conducted by the consultancy Steer in early 2022 suggests the number of serious injuries may in fact be slightly lower, as Voi included incidents that were unverifiable or lacked an accompanying accident log.</p>
22.	<p>Voi has noted that reported incidents often remain unverified, or the user does not follow up the report to provide an outcome, so validating the report is difficult. The validation of accident data forms part of Solent Transport's</p>

	ongoing evaluation of the trial alongside Local Authorities and partner organisations including the transport consultancy TRL, and it is hoped it will be possible to obtain richer data from the police in due course (currently, there is not a clear distinction between incidents involving rental e-scooters and privately-owned scooters, but it is well-understood that the incident rate for the latter is significantly higher).
23.	The monitoring and evaluation effort will also aim to better determine safety compared to alternative modes of travel, such as cycling, and consider the factors that influence injuries and accidents. Accidents and injuries can also be related to infrastructure provision, and as part of the evidence review, the impact of available cycle lanes on incident hotspots will be assessed.
24.	Serious incident, injury or fatality remains the highest risk factor for the trial given the relatively high level of use. The Council, Voi, and Solent Transport have measures in place to mitigate this as far as possible, as detailed in Section 13. Ongoing improvements in infrastructure for alternative modes of travel in the city will also mitigate this risk further, benefitting cyclists and e-scooter users.
25.	<p><u>Marketing and Communication</u></p> <p>The council has worked with Solent Transport and Voi to deliver clear, targeted, Southampton specific communications and messaging to relevant audiences. For example, collaborating on a safety video aimed at reinforcing the rules of using a trial e-scooter in Southampton. Voi have also improved their in-app messaging to remind users of key rules such as pavement riding and twin riding. SCC also regularly use social media to reinforce messaging. Voi's on the ground presence includes ambassadors who will interact with users and holding regular Safety Skills Events, delivered by one of the UK's leading road safety organisations at Guildhall Square.</p>
26.	<p><u>Extension Benefits</u></p> <p>Extending to 31 May 2024 will enable:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continued data collection to add to the DfT and Solent Transport's evidence base, and further inform future national legislation on e-scooters. • More data collection to help ensure fluctuations caused by weather, major events, availability in residential areas, and returning users are as fully accounted for as is possible during the trial period. • Further evidence collection during a period of reopening following the COVID-19 lockdowns, which is more representative of how people are likely travel around the city in the future. • Opportunity to assess the impact of introducing Bike Share and the Mobility-as-a-Service app, and how e-scooters interact with these innovations. • Implementation of new service innovations and trials, including on-carriageway parking bays, marking of virtual bays with paint or signage and improving availability of e-scooter parking across the city. • Extending the trial would facilitate the ongoing independent data validation commissioned by Solent Transport, being conducted by TRL, which would improve the evidence base and help inform subsequent decisions to be taken about e-scooters at the local and national level.

RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS	
<u>Capital/Revenue</u>	
27.	Capital project costs associated with the development and running of the trial will continue to be met by Solent Transport, in accordance with the funding allocated to the trial as part of the FTZ programme. Solent Transport also fund an FTZ Project Manager dedicated to Southampton who is coordinating the implementation of the FTZ programme in the city, and a dedicated Micromobility Project Manager overseeing e-scooters and bike share in the Solent.
28.	No revenue costs are expected for this trial extension. Income received from the contract arrangement with Voi will generate a saving in the Green City and Infrastructure budget until the end of the trial.
<u>Property/Other</u>	
29.	Not applicable
LEGAL IMPLICATIONS	
<u>Statutory power to undertake proposals in the report:</u>	
30.	The Electric Scooter Trials and Traffic Signs (Coronavirus) Regulations and General Directions 2020 came into force on 4 July 2020, to facilitate e-scooter trials, with further provisions in the Traffic Signs (Coronavirus) (Amendment) (England) Regulations 2021 which came into force on 19 February 2021.
31.	The trial had been facilitated by an 18-month Experimental Traffic Regulation Order (ETRO) which allowed trial e-scooters to use cycle lanes. A permanent Traffic Regulation Order (TRO) was subsequently made in September 2022 to continue to enable trial e-scooters to use cycle lanes to the end of the trial on 30 November 2022 and beyond this date should that decision be taken.
32.	The DfT will issue a new Vehicle Special Orders (VSO) to 31 May 2024 that permits the Voi e-scooters to operate in Southampton, evidencing that Voi meet the DfT's requirements for being an approved operator, and setting the limits for e-scooter numbers and geography in Southampton.
<u>Other Legal Implications:</u>	
33.	Only Voi e-scooters operating as part of the trial are legal in Southampton. Privately owned e-scooters will still be illegal on public highway.
	The contract with Voi will initially be extended for a further 12 months from 1 December 2022 as it can only be extended for periods of up to one year. This will also provide an opportunity to review the performance of Voi before committing to a further contract extension to 31 May 2024.
RISK MANAGEMENT IMPLICATIONS	
34.	An Equality and Safety Impact Assessment (ESIA) has been drafted and is regularly updated throughout the trial. This provides detail for the mitigations in place to reduce risks presented by trial e-scooters in Southampton.
POLICY FRAMEWORK IMPLICATIONS	
35.	The proposals within this report are in accordance with the Local Transport Plan and LTP Implementation Plan.

KEY DECISION?	Yes	
WARDS/COMMUNITIES AFFECTED:	All	
<u>SUPPORTING DOCUMENTATION</u>		
Appendices		
1.	Equality and Safety Impact Assessment (ESIA)	
Documents In Members' Rooms		
1.	Not Applicable	
Equality Impact Assessment		
Do the implications/subject of the report require an Equality and Safety Impact Assessment (ESIA) to be carried out.		Yes
Data Protection Impact Assessment		
Do the implications/subject of the report require a Data Protection Impact Assessment (DPIA) to be carried out.		No
Other Background Documents		
Other Background documents available for inspection at:		
Government Guidance on E-Scooters for Local Authorities: Electric Scooter Trials & Traffic Signs (Coronavirus) Regulations & General Directions 2020: The Electric Scooter Trials and Traffic Signs (Coronavirus) Regulations and General Directions 2020 (legislation.gov.uk)		
The Traffic Signs (Coronavirus) (Amendment) (England) Regulations 2021: The Traffic Signs (Coronavirus) (Amendment) (England) Regulations 2021 (legislation.gov.uk)		
Southampton City Council E-Scooter Safety Video: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=h8cRTeCvsYM		
Title of Background Paper(s)	Relevant Paragraph of the Access to Information Procedure Rules / Schedule 12A allowing document to be Exempt/Confidential (if applicable)	
1.	Not Applicable	