



# City Management Policy and Scrutiny Committee

<b>Date:</b>	24 <sup>th</sup> November 2021
<b>Classification:</b>	General – with confidential appendices
<b>Title:</b>	Rental E-scooter Trial update
<b>Report of:</b>	Raj Mistry, Executive Director, City Management
<b>Cabinet Member Portfolio</b>	Cabinet Member for City Management, Councillor James Spencer
<b>Wards Involved:</b>	All
<b>Policy Context:</b>	<p>The trial will contribute to City of Westminster’s 2019-2040 City Plan objectives. It is intended that the implementation of the trial will address the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- S25, A The council will support a sustainable pattern of development which maximises trips made by sustainable modes, creates safer streets for all, reduces traffic, improves air quality and reflects the objectives in Westminster’s Transport and Public Realm Programme and Local Implementation Plan 2019/20 to 2021/22</li><li>- S26.7, enabling people to lead healthier, more active lives, can help to reduce the pressure on highways capacity and public transport, facilitate improvements to the public realm and enable greater numbers of people to use the existing road space;</li><li>- S26.8, increase shift from the motor car, resulting in reduction of harmful emissions and leading to improved air quality.</li></ul>
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## 1. Executive Summary

- 1.1 The rental e-scooter trial was approved by the Cabinet Member for Environment & City Highways on 29<sup>th</sup> November 2020. Transport for London (TfL) launched the scheme on 6<sup>th</sup> June 2021 for a twelve-month period, with an option to extend the trial for a period of up to six-months, with Westminster successfully joining on 3<sup>rd</sup> August 2021 on commencement of Trial Period (TP) 3 (there are 13 TPs in total).
- 1.2 The current trial area consists of ten London Boroughs, including Camden, City of London, Ealing, Hammersmith & Fulham, Kensington & Chelsea, Lambeth, Richmond upon Thames, Southwark, Tower Hamlets, and Westminster. The London Borough of Camden data is not included within this report as it joined the trial on TP4, and the verified data issued by TfL is up to TP3 only. See **Appendix 1** for a visual representation of the current trial area.
- 1.3 The trial across London is being led by TfL and forms part of the wider Department for Transport (DfT) initiative being rollout across England. It will inform the DfT what legislation would be necessary if e-scooters were legally permitted to be ridden on the public highway. It is also supporting Covid-19 recovery by providing an alternative and greener transport mode for people in Westminster and across the participating boroughs.
- 1.4 This report provides a summary to the background of the rental e-scooter trial, highlight challenges arisen and progresses that has been made since the launch of the scheme. Furthermore, it includes a comprehensive dataset which can be found in the Appendices of this report.
- 1.5 Please note all contents within the Appendices of the report is confidential. No content within should be made public, or shared with any third parties, including the e-scooter operators.

## 2. Key Matters for the Committee's Consideration

The Committee is asked to comment on the following four questions to key aspects relating to the trial and its outcome:

- 1) Is this a sustainable type of mobility that has a permanent space on our streets, and will it encourage mode shift from private car use or any other green or 'Active' mode, and help to contribute achieving the City Council's climate emergency objectives?
- 2) While some validated data is available (see appendices below) discussions are still ongoing with TfL and operators to develop robust key performance indicators (KPIs). Officers are feeding into this process and the aim is these KPIs will be used to determine the success of the trial. Are there any key issues that need to be considered to allow Westminster to take a decision on the future of the trial?
- 3) A dense parking network, of e-scooter bays, can influence higher levels of usage, parking compliance and can encourage mode shift. Will the City

Council consider intensifying parking bays in the remaining months of the trial to increase accessibility to the scheme to more areas of the city? (This is being requested by the operators and figures show the most journeys are undertaken in Westminster)

- 4) Safety and compliance remain the key areas of concern and at the early stages of the trial and available data currently informs neither are an issue. How does Westminster determine the threshold of these aspects considering it is a destination borough and in normal circumstances, attracts more than one million visitors per day?

### **3. Background**

- 3.1 TfL and London Councils are responsible for the strategic oversight of the trial as the lead Authority. This is to ensure consistency across the appointed operators and the trial area. In addition, TfL has oversight of operator fleet and trip data through the Bluesystem platform which provides real-time data and onboard Global Positioning System (GPS) monitors operator compliance.
- 3.2 The data is aggregated across all three operators (Dott, Lime & TIER) and will provide insights on utilisation rates and any trends regards this type of transportation.
- 3.3 The trial will help inform the City Council to assess how these types of vehicles and similar types of mobility can be safely accommodated on London's streets, as battery technology continues to advance, making personal transportation vehicles more accessible to the public despite their current illegal status for usage on public roads in England.
- 3.4 Participating borough's responsibility includes the designating of parking bays, specifying local requirements, and setting key zones such as 'go-slow' and 'no-go' zones. Operations and monitoring localised issues are also dealt with and managed by borough officers.

3.5 It was recommended by the City Highways team that 79 designated parking bay locations were to be implemented in Westminster. At the time of writing this report, 68 parking bays were implemented under Experimental Traffic Orders (ETOs) and all are now active. All feedback and comments received during the ETO period of 10 months will be recorded as formal evidence in support of the formal consultation process on making such parking bays permanent, or otherwise, provided the City Council's decision to continue the scheme with TfL, as the lead authority and London Councils.

<b>Ward</b>	<b>No. of parking bays</b>	<b>Ward</b>	<b>No. of parking bays</b>
Abbey Road	5	Maida Vale	2
Bayswater	2	Marylebone High Street	4
Bryanston & Dorset Square	2	Queen's Park	5
Churchill	1	Regent's Park	3
Church Street	0	St. James's	10
Harrow Road	5	Tachbrook	0
Hyde Park	2	Vincent Square	3
Knightsbridge & Belgravia	4	Warwick	3
Lancaster Gate	3	West End	8
Little Venice	3	Westbourne	3
		<b>Total parking bays</b>	<b>68</b>

3.6 Total of 36 complaints were received since the launch of the trial, summarised in the table below. Note the some of the complaints are duplicates recorded from different channels. However, details cannot be disclosed due to GDPR regulations. 7 of which are related to user behaviour, 3 are operational issues, and 26 are related to parking. Note, no parking bays designated on 'footway' (unused space on traffic islands) have caused any issues in Westminster since the launch of the trial.

Bay Number	Ward	Location	Complaints received	Private/Rental vehicles	Category	Outcome
54	Regent's Park	Allsop Place	1	Rental	Parking	Monitoring
92	Marylebone High Street	Devonshire Street	1	Rental	Parking	Impact on delivery, parking bay removed
41	St. James's	Garrick Street	3	Rental	Parking	Monitoring
104	Abbey Road	Hall Road	1	Rental	Parking	Monitoring
20	Lancaster Gate	Inverness Terrace	2	Rental	Parking	Monitoring
n/a	St. James's	Leicester Square	1	Not specified	Behaviour	No-go geofencing control remain in place to limit access for rental vehicles
26	Bayswater	Leinster Square	1	Rental	Behaviour	Users identified and banned for riding against one-way
35	Vincent Square	Marsham Street	11	Rental	Parking Operators	Operator servicing issues, parking bay removed
84	Bryanston & Dorset Square	Montagu Street	2	Rental	Parking	Monitoring
34	Tachbrook	Moreton Street	3	Rental	Parking	Poor location siting, parking bay removed
n/a		Queens Park Gardens	1	Rental	Behaviour	

Bay Number	Ward	Location	Complaints received	Private/Rental vehicles	Category	Outcome
78	Harrow Road	Saltram Crescent	2	Rental	Parking	Monitoring
105	Queen's Park	Sixth Avenue	2	Rental	Parking	Monitoring
68	Abbey Road	Springfield Road	1	Rental	Parking	Monitoring
33	Warwick	Sutherland Street	3	Rental	Operation	Monitoring, servicing times reviewed with operators
n/a	Vincent Square	Victoria Street/Cathedral Piazza	1	Not specified	Behaviour	Monitoring, reviewed no-go zone

3.7 Informal Member consultation was undertaken in April 2021 to collate feedback on the general proposal of the scheme, along with the designated parking bay locations and setting out key zones for 'go-slow' and 'no-go' areas. Recommendations were presented to the Cabinet Member for City Management for further approval in May 2021.

3.8 The trial is intended to be cost neutral to the City Council. All costs incurred will be charged against the City Highways budget and recouped through the TfL fee structure.

3.9 User compliance and enforcement are dealt with by the Metropolitan Police Service (MPS) under the Road Traffic Act (1988).

#### 4. Challenges

4.1 **TfL data** - Each operator define parking compliance differently and this has presented a challenge for TfL in measuring and comparing cross-operator performance. This dataset is for indicative purposes at this stage and qualitative feedback along with complaints is used to provide an indication of parking compliance. This area of interest will need to be evaluated over the full trial period.

4.2 **GPS accuracy** - TfL's Bluesystem platform and geofencing technology promised real-time data and the ability to monitor operator and parking compliance. However, issues with 'GPS drift' have created issues on user safety

around 'no-go' zones and shown the difficulty in accurately measuring parking compliance. Since the launch of the trial, it has also been identified that it is difficult to determine trips per bay data to reliably present bay utilisation data.

- 4.3 **Mode-shift and demographic data** – one of the aims of the rental e-scooter trial is to provide an alternative transport option. Given that some 72% of Westminster residents do not own/ have access to a car the abstraction from the private car is likely to be small in this borough. The DfT are collecting data through surveys on mode shift and journey purpose, demographic and TfL are currently in discussion to obtain access to this data for London.
- 4.4 **Reported incidents** – the numbers represent the incident being reported by members of the public or by borough officers/operatives of the scheme. This is unlikely to be a true reflection on incidents that actually occur and can only act as an indicator in terms of measuring the success to the trial. Some users also choose not to self-report incidents if considered minor and 'time consuming'.
- 4.5 **STATS 19 data** – all road traffic accidents are recorded and categorised by Police and DfT's STATS 19 casualty related collision recording system. E-scooters do not have their own category at present and we understand that DfT are unable to implement the new category until 2023/24. In the meantime, any recorded incidents related to an e-scooter will be classified as 'other' mode in STATS 19. As a result of this unsatisfactory position, unlike casualty related collisions that involve pedestrians, cyclists and all motorised vehicle incidents the police, DfT and the Police have no meaningful system of recording casualties that involve the riders of e-scooters.
- 4.6 **Enforcement** – automated road traffic enforcement with Automatic Number Plate Recognition system (ANPR) is not possible, meaning currently such violations can only be dealt with by the MPS in real-time by officers.
- 4.7 **GDPR regulations** - Issues around GDPR data protection and sharing of information across operators means that incompliant user's details cannot be shared across the three operators. In practice, a banned user will still have access to the scheme via the remaining two operators.
- 4.8 **The Royal Parks** – the trial is not permitted on any of the Royal Park's land. Geofencing has therefore restricted the access of rental e-scooters in the parks as well as the major thoroughfare alongside key cycling infrastructure (e.g., the East to West Cycle Superhighway). This can limit on usage in Westminster, particularly for the north-south and east-west journeys.



## **5. Progress**

- 5.1 Following several test rides by borough officer and operators, it was recommended to the Cabinet Member that the 'go-slow' zone to be removed from the Westminster area. The speed cap of 8.5mph in 'go-slow' zones posed safety concerns alongside faster running traffic in the carriageway, where the e-scooters are intended to be used. Given that all scheme e-scooters are set to a 12.5mph the prospect of killed or serious injury of a pedestrian by an e-scooter rider is marginal, when compared to higher speeds. All 'go-slow' zones have currently been removed, for ease of navigation by riders. This situation is under review and 'go-slow' areas can be reintroduced if required.
- 5.2 Review and reduction in 'no-go' polygons in mapping layer to reduce the risk of sudden loss in power/braking in vehicles on adjacent carriageway as a result of GPS drift. Improving safety and user experience without compromising the original intention of restricting access to such areas.
- 5.3 Review and removal of e-scooter parking bays causing localised disruptions, which were unforeseen as a result of the lack of a formal traffic consultation. A number of alternative locations for parking bays have been identified.

## **6. Policy and Scrutiny Member questions**

- 6.1 Members are requested to consider the four questions raised in Section 2 of this report.

**If you have any queries about this Report or wish to inspect any of the Background Papers, please contact Steve Tse [stse@westminster.gov.uk](mailto:stse@westminster.gov.uk)**

## **APPENDICES**

The appendices to this report are exempt under Section 100(A) (4) and Part 1 of Schedule 12A to the Local Government Act 1972 (as amended) at paragraph 3, as they involve the likely disclosure of exempt information on the grounds stated.