



Committee report

Committee	POLICY AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE FOR NEIGHBOURHOODS AND REGENERATION
Date	23 SEPTEMBER 2022
Title	UPDATE ON THE E-SCOOTER TRIAL
Report of	CABINET MEMBER FOR INFRASTRUCTURE, HIGHWAYS PFI AND TRANSPORT

SUMMARY

1. The purpose of the report is to provide an update on the current E-Scooter Trial on the Island in particular progress since its commencement in November 2020.

BACKGROUND

2. 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.
3. The 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 their Future Transport Regulatory Review.
4. The DfT is only permitting the trialling of rental e-scooters. The use of privately owned e-scooters on the public highway will remain illegal during the trial period
5. 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.
6. During summer 2020, the DfT announced the possibility for FTZ Local Authorities to run e-scooter rental trial schemes as part of the transport restart response as such on 31st July 2020, Solent Transport submitted a proposal to

the DfT requesting permission to operate an e-scooter trial in the Solent area, with up to four sub-projects in Portsmouth, Winchester, Southampton, and on the Isle of Wight.

7. The Isle of Wight scheme was the first part of the Solent project to launch in November 2020, with the operator Beryl.

PROGRESS TO DATE

8. The initial trial was for 12 months, before a requested extension by the DfT for a further 12 months.
9. The first phase of the project was focused Newport, before being rolled out to Cowes, East Cowes, Ryde and finally the Bay Areas, as the Island came out the other side of the pandemic. Likewise, the number of e-scooters increased over the first 12 months as the trail expanded to a total of 125 currently available to hire.
10. As with any such project, especially given that it was for a new mode of transport, there were concerns in respect of the devices themselves, their use and the impact of the e-scooter bays on the highway.
11. However, through both DfT Guidance and efforts at the local level were taken to address these concerns such as:
 - Limiting e-scooters to 15.5mph
 - The requirement to have a full or provisional UK Drivers licence and the requirement of a personal account to be set up against which a copy of the user's driving licence is held.
 - The review and assessment of each individual e-scooter bay location
 - Fixed penalties for e-scooters out of bays, out of operating zones or when left unlocked.
 - Warnings and user bans for misuse
 - Front, rear and indicator lights.
 - GPS tracking of each e-scooter and unique reference numbers
 - Warning bells
 - Online and in person safety guidance, including the recommendation to use helmets and bright clothing.
 - Continual liaison with local Police on any specific reports of misuse or misbehaviour
12. The presentation shall give an overview of the trial's performance of the last few months.

NEXT STEPS

- Seek a further extension of the trial to March 2024, to operate alongside the recently agreed public bike share scheme for the Island as a part of the Solent FTZ project.
- Continue to review and embed the provision to maximise the benefit to the Island as more rounded approach to micro mobility as a viable alternative to single use car journeys.

- Provide feedback to the Department for Transport to help inform future decisions and legislation in respect of the use of e-scooters

APPENDICES

Appendix 1 – Highlights

Appendix 2 - Issues

Contact Point: Stewart Chandler, Highways and Transport Client Manager,
☎ 821000 e-mail stewart.chandler@iow.gov.uk

COLIN ROWLAND
Director of Neighbourhoods

PHIL JORDAN (CLLR)
*Cabinet Member for Infrastructure, Highways PFI,
and Transport*