

READING BOROUGH COUNCIL

REPORT BY DIRECTOR OF ENVIRONMENT & NEIGHBOURHOOD SERVICES

TO:	HEALTH AND WELLBEING BOARD		
DATE:	21 MARCH 2014	AGENDA ITEM:	6
TITLE:	BEAT THE STREET UPDATE		
LEAD COUNCILLOR:	GRAEME HOSKIN	PORTFOLIO:	HEALTH
SERVICE:	TRANSPORT	WARDS:	ALL
LEAD OFFICER:	HANNAH BUDNITZ	TEL:	0118 937 2653
JOB TITLE:	SENIOR TRANSPORT PLANNER	E-MAIL:	HANNAH.BUDNITZ@READING.GOV.UK

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT AND EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to provide feedback to the Health and Wellbeing Board on the 'Beat the Street' Caversham project that was funded by a Transport service grant awarded to the company Intelligent Health to run a community-wide walking challenge throughout Caversham in summer 2013. This report also provides an outline of a further 'Beat the Street' project as proposed by the North & West CCG, and funded mainly by the North & West and South CCGs. This further project has been developed based on the positive reception of the Caversham project and a workshop provided by Intelligent Health to the CCGs.

2. RECOMMENDED ACTION

- 2.1 That the Health and Wellbeing Board note the background to the Beat the Street walking challenges and the feedback and evaluation results for the Caversham Beat the Street Project as summarised.
- 2.2 That the Health and Wellbeing Board note the proposal for a further, expanded challenge funded primarily by the North & West and South CCGs with support from the Transport Strategy and Public Health teams within the Council(s).

3. POLICY CONTEXT

- 3.1 Transport budget for Beat the Street Caversham and earlier pilots was made available from the Local Sustainable Transport Fund (LSTF). This is a £560m fund made available by the DfT with the aim of implementing local sustainable

transport measures that will deliver lasting benefits to support the local economy and reduce carbon.

- 3.2 Reading successfully secured £4.9m funding in July 2011 for a LSTF Small Project to deliver a package of transport investment measures which are complimentary to those already being progressed through the implementation programme of the Council-approved Local Transport Plan 2011-2026 (LTP). The LTP incorporated input from public health using data that had been applied to undertake a Health Impact Assessment of the strategy document.
- 3.3 In partnership with Wokingham Borough Council, West Berkshire Council, the Thames Valley Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP) and the NHS Berkshire West Primary Care Trust (public health function now located within the Local Authority), Reading secured a further £20.692m for an LSTF Large Project in June 2012 to deliver a package of transport investment measures to benefit the wider urban area. Core objectives of this bid included helping to deliver wider social and economic benefits and actively promoting increased levels of physical activity.
- 3.4 Under the new structure of the NHS, the Clinical Commissioning Groups have a responsibility to make efficiency savings and improve care for patients through a plan for 'Quality, Innovation, Productivity and Prevention' (QIPP) that has a budget attached to it. Beat the Street has been accepted as a preventative project to change habits and behaviours, particularly by targeting certain groups. The Health and Wellbeing Strategy identifies promoting health-enabling behaviours & lifestyle tailored to the differing needs of communities as one of its four main goals within its Delivery Plan, making promotion of physical activity an appropriate target for prevention and behaviour change programmes.

4. THE PROPOSAL

4.1 Background

Intelligent Health is a company founded and directed by Dr William Bird, a local GP. The company focuses on promoting physical activity to improve health outcomes and has two main products. The first is a training package for GPs on the health benefits of physical activity. This was first implemented in a number of London boroughs. The second product encompasses the organisation of challenges to promote walking for health, using technology to foster competition and record participants' walks. Many of these challenges have been branded 'Beat the Street'. The technology involves RFID (radio frequency identification) cards or keyfobs and strategically located readers called 'beatboxes' and was trialled at Stormont in Belfast.

Reading's first involvement with Intelligent Health was a pilot 'Beat the Street' project in Whitley in June/July 2012, funded by the initial Local Sustainable Transport Fund award (Tranche 1 or Key Component Bid). Intelligent Health engaged with three primary schools in the area: Christ the King Catholic Primary School, Geoffrey Field Primary School, and George Palmer Primary School. Over 1000 keyfobs were distributed to the children and beatboxes purchased by the Transport team were placed along the children's routes to school.

During the four-week competition, over half of students at the three schools participated by walking to and from school, particularly in the first week. Numbers declined to about 20% participation by the end of the competition, but it was noted

that this was during a period of record rainfall for the time of year. Feedback was very positive from children, parents and schools and the pilot did test the technology and the organisation of the challenge. There was a leaderboard competition between the schools, and this fostered community spirit. Christ the King won £500 for charity at the end, and the children who had participated most received certificates.

A further competition was held in October 2012 between secondary schools in London, Vancouver, Shanghai and Reading, funded by Coca-cola Foundation, although using the Council's 30 beatboxes. Children in years 7 and 8 from Blessed Hugh Faringdon, Highdown and Reading Girls schools were invited to participate, and 528 students did so. A detailed post-challenge survey indicated that the number of children who had walked to school at least once in the past week rose from 75% to 92%. Half of the participants said that they walked more by the end of the competition and a tenth cycled more. Children also enjoyed the additional time with friends secured by walking to and from school.

4.2 Caversham Project

In January 2013, the Transport team launched a 'Challenge Fund' open to any business, charity, community group or other organisation with an idea to promote and increase sustainable transport. Grants of up to £50,000 were available on a competitive basis, with the budget allocated from the Local Sustainable Transport Fund partnership bid. Intelligent Health bid for and won a grant of £49,700 to run Beat the Street in Caversham.

The project aimed to engage the entire community to collectively 'walk around the world' between June and September 2013 in the biggest-ever 'Beat the Street'. It also included training for local GP practices to encourage participation of their at-risk patients. Individual prizes donated by local businesses were available, plus £3000 of books donated to local schools and the library. There was a leaderboard for the 8 primary schools in the area, allowing children's points to be pooled into team scores. Beatboxes were set up at 46 locations by the schools and other destinations in Caversham, as well as on the two bridges, at the northern entrance to the railway station and at John Lewis.

In total, 5,651 people took part, walking twice round the world in the three-month period. Of these, 2,627 school children participated from all the primaries as well as a limited number from secondaries. The leaderboard was won by Caversham Park Primary. The importance of school involvement was demonstrated by the reduction in journeys per week from 20-30,000 over the first 6 weeks of the challenge to 7-10,000 journeys per week over the 6 weeks of the summer holidays.

Just under 3,000 adults participated, recruited through GP surgeries, local chemists and other businesses, Caversham library and at school gates and community events. An after survey of adults who had registered with an email gained 250 responses. These were positive about the challenge, reflecting the separate feedback gathered from teachers and GPs and reported by local press and community groups: people enjoyed Beat the Street and were particularly pleased to be invited to be part of an activity that gave something back to the community.

In the survey, two thirds said they walked more and 29% that they cycled more during the challenge and 81% said they aimed to continue these behaviours after the challenge ended. Participants were also asked how often they walked, cycled, travelled by bus or by car before the competition compared to during. The responses

showed that those who walked daily rose from 50% to 62% and those who drove daily decreased from 34% to 20%.

Limited analysis of the swipe data, the survey and anecdotal feedback made up the evaluation of the Caversham project. Therefore, there is no evidence of sustained behavioural change or health outcomes, as these were not measured. However, the project's success in terms of participation, community engagement and enthusiasm is undeniable. And this caught the attention of local GPs.

4.3 CCG Project

The North & West and South CCGs have decided to fund Beat the Street for the entire areas covered by the CCGs as a preventative project to change habits and behaviours and increase physical activity in their patients. The project board also includes representatives from Reading Borough Council's transport and public health teams.

The project is proposed to run throughout all of Reading Borough and into parts of West Berkshire covered by the North & West CCG. The population of the area is estimated at approximately 180,000. The challenge is scheduled for the month of May 2014 and will be open to all, although children under 12 and certain categories of high risk patients will be targeted. The aim is to engage 20% of the total local population (a similar percentage to that achieved in Caversham) to participate in 'walking to the moon'. Up to 60,000 smartcards will be issued through schools, GP practices, workplaces, community groups and at local shops and events.

A communications plan has been developed, which utilises a combination of approaches, from letters to all parties to attending arranged meetings, briefings and workshops throughout March to present to key groups, such as primary school headteachers, GPs and the voluntary sector. Contacts throughout Reading, including at the local media have been engaged. GP training at the area's 10 largest surgeries has also been programmed for March and April. In parallel, the placement and mapping of the beatboxes are being organised. The CCGs are funding the lease of 50 beatboxes and the operational costs of these, plus the 30 Reading Borough Council transport-owned beatboxes. Intelligent Health is seeking further funding from Reading Borough Council or business sponsors for an additional 50 beatboxes.

A more thorough scope for evaluation is being developed based on 'lessons learned' from the Caversham project, to reflect the additional health goals and to enable an understanding of the longer-term outcomes. The potential for legacy projects post June 2014, using the beatboxes and/or the back-office system, is also on the agenda. Certain simple alterations that would support these tasks have already been identified, such as allowing all participants to register with up to 50 'teams' similar to those formed by the primary schools in Caversham. This will enable different sectors of the population to be evaluated as groups, potentially by their shared characteristics (e.g. all patients of a particular surgery). Another alteration is that all participants will be allowed to retain their smartcards after the challenge, so that they can be involved in any legacy schemes.

4.4 Other Options Considered

The CCGs have indicated that they have not had many similar options coming forward to meet their QIPP criteria and that the success revealed in Beat the Street Caversham in terms of engagement and feedback from local GPs has made this a worthwhile use of the QIPP budget.

5. CONTRIBUTION TO STRATEGIC AIMS

- 5.1 This project contributes to the following of the Council's strategic aims:
- To Develop Reading as a Green City with a sustainable environment and economy at the heart of the Thames Valley
 - To promote equality, social inclusion and a safe and healthy environment for all

6. COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT AND INFORMATION

- 6.1 Community engagement was at the heart of the Beat the Street Caversham project, and substantial project resources were spent on engaging different groups within the community. The Reading-wide challenge will use similar techniques, engaging with multiple user groups and, as there are more hard-to-reach groups in other areas of Reading, will also work through additional channels with the assistance of appropriate contacts within the Council.

7. EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT

- 7.1 The aim of this type of programme is to reach entire neighbourhoods and communities, with no regard to race, gender, disability, sexual orientation, age or religious belief. Walking is seen as an activity in which everyone can participate, even if through assisted means, and the design of the project aims to engage all groups to give them equal opportunity to participate. Therefore, an EIA is not relevant to this decision.

8. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 8.1 All prior Beat the Street projects have followed appropriate standing orders and procedures and have been approved through relevant Council committees and the LSTF Steering Group. The upcoming project is being commissioned by the CCGs under their QIPP procedure. Any additional spend by Council public health or transport functions will be approved through relevant committees or procedures.

9. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 9.1 Previous budget has been documented through previous committee reports. Intelligent Health have delivered all interventions thus far on-time and within budget. The CCGs' budget is £122,340. Any additional budget contributed by the Public Health or Transport teams will be sourced from existing unallocated budgets. If the proposals achieve engagement at the levels forecast (20%), the cost per participant is relatively low. Furthermore, considering the cost of key diseases and conditions attributable to inactivity in Reading is estimated at over £1.6million per year, relatively low levels of ongoing behaviour change among the target high risk patients could result in substantial savings to the NHS over time.

10. BACKGROUND PAPERS

- 10.1 Traffic Management Advisory Panel Report March 2013; Traffic Management Sub-Committee Reports June and November 2013.