

READING BOROUGH COUNCIL

REPORT BY DIRECTOR OF ENVIRONMENT AND NEIGHBOURHOOD SERVICES

TO:	TRAFFIC MANAGEMENT SUB-COMMITTEE		
DATE:	10 MARCH 2016	AGENDA ITEM:	15
TITLE:	CONNECTING READING: CAR CLUB AND MULTIMODAL HUBS		
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1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to update the Sub-Committee on progress made on the project to introduce two new multimodal hubs including ReadyBike, Reading Buses, two new on street Car Club car share cars and cycling and walking routes together with a smartcard to unlock Readybikes, Car Club cars and Reading Bus travel.
- 1.2 A separate report is submitted at this time which outlines the results of the statutory consultation to provide the second of the two new Car Club spaces with links to multimodal travel.

2. RECOMMENDED ACTION

- 2.1 That the Sub-Committee notes the report.
- 2.2 That the committee agrees that the working group continues to progress the joint branding and marketing of the multimodal hubs and that approval is given to install the scheme's branding on the front decals of all 200 ReadyBikes to promote the scheme.

3. POLICY CONTEXT

- 3.1 The proposal is in line with Reading's strategic objectives set out in the Local Transport Plan which has the vision to enable people to

move around easily, safely, sustainably and in comfort by 'Better Connecting' Reading, specifically:

- To align transport and land use planning to enable sustainable transport choices, improve mobility, reduce the need to travel and preserve the natural environment.
- To provide affordable, accessible and inclusive travel options for everyone.
- To reduce carbon emissions from transport, improve air quality, and create a transport network which supports a mobile, affordable low-carbon future.

#### 4. THE PROPOSAL

- 4.1 This project builds on the existing Car Club in Reading by introducing two new Car Club multi-modal nodes which have significant connectivity to other sustainable modes of transport, including Reading's cycle hire scheme (ReadyBike), Reading bus services and walking and cycling routes. The two new cars at these nodes will be hybrid vehicles which use electric power when moving slowly around town and generate electricity using regenerative braking systems. Reading Borough Council in partnership with Co-Wheels was awarded £48,800 funding from the Department of Transport for the scheme as a Car Club Demonstration Project in March 2015.
- 4.2 A joint working group meets several times a month with all stakeholders in the multimodal package: Co-Wheels, ReadyBike, Reading Buses and Better Points (a multimodal phone app encouraging sustainable travel already linked to Reading Buses and ReadyBike). Work has progressed collaboratively to develop a multimodal package of ticketing, registration and promotions. A Smartcard called 'EasyGo' is being designed to unlock the cars, ReadyBikes, bus travel on Reading Buses and to promote the whole project in a way that makes the concept of multimodal travel easy to understand and something that enables people to make easier choices of how to travel. The Smartcard will also link to BetterPoints incentives to encourage sustainable travel. The draft design for logo and Smartcard are shown in Appendices 1 and 2.
- 4.3 Promotion of EasyGo will include advertising on the outsides of two double decker buses, screens inside the buses and posters at bus stops and small adverts on the outside of the Car Club cars. Permission is sought to promote EasyGo on all RBC screens and on the fleet of 200 ReadyBikes. This would be EasyGo branding on the front decals of ReadyBikes, leaving the larger rear decals available for sponsorship. A separate EasyGo webpage is being planned for the RBC website to provide general information on how to register and use the scheme together with a map showing all bus stops, ReadyBike docking stations and Co-Wheels Car Club cars in Reading.

- 4.4 The sites for the two Car Club bays and details of the project were reported to Reading Borough Council's Traffic Management Sub-Committee on 16 September 2015. The committee has given spending approval for the project and approval to take this forward through the statutory consultation (TRO) process.
- 4.5 The consultation process for the 2 car clubs bays commenced on Thursday 17 December for 21 days, ending on 11 January 2016. This was reported to Reading Borough Council's Traffic Management Sub-Committee in January 2016. Work is progressing with the installation of the car bay and car on Oxford Road. Following objections reported to this Committee in January, an alternative site for the Car Club bay and car on Rectory Road is reported separately at this meeting.
- 4.6 The EasyGo Smartcard and the car bay at Oxford Road will be operational by the end of March which is a requirement for the DfT funding. It is intended to launch the scheme in May by which time the delayed second car bay should be installed and after testing of the scheme by volunteers from council staff and users of ReadyBike, Reading Buses and Co-Wheels Car Club.
- 4.7 The scheme is funded by the DfT as a Demonstration Project and therefore the scheme is likely to be visited after the launch by other Local Authorities and Transport Operators who wish to learn from Reading's experience.

## **5. CONTRIBUTION TO STRATEGIC AIMS**

- 5.1 The delivery of this project will help to deliver the following Corporate Plan Service Priorities:
- Keeping the town clean, safe, green and active.

## **6. COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT AND INFORMATION**

- 6.1 Public consultation has been undertaken through the statutory Traffic Regulation Order (TRO) process for the new car club spaces.

## **7. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 7.1 The proposals for waiting and movement restrictions were advertised under the Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984.

## **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.

8.3 The scheme is being developed to be as inclusive as possible so that those who do not drive or do not wish to join a Car Club can still benefit from the wider EasyGo scheme to improve choices and to reward sustainable travel such as using ReadyBike and Reading Buses.

8.4 By promoting EasyGo, it is intended to make travel choices and switching between modes easier and to increase awareness of how to travel more sustainably. In this way, it is hoped to increase the awareness of potential students and other newcomers that they do not need to bring a car to Reading or buy a new car.

## **9. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

9.1 The scheme is funded through a grant of £48,800 from the Department for Transport for completion by the end of March 2016. A local contribution of £7,000 for the project will be funded through existing transport budgets.

## **10. BACKGROUND PAPERS**

TM Sub reports September 2015 and January 2016.

Details of the draft designs for the EasyGo Logo and the EasyGo Sartcard are shown in Appendix 1

Appendix 1

EasyGo logo



EasyGo Smartcard draft design

