

ENVIRONMENT CABINET MEMBER MEETING

Agenda Item 79

Brighton & Hove City Council

Subject:	Cycle Counter Display		
Date of Meeting:	17 December 2009		
Report of:	Director of Environment		
Contact Officer:	Name:	Veronika Moore	Tel: 29-1597
	E-mail:	Veronika.moore@brighton-hove.gov.uk	
Key Decision:	No		
Wards Affected:	Moulsecoomb & Bevendean; Patcham; Regency; Withdean		

FOR GENERAL RELEASE

1. SUMMARY AND POLICY CONTEXT:

- 1.1 As part of the Council's ongoing sustainable transport strategy it is proposed to install 3 cycle counter displays at key points on the cycle route network. The project will attempt to increase levels of cycling through the provision of visible count data that will support the proposition that cycling is part of everyday life in the city rather than a niche activity.
- 1.2 Cycle counter displays have been successfully used in several European cities but have so far not been used in Britain. Brighton & Hove has the opportunity to be the first British city to introduce this technology.
- 1.3 The project will be supported by funding from the European Union CIVITAS project. Cabinet formally accepted grant funding through the CIVITAS programme on 16 October 2008. The grant of £2.2 million provides Brighton & Hove City Council with funds to research and implement a number of innovative small-scale transport projects over a four-year period. Involvement in the CIVITAS process provides an excellent opportunity for the council to undertake additional investment in the City's transport infrastructure and services. The aim is to position the Council as a leader in offering sustainable transport opportunities and giving people the choice to determine what is best for them.
- 1.4 The project will contribute towards the council's carbon reduction commitment and specifically help to achieve the following corporate priorities:
 - Protect the environment while growing the economy - as cycling is a carbon neutral form of transport;
 - Reduce inequality by increasing opportunity – cycling provides access to jobs and services for those who have no access to a car.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS:

- 2.1 That the Cabinet Member gives approval to install 3 Cycle Display Counters in Brighton and Hove as set out in this report.

3. RELEVANT BACKGROUND INFORMATION/CHRONOLOGY OF KEY EVENTS:

- 3.1 The aim of the display is to encourage cycling by demonstrating that it is already a popular activity carried out as part of people's daily routine. By seeing that large numbers of people are cycling it is hoped that potential cyclists will gain confidence from 'safety in numbers' and take up cycling themselves.
- 3.2 A Cycle Counter Display uses a loop in the ground to count the number of cyclists passing a particular point and then prominently displays this information above the cycle path. The display can be configured to show several totals, for instance daily bicycle traffic and annual bicycle traffic.
- 3.3 There are currently no Cycle Counter Displays in Brighton and Hove and so this project will introduce a new and innovative way to promote cycling in the city.
- 3.4 Statistical information gathered by the counters will also be used to inform future cycling policy.

Locations

- 3.5 To achieve maximum benefit the counters need to be positioned along the key cycle routes within the CIVITAS area: the Lewes Road (A270), the London Road (A23), and the seafront promenade. Potential sites along these routes were assessed according to the following criteria:

- Type of cycle route (on / off carriageway)
- Is the site in a conservation area?
- Would any highway visibility splays be obstructed?
- Would the counter add to street clutter in the area and obstruct pedestrian flow?
- Is there an electricity supply nearby that can be connected to the counter?
- Are there any underground structures present?

As a result the following preferred locations were identified (a map is provided in Appendix A):

- Seafront cycle lane, opposite the Grand Hotel.
- East side of A23, edge of Surrenden Park or East side of A23, opposite Leahurst Court Road
- East side of A270, opposite Moulsecomb Library

Type of Display

- 3.6 The A23 and A270 sites an established standard LED design will be used that has successfully operated in other European cities. An image of this design is available as Appendix B.
- 3.7 The seafront site is a prominent location that requires a design suitable for its conservation area status and sea-air conditions and a bespoke design will therefore be used at this site. In addition there is the possibility to incorporate an innovative LCD screen at the seafront site. Development costs of the LCD

screen will be funded by the technology provider in return for the opportunity to showcase their work in a high profile location.

Timescale

- 3.8 Assuming approval to install is granted the counters will be installed at the A23 and A270 locations by March 2010 and on the seafront in early summer 2010.

4. CONSULTATION

- 4.1 The project has obtained initial political approval as part of the CIVITAS reporting process. Cabinet accepted CIVITAS programme funding on 16 October 2008 and Cabinet noted the CIVITAS update and work programme on 9 July 2009.
- 4.2 Internal consultation has been carried out with Ward Members. As a result of comments from Cllr Kitcat regarding street clutter the proposed position of the seafront counter has been moved from the seafront cycle lane opposite East Street to the seafront cycle lane opposite the Grand Hotel. The following Council departments were also consulted: Arts & Culture, Conservation, Highway Engineering & Projects, Traffic Signals, Parks & Green Spaces, Development Control.
- 4.3 The Department for Transport have confirmed that, as the cycle counter displays are classed as outdoor advertising and not traffic signs, therefore no special approval is required from them.
- 4.4 Due to the nature of the project wider public consultation is considered not necessary.

5. FINANCIAL & OTHER IMPLICATIONS:

Financial Implications:

- 5.1 The CIVITAS Archimedes Project will provide funding of £52k for Cycle Counter Displays. In addition, a further £10k has been identified from Cycling England this financial year.
- 5.2 The cost of any electricity to power the counters, along with any ongoing maintenance costs will have to be met from existing revenue budgets, although this cost is envisaged to be minimal.

Finance Officer Consulted: Karen Brookshaw

Date: 28/10/09

Legal Implications:

- 5.3 The provision of these Cycle Counter Displays is consistent with the council's powers as a highway and traffic authority to provide information to road users as part of the city's traffic management strategy. So far as advertisement consent is concerned the signs have deemed consent under The Town and Country Planning (Control of Advertisements) (England) Regulations 2007.
- 5.4 At this stage no human rights issues have been identified.

Lawyer Consulted: Stephen Dryden / Hilary Woodward

Date: 30/11/09

Equalities Implications:

- 5.5 Increasing cycling participation will help to reduce inequality by improving accessibility for those who have no access to a car.
- 5.6 The positioning of the counter will take into consideration the needs of pedestrians including the disabled.

Sustainability Implications:

- 5.7 The cycle counter displays will encourage the uptake of cycling, which will result in air quality improvements, less congestion and improve the overall health of the population of Brighton and Hove.
- 5.8 The possibility of using solar panels for the supply of electricity needed for the cycle counter displays was considered. The integration of the solar panels into the displays that could withstand vandalism was found to be unfeasible due to time and financial constraints.

Crime & Disorder Implications:

- 5.9 All units have been designed to be as vandal-proof as possible.

Risk & Opportunity Management Implications:

- 5.10 In bright sunlight some displays may not be legible.

The ability for the screens to be read in all conditions has been included as part of the design brief and site-testing will take place before approval.

- 5.11 Counters may not record cycle numbers accurately, resulting in public loss of confidence in the scheme.

The cycle counters are based on established, reliable technology. At each site cycle behaviour will be analysed to ensure the counter loop covers a large enough area to count all cyclists. Data will be validated by manual checks.

Corporate / Citywide Implications:

- 5.12 This project will contribute towards the following Council Priorities:
 - Protect the environment while growing the economy - as cycling is a carbon neutral way of transport;
 - Reduce inequality by increasing opportunity – cycling provides access to jobs and services for those who have no access to a car.
- 5.13 The cycle counter displays will help to achieve the Local Transport Plan priority of promoting cycling as a healthy and sustainable mode of independent transport in the city.

6. EVALUATION OF ANY ALTERNATIVE OPTION(S):

- 6.1 Several potential locations were considered. For the purpose of the project the displays need to be along well used designated cycle lanes within the CIVITAS programme area. It was also necessary for the displays not to pose any risk to the public or add unnecessary street clutter. The preferred locations satisfy these criteria.
- 6.2 Several options were considered for the type of counter to be used. The option of using local artists to provide a bespoke design was considered along with the possibility to integrate the counters in the recently installed pedestrian wayfinding signs. Both options were considered unfeasible due to time and financial constraints.

7. REASONS FOR REPORT RECOMMENDATIONS

- 7.1 The project will promote cycling as an everyday activity without disadvantaging other road users. The project's aim is to increase the uptake of cycling by making it an acceptable and popular way to travel, therefore bringing benefits to the overall health of the population and improving air quality.

SUPPORTING DOCUMENTATION

Appendices:

1. A. Map of locations
2. B. Image of counters

Documents in Members' Rooms

None

Background Documents

None

