

Report of the Monitoring Officer

Spotlight Review: Lime Bikes

1. Purpose of Report

To consider the operation of the Lime shared e-bike scheme within Broxtowe Borough, examine concerns raised by residents and stakeholders, assess governance and accountability arrangements and identify recommendations for consideration by the Overview and Scrutiny Committee and Cabinet.

2. Recommendation

The Committee is asked to RESOLVE that the recommendations identified in the spotlight review be approved.

3. Detail

The Lime Bikes scheme is currently operating within Broxtowe Borough under an informal pilot arrangement that was initially supported through the UK Shared Prosperity Fund (UKSPF) Panel and subsequently received Cabinet approval in January 2025.

The spotlight review was held on 7 August 2026 and included representatives from Lime Bikes, Broxtowe Borough Council's Economic Development team, elected Members and members of the public.

The review considered the impact of the scheme on residents, public spaces, transport connectivity, health outcomes and environmental objectives. Alongside concerns relating to parking, enforcement and accountability of the individual organisations.

Further information can be found in the **Appendix**.

4. Financial Implications

The comments from the Interim Deputy Chief Executive and Section 151 Officer were as follows:

There are no additional financial implications for the Council to consider at this stage. Any significant budget implications in the future, over and above virement limits, would require approval by Cabinet.

5. Legal Implications

The comments from the Monitoring Officer / Head of Legal Services were as follows:

Whilst there are no direct legal implication arising from this report, the legal services team will be able to support and advise as required as the project progresses.

6. Human Resources Implications

Not applicable.

7. Union Comments

Not applicable.

8. Climate Change Implications

Any climate change implications are contained within the report.

9. Data Protection Compliance Implications

This report does not contain any OFFICIAL(SENSITIVE) information and there are no Data Protection issues in relation to this report.

10. Equality Impact Assessment

Not applicable.

11. Background Papers

Nil.

AppendixBackground

Lime Bikes operates a dockless e-bike rental scheme across Nottingham through a partnership with Nottingham City Council.

This scheme has been expanded into the Broxtowe Borough Council area through the application of the UKSPF fund and Cabinet approval. A trial period was established for Lime Bikes to operate in Broxtowe Borough and has continued to do so from January 2025.

Users hire the bikes via a mobile application and are required to park them within designated parking bays at the end of their journey. Riders who fail to comply can receive financial penalties and may ultimately be banned from the platform.

1. Parking and Obstruction Issues

The most significant concern raised during the spotlight review related to the inappropriate parking of Lime Bikes, particularly within Beeston and other high-footfall areas.

Members and residents highlighted instances of bikes being left in unsuitable locations, creating obstructions and affecting public amenity.

Lime acknowledged that parking compliance remains a challenge but advised that additional parking bays can reduce instances of abandoned or poorly parked bikes.

The use of GPS-designated parking bays and operational relocation of bikes was outlined as part of the current management approach.

2. Enforcement and User Behaviour

Evidence provided by Lime demonstrated that enforcement measures are in place for inappropriate use of the scheme, including:

- Warnings issued for breaches of user conditions.
- Financial penalties following repeated offences.
- Permanent bans for serious or persistent misuse.
- Age-verification processes including selfie verification technology.
- Monitoring of journeys through trip data.

However, concerns remained regarding:

- Pavement riding and anti-social behaviour.
- Underage usage.
- Ability of banned users to circumvent restrictions through new email addresses and payment methods.
- Apparent limitations in traceability and identification of offenders.

Members considered that enforcement arrangements require ongoing review and stronger regulatory support.

3. Governance and Accountability

The review identified some uncertainty regarding governance arrangements for the scheme.

Whilst the UKSPF Panel approved funding support and Cabinet approved the trial arrangement in January 2025, questions were raised regarding:

- The informal status of the pilot.
- The absence of a defined end date.
- The role and responsibilities of Broxtowe Borough Council, Nottingham City Council, Nottinghamshire County Council and Lime.
- The extent of consultation with highways authorities.

It was noted that current national legislation offers limited regulation of shared e-bike schemes, although future legislative changes through wider devolution and transport reforms may provide a more robust regulatory framework.

4. Data Availability and Performance Monitoring

Members expressed concern regarding the limited availability of Broxtowe-specific performance information.

While Lime provided headline figures across Nottingham City and Broxtowe combined, detailed information relating specifically to Broxtowe was unavailable at the time of the review.

The Committee considered that effective scrutiny requires:

- Broxtowe-specific usage data.
- Complaint data.
- Enforcement statistics.
- Information on bike recovery, maintenance and vandalism incidents.
- Monitoring of parking compliance.

5. Operational Considerations

Several operational matters were discussed, including:

- Between 100 and 300 bikes are available within the operating area.
- Full parking bays can be disabled within the app.
- Bays can be temporarily suspended during events.
- Bays can be temporarily increased in capacity during events.
- Bikes are relocated when designated bays reach capacity.
- Vandalism remains an issue in parts of Broxtowe.

- Battery-related concerns previously raised in Stapleford have reportedly improved following operational changes by Lime.

6. Benefits of the Scheme

Despite concerns, the review acknowledged several potential benefits associated with the scheme, including:

- Sustainable transport options.
- Reduction in car journeys.
- Improved connectivity.
- Public health and wellbeing benefits through active travel.
- Support for local and regional carbon reduction objectives.

Members recognised the importance of balancing these benefits against the concerns raised by residents and ensuring appropriate management arrangements are in place.

Actions Identified During the Review

1. Lime to provide complaint data specific to the Council.
2. Lime to provide Broxtowe-specific operational and usage data where available.
3. Economic Development and relevant officers to explore whether WISE, the Council's environmental enforcement contractor, could be used to address issues relating to abandoned bikes and recovery costs.
4. A dedicated contact email address to be established to improve communication and reporting.
5. A visit to the Lime operational warehouse to be arranged for members.
6. Signage requirements to be reviewed and progressed through appropriate officers.

Conclusions

The review found that the Lime Bikes scheme provides potential transport, environmental and health benefits; however, a number of concerns remain regarding parking compliance, anti-social behaviour, enforcement effectiveness, governance arrangements, and access to local performance data.

The absence of a formal review period or agreed end date for the pilot arrangement limits opportunities for structured evaluation. Members considered that stronger monitoring arrangements and clearer accountability mechanisms would assist in addressing public concerns whilst allowing the benefits of the scheme to continue.

Recommendations to Overview and Scrutiny Committee

The Overview and Scrutiny Committee is asked to recommend that Cabinet:

- 1. Ask that Lime consider their ability to implement temporary parking bays and increases in patrols surrounding events where higher foot traffic is suspected. Physical corrals should be used instead of digital corrals or painted lines on the ground, where possible.**
- 2. Consider the introduction of an end date for the informal service trial currently underway with Lime.**
- 3. Direct the Economic Development team to investigate the provision of further Lime parking bays to aid better parking and help reduce the number of poorly parked bikes.**
- 4. Consider the viability of introducing a system by which Broxtowe Borough Council may issue fines to Lime for the collection of poorly parked or dumped bikes, as have other authorities around the country.**