

Sustainable Travel Collective - Direction of Cycling

Report for Nottingham City Council's Overview and Scrutiny Committee, February 2017.

1. Charity Overview

We have been promoting and encouraging the use of public transport, cycling and walking in the City since 2001, firstly through the Greater Nottingham Transport Partnership business engagement and lobbying activities and the Big Wheel promotional and events programmes. Since 2006 we have been active in cycle training and led ride programmes and, from 2011, the management of community programmes in the north of the City through our TravelRight project. Presently we train schoolchildren and adults to cycle safely and manage partnership and consultation events with cyclists. We provide accredited cycling instructors to support cycling activities managed by City departments such as Neighbourhoods, Sports and Leisure, Parks, Travel Policy.

2. Past perspectives

The City's success in transport policy and delivery was initially driven by Local Transport Plans developed from 2000. Early focus was on delivering, in partnership, excellent bus networks and services, the first tram routes, integrated ticketing, promotional campaigns and business travel plans. However, by the second LTP (from 2006) cycling began to come to the fore. Over the last 5 years or more cycling has been seen as an important priority and considerable amounts of revenue and capital spent on cycling infrastructure and activities. Although not easy to do, Nottingham has ensured that major capital funding has been won for cycling projects especially as an important part of any major roads, transport or redevelopment scheme.

On the revenue front, from 2011 to 2015, the Local Sustainable Travel Fund meant that the City could support a Cycling programme which included

- Free cycle training for adults, young people and children
- City wide and local community promotional events and activities where cycling activities such as 'fun/novelty' bikes, encouraging those with mental, physical and learning disabilities to cycle and teaching bike maintenance.
- Mass cycling events

This revenue funding helped cycling numbers to grow but was not available in 2016/17 and as a result that cycling programme has almost all been stopped except for children's cycling training. Fortunately, the City has won 'Access Fund' grants from 2017/18 and it is understood many of these activities will now get new life.

3. Strengths of the City's Approach

- Good leadership – cycling is understood to be important from transport, health and air quality perspectives
- Good ambitious long term vision and strategies re cycling network and culture
- Seen as a leader by DfT and other cities.



- Able to show how cycling proposals will supplement any new major capital investments e.g. Tram, Broadmarsh, Eco Zone, LEZ.
- Creative in delivering cycling infrastructure and activities on a small budget.
- Open and engaging with the cycling community in consultations and developments.
- Levels of cycling have increased by at least 30% over the last 3 or 4 years.

4. Areas for improvement

- Many drivers and pedestrians in the City are not in agreement with the transformations taking place because there has been insufficient funding to explain the benefits of cycling and get people supportive of the cycling programmes. This creates a problem because
 - It creates conflict between the different road users because of lack of empathy and intolerance for each other
 - The City might become less bold in this leadership of the cycling 'project'
- Some cycling infrastructure projects have been seen as 'Cinderella' projects within a much larger infrastructure investment and as a result trade-offs are made and incomplete work is left on the cycling facilities. The last tram phase is an example.
- There is insufficient funding for maintenance, developing the infrastructure and developing the cycling culture by promotions, events, activities and training.
- The City's ambition and vision stops at the boundaries of the City – the many commuter cyclists coming from the suburbs do not get the benefits of the City's investment. There is some evidence of changed thinking in that the County Council are investing in cycling in West Bridgford but, whilst it is recognised that County have funding constraints and have not accessed funding as successfully as the City, it is of concern that there is insufficient joint thinking, development and delivery of the conurbations' cycling programmes and networks.

