

E-scooter Trial Update

ITEM 8.1 12/03/2019
Council

2019/00296
Public

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:

In January 2019, the City of Adelaide and the State Government agreed to trial electric scooters (e-scooters) in the City of Adelaide during the 2019 Fringe and Adelaide Festival season. The e-scooter trial commenced on 15 February 2019 for a period of four weeks.

Following a select expression of interest process, the City of Adelaide issued a permit to Lime e-scooters for this period, and the State Government amended regulations to allow the use of e-scooters as part of the trial.

Based on our analysis to date, the relatively low complaint levels, and the size and immediate take up of the service, we propose that e-scooters should continue as a transport option in the city. This report summarises early findings of the trial and provides recommendations and next steps for the future operations of e-scooters in the City of Adelaide.

RECOMMENDATION:

THAT COUNCIL

1. Notes that a review of the e-scooter trial be presented to Council on 26 March 2019.
 2. Approves Option 1 as the next steps for e-scooter operation in the city:
 - 2.1. That the current e-scooter trial is concluded on 17 March 2019
 - 2.2. That an EOI process is undertaken for up to two operators for a six-month permit, with an option to extend based on performance
 - 2.3. That the EOI include updated permit conditions and requirements that respond to the issues raised in the trial.
 3. Approves that we approach the State Government to discuss expansion of the permitted e-scooter use area to include the full City of Adelaide region.
 4. Delegates authority to the Chief Executive Officer to develop an expression of interest process (consistent with Option 1 as detailed in this report) to permit up to two e-scooter operators with a maximum of 500 e-scooters each for a period of six months, with an option to extend based on their performance.
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IMPLICATIONS AND FINANCIALS:

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|--|---|
| City of Adelaide 2016-2020 Strategic Plan | <p>Liveable: Work with neighbouring councils and the State Government to enhance the facilities, attractions, landscapes and movement networks in the Park Lands to meet the needs and expectations of growing high-density communities living in and near the City.</p> <p>Creative: Work with businesses and other partners to bring creativity and smart technology into the everyday experience of our City</p> |
| Policy | An appropriate policy position will be determined through analysis of the trial and is subject to Council's direction for the future of e-scooters in the City of Adelaide. |
| Consultation | We will continue to work closely with the State Government, SAPOL, and the Health and Emergency Services on analysing the results of the trial. |
| Resource | The e-scooter trial is being managed through existing resources. |
| Risk / Legal / Legislative | Not as a result of this report. |
| Opportunities | To build on the success of the e-scooter trial and amend the permit conditions to address issues identified in the review of the trial. |
| 18/19 Budget Allocation | Not as a result of this report. |
| Proposed 19/20 Budget Allocation | Not as a result of this report. |
| Life of Project, Service, Initiative or (Expectancy of) Asset | Not as a result of this report. |
| 18/19 Budget Reconsideration (if applicable) | Not as a result of this report. |
| Ongoing Costs (eg maintenance cost) | Not as a result of this report. |
| Other Funding Sources | Not as a result of this report. |

DISCUSSION

Background

1. At its meeting on 29 January 2019, Council approved a trial of shared electric scooters (e-scooters) in the City of Adelaide for the 2019 Adelaide Fringe and Festival season through the following decision, that Council:
 - Notes that e-scooters are currently prohibited from use on public roads and footpaths in South Australia.*
 - Notes that the Department of Planning, Transport and Infrastructure is exploring options to legalise e-scooters on public roads and footpaths, which may include a temporary exemption for e-scooter share operators to facilitate a trial during Adelaide's 2019 festival season.*
 - Delegates authority to the CEO to develop a temporary permit for up to two e-scooter share program operators to facilitate a trial in the City of Adelaide (should the State grant a temporary exemption for e-scooter share operators to facilitate a trial) including, but not limited to, considerations of safety, placement of scooters, monitoring fleet, complaints process for inappropriately located bikes, and number of e-scooters in each program.*
2. We developed a series of provider requirements for the trial for potential e-scooter operators based on similar trials in other Australian cities and around the world as well as our experience with dockless bikeshare operators. Due to the nature of the trial, it was determined a single operator with a maximum of 500 e-scooters was appropriate. The three key measures of success and performance for the trial are:
 - 2.1. Safety: including complaints, injury (users and non-users) and nuisance. Analysis of collected data from e-scooter operators, South Australian Police (SAPOL) and Emergency Services, the South Australian Government, hospitals and medical institutions, and the City of Adelaide.
 - 2.2. Usage: including number of trips and their statistics for the e-scooter operator, pick-up and drop off locations and demand for e-scooter services. Analysis to include the number of operators and e-scooters provided in the trial.
 - 2.3. Impact on the transport network including: mode shift, integration with other modes of transport and carbon emissions saved with the operator required to undertake a survey of users and provide this data to the City of Adelaide for analysis.
3. On Thursday 7 February 2019, following a shortlisting process of potential providers who had approach the City of Adelaide, a select Expression of Interest (EOI) with application requirements was provided to four e-scooter operators.
4. Three of the four operators responded to the e-scooter trial EOI. Interviews were conducted on Friday 8 February 2019 and their submissions were received by 9am Monday 11 February 2019.
5. On Tuesday 12 February 2019, the e-scooter operators were notified of the outcome of the evaluation process and Lime was selected as the preferred e-scooter operator (pending changes to the relevant State Regulations).
6. On Thursday 14 February 2019, the South Australian Government released a Gazette Notice which provided amendments to the South Australian Regulations to permit the use of e-scooters on public roads to enable the trial. The Gazette Notice included rules, regulations and the geographical area within which the e-scooter trial could operate.
7. On Friday 15 February 2019, a media event occurred in Victoria Square with the Hon Min Stephan Knoll, Minister for Transport, Infrastructure and Local Government, the Lord Mayor and representatives from Lime to launch the e-scooter trial.

Early findings and outcomes of the e-scooter trial

Operation and statistics

8. The City of Adelaide e-scooter permit conditions included a maximum of 500 e-scooters. Lime launched the trial with approximately 220 and increased the number of e-scooters to 500 on Friday 22 February 2019.
9. More than 50,000 trips undertaken by over 20,000 users have occurred in the first three weeks of the trial.
10. Within the defined trial precinct area, the average distance travelled per ride has been 1.25km.

Community information and feedback

11. The City of Adelaide and State Government both provide dedicated webpages with consistent information about e-scooter operations, the regulations and the trial permit conditions.
12. Since the launch of the trial there has been approximately 10,000 visits to the State Government's website on e-scooter rules and regulations, and 4,000 visits to the City of Adelaide's website about the trial.
13. A dedicated City of Adelaide email address was created to collate feedback on the trial. Since the launch of the trial and at the time of writing this report, 43 responses have been received either from the dedicated email address, the City of Adelaide customer centre or through the general city email.
14. The majority of the feedback relates to the rules for riding e-scooters, where they can be ridden and e-scooter rider behaviour. A summary of themes of the feedback is listed in the table below.

| Feedback | Responses |
|---------------------|-----------|
| Supportive feedback | 9 |
| Neutral feedback | 20 |
| Negative feedback | 14 |

| Theme of Feedback | Number of mentions |
|---|--------------------|
| General rider behaviour | 18 |
| Complaint against riding on footpath | 18 |
| Nuisance complaint (e-scooter parking concerns and noise complaint) | 10 |
| riding at speed | 9 |
| Riding without a helmet | 9 |
| Underage riding | 5 |
| Incorrect information provided on app | 4 |

Incidents

15. A total of 11 incidents have been reported to the City of Adelaide. These incidents are as follows:
 - 15.1. three injuries as a result of falling off or being propelled off an e-scooter while in motion
 - 15.2. six reported near misses between e-scooter riders on footpaths and pedestrians
 - 15.3. one incident of a e-scooter rider losing controls and crashing into a parked vehicle
 - 15.4. one incident of a collision between a pedestrian and an e-scooter rider.

Identified issues with trial

16. Several issues have been identified as part of the e-scooter trial. These include:
 - 16.1. Inability for the operator to effectively enforce the geofence (permitted area) resulting in e-scooter users being able to ride and park e-scooters outside of the permitted trial area, and through Rundle Mall and the City West Declared Public Precinct.
 - 16.2. Conflicting information provided to users within the operator's mobile phone app compared to the South Australian rules and regulations published on government websites.

- 16.3. Lack of e-scooter user education and awareness, for example not knowing the rules regarding the use of helmets, appropriate riding, where and where not to ride, riding with blood alcohol concentration of less than 0.05, minimum age requirements, and not riding with passengers.
- 16.4. The conflict between e-scooter users and pedestrians on footpaths and that e-scooters are prohibited from riding on roads and within bike lanes.
- 16.5. Parking of e-scooters on footpaths conflicting with accessible paths, building entrances and causing nuisance in heavily utilised areas (for example bus stops and restaurant precincts).
- 16.6. These issues will be addressed as part of the review of the trial, and any agreed actions included in the EOI stage.
17. We will assess these issues further as part of the trial, noting that the issues may either be related to the specific e-scooter operator and technology, or the user behaviour. Introducing a second operator may help to determine which issues are related to e-scooters more broadly and which relate to Lime's technology.

Options for e-scooter operation

18. The current e-scooter trial concludes on Sunday 17 March 2019.
19. Based on our analysis to date, the relatively low complaint levels, and the size and immediate take up of the service, we propose that e-scooters should continue as a transport option in the city.
20. Three options have been identified for the proposed continuation of e-scooters in the city. These options are:

20.1. Option 1:

- **Conclude the current trial on 17 March 2019.**
- **Undertake an EOI for up to two operators for a six-month permit, with an option to extend based on performance.**
- **Include updated permit conditions and requirements in the EOI that respond to the issues raised in the trial.**

This option is consistent with the current conditions of the trial and enables analysis of the trial and amendments to permit conditions (and potentially State Government regulation) whilst enabling an informed decision-making process. This option does create reputational and political risk, as it means that Lime e-scooters would not be able to operate on public streets in the city during the evaluation and the EOI period. The EOI would be undertaken as quickly as possible (we estimate 2-3 weeks).

20.2. Option 2:

- **Extend the existing trial permit for Lime to operate in the City for up to four weeks while we undertake an EOI for up to two operators for a six-month permit, with an option to extend based on performance.**
- **Include updated permit conditions and requirements in the EOI that respond to the issues raised in the trial.**

This option allows the current permit operator, Lime, to continue to operate while an analysis of the e-scooter trial and an EOI process is undertaken. It also enables analysis of the trial and amendments to permit conditions (and potentially State Government regulation) whilst enabling an informed decision-making process.

This option creates significant reputational risk given the overt undertaking given to the current and prospective operators that the trial will cease on 17 March 2019. Lime may also be seen to have an unfair (or 'first movers') advantage for the EOI for the permit.

20.3. Option 3:

- **Extend the existing trial permit for Lime to operate in the City for up to four weeks while we undertake an EOI to enable any operator that meets the current application requirements and permit conditions a permit to operate in the city for six months, with an option to extend based on performance.**

- **Include updated permit conditions and requirements in the EOI that respond to the issues raised in the trial.**

This option allows the current permit operator, Lime, to continue to operate while an analysis of the e-scooter trial and an EOI process is undertaken. An EOI process would be undertaken to enable any operator that meets the permit conditions a permit for a period of six months

This option has the potential to open up the market to a large number of e-scooter operators. At the current time there are more than ten operators that could potentially operate under the conditions of our current permit. Multiple operators could create a number of issues for the city, including the potential for excessive numbers of parked e-scooters causing nuisance, user confusion with many operators and apps, difficulty in managing operators and their compliance with the permit conditions.

21. Based on the above options we recommend the following:
 - 21.1. That Option 1 be supported: we conclude the e-scooter trial on 17 March 2019 to undertake a review and conduct an EOI process for a six-month permit for up to two providers, with the option of extending the permit(s) based on each operator's performance.
 - 21.2. In the EOI, we will include updated permit conditions and requirements that respond to the issues raised in the trial.
 - 21.3. That, subject to the review of the trial, the permitted area be expanded to include the full City of Adelaide council area (subject to amending the permitted area by the Minister).
22. We would propose to commence the new permit within four weeks of the conclusion of the trial. Commencing the new permit would then coincide with the Easter Long Weekend.

Next steps

23. As the current e-scooter trial is currently under way, not all information is available to undertake a full analysis of the trial at this time. A full report outlining the results of the trial will be presented to Council for consideration on 26 March 2019. It is anticipated that the results of the trial will inform the conditions for the next permit conditions, such as number of scooters, as well as the geographical area permitted.
24. We will continue to work closely with the State Government, SAPOL, and the Health and Emergency Services on analysing the results of the trial.

ATTACHMENTS

Nil

- END OF REPORT -