

<b>Report title:</b> Proposed Cycle Event - Road Closures	
<b>Report to:</b> Cllr Ray Gooding, Cabinet Member for Education and Skills	
<b>Report author:</b> Andrew Cook, Director, Highways and Transportation	
<b>Date:</b> 22 January 2020	<b>For:</b> Decision
<b>Enquiries to:</b> Jason Fergus, Head of Active Essex, email Jason.fergus@essex.gov.uk	
<b>County Divisions affected:</b> All Essex	

## 1. Purpose of Report

- 1.1 To consider and approve a closed road cycle event in Essex to take place annually over a five year period to be organised and managed by a sports event organiser Active Sport and Entertainment Limited (the “Event Organiser”).
- 1.2 To note the date and route of the first proposed event on Sunday 20 September 2020.

## 2. Recommendations

- 2.2 Agree that the Council should enter into an agreement with the Event Organiser on terms agreed by the Director, Highways and Transportation under which a closed road cycle event will be held in Essex on one day each calendar year from 2020-2024.
- 2.3 To agree that the first event will be held on Sunday 20 September 2020.

## 3. Summary of issue

- 3.1 Active Essex and Essex Highways have developed an opportunity, working with the Event Organiser, to bring a mass participation cycle event to the County of Essex. It is proposed that the Council and the Event Organiser work together over a five-year period to deliver an annual closed road cycle event on one day per year which encourages cyclists of all levels, including families, to participate in the sport.
- 3.2 Each event would be organised and managed by the Event Organiser who is experienced in running such events including the Velo Birmingham and Midlands event. The event in Essex will be called ‘Velo Essex’ and will comprise a family ride, a 50 mile ride and a 100 mile ride. In due course, a professional road race may be held on the same day on the same route but this will form part of a separate decision making process.

- 3.3 A recommended route for the first Velo Essex 50 and 100-mile route has been considered and is proposed to take place on Sunday 20 September 2020. It is anticipated that there may be up to 18,000 riders for the 50 and 100 mile routes and up to 10,000 riders for the family event. The details of the proposed route is set out in Appendix 1. A family ride element along the route will encourage cyclists of all abilities and ages to participate.
- 3.4 There are a number of benefits from promoting and facilitating this event and there are several policy areas impacted including:
- (i) Public health – the event will encourage people to be physically active throughout their lives regardless of age and ability. It has been demonstrated that cycling improves physical and mental wellbeing. Participating in this event will encourage people to do more cycling and attract new cyclists to the sport. The provision of the family ride will ensure that all ages and abilities have the opportunity to ride on closed roads in a safe way. Children and young people will be exposed and inspired to the benefits of cycling and given a chance to change behavior and form good habits while young.
  - (ii) Promoting active travel: the event will promote cycling as a sustainable means of transport. Cycling is a practical means of travel for short journeys or as part of an integrated transport journey (with rail for example). The event will help in promoting the use of quieter roads and dedicated cycle facilities and promote cycling as a sustainable and healthy means of transport.
  - (iii) Cycling strategy: the Council has a policy to enable and promote more cycling and provide safe cycle facilities. The event supports this policy and demonstrates that the Council are serious about promoting cycling. The event will build on the foundations laid down at the 2019 Cycling Conference which was organised by the Council. Further, the Council's involvement and participation in high profile activities will demonstrate to the public and funding bodies, the benefits of investment in Essex whether for public health, economic growth or transport reasons.
  - (iv) Economic growth: it is anticipated that the event will attract many thousands of people to Essex, to both participate in a cycling event, stay in hotels and promote Essex as a destination for shopping and recreation. The legacy from such events has been demonstrated already from participating in other events such as the Tour de France and the Olympics.
  - (v) Promoting Essex as a destination– it is hoped that the event will gain local, regional and nation publicity and will be a great showcase for the County. The event is an opportunity to show case Essex as a destination for families, cyclists, tourists and businesses.
- 3.5 The Event Organiser has a strong track record in this sector having run similar events in the Midlands. The Event Organiser will be responsible for the organisation, staging and safety of the Event. The Council's role will be limited

to administering at no cost to the Event Organiser: (i) all necessary permissions to secure a full road closure programme for each Event including road closures, parking suspension and enforcement; (ii) procuring (at no cost) areas for the start, finish and registration venues; (iii) implementing and managing all business and community communications relating to the Event as a result of the road closures; and (iv) the cost of and ensuring that the road surfaces meet the required standard. It is proposed that the Council will also work alongside the Event Organiser to procure the co-operation of relevant authorities (such as the emergency services and district and borough councils) to the extent that it is able to do so.

- 3.6 One role of the Council is to find a start, finish and registration venue for each event. The use of Hylands Park has been agreed for the 2020 event and possibly future events. The Event Organiser will enter into an agreement directly with Chelmsford City Council that governs the use of this site for 2020. In future years, if Chelmsford City Council decide that this venue cannot be used, the Council would need to find alternative venues for the registration, start and finish of each event. This could be by providing sites owned by the Council. If the Council cannot use its own site or agree the use of an alternative site for no cost, it may have to pay for the cost of hiring such venues.
- 3.7 The Council is required to issue Temporary Traffic Regulation Orders (TTROs) for each event as required depending on the route and remove any vehicles that may be a hazard to the cyclists. The road closures are put in place and removed in sections to minimise the length of time the roads are closed. Several months before the event is due to be staged, the Council will undertake detailed and ongoing communication with all residents and businesses along the route. This is designed to inform local businesses and residents of the event and give them the opportunity and resources to plan for the event, be it to get involved, spectate, or to plan around road closures. It also enables the Council to assist anyone who may be potentially impacted by the event in order to mitigate any inconvenience.
- 3.8 As with any mass participation sporting event, there are some risks with running this event the most likely being resident complaints about the closed roads. For this reason, the route and associated road closures are planned through a partnership of Essex County Council, emergency services, and transport operators to minimise the inconveniences of the necessary road closures. Full details of all closures and their timings will be published once finalised so that residents and businesses are fully aware. There will also be a comprehensive communications programme that will be monitored and followed.
- 3.9 The Council and the Event Organiser will undertake detailed operational and logistical planning to deliver a safe and successful event and meet the specifications of all local authorities. This process includes working with key stakeholders and meeting with Safety Advisory Groups.
- 3.10 A number of sustainability obligations will be built into the agreement to encourage sustainable travel, the phasing out of single use plastics and the use of sustainable materials in the production and installation of branding for the events.

- 3.11 The Event Organiser will be responsible for organising all commercial rights to each Event (including sponsorship, broadcast, other media, partnerships and entries) but will be required to inform the Council of all such arrangements and the Council will have the right to notify the Event Organiser of any such arrangements which the Council acting reasonably considers is not suitable. The Event Organiser will also be required to liaise and consult in advance with the Council over the use of the Council's name, branding, use of the Seaxes and other promotional material that references ECC.
- 3.12 The Council and the Active Essex Foundation will be entitled to some free entries and marketing space to assist in encouraging participation in the sport.

## **4. Options**

### **Option 1 – Enter into the Agreement with the Event Organiser**

- 4.1 It is recommended that approval of the event over the five-year period is given and an agreement with the Event Organiser entered into to detail the responsibilities and obligations of both parties.
- 4.2 This option is recommended because of the benefits it brings to the Council and residents in terms of promoting the county, encouraging sustainable travel and promoting a healthy and active lifestyle. An indirect benefit will be to boost the economic impact of the area and showcase the County.
- 4.3 The proposed agreement sets out terms which will enable the event to take place in a reasonably safe way. It should be noted however that it is not possible to entirely eliminate risks from an event of this nature but work will be done to ensure that any risks are reduce to an acceptable level. An agreement until 2024 ensures the event has time to grow and gain traction and publicity to maximise entries and promote the sport.
- 4.4 This is the recommended option.

### **Option 2 – Do Nothing**

- 4.5 This option is not recommended as it will not enable the event to take place and the Council will not obtain the benefits set out in this report.
- 4.6 This option would avoid the risks associated with the event and the moderate inconvenience that some residents will experience as a result of the road closures on one day per year but the Council would lose the opportunity to host this event with the associated economic, public health, active travel and publicity benefits that it will bring.

## **5. Next steps**

If the recommendation is approved, the proposed agreement with the Event Organiser will be entered into and detailed planning will commence for the event to be held in September 2020.

## **6. Issues for consideration**

### **6.1 Financial implications**

6.1.1 Under the proposed agreement with the organiser the Council will be responsible for the following:

- (i) Cost of securing all necessary permissions to secure a full road closure programme as required for each Event, including Temporary Traffic Regulation Orders (TTRO), parking suspensions and enforcement. These works will be carried out by highways, managed within the existing revenue budget. If required parking suspension and enforcement will be the responsibility of the parking partnerships at no cost to ECC.
- (ii) Cost of communicating road closures to residents and businesses along the route with the method and frequency of such communications to be entirely for the Authority to determine. ECC will make use of advance traffic warning signs to communicate these messages to residents and businesses along the route in addition to social media. ECC will also ensure leaflets are distributed to all residents and business along the route, the annual cost of which is believed to be between £30,000 and £50,000 funded through the existing highways revenue budget.
- (iii) Overhead costs (including, without limitation, officer time, costs and expenses) incurred by ECC for each Event. The known overhead costs are limited to officer time.
- (iv) Cost of hiring the Event start, finish, and registration venues if such venue(s) are not owned by ECC. Hylands is being provided free of charge for the first event and the authority does not envisage any venue hire costs in future years.
- (v) Cost of making good any road surfaces on the route agreed for the Event where it is considered necessary to facilitate the agreed route. The selected route will be inspected as part of normal inspection routines. In addition, the event organiser will inspect the route, however ECC are only obliged to fix in line with the existing maintenance strategy, the cost of which are considered business as usual within the existing highways budget.

6.1.3 The known annual cost of the event is £30,000 to £50,000. Any costs that arise that have not been foreseen, will be contained within the highways budget for the life of the contract.

6.1.4 The contract can be terminated if the costs of complying with the authority's obligations do not justify the benefits of the event.

### **6.2 Legal implications**

6.2.1 The Council as traffic authority has the ability to close roads to motor vehicles for the purpose of facilitating the holding of a sporting event, enabling the public

to watch the event or reducing the disruption to traffic caused by such event. Such order can be subject to such conditions or exceptions as the traffic authority considers necessary or expedient. Before making such an order, the Council should satisfy itself that it is not reasonably practicable for the event to be held otherwise than on a road.

- 6.2.2 No order can be made with respect to any road which would have the effect of preventing, at any time, access for pedestrians to any premises situated on or adjacent to the road or any other premises accessible for pedestrians from and only from the road. The Council should also have regard to the safety and convenience of alternative routes for traffic affected by the order.
- 6.2.3 An order may not be made in relation to a race or time trial unless such race or time trial is authorised in accordance with the relevant applicable regulations governing cycle racing on the public highway. It is an offence to promote or take part in a race or trial of speed between cycles on a public highway unless the race or trial is authorised and conducted in accordance with the conditions laid down by the applicable regulations.
- 6.2.4 A proposed draft agreement between the Council and the Event Organiser is proposed to ensure that the obligations and liabilities of the parties are clearly set out. The proposed agreement is for the five-year period and includes termination rights for the Council in certain prescribed situations including if the event is not a success or there is reputational damage to ECC.
- 6.2.5 It should be noted that the main obligations of the Council are (1) the cost of and the actioning of the road closures including the removal of vehicles; (2) the cost of and the implementation of resident and business communications about the road closures; (3) the cost of and the provision of the start, finish and registration venues; and (4) the cost of making good any road surfaces where necessary to facilitate the agreed route.

## **7 Equality and Diversity implications**

- 7.1 The Public Sector Equality Duty applies to the Council when it makes decisions. The duty requires us to have regard to the need to:
  - (a) Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and other behaviour prohibited by the Act. In summary, the Act makes discrimination etc. on the grounds of a protected characteristic unlawful
  - (b) Advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.
  - (c) Foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not including tackling prejudice and promoting understanding.
- 7.2 The protected characteristics are age, disability, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, marriage and civil partnership, race, religion or belief, gender, and sexual orientation. The Act states that 'marriage and civil

partnership' is not a relevant protected characteristic for (b) or (c) although it is relevant for (a).

- 7.3 The equality impact assessment indicates that the proposals in this report will not have a disproportionately adverse impact on any people with a particular characteristic.

## **7. List of appendices**

- Appendix 1 - Proposed Route for September 2020.
- Appendix 2 – Equality Impact Assessment

## **8. List of Background papers**

- PLT Briefing note

<b>I approve the above recommendations set out above for the reasons set out in the report.</b>	<b>Date</b>
<b>Councillor Ray Gooding, Cabinet Member for Education and Skills</b>	<b>05/02/20</b>

**In consultation with:**

<b>Role</b>	<b>Date</b>
<b>Councillor Kevin Bentley, Deputy Leader Cabinet Member for Infrastructure</b>	<b>06/02/20</b>

<b>Executive Director for Technology and Finance (S151 Officer)</b> <b>Stephanie Mitchener on behalf of Nicole Wood</b>	<b>04/02/20</b>
<b>Director, Legal and Assurance (Monitoring Officer)</b> <b>Katie Bray on behalf of Paul Turner</b>	<b>04/02/20</b>