

EAST RENFREWSHIRE COUNCILCABINET19 JUNE 2025REPORT BY DIRECTOR OF ENVIRONMENTLOVE TO RIDE – NEGOTIATED CONTRACT AWARD (HOMOLOGATED)**PURPOSE OF REPORT**

1. The purpose of this report is to homologate the decision taken by two Cabinet members in April 2024 to approve awarding of a negotiated contract to 'Love to Ride Ltd.' for the provision of the 'Ride365' programme.

RECOMMENDATIONS

2. It is recommended that Cabinet homologates the decision to award a negotiated contract to 'Love to Ride Ltd.' to provide the 'Ride365' programme.

BACKGROUND

3. A report was prepared for Cabinet in April to seek Cabinet approval to award a negotiated contract without call for competition, in relation to a direct bid to Love to Ride Ltd., for the provision of the 'Ride365' programme. Following cancellation of the April Cabinet, direct approval was sought from Elected Members with a view to homologating the report at a future Cabinet.

4. Approval was provided by Councillors O'Donnell and Devlin. As such, a contract for an initial 12 month period has been awarded in April 2025. The contract has the option to extend for a further 12 months, with a total contract value of up to £80,000 over the 2 years. The contract is fully funded by external grant funding, with no cost to the Council.

5. The Love to Ride, Ride365 programme, is an evidence based behaviour change programme, which aims to help people address their barriers to cycling, encourage more people to start cycling, and promote the use of existing cycling infrastructure within the local authority area.

6. The programme provides the Council with information on travel behaviour choices and barriers (via bespoke surveys of participants) and route comfort (via a 'rate my route' app), which can then be used to understand where support is required, such as improving cycling infrastructure integration, improving safety, and promoting social inclusion.

7. The Council first procured a trial of the Love to Ride, Ride365 programme, in December 2022, using funding from Paths for All's Smarter Choices, Smarter Places (SCSP) Local Authority fund.

8. Due to the take up and participation levels in the initial 4-month Ride365 programme, in terms of the total numbers of new user registrations and the groundwork that had been achieved in terms of engaging local groups and businesses, the programme was extended, using SCSP funding in 2023/24 and Strathclyde Partnership for Transport (SPT) People & Place Funding in 2024/25.

REPORT

9. The proposed 2025/26 programme has been costed at £39,675 and consists of the following core elements:

- a) The East Renfrewshire Love to Ride website, which is an online cycling platform that unites new and existing riders within East Renfrewshire to discover the benefits of cycling. It provides an interactive online space where participants can create and join groups and clubs, which encourages cycling and provides participants with information to address barriers and improve their confidence on a bike;
- b) National Love to Ride campaigns, challenges, and promotions which provide fun and engaging challenges that users can participate in with the chance of winning prizes;
- c) A dedicated Engagement coordinator who will engage directly with residents and local businesses in East Renfrewshire in the Love to Ride program. This includes outreach and personal contact with local businesses, community groups and residents, through information events or attending community meetings;
- d) GPS Trip Data to understand where people are cycling and Rate My Route engagement programme, to encourage residents to use and rate new cycling infrastructure and collect user feedback on network gaps and barriers, to inform future investment.

10. Approval was provided to award a negotiated contract for a year, with an option to extend to a second year. This was sought as the cumulative spend with Love to Ride since 2022 will exceed the upper threshold approval value of £100k for a negotiated contract award. It is anticipated that this will cost approximately £80,000, if the option to extend into a second year is taken, with funding provided by SPT and Transport Scotland.

11. Love to Ride is the only provider that operates the UK's National biking encouragement programme. While other cycling incentive initiatives may exist, the National programme is only available through Love to Ride. Participating in the national programme ensures that residents, businesses, and employers in East Renfrewshire can engage in Cycle September and the National Bike Month Challenge, along with other regions and offices and colleagues across the UK. There is no alternative supplier capable of bringing the national programme to East Renfrewshire.

12. Additionally, no other provider can deliver the same national engagement model, ensuring consistent branding, behaviour change methodology, and seamless participation for national businesses and local residents alike. A direct award to Love to Ride will provide continuity in the relationships that have been developed by the dedicated Engagement Coordinator with, and between, local community groups and businesses.

Impact of Love To Ride in East Renfrewshire To Date

13. Delivery of the Love to Ride project commenced in East Renfrewshire in 2022, over its first two years of delivery (2022/23 and 2023/24) there was an almost doubling of active participants. Across the project, East Renfrewshire's Active Riders have logged over 25,000 trips.

14. Over the last 12 months, there has been approximately 11,000 trips within the Love to Ride Project; with 44% of these being transport trips (trips to work, education, essential services, etc.). Transport trips have steadily increased throughout the duration of the Love To Ride Project, which suggests an embedded behavior change.

15. Initial estimates of the trips logged suggest that approximately 8,603kg of CO2 emissions have been saved by bike journeys under the Love to Ride project in East Renfrewshire. This is the equivalent to planting 344 trees.

16. Across the contract, it is hoped that the positive trends witnessed to date from the Love to Ride project continue. As such, there would be further increases in transport trips logged and to the number of trips logged generally. This in turn will have positive indirect impacts on East Renfrewshire's journey to Get To Zero by reducing the number of journeys taken by car, through encouragement for active travel, in addition to contributing to the health and well-being impact that cycling has.

FINANCE AND EFFICIENCY

17. The total values of the previous negotiated contract awards are as follows:

- a) £23,202 for the 4 month period December 2022 to March 2023, funded by SCSP (awarded under Exemption ref. ERC000092);
- b) £49,720 for the 18 month period April 2023 to September 2024, funded by SCSP (April 2023 to March 2024) and SPT People & Place (April 2024 to September 2024) (awarded under Exemption ref. ERC000158); and
- c) £26,425 for the 6 month period October 2024 to March 2025, funded by SPT People & Place (awarded under Exemption ref. ERC000455).

18. The previous agreement with Love to Ride ended on 31st March 2025.

19. Based on the quote provided by Love to Ride for running the programme for the 2025/26 Financial Year (£39,675), it is estimated that a subsequent 12-month programme would cost around £40,000. It is therefore estimated that to continue the Love to Ride programme to the end of the 2026/27 financial year will cost up to £80,000. This would be subject to full funding via external grant funding being available with no cost to the council general revenue budgets.

PARTNERSHIP WORKING

20. Love to Ride's dedicated Engagement Coordinator will work with local groups and businesses including but not limited to Active Schools, local bike shops and cycling projects, the Chamber of Commerce and Business Improvement Districts, and the Culture and Leisure Trust.

IMPLICATIONS OF THE PROPOSALS

21. There are no new staffing, property, policy, IT, equalities or other implications at this point in time.

22. [An Equality Fairness & Rights Impact Assessment \(EFRIA\)](#) was completed as part of these proposals, and it was concluded that a full assessment is not required. The proposed service is an online cycling platform that participants sign up to voluntarily. It provides an interactive online space where participants can create and join groups and clubs, which encourages cycling and provides participants with information to address barriers and improve their confidence on a bike. Therefore, this does not affect anyone, including people with protected characteristics or impact on human rights or socio-economic inequalities.

23. [A climate change impact assessment \(CCIA\)](#) was completed to assess the Love to Ride - Ride365 programme impacts (positive and/or negative) on the environment and the 2045 net zero carbon emissions target. The CCIA indicated a likely increase in commuting by bike as a result of the Love to Ride Ride365 programme. This would have a small positive impact on community emissions as a result of the avoided vehicle journeys. No other climate change impacts (positive or negative) have been identified.

CONCLUSIONS

24. Love to Ride has been a successful project since delivery started in 2022 with the numbers of active participants almost doubling between 2022/23 and 2023/24 and evidence of sustained behaviour change amongst participants. In continuing with the national programme, there is a consistent engagement model for residents, businesses and employers in East Renfrewshire that offers seamless participation at all levels from local to national campaigns.

25. By continuing to encourage cycling as part of an active lifestyle, Love to Ride offers a positive contribution to the Council's ambitions to Get To Zero. It is hoped that with continuation of the positive uptake trends, there will be continued building on the approximate 8,600kg of CO2 emissions saved by bike journeys under Love to Ride in East Renfrewshire. In assisting app users to address their barriers and concerns to cycling; Love to Ride helps to drive Active Travel uptake in East Renfrewshire.

RECOMMENDATIONS

26. It is recommended that Cabinet homologates the decision to award a negotiated contract to 'Love to Ride Ltd.' to provide the 'Ride365' programme.

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