

<b>Committee:</b> Streets and Walkways Sub-committee	<b>Dated:</b> 19/03/24
<b>Subject:</b> Pan-London rental e-scooter trial extension until May 2026	<b>Public</b>
<b>Which outcomes in the City Corporation's Corporate Plan does this proposal aim to impact directly?</b>	9
<b>Does this proposal require extra revenue and/or capital spending?</b>	<b>No</b>
<b>If so, how much?</b>	n/a
<b>What is the source of Funding?</b>	n/a
<b>Has this Funding Source been agreed with the Chamberlain's Department?</b>	n/a
<b>Report of:</b> Interim Executive Director Environment	<b>For Decision</b>
<b>Report author:</b> Giacomo Vecia, Senior Strategic Transportation Officer	

## Summary

As part of their e-scooter review and in response to reduced public transport capacity as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic the Government fast-tracked legal processes to allow trials of rental e-scooter schemes in the summer of 2020.

In July 2020 the Planning & Transportation Committee agreed to participate in the pan-London rental e-scooter trial. The City formally joined the trial in July 2021. On 1 November 2022 the Planning & Transportation Committee then agreed an extension of the current trial until 31 April 2024.

Since joining the trial in July 2021 over 3 million e-scooter trips have been taken across London and the Government has announced plans to introduce a new vehicle class to legalise and regulate e-scooters.

Following the Department for Transport's (DfT) announcement that UK trials were extended until the end of May 2026, Transport for London (TfL) announced that the London trial had also been extended until May 2026.

TfL has extended the trial to maintain service continuity and continue studying e-scooters until the adoption of relevant primary legislation by Central Government at some point in the future.

No further action is required by the City Corporation to participate in this trial extension beyond the adoption of the recommendations in this report.

## Recommendation(s)

Streets and Walkways Sub-Committee is asked to:

- I. Approve the City of London Corporation's participation in the extension of the pan-London rental e-scooter trial until May 2026.
- II. Delegate authority to approve participation in any further rental e-scooter trials or extensions beyond May 2026 to the Executive Director Environment, in consultation with the Chairs and Deputy Chairs of Planning & Transportation Committee and Streets & Walkways Sub Committee.

## Main Report

### Background

1. As part of their e-scooter review and in response to reduced public transport capacity as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic the Government fast-tracked legal processes to allow trials of rental e-scooter schemes in the summer of 2020.
2. In July 2020, the Planning & Transportation Committee agreed to participate in the pan-London rental e-scooter trial coordinated by Transport for London and London Councils. The trial commenced in June 2021 and the City Corporation formally joined in July 2021 following additional preparations and engagement.
3. On 1 November 2022 the Planning & Transportation Committee agreed an extension of the current trial until 31 April 2024.
4. As part of the previous extension approved by Planning & Transportation Committee in 2022, City Officers made permanent the necessary traffic orders to facilitate future trial extensions.
5. All powers given to local authorities by the DfT to enable them to run e-scooter trials are limited to managing and regulating rental e-scooters only. Dockless bike schemes remain a distinct and separate industry which local authorities have very limited powers to regulate and effectively manage (see the *General micromobility update and actions for improving dockless bike hire in the City – Streets & Walkways Sub-Committee 30 Jan 2024* report in Background Papers for further details on the management of dockless cycles in the City).
6. At present 10 boroughs (including Westminster, Southwark and Camden), TfL and the Canary Wharf Group are participating in the pan-London rental e-scooter trial. Three operators – Dott, Lime and Voi currently have permission to operate a combined fleet of approximately 5,300 e-scooters across the trial area.

7. There have been no recorded serious injuries in the City of London on rental e-scooters across more than 135,000 trips since the trial commenced in 2021. It is estimated that parking bay compliance for e-scooters in the City has remained above 95% over the entire period. More data on the rental e-scooter trial is available from TfL's rental e-scooter trial publication webpage (<https://tfl.gov.uk/corporate/publications-and-reports/electric-scooter-rental-trial>).
8. The DfT has authorised trials in 22 regions across England. The trials are gathering data to inform any changes to the legal status of e-scooters that Government may choose to introduce.
9. The London trial is also exploring whether rental e-scooters are safe to ride, positively contribute to London's transport mix, reduce carbon emissions and continue to enable a sustainable recovery from the pandemic.
10. Private e-scooters remain illegal for use on public land and highways, including pavements and cycle lanes.

#### **Future of the pan-London rental e-scooter trial**

11. On 8 November 2023, the DfT announced a further 2-year extension of the current e-scooter trials to May 2026. The extension will be restricted to existing trial areas only and will allow local authorities and the DfT to gather further evidence where gaps are identified and build on the findings of the current trials.
12. Following the DfT's announcement that UK trials were extended until the end of May 2026, Transport for London announced that the London trial had also been extended until May 2026 (as individual boroughs do not have the necessary powers to exclusively extend the trial on their network).
13. TfL also recently commenced a new "phase" of the trial (Phase 2) in September 2023, which included appointing new operator Voi to operate alongside Lime and Dott.
14. In addition, the following changes to the trial as part of Phase 2 have been identified:
  - a. The operation of a significantly larger fleet than at trial inception (5,300 as of February 2024 compared to 600 in 2021)
  - b. New areas and a new borough, Wandsworth, expanding the geography of the trial
  - c. New data insights generated by an updated Data Solution, including on occupancy rates and parking compliance
  - d. New technologies being applied to operations, including the use of AI to improve parking compliance, the use of on-vehicle pavement riding technology, and audible vehicle alerts (AVAS)

15. Phase 2 of the trial is also helping to inform a potential single contract approach for e-bikes and e-scooters proposed by London Councils and TfL (and outlined later in this report in Paras 24-30).
16. Given this, Officers recommend that Planning and Transportation Committee
  - a. Approve the City of London Corporation's participation in the extension of the pan-London rental e-scooter trial until May 2026.
  - b. Delegate authority to approve participation in any further rental e-scooter trials or extensions beyond May 2026 to the Executive Environment Director, in consultation with the Chairs and Deputy Chairs of Planning and Transportation Committee and Streets & Walkways Sub Committee.

### **E-scooter trial monitoring**

17. Several metrics are being tracked as part of the monitoring and evaluation of the e-scooter trial. TfL publish these statistics at the end of each four-week trial period.
18. TfL, e-scooter operators, the Metropolitan Police and the City of London Police work together to report collisions involving rental e-scooters. As of 23 February 2024, there have been 30 serious injuries and one death involving rental e-scooters reported by operators across the trial area over 3.4 million trips covering 8.2 million kms (or over 200 circumnavigations of the globe). None of the serious injuries reported occurred in the City of London.
19. TfL have also prepared an interim report on the pan-London rental e-scooter trial (see Appendix 1). This report covers data collection from June 2021 to September 2023. In that report, TfL notes "*The trial's strong safety record demonstrates the benefits of clear standards and regulations for e-scooters.*"

### **E-scooter trial infrastructure and maintenance**

20. Maintenance of existing micromobility parking locations has been required, with the replacement of four cycle parking racks and several bollards and signs. This level of maintenance is not unexpected for dockless parking infrastructure and costs have been recovered through income generation on the trial.

### **E-scooter trial feedback**

21. Relatively few comments were received by officers regarding the City's e-scooter trial. Of those received most regarded riding behaviours of e-scooter riders more generally and it was unclear whether comments referenced rental or private e-scooter riders. The City of London Police continue to enforce against illegal behaviours on the street network and have undertaken targeted enforcement campaigns against e-scooter riders and in particular those riding private e-scooters across the City over the last two years.

22. Two other specific issues were raised during the earlier and current phase of the trial including incorrect deployment of e-scooters in one location and inappropriate parking issues at another location on the border of the pan-London trial area. Mitigations included closing and proposing relocation of an impacted bay to limit the risk of incorrect deployment at the location and working with operators to increase patrols in areas with lower parking compliance. In both cases issues were resolved by the City and operators and no additional negative comments were received.

### **E-scooter trial traffic orders**

23. At the end of the e-scooter rental trial extension in May 2026, if the use of e-scooters is terminated, or if primary legislation is not passed, or it is decided at any time that a provision is no longer required the permanent traffic orders could be revoked and the traffic arrangement amended as required.

### **Pan-London joint dockless micromobility contract**

24. Following works undertaken by London Councils, Transport for London and several London local authorities, in June 2023 London Council's Transport and Environment Committee agreed in principle to a single contract approach for e-bikes and e-scooters and to work with TfL and London local authorities on the design of the scheme, with the hopes of enabling a transition to a single contract in 2025/26.
25. A single, coordinated contract would allow London local authorities to provide a high-quality service for residents, workers and visitors which can harness the potential of these modes and control how vehicles are parked in lieu of additional powers granted by central legislation.
26. This approach has been successfully introduced in the e-scooter trial. The following factors will seek to guarantee operator compliance:
- a. a legally binding contract with clear rules and expectations
  - b. one set of rules across London for operators and for users
  - c. central capacity to manage the contract and measure performance through TfL and London Councils
27. This proposal would also give London local authorities and London customers greater certainty. The contract would last 3-5 years in order to provide financial sustainability and certainty of delivery for both operators and local authorities. This would allow us to embed these services into long term policy and business plans. The proposal also sets us up for new legislation where TfL – rather than London local authorities – are likely to have the powers to grant licences to operators.
28. TfL and London Councils are nearing the completion of draft contractual documents, including a proposed operational specification and participation agreement. City Officers have been heavily involved in the drafting process and will continue to participate in document finalisation in the Spring.

29. It is anticipated that TfL and London Councils will seek commitments in principle from London local authorities to join the joint micromobility contract prior to the commencement of a dedicated procurement exercise later in 2024. Officers will bring a report to this committee in due course to seek formal approval to commit to joining the joint micromobility contract.
30. In the interim, in January 2024 Members of the Streets & Walkways Subcommittee agreed a series of actions to improve dockless operations in the City. Most of these actions were targeted at improving dockless cycle hire parking compliance, however, where applicable and relevant, action will be taken to also improve rental e-scooter trial operations.

### **Central government micromobility legislation**

31. The Government has stated its plans to introduce controls to enable the regulation of the dockless rental market. This would extend to rental bikes and e-bikes as well as e-scooters. The timetable for the legislative process is not yet been confirmed and no relevant legislation was included in the King's Speech in Autumn 2023.
32. As discussed at the last meeting of the Committee the Chairman has written to the Secretary of State for Transport to highlight our concerns around the delay to this legislation.

### **Corporate & Strategic Implications**

33. The e-scooter trial supports the delivery of Corporate Plan Outcome 9: We are digitally and physically well-connected.
34. The City of London Transport Strategy (Proposal 28) sets out our approach to improving cycle hire in the Square Mile. While rental e-scooters schemes technically fall outside the remit of this proposal their benefits and challenges will be similar. The need for designated parking areas is also included in Proposal 17: Keep pavements free of obstructions.
35. The trial will provide data to help understand how e-scooters might impact the City of London Transport Strategy and Mayor's Transport Strategy (MTS), as well as helping to inform the DfT's position on the statutory basis and legislative requirements for e-scooters to be used in England, Scotland and Wales, following the trials.
36. The trial forms part of the Future City Streets Programme (Proposal 42).
37. The trial also supports our Climate Action Strategy through providing a potentially zero emission alternative to short car and taxi trips.
38. There is a possible reputational risk to the City Corporation if innovative approaches to supporting Covid-19 recovery and increasing sustainable and healthy transport modes are not carefully considered. There are also possible

reputational risks if potential adverse impacts of rental e-scooter scheme operations are not carefully managed.

### **Legal implications**

39. The City Corporation has no jurisdiction over the legality of e-scooters. The London e-scooter trial is fully compliant with any laws and regulations as set out by the DfT.
40. The trial will help inform Corporation policy and possible representations on and consultations to future legislation to legalise scooters for general use.
41. Should the trial not be extended or the City Corporation cease its participation in an extended trial, rental e-scooters would not immediately become illegal in the City but instead operators of rental e-scooter schemes would be unable to operate their schemes on public highways in the City.

### **Financial implications**

42. A permitting scheme has been agreed with operators that will generate revenue for boroughs and TfL during the trial, offsetting some of the costs associated with preparing for and participating in the trial (approximately £32,785 have been incurred). To date, £66,648 in revenue has been generated from the trial for the City Corporation to support the development of the trial, including delivering new parking and resourcing trial administration.
43. Costs of deploying additional parking bays for e-scooters will likely be met by contributions from operators.
44. Additional costs will be incurred if the City Corporation must remove e-scooters deemed to be causing a danger from the streets in default of the operator removing them. Removal and storage costs would be incurred in these circumstances and will be recovered through charging operators for removal.

### **Health Implications**

45. Well managed rental e-scooter schemes have the potential to reduce the number of car journeys within central London, and potentially shift journeys from short taxi, private-hire and public transport trips, with associated benefits to air quality and public health.
46. Concerns exist around the safety of travelling by e-scooter, with some evidence suggesting users of e-scooters may be at higher risk of injury or casualty than other road users on comparable vehicles such as e-bikes and mopeds in areas with higher speed limits. DfT has deemed this risk to be manageable and mitigatable given its decision to continue to legalise rental e-scooters in the UK.

### **Equality Implications**

47. A detailed Equalities Impact Assessment has been undertaken in consultation with internal and external stakeholders, including the City of London Police and protected characteristic groups.
48. E-scooter activity in the City is being closely monitored throughout the trial to understand impacts on vulnerable road users (e.g. visually impaired, wheelchair users). This is consistent with the public sector equality duty.
49. The EQIA identifies a number of issues, particularly around safety of e-scooter users and other road users, especially people walking.
- Increased risk of Covid-19 transmission to riders.
  - Speeding and irresponsible riding behaviours.
  - Irresponsible parking leading to e-scooters being abandoned and becoming street litter that could causing obstructions or injury.
  - Increased fears for people's safety and wellbeing on the City's Streets.
  - Increased risk of collisions for those riding e-scooters.
  - Increased risk to people walking on our streets, due to e-scooters not being seen or heard, e-scooters speeding in shared use areas, and/or illegal or poor rider behaviour.
50. Mitigating the safety impacts of the trial is of utmost importance. For this reason, TfL in collaboration with London Borough Councils and the City Corporation are taking a co-ordinated approach to the trial. In this way the safety standards, accessibility standards and environmental standards can be collectively determined and agreed upon. This process will assist in mitigating and reducing the severity of many of the negative impacts identified.
51. In addition to the mitigation measures put in place by TfL the City of London will address measures by restricting where scooters can travel and park.
52. Engagement and enforcement on the legal and safe use of scooters will be undertaken in partnership with City of London Police.
53. Full details on the issues of concern to all protected characteristic groups and associated mitigation measures are available in the TfL EQIA here ([link](#)) and the CoL EQIA (available upon request).
54. In summary we have concluded that the application of mitigation measures and the benefits from safe use of an e-scooter trial outweigh the negative impacts, or potential impacts of those in protected characteristics groups.

## **Conclusion**

55. Participating in this rental e-scooter trial extension will allow the City to continue gathering evidence on e-scooter safety and demand in the Square Mile, build on the findings of the current trial, help inform a potential single



contract approach for e-bikes and e-scooters and be more effective in influencing draft legislation on e-scooters in the UK.

56. As set out in this report, current trial operations, including parking compliance and demand, are considered acceptable, although still requiring officer management and oversight.

57. No further action is required by the City Corporation to participate in this trial extension beyond the adoption of the recommendations in this report. The City Corporation also retains the ability to leave the trial at any point.

58. The single micromobility contract approach for e-bikes and e-scooters, proposed by TfL and London Councils, will look to build on the success of the e-scooter trial, with the hopes of enabling a transition to a single contract in 2025/26. In the interim, officers will continue to lobby for improved dockless operations more broadly, including for dockless cycle hire schemes.

## **Appendices**

[Transport for London rental e-scooter trial phase 1 report \(external\)](#)

## **Background Papers**

[General micromobility update and actions for improving dockless bike hire in the City – Streets & Walkways Sub-Committee 30/01/2024](#)

[London rental e-scooter trial and dockless vehicle update -Planning & Transportation Committee 19/17/2023](#)

[Pan-London rental e-scooter trial extension – Planning & Transportation Committee 01/11/2022](#)

## **Giacomo Vecia**

Senior Strategic Transport Officer  
Environment Department

**T: 020 7332 1489**

**E: [giacomo.vecia@cityoflondon.gov.uk](mailto:giacomo.vecia@cityoflondon.gov.uk)**