



10.1 DOCKLESS ELECTRIC SCOOTER TRIAL

EXECUTIVE MEMBER: LILI ROSIC, GENERAL MANAGER, DEVELOPMENT, TRANSPORT AND CITY AMENITY

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1. PURPOSE

- 1.1 To update Council on the progress of the delivery of a Dockless Electric Scooters (e-scooters) trial as supported by a Council resolution of 2 October 2019 (Attachment 1), and seek Council's endorsement to submit an EOI to participate in the State Government's e-scooter trial for a period of 12 months.
- 1.2 The State Government has invited Council to submit an expression of interest for a twelve-month trial of e-scooters.

2. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 2.1 At the Ordinary Council Meeting on 2 October 2019, Council resolved to support a three to six month trial of dockless electric scooters (e-scooters) on Council land dependent on managing risks to Council, and the introduction of State Government regulations authorising the use of e-scooters on roads.
- 2.2 The trialling of e-scooters within our municipality aligns with the following strategic documents:
 - 2.2.1 Strategic Direction 2 of the Draft Council Plan 2021-31, Liveable: Port Phillip is a great place to live, where our community has access to high quality public spaces and it is safer and easy to connect and travel within, and
 - 2.2.2 Council's *Move Connect Live: Integrated Transport Strategy 2018-28 – Outcome 5: Our community benefits from new transport options and technology, particularly and Action 38: Partner with the Victorian Government and other councils to regulate and promote shared transport services and manage disruptive shared transport technologies.*
- 2.3 On Friday 23 April 2021, the Minister for Roads and Road Safety Ben Carroll announced a trial of e-scooters for up to a year in three council areas to determine how this device can be safely incorporated into our transport network.
- 2.4 The City of Port Phillip has been invited by State Government to submit an Expression of Interest (EOI) to participate in a 12-month trial of e-scooters. This is a longer period than endorsed by Council on 2 October 2019 (Attachment 1) which was to trial e-scooters on Council land for a three to six-month period. To extend the trial period to twelve months will require Council endorsement.
- 2.5 The regulatory parameters of the State Government's trial addresses many concerns previously raised by Councillors, including where e-scooters can operate, speed limits and requirements for operators to enter into an agreement with Councils.
- 2.6 By participating in the trial, Council will inform the State Government's regulatory framework that will support the operation of this new shared transport technology. Learnings from the trial will inform the review of Council Local Laws and help to ensure new shared transport services such as e-scooters positively contribute to the safety and amenity of our community.



3. RECOMMENDATION

That Council:

- 3.1 Notes that Council resolved to support a trial of dockless electric scooters (e-scooters) on Council land on 2 October 2019 (Attachment 1).
- 3.2 Endorses the CEO (or his delegate) to submit an Expression of Interest to the State Government to participate in the dockless electric scooters (e-scooters) trial for a period of up to twelve-months.

4. KEY POINTS/ISSUES

- 4.1 At the Ordinary Council Meeting on 2 October 2019, Council resolved to support a three to six month trial of dockless electric scooters (e-scooters) on Council land dependent on managing insurance and other safety risks to Council, and the introduction of State Government regulations authorising the use of e-scooters on roads.
- 4.2 E-scooter in this report refers to motorised standing scooters rather than sit-down motor scooters (such as Vespas).
- 4.3 Since October 2019, Council has advocated to the Victorian Government to introduce minimum enforceable service standards for shared transport services along with necessary changes to Road Rules.
- 4.4 The State Government has committed to the necessary changes to regulations to enable a 12 month geographically limited trial of shared-scheme e-scooters. The Department of Transport (DoT) has invited five metropolitan and three regional councils to express an interest in participating in the trial. Two metropolitan and one regional location will be selected.
- 4.5 The Minister for Roads and Road Safety will set up a Panel, chaired by the Parliamentary Secretary for Transport, to oversee the trial. DoT will also establish an evaluation Steering Committee, including representatives from DoT, trial council participants, Victoria Police and the TAC, to evaluate trial outcomes and report to the Panel.
- 4.6 On 3 May 2021, the City of Port Phillip received an invitation to submit an expression of interest to the DoT to participate in the e-scooter trial by 31 May 2021. A decision by the DoT is expected by the end of June 2021, enabling successful councils to undertake their own selection process for commercial operators to commence a trial in Spring 2021.
- 4.7 The State Government is requesting a trial of up to twelve months to enable an evaluation of this new transport technology and to inform future regulatory framework changes to meet transport and safety objectives. Council can, at any time, withdraw from the trial where there is, for example, an adverse impact on public safety or amenity.
- 4.8 A well-regulated shared transport service including e-scooters can provide a convenient and flexible travel choice including for commuters returning to work post Covid 19 restrictions and can assist in easing congestion and reducing emissions.
- 4.9 Victoria Police are the enforcement authority for e-scooters and have had input into the development of the trial parameters. The draft State Government trial parameters



(Attachment 2) address concerns regarding where the scooters can operate, maximum speeds, rider behaviour and require that commercial operators enter an agreement with participating councils. During the trial period these parameters will include the following:

- 4.9.1 E-scooters will be limited to using low-speed roads (up to and including 50 kilometres per hour), bicycle lanes, bicycle paths, separated and shared paths (on the bicycle side, if specified). E-scooters will not be permitted on footpaths (other than separated and shared paths)
 - 4.9.2 E-scooters must have a maximum speed of and not travel in excess of 20 kilometres per hour
 - 4.9.3 E-scooter riders will be subject to blood alcohol content and drug use restrictions applying to other motorists under the Road Safety Act 1986.
 - 4.9.4 E-scooter riders must be at least 18 years of age
 - 4.9.5 E-scooters are treated in the same way as bicycles in relation to brakes, warning device (bell), lights, reflectors, etc
 - 4.9.6 E-Scooter riders must adhere to rider behaviours set out in the trial parameters.
- 4.10 Council would be responsible for establishing agreements with the shared e-scooter operators including response timeframes, deployment locations, and operational model.
- 4.11 Council with the Cities of Yarra and Melbourne has a Memorandum of Understanding with Lime Australia for a twelve month trial of shared eBikes which commenced in December 2020 and has been well received.
- 4.12 Shared e-scooters schemes have been operating globally for several years and more recently in Adelaide, Brisbane, Canberra, Darwin and Townsville. Trials will shortly commence in Hobart, Launceston and Rockhampton. In other cities, user surveys have suggested that e-scooter and eBike users differ and more women use e-scooters than eBikes.
- 4.13 Officers continue to consult with local and state government representatives, and micro mobility experts within Australia and overseas to apply a best practice approach to Council's framework for the trialling of e-scooters.

5. CONSULTATION AND STAKEHOLDERS

- 5.1 Council has been working on an opportunity to introduce this as a sustainable transport option since 2018 when Council was first approached by commercial e-scooter operators and we are now acknowledged as a leader in the field in Victoria. Internal consultation has been completed with a number of department staff, including ASSIST, City Permits, Communications and Engagement, Local Laws, Risk and Assurance, Safety and Amenity and Strategic Partnerships.
- 5.2 Council have received some safety complaints from residents who have been negatively impacted by the illegal use of e-scooters on roads and footpaths.
- 5.3 Community consultation on the effectiveness of shared e-scooters as a transport choice will be undertaken as part of evaluation of the trial.



6. LEGAL AND RISK IMPLICATIONS

- 6.1 Council officers will undertake further consultation with insurance providers to assess the risks and costs to Council prior to entering into any agreement.

7. FINANCIAL IMPACT

- 7.1 Participation in a trial of e-scooters will be dependent on the trial being delivered within Council's approved budget and existing resources. The trial will include administration, compliance, and evaluation components.

8. ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT

- 8.1 A well-regulated and well managed shared transport scheme such as e-scooters has the potential to reduce the need for car travel particularly for "first and last mile" travel, reducing congestion on our roads and the negative environmental impacts associated with vehicle emissions.

9. COMMUNITY IMPACT

- 9.1 Council seeks that our city is connected and easy to move around. A well-regulated, readily available, inexpensive, and easy to use shared transport service such as e-scooters could offer the community a convenient and flexible travel choice.
- 9.2 Community expectations are that Council will manage and impound abandoned, improperly, or dangerously parked e-scooters. The proposed regulations and minimum standards, coupled with clear enforcement responsibilities for Victoria Police will help to facilitate a well operated service that avoids adverse impacts on safety and amenity, particularly around popular precincts within our City.

10. ALIGNMENT TO COUNCIL PLAN AND COUNCIL POLICY

- 10.1 The trialling of e-scooters aligns with Strategic Direction 2 of the Draft Council Plan 2021-31, Liveable: Port Phillip is a great place to live, where our community has access to high quality public spaces and it is safer and easy to connect and travel within. This includes the strategy: The City is well connected and easy to move around with options for sustainable and active transport.
- 10.2 The trial aligns with Council's *Move Connect Live: Integrated Transport Strategy 2018-28* – Outcome 5: Our community benefits from new transport options and technology particularly and Action 38: Partner with the Victorian Government and other councils to regulate and promote shared transport services and manage disruptive shared transport technologies.

11. IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGY

11.1 TIMELINE

- 11.1.1 31 May 2021 - Respond to State Government Expression of Interest process
- 11.1.2 July 2021 – Undertake an Expression of Interest (EOI) process to select operators for the trial (if selected as a trial location for e-scooters).
- 11.1.3 Early September 2021 – Commencement of trial of e-scooters

11.2 COMMUNICATION

- 11.2.1 A well-regulated shared transport service including e-scooters can provide a convenient and flexible travel choice.



11.2.2 Prior to the commencement of any trial of e-scooters a communications plan would be developed identifying opportunities for community feedback throughout the trial period.

12. OFFICER DIRECT OR INDIRECT INTEREST

12.1 No officers involved in the preparation of this report have any direct or indirect interest in the matter.

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ATTACHMENTS

- 1. 2 October 2019 Substantive Motion for Dockless Electric Scooter Trial**
- 2. Draft State Government Safety-based e-scooter trial Regulatory Parameters**