

Meeting of the Environment and Leisure Committee

Tuesday 29 August 2023

Agenda Item 6.3

TO CONSIDER THE CYCLE TO WORK SCHEME FOR TOWN COUNCIL STAFF

1.0 Summary

- 1.1 In April 2020, under confidential business, members were asked if they would support Uckfield Town Council setting up a salary sacrifice scheme for staff, to introduce the Department for Transport 'cycle to work scheme.' Members were happy for staff to proceed with this initiative.
- 1.2 At that time, around two thirds of staff lived in a five-mile radius of Uckfield and had the potential to cycle to work rather than drive. When reviewing the 29 staff currently employed in permanent positions within the council, 20 live within a five mile radius and two of the vacant positions could also be filled by local residents.
- 1.3 With the impact of the pandemic and other staffing issues taking priority, getting the scheme set up, has taken time. There are three businesses selling bicycles in the town and one 'the Electric Bike Shop' sells electric bikes which might be more favourable to tackle the hills in Uckfield!
- 1.4 When contact was made with Wealden DC to understand how they ran their 'cycle to work' scheme. They were working with the 'Green Commute Initiative.' Green Commute provided Wealden DC staff with a listing of participating bike shops of which their staff could use to buy bikes and accessories. They also provided staff with the purchase vouchers to cover the cost of these.
<https://www.greencommuteinitiative.uk/>
- 1.5 Two staff trialled an electric bike and explored the costs. To get an average electric bike with the government discounts it would cost in the region of £2k per person.
- 1.6 Members of General Purposes Committee considered the terms of the scheme in October 2021. It was explained that the salary sacrifice scheme element of the scheme would work by Uckfield Town Council paying the cost of the bike upfront, with the staff member then agreeing to a contract for repaying the cost of the bike on a monthly basis through their salary.
- 1.7 Members of General Purposes Committee considered the terms of repayment period. It was suggested that 18 months would be a suitable time frame, as some bicycles were of greater cost.
- 1.8 Members of General Purposes Committee were also required to consider which funds the initial purchase of bicycles could be made from, before the full repayment was made by the staff member(s). It was suggested that either of the Climate Change or Greener Project Earmarked reserves would be appropriate.

2.0 Current research

- 2.1 The scheme was not put into practice due to staffing changes and other priorities in the past 18 months.

- 2.2 The Assistant Town Clerk & RFO has been exploring the current schemes available for the Cycle to Work Scheme. Back in 2020/21, the Green Commute Initiative was the preferred scheme, but there's a number on the market now.
- 2.3 From the investigations of the officer, Gogeta is now considered the most competitive on charges to both the local business and the employee.
- 2.4 Quick reference guide to charges:

| PROVIDER | FULL PRICED BIKE | BIKE REDUCED BY 5% OR LESS | BIKE REDUCED BY MORE THAN 5% |
|-----------------|---------------------|--|------------------------------|
| Cyclescheme | No admin fee | Cannot be purchased | Cannot be purchased |
| Vivup | No admin fee | Add a fee to effectively adjust bike price to full RRP | Charge 5% admin fee |
| Gogeta | No admin fee | No admin fee | No admin fee |
| Bike2Work | Charge 5% admin fee | Charge 5% admin fee | Charge 5% admin fee |
| Cycle Solutions | Charge 5% admin fee | Charge 5% admin fee | Charge 5% admin fee |
| GCI | Charge 5% admin fee | Charge 5% admin fee | Charge 5% admin fee |
| Benefits World | Charge 5% admin fee | Charge 5% admin fee | Charge 5% admin fee |

- 2.5 News articles claim that Gogeta have been shaking up the cycle to work scheme by offering the lowest commission and have an introductory rate for bike shops until 31 December 2023. The founder of Gogeta was involved in a well-known Bike company and ran a bike shop for 10 years. He was frustrated by the complexity of the schemes available. Other schemes can be 'expensive and unprofitable' to bike shops.
- 2.6 The Gogeta scheme is also considered a 'faster and easier process' to follow. The employee applies for a voucher and the shop is notified that they have a customer through the scheme.
- 2.7 The full information on Gogeta's scheme is available in appendix A of this report. For employer FAQs, please visit: <https://gogeta.bike/faq>
- 2.8 Gogeta provide an employer service agreement which sets out the terms of supply and the company's agreement to purchase. This will be circulated prior to the meeting for members to review.
- 3.0 Recommendations**
- 3.1 Members are asked to consider whether they wish to pursue a salary sacrifice 'cycle to work scheme' with Gogeta based on the information provided.

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