

LONDON BOROUGH OF CAMDEN	WARDS: ALL
REPORT TITLE Procurement Strategy for Dockless Bike Hire Services in Camden (IPO/2026/03)	
REPORT OF Cabinet Member for Planning and a Sustainable Camden	
FOR SUBMISSION TO Cabinet	DATE 9 June 2026
STRATEGIC CONTEXT <p>We Make Camden is our joint vision for the borough, developed in partnership with our community. The procurement of Dockless Bike Hire (DBH) services for Camden would help to meet We Make Camden objectives by helping to create clean, vibrant, and sustainable places with everyone empowered to tackle the climate emergency. Rental bikes offer our communities an additional sustainable transport option, making it easier to choose to cycle, and a switch away from motor vehicle use or over-crowded public transport, and helping to reduce carbon emissions and improve air quality. The proposal also helps to support good health, wellbeing and connection for everyone: rental bikes broaden access to cycling for Camden’s communities, support independent mobility and access to jobs and employment, education, healthcare, and other essential services, leisure and social networks with further benefits for health and wellbeing.</p> <p>The Way We Work is the organisational response to We Make Camden, setting out how the Council will deliver its priorities. In this context, the proposed procurement strategy for the DBH service aims to strengthen our ability to evidence local impacts through better access to third-party technology and data, incorporate learning from the current contract to improve responsiveness to residents, and introduce stringent requirements to manage future risks.</p>	
SUMMARY OF REPORT <p>This report seeks approval for the procurement strategy to procure DBH concession contracts, giving permission for up to two operators to provide DBH services in Camden. The proposed duration of the contracts is 5 years from June 2027, including a break clause after 2 years of the contract. The estimated aggregate concession value of the contracts for the operators is £82 million (this is estimated operator concession revenue and does not represent any Council spend or financial commitment).</p> <p>DBH plays an important role in increasing cycling in the borough, helping the Council to delivery multiple policy objectives including improving air quality, cutting carbon emissions, reducing road danger and congestion, and supporting active, healthy travel. DBH also increases the opportunity for residents and visitors to access a bike, particularly those facing barriers to owning or storing one at home.</p> <p>The Council currently has contracts with two DBH operators which started in June 2023 and end in June 2027. New contracts are needed at the end of the current contract period to ensure residents’ (and visitors to Camden) continued access to DBH and its benefits and a mechanism for the Council to manage DBH operations.</p>	

The proposed procurement strategy is informed by evidence from the current contract period and engagement with other London boroughs. Rental bikes are very popular in Camden, with use rising exponentially since they were first introduced in the borough in 2019. However, they also present challenges around, in some locations, non-compliant parking, noise, and antisocial behaviour which can impact residents' and visitors' safety and amenity in those locations. The proposed procurement strategy includes a 60/40 quality/price weighting which places greater emphasis on service quality to ensure the best possible service for our communities, and strengthen contractual obligations for monitoring, reporting and enforcing DBH services.

The contracts would generate income to fund DBH parking infrastructure, contract management, monitoring and enforcement, and support cycling related infrastructure and measures as part of the Council's wider Safe and Healthy Streets programme. Procuring DBH services also provides an opportunity for the Council to enhance Social Value to help deliver We Make Camden objectives, particularly strong growth and access to jobs, and safe, strong and open communities, supporting healthy independent lives and delivering clean vibrant and sustainable places.

The report is being submitted to the Cabinet in line with Contract Standing Orders, which state that the Cabinet must agree procurement strategies for contracts over £5,000,000 (CSO C4.1).

Local Government Act 1972 – Access to Information

No documents that require listing were used in the preparation of this report.

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RECOMMENDATIONS

That, having considered the contribution of Dockless Bike Hire services to cycling and delivering wider Council objectives, alongside the challenges/mitigations arising, the results of the Equalities Impact Assessment in Appendix 2, and having due regard to the obligations set out in section 149 of the Equality Act 2010, the Cabinet agrees:

1. The procurement strategy, with a price/quality split of 40/60 and contract term of 5 years with a break clause after 2 years, for an estimated aggregate value of £82 million.
2. That the approval to award the contract is delegated to the Executive Director, Investment Place and Opportunity following consultation with the Cabinet Member for Planning and a Sustainable Camden.

Signed:



Richard Bradbury, Director of Environment and Sustainability

Date:

28th May 2026

1 CONTEXT AND BACKGROUND

- 1.1 The Dockless Bike Hire (DBH) scheme provides on street, rental, electric assisted bikes which are deployed in dedicated on-street parking bays provided by the Council. Bikes must be picked up or dropped off in any bay which is a key condition of the current contract, and failure to do so can result in a fine from the operator and ultimately in a ban. Operators are required to report on levels of compliant parking and to respond to reports of non-compliant and dangerous parking in a timely way. To date, the Council has delivered a comprehensive network of 226 dedicated DBH parking bays, the majority of which are on the carriageway to protect pedestrian space.
- 1.2 In 2023, contracts were [awarded](#) to two operators (Lime Technology Limited and Human Forest Limited) to provide DBH services for an initial two-year period, with two optional one-year extensions. The final one-year extension, which was [recently approved](#), ends in June 2027 and new contracts will be required at the end of the current contract period to ensure continued provision of DBH services in the borough and to maintain a formal mechanism for the Council to manage DBH operations. The proposed contract duration is five years from June 2027 to May 2032, including a break clause after two years. The estimated concession value of the contracts for operators is £82 million.
- 1.3 DBH services help to deliver several Council policy objectives:
- A core objective of the [Camden Transport Strategy \(CTS\) 2019-2041](#) and the associated Cycle Action Plan is to increase the level of cycling in the borough. This commitment supports Camden's wider goals to reduce motor traffic, cut vehicle emissions, ease congestion, reduce road danger and promote healthier more active lifestyles, and relieve overcrowding on public transport. DBH plays a key role in achieving these aims by expanding opportunities to cycle, particularly among residents who face barriers to owning and storing a bike at home, and supporting independent mobility to access jobs, essential services, leisure activities and social networks. Measure 21 of the CTS specifically commits the Council to supporting, promoting, and expanding cycle hire systems as a tool for creating viable alternatives to car ownership and use.
 - The [CTS Delivery Plan](#) for 2025/26 to 2027/28, approved by Cabinet in November 2024, notes that shared mobility and micro-mobility are an increasingly important part of the transport mix in the Borough and commits to expanding DBH parking provision, as well as working with operators to improve parking compliance.
 - DBH can also contribute to delivering the [Camden Clean Air Action Plan 2023-2026](#) outcome to reduce transport emissions from vehicles on roads in Camden by improving cycling and walking infrastructure throughout the borough (for example by providing dockless cycle hire as a transport option).

- In addition the latest Camden [Climate Action Plan \(2026-2030\)](#), approved by Cabinet in December 2025, commits within the Sustainable Travel priority section to “continue to create accessible spaces on streets for shared mobility services”, of which dockless bike hire facilities are one component.
- 1.4 Evidence shows that DBH services are well used by Camden residents and visitors. Since the start of the current contract period in June 2023, rides beginning in the borough have increased by over 1,000%, contributing to higher cycle volumes in Camden and supporting the delivery of CTS objectives and targets. This growth is reflected in the 2025 screenline data which records the highest number of cyclists on Camden’s streets and also the highest cycle mode share (20% of all traffic) since monitoring began in 2006. Yet data shows that 67% of Camden households do not have access to a bike, and surveys show that lack of space is a major barrier to storing a bike at home (Appendix 2 – EqIA) which DBH helps to overcome. Officers expect DBH demand to continue to grow, supported by the Council’s roll-out of protected cycle lanes and wider Safe & Healthy Streets programmes which, together, help to address key barriers to cycling, particularly among under-represented groups.
 - 1.5 Feedback from residents and businesses during the current contract period, however, also show that there are some negative impacts associated with DBH, primarily linked to noise, anti-social behaviour, non-compliant parking and over-capacity at some bays/locations which can also cause obstruction on the footway. Together these challenges can impact on amenity in those locations for residents, visitors, businesses and other stakeholders.
 - 1.6 Based on lessons learned since 2023 and engagement with other London boroughs, variations to the current contracts have introduced additional measures to strengthen the Council’s oversight, monitoring and enforcement of DBH services, and operators’ contractual obligations to comply with service standards. The proposed procurement strategy for the new five year contract period aims to build on these measures to further improve performance, including in the proposed 60/40 quality/price weighting which places greater emphasis on service quality compared to price.
 - 1.7 The current contracts generate income for the Council through a guaranteed annual lump sum from each operator and a share of revenue from DBH operations within the borough. This funding is used alongside other funding sources to manage the contracts, further develop and maintain the DBH parking bay network and contribute to the delivery of our wider Safe and Healthy Streets schemes, and related “complementary measures” activities, including DBH. A similar approach is proposed in the procurement strategy to ensure that the Council receive an appropriate level of revenue for permitting DBH operators in the borough and to support the resource requirements associated with managing and enforcing a contract of this size.
 - 1.8 The procurement strategy offers an opportunity for the Council to enhance Social Value, which will similarly expand on the current contract requirements to help deliver We Make Camden objectives (Appendix 3).

- 1.9 An absence of legislation has made the management and enforcement of DBH services extremely challenging. However, the UK Government's English Devolution White Paper of December 2024 gives local transport authorities the power to regulate on-street micromobility schemes such as hire bikes. [The Council has also signalled its support for one coordinated future scheme](#) to manage dockless e-bikes and e-scooters across London which would provide a more robust operating environment and the opportunity for a pan-London contract in the future. It is currently estimated that legislation to enable a future pan-London contract procurement will not be available for 2 to 3 years, hence a break clause after 2 years is proposed in the procurement strategy to allow for Camden's participation in a pan-London contract should that opportunity arise (and subject to further, separate approvals processes).

2 PROPOSAL AND REASONS

- 2.1 This report seeks approval of a procurement strategy for DBH concession contracts for five years from June 2027, after the current contract period expires, with a break clause after two years. The scheme aims to promote and expand opportunities for residents in, and visitors to, Camden to cycle, while protecting pedestrian infrastructure and the inclusive environment of our streets and public spaces by minimising the impacts of DBH services. The strategy would also enable the Council to secure funding to manage and enforce DBH services and contribute to infrastructure to enable safe cycling.

Procurement Approach Business Case

- 2.2 The procurement strategy proposes contracts with up to two DBH operators, with a maximum fleet number for each. The proposed two-operator model encourages competition and a choice for users while also providing resilience to the service should one operator leave the market. However, if only one operator is successful in meeting the Council's requirements, then the option to award a single contract will be provided for in the tender documents.
- 2.3 The recommended approach is to conduct an Open Tender procedure. The market is known to be very competitive but relatively small: there are currently four main operators of large-scale dockless bike hire operations in London known to the Council. It is envisaged that the tender will include Conditions of Participation requiring operators to demonstrate experience of delivering similar sized contracts in urban areas, with suitable technical and operational ability to deliver the contracts. This will ensure that only operators with the necessary expertise progress to evaluation, maximising the likelihood of competitive pricing and a transparent evaluation process. These proposals are based on the following:
- A [Preliminary Market Engagement \(PME\)](#) notice published on 3 March 2026 to understand market capacity, risks and deliverability, and explore alternative and innovative solutions to inform the procurement strategy and tender documents (Appendix 4).

- Lessons learned since the start of the current contracts in 2023, including feedback from residents and stakeholders and engagement with other London boroughs. This informs the proposed 60/40 quality/price weighting which will be further reinforced through more stringent measures in the contracts to improve Council oversight and enforcement, and contractual obligations.
- 2.4 Each operator will be required to provide minimum Social Value commitments and help to deliver We Make Camden priorities, particularly access to jobs, supporting healthy, independent lives and delivering clean, vibrant and sustainable places. This includes providing school pupil work placements, apprenticeships for Camden residents, participating in careers support events and using Small and Medium sized Enterprises (SMEs); offering free or discounted rides for low-income and disadvantaged groups and support for cycle events targeting under-represented groups; road safety campaigns, support for schools around climate change and contributions to biodiversity improvements. More detail is provided in Appendix 3.

Financial Analysis and Savings

- 2.5 The contracts will generate revenue payments to the Council:
- A minimum borough annual access fee, which will increase annually over the course of the contract to reflect the expected increase in parking bay capacity. 10% of the price weighting would be applied to this element of the tender.
 - A fixed annual sum, index linked over the course of the contract, split equally between operators, to fund two dedicated Council posts to support contract management and enforcement.
 - A minimum revenue share paid to the Council (22.5% of price weighting). This could be a percentage of the operators' revenue or a fixed sum per ride index linked. A minimum amount would be stipulated in each instance.
- 2.6 The remaining 7.5% of the price weighting in tender evaluations will apply to the cost of rides to the users, to ensure operators are assessed on the value for money of the service to their customers.
- 2.7 The funding model is based on evidence of number of rides in the borough in recent years, and growth predictions, ensuring that the contracts are commercially realistic while securing a fair and consistent financial return for the Council. Index linking the fixed annual sum to fund Council posts will also ensure that the operators fully account for any increases in costs incurred by the Council such as inflationary pressures on staff costs.
- 2.8 The estimated concession value of the contract is £82 million. This is an estimate of total concession revenue (not a Council cost and does not create a financial commitment for the Council). This is based on an analysis of the

annual revenue share paid to the Council under the current contracts, and historic and projected growth over the proposed new five year period.

3 OPTIONS APPRAISAL

- 3.1 The following options were considered in relation to securing DBH services in Camden:
- 3.2 **Option 1 – recommended:** proceed with procuring new contracts to secure DBH services as set out Section 2, for the reasons outlined in Sections 1 and 2 above.
- 3.3 **Option 2: Insourcing.** It is not considered feasible for the Council to operate a DBH service independently. This would require substantial capital investment in a bicycle fleet, as well as the development and ongoing maintenance of a dedicated mobile application. The Council also lacks the specialist expertise, operational staff, and servicing infrastructure needed to run a scheme of this scale safely and reliably. Commercial operators already provide established DBH networks across multiple London boroughs, enabling seamless cross borough travel. Their wider operating areas and mature systems offer a more convenient and attractive service than a stand-alone Council run scheme, which would inevitably have limited reach and lower user appeal.
- 3.4 **Option 3 – tender for contracts on a similar basis to the current contracts.** The tender for the current contracts adopted a 50/50 quality–price weighting. Officers consider that this would reduce the emphasis on operators’ contractual obligations and limit opportunities for the Council to improve the quality of the service based on lessons learned. The current contracts also do not fund dedicated Council posts: without this provision, the Council’s capacity to manage and regulate DBH services would be limited and could lead to higher resource demands and costs for the Council longer term as demand for DBH grows. This option is therefore **not recommended**.
- 3.5 **Option 4 – do not tender for new contracts.** In the absence of supporting legislation, not tendering for new contracts would expose the Council to significant operational risk and is therefore **not recommended**: the Council would lose its ability to manage and enforce DBH services, increasing the likelihood of non-compliance, and inconsistent service standards and incur costs to the Council. This option would also remove the opportunity to secure Social Value commitments.

4 WHAT ARE THE KEY IMPACTS / RISKS? HOW WILL THEY BE ADDRESSED?

- 4.1 Project specific impacts / risks, and the associated mitigation strategy are set out below.

- 4.2 Pan London legislation may be introduced during the contract period which could contradict the Council's proposed DBH contracts, making them unenforceable. Mitigations include the contract specification being designed to align with the legislative proposals: this includes a proposed break clause in the contracts which can be enacted at any point after 2 years with adequate notice to the operators. This will allow the Council to participate in a pan-London framework, while also providing a minimum 2 years' guaranteed operating environment for successful tenders. Officers will continue to attend regular pan-London meetings to keep updated on time frames for a potential pan London framework and contract.
- 4.3 Poor parking compliance and other operational issues will negatively impact the Council's reputation, public safety and convenience, and political support for DBH. Mitigations include establishing a rigorous procurement strategy based on knowledge gained both from managing the current contracts and engaging with other London boroughs as part of the London Micromobility Working Group. Officers will meet and engage frequently with DBH operators, require access to live data to monitor performance, and establish a formal escalation process in the contracts to address issues. Robust contract management mechanisms will be established within the contracts including a formal escalation process to address issues. The Council will enhance enforcement activities in the borough. Officers will continue to report to Camden's Culture & Environment Scrutiny Committee to ensure oversight and Member scrutiny and obtain feedback on the service (please see most recent in [January 2026](#)).
- 4.4 An unsuccessful operator may appeal against not being awarded a contract which may delay commencement of the contracts and damage the Council's reputation. Mitigations include a robust compliant procurement process and early engagement with the Council's procurement team. Sufficient time will be built into the procurement schedule to enable a thorough review and checks at each stage of the process.
- 4.5 A contracted operator may discontinue services, leaving Camden with one or potentially no operator in the borough. The procurement process will require operators to demonstrate a proven track record of delivering DBH at scale and financial viability. Awarding contracts to up to two operators also mitigates the impact of one leaving the market and provides some resilience for continuing DBH services
- 4.6 The tender process is not successful in awarding contracts to two operators, and only one contract is awarded. The tender documents will include an option to award to a single operator if two contracts are not possible.
- 4.7 An unsuccessful operator may choose to operate in Camden. To mitigate this, Officers will continue to strengthen enforcement activities including issuing fines and removing and impounding bikes. The planned legislation and future pan-London licencing framework will include robust mechanisms for mitigating such behaviour. This may potentially include eg issuing financial penalties and removing the licence without which it would a criminal offence to operate in

London. A further opportunity to enhance enforcement is to amend the Traffic Management Orders (TMO) for the DBH parking bays to restrict them to the named, contracted operators.

Equality Impact Assessment (EqIA)

- 4.8 An EqIA has been undertaken for the proposed procurement strategy (Appendix 2). The assessment considers the potential positive and negative impacts of the strategy on protected groups under the Equality Act 2010, as well as on groups with additional characteristics of interest to Camden.
- 4.9 Evidence shows that DBH provides an important service to some Camden residents (and visitors to the Borough) by helping to overcome barriers to cycling, increasing opportunities for independent mobility and active travel, access to opportunities and improving health and well-being. However, there are also some negative impacts, particularly footway obstruction associated with non-compliant parking, as well as noise and anti-social behaviour. To address these issues, the proposed procurement strategy prioritises service quality which will be supported by contracts that strengthen measures to prevent and mitigate incidents and enhance Council oversight of DBH services. In addition, all new DBH parking bays proposed in the borough are subject to their own consultation and EqIA process.

Modern Slavery

- 4.10 Some hardware on dockless e-bikes such as lithium-ion batteries contain materials which could carry risk of exploitative practices within the supply chain. Tenderers will be asked to set out the mitigations they have put in place in the tender, with potential areas for further questioning covering governance and verifications of supply chains and safety compliance with approved standards.

The Living Wage

- 4.11 Workforce Standards, including LLW, will be applied to the contracts.

5 CONSULTATION / ENGAGEMENT

- 5.1 Officers attend regular regional and pan-London meetings which provide opportunities to share lessons learned, discuss best practice, and consider common challenges.
- 5.2 Each proposed DBH bay location is subject to a full public and Traffic Management Order (TMO) consultation. As part of this process feedback is gathered from residents and stakeholders and is carefully considered before a decision is made. In addition, officers regularly monitor feedback and review DBH bays, and make amendments once installed where necessary.
- 5.3 Common themes raised during consultations include concerns about non-compliant parking and bays operating over capacity. While some operational issues are expected for a service of this scale, the borough uses contract-management measures to address these.

- 5.4 DBH operations have been brought to three meetings of the Culture and Environment Scrutiny Committee, with the latest held in [January 2026](#). Through these sessions, the Committee ensures that both the service and operators are subject to robust review and accountability, while also providing a structured forum for public input, member scrutiny, and discussion of service management.

6 LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 6.1 This report seeks the approval of Cabinet of the procurement strategy relating to dockless bike hire services across the Borough. It is proposed that the contract run for a period of five years, with a break clause after the second year, to allow for flexibility. It is proposed that there be up to two operators providing these services. The estimated concession value of the contract is £82 million in aggregate.
- 6.2 Legal Services have assessed the recommendations in the report and consider that the recommendations are in compliance with the Contract Standing Orders and the Procurement Act 2023.

7 RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

7.1 Comments of the Director of Finance

- 7.2 The estimated total contract value is £82 million over 5 years; this is equivalent to £16.4 million per annum. The contract is due to commence in June 2027, for a period of 5 years with a break clause after 2 years. The successful operator(s) will be given a minimum of 3 months' notice if Camden Council decides to enact the break clause.
- 7.3 The concession contract will generate income for the Council by way of an annual guaranteed lump payment sum payment (Access fee). Income will be subject to fixed annual increases to reflect the expansion of parking bay capacity.
- 7.4 In addition to the above, the operator(s) will pay Camden Council a share of the revenue generated. This will be via one of two options that will be decided prior to commencing the tender: a minimum fixed sum per ride starting in the borough, or a minimum percentage revenue share. If the fixed sum is chosen, this will be subject to inflationary increases compounded annually. The operator(s) will also make a financial contribution/payment for staffing costs. This payment will be increased in line with the Council's pay awards each year.
- 7.5 The scheme is expected to contribute to the current MTFS. Amount to be confirmed.

7.6 The share of operator(s) revenue (if a fixed sum per ride) and payroll costs are subject to annual inflationary increases; the percentage increase is not currently known.

8 ENVIRONMENTAL IMPLICATIONS

8.1 Road transport is major source of pollution, both from particulate matter and nitrogen dioxide, with significant impacts for health and costs to health services. DBH offer additional sustainable travel choices to Camden residents and visitors, reducing the need to travel by motor vehicle – both private vehicles and public transport. Specifications within the tender will encourage the use of renewable energy to charge batteries and the sole use of zero tail pipe emission vehicles for on street operations.

9 TIMETABLE FOR IMPLEMENTATION

9.1 If the recommendations are approved by Cabinet, an indicative timeframe of the next steps is set out below.

Key milestones	Indicative Date (or range)
Tender period	July - October 2026
Contract Award Report – Executive Director Investment Place and Opportunity following consultation with the Cabinet Member for Planning and a Sustainable Camden	November 2026
Standstill Period – 8 working days	December 2026
Contracts sealing	January 2027
Transition to the new arrangements	February – May 2027
Contracts start date	1 st June 2027

10 APPENDICES

Appendix 1 Part II confidential appendix not for publication as it contains exempt information relating to the financial and business affairs of a particular person (including the authority holding that information), in accordance with paragraph 3 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972 (as amended). This includes contract valuation and historic and predicted income to the Council.

Appendix 2 Equalities Impact Assessment

Appendix 3 Social Value requirements

Appendix 4 Preliminary Market Engagement

REPORT ENDS