

## Manchester City Council Report for Resolution

**Report to:** Communities and Equalities Scrutiny Committee – 7 November 2023  
Executive – 15 November 2023

**Subject:** ACES European Capital of Cycling 2024

**Report of:** Strategic Director (Neighbourhoods)

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### Summary

This report provides an overview of Manchester's bid to become ACES European Capital of Cycling for 2024. For Manchester to be named the European Capital of Cycling would be an incredible reward for the work done to promote cycling in the city, generating an even greater transport revolution to get many more Mancunians into the saddle. This bid is the culmination of years of work which has seen a hugely ambitious expansion of cycling in both Manchester as well as the entire Greater Manchester region.

The opportunity to be awarded this prestigious title will be a catalyst for change, enabling Manchester to expand and grow our cycling provision, encouraging everyone to Pedal More in 2024. It will enable the city to shine a real spotlight on cycling during the whole of 2024 and beyond, embedding cycling as a thread to run throughout our work and within communities. If successful, Manchester will become the first ever ACES European Capital of Cycling and this will enable the city to further prioritise cycling plans, infrastructure and policy across the city to benefit our citizens.

### Recommendations

The Communities and Equalities Scrutiny Committee is recommended to:

1. Consider and comment on Manchester's bid to become ACES European Capital of Cycling for 2024: and
2. Endorse the recommendation to the Executive for Manchester's bid to become ACES European Capital of Cycling for 2024.

The Executive is recommended to agree that Manchester bids to become ACES European Capital of Cycling for 2024.

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**Wards Affected:** All

<b>Environmental Impact Assessment</b> - the impact of the issues addressed in this report on achieving the zero-carbon target for the city
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Our vision is for Manchester to be in the topflight of World Class cities and to be zero carbon by 2038, as well as creating a healthier city. The European Capital of Cycling
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status will help us achieve this vision and our partners will be central to us realising our ambition. Replacing shorter car journeys with cycling has the potential to improve air quality in the city

**Equality, Diversity and Inclusion** - the impact of the issues addressed in this report in meeting our Public Sector Equality Duty and broader equality commitments

The delivery of programmes within the ACES capital of cycling 2024 will include a particular focus on engaging Manchester residents who are under-represented in sport and physical activity, including cycling. Examples of these initiatives can be found within this document and include increasing participation of women and girls; Black, Asian and Minority ethnic groups and people with disabilities. As well as developing new cycling opportunities for such groups and other protected or disadvantaged groups, we will further promote existing provision.

<b>Manchester Strategy outcomes</b>	<b>Summary of how this report aligns to the OMS/Contribution to the Strategy</b>
A thriving and sustainable city: supporting a diverse and distinctive economy that creates jobs and opportunities	If successful, the accolade will help us to promote cycling as a mode of transport, and aligning this with investment in other non-car modes across the city, will support growth of the economy, contribute to economic recovery, and maximise the city's competitiveness. Hosting of major cycling events will support the visitor economy and promote the city on the world stage.
A highly skilled city: world class and home grown talent sustaining the city's economic success	If successful the ACES European Capital of Cycling award will further highlight Manchester's World Class position, as home to the Great Britain Cycling Team and as hosts to major international cycling events. The launch of the new City Cycling Academy will be a key project that will support the identification and development of talented Cyclists from Manchester.
A progressive and equitable city: making a positive contribution by unlocking the potential of our communities	If successful with the ACES capital of Cycling bid, partners would actively ensure that opportunities to encourage cycling and enhanced across the city, including our diverse communities. Case studies are highlighted within the bid around how we are supporting inclusive cycling, women's and girls cycling and progressing initiatives to engage black, Asian and minority ethnic minority people.
A liveable and low carbon city: a destination of choice to live, visit, work	If successful, the ACES Capital of Cycling bid will allow us to continue to promote

	active travel, which aligned with other sustainable transport will reduce carbon emissions by increasing the overall share of public transport, cycling and walking trips and reducing short journeys by car.
A connected city: world class infrastructure and connectivity to drive growth	If successful, the ACES Capital of Cycling bid will support proposals under the Active Travel Strategy and related strategies will improve transport integration across Manchester, making it easier for people getting into and moving around the city.

Full details are in the body of the report, along with any implications for:

- Equal Opportunities Policy
- Risk Management
- Legal Considerations

### **Financial Consequences – Revenue**

Should the City's bid to become European Capital of Cycling be successful, a delivery plan would be developed setting out revenue requirements. It is anticipated that the costs would come through existing funds held for these purposes from council and partner resources. This might include a core team of 2 staff to co-ordinate partnership activity and maximise impact within the city's communities.

### **Financial Consequences – Capital**

Whilst there are no direct capital implications specific to the European Capital of Cycling bid, there has been major investment already made into cycling infrastructure and there are already a number of planned capital schemes underway to enhance cycling within the city, as part of a £70m programme of investment from central government and city-region devolved funding.

The city's capital investment into cycling recently has included £27m refurbishment of the National Cycling Centre and a £1.5m cycling hub at Wythenshawe Park. There have also been significant capital improvements to Clayton Vale trails and several projects in the pipeline that will be further progressed in relation to upgrading or building new assets to drive growth in cycling across the city.

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**Background documents (available for public inspection):**

The following documents disclose important facts on which the report is based and have been relied upon in preparing the report. Copies of the background documents are available up to 4 years after the date of the meeting. If you would like a copy, please contact one of the contact officers above.

- Manchester's ACES Capital of Cycling 2024 Bid Document (Appendix 1)

## **1.0 Introduction**

- 1.1 This report introduces the City of Manchester's bid to become ACES European Capital of Cycling 2024. It summarises the content of the bid document, which was submitted to ACES earlier this year, and outlines commitments for 2024 from Manchester City Council and our bid partners. If successful, Manchester will become the first ever ACES European Capital of Cycling and this will enable the city to deliver activation further prioritising cycling plans, infrastructure, and policy across the city.
- 1.2 Our vision is for Manchester to be in the topflight of World Class cities and to be zero carbon by 2038, as well as creating a healthier city. Cycling has a huge role to play in helping us achieve this vision and our partners will be central to us realising our ambition.

## **2.0 Background**

- 2.1 ACES Europe stands for European Capitals and Cities of Sport. They are an association that awards recognition to cities that promote sports to improve quality of life and psycho-physical well-being. ACES Europe are a non-profit organisation based in Brussels which assigns every year the recognitions of World Capital, Region, City, Island, Community and Town of Sport in order to recognise, reward and promote successful sport policies.
- 2.2 ACES Europe identified and invited Manchester to become a candidate for its inaugural European Capital of Cycling 2024 and expressed that Manchester would be a strong candidate. The accolade has not been awarded previously, therefore if Manchester were successful, the city would be the first European city to be awarded the title. The opportunity could be used as a catalyst to transform and enhance our cycling offer as a city, enabling Manchester to expand and grow our cycling provision encouraging everyone to Pedal more in 2024 embedding cycling as a thread to run throughout our work.
- 2.3 There are lots of opportunities for the city in being awarded the inaugural title of European Capital of Cycling 2024. The opportunity to use the title as a springboard can realise benefits include but are not limited to:
  - Cycling Development
  - Raising the profile of the city
  - Community engagement and well being
  - Business opportunities and potential access to funding
  - Share and gain knowledge and best practice with other European Cities
  - Extensive PR and Media Coverage

Securing the title would allow the city to showcase and drive forward some of the examples listed below:

- The city's capital investment into cycling (to include £27m refurbishment of the National Cycling Centre, £1.5m cycling hub at Wythenshawe Park, improvements to Clayton Vale trails and several projects in the pipeline

that will be further progressed in relation to upgrading or building new assets to drive growth in cycling across the city).

- How we contribute to being a carbon zero city with Manchester's commitment to be carbon zero by 2038 to include active travel, which has cycling as a significant part of the transformation and links to Manchester's Sport and Physical Activity Strategy (2018-28) which sets out how we will become a more active city.
- The importance the city places on cycling as a mode of transport and the Bee Network routes and crossings in neighbourhoods across Greater Manchester.
- Progress made on Manchester being selected as one of the 5 locations by the Department for Transport Fund e-cycle pilot run by Cycling UK to make e-bikes more accessible.
- As home to British Cycling and the Great British Cycling Team, how our city plays an important part in the embedding cycling in Manchester.
- Integration of the continued work on Child Friendly City engaging children and young people throughout the European Capital of Cycling Activation Plan.

2.4 A bid consortium was established on behalf of the city with representatives from Manchester City Council, British Cycling, TfGM, MCRactive, Marketing Manchester, GLL and Cycling UK. A formal candidature document was submitted by the bid team representing the City of Manchester in August 2023. The document outlines Manchester's cycling achievements to date and highlights the ambitions for the city moving forward (see appendix 1 for copy of Manchester's ACES Capital of Cycling Bid Document).

2.5 In September the city welcomed a delegation from ACES Europe, who assessed Manchester's bid. Delegates attended the relaunch of the National Cycling Centre, The Tour of Britain, a range of community cycling venues and used Bee Network Cycle Hire bikes to visit key infrastructure projects and protected cycleways on the Oxford Road Corridor. The visit showcased Manchester's commitment to cycling and allowed all bid partners to come together to demonstrate Manchester's ambition to be a world class cycling city.

2.6 The outcome of Manchester's candidature will be announced at the ACES Europe Gala event in Brussels, which will take place in early December.

2.7 If successful in securing the award, Manchester's Capital of Cycling year would commence in January 2024 for 12 months and leave a long-lasting legacy for Cycling in Manchester.

### **3.0 Manchester's Bid Content**

3.1 Manchester's Candidature was submitted as a joint bid between Manchester City Council, MCRactive, TfGM, British Cycling, Marketing Manchester and GLL representing the City of Manchester.

3.2 The bid document embeds and aligns with ACES Europe's five aims of:

- Enjoyment in Exercise
- Willingness to Achieve
- Sense of Community
- Learning Fair Play
- Improvement of Health

3.3 Likewise, the bid document aligns closely with several key council strategies, including:

- Manchester Active Travel Strategy and Investment Plan, which aims to deliver high quality cycling provision on our highways and supporting infrastructure such as cycle parking
- Making Manchester Fairer, which recognises the role of cycling in improving our surroundings, the environment, transport and tackling climate change, which in turn contribute to tackling health inequalities in the city/
- Manchester Sport and Physical Activity Strategy, which works collectively with the whole sport, physical activity and health sector to widen access for all, in turn leading to happier and healthier lifestyles. Cycling was identified as a priority area during the consultation process for the Sport and Physical Activity Strategy.

3.4 Manchester has a strong track record of hosting major sporting events since the 2002 Commonwealth Games. The National Cycling Centre houses the velodrome and indoor BMX track, as well as being the headquarters of British Cycling and the GB Cycling Team.

3.5 Manchester City Council has a long-term investment strategy that has seen over £100m invested into the sport and leisure venue portfolio between 2010 and 2020 and a further £20m is forecasted for investment this decade, which will include key cycling facility improvements. The National Cycling Centre has recently reopened after a £27m refurbishment and enhancement programme, which included green technology improvements to enable the facility to operate more efficiently and reduce its carbon footprint.

3.6 The Bee Network will see 1,800 miles of new walking and cycling routes created to connect neighbourhoods across Greater Manchester. 13km of protected cycle lanes have been built in Manchester since 2018, including the UK's first CYCLOPS junctions. More major highways schemes will be delivered in 2024 on Deansgate, and in Ancoats and New Cross, as well as the completion of the Chorlton Cycleway, a flagship 5km link from Chorlton to the city centre, which is considered to be a national exemplar of high-quality design for both cycling and pedestrians.

3.7 The Bee Network includes the cycle hire scheme which is managed and funded by TfGM, providing 1,500 bikes and e-bikes available for public hire. The scheme has seen over 1 million kilometres ridden since its launch in 2021, with over 60,000 active users and 1,300 rides made per day.

- 3.8 In February 2023, the council adopted the Manchester Active Travel Strategy and Investment Plan which has set out the scale of Manchester's ambition for cycling including a target to double Manchester's cycling modal share from 6% to 12% by 2028.
- 3.9 Manchester City Council has secured investment of £70m to deliver high quality cycling infrastructure on the highway, including the provision of kerb-separated schemes, cycle priority junction improvements and modal filters.
- 3.10 In 2020 Manchester undertook a cycling facility needs assessment which identified cycle hubs as a key priority to provide local opportunities to encourage people to learn to ride and develop their skills and confidence. Potential cycle hub locations were identified during this assessment, and three of these sites are now operational including Wythenshawe Cycle Hub, Philips Parks Cycle Hub and Platt Fields Park Cycle Hub.
- 3.11 MCRactive and British Cycling work closely together to widen access to cycling through community focused initiatives such as:
- Breeze is a women's only programme offering free local bike rides for women of all abilities.
  - Pedal Parties are held in traffic free spaces and provide opportunities for families and children to improve their cycling skills.
  - Guided rides are planned rides delivered by trained ride leaders and are suitable for all abilities.
- 3.12 Manchester has hosted many major international cycling events, including the Tour of Britain, the National BMX Series and the UCI Track World Masters Championships in 2023. Further international events are scheduled for 2024, including the National Track Championships, the Women's Tour of Britain and the National BMX Series.
- 3.13 Manchester is home to a variety of major cycling clubs and organisations, as well as community led cycling groups. Similarly, Manchester has strong relationships with National and International cycling organisations such as Union, Cycliste Internationale (UCI), British Cycling, UK Sport, Cycling UK and Sport England.
- 3.14 Cycling underpins Manchester's ambition to improve health and wellbeing across the city. Furthermore, replacing shorter car journeys with cycling has the potential to improve air quality in the city. Many community-focused cycling activities promote inclusive cycling, with specific initiatives to inspire women and girls to become involved in cycling, such as 'Women in the Workshop' sessions held at Station South.
- 3.15 Other health and wellbeing initiatives include TfGM's Cycle and Stride for Active Lives where 29 Manchester based groups and organisations have received funding to develop local walking and cycling opportunities. Similarly, TfGM have provided £5,000 grants to 13 groups and organisations to set up



Bike Libraries, which allow people to borrow bikes for free from locations within the heart of communities, increasing access to bikes.

- 3.16 Volunteers play a significant role in the running of cycling clubs and activity in Manchester. Direct targeting of cycling volunteers has always been a challenge so in 2024 MCRactive with British Cycling will launch a cycling volunteer programme to support events and activities across Manchester.
- 3.17 Cycling tourism is currently promoted by all bid partners through their websites and e-newsletters. However, we recognise this is an area in which all partners can improve. The intention is for this to be captured as part of the new Tourism strategy for Greater Manchester

#### **4.0 Commitments for 2024**

- 4.1 If successful in being named the European Capital of Cycling, 2024 will see a year-long celebration of Cycling in Manchester. A programme of events is being developed to drive community activation, identifying existing programmes to build on and new interventions which encourage active travel and widen participation in cycling.
- 4.2 Each bid partner has identified commitments for 2024, if Manchester should be successful in obtaining the accolade. Whereas some of these measures pre-date the bid, success would have significant benefit in promoting and amplifying their benefits. A delivery plan would be developed outlining when and how these actions would be delivered. These include but are not limited to:
- Deliver pilot scheme of secure on-street residential cycle parking in 'cycle hangars'
  - Enhanced activation of major active travel schemes due to complete during 2024, for Deansgate and the Victoria North Eastern Gateway scheme through Ancoats and New Cross.
  - Continue to develop our School Streets programme and introduce enforcement through Automatic Number Plate Recognition (ANPR) cameras, removing the demand for volunteer enforcement
  - Every primary school child to be offered cycle training (Bikeability and cycle coaching).
  - Expand cycling participation events in partnership with community groups.
  - Free/ low-cost family activity in parks and community spaces- every school holiday and at regular intervals term time as well.
  - Launch of Manchester Cycle Academy- new programme of outreach activity in partnership with British Cycling, MCRactive and GLL that will connect back to National Cycling Centre and Talent Pools.
  - A focused campaign on women and girls to address confidence and safety perceptions.
  - Increased traffic free city centre events to enable a cycling take over.
  - Campaigns focused on bike maintenance to give confidence to people and communities who are less confident with cycling, including 'Dr Bike' free maintenance sessions.

- Increase the number of Pedal Parties to ensure residents have access to free local family cycling activities.
- To plan and deliver a workforce development plan to increase and upskill the cycling workforce.
- Launch community Cycling festivals and participation events.
- Continue to grow and develop the bike maintenance and training programmes in partnership with community organisations.
- Launch a series of inclusive cycling programmes targeting a number of target groups including disability, women and girls.
- Free tickets to major cycling events targeted at community groups who are expanding and growing the cycling offer.
- Increase the opportunities to borrow or hire a bike within the City, with a particular focus on parks and off-road recreational trails.
- Improve access to safe sites for cycling such as parks, ensuring that physical barriers are identified and adapted to provide access for all.
- Continue to invest in walking, wheeling and cycling infrastructure to provide clean, safe and well-maintained routes that encourage use.
- Increase cleansing frequency of segregated cycle lanes through investment in a dedicated narrow access sweeper. Work with internal and external stakeholders to support Keep Manchester Tidy events to clean up cycle routes which are not part of the cyclical cleanse programme.

## **5.0 Communications Plan**

- 5.1 Should the bid be successful, we will develop a year-long campaign with the objective of raising the profile of Manchester's world class cycling facilities, driving participation with community groups and facilities, as well as highlighting the investment and delivery of cycling infrastructure.
- 5.2 Supporting residents to take up cycling, whether for fun or to travel around the city, is in line with Manchester's Active Travel Strategy and facilitates healthier lifestyles. The campaign will be aligned to these guiding principles.
- 5.3 This accolade will put Manchester on the national and international stage with the opportunity to tell our story and highlight our ambitions for the future. The communications campaign will include media and PR opportunities working with those who make Manchester a proud cycling city and encourage others to get involved.
- 5.4 A bespoke campaign brand has been developed that will be used to bring all elements of the bid together, working with partners under one recognisable look and feel. The campaign will filter through the channels that partners own or have access to 'badge' Pedal More in 24.

## **6.0 Outcomes and Legacy**

- 6.1 By building on the commitments set out for 2024, we hope to accelerate Manchester's cycling ambitions and create a legacy which will help grow Manchester as an international city of cycling, helping to leverage further investment into cycling in the city. In the lead up to 2024, the partners will work

collaboratively to develop a detailed activation plan which incorporates the key targets and outcomes.

- 6.2 Should the City be successful; it is proposed that the programme of activation be extended to ensure a legacy programme.

## **7.0 Recommendations**

- 7.1 The Communities and Equalities Scrutiny Committee is recommended to:

- Consider and comment on Manchester's bid to become ACES European Capital of Cycling for 2024: and
- Endorse the recommendation to the Executive for Manchester's bid to become ACES European Capital of Cycling for 2024.

- 7.2 The Executive is recommended to agree that Manchester bids to become ACES European Capital of Cycling for 2024.