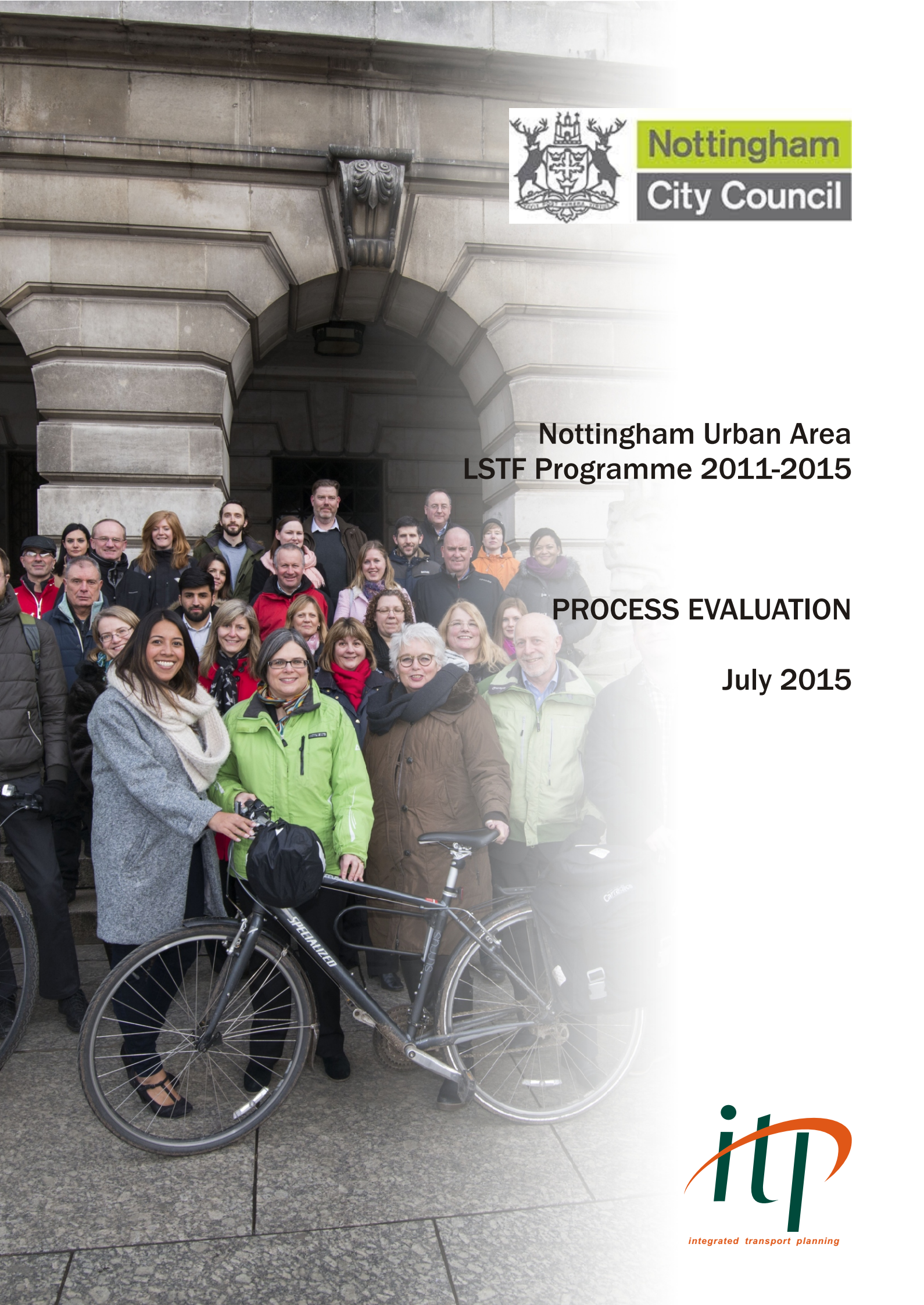


Nottingham City Council

Nottingham Urban Area LSTF Programme 2011-2015

PROCESS EVALUATION

July 2015

itp
integrated transport planning

Nottingham City Council

Nottingham Urban Area LSTF Programme 2011-2015

PROCESS EVALUATION
July 2015

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Department for Transport's (DfT) Local Sustainable Transport Fund (LSTF) was established to assist local authorities with the delivery of sustainable transport initiatives that supported economic growth, whilst reducing carbon emissions. The Nottingham Urban Area LSTF Programme received a total £15.424 million of LSTF funding from the DfT to fund local transport initiatives in 2011-2015 and was further boosted by an additional £0.77m of local funding.

The Nottingham LSTF Programme was led by Nottingham City Council (NCC), on behalf of a local partnership that also included Nottinghamshire County Council, Derbyshire County Council, the Greater Nottingham Transport Partnership (GNTP)/Big Wheel, Sustrans, and NHS Nottingham City. The partnership was supported by a range of public, private, and third sector stakeholders.

Integrated Transport Planning Ltd. (ITP) was commissioned by NCC to undertake an independent evaluation of the Nottingham Urban Area LSTF programme's delivery and impact. This document reports the findings from the process evaluation, which focuses on how the LSTF programme was delivered, rather than what the various projects achieved in terms of outputs and outcomes.

The process evaluation's three key objectives were to:

- Clearly document the approach to managing what has been a major programme of sustainable transport projects in Nottingham.
- Determine how well the programme delivery and implementation arrangements have worked in practice; highlighting what worked well, or could be improved.
- Identify lessons that could improve the delivery of similar future initiatives.

The process evaluation was qualitative in nature, and commenced with a desk-based review of key project documents and management structures. This was followed by 25 semi-structured in-depth interviews with key individuals involved with the delivery of Nottingham's LSTF programme.

Programme strengths: what worked well and should be carried forward?

A key strength of the Nottingham LSTF programme was that it delivered a wide ranging, but at the same time integrated, package of measures which linked into wider capital investment in transport infrastructure in Greater Nottingham. Other key strengths identified included:

- Effective overall management and coordination of a complex programme covering a large number of projects, which typically ran for between 2 and 3 years.
- The strong sense of partnership and collaboration fostered through new and existing working relationships fostered through LSTF programme's delivery.
- Effectively using the existing Big Wheel branding saved delivery time up-front, while Council social and print media networks helped expand the reach of LSTF projects.
- Continuity of staff members and delivery partners throughout the LSTF programme period, with a clear emphasis that 'people made the programme'.
- Regular high profile sustainable and active travel events which have showcased the quality and diversity of the LSTF programme as a whole package of measures that support on-going infrastructure improvements.
- Removal of the technological barriers to smart integrated ticketing, allowing NCC to demonstrate to operators that they have the necessary systems in place.

Programme weaknesses and lessons learned: what could be improved in future?

Some aspects of the LSTF programme proved more challenging to deliver than envisaged at the bid stage, and consequently worked less effectively than intended. Identified weaknesses that yielded lessons for future similar initiatives have been grouped into a number of themes.

Programme design and management:

- The interwoven nature of lots of smaller LSTF projects meant there was considerable overlap across workstrands, making it hard for some delivery partners and members of the public to understand how the programme fitted together. In future it may be beneficial to treat each workstrand more discretely, or to rationalise the scope of workstrands so they can be more clearly defined around core themes.
- Combining project Steering and Communications Groups in future may help avoid duplication of discussion, and ensure a fuller attendance at single quarterly meetings.

Procuring staff, delivery partners and sites:

- The programme management challenge of commissioning a large number of revenue-funded projects delivered by external partners was more significant than expected, and resulted in programme delays. Future delays may be overcome by:
    - Securing dedicated staff resources on a short term basis to assist with commissioning/project management
    - Pre-approving/selecting preferred suppliers whilst waiting for the award decision
    - Building-in sufficient time at the beginning of smarter travel choices interventions to ensure the right mix of staff members are appointed into delivery teams.
- Discussions with potential delivery locations reduced the time available for delivering the Community Smarter Travel Hubs and Citycard Cycle Hubs. In future it may be beneficial to 'warm-up' potential delivery site managers to ensure there are no planning or availability issues that will prevent swift start-up.

Funding and budget management:

- The lack of contingency built into the funding bid meant changes proposed by DfT caused delays when additional funds needed to be identified. Pre-empting this with contingency budgets could help to overcome future funding shortfalls and delays.
- The migration of Council payment systems created a short term cashflow issue for some delivery partners. In future, enabling partners to invoice in advance so as to cover periods of disruption may mitigate this risk.

Barriers to successful collaboration:

- A lack of shared decision-making responsibility between NCC and Notts County Council was identified as a weakness, reflecting the LSTF programme's city-focused nature. Balancing ownership of this role may be important for the Nottingham and Nottinghamshire Combined Authority's success.
- The smartcard programme demonstrated the challenge of accommodating operators' commercial interests, and city-wide sustainable travel objectives within a deregulated public transport market. This highlights that there may be a need for city councils, such as NCC, to have greater influence over ticket pricing within their locality.

- Working across different administrative boundaries created delivery challenges on projects that combined involvement from health, sports, leisure and transport teams. Going forward it could be beneficial to establish a cross-sectoral working group (e.g. involving transport, leisure, health, employment delivery partners) so that a joined-up approach can be adopted.

Branding and communications:

- Even with a strong core brand (The Big Wheel) at the heart of a major smarter travel delivery programme, there were competing brand-related interests among some of the delivery partners. For example, the lack of a consistent approach to presenting and delivering Community Smarter Travel Hubs was widely identified as a weakness.
- On projects that are seeking to promote sustainable travel, it is important to remember the role local Councils can play in being champions and leading by example.
- Social and digital media are central to major sustainable transport behavioural change initiatives. In future consideration might be given to establishing (or re-using) the digital and social media platforms created for the LSTF programme at an earlier stage. This would reduce the need for multiple project websites and social media profiles.

<u>Monitoring and reporting</u>

- The need for up-front research and information gathering at the individual project scale has potential to delay future similar programmes to LSTF. With hindsight, not collecting sufficient project-specific baseline data for specific target objectives was a missed opportunity for the LSTF programme. It was always likely NCC's officers and Council members would need to demonstrate the programme's impact post-delivery to secure future funding support.
- The use of city-wide monitoring activities means it will be hard to separate the impact of LSTF from other major transport investments being delivered in Nottingham. A lesson for future programmes is therefore not to rely too heavily on city-wide key indicators for detailed impact evaluation, but to instead treat them as corroborative datasets that indicate whether monitored programme impacts are in-line/counter to broader transport trends.

Lessons for future DfT funding / programme design:

- The DfT should set out their monitoring and evaluation requirements earlier, either at the bidding stage or as part of the funding award, so that these requirements can be better built into delivery programmes.
- One of the most significant lessons learned was that behaviour change programmes, and in particular complex programmes involving numerous projects and delivery partners, require more time than was allowed under the current LSTF programme.
- To address these issues the programme management team feel that it would be beneficial if DfT could offer bid-derived funding for travel behaviour change projects over a longer period of time.

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Appendix B: In-depth interview discussion guide – Delivery Partners
Appendix C: In-depth interview discussion guide – Stakeholders

1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 The Department for Transport's (DfT) Local Sustainable Transport Fund (LSTF) programme was established to support local authorities with their delivery of sustainable transport initiatives that supported economic growth, whilst reducing carbon emissions.

1.2 Nottingham's LSTF programme bid and delivery was led by Nottingham City Council (NCC), on behalf of a local partnership that also included Nottinghamshire County Council, Derbyshire County Council, the Greater Nottingham Transport Partnership (GNTP)[1]/Big Wheel, Sustrans, and NHS Nottingham City. The partnership was supported by a range of public, private, and third sector stakeholders.



1.3 Successful bid applications resulted in the 'Nottingham Urban Area LSTF Programme' receiving a total of £15.424 million of LSTF funding from the DfT to fund local transport initiatives during the period 2011-15. A further £1.18 million of revenue funds have since been awarded by DfT to continue supporting elements of the city's programme through the 2015/16 public sector financial year.

1.4 In February 2015 Integrated Transport Planning Ltd. (ITP) was commissioned by NCC to undertake an independent evaluation of the Nottingham Urban Area LSTF programme's delivery and impact from its inception in 2011 to the end of March 2015. This document reports the findings from the process evaluation component of ITP's review.

Purpose of the Process Evaluation

1.5 The following three key objectives for the process evaluation were agreed with colleagues at NCC:

- To clearly document the approach to managing what has been a major programme of sustainable transport projects in Nottingham.
- To determine how well the programme delivery and implementation arrangements have worked in practice; highlighting what worked well, or could be improved.
- To identify lessons that could improve the delivery of similar future initiatives.

1.6 The process evaluation was qualitative in nature, and commenced with a desk-based review of key project documents and management structures. This was followed by a series of semi-structured in-depth interviews with key individuals involved with the delivery of Nottingham's LSTF programme.

[1] The Greater Nottingham Transport Partnership (GNTP) is a strategic advisory body who provide advice and support on transport planning and represents both public and private sectors

Relevance to evaluation of LSTF programme impacts

1.7 ITP is also undertaking a separate meta-analysis of the programme-wide impacts across all documented Nottingham LSTF initiatives and projects since their inception in 2011 to the end of March 2015. The focus of this work is on identifying how the various LSTF interventions have changed people's travel behaviour, and their subsequent impacts on local health, the economy, and the environment. The findings from this work will be documented in a separate Impact Evaluation Report, which will be informed by this process evaluation.

1.8 As such, this process evaluation report focuses on how the LSTF programme was delivered, rather than what the various projects achieved in terms of outputs and outcomes.

1.9 In addition, the DfT have commissioned a meta-analysis of the large LSTF programmes, including the Nottingham Urban Area LSTF programme. The outcomes reported by the NCC programme management team are being synthesised with those from other LSTF programmes to inform the DfT's understanding of the impact LSTF has had at a national level.

Structure of this report

1.10 The remainder of this report is structured as follows:

- Chapter 2 provides an overview of the Nottingham Urban Area LSTF programme and summarises the approach used to conduct the process evaluation.
- Chapter 3 sets out the findings on LSTF programme governance and management.
- Chapter 4 covers internal communication and partnership working within the programme.
- Chapter 5 focuses on external communications, and the marketing of the whole LSTF programme/individual projects to target audiences.
- Chapter 6 documents project implementation experiences from delivery partners.
- Chapter 7 looks at monitoring activities undertaken during the life of the programme.
- Chapter 8 reflects on what the LSTF delivery partners identified as the main legacies of the programme.
- Chapter 9 concludes by summarising what worked well, and looks at what could have been improved. As such it reflects both a set of conclusions and recommendations that could be taking forward through the delivery of similar future initiatives to the LSTF programme in Nottingham.

1.11 Within Chapters 3-8 ITP's key findings are highlighted within coloured text boxes:

Green boxes highlight aspects of the project that worked well, and could be implemented in similar future initiatives and programmes.

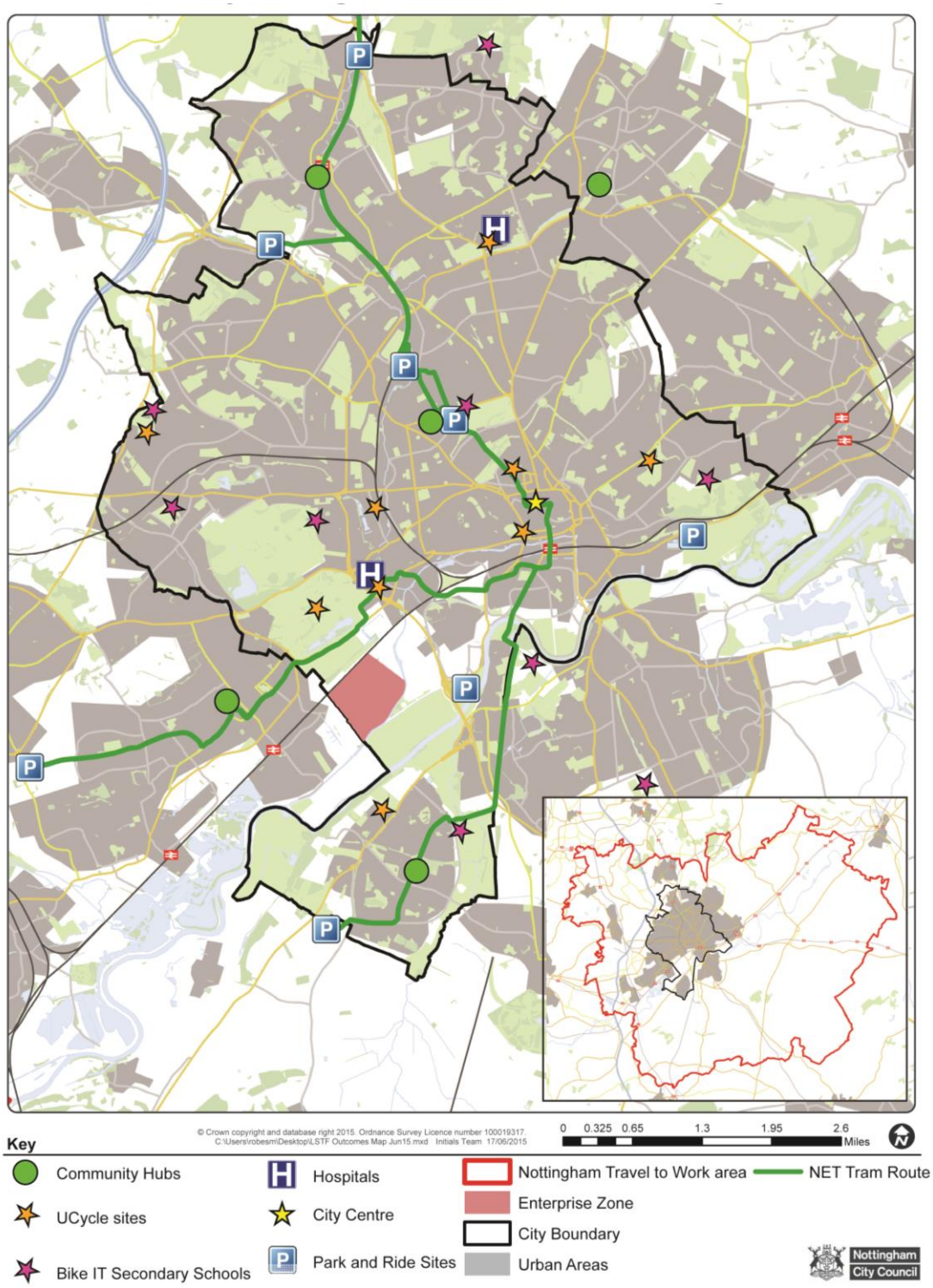
Grey boxes highlight specific challenges or lessons learned that could be usefully heeded when delivering similar future initiatives and programmes.

1.12 The points identified in these boxes throughout the report are summarised in the final Chapter of this report.

2 PROGRAMME OVERVIEW AND PROCESS EVALUATION METHODOLOGY

2.1 The delivery of the Nottingham LSTF programme was focused on the built-up area of the Nottingham conurbation. As illustrated in Figure 2-1; this area covers the administrative areas of Nottingham City Council, the urban areas within the boroughs of Broxtowe, Gedling, Rushcliffe in Nottinghamshire, Hucknall town centre in Ashfield District (also in Nottinghamshire), and the boroughs of Erewash and Amber Valley in Derbyshire.

Figure 2-1: Area covered by the Nottingham Urban Area LSTF Programme



Strategic programme objectives and targets

2.2 The four defined objectives for the Nottingham Urban Area LSTF programme were:

1) Growth: Increasing economic competitiveness and creating capacity for growth by bringing staff into the workplace using an integrated multi-modal sustainable transport network and attracting inward investment.
2) Carbon and Air Quality: Continuing downward trend in carbon emissions from transport and adapting to climate change by making low carbon travel options a realistic and attractive choice and preparing for changing weather patterns.
3) Accessibility: Linking people to jobs by reducing barriers to accessing services and opportunities, particularly in terms of affordability and low travel horizons.
4) Health: Creating the social, cultural and physical environment to support active travel options and reduce transport impacts.

2.3 Headline outcome targets, defined for achievement by the end of March 2014/15[2], were:

- Increase sustainable travel modal share by 10% from 2011/12 levels by 2014/15.
- No increase in traffic levels contributing to a reduction in carbon emissions from transport by 10% over three years by 2014/15.
- Increase in the number of people supported to employment and training by 2014/15.
- Double levels of cycling in key intervention areas from baseline levels by 2014/15.

2.4 As noted in the introductory chapter, these headline targets will be evaluated through a separate LSTF Programme Impact Evaluation that ITP will prepare in autumn 2015.

Programme workstrands

2.5 To aid delivery, the Nottingham LSTF programme was divided into four workstrands:

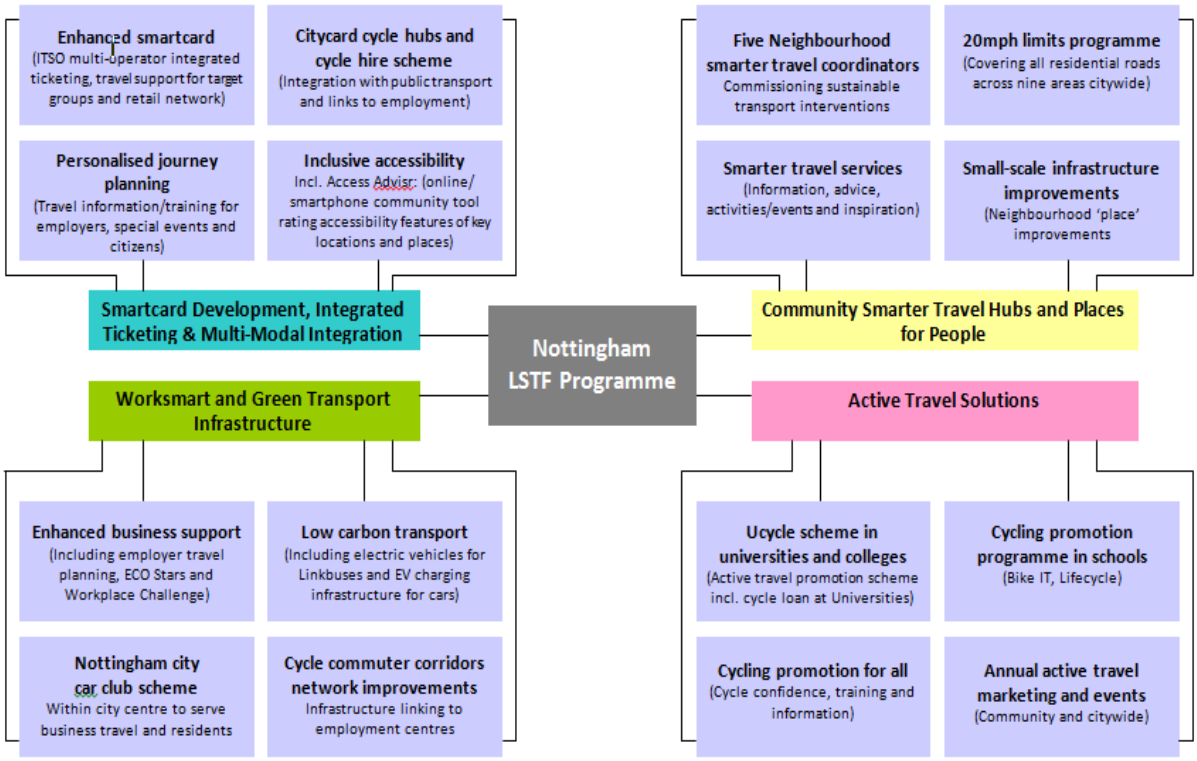
Table 2-1: Key features of Nottingham LSTF programme workstrands

Workstrand	Key features
A) Smartcard development, integrated ticketing and multi-modal integration	• Supporting access to employment and training • Improving integration and unlocking travel opportunities • Increased use of low carbon transport
B) Community smarter travel hubs and places for people	• Integrated smarter travel services at neighbourhood level • Help local people choose low carbon, active travel options • Address identified travel barriers
C) Worksmart business support activities & green transport infrastructure	• Supporting the needs of the business community • Smarter travel advice and support services • Developing the low carbon transport network
D) Active travel solutions	• Comprehensive programme of active travel marketing • Promotional activities and events • Make walking and cycling the norm for local journeys

[2] Nottingham Urban Area Local Sustainable Transport Fund, Outcomes Update Report 2013/14. Nottingham City Council, October 2014

2.6 Each workstrand contained a number of individual elements, illustrated in Figure 2-2, and was supported by a programme-wide marketing and communications strategy.

Figure 2-2: Nottingham LSTF Programme Interventions



2.7 Table 2-2 provides further details on the individual projects which were delivered via the Nottingham LSTF programme. This serves to highlight the complexity associated with:

- The scale of the delivery programme envisioned through the Nottingham LSTF bid.
- The large number of inter-related and complementary projects that were being delivered through the programme.
- The large number of delivery partners and stakeholders involved in delivering the programme.

Something highlighted by both the LSTF delivery stakeholders interviewed, and by the evaluation team, was that the diverse range of projects being delivered through the programme made it challenging to understand which organisations were responsible for which components of each workstream. There was also considerable overlap across workstrands – for example: business travel support, and community-level engagement on Smarter Travel Choices both formed components within two programme workstrands.

A potential lesson learned for future similar initiatives could be to treat each workstrand as an entirely separate programme (thereby minimising potentially confusing links between workstrands), or to rationalise the scope of workstrands so they can be more clearly defined in relation to common themes and delivery partners.

Table 2-2: Nottingham LSTF Projects and Delivery Partners

Workstrand	Project Name	Description	Delivery lead
A) Smartcard development, integrated ticketing and multi-modal integration	ITSO smartcard multi-operator ticketing	Development of multi-operator smartcard products	NCC Public Transport Team
	Smartcard retail network	On-street and in-store smartcard top-up mechanisms	
	Citycard Cycle parking hubs	Secure public cycle parking at key locations	
	Citycard Cycles	By the hour public bike hire service	
	Inclusive accessibility (Access Advisr)	Online public accessibility information and rating tool	
	Travel support for jobseekers & new starters + Personalised Travel Plans	½ price public transport day ticket for jobseekers & 1 month's free multi-operator travel for new job starters	
	Mobile Travel Centre (Info Bus)	Bus-based travel info service that visits local communities	
B) Community smarter travel hubs and places for people	Community Smarter Travel Hubs	Staffed neighbourhood centres promoting sustainable travel	Sustrans & TravelRight
	Travel advice at community events	Ad-hoc support for community events via the Hubs	
	Travel planning surgeries for job seekers	Support for jobseekers, promoting Kangaroo ticket offers	
	20mph limits programme	City-wide 20mph speed limits introduced in residential areas	NCC/Notts CC Road Safety
	Small-scale infrastructure improvements	Enhanced active travel facilities and routes to schools	
C) Worksmart and green transport infrastructure	Employer Travel Plan support	Advice to employers looking to influence staff travel patterns and encourage use of active and sustainable travel options	Big Wheel
	Travel advice at business events		
	Nottingham ECO Stars	Eco-driving/fleet management training course & recognition	TTR Ltd
	Workplace challenge	Annual challenge to reward sustainable workplace travel	Big Wheel
	EV charging infrastructure for cars	On-street electric vehicle charging for private vehicles	NCC
	Electric Link buses	Funding supported roll-out of electric Link bus network	NCC
	Nottingham City Car Club	Public on-street vehicle hire-by-the-hour service	City Car Club
	Cycle corridor infrastructure	Resurface Victoria Embankment and new River Leen route	NCC
D) Active Travel Solutions	Jobseeker cycle provision	Loaning bicycles to jobseekers in Nottingham	Ridewise
	Cycling promotion & training for all	Adult cycle training and advice, including for disabled people	
	Cycle maintenance training	Teaching core cycle maintenance skills at Hubs and events	
	Ucycle – Universities and FE Colleges	Bike hire, events, cycle training and facility improvements	Sustrans
	Cycle promotion & training in schools	BikeIT, Bikeability & Lifecycle training for local school children	Sustrans / NCC Road Safety
	Active travel marketing and events	Annual programme of promo activities, events & ongoing comms	Big Wheel

Process evaluation methodology

2.8 To gain insight into how effectively the Nottingham LSTF Programme had been delivered ITP agreed the following topics with colleagues at NCC:

- **LSTF governance and management** - governance structures, role of the programme management team, allocation of funding, commissioning of external delivery partners.
- **Internal and external communications** - partnership working, stakeholder engagement, external marketing and branding, engaging target audiences.
- **Project implementation** - project set-up, recruitment and retention of delivery teams, changes during the delivery phase, factors which aided or hampered project delivery.
- **Monitoring** - objectives and targets, reporting to the DfT, project reporting, monitoring activities, feedback mechanisms.
- **Overall reflections on the LSTF programme** – adherence to delivery programme and costs, key strengths and weaknesses, feedback on projects/programmes.
- The **legacy and lessons learned** from the LSTF programme.

2.9 These provided the focus for the process evaluation. They defined the perspective from which ITP undertook the qualitative review of existing project documents, and a series of in-depth interviews.

Review of relevant project documents

2.10 The following documents were made available to ITP for review:

- Key Component and Main Bids
- Annual monitoring reports
- Service Level Agreements/Contracts
- Quarterly project highlight reports
- Outcome monitoring plans
- Communications strategy and protocols
- Steering & Comms Group meeting notes

2.11 These reports were used to chart, at a high-level, the progress of the programme at different stages of its delivery timeframe. They also enabled the ITP evaluation team to tailor the in-depth discussion sessions to the various projects that made up the LSTF programme.

In-depth interviews

2.12 The ITP evaluation team undertook in-depth interviews to ascertain the views of key individuals involved in LSTF delivery in Nottingham, and of wider stakeholders with an interest in the programme. This allowed ITP to gather insights from people working 'within' project teams, as well as those 'outside' of the programme who were aware of its objectives and activities.

2.13 In total the evaluation team completed 25 interviews with people who worked in the following LSTF programme roles:

- 4 with members of LSTF programme management team – NCC staff who oversaw the programme's delivery.

- 7 with Council delivery partners – internal Council (NCC and Nottinghamshire County Council) teams delivering LSTF projects.
- 8 with external delivery partners – external organisations contracted to deliver LSTF projects.
- 6 with LSTF stakeholders – who supported the programme and/or individual LSTF projects without direct delivery roles.

2.14 A list of the project roles and/or organisations of the people ITP interviewed is provided in Appendix A to this report. This list was devised in conjunction with colleagues at NCC.

2.15 Several respondents were involved in the delivery of more than one LSTF project, in which case all relevant projects were covered within one in-depth interview. Some discussions also involved more than one respondent, either because two people were identified from one project delivery team / stakeholder group, or because it was appropriate to combine related project interviews.

2.16 Each interview lasted for approximately 1 hour, and the respondents received an email in advance setting out the key discussion themes which were based on the topics defined within paragraph 2.8. Respondents were encouraged to express themselves freely, and the individual focus allowed for discussion of any sensitive issues that might not be covered in a group setting.

2.17 The interviews all followed a semi-structured discussion guide developed by ITP with input from the LSTF programme management team. The discussions with other stakeholders followed a slightly shorter topic guide, to reflect their non-delivery role in the programme. These discussion guides can be found in Appendices B and C to this report.

2.18 Following each interview, the notes taken by the ITP facilitator were written-up and shared with interviewees so they could confirm that they represented an accurate record of the discussion. All interview notes were then comparatively analysed against the key topics agreed for this process evaluation. The findings from ITP's analysis are documented in the remaining chapters of this report.

3 GOVERNANCE AND PROGRAMME MANAGEMENT

3.1 Nottingham's LSTF programme was made up of a complex mix of inter-related projects all being delivered to different timescales and budgets over a 3.5 year period from late 2011 to March 2015. Effective governance and programme management were evidently required to successfully deliver the various component projects to time and budget.

3.2 This Chapter explores the governance structures, programme and budgetary management activities, and approach to commissioning adopted by the programme management team.

Governance structures

3.3 The governance framework for the Nottingham LSTF programme was developed as part of the LSTF bidding process. Figure 3-1 illustrates the governance framework initiated for the Nottingham LSTF programme.

3.4 At a **strategic level** senior partners (Derby, Derbyshire, Nottingham and Nottinghamshire Local Enterprise Partnership (D2N2 LEP), Nottingham and Nottinghamshire Joint Committee on Strategic Planning and Transport, the Nottingham and Nottinghamshire Joint Planning Advisory Board and the Greater Nottingham Transport Partnership) endorsed LSTF delivery, providing input and overview in the context of wider planning and transport activities in the Nottingham urban area. Alongside this group, NCC's existing Local Transport Plan (LTP) governance structure and hierarchy were adapted to oversee the delivery of the LSTF programme. As such:

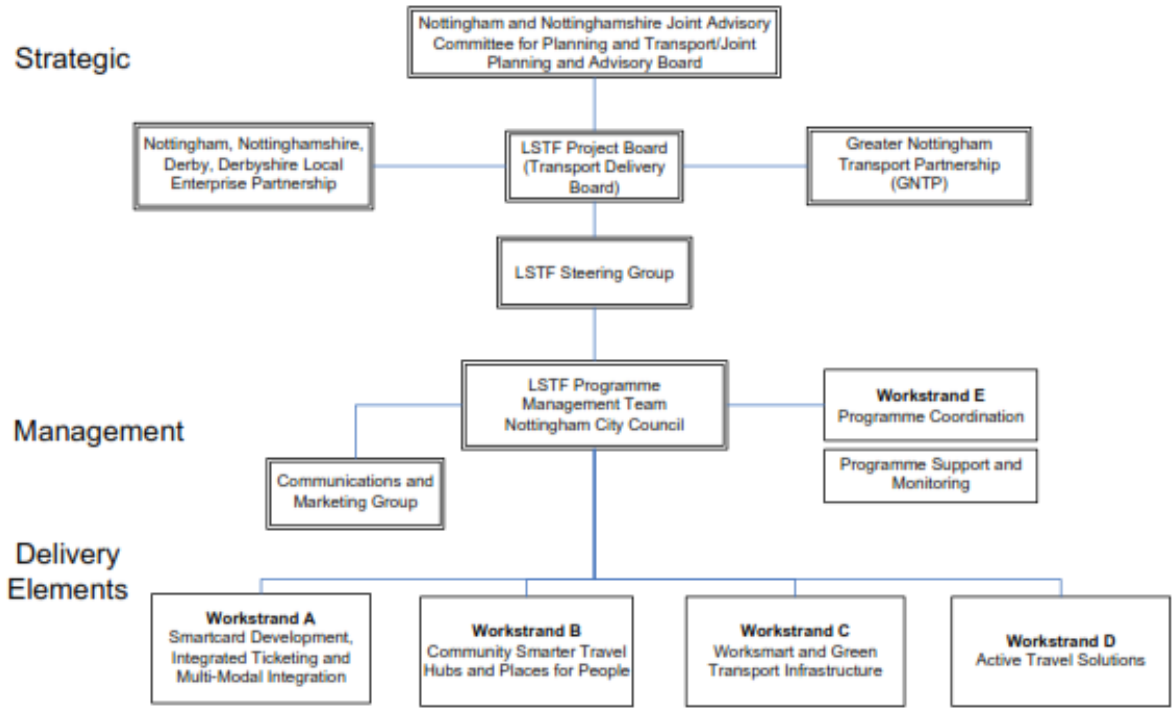
- NCC's Executive Board approved the overall LSTF programme.
- Decisions relating to 'scheme approvals' or the commissioning of projects costing less than £1million were delegated to the **LSTF Project Board** (also known as the 'Transport Delivery Board'), chaired by NCC's Portfolio Holder for Planning and Transport (Cllr. Jane Urqhart). As such the Project Board owned the LSTF programme and provided strategic direction over its implementation. Formally, approvals were made via the Council's Portfolio Holder Delegated Decision Making process (projects costing less than £1 million) and the Council's Executive Board for decisions above £1million.
- Operating alongside the Transport Delivery Board, the Greater Nottingham Public Transport Integration Board provided a link to local bus companies (NCT and Trent Barton) and to the tram operator Tramlink. Some of the stakeholder organisations interviewed for this process evaluation are part of this group.

3.5 At a management level:

- The **LSTF Steering Group** was the programme's mechanism for day-to-day management, and reported to the Project Board. It directed the implementation of LSTF-funded projects, and provided the progress reporting and monitoring frameworks needed to effect delivery against timescales and objectives. The majority of delivery partners interviewed were members of this group.
- Officers from NCC's Transport Strategy team formed the **LSTF programme management team**. They led the day-to-day management, coordination and liaison across the programme; and also managed programme finances.

- A **Communications and Marketing Group** was established to oversee both internal and external communications relating to the programme. This was convened by the GNTP on behalf of the whole LSTF programme.

Figure 3-1: Nottingham LSTF Programme Governance Arrangements

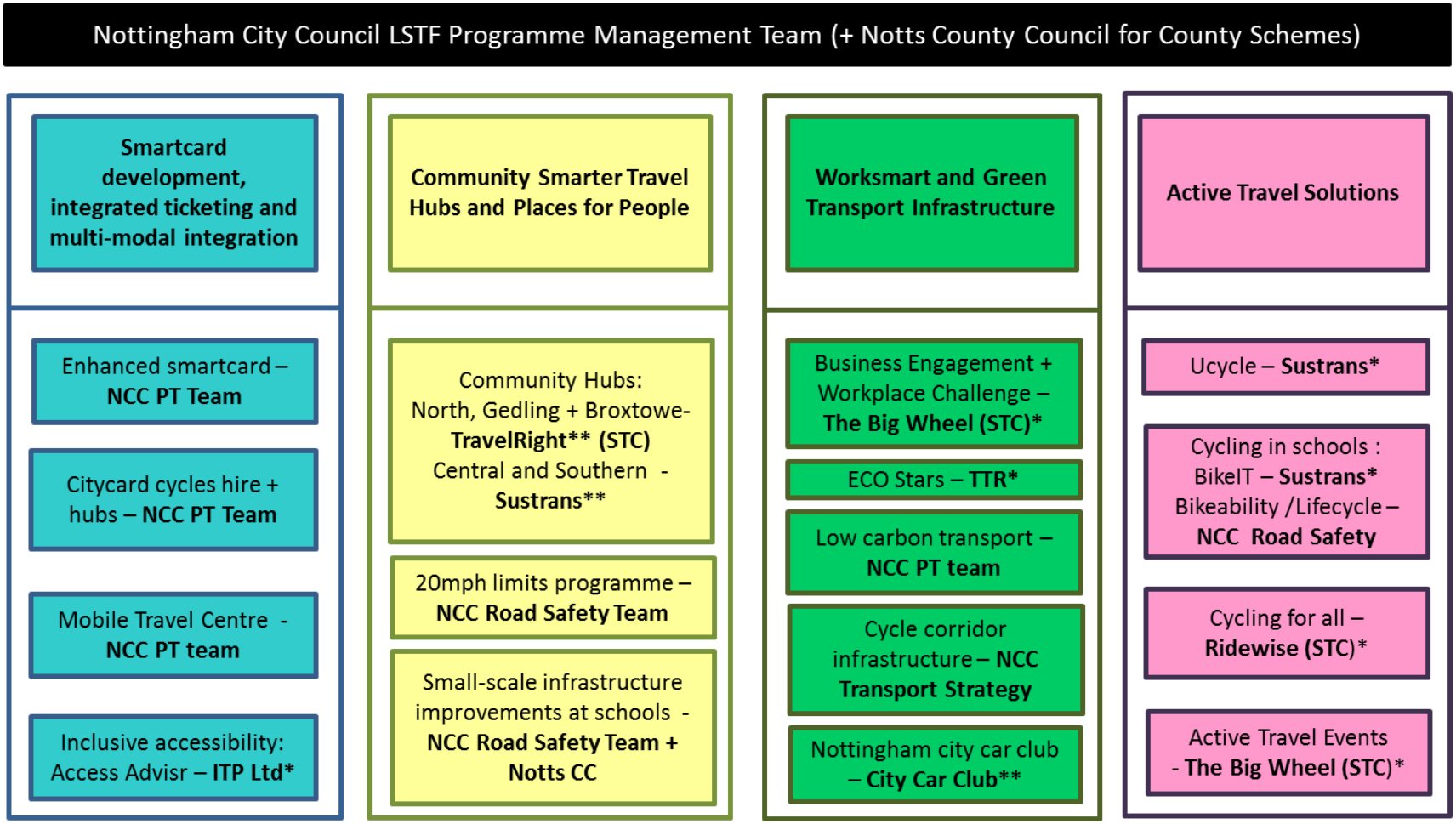


Delivery partners

3.6 Figure 3-1 shows that, at the **delivery level,** there were project leads and delivery teams responsible for each component of the LSTF programme. Some of these were teams from within Nottingham City and Nottinghamshire County Councils, while some were externally appointed to support programme delivery. Figure 3-2 provides further detail and outlines the different teams responsible for LSTF project delivery, including:

- **Council delivery partners** – such as NCC's Road Safety (20 mph speed limit implementation) and Public Transport/Citycard (Smartcard development) teams. Nottinghamshire County Council staff members were responsible for managing the delivery of LSTF projects with the county area. This included the Community Smarter Travel Hubs in Gedling and Broxtowe, the Citycard Cycle Hubs within the county, and the introduction of 20mph speed limits outside county schools.
- **LSTF delivery partners** – these external organisations were contracted by NCC to provide the services which helped make up the LSTF Programme. They include the Sustainable Travel Collective (an umbrella organisation which delivered projects under three brands - The Big Wheel (business engagement and active travel events), TravelRight (Community Smarter Travel Hubs) and Ridewise (cycle training)), Sustrans (Ucycle Nottingham, Community Smarter Travel Hubs) and City Car Club (Car Club delivery).

Figure 3-2: LSTF Workstrand Leaders and Project Delivery Leads



Other Stakeholder's primary project inputs:

NCC Public Health Team: Central + Southern Hubs	NCC Sports, Parks & Leisure: Active Travel Events	Public transport operators : Enhanced smartcard	Broxtowe + Gedling Borough Councils: Broxtowe + Gedling Hubs

Appointment of project delivery leads: * Direct appointment; ** Open tender
Several of the NCC-led projects involved the procurement of additional external service providers/suppliers/contractors

- **Wider stakeholders** – who supported the LSTF programme without playing a leading delivery role. This group includes:
  - Local public transport operators (PTOs): Provided input into the smartcard and integrated ticketing element of the LSTF programme, and helped subsidise the reduced price public transport tickets for job seekers.
  - NCC's Sport, Culture and Parks Department: Supported the active travel elements of the programme.
  - NCC's Public Health Team: Provided funding for the Community Hub Coordinators for the Nottingham Central and South Hubs.
  - Gedling and Broxtowe Borough Council: Primarily provided support to the TravelRight Community Smarter Travel Hubs which were set up within their administrative area.

3.7 Various documents were produced to explain the LSTF governance arrangements, and shared through P2.net (Nottingham City Council's programme management portal) to which all project delivery partners had access. Despite this, several delivery partners noted they were not totally clear on the roles and responsibilities of different various structures. There was most commonly some confusion between the role of the LSTF Steering Group and the Communications and Marketing Group.

3.8 Overall the NCC programme management team felt that the correct governance structures were in place, and while it may have seemed overly bureaucratic to the delivery partners this was largely unavoidable given the scale and complexity of the LSTF programme. The programme management team sought to reduce unnecessary bureaucracy wherever possible. A good example of this is when the frequency of Steering Group meetings was changed from every 6 weeks to every quarter, in-line with the DfT's initial requirements for grant claims.

Many of the delivery team interviewees commented that, overall, the project was effectively managed. It was widely recognised that the large number of projects that made up the Nottingham LSTF programme, and the evolving reporting requirements from DfT made this a challenging task.

The one issue raised by a couple of interviewees was that the LSTF Project Board appeared to have ceased meeting as frequently as initially planned, and that the reason for this had not been communicated.

The LSTF programme management team

3.9 The LSTF Programme Manager role was fulfilled by one FTE Principal Officer from NCC's Transport Strategy team. Their responsibilities included commissioning, directing, and coordinating internal and external project delivery teams, financial management for the programme (submitting grant claims to DfT and accounting for project budgets), and reporting progress and outputs to the DfT on a quarterly and annual basis.

3.10 The Programme Manager was supported by other members of the Transport Strategy team, in particular the Transport Strategy Service Manager who chaired the LSTF Steering

Group and took responsibility for quality assurance. The Programme Manager was supported and advised by another Principal Officer from NCC's Transport Strategy team. This individual acted as a Project Manager for several LSTF projects and supported the preparation and implementation of monitoring and evaluation activities. In addition NCC appointed an LSTF Project Officer who provided marketing and communications support, oversaw several LSTF projects, and undertook elements of the DfT's monitoring requirements.

3.11 The LSTF programme management team received support from NCC's Transport Communications Officer, who works across the City's transport teams to coordinate transport-related communications.

The programme management team highlighted that the LSTF programme was a 'new' type of initiative for their team, by virtue of incorporating a large proportion of revenue funding and the need to commission numerous external partners. This meant there were lots of new processes and procedures for the programme management team to learn.

The challenge was exacerbated by only having limited staff resources allocated for programme management and by having so many different projects and delivery partners to coordinate and manage. This was particularly an issue at the beginning and end of the LSTF programme, when programme management team had to divide their time between ramping-up / finishing-off LSTF delivery tasks and writing Bids for further LSTF funding.

On a positive note, unlike other LSTF authorities who had to recruit new staff to fulfil LSTF roles, the Nottingham LSTF programme management was largely undertaken by existing NCC staff. This meant they already had good knowledge of the locality covered by the LSTF programme and an awareness of local sustainable transport networks.

LSTF funding allocation and budgets

Allocated budgets

3.12 The £15.424m awarded to NCC by the DfT for its LSTF Programme was made up of:

- £4.925m confirmed in July 2011 (related to the Key Component bid);
- £10.320m confirmed in July 2012 (related to the Main bid); and
- £178,825 secured in the final 2014-15 settlement from the DfT (also related to the Main bid).

3.13 The total expenditure on the LSTF programme was £16.196 million, which included some additional funding (from the LTP and Sustrans) to supplement the DfT funding. Table 3-1 shows how this was allocated across the workstrands that made up the Nottingham LSTF Programme. Roughly two thirds of the programme budget was allocated for revenue projects, with one third earmarked as capital spending. The key items of budgeted expenditure within the programme were:

- Smartcard integration £4.959m revenue, £0.858m capital = £5.817m total
- Community Travel Hubs £1.848m revenue, £1.926m capital = £3.774m total

- Worksmart: £1.382m revenue, £2.985m capital = £4.367m total

3.14 With the inclusion of other local contributions from the Nottingham Local Transport Plan capital programme and partner contributions, the total Nottingham Urban Area LSTF package was worth £34.979 million.

Table 3-1: LSTF key component and main bid programme funding allocations (in £000s)

LSTF Bid and Workstrands	2011/12		2012/13		2013/14		2014/15*		Total	
	Rev	Cap	Rev	Cap	Rev	Cap	Rev	Cap	Rev	Cap
Key Component funding allocations										
A: Smartcard Development, Integrated Ticketing and Multi-modal Integration	812	224	709	235	237	367	152	33	**1,910**	**858**
B: Community Smarter Travel Hub Pilot (Bulwell)	14	0	135	0	226	0	200	0	**574**	**0**
C: Worksmart and Green Transport Infrastructure (Business Support)	102	0	143	0	136	0	111	0	**493**	**0**
D: Active travel Solutions	53	25	247	75	200	0	217	117	**717**	**217**
E: Programme monitoring and partnerships	20	0	0	0	95	0	42	0	**157**	**0**
Key component sub totals	***1,001***	***249***	***1,234***	***310***	***894***	***367***	***722***	***150***	***3,851***	***1,075***
Main Bid funding allocations										
A: Smartcard integration			398	0	859	0	1,792	0	**3,049**	**0**
B: Community Smarter Travel Hubs and Places for People (20mph projects)			0	323	520	389	754	1,214	**1,274**	**1,926**
C: Worksmart and Green Transport Infrastructure			206	383	239	1,338	444	1,265	**889**	**2,985**
D: Active travel Solutions			185	33	320	0	339	0	**844**	**33**
E: Programme coordination			47	0	42	0	181	0	**270**	**0**
Main bid sub totals			***836***	***739***	***1,980***	***1,727***	***3,510***	***2,479***	***6,326***	***4,944***
Grand total		**1,250**		**3,119**		**4,968**		**6,861**		**16,196**

This table reflects the total LSTF expenditure, made up of £15.424 million DfT funding plus £772,777 of funding from the LTP, Sustrans and other NCC sources.

Significant changes to budget allocations and reasons for variation

3.15 There were minor changes to some programme workstrands after the LSTF funding was awarded by the DfT. Smaller projects removed from the LSTF programme include:

- Funding for residential travel planning element was re-allocated. It would have been difficult to deliver this element given limited new residential development was taking place in Nottingham during the time of LSTF programme delivery.
- The bike recycling project, which was to be delivered by the charity Framework, received lottery funding so no longer required LSTF support. It remained a complementary project to the LSTF programme.
- The 'avoiding travel' element of the businesses and community engagement strands was removed because Councillors and the local community showed little support for it.

3.16 Four more significant changes to the programme budget were also identified through the process evaluation:

- A considerable challenge arose when the partnership was awarded the Main Bid funding in mid-2012. The requested contribution towards coordinator staff at the four additional Community Smarter Travel Hubs was specifically excluded in from the funding award, requiring a local funding source. NCC sourced the funding required for the Central and Southern Hubs from NCC's Public Health's team and Nottinghamshire County Council secured Section 106 contributions for the Gedling and Broxtowe Hubs. The time taken to find this additional funding was identified as a contributory factor to the relatively slow start to this component of the LSTF programme.
- Within the enhanced smartcard workstrand, it was originally intended there would be more Personalised Travel Planning activity. Once the LSTF funding was awarded, the allocations were re-assessed and some of the PTP funding had to be reprioritised due to higher than anticipated costs associated with the development of the multi-operator smartcard scheme. In 2014-2015 some of the funding intended for PTP was used to continue the scheme that gave reduced price Kangaroo tickets to jobseekers, as an interim evaluation had demonstrated the success of a pilot project funded through the DWP's City Deal in 2013-14.
- The scale of the 20mph limits programme was expanded with more areas implemented through LSTF than was originally planned. The whole city, excluding the city centre, has now been covered. Originally there were only plans to cover two-thirds of the city, but underspend in some LSTF budgets and local political support for city-wide 20mph limits meant this work was completed within LSTF. However, low initial cost estimates for this programme subsequently contributed to a need to find additional budget (from Local Transport Plan funds) to complete its expanded delivery.
- Some of the funding for the safer routes to school projects (a sub-element of the small scale infrastructure improvements) was re-allocated to other LSTF projects because there were delays in sourcing the additional non-LSTF funding required from other projects. As a result only two schemes, the Beckhampton Road scheme and a pedestrian cycle link along the new tram route (including adjacent to Farnborough Road serving local schools based in the vicinity) were implemented through this project.

3.17 Other budget-related issues were identified by respondents interviewed through the course of this process evaluation include:

- Programme and project start-up delays, which made it difficult for some delivery teams to spend their intervention budgets due to having condensed delivery timeframes.
- NCC changing their internal financial management system during the course of the LSTF programme which resulted in payments to some of the external partners not getting paid. Several of the delivery partners raised this matter as a significant challenge for their project/organisation.

3.18 Overall, the programme management team stated that the Nottingham LSTF programme had delivered everything it set out to within budget, and this was a considerable achievement given other LSTF Authorities struggled to spend their full funding allocations.

Project delivery teams generally acknowledged that such a large, wide-ranging, package of interventions meant it was inevitable not all of the projects would necessarily come to fruition, and that there would be changes to the scope and scale of delivery for others. This suggests NCC's flexible and consultative approach to managing LSTF budgets was well received, and helped ensure the programme achieved 'full spend' while being responsive to local priorities and the original objectives of the Nottingham Urban Area LSTF bid.

The lack of contingency built into the LSTF funding bid meant that changes to the programme allocations were disruptive to the delivery of the Nottingham programme. In future it may be appropriate to pre-empt these kinds of budget changes when bidding competitively. This could be achieved by ensure that contingency funds are available to cover potential shortfalls – for example, up to 5% or 10% of the total bid value. Adopting this kind of approach could help to mitigate the delays experienced through LSTF, and reduce funding risks to similar programmes.

Although clearly unavoidable, the migration of the Council's financial management and payment systems was also not ideal for delivery partners who experienced delays to payments. Enabling external delivery partners to invoice in advance using the existing payment system might have helped mitigate the delays incurred as a result of the introduction of new Council financial reporting tools.

Programme timescales

3.19 **Error! Reference source not found.** provides a timeline of when the various elements of he Nottingham LSTF programme were delivered.

Significant changes to project timelines and reasons for variation

3.20 The programme management team stated that, overall, the Nottingham LSTF programme delivered on time (by the end of March 2015). However, they also identified some projects that came on-stream later than intended, and some specific milestones that were missed.

3.21 The following delays and deviations from the original timetable were identified through the desk review of LSTF project materials and the process interviews:

- The Nottingham City Car Club was highlighted as the final project to come on stream and didn't start operating until mid-2014.
- The four additional community hubs (following the pilot in North Nottingham) were only operational for the final 18 months of 2011-2015 LSTF programme.
- Implementation of the enhanced smartcard and on-street retail network took longer than anticipated and work to introduce the accompanying e-purse remains ongoing.

3.22 Interviews stated that programme delays were typically the result of a combination of programme governance issues and project-specific challenges. A summary of governance-related reasons is provided here:

- Identifying additional funding sources – discussed earlier in this Chapter, in relation to the four additional Smarter Travel Hub coordinators.
- Procuring delivery partners and drawing up Service Level Agreements/Contracts – discussed in more detail in the next section of this Chapter.
- Obtaining approval to recruit staff and purchase materials/equipment – discussed further in Chapter 6, which also covers the project specific delays and their reasons.

3.23 Figure 3-3 serves to emphasise the importance of continuity in funding for consistent project delivery. Those projects which were already running in some guise, and were continuing to be supported or expanded as a result of the LSTF funds, also demonstrate the longest delivery timeframes. Examples include the multi-operator smartcard product's development, business travel planning engagement, and Ucycle. The projects which took longest to get started were primarily those which were wholly reliant upon new external providers to deliver them (e.g. Car Club, AccessAdvisr, ECO stars) which experienced delay through internal approvals and commissioning.

Considering the wide range of projects and delivery partners the programme management team needed to coordinate at its inception, Nottingham's LSTF programme effectively delivered the sustainable travel services envisaged in the original funding bid to DfT. The majority of the LSTF-funded projects were operational for at least 2 years of the delivery period, with some running for over 3 years.

Figure 3-3: Nottingham LSTF Programme timescales

Programme Workstrands / Projects		2011/2012			2012/2013				2013/2014				2014/2015			
		Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4
A) Smartcard development, integrated ticketing and multi-modal integration																
Enhanced Smartcard	Smartcard Development															
	Travel Support Scheme															
	Retail Network															
Citycard Cycle hubs																
Citycard Cycle hire																
Personalised journey planning																
Access Advisr																
Mobile Travel Centre																
B) Community Smarter Travel Hubs and Places for People																
Five Neighbourhood smarter travel coordinators	Establish and deliver North Community Hub															
	Community hub expansion and delivery (x4)															
	Active Travel Champion Volunteers															
20mph limits programme	Pilot project in Sherwood															
	Other areas															
Small-scale infrastructure improvments at schools																
C) Worksmart and Green Transport Infrastructure																
Enhanced business support	Business engagement															
	Workplace challenge															
ECO Stars																
Cycle infrastructure improvements																
Low carbon transport	Electric buses															
	Electric vehicle charging															
Nottingham City Council car club																
D) Active Travel Solutions																
Ucycle in Universities and Colleges	Cycle loan and cycle promotion															
	Small scale infrastructure improvments															
Annual active travel events programme																
Cycling for All																
Cycling programme in schools	Bike IT in schools:															
	Lifecycle															
	Bikeability Training															
Programme Management and Coordination																
Programme coordination																
Marketing and communications activities																

Commissioning and managing delivery partners

3.24 As described earlier in this Chapter, many of the LSTF projects were delivered by external delivery partners. The services of external partners were procured through a combination of direct appointments and open tenders, as shown in Figure 3-2.

- Direct appointments were possible where delivery partners had supported the Nottingham LSTF programme at the bid stage. This tended to occur where the delivery partner was already providing the service to NCC (i.e. where the LSTF project formed an extension to an existing project), or where the delivery partner was the only service provider who could provide the required service due to its specialised nature.
- Open tenders were used to procure the Car Club operator (City Car Club) and the Community Smarter Travel Hubs (2 x Sustrans and 3 x TravelRight).

3.25 The delivery of several NCC-led LSTF projects also involved the procurement of external service providers/suppliers/contractors, bringing their expertise to specific components of various projects. Examples include:

- Trent Barton were the contracted operator for the electric Centrelink buses which formed part of the low carbon transport element.
- INIT supplied on-board ticket machines for the enhanced smartcard programme.
- Hourbike were procured to operate the Citycard Cycle Hire scheme and provide the hire bikes.

3.26 Key issues identified with programme-level procurement and commissioning were:

- **The need to meet Council procurement rules and seek internal approvals**, while also respecting the partners who had supported the original LSTF bid and committed match-funding. This issue was, in part, created by DfT's bidding rules – which encouraged local authorities to attract match-funding from other sources without making provision for the subsequent likelihood that these LSTF delivery services might need to be competitively tendered.
- **A lack of NCC staff resources with the necessary procurement experience** to manage the process of commissioning multiple delivery partners along parallel timelines at programme inception. This in part reflected the unprecedented revenue spend associated with the LSTF programme in Nottingham.
- **Prioritising larger projects meant that smaller projects were delayed** for longer periods of time (e.g. ECO stars, AccessAdvisr, Car Club). Although this was prudent in terms of mitigating overall programme delivery risk; it placed extra pressure on smaller more resource-constrained projects in the programme, and gave their team leaders less time in which to recruit the staff resources/procure external support they needed to meet delivery expectations.

3.27 Difficulties with the procurement process were cited by the LSTF programme managers, as well as individual project delivery teams. The NCC public transport officers leading the enhanced smartcard workstrand noted that they experienced delays when appointing third parties to deliver the capital elements of the smartcard programme. Where possible, NCC tried to utilise suppliers who were already on frameworks set up by other local authorities /

passenger transport executives. This approach was viewed favourably as it streamlined the procurement process by reducing the number of time consuming open tenders. However, NCC's internal procurement team did challenge some direct appointments, which resulted in NCC's delivery team having to divert resources to justify their approach. In the context of procuring the supplier of the on-street ticket vending machines it took 9 months to prepare the specification and get internal approval for direct appointment. Coupled with the complex and commercial negotiations with local public transport operators, these delays affected the pace at which the smartcard initiatives could be rolled-out across Nottingham.

Overall it is clear that writing delivery partners into the LSTF bid was beneficial. It enabled NCC to establish appropriate delivery team leaders and lines of communication before any projects started. It also ensured NCC lined-up appropriate delivery partner organisations in advance of learning their bid was successful. This was essential given LSTF bidders had to demonstrate their readiness to commence programme delivery.

On the flip side of this it is clear the programme management team found the commissioning process challenging, through a combination of procurement rules and the unprecedented scale of revenue service commissioning. The delays experienced by the team might have been overcome if NCC had been able to appoint (or second) staff from its in-house procurement team to work closely with the LSTF programme managers at the inception stage. More staff resources with experience of directly appointing external providers would certainly have helped in the early stages of the programme.

For future bids it could also be appropriate to pre-approve/pre-select preferred suppliers so they can start work immediately if the bid is successful. Transport for Greater Manchester (TfGM) and Centro set up their LSTF delivery frameworks in this way. It made effective use of the time period when DfT was deliberating on the bids it had received, and allowed them to call-off services from preferred suppliers they had selected through an open tender competition. Amongst these preferred suppliers were their respective LSTF bid partners.

Service Level Agreements/contracts and ongoing management

3.28 Post commissioning, NCC's programme management team set up service level agreements (SLAs) with several of the external service providers, while other providers were managed through contracts with supporting action plans. The SLAs set out the services to be provided by each provider in return for a specified level of funding from NCC. They also detailed any conditions attached to NCC's funding, such as output targets and monitoring requirements. Feedback from all parties was that these SLAs worked well and, although initially a focus for detailed discussion, clarified what outputs NCC was expecting to receive and made it easy for delivery teams to track their progress.

3.29 The Community Smarter Travel Hubs project was highlighted as one which the NCC programme management team found challenging to manage. The main reason appears to stem from the decision to appoint two different providers (Sustrans and TravelRight), which resulted in distinctly different delivery approaches and brands for the Hubs in different areas of the city. As discussed in later Chapters of this report, the two providers worked well together on joint events; but were naturally protective of their respective brands. While having two different Community Hub providers meant that they could learn from each

other's successes, it is possible that greater consistency could have been enforced through each provider's SLA (e.g. requiring consistent use of existing branding).

It is clear that SLA's worked effectively and can be rolled out to future programmes of a similar nature. To ensure NCC and its partners receive the kind of project delivery they are seeking, SLAs could be used to define both output and outcome targets, as well as points of detail regarding implementation (e.g. consistency of approach, branding etc.).

Given how effectively the SLAs appear to have worked with external delivery partners, future programmes may benefit from similar agreements with internal delivery partners. Such an approach may have helped clarify programme-level expectations and requirements for internal partners – potentially mitigating delays and cost over-runs experienced with the 20mph speed limit and multi-operator smartcard projects.

4 PARTNERSHIP WORKING

4.1 With such a large and diverse delivery team, effective internal communications were an essential requirement of the Nottingham LSTF programme. This chapter examines communication channels within the LSTF team and discusses how well the various delivery teams worked together in partnership. It also highlights how wider stakeholder groups were engaged and support they provided to aid delivery of Nottingham's LSTF programme.

Communications within the LSTF team

Steering Group meetings

4.2 The primary forum for internal LSTF communications was the Steering Group which met quarterly.

4.3 In advance of the Steering Group meetings delivery teams were required to prepare a 'Highlight Report'. These reports summarised key activities that had taken place (project outputs), plans for the next quarter, identified any emerging delivery risks, and provided an update on budgetary spend. The highlight reports were presented at the Steering Group meetings by each delivery team partner. It was common practice for workstrand leads to attend Steering Group meeting and represent several of the LSTF projects within their workstrand. For example, a senior member of the NCC's Public Transport team would attend and update on most project components of the smartcard workstrand.

4.4 The individuals interviewed by ITP all agreed that, given the size and diversity of the LSTF programme, there was a need for regular meetings to ensure that core delivery partners knew what others were doing. Many interviewees stated that attending the Steering Group meetings and communications sub-group meetings kept them informed about the programme, and gave them a regular forum in which to liaise with other delivery partners offering related services.

> LSTF Steering Group meetings were an effective mechanism for keeping the programme management team updated on progress across the wide range of projects that combined to make-up the LSTF programme in Nottingham. One delivery team leader commented that the Steering Group meeting was an effective way of bringing all key programme partners to the table to discuss progress on a regular basis. The meetings also enabled delivery teams to identify synergies and opportunities for cross-promotion of project activities. The highlight reports were effective at focusing frontline teams' efforts on quarterly reporting deadlines.

4.5 While it was necessary to limit Steering Group membership in order to prevent the meetings becoming too large and unworkable, it may also explain why some of the NCC delivery teams interviewed by the ITP team lacked broader awareness of the LSTF programme and the context for their project. One external service provider stated they were not initially made aware of the Steering Group meetings, nor did they know their project was being represented by their workstreams nominated leader. The project team leader felt it would have been beneficial for a member of their own team to attend any meetings concerning their project's delivery.

A lesson learned for the future is that workstrand leaders could provide more feedback from Steering Group meetings to their respective project delivery teams. This would treat the meetings, and quarterly reporting period, as an opportunity for a two-way flow of information.

It may also be appropriate to invite guest delivery team representatives to give a brief presentation to the Steering Group when their projects first start-up. This would have helped all parties to better understand the full range of LSTF projects that were being delivered.

Communications and Marketing sub-group

4.6 A further forum for internal communications was the LSTF Communications and Marketing sub-group (referred to as the Communications Group) which also met quarterly. Delivery partners produced quarterly Communications reports for presentation at the Comms Group meetings. These reports outlined any marketing and communications activities that delivery teams had undertaken in the last quarter and their plans for the next quarter.

4.7 Despite recognising the overall need for, and benefits of, effective internal LSTF communication, the delivery partners interviewed by ITP identified a few issues on this topic:

- There was a widespread feeling that the specific roles of the Steering Group and Communications Group were not clearly-defined or conveyed to delivery partners that joined the LSTF Programme midway through the programme timeframe. Given the similar membership across the two groups, and their close proximity in the calendar, it was reported that there was often repetition across the content of meetings and reports.
- Some of the smaller delivery teams suggested that attending the quarterly meetings was quite onerous, as they wanted to focus their limited resources on project delivery.
- Some interviewees suggested that not all delivery partners appeared to treat the meetings with sufficient importance, which resulted in limited attendance and different degrees of quarterly reporting.

Based on the feedback from respondents interviewed, another lesson for future similar projects could be to combine project management and communications meetings so that fewer (albeit longer) meetings are convened on a quarterly basis. This might help ensure a fuller attendance, and confine discussion about programme-wide management and marcomms to one common forum.

A secondary lesson would be to ensure that new delivery partners are informed about the LSTF programme Steering Group and/or Communications Group purpose and responsibilities as they join the programme's delivery team.

LSTF partnership working

4.8 The LSTF programme management team suggested that, inevitably, a range of different approaches to project implementation were exhibited across the group of delivery partners. As such, part of NCC's management role was to create a common vision for the LSTF programme and ensure that partners worked collaboratively to achieve it. As the programme progressed the various NCC teams and external delivery partners came

together effectively and, overall, were judged to have worked well together. Interviewees from delivery teams provided numerous instances of collaboration and partnership working across projects in support of different initiatives and events. Specific examples include:

- NCC's Road Safety Team, Ridewise, and the Sustrans BikeIt officer supported each other with the delivery of the various school-based cycling projects.
- There were many noted instances of The Big Wheel providing communications support to other service providers. The City Car Club representative spoke positively about The Big Wheel's role in organising events to promote the car club - both to local businesses and to the wider public.
- Many other examples of delivery teams cross-promoting each other's services and events are covered in greater detail in Chapter 5 of this report.

It is clear the Nottingham LSTF programme has provided a positive focus for local partnership working. Examples cited by project delivery partners (referenced throughout this report) demonstrate that successful partnership working enabled members of delivery teams to raise the profile of their projects with new audiences, and be more effective, than if they had worked on their own. This is a key strength of the interwoven nature of the Nottingham LSTF programme.

4.9 Set against this several interviewees were able to cite some instances of tension between partners, and most notably between Sustrans and TravelRight in their respective roles delivering the Community Smarter Travel Hubs. Both organisations operate within the same space - Sustrans at the national level and TravelRight at a local scale. This was a likely outcome of two 'competing' organisations being commissioned to share delivery of the Community Travel Hubs project. Unfortunately some aspects of the Hub projects were compromised by the lack of cooperation between these two organisations, which are discussed in greater detail in subsequent Chapters of this report.

Although unsurprising, the tension between the delivery partners working on similar Community Hub projects was a distraction that has been widely noted by people involved in the LSTF programme. Similar future projects, where a consistent approach is sought across multiple project delivery locations, might benefit from either:

- Only having one delivery partner commissioned to run the projects.
- Having more carefully worded SLA terms to prevent distracting tension and uncollaborated approaches to delivering the project.

Wider stakeholder engagement

4.10 The success of many LSTF projects in Nottingham was critically dependent upon, or enhanced by, the support of wider stakeholder groups. As such, the majority of delivery teams engaged with other stakeholders as part of their project delivery activities.

Involvement of related NCC departments

4.11 As outlined in Chapter 3, NCC's Sport, Culture and Parks Service and NCC's Public Health team supported elements of the LSTF programme.

4.12 NCC's Parks Department (part of NCC's Sport, Culture and Parks) were consulted on the development of cycle infrastructure schemes. NCC's Sport and Leisure team (also within Sport, Culture and Parks) played a significant role in securing external contributions and partners (e.g. British Cycling) for the delivery of active travel events and, to a lesser extent they supported the local cycle infrastructure projects. At a strategic level, the Sport and Leisure team helped identify the direction of active travel elements of the LSTF programme, advising on how funding spend should be prioritised. During the programme's implementation phase the Sport and Leisure team worked with LSTF delivery partners to promote cycle services and events to the public:

- They worked closely with TravelRight and Sustrans to identify they could cross-sell their services to the wider community.
- They also worked with The Big Wheel team in the context of active travel events such Cycle Live and the Milk Race. The LSTF programme management team and the Sport and Leisure team both felt this collaborative working had been positive.

The positive experience of engaging with NCC's Sports and Leisure team was a feature of the LSTF programme's Active Travel Solutions workstrand. This was likely facilitated by the fact the team has been established within NCC for a long period of time, and had clearly established delivery goals that aligned with the LSTF programme's objectives.

4.13 NCC's Public Health team provided the funding for the Nottingham Central and South Community Smarter Travel Hub coordinators. The LSTF programme management team suggested the Public Health team might subsequently have played a greater role in the programme, and while they share strategic policy goals with the Transport Strategy teams (encouraging active travel) there is currently a lack of joint-working in practice. The Public Health team explained how the LSTF programme came at a challenging time for the department, as a number of reorganisations and relocations hampered their ability to become more involved with LSTF. If the Public Health team had been operating within a more stable working environment then it was suggested they would have provided more resources (staff and budget) and commitment to the LSTF programme.

The transition of Nottingham's public health team, which had recently transferred from NHS ownership into an NCC team prior to the start of the LSTF programme, appears to have limited their ability to play an active role in supporting the projects they were co-funding. Now this transition is complete, future similar projects that will have tangible public health impacts should benefit from greater participation by the Public Health team.

Engagement with NCC's Senior Management and Councillors

4.14 As outlined in Chapter 3, NCC's Executive Board was responsible for approving the overall LSTF programme. This meant those in the most senior positions within NCC had a strategic awareness of the LSTF programme. At a delivery level, some of the individual LSTF schemes, for example the larger cycle infrastructure projects, had to be signed off by the Council Leader and the Portfolio Holder for Planning and Transportation.

4.15 Through the process evaluation interviews it became evident that NCC Councillors were also engaged through individual LSTF projects. Cycle events in particular seem to have

engaged City Council members, while at a local level the Community Hubs have engaged with local councillors that represent the areas they cover.

The involvement of publicly prominent NCC Council Members aided the profile and public awareness of LSTF projects – particularly those relating to cycling. This is a positive outcome that could be harnessed in future similar projects.

4.16 The LSTF Programme Management team felt that, beyond the Transport team, NCC's senior management teams were not as engaged in LSTF at a programme level to the extent they could have been. With the notable exceptions of the aforementioned joint working with Public Health and Sports & Leisure, there was no sharing of progress with colleagues in other NCC departments.

4.17 At a project level, City Car Club indicated that they would have liked more internal buy-in from NCC to establish the car club as a primary mode of business travel for NCC staff. Some NCC departments have made good use of the car club service but other departments have not. In a similar vein it was suggested that NCC had missed an opportunity to incorporate the ECO Stars scheme into NCC's procurement criteria for suppliers and contracted transport operators.

A lesson learned is that NCC can itself be a champion for the kinds of projects being promoted through the LSTF programme. This kind of support would undoubtedly assist smaller business-focused initiatives – such as the City Car Club and ECO Stars – in their efforts to persuade local employers to participate.

Nottinghamshire County Council and local Borough Councils

4.18 Nottinghamshire County Council members were consulted on the projects being introduced in the county. Consultation was also carried out with Local Area Forums, of which the West Bridgford Local Area Forum was particularly vocal with regards to the installation of Citycard Cycle Hubs in the area.

4.19 The NCC programme management team also expressed mild disappointment with the level of engagement from Nottinghamshire County Council, suggesting that their resistance to fully engage with the implementation of the LSTF programme may have been for political reasons. The County Council officers felt they were closely involved in the projects that they were responsible for, but that they would have liked greater involvement in the decision-making for initiatives within their administrative area. Both the City and County agreed that the City-County partnership needs to be enhanced, and there need to be more efforts towards joint working where possible.

Greater engagement with Nottinghamshire County Council is a key issue now, and in the future. The County Council officer's sentiments relating to greater involvement in decision-making may be relevant in the context of current discussions relating to setting up the Nottingham and Nottinghamshire Combined Authority.

4.20 Gedling and Broxtowe Borough Councils were primarily involved in the LSTF programme through the Community Smarter Travel Hubs implemented in these boroughs. NCC hosted quarterly meetings which were attended by representatives from each Borough Council and Nottinghamshire County Council. Broxtowe Borough Council provided considerable

support to TravelRight when setting up its local hub and continued to liaise with the delivery team on a regular basis during the project's implementation.

NCC's LSTF programme management team viewed the local Borough Councils' participation as a positive feature of the programme. This could be built upon in future similar projects that involve localised intervention.

Public Transport Operators

4.21 As outlined in Chapter 3, local public transport operators were directly involved in the delivery of smartcard elements of the Nottingham LSTF programme and they helped fund the half price Kangaroo tickets for job seekers. Trent Barton, as operator of the electric Centrelink bus, was also involved in the electric vehicles element. At a strategic level, the local public transport operators were also engaged through the:

- Public Transport Integration Board.
- Quality Bus Partnership forum.
- Kangaroo Operators Group (KOG).

4.22 NCC provided operators with updates about the LSTF programme through e-mails and letters. The operators who were interviewed had varying opinions of how well informed they had been of progress with the LSTF programme. Trent Barton felt they had been adequately engaged; while Yourbus suggested that, as a smaller operator, they were often 'left out of the loop'. Their representative suggested that smaller operators could have been engaged to the same extent as the larger local operators.

4.23 The smartcard workstrand, and in particular the multi-operator smartcard and e-purse component, was critically dependent on obtaining the agreement of the local public transport operators. The culture of joint working that already exists among the local public transport operators (as evidenced by the long-established Kangaroo fare products) has clearly benefitted the challenging dialogue on the technical details of the multi-operator smartcard.

4.24 Agreement on the finer points of the multi-operator e-purse ticket have taken longer than envisaged due to the different aims of NCC and commercial operators. While the various parties felt they had all worked well together, NCC feels that the operators are yet to fully buy into the concept of a simplified, integrated ticketing system. As such the group has been unable to agree upon a commercially viable pricing structure for the integrated, multi-operator e-purse.

Through LSTF, Nottingham aimed to deliver an ambitious smartcard programme, akin to London's Oyster system. LSTF has facilitated the development and delivery of the necessary of the smartcard systems. but the final hurdle of securing operator buy-in remains. This demonstrates the challenge of accommodating operators' commercial interests, and city-wide sustainable travel objectives within a deregulated public transport market. This highlights that there may be a need for city councils, such as NCC, to have greater influence over bus fare setting within their administrative area.

4.25 Looking beyond the projects they were directly involved in, NCT stated that they were aware of some the individual LSTF schemes and events through their involvement in The

Big Wheel, but overall they had limited awareness of the wider LSTF programme. YourBus suggested that it was hard for the operators to disaggregate what projects were being delivered through the LSTF programme and what formed part of other programmes (such as the Better Bus Area project, which ran in parallel to LSTF).

Other Stakeholders

4.26 The Nottingham LSTF programme was supported by a range of other stakeholders including: the D2N2 Local Enterprise Partnership, local public/private sector skills, economic development and green economy partnerships, national private sector partners including Alliance Boots, E.ON, Capital Shopping Centres, University of Nottingham and Nottingham Trent University, local business networks and local third sector organisations with experience of delivering community sustainable travel interventions.

4.27 Many of the interviewees spoke positively about the contribution stakeholders made to individual LSTF projects. Examples include:

- NCC's Sports and Leisure Team suggested the LSTF programme was the catalyst for NCC's productive partnership with British Cycling. This partnership subsequently facilitated a number of the active travel events delivered through the LSTF programme, and has helped attract the Tour of Britain and the Milk Race to the city during the LSTF delivery period.
- The Ucycle delivery team cited the partnerships established (and maintained) with the two Nottingham universities, FE colleges and Nottingham University Hospitals NHS Trust as a major achievement of the LSTF programme.
- Cycle infrastructure schemes were developed in consultation with the Nottingham Cycle Development Group. This group involves NCC, Notts County Council, Pedals, Ridewise, and the CTC.
- The Big Wheel worked with The Creative Quarter on the Hockley car free event (held on the Saturday of European Mobility Week in 2014). This partnership was seen as a good opportunity which The Big Wheel would like to develop.

Effective partnership working with stakeholders that were not originally part of the LSTF Bid team (e.g. British Cycling) is a positive outcome. It can be partially attributed to the profile achieved through a large programme of smaller projects, and demonstrates the importance of continuing to work flexibly and opportunistically when delivering future sustainable travel projects.

4.28 Several interviewees stated that they experienced difficulties engaging some stakeholder groups, while other interviewees felt that (in hindsight) the LSTF programme would have benefited from additional support from stakeholder groups. Examples include:

- The 20mph limits projects did not get as much buy-in as hoped from local community groups within the scheme areas. Based on other local authorities' experiences, the Road Safety team suggested that, with hindsight, delivering specific marketing activities for the 20mph programme may have helped achieve community buy-in.
- TravelRight found that some of the Clinical Commissioning Groups (CCGs - which run groups of GP surgeries) were difficult to engage because their boundaries do not match

those of local Councils. The team experienced similar problems when trying to work with Job Centre Plus, as job centre boundaries differ from other administrative boundaries.

- From a business engagement perspective some respondents suggested the Chamber of Commerce could have been more involved than they were.

The issue of mis-aligned administrative boundaries across local transport and other related public services is one that frequently challenges public sector projects and programmes. To address this in future it could be beneficial to establish a cross-sectoral working group (e.g. involving transport, leisure, health, employment delivery partners) so that a joined-up approach can be adopted from the bid-stages of similarly-scaled programmes. In the context of competitive bid derived funding from central government this might stand the Nottingham Urban Area in a stronger position, and help overcome the overlaps and gaps between different public service providers.

Alternatively, ongoing central government dialogue relating to greater local autonomy for cities may enable Nottingham's public sector bodies to instigate greater alignment between these different public sector services.

5 MARKETING AND COMMUNICATIONS

5.1 The Nottingham LSTF programme was fundamentally about behaviour change and, as such, marketing and communications were central pillars. This chapter examines how both the overall programme, and individual LSTF projects, were promoted externally to the wider public - and specific target audiences.

Coordination of external marcomms activity

5.2 During the LSTF delivery period a number of major transport infrastructure schemes were underway across the Nottingham Urban Area. These included:

- The NET tram extension to Beeston and Clifton.
- Nottingham Hub railway station closure and redevelopment.
- A453 widening between Clifton and the M1.
- Ring Road widening and junction capacity improvements.

5.3 The LSTF programme was deliberately positioned as a suite of complementary projects that supported and promoted these significant transport infrastructure investments. To maximise the opportunities for 'cross-selling' these large programmes, NCC recruited a Communications Officer for Transport to work across the city's transport teams and coordinate NCC's transport-related communications, including those relating to the LSTF programme.

Several interviewees suggested that the effectiveness of the Transport Communications Officer's role, in the context of LSTF, was limited slightly by the post-holder changing several times during the course of the LSTF programme. In the future this could be overcome by having a team of two people who share the role part-time (e.g. alongside other comms related tasks) or by outsourcing the role to a third party.

5.4 The LSTF programme also benefitted from communications support from the LSTF Project Officer, who helped prepare the LSTF communications documents (outlined below) and worked with the Transport Communications Officer to support the delivery of NCC communications activities. On a day-to-day basis the Project Officer supported project delivery teams with the external marketing of projects via social media, website, press releases, and regular newsletters. This activity was delivered alongside programme and project management support.

The LSTF Project Officer was identified as being responsive and supportive by several delivery partners. Leveraging the City Council's social and printed media networks was beneficial to several of the smaller projects, and new initiatives, that needed assistance with raising their profiles locally.

5.5 As outlined in Chapter 3, the LSTF Communications Group was established to oversee LSTF communications messages. The Group's role was to "*coordinate integrated smarter choices and behaviour change messages as relevant to the four workstrands in a*

consistent, timely and effective manner and in ways that promoted the work of the individual partners involved in delivery"[3].

5.6 This Group prepared an overarching LSTF Communications Plan, which defined the overall approach for engaging the programme's target audiences through marcomms. The plan outlined the communication platforms to be utilised, target groups, key communications messages and how the channels were to be managed and evaluated. A separate social media plan set out how messages would be targeted via Twitter and Facebook. Midway through the LSTF programme a Communication Protocol was developed, this document stipulated a series of rules which the project delivery partners had to follow in terms of communications.

5.7 As noted earlier in this report, several LSTF delivery partners felt that the Communication Reports, which were prepared for Communication Group meetings, were overly onerous and repetitive. In contrast with this, the delivery partners whose primarily concern was promoting LSTF services and events to public (for example The Big Wheel and the TravelRight and Sustrans Community Hub teams) felt that even more detail about other delivery partners' services would have enhanced their promotion of LSTF to the public.

A consistent and strategic approach to programme communications from early in the LSTF delivery period may be a learning point for similar future initiatives. While the marcomms strategy, and its implementation, rightly evolved as all the LSTF projects came on-stream; it appears the programme-wide level comms lagged behind the start-up of some projects. Consequently some opportunities to promote projects at the programme level may have been missed in the first 12-18 months of the LSTF delivery period.

Branding of the LSTF Programme

5.8 Unlike many other LSTF programmes, the Nottingham Urban Area bid partnership team decided against creating a dedicated 'brand' for its LSTF programme. The main reason for this was the prior existence of the city-wide Big Wheel transport branding, which is already widely recognised by members of the public and local businesses. The programme management team therefore believed that duplication of this existing brand would use time and budget that could otherwise be spent on the delivery of LSTF projects and proactive marketing and communications.

Using the existing, well-established, Big Wheel branding was an advantage Nottingham had over other similar sized cities in the region. It saved delivery time and budget for the LSTF programme, which would otherwise have been spent debating and designing a brand, and avoided public confusion over what 'LSTF' was and how it related to transport delivery in the city.

5.9 While this was almost certainly the correct decision, the lack of a 'new' unifying brand for the (time-limited) LSTF programme in Nottingham, did create a number of issues. Those identified through the process evaluation interviews include:

[3] Nottingham Urban Area LSTF, Main Bid Business Case, December 2011, Volume 5: Management Case

- That it was harder to communicate what the LSTF programme had delivered to Councillors and members of the public/business community.
- That individual delivery partners tended to apply their own branding to the projects they were working on, in order to achieve recognition for the work they were doing. Consequently some project components of the LSTF programme achieved greater recognition than the programme as a whole.
- Local Councillors were keen for NCC and Notts CC's LSTF programme involvement to be publicly recognised, which created internal pressure to also use the respective Council's logos on project materials and infrastructure. This was resisted by some delivery partners who believed their projects would perform more effectively if they were not publicly perceived as 'Council' projects.
- This resulted in the LSTF programme at times operating under too many brands, which may have given the impression the programme was not unified. It was particularly identified as an issue for the Community Travel Hubs, which were differentiated by TravelRight (Nottingham North, Broxtowe, and Gedling) and Sustrans (Nottingham Centre and South) branding instead of operating under the Big Wheel banner.

5.10 These branding issues were an issue during early stages of the LSTF delivery period. To address them NCC undertook negotiations with the service providers, which resulted in the development of the LSTF Communication Protocol described earlier in this Chapter. This was introduced to provide a framework that ensured all LSTF partners and funders received appropriate credit and recognition for their role.

A learning point for similar future projects is that, even with a strong core brand at the heart of a major transport delivery programme, there are likely to be competing interests and tensions where there are multiple delivery partners. In future this could be proactively managed by either:

- Making 'white-label' branding and operation a requisite in contract documents – effectively insisting the delivery partners operate to strict central branding rules.
- Defining a communications protocol as a priority at an early stage of the programme's delivery. The experience from LSTF is that as soon as external delivery partners are contracted they will want to start identifying their services to the public and business communities.
- Establishing a sub- or co-brand that complements The Big Wheel, but effectively communicates which delivery/funding partner are involved.

Communicating with target audiences

5.11 Table 5-1 outlines the programme-wide communications tools and techniques were used to engage target audiences in Nottingham in relation to LSTF funded projects and services. This multimedia approach enabled the LSTF programme management team to proactively share news about the various LSTF projects, and programme-wide achievements.

5.12 During the course of the LSTF programme's delivery, NCC developed a new suite of 'Transport Nottingham' social media platforms. This filled an identified gap in the range of channels the LSTF team and its project partners were using to communicate with members

of the public and local businesses and complemented the efforts of the Big Wheel and other LSTF project partners.

The use of social media was particularly powerful. It enabled smaller LSTF funded projects to tap into the large numbers of followers (~15,000) of NCC's Transport_Nottm and MyNottingham profiles – boosting their visibility and amplifying their messages.

Table 5-1: LSTF-supported programme-wide communications approaches

Comms media	Tools and techniques used
On the web	• The Big Wheel website was the primary channel for promoting LSTF services to the wider public and business community. • Information about LSTF supported projects was also provided via NCC's own website. • Nottingham Insight contained project oversight reports and monitoring documents.
In print	• Nottingham LSTF newsletter. • Articles highlighting the programme and specific projects in the Nottingham Arrow public information magazine.
Social media	• @Transport_Nottm twitter profile • Transport Nottingham Facebook page • Transport Nottingham YouTube channel • @MyNottingham twitter profile

5.13 In addition to these programme-wide communications activities, several LSTF projects were themselves mechanisms for directly engaging with the public to inform them of LSTF offers and services, and promoting sustainable modes of travel. The Mobile Travel Centre (InfoBus), Community Smarter Travel Hubs, and Active Travel Events projects all fall into this category. Individual projects also developed their own marcomms materials/activities to raise their profile, and in doing so they helped to raise awareness of the wider LSTF programme. Examples include:

- The LSTF-funded major events (such as Light Night, Cycle Live and European Mobility Week) provided an opportunity to engage with the public en masse.
- NCC's Road Safety team was already in contact with the City's primary schools, so they could email/phone their contacts directly to promote the new school services available through LSTF.
- The promotion of the jobseeker Kangaroo public transport ticket offer was primarily communicated via Job Centre Plus staff and specialist agencies such as A4E and Ingeus. The Big Wheel had a business liaison officer who met with local businesses; it was this one-to-one contact that led to business buy-in and workplace travel planning activities.
- Prior to the public launch of the Nottingham's City Car Club, NCC and The Big Wheel organised events to promote the car club concept to local businesses.
- TTR, who delivered the ECO Stars project, are members of the Freight Transport Association and the Confederation of Passenger Transport. This forum allowed the ECO Stars team to call on local / regional representatives to engage with fleet operating businesses - particularly bus and coach operators in the Nottingham area.

- In the context of promoting AccessAdvisr, ITP colleagues stated that their most meaningful contact and dialogue with local disabled people was as a result of direct proactive telephone and email contact with local disabled people's representative groups.

5.14 A large number of project-specific websites, marketing materials, and social media accounts were some of the outputs arising from this on-going effort to publicly promote smarter travel choices – as well as the outputs of the LSTF programme's delivery.

Many of the delivery team leads concurred that social media and digital content on their project websites was central to how they communicated with, and expanded, their target audiences. This is a strong positive output that can be replicated in similar future initiatives, but may need to be tempered slightly to prevent public confusion arising from too many similar websites and social media campaigns.

With hindsight it would have been beneficial if the various LSTF social media channels had been launched earlier in the programme, or if there had been clearer up-front intent from NCC in relation to the LSTF Programme's use of social and digital media, so that they had more time to develop. This might have mitigated the need for every project to have a social media profile and website, aiding public comprehension of the LSTF programme and the range of services it was funding.

Having different websites for the same service in different geographical areas (e.g. the Community Smarter Travel Hubs) was widely considered to be confusing for members of the public, and a factor that prevented consistent approaches towards marketing and delivery of this component of the LSTF programme. To avoid this in future, specifically stipulating the allowable extent of a service provider's digital presence may be appropriate when contracting external service providers.

Cross-promotion of LSTF funded projects and other local transport initiatives

5.15 The various LSTF delivery partners regularly cross-promoted each other's projects, and wider transport initiatives in Nottingham, during the life of the programme. Notable examples include:

- The reduced price Kangaroo ticket for job seekers was led by the NCC Citycard team, but was promoted to the public by the Community Smarter Travel Hubs as part of their bespoke access to work support packages. The Community Smarter Travel Hubs also promoted any new LSTF infrastructure when it launched within their local areas.
- Public transport operators helping to promote the reduced price Kangaroo tickets for job seekers - Trent Barton provided information on their website. They also provided materials and staff resources for Big Wheel coordinated events.
- Articles written by TravelRight Broxtowe were included in the Broxtowe Borough Council's 'Broxtowe Matters' magazine, which is delivered to 55,000 households in the Borough. The Borough Council also allowed TravelRight to place banners in local public parks to promote the local Community Smarter Travel Hub.

- NCC's Sport & Leisure team's 'Summer of Cycling' brochure for 2014 documented all of the new cycling initiatives delivered through the LSTF programme.
- NCC's Public Health team fostered joint PR opportunities, organising a photo shoot to promote physical activity in Nottingham which was also attended by Councillors and the LSTF team.
- NCC's Workplace Parking Levy business support team sign-posted organisations to LSTF business support services and vice versa.
- Existing Citycard holders were notified about the launch of the Nottingham City Car Club, and were offered discounted membership and incentives to join the scheme.

5.16 This had always been part of the LSTF Communications' Group's vision, but was not initially embraced by external delivery partners – who generally had a culture of working in isolation, rather than in open partnership. As the programme progressed the delivery partners became better at communicating with each other, and were more open to NCC and other delivery partners promoting 'their' services and events on their behalf. It also encouraged LSTF delivery teams to fit in with external stakeholders' existing campaigns and events. For example; TravelRight's annual events, activities programme, social media campaigns, and press releases were dovetailed with those of Broxtowe Borough Council – which was warmly received by the Council's officers.

5.17 To help manage this cross-promotional activity, the LSTF project officer sent out weekly email schedules of the forthcoming weeks' social media messages. This was designed to make delivery partners more aware of other partners' activities, and enable them to identify (in advance) whether they could support the promotion of a campaign/event. The project officer also began circulating a monthly schedule to try and encourage partners to link up earlier, and to give NCC more time to link LSTF funded activities with other campaigns running elsewhere within the Council.

The degree of cross-promotional effort, and collaborative working, fostered by social media engagement has been an unexpected success of the Nottingham LSTF programme's delivery. With minimal effort, and an upfront social media engagement strategy, similar future programmes that involve multiple project components and delivery partners could benefit from adopting the same approach to cross-promote smarter travel choices and services to relevant target audiences.

6 PROJECT IMPLEMENTATION

6.1 Over the course of the LSTF implementation period the project delivery teams had to overcome a range of challenges. In some cases planned project approaches were amended in response to difficulties faced. More positively, a number of projects benefitted from external opportunities or were adjusted because specific elements were particularly successful. This chapter explores what worked well, and the issues experienced, at a project delivery level.

Project set up and mobilisation

6.2 In Chapter 3 of this report it was noted that both the programme management team and delivery partners found the procurement process challenging and identified it as a source of delay. This section discusses other factors that delivery partners felt contributed to early inertia following the inception of their projects.

The inclusion of existing projects within the Nottingham LSTF programme meant that some teams already had tried-and-tested delivery models and staff in place, and could start delivering with minimal lead in times. This was particularly true of the Ucycle, ECO-Stars and Big Wheel business support projects. It emphasises the value for similar future initiatives of:

- Continuity of approach and delivery teams, wherever possible.
- Utilising emerging funding opportunities (like LSTF) to continue supporting sustainable travel initiatives that are deemed effective.
- Including a mix of 'quick-start' existing projects, and innovative new projects in competitive funding bids.

6.3 One cause of early project delays, identified by a number of the LSTF projects, was the extent of up-front consultation, research, and data analysis needed before implementation could commence. Representatives from several projects identified this as an issue, and referenced the following examples:

- Community Smarter Travel Hubs - Sustrans and TravelRight conducted travel surveys, analysed socio-economic and Census travel to work data, consulted community leads, and held focus groups to ascertain local requirements for each Hub. While this took some time it was considered necessary in helping to ensure the services delivered were relevant to local people.
- Enhanced Smartcard and on-street retail network – NCC's Citycard team undertook a considerable amount of market sounding and research into ticket machines and smartcard software.
- 20mph limits programme – NCC's Road Safety team undertook formal consultation with local communities before developing detailed plans for each area.
- Nottingham City Car Club – this was the last LSTF project to launch, largely because it the least developed element at the LSTF bid stage. NCC had to update previous research into the market for Car Club services, and current providers, before they could tender for an operator. While this research was essential, it might have been completed

more quickly if internal resources had allowed – permitting the car club to launch earlier in the LSTF programme.

The need for up-front research and information gathering also has the potential to delay future similar programmes. One way this could be avoided might be to first procure a monitoring and evaluation team that takes responsibility for establishing a baseline of travel behaviour and physical activity levels in programme intervention areas. Such a resource could also collect specific data (e.g. through attitudinal surveys, or cycle/walk counts) that are made available to all delivery teams in order to inform their project design and implementation.

6.4 One of the most significant project mobilisation challenges from across the programme was that of identifying suitable accommodation for the Community Smarter Travel Hubs. It was originally envisaged the Hubs would operate from local authority offices / joint service centres within the five intervention neighbourhoods.

- In practice this happened for the three TravelRight Community Hubs in Gedling, Broxtowe and Nottingham City North). The Hub leader in these locations spoke positively about the benefits of co-location - particularly helping to nurture positive working relationships and attract external funding and support from local sources.
- The Nottingham City South and Central Community Hubs, operated by Sustrans, did not establish a permanent community base. The Mary Potter Centre and Clifton Cornerstone were not viable due to issues associated with allowing external service providers to access internal NCC computer networks, and limited office accommodation at these two sites. Instead these teams operated from Sustrans' office in Nottingham City Centre. While this enabled their team to support more than one location, it did mean the co-location benefits were less pronounced.

Discussions with the potential service centre locations ate into the time available for the delivery of the Community Smarter Travel Hubs, and extended their start-up phases. With hindsight, and as a lesson for future similar projects, it may have been beneficial for the joint service centres to have been 'warmed up' to the idea of embedding hub officers at their sites in advance of the service providers being appointed. This would have reduced delays and flushed-out site viability issues earlier in the project delivery cycle.

Staff Resources

All of the LSTF programme partners all spoke positively about the quality of their delivery staff. A clear message was that 'people made the programme'. This reflected the people-centred, inspirational nature, of many of the roles associated with promoting smarter travel choices to members of the public and local businesses.

6.5 Notwithstanding the positive views of the various project team leaders regarding their staff members, several also highlighted challenges associated with the process of recruiting and retaining key individuals. Common issues raised include:

- **Delays associated with recruiting the staff needed to deliver projects**. Several delivery teams found that staff recruitment and training had taken longer than

anticipated due to procedural issues. In several cases these recruitment delays meant they began engaging target audiences at sub-optimal times of the year:

- This particularly affected the Road Safety team's ability to start engaging with schools about active travel options. Obtaining internal Council approval for staff recruitment resulted in engagement efforts starting in the Autumn rather than Spring term.
- ITP's initial delivery of fresh software development of the AccessAdvisr website was impacted by the time it took to hire a suitably experienced in-house software developer. This was offset in the short term by the use of the existing external software developers from Leicester, but the pace of development was slower and resulted in the bulk of engagement activity happening in the final 12 months of the LSTF delivery period.

- **Retaining or replacing staff members who left programme or project teams midway through the LSTF programme** delivery period. This particularly became an issue towards the end of March 2014, as some members of staff left for new jobs before some projects finished altogether or reduced in scope:
  - While the NCC programme management and delivery teams stayed largely constant throughout the LSTF programme, the departure of the NCC officer overseeing the Car Club's implementation resulted in a slight loss of continuity and knowledge for this project. This was exacerbated by City Car Club's resources being stretched at this point in the project.
  - A couple of the LSTF project delivery teams experienced problems retaining staff, with the turnover related to the short term/time-limited nature of some LSTF-funded posts. This particularly affected the Community Smarter Travel Hubs as the LSTF programme neared completion. The TravelRight team gave their staff advice about what they could do post-LSTF, which they believed help reduce turnover and kept key individuals in-post until the end of the programme.
- **Under-resourcing** of some project teams. The BikeIT project was staffed by one project officer, whose role was to work with six Nottingham City secondary schools. Trying to engage secondary schools was found to be particularly challenging and time consuming, and it was suggested that perhaps it was too much for one individual to take on, and resulted in a feeling that resources were spread too thinly.

A learning point for future projects may be to anticipate sufficient time at the beginning of smarter travel choices interventions to ensure the right mix of staff members are appointed into delivery teams, rather than being surprised by how long it takes to recruit them. In a similar vein, it would also be appropriate to make contingency arrangements for staff absence or turnover in key 'people-facing' roles. Identifying which roles are 'mission critical' (e.g. the Community Smarter Travel Hub leaders), and ensuring alternative staffing arrangements can be implemented at short notice, could help to prevent project delivery gaps.

Securing buy-in from target audiences

6.6 The success of the majority of the LSTF projects was dependent on delivery teams obtaining buy-in from their target audiences. While this largely happened very successfully, several of the delivery teams explained how achieving the level of uptake they had been aiming for was their most significant implementation challenge. Specific issues identified include:

- **Finding people interested in the project/service**: The Access Advisr worked hard to find disabled people and representative groups in Nottingham who were interested in using internet-based resources as a means of finding and sharing information about accessible places. This was a challenge that neither ITP nor NCC had anticipated, and suggested there was a lack of initial interest in the tool among the target demographic of younger, internet savvy, disabled people. When this team did get to engage with groups or individuals, the feedback received was generally very positive.
- **Building consensus with key stakeholder groups**: The main challenge for the teams who were delivering the school-based cycling programmes was getting buy-in from schools and parents. This was particularly true in locations where the school was perceived to be in a dangerous area for cycling. NCC's Road Safety team overcame this barrier by using the popularity of Lifecycle (a low effort cycle training programme that fulfilled several curriculum objectives, whilst being enjoyable for pupils) as a starting point for discussion and follow-up on the more involved Bikeability training.
- **Adapting existing practices to meet the interests of new target groups**: The BikeIt project involved deploying an existing Sustrans delivery model, building on success from elsewhere in the UK. However, the previous projects were delivered in primary schools, whereas in Nottingham BikeIT was deployed to engage secondary schools. The BikeIT officer suggested it was harder and more time consuming to work with secondary schools. Their larger size meant it took longer to build-up a culture of sustainable travel, and it often required more than one cycle champion within the school. Sustrans' BikeIT officer noted that a flexible delivery approach had proved crucial when engaging with secondary schools, using any opportunity possible to get in front of staff and students.
- **Engaging with larger organisations:** The size and complexity of partner organisations was cited as a challenge the Ucycle delivery team had to overcome. The team found it hard to convince these organisations that cycling should be a priority. As above, this challenge was overcome by being flexible and adapting the engagement approach to prioritise the short term interests and objectives of each organisation (which typically related to pressure on parking at education sites).
- **Public awareness of the Citycard:** the NCC Public Transport team responsible for delivering the Citycard Cycle Hire and Hubs suggested a lack of public awareness of the Citycard among non-Nottingham City residents was a barrier to encouraging wider uptake in these cycling initiatives. A large proportion of Nottinghamshire residents are believed to be aware of the Citycard, but perceive it is only available to NCC residents. The slow take-up of Cycle Hubs in County locations was perceived, in part, to be a result of this confusion. To help overcome this issue Citycards have been made available to County residents in public venues, such as Hucknall and West Bridgford libraries where there are Cycle Hubs.

Being responsive to challenging public engagement circumstances is an important lesson from the Nottingham LSTF programme. Establishing delivery programmes that maintain flexibility in approach, and prioritise projects that work well over those that struggle to gain traction or appeal to the wider public, will continue to be a priority in the future.

The main lesson to learn from these project experiences is the importance of pitching public engagement at an appropriate level and scale. The projects that appear to have experienced the greatest challenges are those that aimed to engage 'at-scale' with large target groups, or large organisations, that can often be impenetrable. Projects that focused on smaller, more focused, target groups were generally less susceptible to these issues and may represent a model for future programmes that aim to encourage sustainable travel behaviour change in Nottingham.

Practical issues

6.7 All of the LSTF delivery teams faced practical challenges of some nature. Positively, none of the challenges were insurmountable. This section provides some examples of the practical barriers which delivery teams overcame as part of their project's implementation.

Land/site availability

6.8 Identifying suitable locations for project implementation, and negotiating access to specific sites, was cited as a challenge by several delivery teams:

- Colleagues at Nottinghamshire County Council noted that it was difficult to find appropriate locations for the Cycle Hubs sited in County areas. Negotiation with the landowning Borough councils was needed to secure use of the land.
- Mobile Travel Centre – securing appropriate parking locations was a practical challenge faced by NCC's delivery team.
- Cycle corridor improvements - The Embankment scheme was relatively easy to implement, because it was on NCC-owned land, compared with the Leen Valley cycle route (which required access to private land). Negotiating with private landowners made the Leen Valley project more complicated, but it was beneficial since it established a valuable public right of way across private land.

Planning permission and traffic orders

6.9 Once suitable locations were identified, obtaining the necessary planning/traffic approvals represented a further hurdle for some delivery teams. Examples include:

- On-street retail network – NCC's delivery team noted that obtaining planning permission for on-street ticket machines delayed their installation across Nottingham.
- Car club - Implementing the car club required a number of Traffic Regulation Orders (TROs) to be in place. CCC highlighted that, given lead time between their appointment and the public launch of the service was very short, they benefited from the extensive preparation undertaken by NCC. The Council had already passed the TROs needed to establish car club bays across the city.
- Cycle events - The Big Wheel highlighted the extensive paperwork and consultation needed for Temporary Traffic Regulation Orders for the Mobility Week Car Free event

run in Hockley in 2014. Delays to receiving approvals for the planned road closures added to the delivery pressure, and created concerns about the format of the event.

Technological challenges

6.10 The enhanced smartcard and on-street retail network were considered to be the most technically challenging elements of the LSTF programme to develop and implement, not least because the switch from paper to smart systems had to take place in a live public transport operating environment.

> At the outset of project there was a feeling amongst operators that a smart integrated ticket was not technically possible, or would involve a very complex ICT project. LSTF provided the funding to remove these technological barriers and NCC can demonstrate to operators that they now have a system that works in the Nottingham Urban Area. The NCC public transport officers interviewed also highlighted that their delivery of this project underlined their team's capacity to handle what was a challenging IT project.

6.11 The complexity of the smartcard systems introduced through LSTF was not fully appreciated by councillors and the general public, and that it was not as simple as buying an 'off the shelf' product. The NCC lead for the smartcard project spoke positively about the support the DfT has provided to local authorities on introducing smartcard technology, while the LSTF funding allowed NCC to buy in specialist support from external consultants where it was needed.

6.12 There were also a number of unforeseen technological difficulties on-the-ground, for example:

- Identifying a suitable power supply at the selected locations, made the process of rolling out the on-street ticket purchase system more complex.
- The ICT compatibility of parking locations used by the Mobile Travel Centre (InfoBus) made this project more challenging than originally envisaged.
- Staff working at the travel centres had to become familiar with the new smartcard issuing systems. The temperamental nature of the new technology made this switch-over more difficult for staff.

Financial barriers

6.13 A couple of the delivery teams highlighted that the economic circumstances of their target audiences created a challenge to their project's delivery. Examples include:

- Bikeability - The Road Safety team experienced particular challenges when trying to deliver the training in inner city schools, where many students did not have their own bicycle. The delivery team tried to remove this barrier by purchasing bikes for pupils to use when undergoing their training.
- Ucycle - The budgets at the FE colleges and the Hospital Trust were very constrained which made engaging with these organisations about infrastructure improvement grants a challenging subject.

It is very positive to note that all of these implementation challenges (many of which were points of detail that emerged through the life of the project) were addressed within the scope of delivering individual LSTF projects.

For similar future programmes it may be advisable to scope out potential land availability and planning related issues as early as possible (maybe even while contracting external delivery partners) so that they can be addressed as a priority within the project delivery timeframe, rather than being 'discovered' once the project is underway.

Contractor / Supplier Issues

6.14 Several delivery teams highlighted that the implementation of their LSTF project was delayed as a result of dependencies on third party supplier or contractor. For example:

- 20mph limits programme – NCC's Road Safety team explained how delays were encountered when handing signage and road treatment tasks over to NCC's internal contractors. With hindsight the team stated they would have ensured the 20 mph programme was being prioritised, or alternatively used external contractors, to accelerate delivery.
- Cycle corridor infrastructure - The design of the Leen Valley scheme involved a Boardwalk element, which was something 'new' from a design perspective. It consequently took time to procure the required specialist contractors to construct the Boardwalk, and to source a supplier for the construction materials.
- Enhanced smartcard and on-street retail network - some of the delays with these projects were as a result of issues with the third party technology suppliers. For example, during the LSTF period INIT's resources were stretched and as a result there were instances where their work for NCC work was deprioritised, which resulted in delays to the e-purse system's implementation.

Critical dependencies on third parties are an inevitable source of challenge and delay on large long-term projects. Given the large number of external providers contracted through Nottingham's LSTF programme, it was felt the small number of issues attributable to external providers was very positive.

It may be possible to avoid similar challenges in future by establishing preferred lists of suppliers in advance of establishing bid partners/procuring delivery support for major sustainable transport programmes like LSTF. Reflecting on the programme management team's experiences of delivering LSTF in Nottingham, and the forthcoming impact evaluation report, could help to inform this.

7 MONITORING ACTIVITIES

7.1 Collecting data for monitoring purposes was built into the Nottingham LSTF programme from an early stage, with the outline monitoring framework set out in the original bid documents. This was developed through an Outcomes Monitoring Plan, published in September 2013 with input from DfT funding partners and consistent with the national LSTF monitoring and evaluation framework. This chapter summarises what monitoring activities and reporting were undertaken by the Nottingham LSTF team at both the programme and individual project level.

Programme monitoring

7.2 The Nottingham Urban Area LSTF programme's strategic objectives and targets are summarised in Chapter 2 of this report. In line with the DfT's requirements the LSTF programme management team prepared:

- **Quarterly financial reports** – these supported the grant claims being submitted to DfT and documented what the LSTF budget was being spent on. They were supplemented by internal quarterly reports to the Public Health team, documenting how their funding for the Central and South Community Smarter Travel Hub coordinator roles was being spent.
- **Annual output reports:** recording and reporting on programme activities and accomplished delivery of outputs using standard DfT reporting templates. These monitoring reports were based on data provided by the delivery teams.
- **Annual outcomes reports:** setting out progress towards programme outcome targets that were defined and agreed with DfT at the outset of the LSTF programme.

7.3 The DfT subsequently commissioned a meta-analysis of large LSTF programmes, including Nottingham's. This means the outcomes reported by the NCC programme management team are being synthesised with those from other LSTF programmes to inform DfT's understanding of the impact LSTF has had at a national level.

7.4 NCC decided to capture the impact of LSTF schemes on individual beneficiaries using pen portraits. These qualitative case studies identified how small groups of individuals had responded to various LSTF projects, and provided a helpful insight into how well received the different components of the programme had been. The Council has also commissioned an ex-post impact evaluation exercise in an attempt to retrospectively determine the value of economic, environmental, mode-shift, and employment benefits that are attributable to the LSTF programme.

7.5 The NCC programme management team were critical of the DfT's delay in providing guidance to LSTF authorities setting out their monitoring expectations. This guidance did not arrive until mid-way through the delivery programme. It meant that some of the DfT's information requests were not been built into the monitoring requirements originally placed on delivery teams. Consequently some monitoring elements had to be 'retro-fitted'. The NCC programme management team felt the DfT should have ensured their monitoring requirements were fixed at the outset of the programme so they remained consistent during the delivery period.

With hindsight, not collecting programme-level baseline data for specific target objectives was a missed opportunity for Nottingham's LSTF programme. Given the hyper-local nature of many project components (e.g. Ucycle, school-based interventions, Community Smarter Travel Hubs, Citycard Cycle Hubs), it would have been useful to undertake dedicated 'before' surveys and observation/count data. Such data would have informed project target setting, and also established key benchmarks against which programme impacts could be measured.

This is an important lesson for similarly scaled future programmes that involve smarter travel interventions and promotions, because before and after data is widely accepted as the optimum way to measure change across intervention areas and communities. It is also likely that, for any significant future programme, NCC's officers and Council Members will want to be able to determine the impacts at key project 'checkpoints' and following delivery. These evaluation insights not only satisfy funders, but also create an evidence-base that informs the design of more effective follow-up activities and future funding bids.

As a rule of thumb it would be appropriate to allocate 5-10% of similar future programme budgets for monitoring and evaluation, and use this to collect pre-intervention data as well as 'during' and 'after' project delivery.

Project monitoring and reporting requirements

Monitoring

7.6 The Outcome Monitoring Plan identified a number of key targets for each of the four LSTF workstrands, within which project indicators and targets were set for individual projects. To monitor progress towards these targets all of the LSTF projects had monitoring activities built into their delivery. Examples include:

- Cycle infrastructure schemes - cycle counts and interviews were undertaken along the new cycle route along the Leen Valley.
- Nottingham City Car Club - membership and utilisation figures were recorded and analysed.
- AccessAdvisr – traffic on the AccessAdvisr website was monitored on a monthly basis alongside counts of profile registrations and search logs by Nottingham-based users.

The project-level monitoring data collection activities appear to have worked well, and were adopted by most delivery teams through their SLAs / quarterly reporting requirements. This effort has established a rich source of project output data that has been regularly collected during the programme delivery period. Consequently it can be used to inform an overarching impact evaluation of the LSTF programme, and will help the evaluation team to understand numbers of beneficiaries and travel behaviour impacts of most key LSTF projects.

7.7 Higher level corroborative data from existing NCC transport data collection and monitoring sources were also monitored. These include:

- NCC's existing network of traffic counts, cycle counts, pedestrian counts, and air quality measuring stations.

- The Big Idea Survey; which collects data on travel behaviour trends and public/business attitudes every 3-4 years, and has been running in its current format since 2008.
- Data on the number of smartcards issued, and use of smartcards in Nottingham.

7.8 These datasets are linked to Key Performance Indicators for transport, which were referenced in the original LSTF funding bid to the DfT as the measures against which programme performance would be measured.

While these city-wide monitoring activities are useful from a corroborative perspective, they are sensitive to other changes to Nottingham's transport network that have been taking place over the LSTF delivery period. It is therefore very unlikely that NCC will be able to discern from these datasets the impact of LSTF initiatives (or even the programme as a whole) from major projects like NET Phase 2, Ring Road capacity upgrades, and the A453 widening.

A lesson for future programmes that require monitoring is therefore not to rely too heavily on city-wide key indicators for detailed impact evaluation, but to instead treat them as corroborative datasets that show whether monitored programme impacts are in-line/counter to broader transport trends.

Reporting

7.9 In addition to programme level meetings and reporting (described in Chapter 4), less formal project progress meetings were also convened between delivery teams and the programme management team. The NCC programme management team held regular progress meetings with the Sustrans and TravelRight delivery teams to discuss Community Smarter Travel Hub activities in more depth, setting direction for each quarter and reviewing spend and budget allocations. These progress meetings also involved the County Council, Gedling and Broxtowe Borough Council representatives where appropriate. One of the other project delivery teams suggested that they would have liked more individual project meetings with the LSTF programme managers, since they felt this would have enabled them to discuss the detail of their projects more regularly.

The NCC programme management team reflected that, with hindsight, they would have been clearer with delivery partners about what monitoring outputs they required from them. They suggested the monitoring templates could be streamlined for providers to make it easier for them to complete, and simpler for NCC to extract specific data and information they needed to meet DfT's reporting requirements. This is good lesson that could be carried forward into similar future programmes.

Process feedback mechanisms

7.10 One of the reasons for ongoing monitoring is to identify emerging delivery lessons that can then be re-deployed during the remainder of the programme. NCC's programme management team felt that, overall, the LSTF programme was a very iterative process, with initiatives evolving in response to lessons learned during the course of the delivery period. Many of the delivery teams suggested their working practices involved continually refining their delivery approach and services based on what they learned from monitoring outputs.

7.11 The interview with City Car Club provided a specific example of where delivery was shaped by monitoring results. The operator consistently listened to feedback from its users and this insight was combined with vehicle utilisation data, to help inform new vehicle locations and the relocation of vehicles with low levels of utilisation.

7.12 The 20mph speed limit project also benefitted from having a formal pilot study, which was funded through a combination of LSTF and LTP funds. This allowed the project delivery team to learn lessons from the pilot areas, resulting in changes to the consultation process, onsite construction, and signing strategies.

Ongoing process learning and feedback has worked well over the course of the Nottingham LSTF programme's delivery. Maintaining this open and honest approach to improving projects while they are in motion is a good practice that should be carried forward into the 2015/16 LSTF programme and other similar future programmes.

8 PERCEIVED LEGACY OF THE LSTF PROGRAMME

8.1 At the end of each process evaluation interview, the interviewees were asked what they believed the legacy of Nottingham's LSTF programme will be. Many respondents focused on tangible outputs, which will remain once the programme's delivery has finished:

- 20mph speed limits across Nottingham City and outside County schools
- Enhanced smartcard technology and on-street retail network
- Electric buses
- Citycard Cycle Hire service and Hubs, and improved cycling infrastructure
- Nottingham City Car Club
- Local walking and cycling maps and the AccessAdvisr website
- The new 'Transport Nottingham' outreach channels

8.2 Others focused on more process-oriented legacies, including:

- **Partnership working** - Interviewees hoped that by demonstrating its ability to work with multiple internal and external partners to deliver a complex programme this will this open up further funding opportunities for the Nottingham Urban Area.
- **New delivery models** - LSTF facilitated investment in emerging delivery models, such as the Community Hubs and the Lifecycle schools programme. Service providers were keen to demonstrate their value elsewhere in Nottingham and the country.
- **An enhanced profile for cycling** in Nottingham which was expected to continue under its own momentum.
- **Strategic delivery and value for money** - Using existing long-term products that are already cross-funded from different Council service areas (in this case the Citycard), as the basis for new public services (such as the Kangaroo Smartcard and Citycard Cycle Hire delivered through the LSTF programme) helps to ensure the longevity of the existing products and new services.
- **Improving the skills and abilities of key delivery team members**, which will be deployed on future projects. Examples given include:
    - NCC's Transport Strategy team now has a more thorough knowledge of procurement processes; and have built up a network of internal contacts in NCC's finance, procurement, and legal teams.
    - Through operating Centrelink, Trent Barton gained knowledge on how to deliver an electric bus service.
    - The enhanced smartcard workstrand demonstrated that that a complex 'IT' project can be delivered by a public transport team (in this case, the NCT CityCard team), rather than by IT specialists. This resulted in a product that was more tailored to NCC's ticketing objectives, and which enabled NCC's team to upskill and gain valuable knowledge.

- Through AccessAdvisr's engagement with disabled people and representative groups in Nottingham, NCC have obtained a better understanding of local accessibility issues.

- **Knowledge transfer** - many of the LSTF projects facilitated knowledge and skill transfers to target organisations. The delivery teams expressed hope that this engenders a culture of sustainable travel in schools, colleges/universities, businesses and other organisations who engaged in the LSTF programme.

8.3 A couple of the process evaluation interviewees made reference to more holistic programme legacies, making statements about the Nottingham LSTF programme leaving behind 'a better transport system for Nottingham'. At the other end of the spectrum, several interviewees saw the programme's legacy as the impact it has had on individual beneficiaries, and cited examples of how LSTF projects have changed individual lives.

9 CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

9.1 In this final chapter the ITP evaluation team have reflected on the key findings from the process evaluation of the Nottingham Urban Area LSTF programme to identify what worked well, and what could be improved upon. Both sets of findings warrant application on similar future initiatives, and therefore jointly represent both the process evaluation conclusions and its recommendations.

Programme strengths: what worked well and should be carried forward?

9.2 In the context of this evaluation; the strengths of the LSTF programme relate to the delivery processes that have worked particularly well, rather than what specific projects have achieved through their delivery.

9.1 A key strength of the Nottingham LSTF programme was that it delivered a wide ranging, but at the same time integrated, package of measures which linked into wider capital investment in transport infrastructure in Greater Nottingham.

9.2 Other key strengths identified by ITP include:

- **Effective overall management and coordination** of a complex programme covering a large number of projects, which typically ran for between 2 and 3 years:
  - Use of existing staff within NCC, and on some externally delivered projects, reducing recruitment and familiarisation time at the start of the programme.
  - The flexible and consultative approach to managing projects and budgets, helping ensure the programme achieved full spend in the LSTF delivery period.
  - Successfully working with a large number of delivery partners – the majority of whom committed to being involved in the programme at the bid stage.
  - Use of SLAs to clearly define activities/outputs from external delivery partners.
  - Insistence on collection of good quality output data to meet DfT requirements.
- The **strong sense of partnership and collaboration** fostered through new and existing working relationships fostered through LSTF programme's delivery:
  - Quarterly Steering Group meetings and Highlight Reporting to bring delivery partners together and create opportunities to collaborate informally.
  - Responsive input to transport projects from new partners; notably NCC's Sports & Leisure team, and Broxtowe & Gedling Borough Councils.
  - Collaboration between public transport operators to achieve smartcard-based joint ticketing.
  - Securing support from external agencies (British Cycling), this was in part based on the strength of the overall LSTF programme partnership.
- **Effectively using the existing Big Wheel branding** saved delivery time up-front, while Council social and print media networks helped expand the reach of LSTF projects:
  - Involvement from prominent Council Members in LSTF promotions.
  - Widespread use of digital and social media across the LSTF projects.

- A high degree of cross-promotion, driven by intelligent use of social media.

- **Continuity of staff members and delivery partners** throughout the LSTF programme period, with a clear emphasis that 'people made the programme'.
- **Regular high profile sustainable and active travel events** which have showcased the quality and diversity of the LSTF programme as a whole package of measures that support on-going infrastructure improvements (NET Phase 2, Cycle City).
- LSTF facilitated the **removal of the technological barriers to smart, integrated ticketing,** allowing NCC to demonstrate to operators that they have the necessary systems in place.
- **Achieving strategic delivery and value for money** by using existing long-term products that are already cross-funded from different Council service areas as the basis for new public services helps to ensure the longevity of the existing products and new services.

9.3 Other comments received through the LSTF process evaluation interviews identified additional strengths that project partners felt were relevant. They included:

- Delivery teams were allowed the creativity and flexibility to deliver initiatives that are tailored to their target audiences.
- The significant achievement of implementing both the city-wide smartcard and 20mph speed limits (on residential roads) within the 4 year LSTF delivery period.
- Delivering meaningful support to jobseekers, for whom transport to work is a barrier.
- A perception that LSTF funding has successfully helped raise local awareness of alternatives to the car, and in particular the profile of cycling.
- Peer recognition of the Nottingham LSTF programme in best practice reports produced by the DfT and the Campaign for Better Transport.
- FE colleges have referenced their involvement in Ucycle in Ofsted and sustainability reports, while the city's universities are marketing their participation in Ucycle.

Programme weaknesses and lessons learned: what could be improved in future?

9.4 Some aspects of the LSTF programme proved more challenging to deliver than envisaged at the bid stage, and consequently worked less effectively than intended. Identified weaknesses that yielded lessons for future similar initiatives have been grouped into themes below:

<u>Programme design and management</u>

- The interwoven nature of lots of smaller LSTF projects meant there was considerable overlap across workstrands, making it hard for some delivery partners and members of the public to understand how the programme fitted together. In future it may be beneficial to treat each workstrand more discretely, or to rationalise the scope of workstrands so they can be more clearly defined around core themes.
- The LSTF Project Board became a less meaningful entity over time, as the approvals needed to set up the various projects were front-loaded in the programme delivery

period. Making it clearer to delivery partners that this was the intended function of the Project Board from the outset may avoid confusion for future initiatives.

- Applying SLAs to all external suppliers and issuing mandates to internal delivery teams (as conducted in other capital projects e.g. the LTP programme) would ensure that there is clarity around approach, outputs and commitment around timescales and deliverables.
- Combining project Steering and Communications Groups in future may help avoid duplication of discussion, and ensure a fuller attendance at single quarterly meetings.
- Encouraging workstrand leaders to feed-back relevant discussion from Steering Group meetings, or inviting smaller project's delivery team leaders to attend occasional Steering Group meetings, could improving programme-wide understanding.

Procuring staff, delivery partners and sites

- The programme management challenge of commissioning a large number of revenue-funded projects delivered by external partners was more significant than expected, and resulted in programme delays. Future delays may be overcome by:
    - Securing dedicated staff resources on a short term basis to assist with commissioning/project management, thereby freeing Transport Strategy team members up to prepare bids and guide the programme.
    - Pre-approving/selecting preferred suppliers whilst waiting for the award decision – something TfGM and Centro did while DfT reviewed the LSTF bids.
    - Building-in sufficient time at the beginning of smarter travel choices interventions to ensure the right mix of staff members are appointed into delivery teams. A 6-9 month window would seem appropriate based on LSTF.
- Discussions with potential delivery locations reduced the time available for delivering the Community Smarter Travel Hubs and Citycard Cycle Hubs. In future it may be beneficial to 'warm-up' potential delivery site managers to ensure there are no planning or availability issues that will prevent swift start-up.
- Future similar programmes may benefit from contingency arrangements for staff in 'mission critical' roles (e.g. programme comms), in the event of illness or new employment. Having key roles shared by multiple staff members may mitigate the risk of project delivery gaps associated with staff absence.

Funding and budget management

- The lack of contingency built into the funding bid meant changes proposed by DfT caused delays when additional funds needed to be identified. Pre-empting this with contingency budgets could help to overcome future funding shortfalls and delays.
- The migration of Council payment systems created a short term cashflow issue for some delivery partners. In future, enabling partners to invoice in advance so as to cover periods of disruption may mitigate this risk.

Barriers to successful collaboration

- A lack of shared decision-making responsibility between NCC and Notts County Council was identified as a weakness, reflecting the LSTF programme's city-focused nature. Balancing ownership of this role may be important for the Nottingham and Nottinghamshire Combined Authority's success.
- The difficulties NCC experienced when trying to introduce an integrated, multi-operator e-purse demonstrated the challenge of accommodating operators' commercial interests, and city-wide sustainable travel objectives within a deregulated public transport market. This highlights that there may be a need for city councils, such as NCC, to have greater influence over ticket pricing within their local area.
- Working across different administrative boundaries created delivery challenges on projects that combined involvement from health, sports, leisure and transport teams. Going forward it could be beneficial to establish a cross-sectoral working group (e.g. involving transport, leisure, health, employment delivery partners) so that a joined-up approach can be adopted from the bid-stages of similarly-scaled programmes.

Branding and communications

- Even with a strong core brand (The Big Wheel) at the heart of a major delivery programme, there were competing brand-related interests among some of the delivery partners. For example, the lack of a consistent approach to presenting and delivering Community Smarter Travel Hubs was widely identified as a weakness.
    - Where this is sought in future it may be appropriate to only commission one partner, or use more stringent SLA wording, to prevent creep away from the original programme vision.
    - Similar future initiatives may seek to address this up-front by insisting on the use of existing branding, defining a comms protocol earlier in the programme, or establishing sub-branding for the programme.
- On projects that are seeking to promote sustainable travel, it is important to remember the role local Councils can play in being champions and leading by example. This kind of support could have aided the City Car Club and ECO Stars projects with their efforts to engage local businesses.
- A consistent and strategic approach to programme communications from early in the programme was identified as a weakness. Programme-wide comms lagged behind some projects, and consequently opportunities to promote projects at a programme level were missed in the first 12-18 months of the LSTF delivery period.
- Social and digital media are central to major sustainable transport behavioural change initiatives. In future consideration might be given to establishing (or re-using) the digital and social media platforms created for the LSTF programme at an earlier stage. This would reduce the need for multiple project websites and social media profiles.
- The projects that experienced the greatest challenges were those aimed to engage 'at-scale' with large target groups, or large organisations, which can often be impenetrable. Projects that focused on smaller, more focused, target groups were generally less

susceptible to these issues, and may represent a model for future programmes aiming to encourage sustainable travel behaviour change in Nottingham.

Monitoring and reporting

- The need for up-front research and information gathering at the individual project scale has potential to delay future similar programmes to LSTF. With hindsight not collecting sufficient project-specific baseline data for specific target objectives was a missed opportunity for the LSTF programme, since it was always likely NCC's officers and Council members would need to demonstrate the programme's impact:
    - Establishing a monitoring and evaluation team at the programme outset ensures that a baseline of travel behaviour and physical activity levels is determined for relevant intervention areas. This can inform target setting/monitoring across individual projects (negating the need for project-level data collection), and improve the quality of subsequent impact analyses.
    - As a rule of thumb it would be appropriate to allocate 5-10% of similar future programme budgets for ongoing monitoring and evaluation activity. Such datasets are necessary if NCC wishes to determine the impact of projects and initiatives that are delivered through programmes like LSTF.
    - In future project teams could better support the monitoring effort by receiving more streamlined templates that make it easier for them to complete, and simpler for NCC to extract specific data and information they needed to meet DfT's reporting requirements.
- Instead, the use of city-wide monitoring activities means it will be hard to separate the impact of LSTF from other major transport investments being delivered in Nottingham. A lesson for future programmes is therefore not to rely too heavily on city-wide key indicators for detailed impact evaluation, but to instead treat them as corroborative datasets that indicate whether monitored programme impacts are in-line/counter to broader transport trends.

Lessons for future DfT funding / programme design

- The DfT should set out their monitoring and evaluation requirements earlier, either at the bidding stage or as part of the funding award, so that these requirements can be better built into delivery programmes.
- From across the Nottingham LSTF delivery team, one of the most significant lessons learned was that behaviour change programmes, and in particular complex programmes involving numerous projects and delivery partners, require more time than was allowed under the current LSTF programme.
    - This is primarily because it takes time and continuity of involvement to build up the required knowledge base and develop relationships with delivery partners, stakeholder groups and the local community.
    - The short term nature of the funding creates pressures to deliver everything at once, or in a very compressed manner, which might not be the most effective delivery strategy.

- Furthermore the requirement to bid for additional funding diverts resources away from programme delivery.

- To address these issues the programme management team feel that it would be beneficial if DfT could offer bid-derived funding for travel behaviour change projects over a longer period of time.

APPENDIX A - Organisations and project roles interviewed

Nottingham LSTF Process Evaluation - Organisations and project roles interviewed

ITP completed a total of 25 in-depth interviews to inform the process evaluation of the Nottingham LSTF programme. The tables below and overleaf summarise the organisations and interviewee roles covered by these discussions.

In addition to the interviews completed in the tables below, ITP engaged with the following individuals/organisations but it was not possible to arrange a suitable time to undertake the interview:

- Project lead for the Electric Bus Project
- Gedling Borough Council
- Tramlink, the operators of the Nottingham Tram network

Derbyshire County Council was also invited to be interviewed, but the identified representative declined to participate.

Table 1: NCC programme management team interviews

Ref. No.	Team	Role of Interviewee with LSTF Programme
1	NCC Transport Strategy	• LSTF Quality Assurance (QA) manager • Chairman of the LSTF Steering Group
2	NCC Transport Strategy	LSTF Programme Manager
3	NCC Transport Strategy	LSTF Project Manager
4	NCC Transport Strategy	LSFT Project Officer

Table 2: Council delivery partner interviews

Ref. No.	Team / Organisation	Interviewees	Primary project/s covered
5	NCC Public Transport City Card team	1	• Enhanced Smartcard • Kangaroo tickets for jobs seekers
6	NCC Public Transport City Card team	1	• Enhanced Smartcard - On-street retail network • Kangaroo tickets for jobs seekers
7	NCC Public Transport	1	• Mobile Travel Centre 'Infobus'
		1	• Citycard Cycle Hubs and Hire
8	NCC Public Transport	1	• Enhanced Smartcard – E-purse • On-street retail network
9	NCC Road Safety	3	• Cycling in schools - Bikeability/Lifecycle • 20mph limits programme • Small-scale infrastructure improvements
10	NCC Transport Strategy	1	• Cycle network improvements
11	Nottinghamshire County Council	1	• Community Smarter Travel Hubs – Broxtowe and Gelding • Small-scale infrastructure improvements - 20mph limits outside schools • Cycle hubs in County locations

Table 3: External delivery partner interviews

Ref. No.	Team / Organisation	Interviewees	Primary project/s covered
12	Sustainable Travel Collective - The Big Wheel	2	• Enhanced business support • Active travel marketing and events
13	City Car Club	1	• Nottingham City Car Club
14	ITP Ltd.	1	• Inclusive Mobility - Access Advisr
15	Sustainable Travel Collective - TravelRight / Ridewise	1	• Community Smarter Travel Hubs – North, Broxtowe and Gelding • Cycling for All
16	Sustrans	2	• Community Smarter Travel Hubs - Central and Southern
17	Sustrans	2	• Ucycle • Small-scale infrastructure improvements
18	Sustrans	1	• Cycling in schools – Bike IT
19	TTR	1	• ECO Stars

Table 4: Stakeholder interviews

Ref. No.*	Team / Organisation	Interviewee/s	Most relevant LSTF projects
20	NCC Sports, Parks and Leisure	3	• Cycling infrastructure improvements • Active travel events and marketing
21	NCC Public Health	1	• Community Hubs Smarter Travel – Nottingham North, South and Central
22	Broxtowe Borough Council	1	• Broxtowe Community Smarter Travel Hub
23	Nottingham City Transport	2	• Enhanced Smart Card • Kangaroo tickets for Job Seekers
24	Trent Barton	1	• Enhanced Smart Card • Kangaroo tickets for Job Seekers • Electric buses - operator of Centrelink
25	Your Bus	1	• Enhanced Smart Card • Kangaroo tickets for Job Seekers

Appendix B: In-depth interview discussion guide – Delivery Partners

Title:	**Process Evaluation**
Sub title:	Interview Schedule
Date:	February 2015
Author:	Emma Taylor
Rev:	A

CRITERIA

- **What worked well?**
- **What worked poorly?**
- **What would you change if project repeated?**

ROLE IN THE LSTF PROGRAMME:

PROJECTS INVOLVED WITH:

BID STAGE

- Did you have involvement at Bid stage?
- Were there any changes to the package after the funding was awarded?

PROJECT GOVERNANCE

- Were the correct governance structures in place?
- Could the project have been governed differently?

PROJECT PLANNING / SET-UP

- Commissioning of delivery partners
- Recruitment and retention of the delivery team
- Lead in time between being awarded LSTF funding and delivery starting on the ground

COMMUNICATIONS

- Engagement of local stakeholders
  - Who? How?
  - Are there any other stakeholders that could be involved?

- How well have you worked with other delivery partners?

- Internal Communications (within LSTF team / NCC)

- External Communications and PR
  - How was the project promoted to the target audience?

- Marketing and branding of the LSTF programme / individuals projects
  - How was your project branded?
  - How important is the branding?

PROJECT DELIVERY

- Has the delivery model evolved during the course of the programme / project?

- Which elements work best? Did any of the fail elements to take off?

- Were there any unforeseen events/difficulties/barriers which hampered delivery?

MONITORING

- What monitoring activities have taken place during the programme / project delivery?

- Did you have any targets? Have you met them? Have they changed during the course of the programme/project delivery?

- How useful has the monitoring been? Have you deployed any of the lessons learnt?

PROGRAMME / PROJECT OVERALL

- Was the programme/project delivered on time and within budget?

- Overall feelings on programme/project:
  - Key strengths?
  - Any weaknesses?

- Were there any unexpected outcomes or consequences?

- Any feedback from senior management, public or members?

- Management
  - How easy was the project/programme to manage?

LEGACY

- What lessons have you learnt through the delivery of the programme/project?

- Would you do anything differently if you re-ran the programme/project in the future?

- Would you have done anything differently if the programme/project was to continue post-LSTF?

- What is the programme/project's legacy?

ANY OTHER COMMENTS

Appendix C: In-depth interview discussion guide – Stakeholders

Title:	**Process Evaluation**
Sub title:	Interview Schedule – Stakeholders
Date:	February 2015
Author:	Emma Taylor
Rev:	A

CRITERIA

- **Awareness of LSTF programme?**
- **What worked well?**
- **What worked poorly?**
- **What would you change if project repeated?**

YOUR ORGANISATION'S ROLE IN THE LSTF PROGRAMME:

BID STAGE

- What role (if any) did your organisation play in the development of the LSTF bid?

COMMUNICATIONS

- How did Nottingham City Council keep you informed about the LSTF programme?
- Do you feel that you were adequately engaged?
- Have you undertaken any activities to help promote the programme?
- How widely do you feel the programme has been promoted?

PROJECT DELIVERY

- Which elements of the LSTF programme have you been involved in?
- What did your role involve?
- Which elements have worked best?
- Did any of the fail elements to take off?
- Were there any unforeseen events/difficulties/barriers which hampered any of the projects you were involved in?

STAKEHOLDERS' THOUGHTS ON WHAT THE PROGRAMME HAS ACHIEVED:

PROJECT IMPACT

- What impact(s) has the LSTF programme had on your organisation and its operations?
- What impact do you think the programme has had more widely? For example on the way people travel in Nottingham?

PROJECT OVERALL

- Overall feelings on project
    - Key strengths?
    - Any weaknesses?

LEGACY

- Do you think anything should be done differently if Nottingham was to run another city-wide smarter choices programme?
- What do you think the programme's legacy will be?
- Do you feel the LSTF programme has delivered on its objectives?

ANY OTHER COMMENTS

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