

Response to Request for Information

Reference: FOI 7529
Date: 17/02/17
Type of request Freedom of Information Request

Ofo Bike Sharing Platform in Cambridge

Please release any information held on the subject of the prospect of bike sharing platform Ofo operating in the Greater Cambridge City Deal area.

Ofo are a private company and are operating independently of the Greater Cambridge City Deal. A representative of the Greater Cambridge City Deal attended a meeting with a representative of Ofo to learn more about Ofo's business plans for the area and the following press statement was created following this meeting.

- Hilary Holden, Lead Officer for City Access within the City Deal team, attended a meeting with representatives from ofo on the 16th January, along with a representative from Cambridge University, in a meeting organised by the Head of Inward Investment for the City Deal GCGP LEP.
- ofo is a Beijing-based private company (established in 2014) that provides a non-docking bicycle sharing platform using app-based technology.
- ofo will be bringing 400 of their bikes to Cambridge in March. The bikes don't require docking stations as they can stand unsupported.
- ofo users will enter into a contract whereby they must park their bike on public land so that it is accessible to the next user.
- ofo is pronounced "o-ef-o" and the word mimics the shape of a bike.
- Hilary Holden, Lead Officer for City Access within the City Deal team said: "The promise of 400 yellow rental bikes arriving in Cambridge in March is a bold move by ofo. It represents welcome private investment in our cycling infrastructure that will create new travel options and directly create new jobs. It could also create challenges that will need to be monitored and managed. With 10 million registered users in China, ofo is currently expanding to only two other cities outside China; Stanford University in California and Singapore. Further proof, if any is needed, that Cambridge is the biggest small city in the world, and ready and able to embrace innovative new technology. With the highest rates of cycling in UK, I can confirm that the City Deal partners remain ambitious to do all they can to make cycling the mode of choice for trips within, to and around Cambridge."

A package of business brochures was also received from Ofo and these are included as Appendix 1 as part of this response. Greater Cambridge City Deal holds no further information regarding Ofo.

Information Management Team

Box OCT1224, Cambridgeshire County Council
Castle Hill, Cambridge, CB3 0AP
Tel: 01223 699137
Email: foi@cambridgeshire.gov.uk