



Managing Directors report

November 2021

1. State of the organisation:

How has Fare City performed in the last quarter? (Aug – Oct 2021)

1.1) Summary:

1.11) Unremunerated work: In the last quarter we have published x1 article, x1 panel video and x1 media video.

- The article 'The Chris Boardman interview' is our first Young Professionals Programme (YPP) piece. We are currently working with x2 other contributors.
- The panel video 'Non-Commercial Cargo bikes: where next?' is the first time we have chaired a panel for a major conference (World Car Free Day - WCFD)
- The media video 'Ride the ULEZ' is our response to the extension of London's Ultra Low Emission Zone.

1.12) Remunerated work (including grant applications and pre-contract project work)

- In the last quarter we have submitted x1 grant application, have met with x1 grant funding organisation and are currently in the process of completing x1 grant application.
- We have issued x1 consultancy project proposal.
- We have submitted our application 'Cityshot: Markets as catalysts of regenerative urban futures' to a grant funder – decision in Jan '22
- We have met with another funder to discuss their funding priorities/criteria and we are currently working up some grant fund ideas (Oct '21)
- We will submit our application 'Cargo bike Clean Air Market' to a third funder by the end of November '21.
- We have issued a project proposal 'E-cargo bike project proposal' to a PLC (Sep '21)

1.13) Internal work (including governance & strategy initiatives/documents)

- In the last quarter we have implemented x1 governance initiative and are currently working on x 4 strategic initiatives.
- We have implemented new director workstreams which outline how Fare City's directors will work within the organisation from Oct '21 onwards. This includes more in person meetings, a revolving meeting chair policy, and greater use of the online drive. It also includes individual 90-day director goals and benchmarking. All of which is to be reviewed on a quarterly basis.

- We are working on a new 'services package' (implementation Dec '21); new 'core funding strategy' (implementation Dec '21); updated communications strategy (implementation Jan '22) and research programme (implementation Jan '22).

1.14) MD comments:

- Since the August Advisory Board (AB) meeting, we have yet to secure any paid work but have applied for paid work in the form of a grant fund and a consultancy project.
- We now know that the consultancy project proposal to the PLC was too ambitious relative to the cargo bike work which the company wanted to conduct. This has been confirmed by a much smaller pilot being undertaken between the company and TfL which Fare City may still be able to propose evaluative services for.
- The directors have worked hard to ensure that the organisation is positioned to apply for a November round of grant funding for the Clean Air Market (CAM). This has included auditing Maltby Street Market which has enabled Fare City to secure a pilot site and assemble a project team.
- Several discussions with potential consultancy clients/grant funders are now unlikely to lead to work.
- However, new contacts and opportunities have arisen but are still in the feasibility stage. These include work with a London-based cycle supplier looking to launch a cargo bike sharing scheme and with one of the three London e-scooter trial partners. Both have indicated that there is the potential for Fare City to provide evaluative/advisory services for their projects and talks are ongoing.
- The directors have agreed that while securing paid work is a priority, there is still a need to deliver engaging content to our followers on a regular basis. Inevitably, this will necessitate undertaking unpaid work – with a recent example being our panel on cargo bikes which launched the WCFD summit in September.
- Maintaining a steady stream of good quality work is important in not only engaging with users and providing leadership but for creating opportunities for paid work.
- However, obtaining core funding which affords us the autonomy to produce smaller pieces, more regular pieces of work (blog posts, podcasts, videos) is a priority and has been reflected in our ongoing development of a core funding strategy.

- The directors welcome the board's comments on all the above, in particular the approach to securing core funding and suggestions for how to improve the draft core funding strategy.

**The progress of individual projects has been detailed in the 'Paid project tracker_V03' document*

**The company's finances have been detailed in the FC 'Financial report' document*

1.2) Fare City's performance to primary objectives:

**The organisation's primary objectives are set out in the FC Advisory Board Charter document, previously issued to all board members.*

1.21) *Objective 1: To deliver a high-quality service to our clients and stakeholders
Indicator: Obtain peer and stakeholder recognition (e.g. awards, external publication, speaking invitations, collaborations and partnerships)*

Has the objective been met?

1. We opened the WCFD summit with our cargo bike panel. The panel was live streamed by approx. 40 people.
2. We published a feature length article with Chris Boardman through our YPP which was viewed over 500 times.
3. We are working with two other contributors via the YPP on a 1-on-1 basis, helping them to improve their understanding of key city and transport-related issues.
4. We have confirmed two partnerships for the CAM and are in the process of confirming additional partnerships for the project.
5. We have been invited to join a London-based clean air alliance which has provided us with a voice for responding to clean air issues – as per our joint open letter published in the Independent.

How could Fare City improve?

1. Implement better post project evaluation:
 - In response to the last MD report recommendations (1.21,2) we tried to implement a follow up evaluation with stakeholders from the WCFD panel we ran. Despite inviting all participants to attend a follow up roundtable to discuss ideas further, we were only able to engage a couple of panellists (though we did get written feedback from another). The team could consider other ways of post event engagement such as an online survey to capture feedback in the event of other means proving unsuccessful.
 - We should also look to evaluate the experience of YPP contributors post publication to get formal feedback on the process, what they gained from it and what could be improved.
2. Be more proactive in working with YPP contributors:
 - Uptake for the YPP has been slow, with several contributors dropping out which has resulted in a failure to meet our monthly publication deadline. The team should aim to be working with x3 participants on an ongoing basis to ensure that monthly targets are met. This will require many more potential contributors to be identified, agreed and approached by the team.

1.22) *Objective 2: To empower our stakeholders to consider making more informed travel choices*

Indicator: Provide evidence of greater stakeholder awareness/behaviour change via the use of social impact tools signed off by the client/stakeholder.

Has the objective been met?

1. Arguably, the WCFD panel summit may have encouraged some stakeholders to consider switching to a cargo bike, however, no in-webinar poll was conducted to confirm whether this was the case.
2. Fare City's audit of Maltby Street market engaged directly with market management and traders. Our work with the market manager will enable us to pilot the CAM at Maltby Street, while our discussions with market traders initiated a conversation about why and how traders could use more sustainable modes of transport.

How could Fare City improve?

1. Develop multiple ways of measuring and quantifying the impact of our work
 - This follows on from the recommendations of the previous MD report (1.22,1). For the purposes of future webinars, we should conduct in-webinar polling to identify any likely behaviour change from participants. The omission of this was owing to inexperience of chairing a panel and anticipated time constraints.
 - Measurement of market traders' behaviour will be captured via the development of a bespoke Social Impact Framework (SIF) which should enable us to capture whether our work is empowering traders as intended.
2. Be more proactive in working with stakeholders:
 - The last quarter has seen a downturn in stakeholder engagement, predominantly owing to the team focusing on securing paid work. As set out in 1.14 'MD's comments', the team will focus on balancing paid vs unpaid work in the next quarter with the objectives of both engaging with more stakeholders and growing Fare City's influence with a view to securing paid work.

1.23) *Objective 3: To run the organisation in a sustainable manner*

Indicator: 'Secure fee-paying consultancy/grant funded work from reputable organisations which enable the organisation to thrive, while exploring the potential for core funding'

Has the objective been met?

1. We have not secured any fee-paying consultancy or grant funded work in the last quarter, despite submitting a consultancy fee proposal and a grant application. However, both applications are still live and are with reputable organisations. As discussed at the last board meeting, it is important that we secure funding soon, not only if we are to begin remunerating directors in 2022 (as per our business plan), but to cover overheads including subscriptions, travel, and event tickets.

2. This quarter has seen us start two initiatives – a core funding programme and new service packages – designed to improve the likelihood of obtaining funding. These initiatives will require that the board reviews and advises the company's directors on how best to develop and implement them.
3. We have taken steps to run the organisation both more sustainably and more efficiently. This includes the new director workstreams and director benchmarking. Establishing protocols which provide directors with greater ownership and accountability (benchmarking) but within a more supportive environment (more in-person meetings) is designed to help the company function more responsibly, both for staff and stakeholders. Both workstreams and benchmarking will be regularly reviewed to ensure that Fare City's staff, stakeholders and project work benefit.

How could Fare City improve?

1. Carefully monitor the current approach:
 - Though Fare City have not secured any paid work over the last quarter, the directors are actively working to create opportunities and close out fee proposals/grant applications. Similarly, directors have developed and implemented new workstreams and benchmarking to ensure that targets are identified and met. Careful monitoring of the situation over the coming quarter will be important in determining whether this approach is working.
2. Implement key strategies to programme:
 - We must develop and finalise our core funding strategy, project packages and research programme by the midpoint of this quarter (Mid-Dec '22), with a view to implementation in the new year. Doing so will give us the best possible chance of unlocking new revenue streams and of securing paid work.
3. Formalise engagement with the Advisory Board:
 - This follows on from the recommendations of the previous MD report (1.23,3). CC and CW have since scheduled monthly meetings to review the company's progress, while CC suggests he contacts AB members for x1 call/physical meeting between AB meetings. CC will also send a monthly progress email to the board (x2 between meetings) to keep them informed of key developments.

2. State of the sector:

What external developments could impact the organisation?

Summary:

- COP26 is without doubt the single biggest event this quarter. To date, agreements have been reached on deforestation and methane, while progress on investment for poorer nations and cleantech looks promising. In the next few weeks, it will become apparent how successful the conference has been in agreeing net zero targets with the view to limiting global warming to 1.5 degrees.
- C40 Cities (lead city London) have made the 'Net Zero' pledge, which commits 1,000 global cities to halve carbon emissions by 2030 and go carbon neutral by 2050.
- Aside from national and city-level agreements, there appears to be little pledged in the way of sustainable city transport with cycling noticeably being left off COP26's 'Transport Day' agenda (November 10th).
- The UK government launched its 'Net Zero Strategy' in Oct '21 detailing its plans to reach net zero by 2050. There is an emphasis on EV's – especially ending the sale of ICE vehicles by 2030 and ensuring all new cars and vans are zero emission at the tailpipe by 2035.
- The strategy says little new re. active travel from the government's 2020 Decarbonising Transport Report, aside from an ongoing commitment to delivering the pledged £2 billion to achieve half of all journeys in towns and cities being cycled or walked by 2030.
- The government's Oct '21 spending review confirmed this £2 billion active travel funding, while pledging an additional £6.9 billion sustainable transport funding for England's city regions with the aim of levelling up transport (though only £1.5 billion as a new commitment)
- £25.5 billion has been specifically allocated for 'emissions-reducing spending', including electric vehicle charging infrastructure and funding for active travel projects.
- Fuel prices were frozen again with fuel prices at an eight year high. In the UK, fuel tanker shortages and a broader EU shortage led to panic buying among motorists in Oct '21.
- The ULEZ extension launched in London at the end of Oct '21 and is 18 times the size of the original ULEZ and congestion charge zone.
- Other UK cities are following suit with both Bath and Birmingham introducing Clean Air Zone's, while Portsmouth (Dec '21) and Edinburgh (Summer '22) are coming online.
- The UK launched its first 'on demand' cargo bike sharing scheme in Hackney in Sep '21. The trial is in partnership with an ebike provider and will last for 1 year. Six bikes at three locations are being trialled.
- London's scooter trials have been extended to Summer '22, with ten boroughs now trialling the scheme – up from the original five.

Opportunities for Fare City:

- Fare City will be at COP to attend events, speak to fellow participants, and to conduct a high-profile interview to reboot our 'Street Side Talks' podcast series.
- We have confirmed the *European Cyclist Federation's* President as our guest.
- Fare City have additionally joined over 100 active travel NGO's in signing an open letter calling on world leaders to commit to higher levels of cycling.
- Aside from the experience of attending the biggest sector-specific global event, it should provide an opportunity to learn more about the key issues, to network, and to produce engaging content for our stakeholders.

- The *C40 Cities* pledge and the UK government's renewed commitment to active travel are both welcome and reiterate the importance of continuing to try to work with both city authorities and local government in helping them to deliver upon their respective targets. A number of meetings with both city and council leaders have helped to identify areas that we should target (e.g. 2030 net zero declarations and cargo bikes) as the basis of obtaining work.
- Fare City are set to join a London-based 'clean air alliance', (the terms of which are still to be confirmed) will give FC a voice as part of an influential group and will assist in gaining support and validation for the CAM.
- Fare City have been approached by a cargo bike supplier positioned to roll out a similar app-based cargo bike rental scheme to the one in Hackney. If this goes ahead, there may be potential to support the evaluation of this scheme and others within London.

Challenges for Fare City:

- As identified in last quarter's report, Fare City's biggest challenge at present is securing paid work. Our capacity to achieve this has recently improved, and has enabled the organisation to follow up leads and progress opportunities – despite no uptake yet.
- Regular, high-quality engagement with stakeholders and the ability to measure our social impact is an ongoing challenge. This requires time and would ideally be conducted via fee paying or core funded work. The directors would welcome a discussion with the board as to how this may be best achieved.
- A recurring challenge is having the capacity to develop and deliver internal governance and strategy. We have made a good start with several strategies but need to progress these quickly if we are to implement them to our agreed programme.