



Managing Directors report

August 2021

1. State of the organisation:

How has Fare City (FC) performed in the last quarter? (May – July 2021)

1.1) Summary:

- In the last quarter we have published three pieces of unremunerated project work:
- x 2 research projects: [‘Capital Ambitions’](#), FC’s London mayoral research project
[‘Sharing the Load’](#), FC’s first policy report
- x1 community project: [‘Generation Z’](#), FC’s two-part community project with Northolt High

- We have additionally published [one media piece](#) on the FC website and have had one research project covered by [two external publications](#).
- We have focused on meeting with potential clients/grant funding bodies with a view to generating remunerated work.
- As agreed at the company’s April 2021 AGM, the focus for the period would be to prioritise fee paying work, either in the form of securing consultancy work or through winning grant funding.
- Since the April AGM, we have yet to secure any consultancy work or apply for a grant fund.
- While the slow uptake of any fee-paying work has been disappointing, we have now had at least one meeting with 11 of the 21 organisations identified for initial meetings on the FC contacts database.
- Of these contacts, there is certainly scope for paid work – most likely in the form of partnering for external grant funds, though talks re. direct fee-paying consultancy jobs are still in progress with several organisations.
- We have additionally had introductory meetings with two different grant funders.
- One of these grant funders has indicated that there is a high likelihood they would fund a project which FC have recently presented to them.
- We have made progress in other areas including personnel and programmes started:

- Personnel: HS has joined FC as the third Advisory Board (AB) member
- New programmes: FC’s ‘Young Professionals Programme’ has started.

**The progress of individual projects has been detailed in the ‘Paid project tracker_V02’ document*

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

1.2) Fare City's performance to primary objectives:

**The organisations 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?

4. 'Sharing the Load' was endorsed by Westminster Universities 'Active Travel Academy'.
2. 'Sharing the Load' was covered by two media outlets, while FC were invited to present the report to the 'London Clean Air Coordination group' (which includes organisations such as LCC, Sustrans and the Environmental Defense Fund)
3. Northolt High school have stated that they would collaborate with FC again and have provided an excellent testimonial
4. We have been approached by both a charity and a London Borough to collaborate on fee-paying work, a consultancy project and BID respectively.
5. x 5 organisations (inc. charities, local authorities and limited companies) have agreed to partner with FC on a further research project, this is based on the quality of the team's work and the strength of rapport.

How could Fare City improve?

1. Subsequent policy reports to be circulated to press outlets further in advance to improve the likelihood of external coverage.
2. We should develop an evaluation framework (post project completion) to understand a project's longer-term social impact, while maintaining our professional relationship with the client to encourage further work.
3. We should review client/grant funder strategy on a periodic basis to ensure that we are liaising with clients and funders in the most effective and timely manner.

- 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. 'Generation Z' enabled three students to publish written pieces on what travelling sustainably means to them. In their pieces, students took ownership of themes first identified and explored via the use of FC organised surveys and webinars.
2. We have been contacted by a fellow Community Interest Company (CIC) regarding helping them to implement one of 'Sharing the Loads' report recommendations. FC have since met with the CIC and have issued a consultancy project proposal.
3. We interviewed ten city users at the reopening of London's Hammersmith Bridge to non-motorised transport (NMT). Vox pop style interviews enabled users to share their experiences, concerns and ambitions for the bridge's future.

How could Fare City improve?

1. FC should aim to develop multiple ways of measuring and quantifying the impact of our work (e.g. testimonials, post-project surveys, implementation of project recommendations). This will enable us to firstly test whether our stakeholders value our project recommendations, secondly, enable us to improve our services and thirdly, may be used to demonstrate to potential clients/funders that we are delivering social value.
2. We have developed bespoke social measurement tools (e.g. a social impact framework) for two of our projects. Despite client sign off, we must aim to generate greater stakeholder buy-in throughout the whole process, while using the results as the basis of developing a project evaluation framework (as per 1.21).

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

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

Has the objective been met?

1. We have delivered two consultancy projects to date, but none in the last quarter. Though outgoings are currently covered by a surplus, the next two quarters are critical in enabling us to continue to operate with a view to growing our social impact, and remunerating directors in 2022.
2. In addition to funding via consultancy work and grant funding, we should explore the potential for core funding from a grant funding body. In the two years since we began our first research project (Hammersmith Bridge – August 2019), we have built up a portfolio of innovative and impactful work and have begun to establish our credentials within the sector. Core funding would enable us to deliver our own research programme, inwardly invest in current staff and serve to attract and develop new staff.

How could Fare City improve?

1. We need to be more proactive in identifying potential revenue streams and in subsequently researching and developing project proposals. CC would like to discuss options with the advisory board re. how the organisation could be working more efficiently.
2. We need to develop a research programme which reflects our areas of interest, the needs of our stakeholders and our organisational objectives. FC's directors have identified areas of interest and will need to develop and present ideas to the AB for review.
3. FC's directors and advisers should aim to work more closely. This is something which can be discussed when CC and the full AB meet at the first board meeting. CC and CW, as MD and Chair respectively, should additionally aim to arrange regular meetings (e.g. once a month) in addition to emails on an ad-hoc basis.

2. State of the sector:

What external developments could impact the organisation?

Summary:

- The UK's sustainable mobility sector still appears to be benefitting from the impact of the pandemic, namely in the form of government policy and funding initiatives. These include the recently published 'Gear Change: One Year On' report, The 'Transport Decarbonisation Plan' and 'The New Highway Code' (All July 2021).
- Some of the lustre of these initiatives has, however, been lost by huge levels of ongoing investment in the country's road building programme and mixed messaging around the imposition of punitive policies on motorists, at both national and city level (e.g. fuel tax freezes, London congestion charge operating hours and the East London Silvertown road tunnel).
- However, in the run up to the UK hosted COP26 the UK government – and the transport and built environment sector as a whole – will be aiming to inject new impetus into setting and agreeing upon climate targets. The need to do so has been compounded by recent 'unexpected' weather events including heatwaves, heavy downpours, and flash flooding.
- In UK cities specifically, the effect of these weather events has been acutely felt, while a range of more incremental environmental issues are also impacting city users.
- Clean air is arguably the biggest of these. In London, the 2020 landmark ruling into the death of teenager Ella Kissi Deborah featured widely in the May 2021 mayoral elections, while the ruling has provided the incumbent mayor with further justification for extending the capital's Ultra Low Emission Zone (ULEZ), in October 2021.
- Other interdependent issues include the renewed uptake of the private car, appreciably lower public transport use and even more pronounced levels of partisanship (both pro or anti sustainable mobility), including the implementation of LTN's, cycle lanes and the use of e-scooters.

Opportunities for Fare City:

- On the most fundamental level, the pandemic has initiated a conversation about not only how people travel around cities, but why they travel, how city space is used and who benefits.
 - As a result of this increased awareness, many city users have felt empowered to reimagine their urban environments, try new modes of transportation and have actively collaborated to promote change via both formal and informal means.
 - Fare City has been part of this conversation; from working with young people at Northolt High, to analysing the effects of the pandemic in seven global cities, or interviewing London mayoral candidates – the organisation has delivered insightful and innovative work.
 - There are good opportunities for FC to further contribute and begin to shape this conversation moving forward. In the upcoming quarter specifically, London will host its third car free day event (September 2021) and will extend the ULEZ (October 2021), while the UK will host COP26 (November 2021).
- Tied into these events are current pieces of work which FC is undertaking including the development of the UK's first cargo bike Clean Air Market (CAM), a proposal for the reopening of Hammersmith Bridge to non-motorised modes of transport (NMT) and opportunities to develop grant funding proposals with a range of charities, limited companies, and councils.

Challenges for Fare City:

- As outlined in section 1.1, the organisation's biggest challenge at present is securing paid work. This is coupled with limited capacity to progress existing opportunities, while identifying new streams of revenue (consultancy work, grant funding and core funding). This may result in the company missing key opportunities.
- Limited capacity has also impacted FC's ability to respond to external events in a timely manner (e.g. a social media post in response to a government announcement). This has curtailed the opportunity to increase our influence and may result in potential clients approaching competitors.
- A further time-sensitive challenge outside of securing paid work and responding to external developments, is having the capacity to develop internal processes which may not only impact how efficiently the organisation runs (e.g. social measurement tools), but our eligibility to apply for grant funding (e.g. the need to provide an ethics framework).
- While established competitors in our field provide similar services, none occupy the unique space of think tank and social enterprise. This has been in part confirmed by some of the organisations which are keen to collaborate with us who are looking for new partners outside of the traditional organisations.
- These challenges are certainly surmountable but will require that CC and the board discuss how best to approach them.