



## PRESS RELEASE

No: 511/2017

Date: 30th August 2017

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### **Government of Gibraltar Donation to Charitable Organisations**

HM Government of Gibraltar is pleased to announce that, in the aftermath of the failed Gibibike scheme introduced by the GSD in 2011, a number of these bicycles will finally be put to good use. Fifty of the original bicycles have been refurbished and made roadworthy and donated for use in Morocco via the International Lions Club and the Association Mediterranee de Developpement et de Formation.

From the onset, the Gibibike scheme was fraught with problems. The project was introduced and developed by a company that had no previous experience of running such a scheme and, as a result, it was a scheme that regularly failed its users. The anti-theft devices, electronic tags and lock units were of unsatisfactory quality, as were the locks on the bicycle station themselves. The combination of these poor quality goods and a scheme that had serious design flaws was never likely to be successful. The company behind the scheme failed to deliver spare parts in accordance with the agreement and it came as no surprise that the scheme was unable to operate and, as a consequence, it suffered financial loss.

The Government repeatedly requested the Company to rectify the breach of contract and to repair the equipment and bicycles but the company failed in these obligations. Within 6 months of its launch, the service was discontinued and its parent company in the UK had folded with a cost of over £300,000 to the Gibraltar tax-payers.

The GibiBike scheme started with 130 bicycles and 13 docking stations. Only 6 months later, just 47 bicycles remained fully functional and only 8 docking stations were available for use: many bikes were permanently locked in their stations, not because they were broken but because they could not be released due to software malfunctions. Other bikes just 'went missing'.

Of the 130 Bicycles purchased – 18 were permanently locked in docking stations, 31 had their anti-tilt tags broken with no spares to repair them, 12 others required spares to make them roadworthy. A further 22 were held in reserve, leaving just 47 available for a client base of 419.

The scheme was launched on 27th November 2011 and, within 6 months, only 47 bikes were operational and many stations were out of action.



On a more positive note, last week, Minister Paul Balban handed over 50 refurbished bikes to the two charities. On behalf of the Lions Club, Mr Pepe Palmero said: “On behalf of the President and Members of the Lions Club, I thank you Minister for having had the initiative to donate these bicycles; helping us to help others. We are sending these bicycles to people in need who live 4 miles from their school or work. They will help children to get to school and their fathers to work. I would like to thank the Government and the people of Gibraltar for helping us, which is why we are here.”

Mr Abel Suisi of the Association Mediterranee de Developpement de Formation also gave his heartfelt thanks for the donation of these bicycles to his association. He said: “These bicycles will be put to good use helping people get to their places of work and education”.

The Minister for Infrastructure and Planning, Paul Balban said: “I am satisfied that we can finally put what remains of the failed bicycle rental scheme to some worthy use. These bicycles will give greater mobility to some less fortunate people so that they can access their schools and places of work. I would like to thank these two charities for their work and I am delighted to be able to assist them.”