

**READING BOROUGH COUNCIL  
REPORT BY DIRECTOR OF ENVIRONMENT AND NEIGHBOURHOOD SERVICES**

<b>TO:</b>	<b>TRAFFIC MANAGEMENT SUB-COMMITTEE</b>		
<b>DATE:</b>	<b>14 SEPTEMBER 2016</b>	<b>AGENDA ITEM:</b>	<b>10</b>
<b>TITLE:</b>	<b>MINSTER STREET - EXTENTION TO BUS ONLY RESTRICTION OPERATIONAL HOURS</b>		
<b>LEAD COUNCILLOR:</b>	<b>TONY PAGE</b>	<b>PORTFOLIO:</b>	<b>STRATEGIC ENVIRONMENT, PLANNING AND TRANSPORT</b>
<b>SERVICE:</b>	<b>TRANSPORTATION &amp; STREETCARE</b>	<b>WARDS:</b>	<b>BOROUGHWIDE</b>
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**1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to ask the Sub-committee to approve the request to advertise for an overnight (7pm to 7am) extension to the operational hours of the bus only restriction in Minster Street. There has been a long standing public safety concern during the night-time economy period and the popularity of the bars within Gun Street. By closing Minister Street between 7pm to 7am overnight to through traffic, vehicle movements are reduced thus improving the safety of large numbers of people using the narrow footways of this historic street.

**2. RECOMMENDED ACTION**

- 2.1 That the Sub-committee note the contents of this report.
- 2.2 That in consultation with the Chair of the Sub-Committee, the Lead Councillor for Strategic Environment, Planning and Transport and Ward Councillors, the Head of Legal and Democratic Services be authorised to carry out a statutory consultation and advertise the extension to the operational hours of the bus only restriction of Minister Street to include the 7pm to 7am overnight period in accordance with the Local Authorities Traffic Orders (Procedure) (England and Wales) Regulations 1996.

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| <p>2.3 That subject to no objections received, the Head of Legal and Democratic Services be authorised to make the Traffic Regulation Order.</p> <p>2.4 That any objections received following the statutory consultation be reported to a future meeting of the Sub-Committee.</p> |
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### 3. POLICY CONTEXT

- 3.1 These proposals are in line with current Transport and Planning Policy.
- 3.2 Under the 1988 Road Traffic Act, the Highway Authority has a duty to take steps to both reduce and prevent collisions on the road network. In addition under the Traffic Management Act 2004 the authority has a duty to maintain and manage the road network and secure the safe and expeditious movement of traffic. (Traffic is defined to include pedestrians). It is therefore imperative that the authority continues to strive to ensure the network is safe for all users as so far as reasonably practicable.

### 4. NIGHT-TIME ECONOMY

- 4.1 There has been a long standing public safety concern during the night-time economy period with the popularity of the bars within Gun Street. Many people enjoying what Reading has to offer during the late evening and early morning are attracted to the establishments in Gun Street. Gun Street is an historic street with relatively narrow footways and due to the popularity of the night-time economy many people move around in this area. It is a regular occurrence that people encroach on the carriageway which raises very real public safety concerns.
- 4.2 During the restricted times between 7am to 11am and again between 4pm to 7pm Minister Street can only be legally used by buses, taxis and those that need access. Unrestricted (11am to 4pm and overnight between 7pm to 7am) Minister Street becomes a through route across the town centre area from east to west. By closing Minister Street to through traffic overnight (between 7pm to 7am) vehicle movements are reduced thus improving the safety of large numbers of people using the narrow footways of this historic street.
- 4.3 We have been enforcing Minister Street for many years and have ensured that residents and others that need access to the area is maintained. This change will not only help to improve the public safety concern but also benefit the wider area by closing off a through route across the town centre.

## **5.0 CONCLUSION**

- 5.1 That the Sub-committee agree to the 7pm to 7am extension of the bus only restriction to improve public safety overnight and reduce the impact of through traffic across the town centre area.

## **6. CONTRIBUTION TO STRATEGIC AIMS**

- 6.1 The delivery of road safety and casualty reduction schemes help to deliver the following Corporate Plan Service Priorities:

- Keeping the town clean, safe, green and active.
- Providing infrastructure to support the economy
- Remaining financially sustainable to deliver these service priorities.

## **7. COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT AND INFORMATION**

- 7.1 Statutory Consultation will be carried out in accordance with the Local Authorities Traffic Orders (Procedure) (England and Wales) Regulations 1996.

## **8. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 8.1 Waiting and movement restrictions are advertised under the Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984.

## **10. EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT**

- 10.1 In addition to the Human Rights Act 1998 the Council is required to comply with the Equalities Act 2010. Section 149 of the Equalities Act 2010 requires the Council to have due regard to the need to:-

- eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct that is prohibited by or under this Act;
- advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it;
- foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it.

## **11. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 11.1 The changes suggested within this report are relatively low cost and will be funded from existing transport budgets.

## **12. BACKGROUND PAPERS**

- 12.1 Bus lane enforcement was introduced in 2006 with the current town centre restrictions promoted in 2010/11 - Cabinet, TMAP and TM Sub-committee papers refer.