

READING BOROUGH COUNCIL

REPORT BY EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR FOR ECONOMIC GROWTH & NEIGHBOURHOOD SERVICES

TO:	TRAFFIC MANAGEMENT SUB-COMMITTEE		
DATE:	15 June 2022	AGENDA ITEM:	7
TITLE:	ACTIVE TRAVEL FUND TRANCHE 2 - CONSULTION ON SHINFIELD ROAD TRAFFIC RESTRICTIONS		
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1 PURPOSE OF REPORT AND EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to seek approval from the Traffic Management Sub-Committee to implement new traffic restrictions in the form of double yellow lines along the entire length of Shinfield Road from Christchurch Green to Shinfield Rise as part of the Active Travel Fund Tranche 2 Shinfield Road scheme.
- 1.2 This report also informs the Traffic Management Sub-Committee of objections received during statutory consultation for the implementation of the traffic restrictions as stated above.
- 1.3 Appendix 1 - Shinfield Road Traffic Restrictions - Statutory Consultation Responses

2. RECOMMENDED ACTION

- 2.1 That the Sub-Committee notes the content of this report.
- 2.2 That the Assistant Director of Legal and Democratic Services be authorised to approve the proposed traffic restrictions on Shinfield Road in accordance with the Local Authorities Traffic Orders (Procedure) (England and Wales) Regulations 1996.
- 2.3 The Assistant Director of Legal and Democratic Services be authorised to make the Traffic Regulation Order.

3. POLICY CONTEXT

- 3.1 The Council's Corporate Plan supports the delivery of new transport infrastructure in order to manage levels of congestion, improve air quality and reduce carbon emissions, whilst accommodating the significant levels of planned economic growth. The Council's approved Capital Programme provides capital funding for key infrastructure projects.
- 3.2 Consultation on the Council's new Local Transport Plan (LTP) was undertaken from 4 May to 30 August 2020. The new strategy is being developed to help achieve wider objectives including the Reading 2050 Vision, the Climate Emergency and improved air quality. The LTP will be heavily focused on addressing these wider challenges through a package of solutions to provide realistic sustainable alternatives to the private car, alongside measures to manage demand to improve air quality and congestion. The new strategy will be aligned with other Council strategies including the new Local Plan, and draft Climate Emergency Strategy.
- 3.3 The proposals align with the principles of the Council's Local Transport Plan (LTP), Local Cycling, Walking and Infrastructure Plan (LCWIP), Climate Emergency Strategy and Health and Wellbeing Strategy.

4. THE PROPOSAL

- 4.1 In November 2020, the Department for Transport announced the award of £1.179m to Reading Borough Council for the Active Travel Fund Tranche 2 scheme. This award was on the basis of a detailed, high quality and ambitious bid submitted by the Council, resulting in Reading being awarded 100% of the indicative allocation available.
- 4.2 A two-stage engagement and consultation approach was undertaken in the development of the Active Travel Tranche 2 scheme. An initial engagement exercise ran from 24th February to 23rd April 2021 (8-weeks) whereby 928 responses were received from residents, businesses and organisations. The outcome of this exercise identified the Shinfield Road scheme was the best supported and least opposed scheme.
- 4.3 A further consultation on the Shinfield Road scheme was undertaken on 26th October to 6th December 2021 (6-weeks). Once again, the outcome of this consultation confirmed a support to the Shinfield Road scheme.
- 4.4 As part of the overall scheme, and in order to facilitate the delivery of the enhanced cycle and pedestrian facilities, the Council is required to impose traffic restrictions, in the form of double yellow lines, along the entire route between Christchurch Green and Shinfield Rise.
- 4.5 A Statutory consultation has been carried out in accordance with the Local Authorities Traffic Orders (Procedure) (England and Wales) Regulations 1996, advertised on street, in the local printed newspapers and on the Council's website (the 'Consultation Hub'). The Consultation commenced on 12th May 2022 and ended on 2nd June 2022.

4.6 A total of 22 responses to the consultation were received, of which 78% were in support of the proposed traffic restrictions. In summary of the objections, the 2 common themes were:

- Individuals were not aware of the detail of the Active Travel Tranche 2 scheme and therefore their objections identified that the current parking on Shinfield Road was not causing an unsafe obstruction or increasing congestion.
- Individuals were also concerned that the traffic restrictions may cause parking to be displaced to the local residential streets.

4.7 The Council will continue to review the impact of these traffic restrictions on nearby streets, to ensure that such displacement is minimised as far as possible, and will discuss options with the university to utilise campus parking for staff and students, to reduce on street parking in the surrounding area.

4.8 A summary of the consultation responses can be found in Appendix 1.

5. CONTRIBUTION TO STRATEGIC AIMS

5.1 In order to support the achievement of the Council's vision, as identified within its Corporate Plan 2022/25, the Council has developed three key themes:

- Healthy Environment
- Thriving Communities
- Inclusive Economy

5.2 The implementation of the Active Travel Fund Tranche 2 - Shinfield Road scheme contributes to the Council's Corporate Plan 'Healthy Environment' theme as set out below:

- Traffic restrictions can assist in preventing obstructive, hazardous or nuisance parking. Many parking issues can create delays or accessibility obstructions for users of the network such as pedestrians, cyclists, domestic vehicles, delivery vehicles, emergency services and public transport.
- Proposals for this Shinfield Road scheme can help to reduce some of these parking issues. and may lead to more efficient traffic flow, clearer footways, improvements to perceived Highway safety and greater containment, and remove some of barriers to active travel.
- The overall scheme will contribute to the Council's goal of making the town carbon neutral by 2030.

5.3 The Council's Corporate Plan 2022/25 is available on the Reading Borough Council website which includes information on the projects that contribute to the delivery of these priorities.

6. ENVIRONMENTAL AND CLIMATE CHANGE IMPLICATIONS

- 6.1 Transport is the biggest greenhouse gas emitting sector in the UK accounting for around 27% of total carbon emissions. As set out in the Reading Climate Emergency Strategy 2020-25, this figure is lower in Reading with transport accounting for around 20% of carbon emissions. However, significant investment in sustainable transport solutions is vital in order to respond to the Climate Emergency declared by the Council in February 2019 and to help achieve our target of a carbon neutral Reading by 2030.
- 6.2 Proposals set out in this paper seek to support a step-change in transport infrastructure and services and cover perceived local safety, accessibility and traffic flow issues that, once resolved, should improve traffic flow (lower emissions, improved flow for public transport) and remove some barriers toward increased use of sustainable and healthy transport options.

7. COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT AND INFORMATION

- 7.1 A Statutory consultation was conducted between 12th May 2022 and 2nd June 2022 in accordance with appropriate legislation, including Traffic Regulation Orders as appropriate. Notices were advertised in the local printed newspaper and were erected on lamp columns within the affected area. The feedback received during this consultation, is set out in Appendix 1.

8. EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT

- 8.1 Under the Equality Act 2010, Section 149 of the Equality Act 2010, a public authority must 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, and
 - foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it.
- 8.2 It is not considered that an Equality Impact Assessment is required for the implementation of this scheme as the proposals are not deemed to be discriminatory to persons with protected characteristics.

9. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 9.1 New, or changes to existing, Traffic Regulation Orders require advertisement and consultation, under the Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984 and in accordance with the Local Authorities Traffic Orders (Procedure) (England and Wales) Regulations 1996. The resultant Traffic Regulation Order will be sealed in accordance with the same regulations
- 9.2 A Statutory consultation was conducted in accordance with this legislation, and this report seeks agreement for the Assistant Director of Legal and Democratic Services to conclude this process, in the making of the Traffic Regulation Order.

10. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

10.1 The Active Travel Tranche 2 - Shinfield Road scheme is included in the Council's Capital Programme.

10.2 Funding for the Shinfield Road scheme is set out within 4.1 of this report and has been allocated from the Department for Transport's Active Travel Fund as well as the and Integrated Transport Block grant funding allocations as set out in the table below:

Capital Implications:

	2022/23 £000	2023/24 £000	2024/25 £000
Proposed Capital Expenditure: Active Travel Fund - Tranche 2	985	500	Nil
DfT Active Travel Tranche 2 Funding	985	169	Nil
Integrated Transport Block	Nil	331	Nil
Total Funding	985	500	Nil

Value for Money (VFM):

10.3 All aspects of the Shinfield Road scheme that can be delivered using Reading Borough Council's own resources will be delivered internally and not outsourced. This includes investigation and designing of some aspects of the schemes, drafting creation of the Traffic Regulation Orders and the delivery of many engineering elements on street.

11. BACKGROUND PAPERS