

TRAFFIC MANAGEMENT SUB-COMMITTEE MINUTES - 14 SEPTEMBER 2022

Present: Councillors Ayub (Chair for all items except item 15(a)), Yeo (Vice Chair in the Chair for item 15(a)), Barnett-Ward, Carnell, Ennis, Gittings, Hacker, Hornsby-Smith, Hoskin, Keeping, Leng, Mitchell, Moore Page and White.

12. CHAIR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Chair asked the Sub-Committee to stand and observe a minute's silence in memory of Her Majesty the Queen who had passed away on 8 September 2022.

13. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Councillor Ayub declared an interest in item 15(a) on the grounds that he owned a hackney carriage.

Councillor Leng declared an interest in item 18 on the grounds that he lived in one of the roads listed in the 2022B programme.

14. MINUTES

The Minutes of the meeting of 15 June 2022 were confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

15. QUESTIONS

Questions on the following matters were submitted, and answered by the Lead Councillor for Climate Strategy and Transport on behalf of the Chair:

Questioner	Subject
Councillor White	Electric Vehicle Charging Trial
Councillor White	Engine Idling and Pollution

(The full text of the questions and replies were made available on the Reading Borough Council website).

16. PETITIONS

(a) Petition for Private Hire Vehicle use of Kings Road and Duke Street Bus Lanes

The Executive Director for Economic Growth and Neighbourhood Services submitted a report on the receipt of a petition, asking the Council to allow private hire vehicles access to the Kings Road outbound bus lane and the Duke Street Bus gate to access London Street.

The petition contained 187 indications of support and read as follows:

“Application for usage of the Bus Lane (KINGS ROAD, READING - OUTBOUND) and (DUKE STREET TO ACCESS LONDON STREET, INBOUND/OUTBOUND) READING.

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I am writing this to request kindly the usage of the following bus lanes as stated above. I myself and likewise most of the PRIVATE HIRE DRIVERS in Reading have been driving Private Hire for many years.

Over the years the traffic situation in Reading has got from bad to worse. Day by day it is making our job very difficult and challenging. Especially in the Peak times the roads are so busy that we often get very late in dropping our passengers to their designated destinations.

On several occasions taking a V.I.P client to the airport in the mornings/afternoons we always get stranded on the A329 KINGS ROAD OUTBOUND. If we were granted access to use this bus lane it would help us in a logistical way, as you have been very kind to grant us the inbound usage of the same bus lane with barely any complaints of abusive use. As the same goes for the Duke Street bus lane access to London Street inbound/outbound, when we are trying to escort passengers to their destinations, it would be a major help, saving a great amount of time, meeting our customers' demands and needs and most of all reducing the amount of congestion and pollution."

At the invitation of the Chair the petition organiser, Kamran Saddiq, addressed the Sub-Committee on behalf of the petitioners. Mr Saddiq informed the Sub-Committee that he had carried out research into trial periods other Councils had been running allowing private hire vehicles to use bus lanes and the Sub-Committee asked that the results of the research be sent to officers so that it could be included when the request set out in the petition was considered.

Resolved -

- (1) That the report be noted;**
- (2) That officers consider the request in the context of wider transport and climate strategies and their recommendations be submitted to a future meeting;**
- (3) That the lead petitioner be informed of the decisions of the Sub-Committee, following publication of the agreed minutes of the meeting;**
- (4) That no public inquiry be held into the proposals.**

(Councillor Ayub declared an interest in the above item on the grounds that he owned a hackney carriage. He left the room and took no part in the discussion or decision making.)

(b) Petition for Resident Parking Permit Eligibility for Kendrick Court

The Executive Director for Economic Growth and Neighbourhood Services submitted a report on the receipt of a petition from residents, asking the Council that residents of Kendrick Court, Kendrick Road, became eligible for Resident Parking Permits to enable on-street parking along Kendrick Road (Parking Zone 10R).

The petition contained 38 indications of support and read as follows:

"Petition for the Right to Kerbside Parking Permits in Kendrick Road

We, the undersigned, request that Reading Borough Council allow residents of Kendrick Court, Kendrick Road, RG1 5DS, the right to Parking Permits to park in kerb-side parking spaces on Kendrick Road.

The other blocks of flats in Kendrick Road all have plenty of garages and parking. Kendrick Court pre-dates these other blocks by decades, having been

developed when private car ownership was the exception. It has 42 bedrooms but was designed to accommodate just 11 small cars.

Currently only people who live in houses on Kendrick Road can apply for permits. This seems discriminatory and irrational as these households often have

driveways and don't need additional parking, whereas residents of Kendrick Court have so few spaces. There is currently plenty of kerbside parking space available in Kendrick Road.”

At the invitation of the Chair the petition organiser, Edward Hammond, addressed the Sub-Committee on behalf of the petitioners.

The Sub-Committee discussed the petition and Councillor Page proposed that any decision in response to the petition be deferred to the next meeting to allow time for further consideration of a number of points that Mr Hammond had made in an email that he had sent to the Sub-Committee following publication of the report.

Resolved -

- (1) That the report be noted;**
 - (2) That a decision be deferred to the next meeting to allow for consideration of the points that had been raised by the petitioner in his email to the Sub-Committee;**
 - (3) That the lead petitioner be informed of the decisions of the Sub-Committee, following publication of the agreed minutes of the meeting;**
 - (4) That no public inquiry be held into the proposals.**
- (c) Petition for the 54 Households Represented were informed of, and consulted, on any discussions that might result in action taking place on Kidmore Road and requesting a mechanism to put forward proposals

The Executive Director for Economic Growth and Neighbourhood Services submitted a report on the receipt of a petition from residents, asking the Council that the 54 households represented were informed of, and consulted, on any discussions that might result in action taking place on Kidmore Road and requesting a mechanism to put forward proposals.

The petition indicated that it represented the views of 54 households and read as follows:

“We are writing as a group of Kidmore Road residents, residing at the southernmost end of the road, from the Oakley Road crossroads to the junction with The Mount.

We represent the residents of 54 households.

We are aware of discussions and activities involving RBC, regarding both the trees on our section of Kidmore Road, and various traffic issues including volume of traffic, speeding, and unreported accidents.

We are also aware of course of Matt Rodda’s consultation regarding traffic on Kidmore Road.

We as residents would like to ensure that we are informed of, and consulted on, any discussions regarding Kidmore Road, particularly any discussions which might result in some action taking place which affects our neighbourhood.

We would also like some mechanism to put forward proposals of our own, and would welcome a discussion with yourself, Matt, and/or RBC as to how best to go about this.

As a group of residents we are united in the below concerns:

- We are strongly in favour of retaining the trees.*
- We are concerned about the volume of traffic (rat running).*
- We are concerned about the manner of driving (speeding and unreported accidents).*
- We are concerned about the state of the single pavement.”*

A letter from Matt Rodda MP had also been sent to the Sub-Committee about a “Speeding in your Area” consultation he had been carrying out with the residents in Caversham Heights having been contacted about dangerous driving in the area and had shown that Kidmore Road caused most concern amongst local residents.

At the invitation of the Chair the petition organiser, Dan Winchester, addressed the Sub-Committee on behalf of the petitioners.

Resolved -

- (1) That the report be noted;**
- (2) That officers and Ward Councillors agree on an appropriate mechanism to receive and consider proposals from the households indicated in the petition;**
- (3) That the lead petitioner be informed of the decisions of the Sub-Committee, following publication of the agreed minutes of the meeting;**
- (4) That no public inquiry be held into the proposals.**

17. DIGITAL PARKING PERMITS TRIAL

Further to Minute 9 of the previous meeting, the Executive Director of Economic Growth and Neighbourhood Services submitted a report on the findings of the statutory consultation that had been carried out between 4 August and 25 August 2022 on the proposed amendment to the Lower Caversham Traffic Regulation Order and sought approval for officers to carry out a pilot project which would enable the issue of Digital Permits which would not need to be displayed in vehicles. Feedback that had been received to the statutory consultation was attached to the report at Appendix 1.

The report explained that the pilot project would include Residents and Visitor parking permits within the chosen area of Lower Caversham, Zone 02R, including the new ward boundaries and that in summary the changes proposed would mean that :

- Permits were not printed and posted (residents and resident visitor permits);
- The scheme would no longer require a permit to be displayed in the vehicle (residents and resident visitor permits);
- Each household would be entitled to purchase in blocks of hours not books, also known as scratchcards (resident visitor permits);
- Residents would not be asked to allow up to 14 days for these permits to be issued.

Procurement of a new Parking Services contract might lead to a change of supplier within the next 12 months and, if Digital Permits were to go live boroughwide prior to this, a transition plan from the existing system would need to be in place and this would form part of any full rollout plan.

The report stated that during the consultation period 75 returns had been received via the Council's website and five emails had been received and had been responded to. The Police were a statutory consultee and had been notified directly and the Traffic Management Officer from the Hampshire Constabulary and Thames Valley Police Joint Operations Unit had confirmed there were no concerns from them. From the consultation hub responses, 39 had supported the idea of Digital Permits, 11 neither objected nor supported and 25 objected. The analysis had shown that the main reasons for objecting were:

- Concerns about IT access and literacy;
- Perceived lack of enforcement action;
- Data concerns.

From the consultation 39 responses had supported the implementation of a pilot project, 31 responses of these had said it was a good idea and/or an easier system and five responses had supported, but had given no reason for the support. General feedback had acknowledged that residents would not be subject to postal delays, paperless permits were better for the environment and the resident did not have to worry about the paper permit falling off resulting in enforcement action. From the 75 responses there were 19 that had included a question, the answers to these questions could be found in the Frequently Asked Questions or via the website and from 29 July to 30 August there had been 681 visits to the website.

The report explained that should the pilot go ahead the actions that would be taken to alleviate residents' concerns were as follows:

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- Enforcement activity would be maintained in the pilot area;
- The enforcement request page would be highlighted;
- Communications in and outside of the pilot area before and during go live would be increased;
- Communications such as leaflet drops and a social media presence would be targeted;
- The Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) would be updated to reflect the feedback.

During the pilot officers would ensure additional feedback was gathered such as resident's feedback regarding ease of use and benefits of the pilot. The results would be submitted to a meeting in 2023 along with a high-level business case for a proposed boroughwide rollout of digital permits for all permit types.

In answer to a number of questions, Helen Taverner, Parking Services Manager, explained the calculation in respect of visitor permit hours, in particular the overnight provision, and that although the present system had not been set up to provide residents with a renewal reminder this could be included in the procurement specification for the new Parking Services Contract. Helen also reported that following the previous meeting, when it had been suggested that the facility to enter a vehicle's registration number on the Council's website to check if it had a permit should be investigated, General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR) would not allow this, but an explanation would be added to the list of FAQs; the consultation had also shown that residents were concerned about such a facility being provided.

Resolved -

- (1) That the consultation feedback, set out in Appendix 1 attached to the report, be noted;**
- (2) That the proposed pilot project be implemented and the Assistant Director of Legal and Democratic Services authorised to make the Traffic Regulation Order;**
- (3) That respondents to the statutory consultations be informed of the decisions of the Sub-Committee accordingly, following publication of the agreed minutes of the meeting;**
- (4) That no public inquiry be held into the proposal.**

18. WAITING RESTRICTIONS REVIEW

The Executive Director for Economic Growth and Neighbourhood Services submitted a report informing the Sub-Committee of objections that had been received during statutory consultation for the agreed proposal that had formed the 2022A programme and providing the list of new requests, for potential inclusion in the 2022B programme. The following appendices were attached to the report:

Appendix 1 - Feedback received during statutory consultation for the 2022A programme and the advertised drawings for those proposals;

Appendix 2 - New requests for consideration in the 2022B programme

Appendix 3 - Battle Ward informal survey results for potential alterations to RPP restrictions on Belmont Road and Connaught Road.

The Sub-Committee considered the 2022A and 2022B programmes and Councillor Leng reported that with regard to Foxhays Road, the issue appeared to be about footway parking particularly to the north and east of the road.

Resolved -

- (1) That the report be noted;**
- (2) That the objections set out in Appendix 1 with the appropriate recommendation to either: implement, amend or reject the proposals be noted;**
- (3) That the following proposals made under the waiting restriction review 2022A, as set out in Appendix 1, be implemented, amended or removed from the programme as follows:**
 - **Bridge Street - Implement as advertised;**
 - **Kelmscott Close - Implement as advertised;**
 - **Pinewood Drive - Implement as advertised;**
 - **Bigbury Gardens - Implement as advertised;**
 - **Poplar Gardens - Implement as advertised;**
 - **Tenby Avenue - Implement as advertised;**
 - **Dee Road - Implement as advertised;**
 - **Shaftesbury Road - Implement as advertised;**
 - **Upper Redlands Road - Implement as advertised;**
 - **Hogarth Avenue - Implement as advertised;**
 - **Dunstall Close - Implement as advertised;**
 - **Poole Close - Implement as advertised;**
 - **Amersham Road - Implement as advertised;**
 - **Briants Avenue - Implement as advertised;**
 - **Chiltern Road - Remove from the programme;**
 - **Priory Avenue - Implement as advertised;**
 - **Portway Close - Implement as advertised;**
 - **Pendennis Avenue - Implement as advertised;**
 - **Rosendale Road - Implement as advertised;**
 - **Boulton Road - Implement as advertised;**
 - **Bourne Avenue - Implement as advertised;**
 - **Armour Road - Implement as advertised;**
 - **Stoneham Close - Implement as advertised;**
 - **Alexandra Road - Implement as advertised;**
 - **Cadugan Place - Implement as advertised;**
 - **Carnarvon Road, De Beauvoir Road, Junction Road - Implement as advertised;**
 - **Circuit Lane - Remove from the programme;**

- Silchester Road - Implement as advertised subject to the existing double yellow lines being reduced back to, and including, the driveway to number two Silchester Road;
 - Durham Close - Implement as advertised;
 - Shirley Avenue - Implement as advertised;
- (4) That the Assistant Director of Legal and Democratic Services be authorised to seal the resultant Traffic Regulation Order for the 2021B programme and no public inquiry be held into the proposals;
- (5) That respondents to the statutory consultation be informed of the decision of the Sub-Committee accordingly, following publication of the agreed minutes of the meeting;
- (6) That having considered the requests made for waiting restriction changes, set out in Appendix 2 attached to the report, the requests be investigated by officers as part of the 2022B review programme, subject to the following amendments to the programme:
- (i) Belmont Road and Connaught Road locality - Councillor Hacker to meet with officers to discuss a number of traffic related matters in the area and how they could be progressed;
- (7) That the officer recommendations, following investigation of the new requests, be shared with Ward Councillors, providing opportunity for local consultation (informal) and for their comments to be included in the next report submitted to the Sub-Committee;
- (8) That, should funding permit, a further report be submitted to the Sub-Committee seeking agreement to conduct the Statutory Consultation on the recommended schemes for the 2022B programme.

(Councillor Leng declared an interest in the above item on the grounds that he lived in one of the roads listed in the 2022B programme)

19. SIDMOUTH STREET CYCLE LANE - RESULTS OF STATUTORY CONSULTATION

Further to Minute 8 of the previous meeting, the Executive Director of Environment and Neighbourhood Services submitted a report informing the Sub-Committee of objections and other feedback that had been received during the statutory consultation about the temporary active travel scheme on Sidmouth Street that had sought public feedback on whether it should become permanent. A drawing illustrating the existing scheme on Sidmouth Street was attached to the report at Appendix 1 and feedback that had been received to the statutory consultation was attached to the report at Appendix 2.

The report summarised the responses that had been received as follows:

- Around 273 comments had referred to the perceived low use of the cycle lane by cyclists;

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- Around 199 comments had referred to additional disruption that might be caused to traffic, congestion and pollution on Sidmouth Street and the impact on surrounding roads;
- Around 54 comments each referred to a) the perceived poor connection of the facility to the surrounding cycle network; and b) the preference for Watlington Street;
- Around 41 comments had been received regarding perceived safety concerns, for motorists and cyclists using the cycle lane;
- Around 27 comments had been received where people were looking forward to there being better connections to the network in the future;
- Around 20 comments stating that they would like the segregation and wanted more dedicated cycle lanes in Reading;
- Around 18 comments had raised concerns about emergency services trying to get down the road and being unable to drive down the cycle lane.

The report stated that the main themes of the responses had been as expected and there had been no themes nor individual response that would currently lead officers to recommend that the cycle scheme should not be implemented permanently and some of the constructive suggestion for improvements had echoed some of the high level thoughts that officers had been considering.

Resolved -

- (1) That the report be noted;**
- (2) That having considered the consultation feedback set out in Appendix 2 attached to the report the scheme be implemented permanently;**
- (3) That the Assistant Director of Legal and Democratic Services be authorised to seal the resultant Traffic Regulation Order and no public inquiry be held into the proposals;**
- (4) That respondents to the statutory consultation be informed of the decision of the Sub-Committee accordingly, following publication of the agreed minutes of the meeting.**

20. RAILWAY STATION SUBWAY - PROPOSAL TO REVOKE PROHIBITION OF CYCLING

The Director of Environment and Neighbourhood Services submitted a report that sought approval for officers to carry out statutory consultation on the proposal to revoke the cycling prohibition on the route that linked the north and south sides of Reading Railway Station creating a shared use (pedestrian/cyclist) facility. An extract from the 2013 Traffic Regulation Order, that showed the location of the subway was attached to the report at Appendix 1.

The report explained that in 2013, following the redevelopment of Reading Railway Station and its interchanges, the subway that linked the north and south interchanges had been dedicated as a Highway under a deed of variation between Network Rail Infrastructure Limited and the Council. Responsibility for the overhead concrete/rail structure had remained with Network Rail while the internal subway and ceiling were the responsibility of

the Council's Highway and Traffic Services Team. The subway construction had included a suspended ceiling, lower than that of engineering constraints of the surrounding structure and was a potential safety risk to cyclists and as such, a Traffic Regulation Order had been put in place implementing a prohibition of cycling along the subway. The public had a right of access through the subway on foot and cycling was not currently permitted, as the width and height clearances were substandard. It had been a long-standing desire of the Council and cycling groups to find a solution that would enable safe cycling along the subway, as the prohibition and the surrounding rail infrastructure and strategic road network were significant cycling barriers between the north and south sides of the station and beyond.

The Council had commissioned a feasibility report on allowing cycling as part of a scheme to remove the lowest ceiling panels using Section 106 funding specifically for this scheme. The solution would see the removal of the low sections of ceiling panels, a tidy up of the existing concrete ceiling and protection of Network Rail services. There would be an improved head room clearance, which although below national guidelines, would enable the Council to accept the position and allow cycling through the subway following the necessary consultation process and revoking of the Cycling Prohibition Order. There was also a separate proposal to replace the lighting with LED equivalent lanterns to reduce energy consumption and enable remote monitoring and control of the lighting units.

The report stated that should objections be received during the statutory consultation period they would be submitted to a future meeting so that they might be considered prior to a decision being made on the outcome of the proposal.

The Sub-Committee discussed the report and it was acknowledged that it would need to be made clear that it was a shared space, with may be speed restrictions for cyclists and clear signage, and possibly safe segregation of cyclists and pedestrians.

Resolved -

- (1) That the report be noted;**
- (2) That the Assistant Director of Legal and Democratic Services be authorised to undertake statutory consultation processes for the proposed revocation of the Traffic Regulation Order that implemented the subway cycling prohibition in accordance with the Local Authorities Traffic Orders (Procedure) (England and Wales) Regulations 1996;**
- (3) That subject to no objections being received, the Assistant Director of Legal and Democratic Services be authorised to make the Traffic Regulation Order;**
- (4) That should any objection(s) be received during the statutory consultation period, that these be reported to a future meeting of the Sub-Committee for consideration and decision regarding the outcome of the proposal;**
- (5) That no public inquiry be held into the proposal.**

21. EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC

Resolved -

That, pursuant to Section 100A of the Local Government Act 1972 (as amended) members of the press and public be excluded during consideration of item 22 below, as it was likely that there would be disclosure of exempt information as defined in Paragraphs 1 and 2 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of that Act.

22 APPLICATIONS FOR DISCRETIONARY PARKING PERMITS

The Executive Director for Economic Growth and Neighbourhood Services submitted a report giving details of the background to the decisions to refuse applications for Discretionary Parking Permits from 21 applicants, who had subsequently appealed against these decisions.

Resolved -

- (1) That, with regard to application 1, a first discretionary permit be issued, personal to the applicant, valid until February 2023;
- (2) That, with regard to application 11, a first discretionary permit be issued, personal to the applicant;
- (3) That, with regard to applications 7, 8 and 10, discretionary visitor permit books be issued, personal to the applicants, subject to the standard scheme limits for the number of books that can be issued each year;
- (4) That a decision in respect of application 5 be deferred to the next meeting to allow officers to prepare a report in response to the petition that was received by the Sub-Committee asking for Kendrick Court, Kendrick Road to be included in eligibility to parking Zone 10R (Minute 16(c) refers);
- (5) That the Executive Director for Economic Growth and Neighbourhood Services' decision to refuse application 2 be upheld and that officers contact the applicant providing information about applying for a Blue Badge;
- (6) That the Executive Director for Economic Growth and Neighbourhood Services' decision to refuse application 6 be upheld, but that the applicant be offered first refusal of the first or second permit should either be returned by the holders, subject to the applicant supplying the correct documentation;
- (7) That the Executive Director for Economic Growth and Neighbourhood Services' decision to not waive or reduce the fee for issuing a third discretionary resident permit in respect of application 16 be upheld;
- (8) That the Executive Director for Economic Growth and Neighbourhood Services' decision to refuse application 19 be upheld and that officers also contact the applicant highlighting the availability of business permits for which they had not yet applied;
- (9) That the Executive Director for Economic Growth and Neighbourhood Services' decision to refuse applications 3, 4, 9, 12, 13, 14, 15, 17, 18, 20 and 21 be upheld.

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(Exempt information as defined in Paragraphs 1 and 2).

(The meeting started at 6.30 pm and finished at 9.00 pm).