

TRAFFIC MANAGEMENT SUB-COMMITTEE MINUTES – 13 SEPTEMBER 2023

Present: Councillors Ayub (Chair for all items except item 19), Barnett-Ward, Cross, Ennis, Gittings, Goss, Griffith, Hacker, Hornsby-Smith, Keeping, Lanzoni (Vice Chair in the Chair for item 19), McCann, Moore, Page, Singh and White.

Apologies: Councillor Kitchingham.

15. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Councillor Ayub declared an interest in item 19 on the grounds that he owned a hackney carriage.

16. MINUTES

The Minutes of the meeting of 14 June 2023 were confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

17. QUESTIONS

A question on the following matter was submitted, and answered by the Lead Councillor for Climate Strategy and Transport on behalf of the Chair:

Questioner	Subject
Councillor White	Improving Road Safety Around Schools

(The full text of the question and reply was made available on the Reading Borough Council website).

18. PETITIONS

(a) Petition – Speeding on Francis Street

The Sub-Committee considered a report on the receipt of a petition, requesting the Council to address alleged speeding and traffic volumes along Francis Street. A map showing Francis Street was attached to the report at Appendix 1.

The report stated that on 8 August 2023 a petition had been submitted to the Council that had contained 32 signatures. The petition read as follows:

“Reading Council, non resident car owner, delivery vans, and bin vans often drive too fast on Francis Street. Residents’ cars are parked on both sides of the street. With an increase of “through” traffic and the number of wide vans, residents’ cars are regularly scratched, dented and damaged often with no recourse or named parties given for insurance claims.

We would like to park our cars without worrying that they will be damaged and want to avoid a pedestrian or cyclist being hurt. Reading Council; the residents agree that we need to tackle speeding on Francis Street with anti-speeding measures and investigate other ways to cut the volume of traffic on the street.”

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The report explained that Francis Street was a one-way street that ran west to east between Elgar Road and Sherman Road and that within the previous five years of Police supplied casualty data up to 1 April 2023 there had been no recorded incidents on the Street.

The Requests for Traffic Management Measures report that was submitted to the Sub-Committee twice annually contained an entry for requested traffic calmed 20mph restrictions on Alpine Street, Francis Street and Edgehill Road specifically. The list had been submitted to the Sub-Committee meeting on 2 March 2023, Minute 54 refers, and it was intended to submit an update to the next meeting on 13 November 2023.

The report stated that there was currently no allocated funding for the development and delivery of a 20mph zone on Francis Street and officers were aware of the desire for similar treatment in the surrounding area. Officers acknowledged the concerns that had been raised by residents both in the petition and with prior direct contact and 20mph appeared to be appropriate for the nature of the street. Therefore, the report proposed that the entry in the Requests for Traffic Management Measures Report should be updated to reflect the receipt of the petition, with an expectation that scheme development would commence once funding had been identified. The application of traffic calming features, such as speed humps, required statutory consultation and could be locally controversial, but would likely also deter motorists from using these streets as short-cuts, and would additionally address the concerns that had been raised in relation to current traffic volumes.

At the invitation of the Chair Ian Fullbrook, addressed the Sub-Committee on behalf of the petitioners.

Resolved –

- (1) That the report be noted;**
- (2) That the existing entry on the ‘Requests for Traffic Management Measures’ report be updated to reflect the receipt of the petition be agreed;**
- (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.**

(b) Petition – Improving Safety at Kenilworth Avenue and Monks Way Entrances

The Sub-Committee considered a report on the receipt of a petition, requesting the Council to improve the safety of the entrance of Kenilworth Avenue and Monks Way, with requests for raised pedestrian crossings and waiting restrictions. A copy of the petition was attached to the report at Appendix 1.

The report explained that on 22 August 2023 a petition had been submitted to the Council from the Southcote Park Estate Committee that requested three changes:

- The implementation of double-yellow lines around the eastern corner of Kenilworth Avenue, continuing eastbound along Southcote Lane. This was being requested to improve visibility for motorists exiting Kenilworth Avenue onto Southcote Lane, which was currently being compromised by on-street parking;

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- Raised table/bump across Kenilworth Avenue at its junction with Southcote Lane. This was being requested to align with other junctions along Southcote Lane that had had this treatment. It was anticipated to help reinforce pedestrian priorities at the junction which the recent Highway Code changes had introduced;
- Raised table/bump across Monks Way, at its junction with Southcote Lane.

The report stated that beyond the junctions with Southcote Lane these sections of Kenilworth Avenue and Monks Way were not adopted Highway. However, the Highway adoption of Southcote Lane extended into the junctions, so any feature/design would need to be feasible within that adopted section. Tables of this nature should be set back from the junction give-way lines to reduce the risk of vehicle destabilisation when turning and to ensure that the give-way markings were prominent. The table would have entry/exit ramps of a prescribed gradient and a minimum table width of 1.5m should be provided for pedestrians. It was expected that the current extent of adopted land would not fully accommodate this, so development of the scheme would likely require further land adoption, albeit to a relatively small extent to make the scheme feasible. This would allow necessary realignment of the approaching footways and an offset of the table from the junction. Other raised tables along Southcote Lane were set back from the junction and occupied approximately five to five and a half metres between the junction and the end of the furthest ramp. These were relatively wide tables which could be reduced for application at Kenilworth Avenue and Monks Way, but not to the three metres adopted length that had been suggested within the petition.

Surface water drainage would be a consideration of the design and if additional gullies were required this might also necessitate additional potential adoption of land to enable feasibility of the installation.

The report stated that within the previous five year period of Police supplied casualty data up to 1 April 2023, there had been no recorded incidents either at the junction of Kenilworth Avenue or Monks Way.

The report explained that the request for double-yellow lines had already been captured on the list of new requests proposed for the 2023B Waiting Restriction Review Programme, see Minute 21 below, and would be developed as part of the programme. There was currently no allocated funding for the development and delivery of the two requested raised crossings, but officers acknowledged the concerns that had been raised in the petition. The report proposed that the requests should be added to the Requests for Traffic Management Measures Report and once funding had been allocated, scheme development could be programmed and resourced. These development processes would include the requirement for statutory public consultation, so it needed to be noted that they would not be guaranteed for delivery, even when funding became available.

At the invitation of the Chair Soren Sturup-Toft, Trustee member of the Southcote Park Estate Committee, addressed the Sub-Committee on behalf of the petitioners.

Resolved –

- (1) That the report be noted;**

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- (2) That the request for waiting restrictions has been captured in the 2023B Waiting Restriction Review programme be acknowledged and that it is developed through this programme agreed;
- (3) That the requests for raised tables at the entrances to Kenilworth Avenue and Monks Way be added to the next 'Requests for Traffic Management Measures' report update be agreed;
- (4) That the lead petitioner be informed of the decisions of the Sub-Committee, following publication of the agreed minutes of the meeting;
- (5) That no public inquiry be held into the proposals.

19. PETITION UPDATE – PRIVATE HIRE VEHICLE USE OF KINGS ROAD BUS LANE

Further to Minute 16(a) of the meeting held on 14 September 2022 and Minute 28 of the meeting held on 10 November 2022 the Sub-Committee considered a report that set out the officer recommendations that related to the refined request to enable Council licenced private hire vehicles to use the Kings Road, outbound, bus lane.

The report explained that since the report that had been submitted to the November 2022 meeting of the Sub-Committee the strategy work had regrettably yet to be resourced and the petitioning private hire association had refined their request to apply only to the Kings Road (outbound) bus lane.

The report stated that the Kings Road was experiencing a relatively high number of incidents involving casualties. The majority of these incidents either involved pedestrians crossing the road or vehicles turning across other vehicles within the bus lanes. Officers were concerned that an increase in the volume of traffic in the bus lanes, particularly as this traffic would be a similar profile of vehicles to those within the general traffic lanes, would risk increasing the number of casualties. Although it was important to note that officers were not alleging that it would necessarily be as a result of any inappropriate or unsafe driving that was anticipated by the Council's licenced private hire drivers, but as a consequence of increased volumes of traffic that would be travelling at higher speeds in comparison with the general traffic lanes.

The Red Route parking restrictions that spanned from east to west Reading, including Kings Road, had primarily been implemented to improve the reliability of bus services along this corridor, particularly the Number 17 route. The alterations to the Kings Road bus lane had also been introduced with this objective, reducing the previous restriction from all private hire vehicles, alongside other permitted vehicle types, to just Reading Borough Council licenced private hire vehicles. With enforcement based on the vehicle type, and not whether the vehicle was occupied with a fare, alongside the apparent lack of a cap on either the number of licenced private hire vehicles or on the access restriction itself, opening the bus lanes to private hire vehicles could have a marked difference on traffic volumes using the lanes throughout the day.

The report explained that to pursue the requested alteration of access along the Kings Road outbound bus lane would require the following:

- Identification of funding;
- Statutory Consultation – Creation and advertising of the proposed new Traffic Regulation Order (TRO);

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- Implementation of the Decision – Consideration of the consultation feedback;
- Signing Review – Review and creation of signing specifications for the required changes along the route;
- Making the Order – Seal and advertise the made TRO;
- Implementation of the Scheme – Change the signing on street and updating exemptions on the enforcement camera software.

The report stated that, as agreed at the November 2022 meeting, it remained the intention of officers to carry out a strategic review of bus lane access across the Borough and the recommendation that the requested alteration to access along Kings Road outbound bus lane was not agreed.

At the invitation of the Chair Kamran Saddiq, Chairman of the Reading Private Hire Association, addressed the Sub-Committee in favour of private hire vehicle use of the Kings Road outbound bus lane. At the invitation of the Chair Ashif Rasheed, Chair of the Reading Taxi Association, also addressed the Sub-Committee, he spoke against private hire vehicles using the bus lane.

The Sub-Committee discussed the report and Councillor Ennis proposed, seconded by Councillor Barnett-Ward, that an informal consultation be carried out on the requested change to enable Reading Borough Council licenced private hire vehicles to use the Kings Road, outbound, bus lane. He stated that the consultation should include a number of stakeholders such as bus companies, taxi associations, cycle groups, disability access groups and the general public and a report setting out the results be submitted to the January 2024 meeting.

Resolved –

- (1) That the report be noted;**
- (2) That an informal consultation be carried out on the requested change to enable Reading Borough Council licenced private hire vehicles to use the Kings Road (outbound) bus lane;**
- (3) That a number of stakeholders be included in the informal consultation, such as, bus companies, taxi associations, cycle groups, disability access groups and the general public;**
- (4) That a report setting out the results of the informal consultation be submitted to the meeting in January 2024.**

(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.)

20. PROPOSALS FOR A PEDESTRIAN CROSSING – UPPER REDLANDS ROAD

The Sub-Committee considered a report that sought approval to carry out statutory consultation/notice processes necessary to progress the scheme for a pedestrian crossing on Upper Redlands Road. A scheme design of the Upper Redlands Road Pedestrian Crossing was attached to the report at Appendix 1.

The report explained that having reviewed and assessed bids from local authorities, Active Travel England had responded to authorities with an award and Reading had been awarded

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funding for the delivery of the pedestrian crossing on Upper Redlands Road to the value of £75,000.

The scheme was jointly promoted by the Council, St Joseph's College and the University of Reading as there was no safe place for children, university students or local residents to cross Upper Redlands Road. This scheme would provide safer routes for children to walk to school as well as linking to the university via Elmhurst Road to the Active Travel scheme on Shinfield Road as well as the Active Travel scheme at Christchurch Green. Following discussion with Ward Councillors, officers had commissioned an independent Road Safety Audit for the scheme and, subject to the findings and necessary adjustments, which were not expected, the report proposed that officers carried out the required statutory consultation for the scheme. Any objections would be submitted to a future meeting and if there were no objections the report proposed that the scheme should be considered as approved for delivery.

Resolved –

- (1) That the report be noted;**
- (2) That Assistant Director of Legal and Democratic Services be authorised to undertake statutory consultation/notification processes for the proposed zebra crossing designs on Upper Redlands Road, in accordance with the Local Authorities Traffic Orders (Procedure) (England and Wales) Regulations 1996;**
- (3) That the Highways and Traffic Services Manager, in agreement with the Lead Councillor for Climate Strategy and Transport, be authorised to make minor alterations to the agreed proposals;**
- (4) That subject to no objections being received the scheme be considered as agreed for implementation enabling delivery planning to commence;**
- (5) That should a scheme receive objection(s) during the statutory consultation period, that these be submitted to a future meeting of the Sub-Committee for consideration and decision regarding scheme implementation.**

21. WAITING RESTRICTION REVIEW PROGRAMME

The Sub-Committee considered a report informing the Sub-Committee of objections, including petitions, that had resulted from the statutory consultation for the agreed proposals that formed the 2023A Waiting Restriction Review programme and provided the Sub-Committee with the list of new requests for potential inclusion in the 2022B programme. The following appendices were attached to the report:

Appendix 1 – Feedback that had been received to the statutory consultation for the 2023A programme, and the advertised drawings for those proposals;

Appendix 2 – Summary of the petition that had been received against the consulted 2023A programme for Ashby Court;

Appendix 3 – Summary of new requests for potential inclusion in the 2023B programme.

Resolved –

- (1) That the report be noted;**
- (2) That the following proposals made under the waiting restriction review 2023A, as set out in Appendix 1, be implemented, amended or removed from the programme as follows and the petition in Appendix 2 noted:**
 - **Northumberland Avenue – Implement as advertised;**
 - **Carsdale Close – Remove from the programme;**
 - **Coley Avenue – Implement as advertised;**
 - **Almond Drive – Implement as advertised;**
 - **Odiham Avenue – Implement as advertised;**
 - **Henley Road – Implement as advertised;**
 - **Essex Street – Implement as advertised;**
 - **Pottery Road – Implement as advertised;**
 - **Helmsdale Close – Implement as advertised;**
 - **Shilling Close – Implement as advertised;**
 - **Ashby Court – Implement as advertised;**
 - **Foxhays Road – Implement as advertised;**
 - **St Agnes Way – Implement as advertised;**
- (3) That the Assistant Director of Legal and Democratic Services be authorised to seal the resultant Traffic Regulation Order;**
- (4) That respondents to the statutory consultation, and the lead petitioner, be informed of the decisions of the Sub-Committee accordingly, following publication of the agreed minutes of the meeting;**
- (5) That having considered the requests made for waiting restriction changes, set out in Appendix 3 attached to the report, the requests be investigated by officers as part of the 2023B review programme, subject to the following amendments to the programme:**
 - (i) Hemdean Road – Remove from the programme;**
 - (ii) Pottery Road – Remove from the programme;**
- (6) That 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;**
- (7) 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 2023B programme;**
- (8) That no public inquiry be held into the proposals.**

22. JACKSONS CORNER – RESULTS OF STATUTORY CONSULTATION

Further to Minute 10 of the previous meeting, the Sub-Committee considered a report informing them of objections that had resulted from the statutory consultation for the proposals that had been agreed at the June 2023 meeting in respect of Jacksons Corner. The following appendices were attached to the report:

Appendix 1 – Plan to show the alterations proposed in the advertised Traffic Regulation Order;

Appendix 2 – Feedback that had been received during the statutory consultation;

Appendix 3 – Equality Impact Assessment.

The report explained that as part of the agreed planning permissions at Jacksons Corner, situated to the north-east of the junction with Kings Road and High Street, proposed alterations to the highway layout had been agreed. The alterations included widening of the narrow footway width on the northern side of Kings Road, reversal of the one-way traffic direction along Abbey Square, increased provision and relocation of bus stops and provision of on-street loading bays. The changes would necessitate alterations to existing waiting restrictions. The developer had provided the Council with funding to deliver these alterations, which it was required to complete by 31 March 2024. The delivery deadline was one of the conditions and the funding was ringfenced for delivering the scheme and, aside from potential feasibility issues in this constricted area, proposed alterations to the scheme might breach the funding conditions.

Resolved –

- (1) That the report be noted;**
- (2) That having considered the objections set out in Appendix 2, the proposals, as set out in the report, be implemented;**
- (3) That the Assistant Director of Legal and Democratic Services be authorised to seal the resultant Traffic Regulation Order,**
- (4) That the respondents to the statutory consultation be informed of the decisions of the Sub-Committee accordingly, following publication of the agreed minutes of the meeting;**
- (5) That the Highways & Traffic Services Manager, in agreement with the Lead Councillor and Ward Councillors, be authorised to make minor alterations to the proposals as may be necessary;**
- (6) That no public inquiry be held into the proposals.**

23. DIGITAL PARKING PERMITS

Further to Minute 17 of the meeting held on 14 September 2022, the Sub-Committee considered a report informing the Sub-Committee of the findings of the Digital Parking Permits Project that had been carried out between 31 October 2022 and 30 April 2023. Feedback that had been received to the statutory consultation was attached to the report at Appendix 1.

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The report summarised the proposed changes that would mean permits would not be printed and posted, the scheme would no longer require a permit to be displayed in the vehicle and residents would not be asked to allow up to 14 days for these permits to be issued.

The report explained that procurement of a new Parking Services contract had led to a change in supplier, the new service would start on 1 November 2023 with Unity 5 providing back office Penalty Charge Notice (PCN) and Permit software system. This had provided for improvements to be made, which allowed for some of the issues that had been identified at pilot stage to be resolved.

All permits would need to be migrated to the new system regardless of whether they were digital or not and it should be noted that even if the permits were still printed, they would still be linked to the Civil Enforcement Officers handheld computer terminal, except visitor permit scratch cards. Visitor permits would not be linked to the handheld terminal and if there were any errors with the completion of the permit the visitor would be liable to receive a PCN, as they did currently. They would also receive a PCN if the permit was obscured/fell down. The Council was unlikely to cancel PCNs that had been incorrectly completed or not displayed correctly. A digital visitor permit scheme would remove the likelihood of a PCN being issued because the vehicle and dates were completed online and there was no issue with the permits falling down.

The report included a table that showed the permits that had been issued between 31 October 2022 and 30 April 2023 and the total on issue as of 5 July 2023. The report also included an analysis of the consultation feedback and a summary of the benefits of the new scheme.

Finally, the report proposed that digital permits should be rolled out for all permit types, except for visitor permits, to continue to have offline (physical) permits for residents who still needed this requirement (specifically for Resident, Carers and Visitor Permits), to continue the trial in Permit Zone 02R for digital permits and to update the permit scheme rules and definitions with these changes.

Resolved –

- (1) That the proposal that Digital Permits were introduced Boroughwide for all permits except Visitor Permits, which would remain as physical permits, be agreed;**
- (2) That offline (physical) permits be retained for vulnerable residents (residents & carer permits);**
- (3) That residents in the permit zone 02R which was part of the original trial continue to trial digital visitor permits under the new permit software;**
- (4) That a statutory consultation for the implementation of a full rollout of digital permits Boroughwide to include all permit types be carried out in November 2023 and the Assistant Director of Legal and Democratic Services be granted authority to make the Traffic Regulation Order;**
- (5) That the Traffic Regulation Order be made permanent;**

- (6) That respondents to the statutory consultation be informed of the decisions of the Sub-Committee accordingly following publication of the agreed minutes of the meeting;**
- (7) That no public inquiry be held into the proposal.**

24. 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 25 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.

25. APPLICATIONS FOR DISCRETIONARY PARKING PERMITS

The Sub-Committee considered a report giving details of the background to the decisions to refuse applications for Discretionary Parking Permits from 19 applicants, who had subsequently appealed against these decisions.

Resolved –

- (1) That, with regard to applications 1 and 11, a first discretionary permit be issued, personal to the applicants;**
- (2) That, with regard to applications 15, 16 and 19, a first discretionary permit be issued, personal to the applicant, subject to the applicant providing the required proofs and documentation;**
- (3) That, with regard to application 17, a first discretionary permit be issued for one year, personal to the applicant, subject to the applicant providing the appropriate proofs and documentation;**
- (4) That, with regard to applications 3 and 13, discretionary visitor permit books be issued, personal to the applicants, subject to the standard scheme limits for the number of books that could be issued each year and charged at the standard rate;**
- (5) That the Executive Director for Economic Growth and Neighbourhood Services' decision to refuse applications 2, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 12, 14 and 18 be upheld.**

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

(The meeting started at 6.30 pm and finished at 8.33 pm).