

TRAFFIC MANAGEMENT SUB-COMMITTEE MINUTES – 11 JANUARY 2024

Present: Councillors Ayub (Chair for all items except item 37), Cross, Ennis, Gittings, Griffith, Hacker, Hornsby-Smith, Keeping, Kitchingham, Lanzoni (Vice Chair in the Chair for item 37), McCann, Moore, Page, Singh and White.

Apologies: Councillors Barnett-Ward and Goss.

33. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Councillor Ayub declared an interest in item 37 on the grounds that he owned a hackney carriage.

34. MINUTES

The Minutes of the meeting of 13 November 2023 were confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

35. PETITION UPDATE – HEMDEAN HOUSE SCHOOL REQUEST FOR SPEED CALMING MEASURES

Further to Minute 28(a) of the previous meeting, the Sub-Committee received a report providing an update on the receipt of a petition that had requested the Council to place speed calming measures on Hemdean Road, outside Hemdean House School. A copy of the written petition that had been submitted to the Council was attached to the report at Appendix 1.

The report explained that following the presentation at the previous meeting representatives from Hemdean House School had submitted a written petition that had been received by officers on 20 November 2023. The primary request was as follows:

“We the undersigned, petition the Council to place speed humps in front of our school which will slow the traffic down and reduce risks to pedestrians, cyclists, drivers and all other road users.”

Later in the petition it was also implied that a speed reduction (i.e. 20mph) was also being requested alongside the speed calming features. The petitioners referred to an online petition that they had set up which has 120 signatures. It should be noted that the petition had originally been set up to request “*digital road signs*”, but was later updated to request speed cushions.

The report stated that the regular Requests for Traffic Management Measures Report contained an entry for a desired area 20mph zone in Lower Caversham. This had been developed at a time when significant developer contributions were expected, but unfortunately these did not materialise. However, this was still a desirable scheme for development and delivery. While the scale of the concept area was such that it would require significant funding, relatively smaller funding nominations could contribute to a phased delivery on an area priority basis.

The report stated that there was currently no allocated funding for the development and delivery of the changes requested in the petition. Officers acknowledged the concerns that had been raised and the requested changes appeared appropriate for the location. The report recommended that a new entry be proposed on the next update of the Requests for Traffic Management Measures Report that would be submitted to the March 2024 meeting. Taking

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into consideration the petition references to speed cushions, humps and the reference to 30mph being too fast, it was suggested that the entry proposed a section 20mph with appropriate physical speed calming measures, which would be investigated and consulted on when funding was allocated. The report also recommended that the Lower Caversham 20mph entry be amended to include a summary reference to this proposed new report entry, as they potentially covered the same area. Given the specific nature of the petition, it was considered by officers that a new request, rather than a brief amendment to the wider area Lower Caversham request, was more appropriate. Finally, the report stated that it should be expected that scheme development would only commence once funding had been identified, where it would be programmed around other scheme development priorities.

Resolved –

- (1) That the report be noted;**
- (2) That the proposal to add a new entry on the ‘Requests for Traffic Management Measures’ report to reflect the receipt of this petition and the requested measures 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.**

36. WENSLEY ROAD INTRODUCTION OF WAITING AND LOADING RESTRICTIONS, RELOCATION OF SPEED CUSHIONS AND INTRODUCTION OF A BUS CAGE AT LOCATIONS SURROUNDING THE SITE AND INTRODUCTION OF A ONE WAY ROAD

The Sub-Committee received a report on the traffic management measures associated with the residential development at Wensley Road. The report sought approval to carry out a Statutory Consultation on the introduction of waiting restrictions at the new and existing vehicular access around the development as well as waiting restrictions provided along the new road that ran through the site. The report also sought approval to carry out the necessary notice processes that related to the relocation of two speed humps to facilitate an uncontrolled pedestrian crossing and new vehicular junction. Drawings illustrating the proposals were attached to the report at Appendices 1 to 6.

The report explained that planning permission had been granted in December 2020 for the demolition of 29 garages and the development of 26 new dwelling units, including provision of affordable homes, that would be provided in a mixture of houses and apartments. The development had been under construction for some time and was due to be completed in 2024. The proposal consisted of the introduction of numerous changes surrounding the site as these had been broken down into smaller areas for ease of reference. The report commented on each of these areas separately.

Resolved –

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

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- (2) That the Assistant Director of Legal and Democratic Services be authorised to undertake statutory consultation/notification processes;
- (3) That subject to no objections being received, the Assistant Director of Legal and Democratic Services be authorised to make the Traffic Regulation Order for the proposed scheme;
- (4) That any objection(s) received following the statutory advertisement be submitted to a future meeting of the Sub-Committee;
- (5) That the Head of Transport (or appropriate Officer) in consultation with the appropriate Lead Councillor, be authorised to make minor changes to the proposals;
- (6) That no public inquiry be held into the proposals.

37. INFORMAL CONSULTATION RESULTS – PRIVATE HIRE VEHICLE USE OF KINGS ROAD OUTBOUND BUS LANE

Further to Minute 19 of the meeting held on 13 September 2023 the Sub-Committee received a report that provided feedback on the informal consultation that had been carried out throughout November 2023 on private hire vehicle use of the Kings Road outbound bus lane. A copy of the informal consultation introduction page, survey form and attached drawing that had been published on the Council's website was attached to the report at Appendix 1, feedback that had been received via the consultation page on the website was attached at Appendix 2 and a letter that had been submitted by Robert Williams, Chief Executive Officer of Reading Buses was attached to the report at Appendix 3.

The report stated that at the September 2023 meeting the Sub-Committee had agreed an amendment to the recommended action in the report requesting officers to carry out an informal consultation on the requested changes to the restriction, to ensure that key stakeholders were included in the consultation. Officers had arranged for the requested informal consultation to take place throughout November 2023 and the draft content had been shared with Ward Councillors for comment and the introduction page, survey form and attached drawing were published on the Council's website. Officers had notified stakeholders by email, which had included statutory consultees, for example emergency service providers, and other groups including public transport operators. A press release had also been issued.

The report included a table that provided the quantities of each selection in the feedback.

The report explained again 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);
- 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;

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- Implementation of the Scheme – Change the signing on street and updating exemptions on the enforcement camera software.

In the case of a trial, the statutory consultation would involve creation and advertising of an Experimental Traffic Regulation Order and Implementation of the Decision and Signing Review would follow the implementation stage. The old signing would need to be stored for the duration of the trial, which would be for a minimum of six months following the implementation, this was the consultation period.

The report set out the recommended options for consideration which were as follows:

- (a) Agree no change – Retain the existing restriction;
- (b) Agree to pursue a proposed change of restriction to exclude non-Reading Borough Council licenced Hackney Carriage Vehicles;
- (c) Agree to pursue a proposed change of restriction to exclude non-Reading Borough Council licenced Hackney Carriage Vehicles and to permit use by Reading Borough Council licenced Private Hire Vehicles;
- (d) As per (c) above, but using an Experimental Traffic Regulation Order.

At the invitation of the Chair Kamran Saddiq, Chairman of the Reading Private Hire Association and Paul Seaward, Vice 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 Asif Rasheed, Chair of the Reading Taxi Association, and Peter Seymour, Reading Motorcycle Action Group, also addressed the Sub-Committee, they spoke against private hire vehicles using the bus lane.

The Sub-Committee discussed the report and Councillor Ennis moved a motion, seconded by Councillor Page, that option (c), as set out in paragraph 3.16 of the report and above, be agreed which the Sub-Committee unanimously supported.

Resolved –

- (1) That the report be noted;**
- (2) That the feedback received via the consultation page on the Council's website and the letter submitted by Robert Williams, Chief Executive Officer of Reading Buses, as set out in Appendices 2 and 3 attached to the report, be noted;**
- (3) That having considered the proposed options in Section 3.16 of the report the proposed change of restriction to exclude non-Reading Borough Council licenced Hackney Carriage Vehicles and to permit use by Reading Borough Council licenced Private Hire Vehicles be pursued/agreed, option (c) as set out above and in the report, be agreed;**
- (4) That subject to identifying the funding to progress the proposals, the following be agreed:**

- (i) That the Assistant Director of Legal and Democratic Services be authorised to undertake a statutory consultation for the proposed alterations in accordance with the Local Authorities Traffic Orders (Procedure) (England and Wales) Regulations 1996;**
 - (ii) That, subject to no objections being received, the Assistant Director of Legal and Democratic Services be authorised to make the Traffic Regulation Order;**
 - (iii) That any objection(s) received during the statutory consultation period be submitted to a future meeting of the Sub-Committee;**
- (5) 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.)

38. WAITING RESTRICTION REVIEW PROGRAMME – RECOMMENDATIONS FOR 2023B

Further to Minute 21 of the meeting held on 13 September 2023, the Sub-Committee received a report that sought approval for officers to carry out statutory consultation for recommended new/alterations to waiting restrictions as part of the 2023B Waiting Restriction Review Programme. These proposals aimed to address the issues that had been raised in the initial list of requests which had been submitted to and agreed for investigation by the Sub-Committee at its meeting on 13 September 2023 (Minute 21 refers). The recommendations set out in the report had been shared with Ward Councillors and the recommendations and drawings, by Ward, were attached to the report at Appendix 1.

Resolved –

- (1) That the report be noted;**
- (2) That the Assistant Director of Legal and Democratic Services be authorised to undertake a statutory consultation for the 2023B programme in accordance with the Local Authorities Traffic Orders (Procedure) (England and Wales) Regulations 1996, for the proposals contained within in Appendix 1 attached to the report, subject to:**
 - (i) Abbey Ward, Weldale Street - Officer recommendation be agreed, namely to remove from the programme;**
 - (ii) Caversham Ward, Westfield Road - Officer recommendation be agreed, namely to remove from the programme;**
 - (iii) Church and Katesgrove Wards, Northumberland Avenue Number 2 - Officer recommendation be agreed, namely to remove from the programme;**
 - (iv) Coley Ward, Berkley Avenue - Officer recommendation be agreed, namely to remove from the programme;**

- (v) **Coley Ward, Pennyroyal Court - Officer recommendation be agreed, namely to remove from the programme;**
 - (vi) **Emmer Green Ward, Jefferson Close/Wordsworth Court - Officer recommendation be agreed, namely to remove from the programme**
 - (vii) **Katesgrove Ward, Edgehill Street - Remove from the programme;**
 - (viii) **Park Ward, Liverpool Road - Officer recommendation be agreed, namely to remove from the programme;**
 - (ix) **Thames Ward, Addison Road/Meadow Road - Officer recommendation be agreed, namely to remove from the programme;**
 - (x) **Thames Ward, Elliot's Way – Officer recommendation be agreed, namely that the proposal be pursued (proceed to statutory consultation) as part of the Waiting Restriction Review programme and that it follows the same development processes and timescales as the rest of the programme;**
 - (xi) **Tilehurst Ward, Fern Glen - Officer recommendation be agreed, namely to remove from the programme;**
 - (xii) **Tilehurst Ward, Savernake Close - Officer recommendation be agreed, namely to remove from the programme;**
 - (xiii) **Tilehurst Ward, The Meadway/Mayfair - Officer recommendation be agreed, namely to remove from the programme;**
- (3) **That subject to no objections being received, the Assistant Director of Legal and Democratic Services be authorised to make the Traffic Regulation Order for the 2023B programme;**
 - (4) **That any objection(s) received during the statutory advertisement be submitted to a future meeting of the Sub-Committee;**
 - (5) **That no public inquiry be held into the proposals.**

39. BSIP BUS LANES – STATUTORY CONSULTATION RESULTS

Further to Minute 7 of the meeting held on 14 June 2023, the Sub-Committee received a report providing information on the feedback from the Statutory Consultation relating to the six proposed Bus Service Improvement Plan (BSIP) bus lanes. A Traffic Modelling Summary was attached to the report at Appendix 1, the Bus Lanes that had been consulted on were attached at Appendix 2 and detailed consultation results were attached to the report at Appendix 3.

The report explained that an initial four week informal consultation had taken place from 19 May to 16 June 2023 that sought views on the initial bus lane proposals. A formal statutory consultation had followed, which had run from 9 November to 7 December 2023 and had included, where possible, scheme design changes following consideration of the informal

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consultation. A summary of the statutory consultation results were set out in a table included in the report.

Examination of the response had identified a large number of responses, 41, from RG1 that had been submitted within a short time frame. It was assumed that these had been collated from a large group and so had not been discounted. One of the main areas of feedback had been the use of the bus lanes by private hire vehicles and motorcycles. Of the 266 responses a total of 50 objections had been directly related to motorcycles not being permitted to use the proposed bus lanes. Whilst officers were not discounting the comments that had been raised, given that they did not object to the principle of the bus lanes, an alternative version of the results had been presented and had been set out in table in the report.

Due to the timescales associated with the grant funding of the BSIP schemes. Officers had not brought forward proposals to allow motorcycles, or private hire vehicles, as this would require a full policy review of all bus lanes within the Borough to ensure consistency. The consultation responses had raised a number of common themes, both positive and negative, and these were set out in the report.

The report stated that a detailed review of the consultation results had been carried out and whilst it had acknowledged the concerns that had been raised by consultees, particularly around the perception of increased congestion, without making significant changes to transport infrastructure and providing suitable transport alternatives, such as mass transit/public transport and Active Travel, car usage would continue to grow, generating greater levels of congestion. An assessment of each of the schemes had been carried out against key themes to demonstrate the recommendations and were set out in a table in the report.

Inflationary pressures had had a significant impact on the cost of the overall BSIP package since funding had been awarded, therefore whilst the recommendation was to deliver all six schemes this would be kept under review as procurement was carried out and costs were clarified. The report therefore recommended that the assessment of each of the schemes was used as a basis for prioritising scheme delivery.

In acknowledging the comments that had been received relating to the use of bus lanes by motorcycles, the report proposed that an experimental order should be made for each of the bus lanes subject to the Sub-Committee permitting their use by motorcycles. Officers were satisfied that collision risks were low and the inclusion of motorcycles in the bus lanes would not have a detrimental impact on bus movements.

The report explained that officers would carry out a further assessment during the period that the experimental order was in place and would submit a future recommendation to the Sub-Committee on whether the experimental order should be made permanent. There was currently no intention to permit the use of these bus lanes by any private hire vehicles or by any Taxis unregistered within the Borough. This would result in an increase in lane usage which might have a detrimental impact on bus movements and reduce the capacity and benefits that were intended by these schemes.

At the invitation of the Chair Peter Seymour, Reading Motorcycle Action Group, addressed the Sub-Committee.

The Sub-Committee discussed the report and agreed by a majority for officers to proceed with the construction of the bus lanes, subject to available funding.

Resolved –

- (1) That the report be noted;**
- (2) That the recommendation to construct each of the schemes contained within the report, subject to available funding, be approved;**
- (3) That an experimental Traffic Regulation Order, permitting motorcycle access to each of the bus lanes contained within the report be approved;**
- (4) That the Assistant Director of Legal and Democratic Services be authorised to approve the proposed traffic restrictions for each of the schemes contained within the report, in accordance with the Local Authorities Traffic Orders Procedure (England and Wales) Regulations 1996;**
- (5) That the Assistant Director of Legal and Democratic Services be authorised to make the Traffic Regulation Order and no public inquiry be held into the proposal.**

40. 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 41 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.

41. APPLICATIONS FOR DISCRETIONARY PARKING PERMITS

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

Resolved –

- (1) That with regard to application 1, a discretionary teachers parking permit be issued personal to the applicant;**
- (2) That, with regard to application 2, discretionary visitor permit books be issued, personal to the applicant, subject to the standard scheme limits for the number of books that could be issued each year and charged at the standard rate;**
- (3) That with regard to application 3, a temporary one-year first discretionary parking permit be issued personal to the applicant;**
- (4) That the Executive Director for Economic Growth and Neighbourhood Services' decision to refuse application 4 be upheld.**

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

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(The meeting started at 6.30 pm and finished at 8.45 pm).