

Traffic Management Sub-Committee

10 September 2026



Reading
Borough Council
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Title	Digital Traffic Regulation Orders
Purpose of the report	To make a key decision
Report status	Public report
Executive Director/ Statutory Officer Commissioning Report	Emma Gee, Executive Director of Economic Growth and Neighbourhood Services
Report author	James Penman – Network Services Manager
Lead Councillor	Cllr John Ennis, Lead Councillor for Climate Strategy and Transport
Council priority	Ensure Reading Borough Council is fit for the future
Recommendations	1. That the Director of Legal and Democratic Services be authorised to undertake a statutory consultation for the Boroughwide digital map-based traffic regulation order in relation to the waiting, loading and stopping on street restrictions in accordance with the Local Authorities Traffic Orders (Procedure) (England and Wales) Regulations 1996. The purpose of this consultation is to propose the new single, map-based and digitised order and revocation of previous 'paper' Orders, not to propose changes to restrictions in place on-street. 2. That authority be delegated to the Executive Director of Economic Growth and Neighbourhood Services, in consultation with the Lead Councillor for Climate Strategy and Transport, to consider any duly made objections which have not been withdrawn and the outcome of the Order, whether this is to make, modify or abandon the Order. 3. That, subject to either: (a) no objections being received; or (b) a decision being taken to proceed following consideration of objections, the Director of Legal and Democratic Services be authorised to make the Traffic Regulation Order.

1. Executive Summary

- 1.1. This report seeks approval to undertake statutory consultation on the Boroughwide waiting, loading and stopping restrictions Digital Traffic Regulation Order (DTRO), which represents Phase 1 of the Council's programme to digitise all Traffic Regulation Orders.
- 1.2. The DTRO programme is being delivered to improve the accuracy, accessibility and governance of the Council's TRO records, address risks identified through previous TRO rectification activity and prepare the Council for anticipated national requirements relating to the publication and sharing of digital TRO data.
- 1.3. Significant progress has been made in delivering Phase 1. A boroughwide survey of the on-street parking restrictions has been completed, the majority of data validation has

been undertaken and the legal framework required to support the DTRO is being developed.

- 1.4. The proposed consultation will not introduce, amend or remove waiting, loading and stopping restrictions currently in place on street. Instead, it will replace numerous historic paper-based orders with a single map-based digital order reflecting restrictions currently in place on the highway. The consultation is necessary to propose the substantive change to the content of the Order, including map-based schedules and boroughwide, including the revocation of the prior 'paper' Orders.
- 1.5. To support efficient programme delivery and minimise delay, delegated authority is also sought for the Executive Director of Economic Growth and Neighbourhood Services, in consultation with the Lead Councillor for Climate Strategy and Transport, to determine any duly made objections received and decide the outcome of the Order, whether this is to make, modify or abandon the Order.

2. Policy Context

- 2.1. The Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984 (RTRA) sets out the legal basis for making Traffic Regulation Orders (TROs), including Speed Limit Orders (SLOs). It gives local authorities the power to make TROs to regulate or restrict traffic as needed for:
 - (a) avoiding danger to persons or other traffic using the road or any other road or for preventing the likelihood of any such danger arising; or
 - (b) preventing damage to the road or to any building on or near the road; or
 - (c) facilitating the passage on the road or any other road of any class of traffic (including pedestrians); or
 - (d) preventing the use of the road by vehicular traffic of a kind which, or its use by vehicular traffic in a manner which, is unsuitable having regard to the existing character of the road or adjoining property; or
 - (e) preserving the character of the road in a case where it is especially suitable for use by persons on horseback or on foot; or
 - (f) preserving or improving the amenities of the area through which the road runs; or
 - (g) any of the purposes specified in paragraphs (a) to (c) of section 87(1) of the Environment Act 1995.
- 2.2. The Automated Vehicles Act 2024 (section 93) provides the capability for the Secretary of State, through regulation, to require Traffic Regulation Authorities to provide information on a defined set of Traffic Regulation Measures in accordance with a specified model and set of specifications. These will be the D-TRO Data Specifications including the D-TRO Data Model and are expected to be specified under secondary legislation.
- 2.3. Reading Borough Council's Transport Strategy 2024 is a statutory document that sets the plan for developing the Borough's transport network. It includes guiding policies and principles including those related to Network Management (RTS17), Parking (RTS20), Enforcement (RTS21) and Demand Management (RTS22). Reference to the Borough's Red Route is contained within this strategy.
- 2.4. The Council Plan for the years 2025/28 includes priorities of delivering a sustainable and healthy environment and to reduce our carbon footprint, which align closely with the provisions of the Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984 (RTRA), as both seek to improve public wellbeing and sustainable development.

3. The Proposal

Background

- 3.1. The Digital Traffic Regulation Order (DTRO) project is a strategic transformation programme to replace the Council's historic paper-based TRO arrangements with a single, map-based digital system. The project responds to three key drivers:
 - a. Risk reduction – To address weaknesses inherent within legacy paper-based TRO records and reduce the risk of future discrepancies between legal orders and restrictions implemented on street.
 - b. Operational resilience and transparency – To create a single authoritative source of TRO information that is accessible, auditable and easier to manage.
 - c. National compliance – To prepare the Council for anticipated national requirements relating to digital TRO publication and data sharing.
- 3.2. The scale of the programme is significant, requiring the capture of all parking, movement and speed restrictions into a single boroughwide digital platform.
- 3.3. Once implemented, the DTRO system will become the single source of truth for TROs and the sole platform through which new permanent and temporary TROs are managed.

The Approach

- 3.4. The DTROs will move from text-based, to map-based 'schedules' – these detail the type and location of each restriction. This provides clearer information, reduces the potential for differing interpretations and reduces potential for accuracy risks. The forthcoming statutory requirements for digitised TRO data submission (Section 2.2 refers) include the requirement for geographic data to be included with other data relating to restrictions on the Highway.
- 3.5. The DTROs will be populated by the restrictions that the Council has implemented on street, they will be informed by video surveys, validation and changes implemented by the Council (through correct legal processes) between the video survey and DTRO consultation. This approach provides risk reduction and project efficiency benefits.
- 3.6. The project is split into three primary phases, which will produce three initial boroughwide DTROs. These will be based on the following themes and developed in the order as follows:
 - a. Phase 1 – Waiting, loading and stopping restrictions, followed by Temporary Traffic Regulation Orders;
 - b. Phase 2 - Moving traffic restrictions (e.g. bus lanes, one-way, no-right-turn); and
 - c. Phase 3 - Speed restrictions.
- 3.7. The initial statutory consultations for these DTROs will propose only to transition to a map-based DTRO, reflecting current on-street restrictions. They will not be used to propose changes to these restrictions.

This approach is intended to ensure clarity in the purpose of the consultation and reduce risks to the project timeline and resourcing requirements.

Progress to Date

- 3.8. Significant progress has been made since appointment of AppyWay as the Council's DTRO software provider.
- 3.9. Key milestones delivered include:
 - a. Procurement and implementation of the DTRO software platform.
 - b. Completion of boroughwide video surveys of highway restrictions.

- c. Development of bespoke functionality to support management of Red Route restrictions.
 - d. Establishment of the initial digital data set for waiting, loading and stopping restrictions.
 - e. Commencement of legal drafting to support the Boroughwide waiting, loading and stopping restrictions DTRO.
- 3.10. During data validation approximately 500 survey queries were identified where restrictions were obscured (e.g. a tall vehicle parked and obscuring a sign), unclear or required further investigation. Officers have undertaken a comprehensive review of these queries, and the majority (90%) have now been resolved through site visits, review of legal records and officer assessment.
- 3.11. The project remains within its approved budget allocation and is progressing towards Phase 1 consultation.

Phase 1 Next Steps

- 3.12. Validation and population of Phase 1 DTRO data for waiting, loading and stopping restrictions is in its final stages, including officer clarification of survey queries and targeted site verification.
- 3.13. Development of consolidated DTRO legal articles to support the transition from multiple historic paper orders to a single digital order.
- 3.14. Once the survey data is fully converted into the digital map, officers will update the mapping with all changes that have been implemented since the survey was undertaken. For example, the delivery of Waiting Restriction Review programmes.
- 3.15. Random sample checks will be undertaken as part of a quality assurance process, ensuring alignment between on-street restrictions and digital records. This stage is resource-intensive but critical to ensuring the accuracy and robustness of the DTRO before statutory consultation.
- 3.16. The DTRO statutory consultation will propose the revocation of previously made 'paper' TROs, and the implementation of the DTRO in their place.
- 3.17. It will also be necessary to pause the undertaking of any new TRO consultations while the DTRO is being consulted on and the outcome considered. Subject to the DTRO being implemented, new proposals will be managed through the DTRO process thereafter.
- 3.18. Officers will seek to minimise any such 'pause' period and will continue to manage urgent operational requirements where necessary.
- 3.19. Statutory consultation will be undertaken for the boroughwide waiting, loading and stopping restriction DTRO, proposing to revoke all previous TROs relating to these restrictions.
- 3.20. Subject to the outcome of the statutory consultation, the DTRO will be made, and the DTRO management system will be the operational platform for all future TRO works relating to waiting, loading and stopping restrictions boroughwide.

Future Phases

- 3.21. The delivery of Phase 1 has demonstrated the scale and complexity of creating a comprehensive digital TRO record. Lessons learned from this phase will inform the delivery of future phases covering moving traffic restrictions and speed limits.
- 3.22. Subject to completion of Phase 1, officers intend to commence implementation of Temporary DTROs before progressing Phases 2 and 3. Temporary TROs/DTROs follow a different process to TRO/DTROs and require the DTRO system to be 'live' and publicly available, which requires the first DTRO to be made. Additionally, Temporary TROs

impact the operations of a wider number of officers across multiple departments, so specific training is being arranged.

- 3.23. In parallel to Temporary DTROs, work will commence on populating and validating the data for Phases 2 and 3, which will follow the same activity progression as Phase 1.

4. Contribution to Strategic Aims

- 4.1. The Council Plan has established five priorities for the years 2025/28. These priorities are:

- Promote more equal communities in Reading
- Secure Reading's economic and cultural success
- Deliver a sustainable and healthy environment and reduce our carbon footprint
- Safeguard and support the health and wellbeing of Reading's adults and children
- Ensure Reading Borough Council is fit for the future

- 4.2. In delivering these priorities, we will be guided by the following set of principles:

- Putting residents first
- Building on strong foundations
- Recognising, respecting, and nurturing all our diverse communities
- Involving, collaborating, and empowering residents
- Being proudly ambitious for Reading

- 4.3. Full details of the Council Plan and the projects which will deliver these priorities are published on the Council's website - [Council plan - Reading Borough Council](#). These priorities and the Council Plan demonstrate how the Council meets its legal obligation to be efficient, effective and economical.

- 4.4. The DTRO programme contributes directly to the Council Plan priority of ensuring Reading Borough Council is fit for the future through the modernisation of a key statutory service.

- 4.5. The programme will improve governance, reduce legal and operational risk, increase transparency of TRO information and support efficient management of the highway network.

- 4.6. In addition, the programme provides a platform that will assist future delivery of parking, traffic management and sustainable transport initiatives.

- 4.7. The recommendations of this report propose to deliver changes to the management of TROs across the Borough. These changes will reduce risks associated with previous paper-based TRO processes, improve accessibility to, and clarity of information, and ensure that the Council is compliant with forthcoming statutory requirements relating to TRO data sharing.

5. Environmental and Climate Implications

- 5.1. The Council declared a Climate Emergency at its meeting on 26 February 2019 (Minute 48 refers).

- 5.2. A climate impact assessment has not been considered necessary for the recommendations in this report.

6. Community Engagement

- 6.1. The proposed consultation relates to the legal format and management of existing waiting, loading and stopping restrictions and does not propose changes to restrictions currently implemented on street.

- 6.2. Statutory consultation will nevertheless be undertaken in accordance with the relevant regulations, providing residents and stakeholders with an opportunity to comment on the proposed DTRO.

- 6.3. The recommendations of this report do not seek to alter the restrictions from how they are presented on street. The draft DTROs will be advertised in compliance with statutory regulations and an opportunity provided for objections and representations to be made. The consultation is proposing a substantive change to the format and content of the Council's TROs, not to adjust restrictions that are in place on street. Appropriate additional publicity will be considered during the statutory consultations and to encourage self-service use of the proposed DTRO solution thereafter.
- 6.4. Respondents to the statutory consultation will be informed of the outcome of the consultation.
- 6.5. Traffic Management Sub-Committee is a public meeting. The agendas, reports, meeting minutes and recordings of the meetings are available to view from the Council's website.

7. Equality Implications

- 7.1. It is not considered that an Equality Impact Assessment is relevant to the recommendations or resultant decisions arising from this report as the proposals are not anticipated to have a differential impact on people with protected characteristics. The statutory consultation process provides an opportunity for objections/ support/ concerns to be considered prior to a decision being made on whether to implement the proposals, which are not recommended to change restrictions as they appear on street.
- 7.2. The Council's current TROs are a vast library of paper-based, often scanned copies of printed textual documents that may partially, or wholly apply to the restrictions on street. They contain textual descriptions of where each restriction applies, are ordered by the restriction type.
- 7.3. The DTRO system seeks to move to a system whereby restrictions are presented geographically, and illustratively.
- 7.4. While the core system is a web-based, interactive mapping tool, documentation can be extracted and printed clearly for those who may be digitally restricted or have a preference for a particular format. The entire digitised TRO, including the mapping, can be downloaded and printed in a format that includes clear keys for the different restrictions.
- 7.5. The different restrictions are colour-coded, but selection of the feature on the website provides textual information about that restriction. The extracted mapping tiles, used for printing, are colour-coded and additionally have alpha-numeric keys for the restrictions that are included within that extract. These features are intended to ensure that the restrictions are clear.
- 7.6. The public-facing element of the DTRO management software mostly meets recommendations set by the Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG) 2.2. It is designed for viewing across multiple platforms, including mobile, 500% zoom magnification is supported across all features, font size can be easily increased, fonts and colours have been carefully considered, navigation can be undertaken by keyboard, and most of the website can be navigated, or narrated by speech recognition and screen reader software.

8. Health Implications

- 8.1. Health in All Policies (HiAP) ensures council decisions across all services consider their impact on people's health and wellbeing, especially those most exposed to the risks of poor health outcomes. Some people live longer, healthier lives than others, not because of their personal choices alone, but because of the circumstances they are born into, grow up in, live, work and age in. By applying HiAP and the HIA process to council services such as housing, transport, education and economic policy, the Council can help create the conditions that extend healthy lives, reduce avoidable demand on vital public services, and support stronger, more prosperous communities.

- 8.2. It is not considered that Health Impact Assessment is relevant at this time as the report does not directly recommend any physical changes to the Highway.

9. Other Relevant Considerations

- 9.1. Key risks and mitigations are considered to be:

a. Data Accuracy

This risk focuses on a discrepancy between the restrictions as presented on-street, and within the DTRO.

Restriction changes that have been implemented since the video survey was undertaken, such as the implementation of Waiting Restriction Review Programmes, are being logged and will be updated to the DTRO prior to consultation.

Randomised sample checks will be undertaken to compare the draft DTRO against the restrictions on street, intended to provide reasonable assurance regarding data quality.

b. Challenge to the DTRO

It is possible that objections will be received against the DTRO, when it is proposed during the statutory consultation.

It is proposed that the Council will provide publicity to ensure that residents and stakeholders are clear about what is being proposed and why, as outlined earlier in this report. Clarification that the proposal is to reproduce existing lawful restrictions in a consolidated map based digital form and that discrepancies identified during validation will be resolved before the Order is made, accessibility/transparency enhancement and not an introduction/removal of existing restrictions will reduce the risks of objection to the DTRO.

c. Implementation delay

Delays at any phase of the project will have implications for subsequent phases, potentially impact the progress of other schemes requiring TRO work and risk non-compliance with forthcoming regulatory requirements.

The mitigations of section 10.1.b (above) will reduce risks, in addition to the officer recommendation of delegated decisions regarding the outcome of the DTRO following statutory consultation.

If necessary, officers will need to consider resource prioritisation against this project.

d. Future regulatory requirements

The selected DTRO management software will be compliant in providing data to the specifications required in forthcoming regulations. The Department for Transport has been developing the data specifications over a long period, with software providers being engaged at an early stage, and having testing opportunities throughout the project.

Any future changes to requirements would be anticipated as an evolution of current specifications. Once the TRO information is digitised, it is expected that we will be in a stronger position to adapt data outputs according to these changes.

10. Legal Implications

- 10.1. The Council has considered its legal powers and duties in relation to the proposed Traffic Regulation Order ("TRO"). The Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984 provides the legal basis for making TROs, whilst the Local Authorities' Traffic Orders (Procedure) (England and Wales) Regulations 1996 prescribe the statutory procedure that must be followed before an Order can be made.

- 10.2. The proposed Order will establish a single borough-wide map-based TRO for waiting, loading and stopping on street restrictions. Existing on street restrictions have been reviewed and incorporated into a modern map based legal order with the aim of creating a clearer, more accurate and readily maintainable legal record. If made, the proposed Order will supersede the Council's existing waiting, loading, stopping and on-street parking restrictions currently contained within numerous historic Traffic Regulation Orders.
- 10.3. The proposed map-based format replaces the traditional reliance on numerous written schedules by identifying restrictions through maps which form part of the legal Order. The Order, together with the maps incorporated into it, will constitute the definitive legal record of the waiting, loading and stopping on street restrictions applicable on the highway.
- 10.4. Separate borough-wide map-based Orders for movement restrictions and speed limits are intended to be developed in due course. Those matters do not form part of the current proposals, and no decision is being sought in relation to them at this stage.
- 10.5. The statutory consultation process should not be regarded merely as a public engagement exercise. It forms an important part of the statutory decision-making process and provides an opportunity for residents, businesses, statutory consultees and other stakeholders to review the draft Order and associated maps and identify any mapping errors, omitted restrictions, discrepancies between the legal provisions and restrictions implemented on site, or other operational issues before any decision is taken on whether the Order should be made.
- 10.6. Before the Order can be made, the Council must carry out the consultation process prescribed by the 1996 Regulations, including consultation with statutory consultees, publication of the relevant notices and consideration of any objections or representations received. Following consultation, the Council is under a duty to consider all duly made objections that have not been withdrawn, together with any other representations received during the consultation process, before determining whether the Order should be made, not made or modified.
- 10.7. The Council has also taken into consideration the Government's ongoing programme for the digitisation of traffic regulation information. The proposed map-based approach is consistent with the direction of travel established by the Automated Vehicles Act 2024 for the future provision of traffic regulation data to connect to automated vehicle systems. Whilst the proposed Order will remain the legal instrument, the new map-based format places the Council in a stronger position to maintain accurate digital traffic regulation data and respond more effectively to any future legislative requirements in this area.
- 10.8. The Council has also considered its duties under section 122 of the Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984 and its Network Management Duty under the Traffic Management Act 2004. Although the restrictions proposed to be included within the Order reflect on street restrictions currently in force, the development of the proposed borough-wide map-based Order has provided an opportunity to assess whether they continue to support the matters set out in section 122 of the 1984 Act. In doing so, the Council has had regard to matters including the safe and convenient movement of traffic, the expeditious movement of traffic, access to premises, parking provision, local amenity and the needs of pedestrians, cyclists and public transport users.
- 10.9. The proposed Order should therefore not be viewed as a purely administrative exercise or a simple reproduction of historic provisions. Rather, it provides an opportunity to review the existing traffic regulation framework, address identified anomalies, inconsistencies and ensure that the restrictions proposed to be carried forward continue to support the

Council's traffic management objectives. These duties will continue to be considered throughout the consultation process and before any final decision is taken.

11. Financial Implications

- 11.1. A total capital budget of £469k has been allocated to delivery of the project, of which £142.5k has been used to date. The project remains forecast to be delivered within the approved budget.
- 11.2. There will be an annual software licencing cost which will be funded by additional, annual revenue allocation of £55k from FY2026/27.
- 11.3. The programme is expected to deliver long-term operational efficiencies through improved management of TRO records and processes.

12. Timetable for Implementation

- 12.1. The following timetable is subject to change, due to the variables and interdependencies within the project (referred in Section 3 of this report):

Line	Milestone	When (subject to change)
1	Completion of Phase 1 DTRO data and quality assurance	Late Summer/Early Autumn 2026
2	Statutory consultation (Phase 1 DTRO)	Winter 2026-27
3	Consideration of objections and implementation decision	Winter 2026-27
4	Implementation of Phase 1 DTRO and transition to single digital system	Spring 2027
5	Implementation of Temporary DTROs	Late Spring 2027
6	Delivery of Phases 2 and 3 (moving traffic and speed limits)	By Spring 2028

13. Background Papers

- 13.1. There are none.

Appendices

None.