

EXETER HIGHWAYS AND TRAFFIC ORDERS COMMITTEE

23 January 2024

Present:-

Councillors D Barnes (Chair), C Whitton (Vice-Chair), T Adams, M Asvachin, S Aves, R Hannaford, A Leadbetter, P Prowse, J Parkhouse, M Pearce, A Sparling and Wood

Apologies:-

Councillors Y Atkinson

* 129

Minutes

RESOLVED that the Minutes of the meeting held on 30 October 2023 be signed as a correct record.

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Items Requiring Urgent Attention

There was no matter raised as a matter of urgency.

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Petitions/Parking Policy Reviews

The Chair was presented with a petition by Mr Philip Luckham against the implementation of low traffic networks and road closures in Exeter. The Chair indicated that the relevant Head of Service would be asked to respond directly to the petitioner on the issues raised within 15 days.

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Active Streets Heavitree and Whipton Trial Scheme Update

The Chair exercised his discretion to allow oral representations from nominated members of the public as follows:

Sue Simmonds (representing those against the Trial); Edward Pickering (representing those in support of the Trial); and Teegan Creed (representing the views of the disabled community against the Trial).

Additionally, in accordance with Standing Order 25, Exeter City Councillors A Jobson, A Sheridan and P Holland attended and spoke against the Trial Scheme and Councillor D Moore in support of the Trial Scheme.

The Committee considered the Report of the Director of Climate Change Environment and Transport (CET/23/80), which provided a monitoring update on the Active Streets Trial Scheme and recommended that the measures of success were reviewed after 29 February 2024 to determine whether the Trial had had an overall positive impact; and that the Director of Climate Change, Environment and Transport be given delegated powers to suspend

the Experimental Traffic Regulation Orders associated with the Trial from 1 March 2024.

The Active Streets Trial had now been in operation for five months. The Statutory Consultation period will run until 8 May 2024 and responses continued to be received and analysed.

Traffic monitoring data indicated that there had continued to be an increase in traffic at many locations on the boundary roads, most significantly on Polsloe Road and Hill Barton Road where flows had increased by up to 20%, with an increase also on Heavitree Road/East Wonford Hill, which was an air quality-sensitive route. On the roads within the trial area, there had been reductions in traffic at many locations, particularly in the vicinity of bus gates/physical modal filters, but there had also been increased in traffic on some roads, such as North Street. Traffic speeds had reduced slightly on both Pinhoe Road and Hill Barton Road.

There had in general been an increase in cycling on both residential streets and boundary roads, with increases in some locations exceeding 100%, although exceptions to this were near Polsloe Road and Heavitree Road, where reductions were recorded. Increases in walking had also been recorded in some locations.

Stagecoach data had indicated there had been a moderate increase in bus journey times on a section of the Heavitree Road corridor, impacting negatively on bus passengers, and a moderate increase in inbound journey times on a section of the Pinhoe Road corridor, but a smaller change in journey times was recorded outbound. The data indicated that it was likely that journey times for all traffic on boundary roads would have increased on Heavitree Road and some increases on Pinhoe Road.

The Council continued to liaise with key stakeholders, such as the emergency services and feedback could continue to be provided through the statutory consultation.

When reviewing the measures of success, there were currently only two indicators out of 10 that were performing well; traffic on residential roads within the trial area and number of cycling trips. There was a possibility that negative impacts could outweigh the benefits of the trial. The report stated that should there not be a significant improvement by the end of February 2024 and where it met the tests of the Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984, consideration should be given to the trial being suspended.

Officers provided an update as to Carers, where there had been a meeting with Devon Carers on 18 January 2024 and a planned meeting with the paid carer sector in February. It was noted that in discussions with Oxfordshire County Council on their experience of LTNs, they had no exemption for Blue Badge holders.

Officers confirmed that air quality sensors had been installed in December and this data was hoped to be available at a future meeting.

A copy of the presentation given at the meeting is appended.

The matter was debated by Members at length. Members' concerns in particular included:

- that the statutory consultation should be allowed to continue until 8 May 2024 and for there then to be a full analysis of the feedback;
- confusion over the word 'suspend', and clarity was provided that this was a legal term used under the Road Traffic Act legislation.
- that the evidential data presented in the report was insufficient for a decision to be made to suspend the Trial;
- that any decision to suspend the Trial should be made by the Elected Members of the Committee and not Officers.
- that single day traffic counts had been presented on a day when flooding had badly impacted users, due to road closures and rail strikes; and that clear reporting showing maps and trends should be forthcoming at the end of the Trial;
- that the suspension of the Trial could affect future funding applications;
- the absence of original measures of success;
- that it was too early to see the drop off from traffic on arterial routes, and further data was needed for this to be measured;
- that all Petitions received should be carefully validated.

It was **MOVED** by Councillor Barnes, **SECONDED** by Councillor Adams and

RESOLVED that all the recommendations in the Report be rejected.

[Note: In accordance with Standing Order 32(4), Councillors Hannaford and Leadbetter requested that their vote against this decision be recorded.]

* 133

Exeter Western Corridor Bus Service Improvement Plan Upgrades

The Committee considered the Report of the Director of Climate Change, Environment and Transport (CET/24/5), on the Exeter Western Corridor Bus Service Improvement Plan Upgrades.

Mr R Ruffle attended the meeting under the Council's Public Participation Scheme to suggest a modification on parking times in order to help small businesses in Cowick Street.

In 2021 the UK Government published its National Bus Strategy, which aimed to launch a revolution in bus services. The Strategy required local transport authorities to form Enhanced Partnerships with bus operating companies and publish a Bus Service Improvement Plan (BSIP). The Council's BSIP was developed and subsequently approved by Cabinet on 13 October 2021 and an enhanced partnership was formed.

One of the routes identified in the Council's BSIP was the Exeter Western Bus Corridor which connected St Thomas with the City Centre along Cowick Street, Exe Bridges, Fore Street/Preston Street and Western Way.

Approval of the recommendations in the report would enable the implementation of an intelligent corridor, technology improvements and traffic signals on the Exeter Western Bus corridor linking the St Thomas area to Exeter city centre. It would also enable advertising of the Traffic Regulation Order to extend the operation hours of the inbound bus lane on Cowick Street as detailed in Appendix 2 of the report. The proposals provided a low cost, low carbon improvement, providing significant improvements to bus journey times and benefits from external capital grant funding from the BSIP programme.

Officers wished to invite the Committee to a pre-consultation briefing next week on the BSIP proposals for the Exeter Central and Eastern corridors.

Concern was raised at the reliability of bus services caused by yellow box obstruction on Exe Bridges and requested this was followed up by Officers.

It was **MOVED** by Councillor Hannaford, **SECONDED** by Councillor Barnes and

RESOLVED that:

- (a) the implementation of Western Corridor Bus improvements at an estimated cost of £235,000, subject to Department for Transport funding approval, be approved;
- (b) the advertisement of traffic regulation orders for the extension of the Cowick Street bus lane operating hours and the associated loading and waiting restrictions needed to facilitate the changes on the opposite side of the bus lane area as detailed in Appendix 2 be approved and to make and seal the order if no objections are received; and
- (c) delegated authority be given to the Director of Climate Change, Environment and Transport in consultation with the Chair of HATOC and local Members to make minor amendments to the scheme.

* **134** **Exeter Residents' Parking**

The Committee considered the Report of the Director of Climate Change, Environment and Transport (CET/24/6), on the responses to the statutory consultation on the traffic orders proposed for the areas as shown on the plans contained within the supplementary information.

Mr M McNair, Chairman of Exeter Croquet Club, attended the meeting under the Council's Public Participation Scheme and spoke against the residents' parking scheme in St Thomas.

The consultations had taken place from 31 August until 26 September 2023. The Council had received 1,139 responses to the consultation and the results were summarised in the tables in Appendix 1 and on the maps in Appendix 2 to the report. The comments submitted during the consultation had been summarised in Appendix 3 along with the County Council's response.

It was **MOVED** by Councillor Hannaford, **SECONDED** by Councillor Barnes and

RESOLVED that:

- (a) the results of the consultation be noted;
- (b) the proposals for residents' parking in the St Thomas area are not progressed and would not be reconsidered for at least three years;
- (c) the making and sealing of a traffic order to implement the specific restrictions detailed in part 5 of this report be approved; and
- (d) the progression of a residents' parking scheme for the Woodwater Lane area be approved as soon as resources allow.

* **135** **Zebra Crossing for Stoke Hill Junior School**

The Committee considered the Report of the Director of Climate Change, Environment and Transport (CET/24/7), which sought approval to construct a new zebra crossing to support the safety and active travel needs of the students attending Stoke Hill Junior School.

Officers wished to amend the report by the addition of a further recommendation to approve the advertising of the traffic regulation orders and to make and seal them if no objections were received.

The report proposed that the scheme be approved for construction to both support school safety and to promote sustainable and healthy travel choices. Subject to scheme approval, it was intended that construction take place over the summer holiday period, ready for use in September 2024.

It was **MOVED** by Councillor Prowse, **SECONDED** by Councillor Leadbetter and

RESOLVED that:

- (a) the construction for the proposed Zebra Crossing on Stoke Hill shown on drawing in Appendix 1 at an estimated cost of £150,000 be approved;
- (b) the advertising of the traffic regulation orders and the making and sealing of them be approved if no objections received; and
- (c) the Director of Climate Change, Environment and Transport be given delegated powers, in consultation with the Chair of HATOC and the Local Member, to make minor amendments to the scheme details.

- * **136** **Bus Users and Stakeholders (BUS) Forum**

Due to lack of time, this item would be considered at the next HATOC meeting.
- * **137** **Clear Streets Charter**

Due to lack of time, this item would be considered at the next HATOC meeting.
- * **138** **Developer Contributions (S.106) Local Member Consultations**

Due to lack of time, this item would be considered at the next HATOC meeting.
- * **139** **Relaxation of Limited Waiting Bays for Velwell Road**

Due to lack of time, this item would be considered at the next HATOC meeting.
- * **140** **Actions taken under Delegated Powers**

Due to lack of time, this item would be considered at the next HATOC meeting.
- * **141** **Dates of Meetings**

Due to lack of time, this item would be considered at the next HATOC meeting.

NOTES:

1. *Minutes should always be read in association with any Reports for a complete record.*
2. *If the meeting has been webcast, it will be available to view on the [webcasting site](#) for up to 12 months from the date of the meeting*

*** DENOTES DELEGATED MATTER WITH POWER TO ACT**

The Meeting started at 2.15pm and finished at 6.14 pm