

EXETER HIGHWAYS AND TRAFFIC ORDERS COMMITTEE

16 January 2023

Present:-

Councillors D Barnes (Chair), T Adams, M Asvachin, S Aves, R Hannaford, A Leadbetter, P Prowse and C Whitton

Exeter City Council

Councillor M Pearce

Apologies:-

Councillors Y Atkinson, B Denning, A Sparling and T Wardle

* **80** **Minutes**

RESOLVED that the Minutes of the Meeting held on 14 October 2022 be signed as a correct record.

* **81** **Items Requiring Urgent Attention**

No item was raised as a matter of urgency.

* **82** **Bus Services in Exeter**

The Chair welcomed Mr P Knight, Managing Director, Stagecoach South West, to his first meeting of this Committee and he spoke at the invitation of the Committee.

Mr Knight reported on recent improving service reliability (with only 1% lost miles for all reasons over the past 4 weeks - notably with 0.3% lost miles for all reasons in the past 7 days) which compared favourably against 7% of lost miles during the last summer period. There were also staffing improvements with only 21 vacancies across the south west business (within the normal range for vacancies) and 40 trainees in progress; and patronage was at 75% of the pre-pandemic level, although it was noted that concessionary patronage was lower at 65%. There had been 82K sales of the £2 flat fare introduced nationally by the DfT (with Exeter – Exmouth and Exeter - Tiverton being the most popular routes).

Mr Knight responded to Members' questions as follows:

- 32 of the trainee drivers were earmarked for Exeter and its satellite depots and they took 12 weeks to train; and drivers were required to provide 1 weeks' notice should they wish to leave. This created a resourcing

- imbalance but the company had decided it was best to retain the 1 week notice requirement as was commonplace across the sector;
- in regard to the Stagecoach App there were some reliability issues relating to data transfer (and on-bus audio announcements and at the bus stops that had real time bus departure information) and this was an ongoing challenge and priority for the Company to rectify on an ongoing basis;
 - a Company review of bus running times (for peak and non-peak periods) to create a more robust timetable;
 - whilst noting the reliability improvement, it was acknowledged that frequency levels had decreased and it was the Company's aim (with its partners) to improve underlying demand to improve frequencies, as well as ensuring good reliability;
 - Mr Knight noted and welcomed the local Member's observation in regard to the E2 service and its access to a more central point into the High Street and that it was patronised with some over-crowding at times on this service;
 - confirmation that 2 staff had been allocated as 'floor workers' at the Paris Street Bus Station to assist patrons and consideration was being given to addressing anti-social behaviour (with other agencies/partners) with connection to the Exeter City control room and extended use of CCTV, as well as robust toilet turnstiles;
 - acknowledgement of concern expressed by the local member about the level of services in the Exwick area and the general lack of public confidence and hope for improved services and reliability in the future;
 - concessionary fares represented approximately 60% of ticket sales based on national trends and the ongoing work through the new Enhanced Partnership to improve their use to pre-pandemic levels;
 - there were ongoing discussions in regard to the fare structure following the cessation (in approximately 10 weeks) of the flat £2 fare scheme, noting the small level of government support for bus travel relative to the rail travel to fund/subsidise ticketing initiatives; and
 - the Company was reviewing the fare structure in regard to group/family ticket discounts.

The Chair thanked Mr Knight for his attendance, report and responses to Members' questions

* **83** **Bus Users and Stakeholders (BUS) Forum**

The Committee noted the establishment of the Bus Users and Stakeholders (BUS) Forum by the Devon Bus Enhanced Partnership Board under the new Enhanced Partnership arrangements (more information on the Travel Devon website: [DevonBus Enhanced Partnership - Travel Devon](#))

RESOLVED that Councillor C Whitton be appointed to the Bus Users and Stakeholders (BUS) Forum as this Committee's representative.

* 84 **Clear Streets Charter**

The Director of Climate Change, Environment and Transport reported on the Clear Streets Charter agreement with the City Council and its implementation in the City. Both Councils were both reviewing processes and procedures in regard to Street Cafes.

The power to grant licences was primarily available to the City or District and the Councils were continuing to design schemes to the principles set out in the Clear Streets Charter.

Officers from the City and County Councils had met with businesses on Gandy Street and Musgrave Row to understand issues around trade waste storage. The issues around inhouse storage and capacity were clear, and businesses were equally concerned about on street storage due to the impact on the area. Officers were currently, jointly with businesses, in Exeter, and with Member involvement, looking at two potential sites for on carriageway bin storage on Musgrave Row where they would be well used and cause minimum impact. This process had the potential to be considered for a role out into other areas with similar issues, should it prove successful.

In response to member questions and discussion, the Officer indicated:

- the involvement of the RNIB in the Charter process and implementation;
- confirmation of continuing consultation with local members;
- any issues should be reported to the Local Neighbourhood Highway Officer; and
- officer inspections were conducted at regular intervals and more informally by the Local Neighbourhood Highway Officer and frequency was set according to the status of the footway.

* 85 **Traffic Sensitive Streets Review 2023**

The Committee noted the Report of the Director of Climate Change, Environment and Transport (CET/23/2) on a review of the traffic sensitive streets network across the County.

The County Council's legal duty under the Traffic Management Act 2004/Section 59 New Roads and Street Works Act 1991 was to co-ordinate works activities on the road network. As part of this duty, a power was afforded to the Council to enable the designation of certain streets as 'Traffic Sensitive'. When a street was designated 'Traffic Sensitive', timings of works could be better regulated to ensure the free flow of traffic so far as reasonably practicable through the Council's Permit for Works Scheme.

The last recorded full review had been undertaken in 2018. The review formed part of a 5 yearly routine review, designed to ensure that designations remained fit for purpose.

The review aimed to consider strategic visions for network growth wherever possible. Works promoters might find adjusted restrictions on working practices/timescales (this included Devon County Council's contractors). However, the overall objective was to trigger early communication and better planning. It was not to prevent works taking place.

Members referred to recent difficulties created by emergency works in the Pinhoe Road area and the impact of other works in nearby streets. The Officer confirmed that the above approach was designed to minimise the local impacts and referred to the difficulties created by unplanned but necessary emergency works.

* 86 **Rifford Road Lane two-way Cycle track: Exeter North-South Strategic Cycle Route E12**

The Committee considered the Report of the Director of Climate Change, Environment and Transport (CET/23/3) on the proposed construction of a new 700 metre two-way cycle track along the east side of Rifford Road between its junction with Honiton Road and Ludwell Lane. At present there was no dedicated provision for cyclists along Rifford Road and this facility was an important section of route E12, introduced in section 2 of the Report.

The scheme also included measures to make it easier and more comfortable for people to walk or use wheelchairs on Rifford Road (a full scheme drawing was shown in Appendix 1 of the report). Interim solutions were also proposed for Honiton Road to Sweetbrier Lane and at the Ludwell roundabout with minimal works pending a future funding application to Active Travel England for a larger scheme to continue high quality provision on route Strategic Cycle Route E12.

South of the junction of Quarry Lane the shared use path transitions to segregated provision with a footway and two-way cycle track for approximately 600m. The footway and cycle track will be segregated, where possible, using raised trapezoidal kerbing as recommended in design guidance and meaning people who are blind or partially sighted can identify the edge of the cycle track. A standard cross section of the scheme is shown in Fig.2 of the Report.

The local Members expressed their general support for the Scheme noting the efforts to minimise loss of on-street parking, the availability of some off-road parking in private driveways, the design to minimise on-street 'clutter' with no provision of bollards for example, the work to avoid future planned street works by statutory undertakers, and the establishment of links as part of the overall connectivity strategy; the external funding support for the Scheme and the on-going Safety Audit arrangements in place.

It was **MOVED** by Councillor M Asvachin and **SECONDED** by Councillor D Barnes and

RESOLVED

(a) that the construction of the Rifford Road two-way cycle track in Exeter as shown in Appendix 1 at an estimated cost of £1.55 million be agreed in principle, subject to formal approval by the Cabinet;

(b) that the making and sealing of the Traffic Regulation Order to change the parking restrictions be approved; and

(c) that the Director of Climate Change, Environment and Transport, be given delegated authority in consultation with the Chair and local County Councillor to approve minor changes to the scheme design.

(N.B. In accordance with Standing Order 32(4) Councillor A Leadbetter requested that his abstention from the vote taken be recorded by virtue of his membership of the Cabinet)

* 87

Proposed Traffic Regulation Orders for Queen Street and Iron Bridge/St David's Hill, Exeter

The Committee considered the Report of the Director of Climate Change, Environment and Transport (CET/23/4) on a final proposed scheme for changes for Queen Street and the Iron Bridge St David's Hill, Exeter. The Report detailed the proposals, the rationale for them and the outcome of public consultation exercises and responses to the advertised Traffic Regulation Orders.

A summary of the changes in the revised scheme compared to the one approved in January 2022 was shown in the Report.

The Report also detailed the impact of the temporary scheme which had been approved by the Committee in January 2022. The arrangements had reduced the dominance of vehicles in the city centre and active travel levels had also increased. This aligned with the Exeter Transport Strategy 2020-2030. Improving the pedestrian corridor of St David's station and Queen Street to the city centre was also identified in the Exeter Transport Strategy's 5-year Implementation Plan.

Following further discussions with local members and the Chair minor changes had also been agreed to the scheme approved in January 2022 before the traffic regulation orders were advertised in November 2022. With significant rises in construction costs over the last 12 months, it was also proposed to make some further modifications to the advertised scheme to reduce these costs.

Members expressed their general support of the proposals in view the improved active travel measures and priority for pedestrian and cyclists,

climate change benefits, and ongoing review of signage and ongoing safety review.

It was **MOVED** by Councillor C Whitton and **SECONDED** by Councillor S Aves and

RESOLVED

(a) that the comments of the consultation be noted;

(b) that the Traffic Regulation Orders, as modified in accordance with part 3 of this Report, be made and sealed;

(c) that the footway widening on Queen Street and Iron Bridge proposals shown indicatively in Appendix 1, be approved at an estimated cost of £245,000; and

(d) that the Director of Climate Change, Environment and Transport be given delegated powers, in consultation with the Chair and the local County Councillor, to make minor amendments to the scheme details.

* **88** **Parking in the Sweetbriar Area of Exeter**

In accordance with Standing Order 23(2) Councillor D Barnes had requested that the Committee consider this matter in view of the delay in the implementation of the Residents Parking Scheme for this area.

The Officer explained that the Scheme was included in the list of priorities as agreed by this Committee in April 2022 and that the scheme would be progressed subject to availability of resources (and against other schemes across the County) allocated by the County Council.

* **89** **Actions Taken Under Delegated Powers**

The Committee noted the Report of the Director of Climate Change, Environment and Transport (CET/23/5) on actions taken under delegated powers.

* **90** **Dates of Meetings**

21 April, 24 July and 30 October 2023 and 11 January and 17 April 2024.

Confirmation of dates available here: [Browse meetings - Exeter Highways and Traffic Orders Committee - Democracy in Devon](#)

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 10.30 am and finished at 12.35 pm