



Overview & Scrutiny Business Panel

Report title: Update on temporary measures to support safer walking and cycling in response to the COVID 19 pandemic.

Date: 29 September 2020

Key decision:

Class:

Ward(s) affected: All

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Outline and recommendations

Following a report to Overview and Scrutiny Business Panel in May 2020, this report provides an update on the measures to support safer walking and cycling in response to the COVID 19 pandemic. The primary aim of the measures is to facilitate those walking and cycling to do so safely, whilst also maintaining social distancing.

The Overview & Scrutiny Business Panel is asked to receive and comment on the update report.

Timeline of engagement and decision-making

The Overview and Scrutiny Panel considered a report on 26 May 2020. Following that a delegated decision was taken by the Executive Director for Housing, Regeneration & Environment on 2 June 2020.

All measures outlined in this and previous reports are consistent with the longer term objectives of the borough's Transport Strategy and Local Implementation Plan 2019-2041, which was agreed by Mayor & Cabinet in January 2019.

1. Summary

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to provide an update on the temporary transport measures to support pedestrians and cyclists during the COVID 19 pandemic. The primary aim of those measures is to facilitate those people walking and cycling, to do so safely whilst maintaining social distancing. The package of interventions will help support the recovery from this crisis, whilst also being in alignment with a wider range of longer term policy objectives.

2. Recommendations

- 2.1 The Overview & Scrutiny Business Panel is asked to receive and comment as necessary on the contents of this report.

3. Policy Context

- 3.1 In response to the COVID-19 pandemic, DfT and TfL have asked local authorities to act quickly to introduce schemes to create more space for walking and cycling, whilst also maintaining social distance. In response a growing number of local authorities across the UK and beyond are considering which measures to put in place to help people safely make the essential trips they need to on foot or by bicycle.
- 3.2 This is within the context of a range of pertinent issues, which are summarised below, with further detail provided in section 4 of the 26 May 2020 report:
 - the need to retain social distancing guidelines for some time;
 - an observed increase in speeding/dangerous driving on the road network;
 - limitations on public transport capacity due to social distancing requirements;
 - potential public concern over the use of public transport;
 - a likelihood of increased car trips as restrictions are lifted;
 - an encouragement from central and local government that journeys are kept local, and that these are made on foot or by bicycle where possible;
 - A high proportion of footways that are not wide enough to safely accommodate social distancing practices
 - the potential to combine trip purposes where possible to minimise exposure (e.g. physical exercise such as walking/cycling with a trip to the shops);

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- a need for people to maintain good physical and mental health, increasing resilience against COVID-19 symptoms
 - and a need for residents who may have been impacted financially to feel that they have viable low cost transport options available to them.
- 3.3 The measures implemented to date are consistent with both the DfT guidance and TfL's London Streetspace Programme (see Background Document 1). The primary objective of these measures is to protect public health and safety during the COVID-19 pandemic. This will help to support the recovery from this crisis whilst also being in alignment with a wider range of existing policy objectives.
- 3.4 The Council's over-arching policies can be found in the Corporate Strategy 2018-2022 (see Background Document 2). The Council's transport policy objectives can be found in the Lewisham Transport Strategy & Local Implementation Plan 2019-2041 (LIP3) and are summarised below (see Background Document 3).
- Travel by sustainable modes will be the most pleasant, reliable and attractive option for those travelling to, from and within Lewisham
 - Lewisham's streets will be safe, secure and accessible to all
 - Lewisham's streets will be healthy, clean and green with less motor traffic
 - Lewisham's transport network will support new development whilst providing for existing demand.

4. Emergency transport measures in response to COVID-19

- 4.1 The emergency transport measures in response to COVID-19 fall within four projects. The schemes that have been implemented as part of each of these projects are summarised below:

Project 1: Creating more pedestrian space in busy public places, at pressure points

- 4.1.1 Officers identified a number of locations on high streets and at park entrances where the existing conditions meant that it was difficult for pedestrians to comply with social distancing due to limited footway widths and/or shop queuing systems, and intervention was considered necessary.
- 4.1.2 Measures have been implemented in the following locations:
- **Deptford High Street** – temporary barriers were introduced on the eastern side of Deptford High Street between the A2 and Giffin Street and the western side of Deptford High Street between Giffin Street and Deptford Train Station in order to create more pedestrian space. Unfortunately the temporary barriers were regularly moved out of position which resulted in safety concerns and the measures becoming unmanageable and they were therefore removed. Officers are currently investigating alternative options to create additional pedestrian space.
 - **Blackheath Village** - A pedestrian one-way system has been temporarily introduced through Blackheath Village between the pedestrian crossing outside Blackheath Station and the pedestrian crossing at the junction of Tranquil Vale and Montpelier Vale, to enable access to shops and maintain social distancing. The footway on the western side (on the station side) accommodates pedestrians travelling northbound (towards Montpelier Vale), and the footway on the eastern side of the road accommodates pedestrians travelling southbound (towards the station).

It should be noted that a number of other options, including removal of guard rail

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and also traffic operating one way in alternate directions through the use of temporary signals, were also considered. However, the former risks creating safety issues and the latter would create increased congestion through the village.

- **Coulgate Street** –A timed closure to through traffic between 8am and 10pm has been implemented through the use of temporary barriers. This has provided businesses with space in which to put tables and chairs, therefore extending their capacity and supporting economic recovery.
- Suspension of parking bays and / or loading bays have also been implemented in the following locations in order to create more space for pedestrians: Sangley Road, Foxberry Road, Dartmouth Road, Staplehurst Road, Hither Green Lane and Wells Park Road.

4.1.3 In the May 2020 report Luxmore Gardens was identified as one of the locations where interventions were considered necessary and measures would be implemented. It was intended that parking on one side of Luxmore Street, which currently has footway parking on both sides of the street making it difficult to safely practice social distancing, would be suspended. Unfortunately the funding bid to TfL to progress this scheme was not successful as it did not meet their criteria and therefore this scheme has not been implemented. However, if further funding becomes available, this will be progressed.

4.2 Project 2: Creating quieter and safer residential streets for walking and cycling by introducing modal filters

4.2.1 A 'modal filter' is a road closure that stops motor vehicles, but which still allows pedestrians, cyclists (including electric cargo cycles) and powered two wheelers through. These are used to create safe routes for pedestrian and cycle use through the removal of the majority of through traffic. It should be noted that the initial tranche of 'filters' were not intended to stop every rat-run, but focus on some of the key routes. All locations will have exemptions for emergency service vehicles, and public transport services where applicable.

4.2.2 An initial tranche of locations were identified where rat running has historically been identified as an issue, and where it was feared higher volumes of traffic would be likely to re-emerge. This is based on traffic data, resident complaints, and/or officer observations. The footways in these locations are also below 3m.

4.2.3 The first phase of locations were introduced at George Lane, Silverdale and Bishopsthorpe Road, Glenbow Road, Scawen Road, South Row and Kitto Rd. Due to issues arising following implementation the modal filters at South Row and Kitto Road are currently suspended.

4.2.4 A low traffic neighbourhood (LTN) has also been implemented in the Lewisham and Lee Green area. This includes a number of modal filters throughout the area, using planters and bollards in some locations and automatic number plate recognition (ANPR) cameras at locations which are on priority emergency service routes and bus routes.

4.3 Project 3: Creating more space for pedestrians and cyclists along key corridors

These measures primarily seek to increase space for cyclists, but also seek to provide extended footway space for pedestrians. To date, no schemes have been delivered as part of this project due to challenges in meeting the TfL criteria as a result of constraints on carriageway widths and a need to avoid significant civil works.

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However, elements of the TfL criteria are now seemingly being relaxed so these schemes are currently being revisited. The schemes that are currently under consideration are routes along the Brookmill Road / Thurston Road corridor and Baring Road.

4.4 Project 4: School streets to allow social distancing outside schools when they reopen

4.4.1 School streets are streets or parts of streets that are closed to vehicular traffic for part of the day at school pick up and drop off times, when schools are open. This will provide a safe area for children entering or leaving the school during these periods, facilitating the ability to socially distance at the school gates, where feasible.

4.4.2 Schools have been prioritised based on a range of criteria, with highest priority given to those with footway widths below 3m, higher traffic volumes, higher pupil numbers, and school support for the programme.

4.4.3 The following school streets were implemented during week commencing 14 September 2020 at the following schools;

- Adamsrill Primary School;
- Deptford Green School;
- Kelvin Grove Primary School;
- Prendergast Ladywell School,
- Sir Francis Drake Schools; and
- Ashmead Primary School

4.4.4 At the time of writing this report school streets are due to be implemented at Conisborough College, Tidemill Academy, John Ball Primary School and All Saints Church of England Primary School in week commencing 21 September 2020. There are also plans being progressed to introduce more school streets in the coming weeks.

5. Monitoring

5.1 To ensure we have a clear understanding on the impact of our measures we have committed to a comprehensive monitoring programme. The measures have been and will continue to be kept under review and will be lifted or amended if they are not considered to be addressing the challenges that have arisen due to the pandemic and contributing at all to the policy objectives set out in the May 2020 report.

5.2 Traffic counts and air quality monitors will be positioned to ensure that the impacts on the surrounding road network are captured and that there is an understanding of the extent to which traffic may be displaced to other routes, particularly the distributor road network (i.e. the A and B roads). The traffic counters will also pick up any changes in cycling levels.

5.3 In addition the Council will liaise with other key stakeholders to understand the impact on bus journey times and emergency service response times.

5.4 It should be noted that there is a need to strike a balance between capturing the main impacts of the schemes, whilst being mindful of costs and the urgent need to get schemes delivered as quickly.

5.5 With regard to the analysis of the data this will need to be undertaken in the wider context and also give consideration to other factors that could have an impact on travel behaviour and traffic levels and patterns, such as any emergency road works undertaken on the network and any re-introduction of restrictions affecting travel.

5.6 For the Lewisham and Lee Green LTN the monitoring strategy was published, which

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gives details of where the automatic traffic counters and air quality monitors are or will be placed (see background document 4).

6. Lessons Learned

- 6.1 Throughout the process of implementing these measures a number of lessons have been learnt and will be applied to the next stages of implementation. A number of these lessons are associated to the context in which these measures are being delivered, for example the pace in which they are being introduced, the scale of change being delivered in a short timescale and that such measures are being delivered across London.
- 6.2 As set out in section 3 of this report and in the previous May 2020 report, local authorities across the country are being asked to deliver schemes that create more space for walking and cycling in a short timeframe. This in turn has meant that in London there is significant levels of demand for the same type of equipment and infrastructure, such as temporary barriers and signage. This in turn has had an impact on delivery timescales. In future this will need to be carefully taken into account when programming the works and communicating timescales for delivery.
- 6.3 The level of non-compliance with the measures by drivers has been unexpected and has been an issue across London Boroughs. For example, it was not expected that drivers would mount the footway to drive around any physical barriers in the carriageway and this behaviour was not factored into the original design of the modal filters. As a result of this behaviour designs had to be modified and bollards were installed on the footway. Going forward compliance levels will be anticipated and included in the designs of the measures from the outset.
- 6.4 As well as the non-compliance not being anticipated the level of vandalism to the equipment was also not anticipated. In future we need to be prepared for vandalism and implement measures to prevent that as much as possible, such as collars on the ANPR cameras and ensuring that extra stock is available so that equipment can be quickly replaced.
- 6.5 Whilst there is a need to strike a balance with regard to the extent of signage put in place, so as not to cause confusion for road users with too much information, it is recognised that additional advanced warning signage is beneficial. This will be taken forward when future measures are implemented however it should be noted that signage is often ignored.

7. Approach to communications

- 7.1 Given that measures are being rolled out at pace there is a need to be responsive to the questions and issues that are being raised by the community and respond to them in a timely way. So far in this context we have established weekly Commonplace updates and people will receive these if they have signed up to receive the project news. In addition, we have also included information regarding these measures in the weekly Lewisham email updates, news updates on the website and via social media.
- 7.2 It is important that the measures that are being delivered are set in the London-wide context and within the Council's wider policy objectives and that the Council also proactively provides facts and up to date information to address some misinformation on the proposals. This has begun to be addressed through wider communications, which includes a newsletter distributed to households (see background paper 5), blogs and media relations.

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- 7.3 As part of this programme of works it is necessary that a clear and consistent way for people to raise concerns and share feedback is established. It is recognised that there is further work to be undertaken in relation to this and that currently, as a result of previous work and engagement that has been undertaken as part of the usual programme of transport schemes, there is a lot of information available to people that may be inconsistent and be confusing. To address this a rationalisation of websites and digital information needs to be completed with clear information issued about where people go to for information and how they log their comments / concerns.

8. Summary of next steps

- 8.1 Since the implementation of the measures the schemes and their impacts have continued to be discussed with Ward Members and feedback from the public has continued to be received and reviewed. This feedback will carry on being reviewed and used to inform the next stages of the projects.
- 8.2 In line with the monitoring strategy, traffic counts and air quality monitoring will be undertaken. In addition any impact on bus journey times will be discussed with TfL and any impact on response times will be discussed with the Emergency Services.
- 8.3 This feedback and data collection will be used to inform whether changes are required to the existing schemes and what additional measures are required in the wider area to mitigate negative impacts that have resulted from the introduction of the measures.
- 8.4 Consideration will also be given to whether the temporary traffic orders should be converted to an experimental traffic order, which would facilitate a statutory and non-statutory public consultation. Should an ETO be put in place further data collection and a public consultation with residents would take place during this period to evaluate how the scheme has operated and if the measures should therefore be made permanent. A review and final decision would be undertaken after 6 months.

9. Financial implications

- 9.1 There are no financial implications directly arising from this report. However, the following information may be of interest to the Committee:
- 9.1.1 The Department for Transport (DfT) has agreed a financial settlement of £45 million for TfL covering a period to mid-October. This allows TfL to work with London Boroughs to roll out measures as part of the London Streetspace Programme.
- 9.1.2 TfL has withdrawn the majority of transport funding previously allocated to boroughs for 2020/21, with the exception of any 'sunk' costs already incurred. All remaining funding has been reallocated to boroughs who were in a position to rapidly implement temporary transport interventions in response to the issues outlined above.
- Officers have submitted funding bids to TfL and have secured funding from the London Streetspace Programme for measures included within projects two, three and four. In addition funding has been secured from the DfT Emergency Active Travel Fund (tranche 1), for measures within project 2, and the Re-opening high streets safely fund, for measures in project 1. This brings the total available funding to £1.07m. Some additional funding has also been secured to restart the Council's cycle training programme.
- 9.1.3 The Council is currently waiting to hear the outcome of the funding bid for tranche 2 of DfT's Emergency Active Travel Fund, which TfL submitted for London. This could make further funding available, but the outcome of this funding bid and the implications for funding beyond 2020/21 is currently unknown.

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10. Legal implications

10.1 The Legal implications as outlined in the 26 May 2020 Overview and Scrutiny Business Panel report are still applicable. Any further Legal implications that arise from undertaking the next steps will be addressed in the appropriate decision report.

11. Equalities implications

11.1 All staff are trained to meet their responsibilities as outlined in the Equality Act 2010.

11.2 Section 149 of the Equality Act 2010 (“the Act”) imposes a duty that the Council must, in the exercise of its functions, have due regard to:-

- eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct that is prohibited by or under the Act;
- advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and those who do not;
- foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it.

11.3 The protected characteristics under the Act are: age, disability, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation.

11.4 The duty is a “have regard duty” and the weight to attach to it is a matter for the decision maker bearing in mind the issues of relevance and proportionality.

11.5 The equalities implications of the measures were set out in the previous OSBP report and any further equalities implications that arise from undertaking the next steps will be addressed in the appropriate decision report.

12. Climate change and environmental implications

12.1 There is a legal requirement on the local authority to work towards air quality objectives under Part IV of the Environment Act 1995 and relevant regulations made under that part. Encouraging more journeys to be made by walking and cycling rather than private transport will help to protect against a car based recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic, and the negative impacts associated with vehicular traffic. Keeping traffic and congestion to a minimum will help maintain the improved air quality that has been experienced under lockdown conditions. This will, in turn, help in achieving the objectives set out in the Council’s Air Quality Action Plan (see background paper 6) and Climate Action Plan.

12.2 Any climate change and environmental implications that arise from undertaking the next steps will be addressed in the appropriate decision report.

13. Crime and disorder implications

13.1 A number of the modal filter locations and equipment have been subject to criminal damage. Officers have liaised with the Council’s Strategic Community Safety Services Manager and with the Police on these issues, particularly in relation to incidents where we have information that could assist in identifying the individuals that caused the damage.

13.2 Any crime and disorder implications that arise from undertaking the next steps will be

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addressed in the appropriate decision report.

14. Health and wellbeing implications

- 14.1 The health and wellbeing implications of the measures were set out in the previous OSBP report and any further implications that arise from undertaking the next steps will be addressed in the appropriate decision report.

15. Social Value implications

- 15.1 The social value implications of the measures were set out in the previous OSBP report and any further implications that arise from undertaking the next steps will be addressed in the appropriate decision report.

16. Background papers

1. London Streetspace Plan: interim guidance for boroughs (TfL May 2020)
<http://content.tfl.gov.uk/lsp-interim-borough-guidance-main-doc.pdf>
2. Corporate Strategy 2018-2022
<http://councilmeetings.lewisham.gov.uk/documents/s61022/Draft%20Corporate%20Strategy%202018-2022.pdf>
3. Transport Strategy and Local Implementation Plan 2019-2041 (LIP3)
<https://lewisham.gov.uk/inmyarea/regeneration/transport-and-major-infrastructure/local-implementation-plan>
4. Monitoring Strategy - Lewisham and Lee Green LTN -
<https://lewishamcovidresidentialstreets.commonplace.is/schemes/proposals/monitoring-strategy-lewisham-and-lee-green-update/details>
5. Lewisham and Lee Green Low Traffic Neighbourhood newsletter -
<https://lewisham.gov.uk/documents?query=lewisham%20and%20lee%20green%20low%20traffic%20neighbourhood&sort=score>
6. Lewisham Air Quality Action Plan (2016-2021)
<https://www.lewisham.gov.uk/myserVICES/environment/air-pollution/Documents/LewishamAirQualityActionPlanDec2016.pdf>

17. Glossary

The table below includes a glossary of terms, abbreviations and acronyms used in this report

Term	Definition
COVID-19	Coronavirus disease (COVID-19) is an infectious disease caused by a newly discovered coronavirus
DfT	Department for Transport
EHRC	Equality and Human Rights Commission

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Term	Definition
EAA	An Equalities Analysis Assessment (EAA) is undertaken when making changes to the way a service is being delivered to ensure that the Council is meeting its obligations in relation to the Equality Act 2010 and the Council's equality objectives
Equality Act 2010	The Equality Act 2010 legally protects people from discrimination in the workplace and in wider society.
ETO	An Experimental Traffic Management Order is a legal order made by a Local Authority which manages the behaviour of all road user where consultation is carried out after the order becomes live, with the restrictions already in place. This type of order may be in place for up to 18 months.
Highways Act 1980	An Act of the Parliament of the United Kingdom dealing with the management and operation of the road network in England and Wales
LLW	London Living Wage
Modal filter	a road closure that stops motor vehicles, but which still allows pedestrians and cyclists (including electric cargo cycles) and powered two wheelers through
Modal shift	The change from one mode of transport to another, such as from car to bicycle or public transport.
NHS	National Health Service
RTRA 1984	The Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984 is an Act of Parliament in the United Kingdom, which provides powers to regulate or restrict traffic on UK roads, in the interest of safety
School street	Streets or parts of streets that are closed to vehicular traffic for part of the day at school pick up and drop off, while schools are open
TfL	Transport for London
TLRN	Transport for London Road Network – a network of roads for which Transport for London is the Highway Authority
TMA	The Traffic Management Act 2004 (TMA) is an act of parliament that was introduced to tackle congestion and disruption on the road network. The TMA places a duty on local authorities to make sure traffic moves freely and quickly

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Term	Definition
	on their roads and the roads of nearby authorities
TMO	A Traffic Management Order (TMO) is a legal order made by a Local Authority which manages the behaviour of all road users and which is consulted on prior to restriction being made live
TTO	A Temporary Traffic Order (TTO) is an order made by a Local Authority to restrict or prohibit traffic on the road for road works, where there is a likelihood of danger to the public or to allow litter and cleaning duties to be carried out. Normally requires a notice of intent for at least 7 days before
TTRN	A Temporary Traffic Regulation Notice (TTN) is a notice which may be use to immediately put into effect a TTO where it appears to a Local Authority that the restriction or prohibition should come into force without delay
Zero carbon	Achieving net zero carbon dioxide emissions by balancing carbon emissions with carbon removal or simply eliminating carbon emissions altogether

18. Report author and contact

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