

Public Questions and Statements – Transport, Regeneration and Climate Policy Committee

Meeting Date: 27/11/24

Questions (Committee Remit)

From: Roy Morris

Question:

1. Is it still planned to make Rockingham Street partially one way for buses only?

Is it correct to assume that all buses coming from West Street will turn onto

Rockingham Street rather than their current time-consuming, bumpy journey along Carver Street, Division Street and Rockingham Street?

If so, what is the time frame for this?

How many stages will the process involve?

2. What is holding up the installation of proper bus shelters with real time information to replace AG 123 and 124?

Response:

Thank you for your question.

In line with the information provided on the Connecting Sheffield webpages, the current plan remains to trial a bus gate on Rockingham Street, near Devonshire Lane. This will mean that the lower section of Rockingham Street will become one-way for buses. Additionally, the proposal includes enabling buses to turn right from West Street onto Rockingham Street, avoiding the need to travel via Calver Street.

As you are aware, West Street is a vibrant area with both a busy daytime and nighttime economy. The presence of the tram on West Street adds further complexities to any proposed works at the junction with Rockingham Street. We are continuing discussions with our partners to determine the best way to undertake this work with minimal disruption. Once a delivery programme has been agreed, we will communicate this as soon as possible.

With regard to your second question about bus shelters, I'm pleased to share that two new shelters were installed at stops AG123 and AG124 at the end of October 2024. However, colleagues at the South Yorkshire Mayoral Combined Authority, who are responsible for bus shelters, have informed us that the real-time information and 'E-Ink' timetable displays are yet to be implemented. Unfortunately, we do not have a confirmed date for this work to be completed, but we are actively following up with them. Improving

the availability of real-time displays across the city is something I am particularly eager to see rolled out, and we will keep pushing for progress on this matter.

Thank you again for raising these important questions.

Supplementary Question:

Many thanks for your clear reply to my question.

If I may, I would like to add a couple of comments:

1. Thank you for installing a shelter at AG124. I am on Arundel Gate regularly and, unless I am totally mistaken about the numbering AG123 does not have a shelter yet?
2. Public confidence in public transport depends on stability and fixed routes. Therefore the sooner the new arrangements for Rockingham Street are in place, the better for both public and council.

Response:

Thank you for your follow-up question.

Bus Stop AG123 was always intended as a temporary measure and is therefore not equipped with a shelter. The reason for this is that the stop will be removed due to the infilling of the lay-by, which is required as part of the Stack development.

As part of the Arundel Gate works, we are planning to introduce two additional bus stops with shelters between stops AG124 and AG13. However, this depends on the infilling of the lay-by where AG123 is currently located. These new stops will accommodate the bus services currently using AG123, but the allocation of specific services to these stops will be determined by SYMCA, which is responsible for managing bus stops.

The interim arrangements for bus services while AG123 is closed are still under discussion with SYMCA.

Regarding your point about public confidence in transport being linked to stability and fixed routes, we fully agree. Stability and reliability in transport services are essential for building public trust. This is one of the reasons why we strongly support the move towards bus franchising. As a council, we will be responding to the ongoing consultation on bus franchising. Franchising would enable greater local control over routes, timetables, and fares, ensuring the consistency that passengers need.

We encourage you to participate in the current consultation on bus franchising and share your views. Your input will help shape a public transport system that better meets the needs of Sheffield and the wider region.

From: Dorothy Dimberline

Question:

It is becoming increasingly dangerous for pedestrians in Sheffield, due to cycles, e-cycles, skateboards etc being ridden on public footpaths and in pedestrianised areas, seemingly with impunity.

I speak from experience as I had my hip fractured by a cyclist running into me from behind on a footpath and I have had countless close shaves in areas where cycles should not be allowed.

If action isn't taken to ensure that pedestrian areas and footpaths are free of these hazards then people, including myself, will become fearful of going out which is a dreadful situation.

Will the council (along with the police if necessary) take enforcement action and be proactive in highlighting to the public that cycling in pedestrian areas is illegal and reckless.

I feel that pedestrians need much higher priority in Sheffield generally and when looking at active travel plans and would like reassurance that their safety will be paramount.

Response:

Thank you for your question on this important issue.

Road safety is a key priority for the council, and we focus our resources on areas with a poor record of road safety. This typically means targeting roads across the city where there have been collisions resulting in fatalities or serious injuries, in line with our agreed criteria for identifying such locations.

The riding of bikes on footways or pedestrianised areas not designated for cycling is, as you rightly point out, a matter for police enforcement. The police, like all public services, must prioritise their resources based on local needs and risks.

To support enforcement efforts, the council has funded e-bikes for police use, making it easier for them to tackle this issue. Recently, the police, in partnership with the council, conducted an operation targeting bikes ridden illegally. This operation focused specifically on illegally powered e-bikes—those not pedal-assisted and capable of exceeding 15.5 mph. These vehicles are classified as motor vehicles and must therefore be taxed and insured, as required by law.

I think you are absolutely right to raise these issues. They continue to be a feature in my inbox from residents across the city, and from conversations with colleagues around the country, I know this is a concern they are grappling with as well.

While I believe your question relates primarily to these illegal motor vehicles often mistakenly referred to as e-bikes, I'd like to emphasise the council's commitment to improving infrastructure for active travel. Our current plans include the construction of high-standard, connected segregated cycle routes across the city centre and extending out to the suburbs. These routes are designed to ensure clarity and safety for pedestrians, cyclists, and other road users alike, reducing the need for cycling on footways or other inappropriate spaces.

Thank you again for raising this matter. It's an important conversation as we strive to balance safety, accessibility, and the promotion of sustainable travel options.

From: Nick Talbot

Question:

Plans to install 11 new on-street Electric Vehicle Charge Point were announced in October 2023 (<https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-england-south-yorkshire-67095073>), funded by the central government On-Street Residential Chargepoint Scheme (ORCS), with 75% of funding received up-front, and the 25% remaining to be provided after Charge Point installation. The EV Charge Point bays were designed in December 2023 with accompanying Traffic Regulation Orders that were approved 13th March 2024 at a Transport, Regeneration and Climate Policy Committee meeting. The ORCS scheme closed to new applications in September 2024 after 7 years of operation. All ORCS funded EV Charge Points must be completed by March 2025 to receive the remaining 25% of funding, and if the 75% received has not been spent on eligible goods and services by March 2025, the funds must be returned to central government. As of 7th November 2024, installation of the proposed EV Charge Points on Slate Street, S2, has not even been started yet.

Will the proposed Charge Points be installed within the next 4 months by the March 2025 deadline, and if not, will the funds have to be returned to central government, and would the Charge Points still be installed without ORCS funds?

Response:

Thank you for your email and correspondence via email with regards to one of your proposed projects.

In direct response to your question, yes, we fully expect the charge points to be installed by the end of the March 2025 deadline. We are providing regular updates to the government on the progress of this project, and at this stage, we do not anticipate having to return the associated funds to central government. However, as with any project of this scale, there remains a risk that a proportion of

the funding may need to be returned if the installation deadline is not met. This is common across all projects, and we are working to ensure that this is not the case.

We understand your question relates to what would happen if the March 2025 deadline is not achieved and the government requires the return of funds. In such a situation, the project would be thoroughly reviewed, and we would explore the availability of alternative funding sources to ensure its continuation. We would obviously, also be in dialogue with government throughout.

We are committed to delivering this project on time and are taking all necessary steps to mitigate any risks to its successful completion.

Thank you again for raising this important matter.

Supplementary Question:

Please report on the progress of the other 10 Charge Point sites funded by ORCS. Have any ORCS funded charging sites been completed? Prior to ORCS, in March 2023 the Government Getting Building Fund via the South Yorkshire Mayoral Combined Authority funded 48 Charging Points across 21 sites in Sheffield, operated by Blink Charging on behalf of Sheffield Council. 19 of those sites are in council car parks, and not true on-street charging. The Pond Hill site is for e-taxis only. Clarence Lane is a service road for Waitrose and not true residential on-street charging, with four chargers but two are for e-taxis only, and only two are available for general public use. Blink Charging also operate a true on-street charging site on Devonshire Lane behind the Kangaroo Works, but this is NOT a council operated site according to council website <https://www.sheffield.gov.uk/travel-transport/electric-vehicle-charging>. The Kangaroo Works freehold is owned by Sheffield Council, but Leased to Kangaroo Works for 299 years. Is the Devonshire Lane site a privately operated charging site on a public street? Is this the only true on-street charging site in Sheffield? Does the council support planning applications from other private companies to provide residential on-street charging across Sheffield?

Response:

Regarding the additional questions you have raised, the 22 on-street Residential Chargepoint Scheme (ORCS)-funded chargepoints are currently undergoing a final design review prior to implementation. We anticipate that all sites will be completed by the end of March 2025. As for the on-street chargers on Devonshire Lane, behind the Kangaroo Works, these are owned and operated by Sheffield City Council. I acknowledge that the map on the Council website requires updating to reflect all current sites, and we will ensure this is addressed.

On the matter of planning applications, these are considered on an individual basis. In 2023, a report was presented to the Transport, Regeneration and Climate (TRC) Committee, approving the procurement of a commercial partner(s) to work with Sheffield City Council on delivering EV charging infrastructure strategically, including on-street provision. This is a sensible approach for a city to take, in order to ensure that provision is not patchwork.

Following the publication of this Sheffield City Council report, the Government launched the Local Electric Vehicle Infrastructure Fund (LEVI), allocating £8.915M (capital) to South Yorkshire for EV charging infrastructure to support residents without off-street parking. This funding is subject to an application process and meeting the terms of the fund. Delivery is being developed collaboratively through procurement with South Yorkshire's four partner local authorities to achieve scale and enable cross-subsidisation of less commercially viable areas. This work is currently being led by SYMCA. You are welcome to contact SYMCA directly on this or other matters.