



SHEFFIELD CITY COUNCIL Individual Cabinet Member Decision

Report of: Executive Director, Place

Date: 11th September 2014

Subject: Gleadless Key Bus Routes 2014/15 - Project update and Objections to Traffic Regulation Orders

Author of Report: Tony Lawery, 2734192

Summary:

This report describes the measures to be introduced during 2014/15 along the Gleadless Key Bus Route corridor to improve the punctuality and accessibility of services 20, 20A, 47, 48, 79 and 79A in the Gleadless area.

It also sets out officer responses to objections received to Traffic Regulation Orders in respect of proposed parking restrictions and bus lanes and general comments received with regard to the proposals.

Reasons for Recommendations:

The Traffic Regulation Orders and highway improvements works described in this report will contribute to improvements in the punctuality and reliability of bus services in the Gleadless area. Having considered the objections to the proposed Traffic Regulation Orders it is recommended that the reasons set out in this report for making the Traffic Regulation Orders outweigh any unresolved objections.

Recommendations:

Make the Traffic Regulation Orders described in this report in accordance with the Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984.

Introduce the Traffic Regulation Orders, complete detailed design and implement the proposals described in this report subject to the proposed works being brought through the Council's Capital Approval procedures.

Note that full funding for this scheme has not yet been secured.

Inform the objectors and other respondents accordingly.

Background Papers: Appendix 'A' – Location Plan
Appendix 'B' – Blackstock Road/Constable Road
Scheme drawing and consultation responses
Appendix 'C' – Blackstock Road/Gleadless Road
Scheme drawing and consultation responses
Appendix 'D' – Richards Road Widening
Scheme drawing and consultation responses
Appendix 'E' – Spencer Road/Prospect Road/Myrtle Road
Scheme drawing and consultation responses
Appendix 'F' – Consultation responses

Category of Report: OPEN

Statutory and Council Policy Checklist

Financial Implications
Cleared by: Gaynor Saxton
Legal Implications
Cleared by: Nadine Wynter
Equality of Opportunity Implications
Cleared by: Annemarie Johnston
Tackling Health Inequalities Implications
NO
Human rights Implications
NO:
Environmental and Sustainability implications
NO
Economic impact
NO
Community safety implications
NO
Human resources implications
NO
Property implications
NO
Area(s) affected
Gleadless Valley
Relevant Cabinet Portfolio Leader
Leigh Bramall
Relevant Scrutiny Committee if decision called in
Economic and Environmental Wellbeing
Is the item a matter which is reserved for approval by the City Council?
NO
Press release
YES

GLEADLESS KEY BUS ROUTES 2014/15 PROJECT UPDATE AND OBJECTIONS TO TRAFFIC REGULATION ORDER

1.0 SUMMARY

1.1 This report describes the further measures to be introduced during 2014/15 along the Gleadless Key Bus Route corridor to improve the accessibility and punctuality of services 20, 20A, 47, 48, 79 and 79A in the Gleadless area, building on the work which commenced in 2013.

1.2 It also sets out officer's responses to objections received to Traffic Regulation Orders with regard to proposed parking restrictions and bus lanes and general comments received with regard to the proposals.

2.0 WHAT DOES THIS MEAN FOR SHEFFIELD PEOPLE?

2.1 The Gleadless Key Bus Route (KBR) is one of the corridors being progressed to improve Sheffield's public transport facilities. Improvements to the bus routes in this part of the city will reduce delays in bus travel, help to make travel by public transport to and from City more reliable, and improve the accessibility of public transport services, contributing to making the City a *Great Place to Live*.

3.0 OUTCOME AND SUSTAINABILITY

3.1 It is anticipated that when the proposals are in place they will improve the reliability and accessibility of bus services between Gleadless Valley and the City Centre. The improvements will support the Sheffield Bus Agreement, a partnership between the Council, South Yorkshire Passenger Transport Executive (SYPTE) and the operators. One of the key aims of the Agreement is introduce improvements on bus routes to make the journeys more attractive and help to reduce reliance on the private car.

3.2 The proposals will address queuing delays for buses at key locations, which will help to reduce harmful exhaust emissions and improve journey times.

4.0 REPORT

Introduction

4.1 In February 2013 the Department for Transport granted South Yorkshire Passenger Transport Executive £18.3million of funding towards improving infrastructure for buses on certain Key Bus Routes. This second Better Buses Area Fund (BBA2) grant to SYPTE combined money that traditionally would have been paid directly to operators as Bus Service Operators Grant with additional Government funding to be invested by SYPTE in

improving bus services and traffic management across Sheffield. The Gleadless Key Bus Route is one of the first projects to be brought forward by SYPTE and the City Council within this Better Buses funding programme.

4.2 The purpose of the project is to improve bus journey times, improve service reliability and punctuality, tackle congestion hotspots, enable enforcement of existing restrictions and improve passenger access, safety and information at bus stops. All bus stops along these routes will be brought into compliance with the Equality Act 2010 through the provision of raised kerbs and tactile paving to aid boarding and disembarkation and bus clearway waiting restrictions to prevent parking and to enable buses to pull up to the kerb. New bus shelters and real-time bus timetable information displays will also be provided where appropriate. Works on the Gleadless KBR commenced in 2013 which included the upgrade of some 30 bus stops and implementation of improvement schemes at the Blackstock Road bus terminus and at the junction of Raeburn Road/Constable Road.

4.3 During the current financial year, a further 38 bus stops are to be upgraded, together with completion of the detailed design of a number of other improvement schemes which have been developed to address problems at locations where bus services are delayed by the road layout and/or on-street parking practices. It is anticipated that implementation of the schemes will commence in Spring/Summer 2015. Where possible, the works will be designed and built in co-ordination with the Streets Ahead highway maintenance programme for this area.

4.4 The improvements are supported by the operators involved in the Sheffield Bus Partnership, namely First Group, Stagecoach, and Sheffield Community Transport.

Proposed measures

4.5 The bus infrastructure works programmed for the current financial year fall into two categories – improvements to bus accessibility at bus stops and measures to improve service reliability.

4.6 Access to certain of the bus stops on the route is poor. In response, it is proposed to improve the approaches to the stops by putting in ramps of a more suitable gradient.

4.7 Where appropriate, SYPTE have consulted residents and other affected frontages regarding the bus stop upgrades, in accordance with agreed procedures. Two objections were received and these have been resolved satisfactorily.

4.8 The bus operators, assisted by SYPTE and the Council, have identified a number of locations where service reliability and journey times are adversely affected by the current road layout

and/or parking practices (see Appendix A). Improvement schemes have been developed to address the specific problems and assist the operation of buses and are proposed to be implemented at four of these locations. Works are anticipated to commence late in the current financial year and continue into 2015/16. A brief description of the proposals is outlined below and shown on the appended consultation plans.

- Blackstock Road/Constable Road - junction improvement incorporating a pedestrian refuge on Blackstock Road and associated bus stop alterations.
(See Appendix B).
- Widening of Blackstock Road between Bankwood Road and Gleadless Road to accommodate an inbound bus lane and provision of 2 refuges on Blackstock Road to assist pedestrians. The opportunity is also being taken to install a zebra crossing on Gleadless Road as an alternative to the existing pedestrian subway in response to a number of historical requests from the public. The sub-way would be retained.
(See Appendix C).
- Widening of Richards Road along the frontage of Ann's Grove School playing field to enable two way traffic movements whilst accommodating residents' parking.
(See Appendix D).
- Widening of Spencer Road/Prospect Road between Ann's Road and Myrtle Road to accommodate an inbound bus lane and improvement of Prospect Road/Myrtle Road junction. The optimum junction arrangement has yet to be finalised. Further public consultation will be undertaken when assessments have been completed. The scope and extent of the proposed bus lane is unlikely to change.
(See Appendix E).

Bus stops in the vicinity of the proposed improvement schemes will be upgraded in conjunction with the works.

- 4.9 Implementation of all four schemes will require various parcels of land adjacent to the highway, currently the responsibility of two Council Services: Children, Young People and Families and Housing. Discussions have commenced regarding transfer of the necessary land. No problems are anticipated to arise

Public consultation

- 4.10 During July/August 2014, officers consulted residents and other interested parties about the proposals at each location and advertised the appropriate Traffic Regulation Orders. A total of 35 representations have been received, including 5 formal objections to the TROs. Two of these relate to the bus lane proposals at Blackstock Road (although there have been several other representations objecting to the scheme) and 3 relating to waiting restrictions at Blackstock Road/Constable Road. In order to address these and other reported bus stop-related concerns, the scheme has been revised. The changes include removal of a bus stop located in a lay-by (thus providing additional on-street parking for residents) and the existing bus stop near to Constable Road being re-located to a more appropriate location which enables the reduction of certain lengths of waiting restrictions. The operators and SYPTTE need to consult locally about these changes and the outcome will be reported verbally at the meeting. The representations received in respect of each proposal are outlined respectively in Appendices B, C, D and E, together with officer's responses
- 4.11 Gleadless Valley TARA have requested a public meeting to enable local residents to outline their concerns and objections to the Blackstock Road/Gleadless Road scheme. This has been arranged for 26th August and the outcome will be reported verbally by Officers at the ICM meeting.

Other Consultees

- 4.12 The emergency services, Veolia and South Yorkshire Passenger Transport Executive have been consulted about each of the four 'service reliability' schemes. No objections have been received. Representations have been received from other affected parties and these are outlined in Appendix 'F', together with officers responses.

Relevant Implications

- 4.13 The cost of the measures at Gleadless is estimated to be in the region of £2m (including the works completed in 2013/14 at a cost of £290,000). A sum of £745,000 has been allocated to the Gleadless project leaving a £1.255m shortfall in funding. The original approval was to undertake the bus stop work and the increased cost arises from the junction alterations and other road improvements.
- 4.14 The City Council will need confirmation of this funding before the expanded scheme can be implemented. Investment in improved public transport facilities has been made possible by a Government award to SYPTTE of approximately £18m of "Better Bus Area" funding (BBA2) in support of the Sheffield Bus Partnership. SYPTTE administer the fund. The Sheffield Bus Partners are currently reviewing BB2 allocations in the light of emerging priorities. Indications are that the benefits calculated to result from the proposed improvements strongly justify the

additional funding required and will therefore be endorsed by the Sheffield Bus Partnership Programme Board in the Autumn of 2014.

- 4.15 An Equality Impact Assessment has been conducted and concludes that the proposals are fundamentally equality neutral affecting all local people equally regardless of age, sex, race, faith, disability, etc. However, some aspects will be positive, e.g. for the young, elderly and disabled as some of the proposed measures improve accessibility. No negative equality impacts have been identified.
- 4.16 The Council has the power to make a Traffic Regulation Order under Section 1 of the Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984 for reasons that include the avoidance of danger to persons or other traffic using the road; to facilitate the passage on the road of traffic (including pedestrians); and to preventing the use of the road by vehicular traffic of a kind which is unsuitable having regard to the existing character of the road. Before the Council can make an Order it must consult with relevant bodies in accordance with the Local Authorities Traffic Orders (Procedure) (England and Wales) Regulations 1996. It must also publish notice of its intention in a local newspaper. These requirements have been complied with. Although there is no requirement for public consultation, the Council should consider and respond to any public objections received.

5.0 ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED

- 5.1 Officers considered a number of options for each scheme. In the case of the Blackstock Road/Constable Road scheme, a zebra crossing was considered but was not progressed as the speed of traffic on Blackstock Road would have required the introduction of traffic calming on the approaches to the crossing and would have detrimentally affected the availability of on-street parking availability. The proposed central refuge was tested in various locations both in relation to the bus stops and with a view to minimising the negative impact on parking.
- 5.2 The Blackstock Road widening scheme was developed following a review of an earlier proposal to provide a minor bus-only facility at the junction of Gleadless Road. This was discounted as, without the additional length of bus lane now proposed, the limited time saving benefits for buses did not justify the scheme cost.
- 5.3 The Richards Road widening proposals were developed after consideration of a new parking lay-by on the opposite side of Richards Road to accommodate residents' on-street parking requirements. The widening scheme now proposed accommodates parking along the frontage of the properties rather than on the opposite side of the carriageway and provides a slight increase in parking availability over the existing arrangement. The previous lay-by option would have resulted in a net loss of parking spaces.
- 5.4 With regard to the Spencer Road/Prospect Road/Myrtle Road proposals, although the scope and extent of the proposed bus lane has

been determined, a number of different junction layouts are currently under consideration. Computer traffic modelling is being utilised to assess the arrangements and compare the outcomes with a simple 'give-way' layout, as currently exists. This latter arrangement may offer the most flexibility for all traffic throughout the day, with little negative impact on the calculated bus time-savings. In view of the ongoing assessments and the necessity to undertake further, localised, consultation when the optimum junction layout has been finalised, it is proposed to submit a further report on these proposals and the outcome of consultation in due course.

6.0 REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

- 6.1 The proposals described in this report, supported by the Traffic Regulation Orders, will contribute to improvements in the punctuality and reliability of bus services in the Gleadless area together with accessibility improvements to/from bus stops and for passengers boarding and alighting buses. Having considered the objections to the proposed Traffic Regulation Orders it is recommended that the reasons set out in this report for making the Traffic Regulation Orders outweigh any unresolved objections.

7.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

- 7.1 Make the Traffic Regulation Orders described in this report in accordance with the Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984.
- 7.2 Introduce the Traffic Regulation Orders, complete detailed design and implement the proposals described in this report subject to the Council's Capital Approval procedures.
- 7.3 Note that full funding for this scheme has not yet been secured.
- 7.4 Inform the objectors accordingly.

Simon Green
Executive Director, Place

11th September 2014

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