

Cabinet

Background Papers

Date: **Thursday 29 April 2021**

7. **Reference from the Overview and Scrutiny Committee - Shared Services Scrutiny Review** (Pages 3 - 4)
8. **Recommendations from the Traffic and Road Safety Advisory Panel**
 - 8(a) The Streetspace LTN six-month review (Pages 5 - 8)
 - 8(b) The Streetspace Cycle lane six-month review (Pages 9 - 12)
 - 8(c) The Streetspace School Streets six-month review (Pages 13 - 16)

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Cabinet – 29 April 2021

Reference from the Overview and Scrutiny Committee – 20 April 2021

157. Shared Services Scrutiny Review Report

Members received a report which presented the findings and recommendations from the Shared Services Scrutiny Review. The review had commenced in late 2019 but had to conclude early in March 2020, as the Covid-19 pandemic diverted resources and continued to stretch organisational capacity.

A member of the Committee presented the report and highlighted the following:

- the review had been carried out in the midst of the pandemic which had been challenging and whilst not all objectives had been met, the report highlighted some positives;
- feasibility study appraisals should support Council decisions on future shared services, with risks being able to be identified and mitigated;
- it was crucial that contracts and agreements in shared services had exit strategies included.

The Committee raised a number of points including that the opportunity to revisit this issue in the future would be welcomed.

The Chair and Committee thanked the officers and review panel for their work and agreed that this should be included on the Scrutiny Work Programme

RESOLVED: That

- (1) the Shared Services Scrutiny Review be endorsed;
- (2) the review's report and recommendations be forwarded to Cabinet for consideration and response;
- (3) in line with Rule 25.1.1 of the Council's Committee Procedure Rules, Rule 40.2 be suspended, to allow the Executive a longer timeframe within which to respond to the Review, in recognition of current stretch in organisational capacity and that the response be provided by September 2021.

For Consideration

Background Documents:

Agenda of Overview and Scrutiny Committee – 20 April 2021: Report on Shared Services Scrutiny Review Report
Draft Minutes of Overview & Scrutiny Committee – 20 April 2021

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Reason for Deputation	Objection – based on lack of passing trade to shops, on the Harrow side of the blockage.
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In summary, the shop had experienced revenue losses due to the pandemic and due to being located in the Low Traffic Neighbourhood (LTN) area. Other shops had experienced the same effects made by the roadblocks which had, in addition, made deliveries challenging. The LTN should be removed for businesses in the area to recover. The Deputee also noted that driving in the area proved challenging when it came to day-to-day tasks.

The Panel thanked the Deputee for their presentation and the Chair invited questions to which the Deputee responded that a consultation prior to the changes made should have taken place.

The Panel received the officer report which provided details of the six-month review of the four low traffic neighbourhood schemes introduced as part of the Harrow Streetspace Programme in October 2020 and considered the future of the schemes.

An officer presented the report and highlighted the following:

- The scheme had been introduced by Transport for London (TfL) and the Low Traffic Neighbourhoods (LTNs) were part of this scheme. They had been introduced on a trial basis in late 2020 and a monthly review process had been agreed to observe the progress of the trials.
- Ongoing adjustments had been made throughout the trial, including improving access for emergency vehicles.
- There had been an increase in walking but an increased difficulty with vehicle congestion and delay on surrounding main roads.
- The schemes had caused an overall negative response from the public.

The Panel raised a number of questions to which the officer responded to as follows:

- Comments and ideas would be considered with reference to how the schemes could be adapted.
- The budget set out had not just been for the removal of planters but also for traffic sign and road markings to be removed or replaced. The budget had been an estimate and therefore the actual budget could fall below this. There should not be an issue with re-using the planters; there had been a need to ensure they would be re-used appropriately and that recommendations would be listened to.
- The cost of removal had not been included in TfL's budget allocation and so the extra cost for the removal of the LTNs had been placed onto the individual boroughs.

The Panel agreed that a number of Councillors, who were not members of the Panel, could address the meeting. The the issues raised included:

- The recommendations were welcomed and supported with lessons to be learnt from this when it came to future schemes being implemented.
- That there had still been a need for traffic calming measures as there were some positive outcomes from this scheme.
- Public engagement had been crucial and that the public should be listened to.

In response to the comments made, members of the Panel made the following comments:

- Ultimately, there had been a high volume of engagement with considerable officer time spent on this. There were lessons to be learnt from this and the recommendations were supported.
- Climate change remained an important issue to be tackled and it was recognised that there were positive intentions within this scheme and had been an opportunity to encourage walking and cycling.
- The need for improved health and environment remained, but it had been highlighted that the approach and implementation had to be equally considered.

A Member proposed to an additional recommendation to review the capital spend for these issues This was agreed by the Panel. ,:

Resolved to RECOMMEND(To Cabinet)

That

- (1) having considered the information contained in the report of the Corporate Director, Community, the LTN schemes be removed with immediate effect
- (2) the Corporate Director – Community, following consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Environment,
 - (a) to work towards introducing speed reductions in roads and streets with identified road safety issues where budget and enforcement constraints allow;
 - (b) a review of the Francis Road width restriction.

the Corporate Director – Community, following consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Environment , review the Council capital programme in order to ring-fence dedicated additional funding to

promote relevant walking, cycling and road safety measures and schemes.

Reason for Recommendations: The four schemes were implemented in October 2020 on an experimental basis for 6-months in neighbourhoods with longstanding and ongoing concerns around safety, speeding and high levels of traffic and pollution to test the effects of Low Traffic Neighbourhoods (LTNs) in the four areas.

The details in this report highlighted that whilst the residential roads within the LTN had benefitted from reduced levels of traffic, speeding and vehicle damage, surrounding roads had experienced an increase in levels of traffic, longer journey times and waiting times at junctions, and increased vehicle emissions thereby reducing air quality.

With the need for social distancing to continue for the longer-term, alongside the return of schools and easing of lockdown restrictions it was expected that levels of car usage would remain high, if not increase, in the short term, thereby putting further strain on the highways and junctions, and further impacting air quality for those residing on these already busy roads.

The engagement and consultation over the experimental six-month period had highlighted that a strong majority did not agree with the LTNs, did not feel that they were working, and did not agree with the proposal to retain the LTNs using ANPR and virtual permits.

The original Transport for London (TfL) funding for the schemes had been exhausted and any new scheme would require new funding. In respect of the considered option of using of Automatic Number Plate Recognition (ANPR) cameras there would be a capital purchase cost of £172,000, in addition to this would be the full year operational costs of £93,500. There was no funding for this option in the Parking Services budget.

There remained support from residents to retain the 20mph speed limit introduced as part of the LTNs and the need to ensure the Francis Road width restriction met the requirements of reducing large vehicular traffic and through traffic.

- This had been funded by Government and required specifically that road space reallocation be used to facilitate these routes.
- Monthly reviews, traffic studies and opinion surveys had been undertaken. Overall, there had been negative response to the trial.
- Dual-carriageways that had been at 40mph and were now set at 30mph would need to be reinstated to 40mph, consideration of introducing a 30mph limit in these roads in the future would need to go through a consultation with the Police.

The Panel raised a number of questions to which the officer responded to as follows:

- A survey had been adopted following general practice and the portal had been found to be an effective way for feedback to be gathered. The company that oversaw the portal checked for abnormal activity to mitigate the results being affected, therefore there had been confidence in the portal's effectiveness.
- There had still been an aspiration to continue the promotion of cycling but there was a need to review the current strategy.
- At the time the scheme had been accepted, normal funding for these types of projects had no longer been available. The pandemic had created unusual circumstances and this scheme was the best at that given time. The bids for these government schemes did not make allowances for any fees in terms of removals.
- A breakdown of the costs involved in the removal of the Streetspace Cycle Scheme had been largely made up of the removal and replacement of road markings as well as signage.

The Panel agreed that a number of Councillors, who were not members of the Panel could address the meeting and the issues raised included:

- Many residents had been opposed to the Uxbridge Road cycle route and would be pleased to see the officer recommendation as it had caused congestion in the surrounding area. This had not been a case of being anti-cycling but in favour of well executed schemes.

In response to the comments made, members of the Panel made the following comments:

- That although there had been good intentions with this scheme, it had been important for the residents to be listened to and for cycling schemes to be better implemented.
- There had been a need for infrastructure to be in place for residents to be encouraged. There had also been a need for bicycle parking facilities.

- The recommendations were supported but highlighted that although this particular scheme had not materialised, a cycling strategy would still remain in place.
- From a cycling perspective, it had been noted that the lanes were kept in place with the strategies developed and a survey carried out.

A Member proposed an additional recommendation to review the capital spend for these issues and, following a further amendment to this additional recommendation by another member of the Panel, this was agreed.

Resolved to RECOMMEND: (To Cabinet)

That

- (1) having considered the information provided in the report of the Corporate Director of Community, these schemes be removed with immediate effect;
- (2) the Corporate Director of Community, following consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Environment, work towards:
 - a review of the strategy with all stakeholders to create the infrastructure in Harrow that could be improved and expanded, including quiet ways, to create a seamless cycle link across the borough and a further report be submitted to the Panel in three months;
 - introducing speed reductions on Honey Pot Lane and Uxbridge Road where budget and enforcement constraints allow.
 - the Corporate Director of Community, following consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Environment, review the Council capital programme in order to ring-fence dedicated additional funding to promote relevant walking, cycling, road safety measures, cycling facilities and schemes.

Reason for Recommendations: The three schemes had been implemented in October 2020 on an experimental basis for 6-months to test the effects of Strategic Cycle lanes in three areas.

The schemes were funded on the condition that only the Transport for London (TfL) design criteria be used, which was not Harrow specific and therefore did not account for any local conditions.

Therefore, post implementation the schemes had clearly demonstrated that they were not the option best suited to Harrow and that alternative designs for any future cycle scheme fully account for local conditions.

The TfL funding had been exhausted and therefore any new scheme would require new funding which was not currently available from within existing budgets.

With the need for social distancing to continue for the longer-term, alongside the return of schools and easing of lockdown restrictions it was expected that levels of car usage would remain high, if not increase, in the short term, thereby putting further strain on the highways and junctions.

The engagement and consultation over the experimental six-month period have highlighted that a majority do not agree with the design of the cycle lanes and had clearly indicated that they were not working for all users.

There remained support from residents and Ward Councillors to retain the 30mph speed limit introduced as part of the cycle lanes schemes on Honeypot Lane and Uxbridge Road.

- This was a Transport for London (TfL) scheme and that schools had been chosen where there were known issues surrounding the pickup and drop off times.
- The consultation process had been followed, with this scheme recommended for a trial at TARSAP in August 2020, and which had been implemented in September 2020.
- There had been monthly reviews and monitoring throughout the trial. There had been consultation with key stakeholder which included schools.
- It had been clear that the trial had created low traffic conditions for students and parents, which had created a healthier and safer in the conditions in the school streets. The schools had also been supportive of the schemes.

The Panel raised a number of questions to which the officer responded to as follows:

- the second phase was currently going through public engagement and a special meeting for June was planned. The funding provided by TfL from last year had been carried forward but could only be used within a certain time frame. If the deadline were to be missed, that would mean that funding would be drawn from elsewhere.
- The Panel agreed that a number of Councillors, who were not members of the Panel, could address the meeting and the issues raised included there should be time for the data to be understood and to identify why there had been negative feedback to this scheme.

In response, members of the Panel made the following comments:

- There was a need for a better understanding as to why there had been a negative reaction to this scheme.
- there had been a need for parking to be monitored.
- There should be a pause between gathering data and the implementation of projects in order for data to be fully assessed.
- Parking had caused issues in surrounding areas.

A Member proposed to an additional recommendation which was duly agreed by the Panel.

Another Member moved an amendment to the additional recommendation which requested that the Panel recommend no further Street Schools schemes were implemented, until there was data from the current schemes. This was duly seconded, put to the vote and was lost.

Resolved to RECOMMEND: (To Cabinet)

That

- (1) the experimental trials of the school streets schemes be continued until month 12 of the 18 months;
- (2) a full report be submitted to the Panel on the progress of the experimental trials in order that the future of the schemes could be considered;
- (3) the Corporate Director – Community following consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Environment, collate an action plan on learning from the negative consultation feedback to date and take relevant steps to directly address the main issues and problems associated with the School Street programme introduction in the local surrounding areas.

Reason for Recommendations: To continue to evaluate the performance of the school streets schemes over the 18-month experimental period.

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