

Report for:	TRAFFIC & ROAD SAFETY ADVISORY PANEL
Date of Meeting:	22 April 2021
Subject:	Cycle Lane Schemes
Key Decision:	Yes, recommendations will be referred to Cabinet for decision
Responsible Officer:	Paul Walker – Corporate Director, Community
Portfolio Holder:	Varsha Parmar - Portfolio Holder for Environment
Exempt:	No
Decision subject to Call-in:	No, but any Cabinet decision will be subject to call in
Wards affected:	Greenhill, Harrow Weald, Queensbury
Enclosures:	Appendix 1 Monitoring pedestrian, cycling and vehicle activity Appendix 2 Cycling Schemes Public Consultation Feedback Appendix 3 SC-01 - Honeypot Lane, Queensbury Appendix 4 SC-03 - Sheepecote Road, Harrow Appendix 5 SC-09 - Uxbridge Road, Harrow Weald

Section 1 – Summary and Recommendations

This report details the six-month review of the three cycle lanes introduced as a part of the Harrow Streetspace Programme in October 2020 and to consider the future of the schemes.

Recommendations

1. That the panel consider the information provided in this report and make a recommendation to Cabinet remove these schemes with immediate effect
2. That the panel recommend to the Corporate Director of Community following consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Environment to work towards:
 - a review of the strategy with all stakeholders to create the infrastructure in Harrow that can be improved and expanded, including quiet ways, to create a seamless cycle link across the borough and report back to TARSAP in three months.
 - introducing speed reductions on Honeypot Lane and Uxbridge Road where budget and enforcement constraints allow.

Reason: (For recommendations)

The three schemes were 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 we only used the Transport for London (TfL) design criteria, which wasn't Harrow specific and therefore didn't account for any local conditions.

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

The TfL funding has been exhausted and therefore any new scheme would require new funding which is 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 is expected that levels of car usage will 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 have clearly indicated that they are not working for all users.

There remains 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.

Section 2 – Report

Introduction

- 2.1 The purpose of this report is to give an update to TARSAP on the progress of the experimental Strategic Cycling Schemes, which were planned for a term of up to 18 months.
- 2.2 The government issued statutory guidance under Section 18 of the Traffic Management Act 2004 to all highway authorities in England requiring local authorities in areas with high levels of public transport use should take measures to reallocate road space to people walking and cycling to encourage active travel and enable social distancing. In response to this the GLA / TfL developed the London Streetspace Programme which aimed to:
- i) enable social distancing on street,
 - ii) encourage Londoners to avoid unnecessary use of public transport,
 - iii) focus on strategic movement to prioritise walking and cycling.
- 2.3 Harrow participated in the London Streetspace Programme (LSP) promoted by Transport for London (TfL) and subsequently made funding applications and secured funding to implement local proposals to support reallocating more road space on the road network to pedestrians and cyclists. This included proposals for three strategic cycle lanes.
- 2.4 Detailed guidance for the London Streetspace Programme was released to the London boroughs by TfL in mid-May 2020 and can be found at <http://content.tfl.gov.uk/lsp-interim-borough-guidance-main-doc.pdf>
- 2.5 In preparation for Harrow and London coming out of lockdown and with reduced journeys on public transport due to Covid-19, it was important that we made changes to support active travel and local journeys on foot or by bike and address the increased car usage on the borough road network.
- 2.6 By helping more people to walk and cycle rather than drive short journeys, the temporary schemes were also aimed at supporting our longer-term climate and health objectives of reducing air pollution and levels of obesity and diabetes, while also tackling congestion, speeding, and improving overall road safety.
- 2.7 The Council began the process of implementation the experimental cycling schemes on 25 June 2020. These schemes include:

- SC-01 Honeypot Lane, Queensbury
- SC-03 Sheepcote Road, Greenhill
- SC-09 Uxbridge Road, Harrow Weald

2.8 The method for implementing these schemes was using an experimental traffic order to introduce the restrictions and to operate the schemes as a trial for 6 months. There is no statutory consultation required in advance of introducing the measures with this method and the first 6 months of operation would be the statutory consultation period when representations can be made by the public.

2.9 A commitment was made by Cabinet that the schemes would be kept under ongoing review and a report brought back to Traffic and Road Safety Advisory Panel (TARSAP) following the initial 6 months of operation of schemes, to feed back the results of consultation and the equality impact assessments, and to consider whether schemes should be ended, extended up to a maximum of 18 months or made permanent.

2.10 This included the opportunity to review each scheme after 6 months to see how it is performing and whether any further decisions are needed such as:

- To make the scheme permanent
- To extend the scheme by another six months
- To amend the schemes and extend for a further six months
- To cancel the experimental scheme.

2.11 This report sets out the findings from officers and feedback from the local community and stakeholders, including the Emergency Services, following the first 6 months of operation.

The schemes

2.12 The Harrow Streetspace programme took forward the government directive via Transport for London to deliver a range of active travel schemes including strategic cycling schemes.

2.13 The LIP programme, the council's main source of road safety funding, was suspended in May 2020/21 and the only viable option realistically available to the Council to implement transport measures was to apply for funding from the London Streetspace Programme. The proposals were therefore developed in accordance with the TFL guidance.

2.14 The schemes were fully funded by central Government through Transport for London (TfL).

2.15 The strategic cycle schemes have been implemented on an experimental basis in 3 locations in the borough:

- SC01 – Honeypot Lane, Queensbury on 10 July 2020
- SC-03 – Sheepcote Road, Greenhill 17 July 2020
- SC09 – Uxbridge Road, Harrow Weald on 24 July 2020

2.16 The schemes were placed on multi-lane major routes in the borough.

2.17 The schemes used TfL design methodology, and introduced dedicated nearside cycle lanes, with an offside vehicular traffic lane, to allow sufficient space and segregation between cyclists and vehicles.

2.18 As part of the schemes speed limits were reduced from 40mph to 30mph on Honeypot Lane and Uxbridge Road.

2.19 On Sheepcote Road the hours of the southbound bus lane between Gayton Road and Northwick Park Roundabout were extended to operate 'At Any Time'.

2.20 See Appendices 3 - 5 for maps of the cycle lanes.

Methodology

2.21 At the special meeting of TARSAP on 10 August it was recommended and then agreed by the Deputy Leader on the 19 August on behalf of the Leader, to carry out monthly reviews to understand the impact of the schemes and to adjust as needed.

2.22 The monthly reviews included:

- Pedestrian / cycling / vehicle activity (measured by counts)
- Gathered feedback from the local community including:
 - The Emergency services
 - Bus services (TfL)
 - Residents, businesses, schools, health centres and places of worship
 - Ward Councillors
- Officer observations about operational performance
- Suggested scheme changes and or improvements.

2.23 The monthly reports were reviewed by the Environment Portfolio Holder and Corporate Director for Community.

Monitoring pedestrian, cycling and vehicle activity

2.24 The impact of the cycle schemes on the levels of walking, cycling and vehicles were monitored throughout the six-month trial period using both CCTV footage and an Automatic Traffic Counter (see Appendix 1 for details).

2.25 Counts took place during the week and at the weekends between 7am and 7pm.

- 2.26 In Harrow a low percentage of journeys are made by bike – cycling has the lowest travel mode share and has been highlighted in the Borough Transport Local Implementation Plan as a priority for interventions and improvements to increase levels of cycling.
- 2.27 The surveys demonstrate that cycling levels started at a low level and remained low. The surveys indicate that travel by motor vehicle is the dominant travel mode consistent with Harrow having a very high percentage/mode share of travel by car.
- 2.28 The levels of walking and cycling increased in November, January and February which are likely to be influenced by school closures, more people being at home and exercising locally/changing some of their behaviour for local journeys under the more severe government restrictions.
- 2.29 Onsite observations by officers during peak times on weekdays indicate that while cycle lanes have impacted on que lengths due to two lanes of traffic merging into one, vehicle journey times and levels of congestion have not been impacted, with levels of congestion remaining at pre pandemic levels.

Engagement with key stakeholders

- 2.30 The Council engaged with key stakeholders, including the emergency services, residents and businesses as well as ward councillors throughout the six-month trial period.

Transport Officer comments

- 2.31 There are concerns about the road safety of the schemes, where the design of the cycle lanes, as implemented in Harrow, has resulted in forcing two lanes of vehicular traffic to merge into a single outside lane.

Emergency services comments

- 2.32 The Council have continued to engage with the Emergency services throughout the process, no operational issues have been highlighted generally but some changes were made to the Honeypot Lane cycle lane due to the proximity of Stanmore Fire Station to the cycle lane, and impact on queuing traffic on emergency vehicles leaving and accessing the station:
- December 2020: changes were made to the Honeypot Lane cycle lane, removing the traffic cones on the northbound to section of the cycle lane between Crowshott Avenue and Whitchurch Lane to allow the cycle lane to be used by fire crews on emergency calls to bypass queuing traffic.
 - March 2021: To create gaps in the line of cones along the lane making room for cars to pull over and create space for emergency vehicles on call to pass.

Public transport services comments

2.33 Transport for London is responsible for the commissioning and operation of bus services in London, and they have been contacted to seek their views about the impact of the cycle schemes on bus services. No operational issues have been highlighted.

Cycle groups comments

2.34 The schemes are supported by local cyclists, the Bicycle User Group (BUG) at London North West University Hospital trust and the Harrow Cyclists group, represented on TARSAP, who agree with the introduction of the schemes.

2.35 In general cycle groups would like to see these proposals go further to improve connectivity with the wider cycle network and to improve cycle safety at main road junctions.

2.36 Amongst cyclists there is support for 2 of the 3 routes (Sheepcote Road & Uxbridge Rd).

Ward councillors

2.37 Ward councillors for the three cycle lanes have been engaged with throughout the process.

2.38 Queensbury ward councillors requested a residential service road on the western side of Honeypot Lane be subject to a 20mph speed limit and this proposal has been approved and is being taken forward to implementation on an experimental basis.

2.39 In addition to the overall feedback on the Uxbridge Road cycle lane and the engagement, Harrow Weald Ward councillors have requested the 30mph speed limit on Uxbridge Road, in view of the longstanding speeding issues on this road.

Commonplace engagement

2.40 The Council set up a public engagement portal on Commonplace in October 2020 to give the local community a platform to share their views and experiences of all the Streetspace scheme trials, including the cycle lanes. The engagement ran until 31 March 2021.

2.41 Over the lifetime of the engagement portal, the three cycle lanes received almost 2,400 comments on Commonplace.

2.42 Feedback reflects a sustained unpopularity amongst the community towards cycle lanes - with 90% of people responding saying they feel negatively or mostly negatively towards the cycle lanes and wanting them removed.

2.43 SC-01 Honeypot Lane, Queensbury cycle lane received the most responses with 927 people sharing how they felt towards the scheme. Of the responses 93% of people said they feel negative or mostly negative towards the scheme and 94% wanted the scheme removed now or at the end of the trial.

- 2.44 SC-03 Sheepcote Road, Greenhill cycle lane received 445 responses with 81% of people saying they felt negatively or mostly negative about the schemes and 83% wanted the scheme removing.
- 2.45 SC-09 Uxbridge Road, Harrow Weald cycle lane received 680 responses with 89% of people saying they felt negatively or mostly negative about the schemes, with 87% wanting the scheme removed.
- 2.46 The largest group of responses to the cycle lane Commonplace portal was from motorists (53%) - this group expressed more negative sentiments expressing the view that there is increased congestion and queuing at busy times. Residents living locally to the cycle lanes and businesses made up 25% of responses – this group was also generally negative for the same reasons as motorists.
- 2.47 The measures were considered more positive by cyclists although they represent a smaller proportion of the responses received (11%).

2.48 Common themes included:

PROS	CONS
<p>More cycle lanes can lead to more cyclists – reducing pollution and improving health</p> <p>Lanes make it safer to cycle due to the space given to cyclists/ separation from vehicles</p> <p>Support for speed reduction options for example the 20MPH limit on Honeypot Lane service road and 30MPH on Uxbridge Road in introduced as part of the scheme</p> <p>First steps to a borough wide cycle network</p>	<p>Increase traffic and pollution and delays to journey times</p> <p>Concerns around impact on traffic queues once lockdown restrictions are eased and more cars return to the road</p> <p>Delays for emergency vehicles and impact on bus services</p>

2.49 See Appendix 2 - Cycling Schemes Public Consultation Feedback

Staffing/workforce

2.50 The monitoring and implementation of speed reductions/development of a cycle strategy will be undertaken by existing staff resources within the Traffic, Highways & Asset Management team and Parking & Network Management team.

Environmental Implications

- 2.51 Benefits identified were achieved by encouraging active travel.
- 2.52 Due to continuation of social distancing and reduced capacity on public transport, alongside the easing of restrictions and the return of schools, it is expected that traffic will at-least return to pre-pandemic levels or increase. This is expected to be an issue across the borough/London/country with a negative impact on air quality.
- 2.53 The continuation of the 30MPH speed limit introduced as part of the scheme, could help to address issues of speeding vehicles and risk of collisions/injury, thereby going some way to mitigating the return of increased traffic to the road network.

Data Protection Implications

- 2.54 There are no data protection implications.

Risk Management Implications

- 2.55 A design risk assessment has been undertaken during scheme development under the Construction (Design & Management) Regulations to manage any potential health and safety risks.
- 2.56 The delivery of each scheme in the programme has been subject to separate risk assessments.

Procurement Implications

- 2.57 Where needed, consultants and contractors have been procured to investigate, develop and deliver some proposals. This is business as usual. The work has been procured in line with the Public Contracts Regulations 2015 and the Council's Contract Procedure Rules.

Legal implications

- 2.58 The Traffic Management Act 2004 places an obligation on authorities to ensure the expeditious movement of traffic on their road network. Authorities are required to make arrangements as they consider appropriate for planning and carrying out the action to be taken in performing the duty.
- 2.59 The Statutory guidance "Traffic Management Act 2004: network management in response to COVID-19" is an additional statutory guidance issued by the Secretary of State for Transport. It sets out high-level principles to help local authorities to manage their roads and what actions they should take. Local

authorities in areas with high levels of public transport are required to take measures to reallocate road space to people walking and cycling, both to encourage active travel and to enable social distancing.

2.60 The traffic and parking restrictions in the schemes have been given effect by the making of experimental traffic management orders. The first 6 months of operation are a formal statutory consultation.

2.61 The Council has the following options in relation to experimental traffic regulation orders:

- a. Make the order permanent
- b. Modify the order
- c. Extend the order for a maximum period of 18 months from the start of the order, with or without modification
- d. End the order and remove the scheme

2.62 When making decisions, the Council must take account of statutory guidance. TfL has published interim guidance in relation to experimental traffic regulation orders to deliver Streetspace schemes. This states the following:

- e. Schemes should be given time to bed in, generally for at least a three-month period, noting seasonal trends and Covid related restrictions, which can make comparisons challenging.
- f. If, after a monitoring period, the data indicates that the scheme is at risk of not meeting the core objectives or of causing negative impacts e.g. regarding accessibility, the local authority could consider what changes are needed.

2.63 When making decisions, the Council must take account of all relevant information, including consultation results, statutory guidance, internal policies, consultation results and equality impact. It must weigh this information up in a fair way and come to a reasoned decision. When considering consultation results, the Council should consider the detail of the results as well as the numbers of respondents expressing support or otherwise for a proposal. When making decisions to change existing arrangements, it is not uncommon for the majority of respondents to be against the proposal. The Council must take these views into account, but must also weigh this against other information, such as environmental impact, financial implications and the legislative framework.

Financial Implications

2.64 TfL awarded funding of £100k in 2020/21 to introduce the three cycle lanes.

2.65 Should the cycle lanes be removed, there would be a one-off cost of reinstating the traffic lanes, which will need to be met from within Highways Maintenance revenue budget, It is estimated that it would cost approx. £50k to

reinstate the traffic lanes by removing cones / signing and burning off and repainting road markings.

Equalities Implications / Public Sector Equality Duty

2.66 The measures proposed in the programme accord with the Council’s Transport Local Implementation Plan 3 (LIP). The LIP underwent an Equalities Impact Assessment and had due regard to the need to eliminate discrimination, advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and those who do not share it as required under section 149 of the Equality Act 2010.

2.67 TfL have highlighted the need to assess the impacts of schemes on all protected characteristics and the schemes have been subject to a separate EqIA. The schemes do have positive benefits for the groups in the table below:

Protected characteristic	Impact
Age	<p>Young children and elderly people generally benefit most from schemes that prioritise cycling because improved road layouts and public realm provide improved safety, security and convenience and improved access to the town centre and facilities.</p> <p>Older children may benefit from enhanced cycling schemes as they provide a safer means of cycling to school and other activities.</p> <p>The schemes form part of wider school travel planning objectives, which should see longer term health impacts for children and young people.</p>
Pregnancy or maternity	<p>Parents with young children will generally benefit most from schemes that prioritise cycling because improved road layouts and public realm provide improved safety, security and convenience.</p> <p>Minor negative impacts have been highlighted on car journeys with increased journey times to local destinations such as schools and medical centres on main routes. This could also affect residents more dependent on travel by car or taxi or that receive care from carers visiting by car.</p>

Council Priorities

2.68 The proposed programme detailed in the report supports the Harrow Ambition Plan and contributes to achieving the administration’s priorities. The proposed schemes will have the following impact on Council priorities:

Corporate priority	Impact
Building homes and infrastructure Improving the environment and addressing climate change	Measures to develop an integrated cycle network using quiet ways would encourage a greater uptake of cycling for leisure and commuting with wider public health benefits and improve air quality. Measures to introduce speed reductions will also benefit all motorists – by creating safer roads.
Addressing health and social care inequality Tackling poverty and inequality Thriving economy	An improvement in public health will reduce pressure on health services particularly during the current health crisis. Measures to support social distancing will help to reduce fear of the risk of infection and encourage more people to make local journeys by walking and cycling. A new cycle network using quiet ways will improve access to transport links, shopping centres and recreational activities. More cycling journeys can encourage people to shop locally and thereby support the local economy.

Section 3 - Statutory Officer Clearance

Statutory Officer: Jessie Man

Signed on behalf of the Chief Financial Officer

Date: 13 April 2021

Statutory Officer: Hugh Peart

Monitoring Officer

Date: 15 April 2021

Section 3 - Procurement Officer Clearance

Statutory Officer: Nimesh Mehta

Signed by the Head of Procurement

Date: 13 April 2021

Section 3 – Corporate Director Clearance

Statutory Officer: Paul Walker

Corporate Director - Community

Date: 15 April 2021

Mandatory Checks

Ward Councillors notified: **YES**

EqIA carried out: YES

EqIA cleared by: Dave Corby, Community - Equality Task Group (DETG) Chair

Section 4 - Contact Details and Background Papers

Contact:

David Eaglesham – Head of Traffic, Highways & Asset Management

E- mail David.Eaglesham@harrow.gov.uk

Background Papers:

TfL Streetspace for London guidance - <http://content.tfl.gov.uk/lsp-interim-borough-guidance-main-doc.pdf>

TfL Healthy Streets for London - <http://content.tfl.gov.uk/healthy-streets-for-london.pdf>

Transport Local Implementation Plan 3 –
<https://www.harrow.gov.uk/downloads/file/26428/harrow-transport-local-implementation-plan>

Walking, Cycling & Sustainable Transport Strategy -
<https://www.harrow.gov.uk/downloads/file/26432/harrow-walking-cycling-and-sustainable-transport-strategy>

Call-In Waived by the Chair of
Overview and Scrutiny
Committee

NO