

Subject:	Better Bus Areas – Results of public consultation on Edward Street transport proposals		
Date of Meeting:	9th July 2013		
Report of:	Executive Director of Environment, Development & Housing		
Contact Officer:	Name:	Emma Sheridan	Tel: 29-3862
	Email:	Emma.sheridan@brighton-hove.gov.uk	
Ward affected:	Queens Park		

FOR GENERAL RELEASE.

Note: The special circumstances for non-compliance with Council Procedure Rule 3, Access to Information Procedure Rule 5 and Section 100B(4) of the Local Government Act 1972 (items not considered unless the agenda is open to inspection at least five days in advance of the meeting) were that the consultation period did not close until 25th June 2013. Time was needed to assess, and analyse the consultation responses to ensure that a full report could be provided. As funding for the project is allocated in the current financial year it is essential that the report be considered at the July Committee meeting.

1. SUMMARY AND POLICY CONTEXT:

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to outline the results of recent public consultation on the proposals for bus priority, pedestrian and cyclist infrastructure improvements on Edward Street as part of the Department for Transport funded Better Bus Areas Programme and agree a way forward for the Scheme.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS:

- 2.1 That the Committee notes the results of the public consultation on the proposals for bus priority, pedestrian and cyclist infrastructure improvements on Edward Street as part of the Department for Transport funded Better Bus Areas Programme.
- 2.2 That, having taken into account the responses received, the Committee authorises officers to proceed with detailed design and advertising the formal Traffic Regulation Order (TRO) for the Edward Street Bus & Cycle lanes and any necessary waiting & loading restrictions.
- 2.3 That the Committee authorises officers to commence construction on elements of the scheme that are not dependant on the outcome of the TRO consultation process. This would include the introduction of additional controlled crossings at the junction of Edward Street with Upper Rock gardens and Egremont place, footway build outs at Tillstone and John Street and side road raised entry treatments involving some kerb realignment. This work would not be abortive

should the overall scheme fail to materialise following the formal TRO consultation.

3. RELEVANT BACKGROUND INFORMATION/CHRONOLOGY OF KEY EVENTS:

3.1 In March 2012 Brighton and Hove successfully secured £3.48 million transport funding from the Department for Transport for the Better Bus Area (BBA) Project "Better Buses for a Growing City." With local resources contributed by Brighton & Hove City Council and our bid partners Brighton and Hove Bus Company, a total fund of £5.82m was achieved.

3.2 The area covered by the project focuses on unlocking bus market growth to the north and east of the city centre, both areas having been identified as areas for economic growth. It is anticipated that the package of measures being implemented will support the key development sites in the project area, address the capacity issues that exist on the two strategic corridors and remove significant bottlenecks in the network through the introduction of bus priority measures.

3.3 In addition to securing improvements in terms of journey times for bus passengers, the infrastructure works proposed will also improve the environment for pedestrians and cyclists.

3.4 Measures proposed are:

Starting at the junction of Pavilion Gardens and Edward Street heading east:

- Controlled pedestrian crossing to be introduced on Pavillion Gardens
- On carriageway cycle lane (2m) as far as the junction of Edward Street with Egremont Place,
- Existing pedestrian crossing just after John Street to be upgraded to a Puffin crossing,
- Addition of a pedestrian phase to traffic signals on the eastern arm of junction of Edward Street with Egremont Place and Upper Rock Gardens,
- Side road raised entry treatments

From Junction of Edward Street with Egremont Place and Upper Rock Gardens:

- The east bound inside lane proposed to become a shared bus, taxi and cycle lane (4m)
- Footway build out to narrow entrance/exit of Tilstone Street
- Bus lay by in fill just after Park Street and bus stop to be made accessible (Kassel kerbs etc) and extended to accommodate up to 3 buses
- Relocation of existing crossing westwards to improve sight lines and allow for
- bus lane road markings

Central Islands

- Realignment of central islands along the length of Edward Street to ensure adequate lane widths and upgrading of lighting columns where needed.

Starting at junction of Edward Street West bound from Freshfield Road

- Shared bus, taxi and cycle lane (4m up to Upper Rock Gardens and 4.5 meters thereafter) as far as the junction of Edward Street with Pavillion

- Gardens,
- Installation of improved traffic signal technology (“MOVA”) used to give buses priority through junctions,
- Advanced stop lines for cyclists at traffic signalled junctions
- Improvements to pedestrian crossing at junction of Edward Street with Upper Rock Gardens
- Side road raised entry treatments

4. COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT AND CONSULTATION

- 4.1 During the preparation of the bid officers engaged with local bus operators to determine priority areas for funding. Engagement with Brighton and Hove Bus Company has been ongoing since the funding announcement with regular meetings between the BHCC Project Manager and the BHBC Operations Manager throughout the feasibility and initial design stages of these works.
- 4.2 Briefings to update stakeholders on the progress of the Better Bus Areas Programme as a whole have been provided to Buswatch (9th January 2013) and the Brighton and Hove Transport Partnership (26th March 2013).
- 4.3 Engagement meetings have been held on the feasibility and initial design proposals with the CVSF Transport Representative (15th November and 3rd April 2013), Sussex Safety Camera Partnership and Sussex Police (27 February), the Chair of Buswatch (3rd April 2013) and local ward Councillors (8th May and 13th May).
- 4.4 Public consultation took place between 15th May and 25th June 2013. The consultation involved sending out 9004 surveys to residential addresses in the area and 784 surveys being sent out to commercial/business addresses in the area. The survey was also available on-line via the Council’s website consultation portal and following Transport Committee approval to consult and a press release, was covered by The Argus newspaper. Public meetings and exhibitions were advertised on the Better Bus Areas page of the Council website as well as locally by email and direct mail.
- 4.5 Officers have attended the following Residents Association and Local Action Team meetings to present the proposals and answer questions on the proposals:
- Tarnar Area Partnership meeting (15th May 2013)
 - Queens Park Local Action team meeting (22nd May 2013)
 - Albion Hill Residents Association meeting (13th June 2013)
 - A specific meeting was organised and held for residents of Sloane Court, Leach Court and Patchling Lodge (19th June 2013)
- 4.6 Officers offered to attend the meeting of the St James’ Community Action Group on 12th June 2013 to present the scheme proposals and answer questions but were informed by the Chair, on the 29th May, the group had decided against inviting an officer to speak at the meeting.
- 4.7 Public exhibitions of the proposal, staffed by transport officers, have been held at:
- Brighton Youth centre (25th May 2013)

- Dorset Gardens Methodist Church (12th June 2013)

Headline results

- 4.8 1151 responses were received in total, with 297 of these (25.8%) received on-line through the council's consultation portal and 854 (74.2%) as paper survey forms returned by mail or collected at public exhibitions/residents meetings.
- 4.9 A significant majority of respondents were local residents (73%), while 23% stated that they travelled through the area and a further 19% indicated they worked or owned a business in the area.
- 4.10 When asked whether they supported the proposals to give priority to bus users, pedestrians and cyclists as shown in the consultation leaflet, 62.5% (701) respondents supported the proposed changes. The most frequent specific reasons provided for supporting the proposals were:
- Support for the pedestrian and cycling improvements
 - Belief that the proposals would improve safety
 - Support for improvements to the public realm
- 4.11 Of the 37.5% (420) of respondents who did not support the proposals the main reasons stated were:
- That the scheme was a waste of money or the money should be spent elsewhere
 - That Edward Street should be left as it is
 - That the scheme would increase congestion and pollution
 - That the scheme is anti-car
 - That they did not support bus priority/bus lanes
- 4.12 A full analysis of the consultation results is included as Appendix 1.

Additional Correspondence and Longer Responses

- 4.13 A small amount of additional correspondence has been generated as part of this consultation exercise, with some being supportive of the proposals (supporting the prioritisation of sustainable transport and in particular, cycling) and others negative (mainly objecting to the scheme on the grounds that the funding should be spent on improvements to St James St instead).

Summary and Discussion

- 4.14 The results of the consultation suggest a clear majority of respondents are in favour of the proposal. It is clear, however, that a number of respondents have indicated opposition to the changes.
- 4.15 A total of 176 responses stated that the scheme was a waste of money (in particular the rebuilding of the central islands) and that the money should be spent elsewhere.
- 4.16 It is important to note that the central government funding for this Better Bus Area project is specific to Edward Street and as a result may not be spent elsewhere. The relocation of the central islands is necessary to the scheme proposals to ensure that sufficient carriageway widths area accommodated on the westbound lanes and serve the purpose of providing well used, informal, crossing facilities for pedestrians as well as planted areas (both existing and future) to improve the

public realm along the length of the road which was the request of a significant number of those responding to the consultation.

- 4.17 The scheme proposals and predicted outcomes are believed to represent good value for money in terms and have been judged as such by the Department for Transport in granting the funds through a formal bidding process. The benefits arising from the Edward Street proposals are anticipated to be significant and wide ranging. An improvement in both west and eastbound bus journey times is predicted, along with significant modal shift from people travelling by private car to walking, cycling and public transport.
- 4.18 Significant increases in the number of people cycling can also be expected as a result of the improved conditions that would be created for cyclists should the proposals go ahead. The introduction of cycle lanes, slower vehicle speeds, and improved road surface would create a dramatic improvement in the quality of cycle infrastructure on Edward Street.
- 4.19 The combined effect of the above would be a significant reduction in carbon emissions from traffic, a reduction in local air pollution, considerable economic benefit resulting from the improved journey times, as people can increase the amount of time spent undertaking productive tasks instead of travelling and significant health benefits that as more people are enabled to travel using active modes of walking and cycling.
- 4.20 21 responses expressed concern about road width and emergency vehicles and construction traffic.
- 4.21 The creation of bus lanes and reallocation of road space away from general traffic will serve to provide emergency vehicles with a largely traffic free lane in both directions along Edward Street. This will improve accessibility for such vehicles. The general traffic lanes will be of adequate width to accommodate all other traffic.
- 4.22 A number of residents at the public meeting on 19th June expressed a desire to see the crossing at Leach Court remain in current position
- 4.23 It is necessary to the scheme proposals to move the existing crossing outside Leach Court 6 meters eastward on both sides of the road. This move is to accommodate road markings needed to alert drivers turning left out of Park Street of the existence of the bus lane in the nearside lane. The crossing would continue to be a staggered crossing and the move would not increase the distance residents had to walk to access the bus stops on either side of the road.
- 4.24 A small number of respondents both via consultation surveys and through direct correspondence expressed concern that the crossing between John Street and White Street would not serve the change in desire lines from Amex development.
- 4.25 The existing crossing (outside the Job Centre) reflects current desire lines. Whilst there is a proposal in the Edward Street Quarter Planning Brief to create a renewed pedestrian and cyclist access to the Amex site east of this, it is likely to be some years before this can be realised. It is not advisable, at this time, to relocate the crossing to a location where there is no current desire line, putting at

risk those who currently wish to cross at the existing site without having a definite, imminent, timeframe for changes.

- 4.26 9 respondents expressed concern regarding loading and unloading for commercial vehicles and disabled parking along the road
- 4.27 Officers recognise that there is some existing need for loading and unloading along Edward Street for both business and residential purposes. The scheme proposals accommodate a number of locations where existing loading will be unaffected such as between St James Avenue and Upper Rock Gardens. In addition there are parking spaces available in the sides streets which offer potential for loading and unloading for residential purposes. Throughout the ongoing consultation via the advertisement of draft Traffic Regulation Orders officers will investigate the potential for further loading provision where this is identified. Options are available to convert existing parking in side roads for loading or to incorporate designated loading bays at specific locations should they be identified and these would be considered in response to any TRO objections received.
- 4.28 115 respondents have expressed concern that the scheme would lead to increased congestion and traffic displacement to surrounding roads
- 4.29 In order to ensure the impacts of the scheme are well understood, the citywide transport model has been utilised to predict the impact on general traffic both on Edward Street itself and the surrounding road network. The results suggest that the reduction in the capacity on Edward Street, to allow for the Bus & Cycle lanes, can be accommodated without an adverse operational impact for general traffic both on the corridor and in the wider area. The modelling suggests that there would be some displacement of traffic onto parallel routes, however, as the traffic disperses over a number of different routes, the impact will be diluted and that the junctions receiving diverted Edward Street flows would still operate within capacity.

5. FINANCIAL & OTHER IMPLICATIONS:

Financial Implications:

- 5.1 The costs associated with the consultation on and any subsequent implementation of the measures outlined in this report will be largely met from the Better Bus Areas Fund which is external funding provided from the Department for Transport. Some local match funding was required and has been agreed as part of Local Transport Plan (LTP) budget for 2013-14.
- 5.2 Over the remaining year of the project, to the end of the 2013/14 financial year, there is £770k of capital funding (£520k from BBA funding and £250k from LTP) and £200k in revenue funding (all BBA funding) identified specifically for these works.
- 5.3 If the works do not go ahead the BBA funding would need to be returned to the DfT.

Finance Officer Consulted: Name Jeff Coates

Date: 03/07/2013

Legal Implications:

- 5.4 The Council has powers as highway and traffic authority under the relevant legislation to carry out the proposed measures. Any traffic regulation orders necessary to implement the final scheme will need to be advertised and objections considered at a future Environment, Transport and Sustainability Committee meeting in accordance with the relevant procedural regulations and the Council's constitution.
- 5.5 The Council is under a duty to exercise its powers under the Act to secure the safe and convenient movement of traffic and the provision of adequate on and off-street parking facilities. It must also take into account any implications that orders would have for access to premises, local amenity, air quality, public transport provision and any other relevant matters. When considering whether to designate parking places, the Council must consider both the interests of traffic and the interests of owners and occupiers of adjoining property.
- 5.6 In carrying out consultation the Council is under a general duty to ensure that any consultation is fair. This means that consultation must be carried out when proposals are being formulated, that adequate time and information about proposals must be given to consultees to ensure that they can provide a proper response, and that any consultation responses must be properly considered in reaching the decision.
- 5.7 The Council is under a legal duty as a public authority to consider the human rights implications of its actions. Parking and traffic restrictions have the potential to affect the right to respect for family and private life and the right to protection of property. These are qualified rights which means they may be restricted where this is for a legitimate aim, necessary and proportionate

Lawyer Consulted:

Carl Hearsom

Date: 03/07/12

Equalities Implications:

- 5.8 The scheme will be designed in line with industry best practice and guidance to ensure all facilities are fully accessible to all members of society. The scheme should improve conditions for vulnerable road users and has the potential to ease community severance by aiding the development of healthy and sustainable places and communities which will enable children, young people and adults to make more and better use of their local streets.

Sustainability Implications:

- 5.9 The measures outlined in this report will assist in meeting One Planet Living objectives by promoting and encouraging greater use of sustainable transport, and particularly overcome current barriers to walking, cycling, and bus use. It is predicted that significant reductions in travel by private car would result from implementation of the schemes, with people instead choosing to travel by walking, cycling or bus due to their increased attractiveness and viability made

possible through the improvements identified. The scheme will seek to enhance health by encouraging active travel amongst local people and reducing the causes of air pollution along the corridor, namely excessive levels of motorised traffic.

Crime & Disorder Implications:

- 5.10 There are no Crime & Disorder implications arising directly as a result of this report.

Risk and Opportunity Management Implications:

- 5.11 If approval not given at this meeting for consultation it is unlikely that the allocated budget for this scheme will be spent within the current financial year and the funding received from the Department for Transport for this programme will have to be returned. This in turn could have potentially negative impacts for future funding bids to the Department.

There is a risk that the outcome of the advertisement of draft Traffic Regulation Orders will require amendment or complete redesign of some elements if the scheme, however it is hoped any concerns that arise will be alleviated and objections overcome at the detailed design stage, should the scheme move forward to that stage, to produce a scheme that meets the needs of all those upon whom it would impact.

Public Health Implications:

- 5.12 Increasing the number of pedestrians and cyclists and encouraging greater use of public transport will directly lead to improved public health through increasing the use of active modes and therefore the amount of exercise undertaken by local people. Reducing the number of people travelling by private vehicle will also lead to an improvement in air quality which in turn will improve public health.

Corporate / Citywide Implications:

- 5.13 Edward Street is a key route into the City and therefore the citywide transport model is being utilised to fully understand and address any potential impacts on strategic traffic flow. The proposed scheme will assist the Council to meet its strategic objectives and will contribute to the Council's and partners' wider objectives, including those set out in the Corporate Plan and the Sustainable Community Strategy.

Edward Street is proposed as a construction traffic route (eastbound) for traffic serving the development of Royal Sussex County Hospital. Officers have considered the implications of the scheme on traffic flows during this period and consider that they will be negligible in terms of traffic congestion. The scheme proposals will ensure that during the hospital redevelopment bus routes are kept free flowing and that cyclists have increased protection from construction traffic using this route.

6. EVALUATION OF ANY ALTERNATIVE OPTION(S):

6.1 The only other option at this stage would be to discontinue the scheme and return the funds to Department for Transport. This is not considered to be a practical option and would be contrary to the wishes of the majority of the respondents to the public consultation.

7. REASONS FOR REPORT RECOMMENDATIONS

7.1 The results of public consultation have shown that there is a clear majority in favour of the proposed measures.

7.2 To authorise the advertisement of Draft Traffic Regulation Orders for those aspects of the scheme (provision of bus and cycle lanes) which require them in order that the Better Bus Areas programme can progressed to its next stage of implementation.

SUPPORTING DOCUMENTATION

Appendices:

1. BBA Edward Street – Public consultation results report

Documents in Members' Rooms

None

Background Documents

1. BHCC Better Bus Areas Bid

2. Agenda item 76 BHCC Transport Committee: 30th April 2013 – Better Bus Areas Report

