ENVIRONMENT, TRANSPORT & SUSTAINABILITY COMMITTEE	Agenda Item 106 Brighton & Hove City Council

Subject:		**Vogue Gyratory Improvements – TRO Response**
Date of Meeting:		**29th April 2014**
Report of:		**Executive Director Environment, Development & Housing**
Contact Officer:	**Name:**	**Martin Heath** **Tel: 01273 293705**
	Email:	**Martin.Heath@brighton-hove.gov.uk**
Ward(s) affected:		**St Peters & North Laine, Hollingdean & Stanmer**

FOR GENERAL RELEASE

1. SUMMARY AND POLICY CONTEXT:

1.1 The purpose of this report is to address comments and objections to the draft Traffic Regulation Order (TRO). The traffic order outlines the proposed introduction of a bus lane on Lewes Road from the junction with Upper Lewes Road for a distance of 50m in a northerly direction. The bus lane is one element of a proposed junction-wide improvement scheme at the Vogue Gyratory junction that will make it easier and safer for pedestrians and cyclists to manoeuvre through this busy intersection.

1.2 The proposals will also improve access to local bus services by allowing the No.25 University service to access a redesigned bus stop outside the adjacent supermarket. This will improve the frequency of the bus services at this stop whilst maintaining sufficient capacity for existing buses and general traffic using the junction to ensure that journey times will not be adversely affected.

1.3 This report also sets out the costs and timescales for delivering the Vogue Gyratory Improvement scheme and requests approval to proceed to implementation in July 2014.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS:

2.1 That, having taken account of all duly made representations and objections, the Environment, Transport & Sustainability Committee approves as advertised The Brighton & Hove (Lewes Road Area) (Bus Lanes) Order 2006 Amendment No.1 201*.

2.2 That the ETS Committee instructs officers to implement the wider Vogue Gyratory Improvement scheme, as set out in this report.

3. RELEVANT BACKGROUND INFORMATION/CHRONOLOGY OF KEY EVENTS:

3.1 In July 2011 the City Council was successful in bidding for £4.03m funding for the Lewes Road Corridor through the government's Local Sustainable Transport Fund (LSTF). The funding is being used to implement infrastructure measures on Lewes Road and in the surrounding residential areas, as well as a range of initiatives to encourage people to travel more sustainably. A further £2.25m has been committed to the overall project by local partners including Brighton & Hove Bus Company, Brighton & Sussex Universities and Brighton & Hove PCT.

3.2 Following award of the funding and after extensive initial engagement with local residents and businesses, detailed proposals for Lewes Road and the Vogue Gyratory were developed which comprised the following key elements:

1) Bus & Cycle Lanes in both directions on the dual carriageway section of Lewes Road between The Vogue Gyratory and the A27 at Falmer.

2) On-road 2 metre northbound cycle lane through The Vogue Gyratory with improved pedestrian facilities and more efficient traffic lights to aid the flow of traffic. The existing southbound cycle lane would also be widened to 2 metres through the gyratory system.

3.3 Both schemes were subject to extensive public consultation in April / May 2012 where a majority of respondents were supportive of the proposals. Further details about this consultation are included later in this section under the heading 'Community Engagement and Consultation'.

3.4 Following the consultations and during the subsequent detailed design process, the citywide transport model was utilised to fully understand the wider impacts of both schemes and to predict the impact on journey times for general traffic and buses. The results of this modelling suggested that introducing the bus and cycle lane scheme on Lewes Road would not result in significant increases in journey times for general traffic.

3.5 The Lewes Road scheme was subsequently approved by committee in November 2012 and has now been implemented in full. Early monitoring results suggest that the scheme has improved bus journey times and that the impacts on general traffic have been minimised.

3.6 However, the detailed modelling undertaken on the Vogue Gyratory proposals suggested an unacceptable level of additional delay would likely occur for northbound traffic on Lewes Road south of the Vogue Gyratory. This is particularly relevant as there is insufficient space to provide any form of bus priority in this location and therefore bus journey times would be severely affected, negating the improvements implemented on the dual carriageway section to the north.

3.7 Officers therefore recommended that further design work was required, in conjunction with key stakeholders, to ensure that the desired benefits for buses, cyclists and pedestrians do not create unreasonable disbenefits for other users. Traffic Orders and detailed plans for the Vogue Gyratory were therefore not taken forward and it was agreed that revised proposals will be presented at a future meeting of the Committee before Traffic Regulation Orders are published.

Revised Scheme

3.8 On 14th January 2014, the Environment, Transport and Sustainability Committee agreed to move forward with the revised scheme for the Vogue Gyratory as set out below. Plans of the existing layout and the revised scheme proposal are included in **Appendix 1 and 2.** A diagram showing a cross-section of the proposal is included in **Appendix 3.**

3.9 The key elements of the revised proposal include the following:

Simplification of the existing complex layout, making the junction safer and more legible for all users

Continuous 2 metre wide northbound cycle lane through the Gyratory system

Improvements to the Sainsbury's bus stop through introduction of a 'floating bus stop' and larger bus shelter, as successfully used in the Lewes Road Scheme. This will allow the No.25 bendy buses to call at this stop where currently they are unable to gain access.

Pedestrian improvements across the Sainsbury's car park entrance in the form of a raised area to give pedestrians priority over traffic emerging from the car park

Changes to the kerb alignments at the entrance and exits to the Gyratory in order to provide adequate space for cyclists and vehicles to move through the junction without coming into conflict or causing delay

Improved and simplified pedestrian crossings

Replacement traffic signals to improve efficiency and traffic flow using up-to-date technology and linking the signals with the new signals on Lewes Road to maximise traffic flow throughout the area

Advanced green phases for cyclists at traffic lights, providing a 3 second head start to reduce conflict

3.10 The key difference between the revised proposal and the original is the omission of the cycle priority traffic signals at the left turn into Hollingdean Road for northbound traffic. The transport modelling suggested that this element, in conjunction with the required reduction in carriageway and revised signal timings, was the key factor in reducing capacity and therefore the predicted increase in journey times for buses and general traffic.

3.11 Removal of this element means that a possible conflict point remains for cyclists and general traffic at this location but that the overall capacity of the junction would be maintained at a reasonable level. This conflict point exists under the current layout and through good design and use of coloured surfacing and clear road markings it is considered that the conflict can be managed under the new proposal. The accident record for this location will need to be monitored following implementation to ensure there are no specific issues.

3.12 Despite the omission of the cycle priority traffic signals outlined above, the improvements still represent a significant improvement for cyclists, general traffic and buses. Reductions in the number of accidents taking place can be expected as well as further increases in the number of people cycling due to the vastly improved conditions that would result.

Traffic Flow Impact Assessment

3.13 Traffic modelling is being carried out on the proposed layout. Whilst this will provide an indication of the effects of the proposals on queuing and delay, the actual performance of the junction will only be determined once the scheme is in place and signal timings have had an opportunity to be optimised.

3.14 The junction currently functions under the control of two traffic signal controllers and the linking between these is poor. In the proposed new layout the junction will be operated by a single controller and will be more efficient, as it will allow for the computer program that controls timings to be operated under MOVA (microprocessor optimised vehicle actuation). Experience of the effectiveness of this controller has shown that reductions in delays of up to 13% can be achieved, compared to other vehicle actuated systems such as the one currently in use.

3.15 Whilst no change in vehicle demand is envisaged, the realignment of the carriageways through the junction will improve flow and lane discipline, reduce the space available for excessive speeds to develop and reduce the crossing distances for pedestrian, all of which will also improve junction performance.

Community Engagement and Consultation

3.16 An initial public consultation was held over a 6 week period in November and December 2011 to inform people about the award of the funding and gather local opinion on the transport issues that exist in the area. Further, more detailed public consultation was then undertaken over a further 6 week period in April 2012 on plans for the Vogue Gyratory and Lewes Road which involved as many local partners and stakeholders as possible.

3.17 Information leaflets and questionnaires were mailed to 31,190 residential and business addresses and a further 1000 consultation packs were sent to random city-wide addresses. A further 2069 packs were delivered to Brighton University who have sites and Halls of Residence in the area and similarly 3356 were delivered to Sussex University.

3.18 In addition to the direct mail-out, numerous exhibitions were held in local community centres and other venues throughout April and May 2012 and a further four exhibitions were held at University sites.

3.19 4166 responses to the consultation were received in total. A significant majority of respondents were local residents (82%), while 16% indicated they work in the area and 7% were students. 65% (3534) of respondents supported the proposed changes to the Vogue Gyratory.

3.20 The results of the consultation suggest a clear majority of respondents are in favour of the original proposals for the Vogue Gyratory. Given that the plans have not changed significantly, and the issues raised by local people in relation to the existing Vogue Gyratory layout still exist, it is considered that the results of the previous consultation will still be applicable to this revised proposal.

4. STATUTORY CONSULTATION

4.1 The draft Traffic Regulation Order (TRO) was advertised on 28th February 2014 with the closing date for comments and objections on 21st March 2014.

4.2 The Ward Councillors for the areas were consulted, as were the statutory consultees such as the Emergency Services.

4.3 Notices were put on street for 26th February 2014 which outlined the proposal and after a week any missing notices on-street were replaced. The notice was also published in The Argus newspaper. Detailed plans and the Traffic Regulation Order were available to view at Hove Library, Jubilee Library, the City Direct Offices at Bartholomew House and Hove Town Hall. A plan detailing the proposals is included in **Appendix 2.**

4.4 The documents were also available to view and to respond to directly on the Council website.

4.5 In total, three items of correspondence were received in relation to the TRO. All three items objected to the introduction of the bus lane and the details have been summarised in Table 1.

Representations	Object / Support	Contents
1. Resident	Objection	• Against the introduction of a bus lane as it will result in the loss of one lane for general traffic at a busy and overcrowded junction
2. Resident	Objection	• Against the introduction of a bus lane as it will result in only one lane being available for traffic going northbound or turning right up Bear Road
3. Business	Objection	• Concerned that the bus lane will cause confusion for drivers wanting to enter the supermarket entrance and may obstruct visibility • Considers that the concerns could be alleviated if appropriate directional signage and line marking was installed.

Table 1 – Summary of objections

4.6 In response to the objections received from residents, it is understood that the residents may have misunderstood the proposed design and how it will operate. The proposals will not reduce the number of operational lanes available for general traffic at any of the sets of traffic signals and therefore the capacity of the junction will not be affected. This has been verified by evaluation within the City-wide Transport Model which is being revised to take into account the new proposals.

4.7 Officers met with representatives from the business objector prior to receiving their objection. At the meeting they raised their concerns about the visibility of their entrance for their customers and it was agreed that the objector would submit proposals for improved direction signs for the Council to consider as part of the scheme. Officers will assess any proposal received, along with any others received by other businesses in the area, and will incorporate additional signage as appropriate. The proposals include an overhaul and review of all traffic signs at the junction, with rationalisation and reduction where possible.

4.8 Officers are developing a further consultation programme with all business and residential frontages to ensure that the final detailed design does not impact upon their accessibility to premises, both during construction and after the construction is completed.

Conclusion

4.9 Having considered the objections raised, Members are asked to approve The Brighton & Hove (Lewes Road Area) (Bus Lanes) Order 2006 Amendment No.1 201* as advertised and to agree to the implementation of the Vogue Gyratory Improvement scheme as referred to in this report.

5. FINANCIAL & OTHER IMPLICATIONS:

Financial Implications:

5.1 Detailed costing is currently in progress and the total cost of the project is estimated to be £750,000. Of this, approximately £650,000 will be funded from the Local Transport Plan budget. A further £70,000 will be funded for the Better Bus Accessibility project and a further £30,000 will be funded from s106 contributions.

Finance Officer Consulted: Jeff Coates *Date: 15/04/14*

Legal Implications:

5.2 The Traffic Regulation Order has been advertised in accordance with the Local Authorities' Traffic Orders (Procedure) (England and Wales) Regulations 1996. Any person may object to an order. As there are unresolved objections these are now referred to this meeting for consideration.

There are no human rights implications to draw to Members' attention.

Lawyer Consulted:Hilary Woodward *Date: 16/04/14*

Equalities Implications:

5.3 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.

Sustainability Implications:

5.4 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 scheme, with people instead choosing to travel by walking, cycling or bus due to their increased attractiveness and viability made possible through the improvements identified.

5.5 The scheme will seek to enhance health by encouraging active travel amongst local people and reducing the causes of air pollution in the area, namely excessive levels of motorised traffic.

Risk and Opportunity Management Implications:

5.6 Longer term risks include the potential for the project costs to exceed the available budget and the risk of any identified enhancements having unforeseen negative consequences when implemented. The latter risk has been mitigated by a careful design process in the first instance, and thorough extensive consultation with end users.

Public Health Implications:

5.7 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.

SUPPORTING DOCUMENTATION

Appendices:

1. Vogue Gyratory - Existing junction layout
2. Vogue Gyratory - Proposed junction layout
3. Example cross-section drawings

Documents in Members' Rooms

None

Background Documents

None