

Single Member Cabinet Decision

Executive
Forward Plan
Reference

E3209

Rule 16 - Social Distancing and Active Travel Proposals

Decision maker/s	Cllr Dine Romero, Council Leader, Cllr Richard Samuel, Cabinet Member for Resources, Cllr Neil Butters and Cllr Joanna Wright, Cabinet Members for Transport
The Issue	To support the need, in light of the continued Covid 19 pandemic, to social distance and to increase the space allocated to cycling and walking to allow active travel it is recognised that there is a need to reconsider urgently how the available road space is used. This may include using a number of different methods and processes, from temporary use of cones, barriers and signage to the implementation of experimental traffic schemes, all using the existing powers held by the Highway Authority.
Decision Date	5th June 2020
The decision	<p>The Cabinet Members decided to:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">1.1 agree to the principle of the reallocation of road space and access restrictions, both to encourage active travel and to enable social distancing in in a form that is appropriate for the location in areas across Bath and North East Somerset;1.2 recognise and agree to the principle of, where strictly necessary, the removal of parking spaces to deliver the schemes;1.3 approve the incorporation of Social Distancing and Active Travel Measures as a new grant funded scheme into the Councils provisional Capital programme.1.4 delegate authority to the relevant Director, in consultation with the Cabinet Members for Transport, the decisions to agree and to proceed with any relevant legal processes to ensure the delivery of the schemes as developed;1.5 support the development and adoption of a reviewable plan setting out the consultation and review processes for all temporary and experimental schemes; and1.6 consider the Equalities Impact Assessment (EqIA)
Rationale for decision	<p>The need to pursue highway interventions and social distancing measures proposed in light of the Covid-19 crisis that has had a significant impact on the lives of many UK citizens.</p> <p>The highway interventions and social distancing measures also</p>

support the priorities as set out within the Corporate Strategy and recognises that during the period of the pandemic the key outcomes have become even more critical as all Council services have worked together to protect residents and visitors.

During the lockdown period, the average traffic levels within Bath and North East Somerset were reduced by over 60%. This allowed people to move around the city, when appropriate such as for exercise or for key working, in a different way. Significant increases in cycling and walking were seen, transforming the local environment and using the road space in a new, socially distanced and different way than normal. Increases in these behaviours are required to achieve the reduction in CO₂ necessary to deliver on the Council climate declaration to achieve carbon neutrality by 2030.

Additionally, the Council has received significant correspondence from residents that have seen a benefit in the reduced levels of traffic and do not want to go back to high levels of congestion and poor air quality as the lockdown period ends.

The Secretary of State for Transport further highlighted the need to consider how road space is used when stating “Local authorities in areas with high levels of public transport use should take measures to reallocate road space to people walking and cycling, both to encourage active travel and to enable social distancing during restart (social distancing in this context primarily refers to the need for people to stay 2 metres apart where possible when outdoors). Local authorities where public transport use is low should be considering all possible measures. Traffic signs may be needed to inform pedestrians, cyclists and drivers of changes to road layouts, particularly where temporary widening is in place.”

Furthermore, active travel methods have significant benefits to the health of the general population, reducing obesity levels, improving mental health and wellbeing as well as reducing the impact of Covid 19. Furthermore evidence suggests that areas that are based around active travel have lasting economic benefits.

Interventions will be considered are wide ranging and each location will be considered both in isolation and as part of the longer term wider strategic options to reduce the impact of motor vehicles on residents and visitors. These include:

- a) Installing ‘pop-up’ cycle facilities
- b) Using cones and barriers: to widen footways along lengths of road,
- c) Encouraging walking and cycling to school
- d) Reducing speed limits
- e) Introducing pedestrian and cycle zones

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> f) Modal filters; closing roads to motor traffic, g) Providing additional cycle parking facilities h) Changes to junction design to accommodate more cyclists i) 'whole-route' approaches to create corridors for buses, cycles and access only j) Identifying and bringing forward permanent schemes already planned <p>All schemes will be monitored and reviewed to ensure that they are achieving the outcomes necessary to alleviate social distancing issues and/or active travel benefits. Where schemes are not achieving the outcomes necessary or where the community provide feedback to how they can be improved they may be removed or altered accordingly.</p> <p>This decision is to be made under Part 4B Rule 16 of the Council's Constitution as an urgent decision. This matter is urgent because the Council needs to implement social distancing schemes to protect the health and wellbeing of the residents and visitors to Bath and North East Somerset in light of the Covid19 pandemic.</p>
<p>Financial and budget implications</p>	<p>Resources implications for each scheme will be considered based on the final proposals agreed by the cabinet members.</p> <p>The loss of parking spaces may have a financial impact on the Council but this will vary by scheme and location. Therefore each scheme assessment will identify and recognise any potential loss and this will be noted as part of the decision for agreement with the Cabinet Member.</p> <p>In the short term, funding for development of schemes has been identified and reallocated from the Transport Improvement Block funding and is therefore already within existing budgets. Schemes included within the Transport Improvement Block funding that will not be completed due to funding being reallocated will be included within the funding in financial year 2021/22.</p> <p>Further funding for the development and implementation of active travel schemes is expected to become available as part of the Central Government £250m emergency active travel fund via WECA (subject to confirmation).</p>
<p>Issues considered</p>	<p>Customer Focus; Sustainability; Property; Corporate; Other Legal Considerations</p>
<p>Consultation undertaken</p>	<p>Policy Development & Scrutiny Chair; Section 151 Finance Officer; Chief Executive; Monitoring Officer</p>
<p>How consultation</p>	<p>By email and telephone and skype meetings</p>

was carried out	
Other options considered	Not applicable
Declaration of interest by Cabinet Member(s) for decision:	None
Any conflict of interest declared by anyone who is consulted by a Member taking the decision:	None

Name and Signature of Decision Maker/s	
Date of Signature	

This decision is NOT subject to Call-in