


Key Decision Report

Decision maker and date of Leadership Team meeting or (in the case of individual Lead Member or Executive Director decisions) the earliest date the decision will be taken	Cllr Johnny Thalassites, Lead Member for Planning and Transport Date of report: 16 July 2020 Forward Plan reference: KD05659/20/T/A	 THE ROYAL BOROUGH OF KENSINGTON AND CHELSEA
Report title	TRANSPORT MEASURES TO SUPPORT RECOVERY FROM COVID-19 LOCKDOWN	
Reporting officer	Mark Chetwynd, Chief Transport Policy Officer	
Key decision	Yes	
Access to information classification	Public	
Wards	All	

1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 1.1. This report presents the Council's Active Travel Plan, which is its primary response to the transport challenges created by Covid-19. With social distancing likely to continue for many months and with the consequent substantial impact on public transport capacity in the Borough, there is a need to ensure that walking and cycling in the Borough are safe and viable options for as many people as possible.
- 1.2. The Active Travel Plan contains a combination of temporary schemes and schemes that the Council had been planning to introduce, but with an accelerated delivery programme to respond to the easing of lockdown. All of the projects in the Plan are to be introduced as a matter of urgency, in much less time than would normally be required, in line with clear Government guidance.
- 1.3. The Active Travel Plan will form part of the Council's efforts to support the recovery of the local economy and to consolidate some of the air quality benefits that have been observed since lockdown began.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 2.1. The Lead Member is recommended to:
 - i. Approve the funded contents of the Active Travel Plan set out in Table 1;

- ii. Agree to receive and to spend £184,534 of London Streetspace Plan funding from Transport for London (TfL) and £100,000 of Emergency Active Travel Fund money from the Department for Transport (DfT) on measures contained in the Active Travel Plan;
- iii. Approve spending of £320,000 of Council capital funding to enable delivery of elements of the Active Travel Plan that will not be funded by TfL or DfT;
- iv. Delegate authority to the Executive Director of Environment and Communities, to approve the details of individual schemes in the Active Travel Plan;
- v. Delegate authority to the Executive Director of Environment and Communities, in consultation with the Lead Member for Planning and Transport to make changes to the Active Travel Plan if required, to respond to changing circumstances and any new funding opportunities; and,
- vi. Delegate authority to the Executive Director of Environment and Communities, in consultation with the Lead Member for Planning and Transport to bid for and receive additional income from future rounds of TfL and DfT funding streams, consistent with the Active Travel Plan objectives.

3. REASONS FOR DECISION

- 3.1. The Covid-19 public health emergency has had a profound impact on how people travel in London. Recent Government guidance makes clear that there is a pressing need to ensure that the massive reduction in public transport capacity does not result in a large increase in car use, congestion and air and noise pollution. Councils must ensure that the recovery of businesses is not undermined because their employees and customers are unable to travel.

4. BACKGROUND

- 4.1. Travel patterns in London have changed dramatically since lockdown. Public transport capacity has been reduced to around 15 per cent of pre-lockdown levels, but until now has generally been adequate to meet the greatly reduced passenger demand during the Covid-19 lockdown. Londoners have made fewer, shorter trips and used other modes of transport. Road traffic levels have reduced but cycling trips in particular have increased dramatically. As lockdown restrictions are lifted, demand to travel is rising. The Government's relaxation of the social distancing requirement to 1 metre will increase public transport capacity but probably to no more than around 30 per cent of pre-lockdown levels.
- 4.2. It is expected that London will need to manage with huge reductions in public transport capacity for many months. The long-term consequences for peoples' travel choices are unknown, but it seems unlikely that forecasts for public transport demand that were made before Covid-19 will be realised for many years.

- 4.3. On 9 May, the Government issued statutory guidance on how local authorities should respond to the enormous changes in travel behaviour that were created by Covid-19. This guidance, updated on 23 May, amended existing statutory guidance on local councils' Network Management Duty to "secure the expeditious movement of traffic", which was created by the Traffic Management Act 2004.
- 4.4. The guidance note made very clear that the Government expects to see major changes to roads that would support social distancing and an increase in walking and cycling as we come out of lockdown. The guidance was equally clear that plans should be delivered urgently: "Measures should be taken as swiftly as possible, and in any event within weeks, given the urgent need to change travel habits before the restart takes full effect."
- 4.5. There is no time limit on this updated guidance but it will be reviewed within three months of publication. The DfT also announced in May an Emergency Active Travel Fund, from which it allocated £50,000 to the Council on 26 June, to introduce such changes, and a further £50,000 on 16 July. A larger funding stream will be made available later this year, with allocations to councils linked to performance in spending initial allocations. The DfT letter made it a condition of funding that plans would reallocate road space to walking and cycling; it noted that "Anything that does not meaningfully alter the status quo on the road will not be funded."
- 4.6. In addition, TfL announced a £45m London Streetspace Plan (LSP) to which London boroughs would be able to apply for money to support measures falling into three specific categories:
- strategic cycle routes using temporary materials;
 - reallocation of road space where crowding is an issue, such as town centres, interchanges and key hubs; and,
 - low traffic neighbourhoods on borough roads to give space and security for local walking and cycling, and an enhanced ability to maintain social distancing.
- 4.7. This LSP replaces the Local Implementation Plan (LIP), which for many years has been the main source of revenue and capital funding to London boroughs from TfL. The Council had been informed in December 2019 that it would receive an allocation of £1,701K LIP funding for 2020/21, to be spent on a wide range of transport projects. All of this funding has been withdrawn, and therefore most of the projects have been suspended. The LSP includes some provision for boroughs to apply for sunk costs that they would have funded through their LIP allocations.

5. PROPOSAL AND ISSUES

- 5.1. Officers have produced an Active Travel Plan comprising 16 workstreams. This should be considered a working document that will evolve over time, because:
- The Council needs to be able to consider additional suggestions and requests made by residents, businesses, and ward councillors;

- Some schemes may be found to be impractical for delivery within the period of the current LSP funding;
- Some schemes are not yet fully costed and may exceed the cost of the funding allocation from DfT and TfL

5.2. The Plan described in Table 1 below forms the basis of the funding applications that officers made to DfT and TfL. The table indicates which items have been successful in attracting DfT or TfL funding.

Table 1 Active Travel Plan summary

Description	Cost estimate	Timescales	Ward	Funded?
Portobello Road closure to motor traffic Westbourne Grove to Cambridge Gardens (Mondays to Saturdays)	£15,000	Implemented 8 June 2020 for up to 18 months	Colville	Yes, DfT
Portobello Road closure to motor traffic Cambridge Gardens to Golborne Road (Fridays and Saturdays)	£5,000	Expected mid-July for up to 18 months	Golborne	Yes, TfL
Pavilion Road closure to motor traffic Between Cadogan Gardens south and north arms	£1,000	Implemented 1 June for up to 18 months	Brompton & Hans Town	Yes, DfT
Kensington High Street light segregation cycle lanes using traffic wands between LBHF and WCC boundaries	£75,000	August 2020 for up to 18 months	Abingdon, Campden, Holland, Queen's Gate	Yes, TfL*
Temporary pavement widenings and social distancing signs (1) Notting Hill Gate Tube south side; High Street	£39,500	Implemented mid-June for up to three months	Campden, Queen's Gate, Stanley	Partly, DfT (£24k)

Kensington Tube; King's Road Waitrose				
Temporary pavement widenings (2) Tbc but including Notting Hill Gate Tube north side	£60,000	Implemented from late June and responding to requests for up to two months	Pembridge, tbc	No
Cycle parking Up to 15 bike hangars in residential streets plus "toast racks" in town centres and destinations	£133,000	From July, duration to be reviewed	Boroughwide	Partly, RBKC (£44k)
School Streets at up to 10 locations - See appendix (8 confirmed by mid-July)	£56,000	From September for up to 18 months	Boroughwide	Yes, TfL
20mph speed limit on all borough roads	£276,000	Implementation September to November 2020	Boroughwide	Yes, RBKC
Cycleway: Pembridge Square to Meanwhile Gardens	£8,800	Implemented except wayfinding	Pembridge, Colville, Golborne	No
Cycleway: Kensington High Street to Notting Hill	£96,800	tbc	Holland, Norland, Notting Dale	No
Cycleway: Norland Road to Pembridge Crescent	£459,580	tbc	Norland, Colville, Pembridge	No
Chelsea Bridge Road cycle lane Upgrade painted bike lane to light segregation with traffic wands and extend to	£32,000	August 2020	Royal Hospital	Yes, DfT and TfL*

join existing cycle routes at Turk's Row and Chelsea Bridge.				
Queen's Gate cycle lane (tbc) Floated parking cycle lane to join cycle routes on Kensington Road and Harrington Road/Stanhope Gardens	£73,000	August 2020 Duration to be reviewed.	Brompton and Hans Town, Courtfield, Queen's Gate	Yes, DfT and TfL *
Bute Street closure to motor traffic	£4,070	4 July to 3rd October	Brompton & Hans Town, Courtfield	Yes, TfL
Try Before You Bike scheme	£37,400	tbc	Boroughwide	No

**subject to approval of designs*

- 5.3. Officers also bid to TfL for funds to monitor traffic levels at seven sites across the borough up to October 2020. These traffic counters have already begun collecting data, and by mid-June they showed that motor traffic volumes were at between 70 and 90 percent of pre-lockdown levels. This funding request was rejected by TfL.
- 5.4. In the light of TfL's funding decisions, officers advise that some elements of the Active Travel Plan will need to be postponed until such time as alternative funding is found. However, given the importance of the whole-borough 20mph limit to supporting walking and cycling across the whole borough, officers recommend that this scheme be funded using existing Council capital highways improvement budgets, up to a value of £276,000.
- 5.5. In addition, officers recommend that £44,000 of Council highways improvement budgets be set aside to meet the strong demand for residential cycle parking. All of the other schemes that have not received funding approval from TfL or DfT will have to be postponed.
- 5.6. The schemes forming the Active Travel Plan are at different stages of development, with some already well into the design phase and others still awaiting designs. Officers will have more certainty about delivery timescales over the coming weeks but expect that the bulk of the Active Travel Plan will be implemented by the end of August. The boroughwide 20mph speed limit will necessarily take longer to implement.

- 5.7. The schemes in Portobello Road, Pavilion Road and Bute Street are specifically intended to support the recovery of economic activity in these areas. In addition, as part of a new Summer Trading Policy for businesses, transport officers are working with colleagues across the Council to enable premises to place additional tables and chairs on the highway, for instance by converting parking spaces to temporary dining areas.

6. OPTIONS AND ANALYSIS

- 6.1. The Active Travel Plan proposed in this report is a package of several different kinds of intervention at various different locations, whereby the common theme is that officers believe they would help the Council to meet one or more of its objectives to enable more walking and cycling, support local economic recovery, and aid social distancing. Officers have assessed the options and the interventions listed are ones that can be implemented at pace to have the biggest impact, quickly. However, the current proposals form the most practical and appropriate interventions at this time. And as noted in Paragraph 5.1 above, officers consider the Active Travel Plan as a working document, the precise contents of which may need to change over time in response to changing circumstances.

- 6.2. Officers have assessed the options and the interventions listed are ones that can be implemented at pace to have the biggest impact, quickly. In the current circumstances, a Do-Nothing option is not viable and would not meet the needs of residents and businesses.

7. CONSULTATION AND COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

- 7.1. Officers are keenly aware that the pressure from Government, residents and businesses for the Council to implement schemes quickly, is not consistent with the Council's wish and commitment to consult extensively in advance of all parts of the Plan. There simply is not time to do so. Some of the interventions in the Plan require an element of statutory consultation and officers will ensure that such consultation is carried out – for example, in relation to consulting statutory consultees about road closures.
- 7.2. There will also be opportunities for residents and businesses formally to give their views to the Council on schemes that are introduced under experimental traffic orders, such as the boroughwide 20mph scheme, and some of the road closures.
- 7.3. Finally, the Council is already taking opportunities to inform and engage local communities on its plans, using existing networks. For example, we have begun canvassing the views of ward councillors, amenity societies, businesses and local residents' associations on the concept of cycle lanes in Kensington High Street, even before we commissioned a design for the scheme. We thank these groups for their participation and for recognising the need to move at a fast pace.
- 7.4. It is important to stress that the majority of the proposals contained in the Active Travel Plan are designed to be introduced quickly but also on a temporary basis. Should it later be considered appropriate to make any temporary schemes

permanent, after the current public health crisis has passed, the Council would consult local people before doing so.

8. HUMAN RESOURCES AND EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS

8.1. Because the Active Travel Plan contains a range of different types of intervention, and because some of these interventions are still to be designed, it is not possible at this stage to produce a full Equality Impact Assessment for this decision report. Rather, it is proposed that in delegating approval of individual schemes to the Executive Director of Environment and Communities, the Lead Member should ask the Executive Director to provide assurance that all relevant equalities implications have been identified and addressed.

8.2. An initial scoping exercise suggests that the key areas in which equalities issues might arise, will relate to those interventions that include restrictions on vehicle access, and the ways that these might impact upon:

a) people with reduced mobility and

b) older people.

In Portobello Road, for example, the traffic orders, signs and the barriers have been designed to ensure that Blue Badge holders are still able to access the restricted sections of road, in a motor vehicle. The design of the segregated cycle lanes will also need to ensure that adequate provision is made for access by people who find it difficult to walk for significant distances.

8.3. Officers do not expect that any of the interventions currently included in the Active Travel Plan will have an impact on any of the other protected characteristics (gender reassignment, marriage/civil partnership, pregnancy/maternity, race, religion, sex or sexual orientation).

8.4. The principal Human Resources implication of the Active Travel Plan will be the impact that it has on the ability of Council staff to travel to and from work. A cycle route along Kensington High Street, connected to existing and new north-south Cycleways, should be of great utility to many staff.

9. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

9.1. The Director of Law advises that regard must be had to the Network Management Duty contained in section 16 of the Traffic Management Act 2004 (and any statutory guidance relating to it) as well as to the Public Sector Equality Duty contained in section 149 of the Equality Act 2010. Any traffic orders made by the Council will need to be in accordance with The Road Traffic (Temporary Restrictions) Procedure Regulations 1992 and The Local Authorities' Traffic Orders (Procedure) (England and Wales) Regulations 1996 (both of which have been temporarily amended in terms of publicity requirements by The Traffic Orders Procedure (Coronavirus) (Amendment) (England) Regulations 2020).

10. FINANCIAL, PROPERTY, IT AND ANY OTHER RESOURCES IMPLICATIONS

- 10.1. The coronavirus pandemic has had a profound impact on TfL's financial position leading to the withdrawal of the agreed £1.701m LIP allocation to RBKC for 2020/21. Schemes expected to be funded by LIP have been paused or cancelled in many cases. The Council has received confirmation that we will receive £346,000 from TfL to cover sunk costs where expenditure was already irreversibly committed before the decision to withdraw the agreed LIP funding was announced.
- 10.2. The Council has secured new funding from TfL (LSP) to the value of £184,534 and from DfT to the value of £100,000 as outlined within the report to fund elements of the Active Travel Plan as detailed in Table 1. Officers will continue to actively pursue all opportunities to secure further funding for initiatives in the borough that will benefit residents and businesses.
- 10.3. The Council will not receive any TfL funding to finance the planned boroughwide 20mph scheme (£276,000) or to deliver additional residential cycle parking (£44,000). However, alternative funding has been identified within the Highways Improvements capital programme budget to deliver these initiatives in 2020/21, at a combined cost of £320,000.

**Amanda Reid, Director of Planning and Place
and
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Local Government Act 1972 (as amended) – Background papers used in the preparation of this report. None

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Appendix 1

Possible locations for Healthy School Streets

Wetherby Kensington School, Wetherby Gardens	-	Courtfield
Knightsbridge School, Lennox Gardens	-	Brompton and Hans Town
Holy Trinity School, Cadogan Gardens	-	Royal Hospital
Bousfield School, South Bolton Gardens	-	Redcliffe
Chelsea Academy, Burnaby Street	-	Chelsea Riverside
Hill House School, Hans Street	-	Brompton and Hans Town
Bevington School, Bevington Road	-	Golborne
Instituto Espanol, Portobello Road OR St. Lawrence Terrace	-	Golborne