

STREETS AND WALKWAYS SUB (PLANNING AND TRANSPORTATION) COMMITTEE

Friday, 10 September 2021

Minutes of the meeting of the Streets and Walkways Sub (Planning and Transportation) Committee held at Committee Room 3 - 2nd Floor West Wing, Guildhall on Friday, 10 September 2021 at 10.30 am

Present

Members:

Graham Packham (Chairman)
Shravan Joshi (Deputy Chairman)
Randall Anderson
Peter Bennett
Marianne Fredericks
Sheriff Christopher Hayward
Deputy Jamie Ingham Clark
Oliver Sells QC
Deputy Barbara Newman (Ex-Officio Member)

Officers:

Ian Hughes	-	Department of the Built Environment
Olumayowa Obisesan	-	
Gillian Howard	-	
Leah Coburn	-	
Shani Annand-Baron	-	
Kristian Turner	-	
Patrick Hegarty	-	Open Spaces Department
Tom Noble	-	
Maria Herrera	-	
Emmanuel Ojugo	-	

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies were received from Deputy Alastair Moss, William Upton QC, and Paul Martinelli.

2. MEMBERS' DECLARATIONS UNDER THE CODE OF CONDUCT IN RESPECT OF ITEMS ON THE AGENDA

There were no declarations.

3. MINUTES

A Member made a correction to the list of Apologies received in respect of the meeting of 08 July 2021.

RESOLVED – That the minutes of the meeting held on 08 July 2021 be agreed as a correct record, subject to a single correction to the list of Apologies.

4. **BANK JUNCTION IMPROVEMENTS: ALL CHANGE AT BANK**

The Sub Committee heard a presentation on the 'All Change at Bank' project covering an outline of the proposals as consulted; the consultation survey data; the overall consultation themes with Officer comments and responses; and the recommendations.

Members noted that the written comments of local businesses and organisations submitted independently of the survey were shown in Appendix 8.

A Member expressed the view that safety had not come through strongly in the presentation and asked for further clarification on the project's safety implications, particularly in respect of pedestrians and cyclists sharing the road with buses.

Members heard that traffic tended to slow down when travelling along narrower carriageways, and that the widening of pavements and removal of excess carriageway was likely to result in improved safety for pedestrians and cyclists, with cyclist traffic light sequences set to enhance the safety of cyclists.

It was pointed out that some licensed premises in the Bank junction area had been denied an outdoor seating licence for safety reasons.

A Member asked what had happened to previous proposals for a taxi (black cab) rank outside or opposite The Ned (to be funded by The Ned) and whether those plans had been taken forward. The Member expressed support for a taxi rank at The Ned for safety reasons.

Members heard that those proposals were still on the table and had been costed out. Those proposals had been sent to The Ned and no response had yet been received from The Ned on those specific proposals, though the taxi rank issue had been raised via the current proposed project. The pandemic was likely to have affected any response.

A Member sought clarification on whether, given Bank junction's importance on the Lord Mayor's Show ceremonial route, the Pageantmaster for the Lord Mayor's Show had been consulted on the changes - particularly in respect of the narrowing of Princes Street and the impact of that on the spectacle of the Lord Mayor's Show.

Members heard that the Pageantmaster had been consulted on the changes in respect of the ceremonial route and that some changes had been made in the light of that consultation, including a reduced narrowing of Princes Street. The relevant interested parties were confident that the ceremonial route should work well with the new proposals.

A Member sought clarification on whether there were enough survey responses for each mode to result in a statistically significant response, and sought clarification on the methodology.

Members heard that the survey response rate had not been representative of expectations (in terms of modal use), with relatively low response rates from some users including bus passengers and service vehicle drivers. The objective had been to set out views taking into account the large volume of responses from taxi drivers and passengers. Members heard that consideration had been given to weighting the responses to reflect modal use, but that such weighting had been discarded as it was felt that it would over-complicate the analysis and generate uncertainty.

A Member commented that the general trend was to be supportive of the proposed changes to the road pattern. The Member raised concerns around the credibility of the way taxi driver and passenger responses have been dealt with, commenting that there were safety implications around taxis (black cabs) being allowed through the changed Bank junction area arrangements. Members heard that allowing taxis (black cabs) through the Bank junction area was a significant decision and that they accounted for a large proportion of the traffic in the Bank junction area (with varying levels of occupancy). It was recommended that the issue of taxis (black cabs) being allowed through the Bank junction area be handled as a separate issue.

A Member commented that the views of taxi (black cab) drivers and users were important, and queried the blocking out of King William Street. The Member expressed the view that extensions of restrictions into the evening and further extensions were unwelcome given that the economy of the area appeared to be picking up well, and that there appeared to be a demand for taxis (black cabs) in the evening in the area.

In response to a Member's question on whether taxi volumes had been modelled – and the impact of that on risk mitigation – the Sub Committee heard that taxi (black cab) vehicle volumes had been modelled at Poultry, Cornhill and King William St as part of the proposals within the last 12 months. Traffic modelling was based on 2019 traffic flows, and there has been a significant drop in the number of licensed London taxi vehicles (from 18K in 2019 to 13K in late 2020) so it might not be appropriate to take that modelling forward given the uncertainty around future traffic flows. Implications around access and the sense of place were also being taken into account, and the current data was largely pre-pandemic.

A Member pointed out that the London hackney carriage trade viewed itself as a public transport provider and therefore viewed itself as entitled to be treated as such. Safety was the key reason for the project's continuing existence, and it was important for planners to build safety into future plans. The Member expressed support for extending the timings to encompass the weekend given the increased visitor figures to the City at the weekends, which would also reduce confusion and therefore accidents. The Member asked about the impact of a trial in which taxis (black cabs) would be allowed to use the Bank junction

area as a public transport option, and the impact of that on safety and pollution if there was an extension to cover 7 days a week.

A Member commented that it was defensible to seek clear advice around taxis (black cabs) being given special status in the traffic mix, commenting that black cabs are not necessarily suitable for use by some disabled people.

Members were generally supportive of a review within a fixed period of time of the measures being put in place given the post-pandemic uncertainty, the need for businesses to have some certainty, and the need to ascertain whether there were any safety implications. Members were generally supportive of a thorough review to include the impact of the carriageway reduction and its effect on traffic elsewhere, bus routes, and the introduction or otherwise of black cabs.

A Member also raised the issue of scooters not being allowed to use the Bank junction area and whether restrictions on electric scooters were being clearly articulated.

Members heard that specific Bank junction areas had been geo-fenced by the electric scooter hire companies, and that private electric scooters continue to be illegal.

RESOLVED – That the Streets & Walkways Sub Committee:

1. Note the contents of the report and the key themes of the consultation response, Officers' response to the key findings and the design changes proposed (paragraphs 161-229)
2. Approve the proposed way forward:
 - a. to continue to Gateway 5 with the proposed changes to motor vehicle movements on Threadneedle Street, Princes Street and Queen Victoria Street (which would be operational at all times) outlined in Paragraph 240
 - b. to continue to Gateway 5 with the proposed restrictions on Poultry, Cornhill and King William Street remaining as buses and cycles only, Monday to Friday 7am to 7pm.
 - c. to continue to develop the public realm design to Gateway 5 taking into account consultation comments received.
 - d. to maintain pace of programme, agree that the traffic orders reflecting a and b can be drafted and issued for statutory consultation ahead of the Gateway 5 report.
3. Approve the proposal to review the timing and traffic mix for the Poultry, Cornhill and King William Street arms 12 months from completion. (see paragraphs 173-175)

4. Note that a Costed Risk Provision of £93,000 was approved in July 2021 and is still required.

5. **MILLENNIUM BRIDGE HOUSE**

Members considered a report of the Director of the Built Environment on an improvement project within the immediate perimeter and streets in the wider vicinity of the approved Millennium Bridge House development at 2 Lambeth Hill.

Members heard that the area attracts a lot of skateboarders and that further skateboarding would not be facilitated, to include high seating which also benefits the elderly.

Members heard that the City of London School would be kept informed of the project.

RESOLVED – That the Streets & Walkways Sub Committee approve the initiation of the project:

- Approve the budget of **£50,000**, that forms the legally agreed Section 106, Design and Evaluation Fee Payment for the project to reach the next Gateway;
- Note the total estimated cost of the project at **£150K-300K** (excluding risk);
- Note that at the next reporting stage, any proposed Cost Risk Provision is to be delegated to the Town Clerk in consultation with the Chairman and Deputy Chairman of Streets & Walkways sub-Committee and Projects sub-Committee.
- Authorise officers to negotiate and enter into a Section 278 agreement, in accordance with the requirements of the Section 106 agreement.

6. **CITY STREETS TRANSPORTATION RESPONSE TO SUPPORT COVID-19 RECOVERY PHASE 3 - 23JULY 21**

Members received the report of the Projects Sub Committee of 23 July 2021: 'City Streets Transportation Response to support Covid-19 Recover Phase 3'.

Members agreed that the points raised in the report were common to the Streets & Walkways Sub Committee.

Members agreed that updates and developments on the matter would be added to the Sub Committee's Outstanding References.

RESOLVED – That the Streets & Walkways Sub Committee note the contents of the report from the Projects sub-committee of 23 July 2021.

7. **OUTSTANDING REFERENCES**

The Sub Committee received a list of outstanding references and the following points were made:

Dockless vehicles: HumanForest (the second operator) began operating in early September 2021 on a trial basis.

A Member commented that a Lime bike has been seen at the staircase at Breton House (Barbican) for several weeks and queried the effectiveness of the company's bike tracking process. Members heard that the matter would be raised and the findings reported back.

A Member commented that e-scooters were often used on pavements especially in the evening, and raised concerns around the inappropriate use of bikes and e-scooters, and around the level of education in respect of the appropriate use and parking of hired bikes and e-scooters. Members heard that the geo-fencing capability may not be sufficiently precise to prevent pavement use.

Beech Street: the outcome of the judicial review challenging the legality of the experiment (delivered on 10 August 2021) found in favour of the City of London, meaning that the 18-month experiment was considered meaningful and that it could continue. The experiment is to expire on 18 September 2021, and street notices have been posted to explain that. A safety audit on the central reservations for accessing car parks from either direction has resulted in those staying in place. Data is being collected via cameras for traffic modelling purposes to inform future decisions on a permanent scheme at Beech St. That information is being shared with the Barbican Association, and discussions are being held with the Association on a fortnightly basis as part of the Healthy Streets plans. A Gateway 1 - 2 report is expected to be presented to the Sub Committee in October 2021 for the Barbican – Golden Lane Healthy Streets Plan. Subject to the Sub Committee's approval, a permanent scheme to address air quality issues and make public realm improvements for Beech St is expected to be presented to the Sub Committee in December 2021, with any public consultation period in respect of that to run till the end of January 2022 with a permanent scheme potentially in place by summer 2022.

A Member asked whether any traffic analysis of right-turning vehicles had been undertaken following a safety analysis of that.

Members heard that the information had been considered as part of the safety audit and that numbers entering the car park are low, but the situation will be continue to be monitored.

Use of central medians: dialogue is under way between the Department of the Built Environment and the City of London Police in the context of a potential re-design of some of the checkpoints. Further reports are likely to be presented to the Sub Committee.

RESOLVED, that the issue of central medians be removed from the list of Outstanding References.

8. **REPORT OF ACTION TAKEN BETWEEN MEETINGS**

The Sub Committee received a report of action taken between meetings: approval by delegated authority from the Town Clerk of a Gateway 2 report in respect of highway and public realm works in the vicinity of 40 Leadenhall Street.

RESOLVED - that the Sub Committee note the report.

9. **QUESTIONS ON MATTERS RELATING TO THE WORK OF THE SUB COMMITTEE**

A Member commented that signage needed to be improved in respect of some of the roads that had been closed off during the pandemic, including at Old Jewry Poultry junction, given that some minicabs were struggling to navigate the area appropriately. Members heard that a review is currently under way.

10. **ANY OTHER BUSINESS THAT THE CHAIRMAN CONSIDERS URGENT**

No other business was raised.

11. **EXCLUSION OF THE PUBLIC**

12. **NON-PUBLIC QUESTIONS ON MATTERS RELATING TO THE WORK OF THE SUB COMMITTEE**

No matters were raised.

13. **ANY OTHER BUSINESS THAT THE CHAIRMAN CONSIDERS URGENT AND WHICH THE SUB COMMITTEE AGREES SHOULD BE CONSIDERED WHILST THE PUBLIC ARE EXCLUDED**

No other business was raised.

The meeting ended at 12.20 pm

Chairman

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