

Report – Planning & Transportation Committee

Bank On Safety

To be presented on Thursday, 13th September 2018

*To the Right Honourable The Lord Mayor, Aldermen and Commons
of the City of London in Common Council assembled.*

SUMMARY

This report seeks a decision on the future of the current experimental traffic scheme at Bank Junction. The 'Bank on Safety' experimental scheme was introduced in May 2017 following a number of casualties and fatalities which had led to increased concerns about safety at the Junction. Approved for implementation in December 2016, the agreed success criteria were:

- a significant safety improvement at Bank;
- to maintain access for deliveries;
- to improve air quality at Bank; and
- to not unreasonably impact on traffic flow, whilst preferably improving bus journey times.

The experiment has been operational for 16 months. Performance monitoring against the success criteria has been based on a minimum of nine months and a maximum of twelve months data (as reporting to the relevant committees started in July 2018). Based on this data, each of the success criteria has been met. Over a six-month period of public consultation almost 4,300 people responded. 45% of respondents supported the experiment as implemented; 29% generally supported the scheme but wished to see changes; and 25% of people did not support the experiment. In total, 75% of respondents indicated they supported or generally supported the scheme.

A number of concerns, or areas for consideration, beyond the defined success criteria arose from the consultation, comments from Members, interaction with the public, and the equalities analysis. These include disabled access; traffic in the surrounding area; enforcement and signage; pollution in the surrounding area; and taxi passenger impacts. These issues have also been considered to examine the experiment holistically. These have all been evaluated and reported through the committee process and it is not thought that any of these areas have significant impacts which would require the experiment to be terminated.

Following the evaluation of the experimental scheme, your Planning and Transportation Committee is satisfied that the success criteria have been met and that the permanent implementation of the scheme represents the optimal way forward for the City, in view of the primacy of public safety and the need to ensure the safety of road users.

Due to the use of experimental traffic orders, the decision to be made at this stage can only be to keep the experiment as a permanent traffic order, or to abandon it and revert to the previous arrangements. It is therefore recommended that the experimental scheme be made permanent, and that complementary measures to further improve the performance of the scheme be investigated. If Members are minded to keep the experiment and complementary measures are progressed, then the next stage for the area will be look towards the All Change at Bank longer term project, which is detailed within this report.

RECOMMENDATION

The Court of Common Council is **recommended** to agree to make the experimental traffic orders at Bank Junction (to restrict traffic to bus and cycle only, Monday to Friday 0700-1900) permanent.

MAIN REPORT

Background

1. Bank junction was highlighted as an issue that needed reviewing, in terms of safety and function, in the Bank Area Strategy; which was adopted by the Court of Common Council in May 2013. Subsequently, in late 2013, the Bank Junction improvements project (All Change at Bank) was initiated by the Planning and Transportation and Projects Sub-Committees. Work on this longer-term project was already underway when a fatality occurred at Bank in June 2015.
2. In view of the fatality, the Court of Common Council discussed that month the need to bring forward safety measures at Bank. Officers were tasked with proposing options to deliver safety improvements more quickly than the existing All Change at Bank project. Approval was given in December 2015 to investigate the feasibility of making Bank Junction bus and cycle (and possibly taxi) only, Monday to Friday 7am to 7pm (the time when 75% of the collisions were occurring) as an experiment.
3. The Coroner's investigation into the 2015 fatality considered written evidence from the City Corporation around the work that was being undertaken to make changes at Bank (including developing the experimental scheme). On this basis, the Coroner concluded that nothing constructive could be added by way of a preventative death report on this occasion. There was, however, an expectation that measures to improve safety in this complex location would be brought forward.
4. Final approval by the Policy and Resources Committee to implement the experiment as bus and cycle only, Monday to Friday 7am to 7pm, was given on 15 December 2016.

Current Position

5. The experiment is reaching its conclusion and a decision is required to make the scheme permanent and consider any further measures, or plan to revoke the experimental order and return to the previous operation of the Junction.
6. The Bank on Safety scheme restricts the number of vehicles that cross Bank Junction during the working day to significantly reduce the risk of collision. The top causation factors for collisions in the area were pedestrians walking into/in front of

motor vehicles and vehicles making turns. This scheme reduces the probability of both.

7. Between the hours of 7am-7pm Monday to Friday, only buses and pedal cycles are permitted to cross the junction and travel westbound from Leadenhall Street into Cornhill. The Scheme was implemented on 22 May 2017 using experimental traffic orders.
8. The experiment also saw the addition of two new taxi ranks close to the Junction, on Princes Street and Queen Victoria Street (adjacent to the Magistrates Court). The rank on Cornhill had its hours of operation extended. This resulted in nine taxi spaces available close to the Junction during operational hours of the scheme. Previously, there were no daytime ranks in the vicinity.
9. In addition, there were some changes to loading restrictions and disabled parking bays in the vicinity of the junction (see maps in Appendix 1) to help ease the traffic flow on the alternative routes away from Bank.

Has it been successful?

10. The four agreed key success criteria were:
 - A significant safety improvement at Bank
 - Maintain access for deliveries
 - Improve air quality at Bank
 - Not unreasonably impact on traffic flow, whilst preferably improving bus journey times
11. These criteria reflect considerations relating to the traffic authority's statutory duties (Appendix 2). They are discussed in turn below.

Criteria 1: A significant safety improvement at Bank

12. One year of post-scheme collision data is provisionally available. It comprises of provisionally verified STATS19 data (3 months) and provisional (not verified) City of London Police data (9 months). The provisionally verified STATS19 data (the national collision recording format) is not expected to change significantly when it is formally verified, which is expected to be in early 2019. The City of London Police data used in this report may change. More detail is in Appendix 6.
13. Figure 1 uses this data to show the provisional change in the number of casualties following one year of operation of the experiment, in comparison to the average of the previous five years. The casualty data is provisional but indicates that the minimum success criteria of a 25% reduction at the Junction has, so far, been met (11 casualties vs 15 average). The Bank monitoring area is exceeding its target reduction of 5% (59 casualties vs 80 average). More detail is contained within appendix 6.

Figure 1: Provisional percentage casualty change during scheme operating hours (Each area is excluded from the other areas) (one year of post-scheme data in comparison to the average of the previous five years).



- It is not possible to use verified casualty data to conclude the experimental scheme within the permitted 18 months; therefore, despite the above percentages being subject to change in the coming months, this is the most up to date information reported to committee to inform a decision on the experiment.

Criteria 2: Maintain access for deliveries.

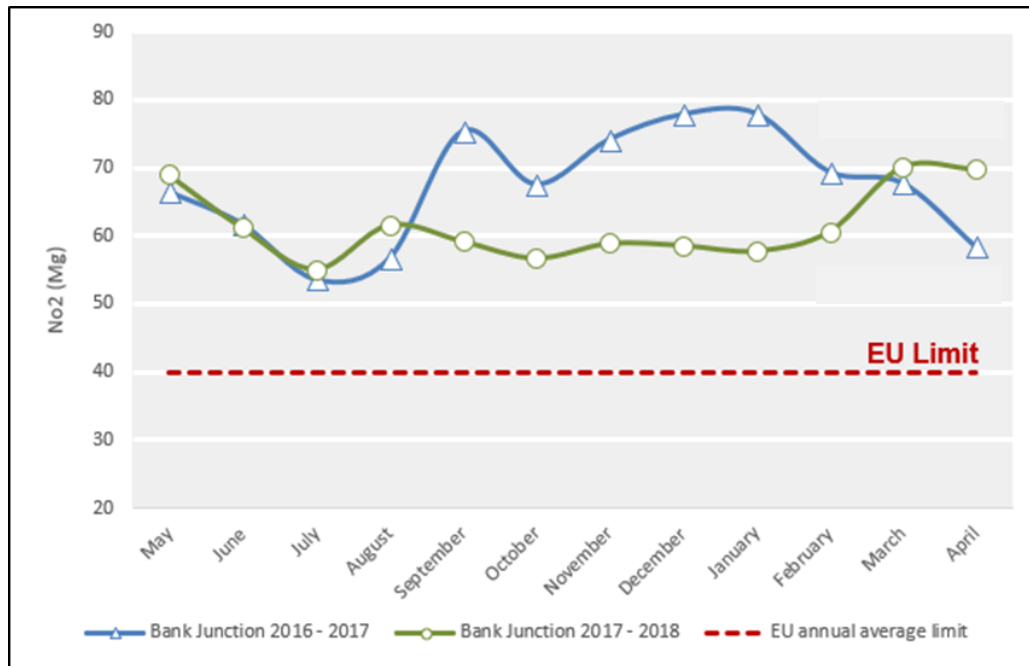
- Officers initially engaged with 46 businesses regarding their ability to service and deliver to develop the design for the restrictions. In the Autumn of 2017, officers contacted the same businesses again to ensure that they were satisfied that they continued to be able to service their premises conveniently. Following some clarifications on loading changes in the area, all businesses were content. This exceeded the success criteria of 75%.

Criteria 3: Improve Air Quality

- The first six months showed that, on average, NO₂ had decreased at Bank and in the surrounding area compared to the 2016 readings. It should be noted that this data cannot be split between scheme and non-operational hours.
- There have been significant street diversions in place since the end of January 2018 due to the emergency gas works at Monument. These unexpected diversions have skewed the traffic patterns and therefore influenced the monitoring results. Whilst the scheme was operating as intended between May and December 2017, the results indicated that there had not been a worsening of air quality at Bank or in the monitoring area.
- Data is available to the end of April 2018. The 2018 data has not yet been bias-adjusted. Figure 2 shows that NO₂ has increased since January 2018. Whilst we

cannot be certain, this increase is in line with the emergency gas work at Monument closing Cannon Street eastbound and Gracechurch Street northbound. There has been an increase in NO₂ above the 2016/17 baseline in March 2018 at Bank which coincides with the formal opening of Queen Victoria Street to traffic across the junction (on a temporary basis to 19 August 2018). In figure 3, the wider monitoring area average NO₂ is shown and indicates that over the monitoring period, 2017 NO₂ levels have been lower than the 2016 observations.

Figure 2: Changes in NO₂ between 2016 - 2017 and 2017-2018 at Bank Junction



19. Figure 3: Changes in NO₂ between 2016 - 2017 and 2017-2018 in the monitoring area

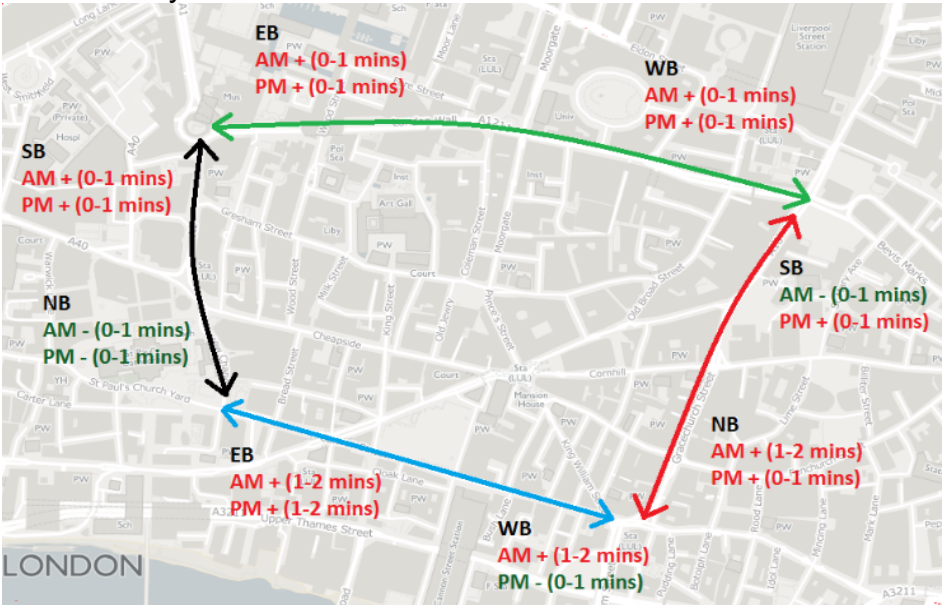


- 20. In consultation with the Air Quality team in Markets and Consumer Protection, they have said: *“Air quality monitoring continues in and around Bank. The data currently being collected provides monthly averages. There are a number of variables that impact on levels of air pollution at roadside in City streets such as the weather, local topography and traffic diversions. This means it is difficult to draw firm conclusions about the impact of the Bank scheme itself on local pollution levels. Overall, air quality post-scheme implementation is better than pre-scheme; although at this stage we are not able to say how much of this improvement is due to the Bank scheme. More detailed hourly average monitoring is planned in the area to enable a better understanding of the impact of the scheme”*
- 21. The success criteria for this element was to see a measured reduction at Bank and not to make the wider monitoring area worse overall. This appears to have been achieved whilst the scheme has operated as intended. Further detail on air quality readings was reported to your committees as part of the scheme conclusion report.

Criteria 4: Not unreasonably impact on traffic flow, whilst preferably improving bus journey times

- 22. The City has numerous statutory duties with which it must comply in the exercise of its traffic authority functions. These are set out in more detail in Appendix 2 and include duties under the Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984, such as relating to traffic movement. This criterion is relevant to considerations regarding expeditious, safe and convenient traffic movements.
- 23. General traffic
Journey times are shown in Figure 4 and have, on average, increased slightly on the four key corridors (London Wall, Bishopsgate/Gracechurch Street, Cannon Street, New Change/St Martin Le Grand).

Figure 4: Average peak period journey time differences for general traffic 22 May 2017 to 28 February 2018



Please note: The above excludes the Bishopsgate southbound closure September to November 2017.

24. The data collected suggests that this average increase is not unreasonable and so the success criteria has been achieved for general traffic.

Bus Journey times

25. All 21 bus routes that pass through the traffic modelled area have been monitored. Table 1 shows the average journey time savings for the groups of buses that serve Bank directly, and those which do not. This is compared to their previous recorded average journey times.

Table 1: Average bus journey time savings Monday to Friday (22 May 2017 to 28 February 2018 vs 1st October 2015 – 21st May 2017)

	AM peak hour	PM peak hour	During the hours of scheme operation
	8am-9am	5pm-6pm	7am to 7pm
Bank Services (9)	-(3-5 mins)	-(1-2 mins)	-(3-5 mins)
Non-Bank Services (12)	-(0-1 mins)	-(0-1 mins)	-(0-1 mins)

26. It should be noted that bus journey times are analysed across the larger traffic modelled area, unlike the key corridor information which is a specific length of corridor (Figure 4 above). This is why the journey times in Table 1 are different to the times shown in Figure 4.
27. On average journey times savings for buses has been achieved and so this criterion has been achieved for bus journey time improvements.

Scheme success criteria summary

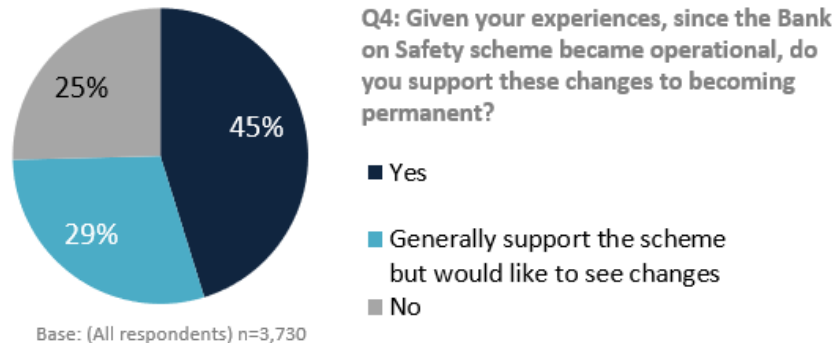
28. With regard to the four key success criteria, all of the data reviewed indicates that the experiment has been successful and that these criteria are being met.

What do people think?

29. There was a large consultation response with almost 4,300 responses received. The online consultation survey accounted for 90% of all respondents to the consultation, with the remainder being letters and emails. Of the online consultation survey respondents, 75% supported or generally supported the experiment when directly asked the question.

Figure 5: Consultation survey respondents support split.

3 IN 4 ARE SUPPORTIVE OF THE SCHEME



30. Figure 5 shows that 29% of respondents generally supported the scheme but wanted to see a variation. These were a mixture of both progressive responses, of people who wanted to see the scheme introduce greater restrictions, and those who wanted to see the scheme operate in a less restrictive way (for example, increasing the operational hours or allowing more types of motor vehicles through). Respondents also suggested enhancements that would not change the technical detail of the traffic order but would improve the look and feel of the junction; such as better enforcement and wider pavements.
31. The most cited variation of those who 'generally support' the scheme was to allow black cabs into the Junction; supported by 41% of respondents (451 responses). This equates to 12% of all survey respondents. Of the 12% supporting this variation, 70% identified themselves as a taxi or private hire driver.
32. In addition to the consultation survey respondents, there were also groups and representative organisations that responded to the consultation; which were largely in support of the scheme. These, along with the other emailed comments received, were reviewed as part of the previous consultation report by your Planning and Transportation Committee.
33. Overall the consultation showed lower levels of support for removing the experiment and stronger levels of support for continuing the scheme as trialled.

Statutory consultation responses

34. There were also statutory consultations undertaken on both of the experimental traffic orders (the first order regards the main vehicle restriction, the second order concerns the loading and waiting changes in the vicinity). There were 23 representations received to the main restriction experimental traffic order (Order 1) which closed on 24 November 2017.
35. Of these 23 representations, 16 were messages of support, 3 made comment but were not classed as objections, and 4 were objections. Of those responses which do not constitute an objection, their responses were included in the analysis in the previous public consultation report.

36. The objections and the City's response are set out in full in Appendix 3 but, in summary, the four objections focus on:
- traffic displacement,
 - the penalty charge notices and publicity,
 - the operation of a specific property (new business in the area – the Ned Hotel); and
 - servicing premises within the zone from a maintenance perspective.
37. The City's response covers these areas by explaining:
- what can be undertaken in terms of loading and servicing and accessing properties in the area;
 - the work done when assessing planned road closures and whether or not the scheme should be relaxed in such circumstances;
 - the publicity work undertaken prior to the scheme; and
 - the warning letters that were issued in the early weeks of the scheme.
38. The issues raised within the objections should be considered alongside the requirement to comply with the City's statutory duties and in context of the mitigation work already undertaken. Details are in Appendix 3.
39. There were no representations received for the second experimental traffic order; which was associated with the loading changes in the area.

Considerations/Issues raised

Equality Analysis

40. A full Equality Analysis has been undertaken based on the operation and experience of the experiment and can be found in Appendix 4. In summary there are three protected characteristics which are deemed to have 'a neutral with possible negative impacts' as a result of the Bank on Safety Scheme. These are: Age, Disability and Pregnancy and Maternity. The possible negative impact of the scheme on these groups results from potentially increased vehicle journey time and costs, removal of one disabled parking bay and removal of the zebra pedestrian crossing on Threadneedle St. Design measures and measures to provide information have been taken to mitigate these impacts and reported to your committees.
41. There are also significant positive impacts experienced, including by persons with protected characteristics, particularly as bus passengers or pedestrians, such as improved safety and air quality and reduced bus journey times.
42. Further information was reported to your committee for consideration and is summarised below. It is considered that the evaluation and recommendation to continue the traffic orders has due regard to the City's public-sector equality duties (see Appendix 2) and is not discriminatory.

Other areas of consideration

43. A number of other concerns, or areas for consideration, beyond the defined success criteria arose from the consultation, Members, interaction with members of the public, and the equalities analysis and are summarised below, viz.:

- Disabled access;
- Traffic in the surrounding area;
- Enforcement and signage;
- Pollution in the surrounding area; and
- Taxi passenger impacts.

Disabled access:

Access for disabled passengers was raised as a concern under the question 'what do you think is not working well' to the consultation survey. This was raised most by taxi/private hire passengers (58 respondents) and taxi/private hire drivers (131 respondents). Figure 8 in Appendix 1 shows where vehicles are able to pick up or drop off passengers close to the junction including where the doors to the buildings surrounding the junction are and the location of the stop lines at the junction (vehicles should not in any event stop to set down and pick up within the junction).

44. The ability to pick up or set down safely to these locations has not been significantly changed by the scheme. However, some drivers may not understand where they can pick up and drop off in the area. Information was provided to try and combat this and improved compliance over the experimental period has been observed. Officers will continue to monitor.

Traffic in the surrounding area

45. In answering the question in the consultation 'what is not working well' (answered by 3684 people), 37% (1363 people) identified that traffic had worsened since the scheme had become operational. The two routes that have often been cited by Members as being more congested are Cannon Street and Gresham Street. Work has been undertaken, and is continuing, to better enforce parking and loading activity on these streets. Performance of Cannon Street has been reported in figure 4. On Gresham Street, increased enforcement resources have been deployed and discussion with TfL to improve the operation of the signalised junctions is taking place.

Enforcement and Signage

46. Enforcement and signage were both cited as elements that 'did not work well' in the consultation survey (base of 3684 people) with 23% of respondents to that question (847 people) citing that banned vehicles were still going through the junction and 12% (442) citing signage needed improvement.

47. Current signage has been independently audited for suitability and compliance and has been found to be legally fit for purpose. The current signage has delivered up to 97% compliance. However, officers have developed alternative signage and are consulting with the Department for Transport to explore whether this could be used, with a view to further improving compliance.

Pollution in the surrounding area

48. Pollution increasing away from Bank was raised by 8% (295 responses) of respondents to the question 'what is not working well' (base of 3684 people). NO₂

levels have shown an average decrease across the Bank monitoring sites after the scheme was introduced compared to the 2016 values. There is therefore little evidence that this perception has been realised. More detail was provided in the scheme conclusion report in its appendix 3.

Impact on taxi passengers

49. In agreeing the experimental scheme, it was recognised that there would be some journey time increases as well as some savings across the area; however, overall these should not be 'unreasonably increased'. Work to establish the impacts has been undertaken and reported to your committees for consideration.
50. In addition, the Licensed Taxi Drivers Association (LTDA) GPS journey time data has also been provided, based on a sample size of approximately 100 journeys per survey over seven routes. The LTDA did not undertake a cost comparison exercise. There is a technical note in Appendix 5 which combines the LTDA data sets with the City's, for all reasonable comparable sets.
51. Overall, the information gathered on the average journey times and cost increases suggest that there has been some impact on the monitored taxi routes. However, this must be considered against the wider benefits of the scheme.

Taxicard users

52. The City has used anonymised taxicard data to look at the impact of the scheme on taxicard passengers with disabilities. A taxicard is given to people with severe mobility or visual impairments. The journeys analysed start or finish in the City. Anonymising the data is necessary but prevents direct like-for-like analysis of journeys. The data used covered the eight months prior to the scheme and the following eight months (excludes May 2017 as the scheme started operation on the 22 May).
53. In summary there was an increase in the number of taxicard journeys in the time period evaluated of 6% (4464 journeys to 4734 journeys. A small reduction in average journey time of all journeys starting or finishing in the City with a small increase in cost was observed. This is partly to do with the increase in taxi tariff between the two periods, and also that the journeys are not like for like in this data set.
54. A particular concern prior to the scheme was that people with a disability might not be able to access buildings at Bank. This has been specifically monitored there has been a small increase in the number of taxicard journeys to or from, the buildings surrounding Bank Junction. This increased from 42 to 45 trips in comparing the eight months before and after.

Other issues raised informally

55. One particular issue raised by Members was the impact on taxis. Officers conducted preliminary investigations in relation to the journey-time impact across the modelled area should limited access to the Junction by taxis be permitted. A total of [nine scenarios were considered as part of this assessment](#), with each scenario permitting taxi movements on specific approaches through the junction, in addition to the buses and cyclists already moving through. Officers also

considered the idea of straight-ahead movements solely for taxis, with cycle and bus movements permitted as now (although it should be noted that this would be something which is extremely complex and difficult to clearly sign and enforce).

56. Of the nine scenarios that were evaluated, bus and general traffic journey times were provisionally forecast and there were found to be winners and losers in all scenarios, with some journey time savings indicated on some routes, but which often resulted in losses in other areas. However, any increase in traffic could increase the risks of road danger and may also make it difficult to achieve full compliance (due to the possibilities of other vehicles following the taxis through). One particular movement of concern is a probable increase in vehicles along Lombard Street, particularly during the peak hours, when there are high levels of pedestrians and cyclists (travelling in both directions). It is ultimately considered that the potential dis-benefits outweigh the benefits of this proposal and therefore, no further investigations into the reintroduction of taxis were recommended.”
57. A number of other issues were raised informally, such as access to Finch Lane and u-turning vehicles, which have been covered in more detail through the report to your Planning & Transportation Committee.

Conclusion

58. In summary, the performance of the scheme has met the agreed success criteria. Consultation was largely positive and showed a strong level of support for the changes at Bank, but also raised some concerns. These concerns have been examined and some do not appear to be borne out by the available data, such as pollution in the surrounding areas and, to a certain degree, the concerns of traffic levels in surrounding areas.
59. Of those issues where improvements may be made, such as signage, enforcement and compliance, some suggestions of areas to investigate have been made to your Streets and Walkway’s Committee. These will be considered in more detail by your committees, should Members approve this report.
60. The issue of potential impacts on some people with a protected characteristic around journey time and cost to disabled/taxicard users is acknowledged. This has been mitigated as far as possible and there are significant positive impacts on people with protected characteristic.
61. In conclusion, the evaluation has had due regard to the City’s statutory duties including: maintaining reasonable access to premises, improving amenity, having regard to the national air quality strategy, facilitating bus traffic (and not unduly negatively impacting on taxis) and securing the safety and convenience of passengers and other road users. Due regard has been paid to the City’s public-sector equality duties and the interests of those with protected characteristics. This report recommends that the experiment should be made permanent as trialled.

Ongoing monitoring and review

62. The scheme as designed, including mitigation measures currently in place, is considered to meet the criteria and be compliant with the City’s responsibilities, and is recommended to continue. However, the operation of the scheme will be

kept under review if approved and, as traffic settles, (particularly after ongoing emergency works are completed) additional measures to further enhance the operation of the scheme could be considered.

63. The future

Following a decision on the experimental scheme the longer-term project, All Change at Bank, can be revitalised and look to establish how this area should change to accommodate the future growth of the area with the other competing needs of the City.

Appendices

- Appendix 1 – Loading and Disabled Parking Bay Maps
- Appendix 2 – Statutory Duties Extract
- Appendix 3 – Statutory Objections to Order
- Appendix 4 – [Equalities Analysis](#)
- Appendix 5 – Taxi Journey Time Data
- Appendix 6 – Casualty Data
- Appendix 7 – [Consultation Report](#)

N.B. – Appendices 4 and 7 are available on request and via the hyperlinks above but have not been printed with the main agenda pack due to their size.

All of which we submit to the judgement of this Honourable Court.

DATED this 10th day of July 2018.

SIGNED on behalf of the Committee.

Christopher Michael Hayward
Chairman, Planning & Transportation Committee