

STREETS AND WALKWAYS SUB (PLANNING AND TRANSPORTATION) COMMITTEE

Tuesday, 4 July 2023

Minutes of the meeting of the Streets and Walkways Sub (Planning and Transportation) Committee held at Committee Room 2 - 2nd Floor West Wing, Guildhall on Tuesday, 4 July 2023 at 1.45 pm

Present

Members:

Deputy Graham Packham (Chairman)
John Edwards (Deputy Chairman)
Deputy Randall Anderson
Deputy Marianne Fredericks
Deputy Shravan Joshi
Alderman Susan Pearson
Ian Seaton
Alderman Ian David Luder (Ex-Officio Member)
Paul Martinelli (Ex-Officio Member)

Officers:

Zoe Lewis	-	Town Clerk's Department
Luke Major	-	Town Clerk's Department
Simon Bradbury	-	Environment Department
Gillian Howard	-	Environment Department
Ian Hughes	-	Environment Department
Beth Humphrey	-	Environment Department
Joe Kingston	-	Environment Department
Daniel Laybourn	-	Environment Department
Sam Lee	-	Environment Department
Bruce McVean	-	Environment Department
Paul Monaghan	-	Environment Department
Kristian Turner	-	Environment Department
Giacomo Vecia	-	Environment Department

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Deputy Alastair Moss.

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

There were no declarations of interest.

3. MINUTES

RESOLVED, That the public minutes of the meeting of 23 May 2023 be approved as an accurate record of the proceedings subject to an addition being

made to the discussion on Item 5 in relation to commercial Apps being used to report issues. (see below).

Matters Arising

Rerouting of Number 11 Bus

In response to a Member's question, an Officer stated that he was not aware of the Policy Chairman having received a response from TfL to his letter about changes to the Number 11 bus route. The Officer would check this. The Member suggested that if a response had not been received, a letter be sent to a senior officer at TfL for a response. In response to the Chairman's question, the Member advised that the bus had been rerouted and the letter was requesting it be routed back to the previous route.

Use of Commercial Apps to Report Issues

In response to the amendment to the minutes of 23 May 2023, an Officer stated that there were a number of routes which complaints, reports and queries came through and this was being streamlined. There was no intention to develop a City App and the preferred approach would be to leverage 3rd party smartphone Apps as the primary reporting channel.

4. **BEECH STREET TRANSPORTATION AND PUBLIC REALM PROJECT (PHASE 1 - ZERO EMISSION SCHEME)**

The Sub-Committee considered a report of the Executive Director, Environment which was a Gateway 5 report informing Members on the results of the public consultation and seeking approval for the recommended option. An Officer stated that the linked Gateway 3 report for the Healthy Neighbourhood Plan was Item 5 on the agenda.

Members were informed that there were two distinct options for consideration. Option 1 would make the zero-emissions scheme permanent. Option 2 was recommended by Officers. This option was not to make the zero-emissions scheme permanent with Beech Street and Golden Lane continuing to operate as currently.

The Officer stated that the traffic had returned to 2019 levels, even though traffic across the City was at 85% of 2019 levels. Two-thirds of the Beech Street traffic was through-traffic that did not stop. Air quality had been measured for 12 months across 2022 and it showed a marginal breach of the national legal limits. The value was now 41 micrograms of Nitrogen dioxide (NO₂) per metre cubed.

Members were informed that the consultation results showed an even split between those who were supportive and not supportive of the proposals.

The Officer outlined the reasons why Officers supported Option 2. He informed Members that the air quality breach was marginal and was a significant improvement on the 2019 levels which were over 60 micrograms of NO₂ per cubic metre. There was an expectation that as air quality in London improved, as electric vehicle take up increased the tunnel air quality would continue to improve. There were disbenefits to some residents in terms of access and

deliveries with the previous zero-emission scheme and support amongst City residents was only 46%.

Members were provided with a revised Appendix 2 which corrected errors on some of the budgeted figures. They were advised the overall budget remained the same.

A Member commented on the traffic data in relation to Fore Street and stated that this road had been closed for much of the year which would have affected the figures. The Officer stated that he would check if a road closure was in place at the time the traffic count was undertaken.

A Member stated that the report showed the benefit of the Ultra Low Emission Zone (ULEZ) scheme and that was a significant contributor to air quality improvement in Beech Street and elsewhere and that an enhancement of the scrappage scheme would reduce the number of more polluting non-compliant vehicles using the roads.

A Member asked about the reuse of cameras. An Officer stated that they would be repurposed for the enforcement of the City-wide HGV restriction. In response to a Member's question about the costs of the cameras, an Officer stated that they cost between £12,500 and £15,000 each.

A Member stated he was in support of the wider scheme and if it was not possible to advance this with Islington Council in the near future, Officers should see how to proceed within the City boundaries.

A Member asked about exposure and stated that as people did not spend much time in the tunnel, their exposure would be lower, whereas there were more issues with polluted areas outside of the tunnel where people spent more time. An Officer stated that there was an hourly limit for nitrogen dioxide which was 200 micrograms per cubic meter. She advised that in general, people would walk along, rather than spend time on Beech Street. Anywhere that averaged out to over 60 micrograms per cubic metre per year was concerning from a health perspective. The Officer stated that Appendix 9 of the report showed the diffusion tube data. The nitrogen dioxide monitors were close to the roadside and a tool developed by the Department of Environment, Food and Rural Affairs showed nitrogen dioxide levels dropped off with distance from roads i.e. towards the facades of buildings in which people spent more time.

A Member commented on the Golden Lane flats which were built over the pavement with their windows at the kerb line. The Officer stated that there was still distance to be factored in in terms of height, as NO_x concentrations reduced when measured at increasing heights above roads. A study had been undertaken with some residents of the Barbican and Golden Lane estate. Residents across both estates were asked to measure air pollution using diffusion tubes in their doorways and balconies and this had shown an average decrease in air pollution of 46% between 2014 to 2022.

A Member stated that working with Islington Council would benefit the area as pollution was a cross borough issue and taking a micro-project perspective would not work.

A Member stated that of those who responded to the consultation, 54% of the City residents opposed the proposal opposed to 45% of non-residents. However, many of the respondents had opposed it as they said the scheme did not do enough to reduce traffic and air quality.

A Member commented that in some cities, air quality measurements were taken before approval of residential planning applications and before residents moved in. This was not currently undertaken in the City and it was suggested that this could be added to the checklist of considerations.

A Member stated that the most heavily congested areas in the City were alongside social housing. She stated that Mansell Street Estate and the Golden Lane Estate had a high concentration of residents, including children and Golden Lane had two schools. The Member stated that air pollution was damaging to young children and their brain development. She considered that more should be done in the wider area and traffic should be reduced along Golden Lane.

RESOLVED - That the Sub-Committee

1. Agree Option 2 – to not make the zero-emission scheme permanent, with Beech Street and Golden Lane continuing to operate as currently;
 2. Note that work would continue with LB Islington to develop the Barbican, Bunhill and Golden Lane Healthy Neighbourhood Plan;
 3. Approve the adjusted project budget (Revised Appendix 2 of the Officer report);
 4. Approve the updated Costed Risk Register (Appendix 4 of the Officer report); and
 5. Be provided with the report of the residential study of air quality.
5. **BARBICAN AND GOLDEN LANE HEALTHY STREETS PLAN**
The Sub-Committee considered a Gateway 3 report of the Executive Director, Environment which asked Members to note the feedback from the public engagements run in parallel with the Beech Street consultation. The report also sought approval for increasing the project budget to continue to develop the plan with Islington Council.

Members were advised there had been 189 respondents to the consultation, making 895 comments in total.

In response to questions from a Member about the programme, progress to date and when the project would be delivered, an Officer stated that there

would be an initial meeting with Islington to set out the programme. It was estimated it would take 8-12 months to fully develop the plan including any required traffic modelling, and working with TfL if there were any implications on bus journey times etc.

In response to the Chairman's questions about how the project would be staffed and the methodology for joint project oversight and reporting, an Officer stated that both the City governance and committee processes would be followed and in Islington, their governance and committee processes would be followed. Concepts and ideas would be developed at a work shop. Islington had a dedicated half time Officer, and with the budget increase, the City would have resources to progress this through the next 12 months with a dedicated project manager. The Chairman stated that these details must be worked out at the start of the project and agreed with elected members in both Local Authorities to avoid any unnecessary complexity, delay and expense.

A Member suggested that the Chairman and Deputy Chairman have an initial meeting with Officers and the relevant Cabinet Member at Islington Council and Councillors from Bunhill ward so there was Member level agreement in the methodology to be followed and the outcomes to be achieved. There could then be further meetings at interim stages. He suggested these meetings could help avoid unnecessary delays and expense.

A Member asked about the air quality measures. An Officer stated that whilst Particulate Matter (PM) 2.5 and PM 10 were still measured at multiple locations across the square mile, they were not considered targets in any specific project due to the nature of PM dispersing much more than Nitrogen Dioxide (NO₂). Members were informed that 96% of the PM in the square mile came from other boroughs and even outside the country so there was little control over it. NO₂ was a target as it could be controlled within a few metres of its source.

A Member asked whether PM should be a target, as vehicles, especially electric vehicles, emitted particulate matter. He raised concern that this was damaging for health, especially as the particulate matter dispersed. The Officer stated that there was no way to measure it as a target. Although the number of vehicles could be measured, there was no way of ascertaining whether the source was local. The Chairman asked if a pan-London approach would be helpful in addressing this. The Officer stated that a pan-London approach would be beneficial but there was also a need for a national approach and an international approach. An Officer stated that the City had its own strategic approach and there was a London-wide strategic approach to not just have cleaner vehicles on the roads, but also fewer vehicles on the roads.

A Member asked whether the consultation process and the plan development would consider all options including Beech Street potentially being a zero-emissions street. The Officer stated that Beech Street and Chiswell Street attracted a lot of traffic as an east-west route. Traffic had returned to 2019 levels on Beech Street and this was likely to be for a variety of reasons. It was likely that a traffic restriction measure would be necessary. There were fewer

people walking on Beech Street than in 2019 and the southern footway was rated F in terms of pedestrian comfort so was below the targets in the Transport Strategy. The Officer confirmed work would need to be done but this would not necessarily be through a zero-emissions street.

RESOLVED - That the Sub-Committee

1. Note the change in the project name and the extent of the project area from Gateway 2 as shown in Figure 1 of the Officer report;
2. Note the findings of the Public Engagement;
3. Approve joint working with Islington Council to develop the Healthy Neighbourhood Plan; and
4. Approve the budget increase of £109,000 from £141,00 to £250,000 to reach the next Gateway, funded from the City Fund CIL receipts as detailed in Table 3 Appendix 3 of the Officer report.

6. **ALDGATE HIGHWAY CHANGES AND PUBLIC REALM IMPROVEMENTS**

The Sub-Committee considered a Gateway 6 Outcome report of the Executive Director, Environment.

The Chairman commented on the successful outcome of the project and stated that there were several learning points which could be usefully applied to the Newgate Square project.

A Member stated that the partnership approach in this project was positive. This included support from TfL of £8m. The Member stated that this was one of the largest projects the City had undertaken. There was also a side project to transform Aldgate and The Minories. She stated the contractors had dealt well when walls and burial sites were found whilst digging and there had been problems filling in the underpasses. The Member stated that Officers had reacted in a dynamic way to keep the programme on track. The Member raised concerns about the Pavilion but stated these were outside the remit of the Sub-Committee. She stated that the project had transformed the area and residents on the east side of the city now had a yard in which to hold events and bring the community together. She thanked Officers and Members on the Streets and Walkways Sub-Committee at the time and stated she would welcome more of this type of project.

RESOLVED – That the Sub-Committee

1. Note and approve the content of the outcome report;
2. Authorise Officers to complete the final account for the project;
3. Note that the unspent Section 106 funds were to be reallocated to other projects in accordance with the requirements of their related legal agreements and a separate report would be brought to Members that sets out details of the proposed reallocations; and

4. Agree to close the project.

7. **EXTENDED REVIEW OF DOCKLESS OPERATOR LIME**

Members considered a report of the Executive Director, Environment, which outlined the results of the extended review into dockless operator, Lime.

Members were informed that a review had taken place of both dockless operators, Lime and Human Forest following complaints regarding their performance around their operations in the City. In January 2023, it was decided to reapprove Human Forest to continue operating in the City but to extend the review into Lime to assess whether they were able to meet the City's standards and requirements.

The Officer stated that the report summarised the results of the extended review and recommended that following a satisfactory review and extensive engagement with Lime, that Lime be approved to continue to operate in the City whilst maintaining ongoing performance reviews. This approach would enable further engagement and for work to be undertaken to improve operations in the City, especially whilst awaiting additional powers in the form of primary legislation to help regulate the industry. Members were informed that the report and recommendations did not propose any changes to the current approach to dockless cycles more generally, other than to recommend a limited trial of allowing users to end their journeys in some Sheffield stands and bike racks.

There was concern expressed from a Member that the City was judging the performance of the dockless cycle-hire vendors using statistics provided by the vendors themselves, and whether there was independent verification of their performance from Officers. An officer responded that Officer verification would be the ideal, but there were constraints due to the Officer time required for this.

In response to a Member's question about the Key Performance Indicators (KPIs), the Officer stated that Officers had worked with Human Forest and Lime to set agreed KPIs and they had also carried over some KPIs used in the pan-London e-scooter trial. The Member raised concern about their methodology of reporting based on anecdotal observations of Lime bikes being left for extended periods of time but stated that working with Lime should be beneficial. He stated that if additional powers in the form of primary legislation were introduced, there should be a discussion about how these would be used.

A Member stated that he supported the use of Sheffield stands and bike racks as this would provide more opportunities for people to park the bikes correctly. Another Member raised concern that although there were often spaces in the cycle stands, they were not in the places that Lime bikes were likely to be left. She stated that the survey of the usage of existing bike stands was important to ensure that commuters had the opportunity to park near their workplace or meeting place. An Officer stated that an independent auditor would undertake this work and it would be funded by the operators. Strict requirements would be set for what was considered spare capacity in a Sheffield stand as sufficient space should be retained for regular users. There was also a risk that the

stands could reach capacity and that dockless bikes would then be parked in adjacent spaces. Therefore, locations would be chosen carefully based on data.

A Member suggested that more car parking spaces could be turned into space for bike stands. An Officer stated that consideration was being given to moving the location of some of some of the existing bays to more desirable locations without the loss of a car parking space, by swapping bays. The Officer stated that, as outlined in the report, it was proposed to install additional bays in adjacent or underutilised carriageway space. Further discussion would be required to identify additional space and how these bays would be funded. Work was taking place with operators to identify voluntary financial contributions to recover the costs of installing the bays.

A Member stated that there were likely to be some residents undertaking monitoring.

A Member commented on bikes being left along the boundaries with Islington and Tower Hamlets and also around tourist sites such as the Tower of London. She asked how often a user had to repeatedly park inappropriately in order to be banned. An Officer stated that Human Forest and Lime had both outlined their banning process. Both involved a warning in the first instance and then an escalating fine over several instances of inappropriate parking, followed by a ban on the next instance. The ban would be for Lime's entire network internationally. Human Forest had a similar process but fewer instances of inappropriate parking to be banned. Lime had provided statistics on bans and this was a significant number.

A Member raised concern that once the extension had been approved, performance could decrease. This could present particular difficulties for those with sight disabilities, mobility difficulties or those with pushchairs or wheelchairs. She stated that operators should pay for the parking spaces for their bikes, move the bikes quickly and have a method for people to report bikes left in inappropriate locations. The Officer informed Members that voluntary financial contributions were being sought but there was no formal contractual arrangement with them. The approval status could be rescinded at any time if performance was not considered to be satisfactory under the ongoing performance reviews. However, this would not necessarily prohibit them for operating in the City. Continuing to engage and influence Lime should lead to improvements.

The Chairman stated that he and the Chairman of Planning and Transportation Committee had met with Lime and believed that they were taking effective action to address the issues. He advocated continuing to work with them.

RESOLVED – That the Sub-Committee

1. Agree to renew Lime's operational status in the City, subject to ongoing performance reviews.

2. Agree the limited use of Sheffield stands and City bike parking racks as additional dockless parking on a trial basis.

8. **TFL'S PROPOSALS FOR ARTHUR STREET**

The Sub-Committee considered a report of the Executive Director, Environment which outlined TfL's proposals for Arthur Street.

The Officer stated that Arthur Street had been closed since 2015 to facilitate the Bank Station capacity upgrade. Since this time, users had had to use alternative options and travel routes and there had not been any significant issues with this. There was now the opportunity to consider whether or not Arthur Street should be reopened back to vehicles.

Members were informed that in the last year, Officers had had been in discussions with TfL to discuss the proposals to improve the Junction at King William Street. This would involve closing it to all vehicles except pedal cycles and emergency services vehicles. There had also been discussions about the junction at Upper Thames Street. The proposal also included a re-routing of the 344 bus route but since the report was written, TfL had decided that the southbound route could remain on Southwark Bridge but the northbound route would be re-routed to London Bridge.

A Member raised concern about the potential of the existing scheme to damage Southwark Bridge and asked if the Bridge House Estates had been fully consulted. An Officer stated that they had been consulted and there was concern about the structure of the bridge because of the additional traffic and heavy goods vehicles that might divert across to Southwark Bridge. The Officer assessment was that the volume of vehicles of 18 tonnes or over, likely to divert onto Southwark Bridge, was minimal and therefore on balance Officers considered that the impacts and benefits of the scheme outweighed the disbenefits.

An Officer raised concern about Heavy Goods Vehicles (HGVs) using Tower Bridge. Although there was no breakdown of HGVs diverting onto other bridges, they created a disproportionate wearing effect. Looking at the routes available for HGVs to cross the river and travel eastwards, these were limited and becoming more difficult, especially as they also had to avoid Central London.

The Chairman stated that this reinforced the desirability of repurposing the cameras at Beech Street for the monitoring and enforcement of HGVs that should not be entering the City.

A Member asked if the layout of the road would allow the road to be used if it needed to be e.g. if there was an incident further down Lower Thames Street and the traffic needed to be moved, whether it could be opened and utilised. The Member also asked if it could be used for abnormal loads when required. An Officer stated that under normal circumstances, using the road as an abnormal route should be avoided due to the impact with pedestrians crossing and cycle traffic but if these abnormal loads were random and off-peak, this should be possible. There could, however, be an issue with how much space would have

to be redesigned to accommodate these vehicles especially if they required large turning circles. As the road was being designed to allow for emergency use, it would be able to be used in the event of diversions but these should be kept to a minimum.

An officer stated that non-standard vehicles such as big low loaders and mobile cranes had to notify their route each time they used it so there was not a standard route as the whole route had to be approved. Southwark Bridge was not a preferred one but the weight limit was unrestricted so it could take every abnormal movement. The Officer informed Members that the city was often a destination but it was also a route from the east where much of the equipment was stored, to the centre and south and west of London. Many of these vehicles came through the City on Upper and Lower Thames Street. Many of them had to go into Westminster to get across the river whereas using London Bridge and Arthur Street would be a simpler route.

An Officer stated that the Bridge House Estate Board could challenge the recommended traffic order once the consultation process began. The Officer also stated that before TfL decided Arthur Street should be shut, they undertook modelling work as outlined in the report. They had predicted that Blackfriars Bridge would take most of the diverted traffic and negligible traffic would be diverted to Tower Bridge.

In response to a Member's question. An Officer stated that Blackfriars Bridge was suitable for accommodating all vehicles and that Blackfriars, Southwark and London Bridges could take all normal road going vehicles. In order of capacity for abnormal vehicles, Southwark Bridge was the least capable, then Blackfriars Bridge with London Bridge able to take any vehicle. Blackfriars Bridge was a north-south route as it was not possible to get onto Upper and Lower Thames Street without going through the local network. Southwark Bridge had a high proportion of normal HGVs going across it because they could turn right or left along Upper and Lower Thames Street.

When the City agreed to the loss of Arthur Street prior to Bank Station works, the benefit to the City was that all the HGVs delivering to that site would enter along Upper and Lower Thames Street and turn right into Arthur Street with no impact to the City network. At the time there were no restrictions on the heavier vehicles and abnormal vehicles using London Bridge.

The Chairman asked if, once the street was closed, there would be any opportunities for greening and making the street more accessible. The Officer stated that if this option was agreed, there would be further discussions with TfL to see how much they could further improve the layout including, greening, seating and materials. A requirement could be imposed before the traffic order was made.

RESOLVED – That the Sub-Committee

1. Agree and support TfL's proposal as detailed under paragraph 10 of the Officer report.

2. Agree to commence the promotion of a traffic order to close Arthur Street at its junction with King William Street to all vehicles except pedal cycles.
3. Authorise the Executive Director Environment to consider responses to the traffic order consultation and if they consider it appropriate, to make the Order.
4. Agree that a requirement be imposed that improvements to the layout including greening, seating and materials take place prior to the traffic order being made.

9. **OUTSTANDING REFERENCES**

The Chairman stated that dockless vehicles and Beech Street had been discussed. Bank Junction would be discussed at the next Court of Common Council meeting.

RECEIVED.

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

There were no questions.

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

There were no urgent items.

12. **EXCLUSION OF THE PUBLIC**

The Committee agreed to exclude the public from the Non-Public part of the meeting in line with Section 100A(4) of the Local Government Act 1972.

13. **EXTENDED REVIEW OF DOCKLESS OPERATOR, LIME - NON-PUBLIC APPENDIX**

RESOLVED – That the Sub-Committee notes the non-public appendix.

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

There were no non-public questions.

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

There was no urgent business to be considered in the non-public session.

The meeting ended at 3.00 pm

Chairman

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