

Brighton & Hove City Council

Environment, Transport & Sustainability Committee

Agenda Item 88

Subject: A259 Active Travel Scheme - Walking, Cycling and Accessibility Improvements

Date of meeting: 15th March 2022

Report of: Executive Director Economy, Environment & Culture

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Ward(s) affected: All

For general release

1. Purpose of the report and policy context

- 1.1 This report outlines the results of the second round of consultation as requested at ETS Committee on the 21st July 2022 for the Tranche 2 Active Travel Funded A259 Walking, Cycling and Accessibility Improvement Scheme. This report also presents the detailed scheme design as informed by the consultation.
- 1.2 Central government released their 'Gear Change' vision document in July 2020 which sets out the national ambition to make walking and cycling the natural choice for short journeys, or as part of a longer journey. Accompanying this is Local Transport Note 1/20 (LTN 1/20) which sets out a step change in how Local Authorities must deliver cycling improvements. These policy documents have been utilised when designing the proposed improvements.

2. Recommendations

- 2.1 That this Committee approve the A259 Active Travel Scheme - Walking, Cycling and Accessibility Improvements detailed design scheme as presented in Appendix 1.
- 2.2 That the Committee authorises officers to commence the construction phase and to procure the Works Contract under the authority of the Executive Director.

3. Context and background information

- 3.1 The Government published its Gear Change Cycling Strategy and Cycle Infrastructure Design Guidance (LTN 1/20) in July 2020. The Active Travel Fund was made available by government, over two phases to date,

to help local authorities to implement this. As part of the first phase of this scheme, temporary cycle facilities were introduced along the seafront (between West Street and Fourth Avenue) in August 2020 in order to bring the existing cycle lane into line with the new national standards. Following consultation, including through the Traffic Regulation Order (TRO) process, these temporary facilities were made permanent by ETS Committee in November 2021 and officers were instructed to develop options for permanent infrastructure and undertake further consultation for the second phase of the scheme.

- 3.2 Locally, the new Local Transport Plan 5 (LTP5) is being developed and has been presented at this ETS committee with objectives to support access around the City more safely, sustainably, and easily. One of the key principles is shifting how people travel – broadly prioritising walking and cycling for shorter journeys and public transport for longer journeys. The Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan (LCWIP) is also in development and identifies high priority strategic routes in the city for improvement, including all the routes being taken forward in the Active Travel Fund such as the A259. The LCWIP will strategically set out a network for active travel improvements in the city and will assist the Council in seeking funding for improvements.
- 3.3 In addition, the Council has committed to being net carbon neutral by 2030, the Carbon Neutral Programme identifies the transport sector for the largest share of the required cut in carbon emissions in the City and includes a key action to develop a public realm which enables active travel.
- 3.4 The citizens' Climate Assembly, held in autumn 2020, noted a representative group of residents' own recommendations for improvement. These included 'cyclists should be prioritised over cars through well-designed cycle networks that are safe and practical for day-to-day use as well as leisure' and the 'creation of healthier low traffic/pedestrianised communities'.
- 3.5 The A259 scheme was originally consulted on in February 2021 and the results of this were brought to the ETS committee in July 2021. Members requested a further consultation on the detailed design of this scheme, which was subsequently conducted between November 2021 to January 2022, for which the result are outlined below.

4. Analysis and consideration of alternative options

- 4.1 These proposals have been developed from the initial plans presented to ETS committee in July 2021. Through the consultation process we have made significant improvements to the scheme to pedestrian, cycling and disabled access, based on feedback received. These proposed plans include extra alterations which came from feedback from community groups, stakeholder meetings and completed questionnaires.
- 4.2 One of the key changes to the original design is that are we are no longer proposing the reversal of the one-way system on Kings Esplanade. We are also no longer proposing moving the parking on Kings Esplanade from the

south to the north side of the road. This change has been made following clear feedback from local residents who had a number of concerns to this section of the proposals. We will also be cutting back some of the walls between Hove Street and Wharf Road. This is to improve visibility sight lines for pedestrians exiting from side access road by the West Hove Lawns.

- 4.3 The detail design now includes:
- Reallocation of a general lane of traffic to form the extension of the westbound cycle lane on the A259, with cyclists separated from motor vehicles from Fourth Avenue to Wharf Road.
 - Removal of the bus stop at Langdale Gardens
 - Introduction of a Bus Boarder Hybrid Solution at bus stops along the route.
 - Improve visibility sight lines for pedestrians exiting from side access road by the West Hove Lawns.
 - Increase of 26 parking spaces for Blue Badge Holders.
 - Provision of around 70 cycle parking spaces, 10% of which will provide for specially adapted bicycles.
 - Additional pedestrian space, including potential for outside seating along Victoria Terrace of circa 100m²
 - Raised Table junctions on Medina Terrace, Sussex Road and King's Esplanade to improve pedestrian access.
 - Dropped Kerbs to assist wheelchair users, mobility scooter, pushchairs and all pedestrians.
 - 3 new loading bays in Victoria Terraces and the Kings Esplanade.
- 4.4 The introduction of the cycle lanes between West Street and Fourth Avenue showed an immediate increase in cycling (30%) in September 2020, and this increase has continued into June 2021 (85%); when compared to data prior to the cycle lane's introduction, in June 2019.
- 4.5 Early signs along this stretch from the casualty data analysis are positive and no casualties involving pedestrians or cyclists were recorded between August 2020 and March 2021. However, casualty data would need to be reviewed over a longer period before any definitive conclusions can be made and will need further monitoring in post pandemic traffic conditions due to current traffic levels still fluctuating.
- 4.6 With the implementation of these proposals, we are likely to see more people choosing cycling as a safe and sustainable alternative to the car, as well as a reduction in casualties as represented in the data above, as we continue to provide protected spaces for pedestrians and cyclists.
- 4.7 There will be a loss of parking associated with the proposed plans, which is covered in more detail in appendix 3. The greatest loss is 30 bays in shared use bays for both Pay & Display and Permit Holder Bays in Zone N. Many of these bays are repurposed to provide 4 additional loading bays required and 27 disabled parking. This is to improve access for local businesses and disabled persons. The councils predicted loss of income due to the loss of these bays is estimated at £10,875.

- 4.8 In terms of loading requirements a servicing audit was carried out on Saturday 22 and Tuesday 25 May 2021 at the shop frontages along Victoria Terrace. The results showed a high level of double parking on the carriageway with 30 and 39 instances on each survey day respectively. It also showed many instances of parking bays used for long-term parking, which was blocking access for deliveries and can be dangerous and obstructive to local businesses. To address these issues, we propose to provide 3 loading bays and change the parking to short-stay only.
- 4.9 The servicing audit was used to help identify the ideal location for these additional loading bays for both business and resident use. When Officers engaged with local businesses and residents in the area, loading was raised as a concern, along with and lack of short stay parking
- 4.10 As well as addressing loading and access needs these proposals also would provide additional and much needed footway outside the shop frontages along Victoria Terraces, approximately 100m². Studies have showed that where footways are extended along shop frontages that this draws in more footfall to the area by between 20 – 30% and can increase sales by 30% or more. Therefore, these proposals are also aimed to help the local businesses along Victoria Terrace and increase revenue.
- 4.11 Air quality diffusion tubes for monitoring ambient NO² which have been set up in two locations on Victoria Terraces, A259. Data collection started in June 2021 and will continue to be monitored over a number of years. Brighton and Hove City Council (BHCC) have so far received monthly data from June 2021 through to December 2021. NO² is monitored annually and BHCC currently only have 6 months' worth of data.
- 4.12 For these locations the 6-month combined average ambient NO² at these locations is 24.07 µg m³. The National air quality objectives and European Directive limit and target values for the protection of human health states that the annual nitrogen dioxide objective does not exceed 40 µg m³. These limit values are legally binding parameters and must not be exceeded. Therefore, BHCC monitoring results indicate that this level is not being exceeded annually, however it is worth noting than no level of human exposure to NO² is considered safe and this level will be having a negative impact of the health and wellbeing of local residents and business owners.

5. Community engagement and consultation

- 5.1 The consultation was conducted in line with the Active Travel Consultation Framework and the Consultation Plan for the A259 Active Travel Walking, Cycling and Accessibility scheme was further informed by additional engagement with Ward Members.
- 5.2 Consultation was conducted between November 2021 and January 2022. An information pack, including plans for the scheme was sent to over 8,000 business and residential properties in the vicinity of the proposed improvements. Residents and the wider community were also invited to go online to give their views on the proposals.

- 5.3 Two open days were also hosted in December 2021 at the King Alfred Leisure Centre where officers were present to answer questions and provide information about the proposals in detail and advise on how to formally provide feedback. Numerous stakeholder meetings were hosted by council officers with a wide range of groups and organisations from the community. A full summary of all feedback can be found in appendix 2.
- 5.4 An independent Accessibility Audit was commissioned, for the area around Victoria Terrace and Kings Esplanade. This provided us with areas of concern to accessibility for disabled people. Working with our design team we have been able to find solutions to the majority of issues raised and feel the proposals will greatly improve access in the area.
- 5.5 Since the A259 Phase 1 was made permanent at November ETS committee, improvements have been made to that section. Working with BADGE, a disabled drivers community group, we have also provided 5 new disabled parking bays in the Phase 1 area.
- 5.6 For the consultation survey, 854 responses (95.2%) came from city residents and 43 responses (4.8%) from residents in other, mostly neighboring, authorities. We can see from the data that higher numbers of respondents live in the vicinity of the proposals, however as noted above there is likely to be high interest in this area from across the city and beyond due to its location on the seafront and the importance of the local visitor economy.
- 5.7 The headline summaries from the feedback received showed that in most aspects of the proposals that there is support for the proposals. 50.6% of respondents agree with widening footways, 38.2% disagree and 10.8% neither agree nor disagree. 66.8% of respondents agree with the improved pedestrian crossing points compared with only 19.8% who disagree and 12.9% neither agree nor disagree.
- 5.8 Overall, there is a high level of agreement that there should be more public space outside businesses (56.2%) and more provision of disabled parking bays (53.8%) than for more or improved loading bays (37.1%). However, in regard to the loading bay 39.8% said they neither agree nor disagree.
- 5.9 Feedback on the proposed cycling improvements in the area suggest that of those who responded, 46% agree with the proposals to improve cycling lanes in the area, compared to 2.1% neither agree or disagree, and 51.7% disagree. However, it should be noted that 75.9% of people who cycle once a week or more support these proposals. There is also support for the additional cycle parking in the area with 52.2% for and 16.1% against.
- 5.10 The majority of respondents feel that these proposals will improve safety on the public highway. In terms of pedestrian safety 47.1% of respondents feel it will improve safety, 42.4% disagreed and 10.6% were unsure. In terms of cyclist safety 45.6% of respondents feel it will improve safety, 41.8% disagree and 12.6% are unsure. In terms of improving safety for those with

disabilities 41.9% feel it will improve safety, 33.1% disagree and 25% are unsure.

- 5.11 369 (41%) of respondents said they would be encouraged to use the new cycle lane, 375 (45%) said they would be encouraged to visit local businesses and amenities as a result of the improvements, and 375 (42%) said they would be encouraged to visit the seafront as a result of the improvements.
- 5.12 Top comments in relation to walking was a concern about pedestrian and cycle conflict with 56 respondents raising this. An important element of these proposals it is that they aim to improve pedestrian footways on Victoria Terraces and improve visibility splays for pedestrians using the West Hove Lawns access roads. It will also provide a new protected space for cyclists on the A259 to keep pedestrians and cyclists protected from motor vehicles as well as taking another step toward fully keeping cyclists safely away from pedestrians.
- 5.13 A concern was raised by 206 respondents regarding the removal of a traffic lane. Respondents stated that it will cause congestion, creating additional pollution and lack of turn offs will cause additional queuing. We recognize that insufficient turn offs are causing some delays in phase one of the A259 and have drawn up plans to address this, but it is also recognized that when road space is reallocated to other modes there will inevitably be some journey time delays. For Phase 2, officers have had significantly more time for consideration to creating new turn off areas and new turn offs are provided in the detail design.
- 5.14 On the topic of cycling, 168 respondents felt that there was already enough provision for cyclists and that the lanes were under used. The existing cycle lanes do not meet the new national standards as outlined in LTN1/20 and to meet this need in their current locations would require the removal of a significant amount of additional footway from pedestrians. Therefore, this option was not pursued and it was felt that the use of the carriageway is the safer and more effective option.
- 5.15 The top comment in relation to disability access was that 27 respondents stated that the proposals would make it more difficult for disabled parking and discourage visiting to the area. 18 respondents stated there was not enough disabled parking in the area. As part of the proposals we will be providing an additional 26 motor vehicle disabled parking bays, significant disabled cycle parking as well as ensuring that all crossings are brought up to standard for accessibility. Additional loading facilities will also allow disabled people to access the area via taxi or by being dropped off.
- 5.16 We also found in the survey that the majority of respondents think that the proposals will improve access for disabled people in the area with 41.9% agreeing it will improve access, 33.1% felt that it wouldn't and 25% were not sure.

- 5.17 The majority of free text comments indicated that the plans were supported, comments also reinforced the overall need to support sustainable travel. This is a key objective for these proposals.

6. Conclusion

- 6.1 This report sets out the proposals to improve walking, cycling and accessibility along the A259 and the likely benefits to the area. Officers will continue to monitor the scheme post-implementation to assess the overall impact. The consultation has highlighted a number of concerns in the area that these proposals aim to address.
- 6.2 These proposals will further help towards delivering high-quality walking and cycling infrastructure and is likely to significantly improve road safety conditions and further increase the uptake of cycling and footfall for businesses in Victoria Terrace.

7. Financial implications

- 7.1 The proposed works are estimated to cost £0.475m which is expected to be spent during 2022/23. This will be funded using £0.171m allocated within the Active Travel Fund Tranche 2 grant and £0.304m from the 2022/23 Local Transport Plan (LTP) capital allocation for 2022/23.
- 7.2 The estimated impact on income due to the removals and changes to parking bays is £0.011m. This will be reflected in parking income projections within the Targeted Budget Management reports to Policy & Resources committee during 2022/23 and built into future year's budget setting.

Finance officer consulted: James Hengeveld Date consulted 02/03/22

8. Legal implications

- 8.1 The Traffic regulations orders required as a result of the detailed design will need to follow the statutory process set out in the Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984 and the Local Authorities' Traffic Orders (Procedure) (England and Wales) Regulations 1996, which will require a period of public consultation.

Name of lawyer consulted: Hilary Woodward Date consulted: 01/03/22

9. Equalities implications

- 9.1 Statutory guidance from Department for Transport (DfT) updated in February 2021 reiterates that the public sector equality duty continues to apply as Local Authorities make changes to their road networks in response to Covid-19. The Council must ensure that elements of a scheme do not discriminate, directly or indirectly, and must consider their duty to make reasonable adjustments anticipating the needs of those with protected characteristics. The guidance emphasises that groups representing disabled people and others with protected characteristics should be consulted at an early stage of

scheme development and accessibility requirements apply to both temporary and permanent measures.

- 9.2 DfT's Local Transport Note 1.20 (LTN1/20) which sets the standards for cycling design, and which Local Authorities receiving the Active Travel Fund Tranche 2 funding must abide by, states: (4.5.11): Local authorities are bound by the Equality Act 2010 in discharging their functions, which includes managing their road networks. Designers should provide infrastructure that is accessible to all, and the dimensions and other features set out in this guidance should help ensure that their designs comply with the Public Sector Equality Duty.
- 9.3 Officers have conducted an overarching Equality Impact Assessment (EqIA) for the Active Travel Fund schemes. We have also consulted with various disabled groups from across the country and locally including guide dogs for the blind, Badge and Possibility People.
- 9.4 These proposals would see all crossing points in the area brought up to disabled compliant standards. Additional footway to provide better and easier access to those with disabilities. 27 additional motor vehicle disabled parking spaces, on top of the 5 additional disabled bays recently included in as part of phase one and disabled accessible cycle parking.
- 9.5 Working with Possibility People a group that represents disabled persons, we ask them to produce a accessibility Audit for the area around Victoria Terrace and Kings Esplanade. They were able to provide us with a long list of issue with accessibility for persons with disabilities, through working with our design team we have been able to find solutions to the majority of issues raised.
- 9.6 As part of this scheme we will be able to bring many areas and crossing into line with national standard to provide accessible crossing, accessible footway, disabled compliant cycle lanes and significant increase in disabled motor vehicle parking.

10. Sustainability implications

- 10.1 The measures will improve the transport network for sustainable modes of transport by reallocating road space. This will give opportunities for more people to switch to low carbon modes of transport from single occupancy car use.

11. Public health implications:

- 11.1 Enabling greater uptake of active travel across the City will provide both short and long term benefits to the mental and physical health of our residents. This approach supports the implementation of the Brighton & Hove Health and Wellbeing Strategy.

Supporting Documentation

1. Appendices

1. Appendix 1: A259 Active Travel Scheme – Detailed Design Pack.pdf
2. Appendix 2: A259 Active Travel Scheme – Consultation Report
3. Appendix 3: A259 Active Travel Scheme – Parking Loss Summary

