

Subject:	Results of Motorcycles in Bus Lanes trial		
Date of Meeting:	7 October 2014		
Report of:	Executive Director Environment, Development & Housing		
Contact Officer:	Name:	Matthew Thompson	Tel: 29-0235
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Ward(s) affected:	Patcham; Withdean; Rottingdean Coastal; Moulsecoomb and Bevendean; Hollingdean and Stamner		

FOR GENERAL RELEASE**1. PURPOSE OF REPORT AND POLICY CONTEXT**

- 1.1 The Government's Motorcycling Strategy published by the Department for Transport in February 2005, sought to facilitate motorcycling as a choice of travel within a safe and sustainable transport framework, and set out policy issues to consider. The Strategy recommends that care should be taken to mitigate foreseeable and avoidable risks.
- 1.2 Brighton and Hove has run a trial to allow powered two wheelers (Motorcycles) to use two sections of bus lanes in the city for the past 12 months and the Committee is asked to consider the results of the trial and recommendations for a way forward.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS:

- 2.1 That the Committee instructs officers to revoke the existing Traffic Regulation Order (TRO) covering the bus lanes on the A259 and to create a new TRO to allow powered two wheelers (PTW) to access bus lanes from the Authority boundary at Saltdean to the Ovingdean roundabout.
- 2.2 That the Committee instructs officers to revoke the existing Traffic Regulation Order (TRO) covering the bus lanes on the A23 and to create a new TRO to allow PTW to access the bus lanes from Carden Avenue to Preston Drove with measures added to deal with road safety concerns identified at the Peacock Lane junction.
- 2.3 That the Committee agrees to a new 12 month monitored trial from December 2015, on an 18 month Experimental Order, to allow powered two wheelers to access bus lanes on the A270 in both directions from north of the Vogue Gyratory to the authority boundary at Stony Mere Way and makes funding available for this purpose.

3. CONTEXT/ BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Collisions Data

- 3.1 Collision data on both the A259 and the A23 during the first thirteen months of the trial involving PTW, pedal cycles, and pedestrians has been monitored. Data for the first month period has been discounted in order to give the scheme time to 'bed in' and become familiar to regular road users. Analysis has therefore been carried out on a full 12 month period from June 2013 to June 2014.
- 3.2 Prior to the trial period, the section of A259 now under consideration recorded a three year average of 2.6 collisions per year involving cyclists, pedestrians or PTW. During the 12 months from 4 June 2013 to 3 June 2014 only two collisions were recorded. One of these collisions was in the westbound bus lane where the trial was in operation and this involved a collision between a bicycle and a private car.
- 3.3 The section of A23 in the trial recorded a three year average prior to the trial of 5.33 collisions per year involving PTW, pedal cycles and pedestrians. Over the three year period this included 7 bicycles, 7 motorcycles and two pedestrians.
- 3.4 During the current trial between 4 June 2013 to 3 June 2014, 2 serious and 8 slight injury collisions were recorded in this section of the A23. Two collisions occurred on the northbound bus lanes which are not part of the trial, one serious involving a PTW and one slight involving a bicycle.
- 3.5 There were no pedestrian casualties recorded on the A23 section during the trial. Cyclist collisions were consistent with the previous three year average, suggesting the trial also had no impact on cyclist safety. However, the number of PTW collisions (6) was slightly more than twice the annual average for PTW collisions recorded prior to the trial.
- 3.6 Two of the southbound incidents involving PTW's and one involving a bicycle were recorded at or near the junction of Peacock Lane.
- 3.7 Investigation undertaken by the Council's Road Safety Engineer has identified that this junction is partially concealed by two large trees and a bend in the road. In all three collisions recorded, a car travelling south in the general traffic lane turned across the path of a rider in the bus or cycle lane.
- 3.8 The Road Safety Engineer has recommended the installation of a 'loop' in the cycle and bus lane which will detect oncoming vehicles including cyclists and PTW. This will activate a warning sign to alert riders they are approaching a junction and drivers in the general traffic lane to the presence of a motorbike or cycle in the bus lane.
- 3.9 It is proposed that this junction will be monitored for a further year once the new TRO is in force. A new TRO is required because the maximum period for an

experimental order (18 months) has already been used at this site and the law does not permit a further extension.

Traffic Flow Data

- 3.10 Traffic counter data from the A23 before and after the trial shows that PTW numbers are low, remaining well below one percent of traffic on this route, but have increased from 0.63% to 0.75%. Speed monitoring suggests that only 6.7% of traffic in the bus lanes after the trial was travelling in excess of 36mph, an increase of 0.6% on pre-trial levels. Cyclist numbers are also consistent, suggesting the scheme has not deterred cyclists from using the route.

Data from the A259 specific to the bus lane shows PTW were 2.8% of the traffic prior to the trial. This increased to 6.4% in the first year of the trial. Cycle numbers remain low (59 per day). It is considered that this is because of the topography and the availability of the undercliff route from Saltdean to the Marina. Figures for the cycle counter on the East Sussex side of the boundary at Telscombe Cliffs Way suggest that about 90 bicycles a day are using that section, suggesting about a third are opting for a flatter route from Saltdean into Brighton. This does not appear to have altered as a result of the trial on the A259.

- 3.11 Lane changing behaviour by all vehicles at the start and end of the bus lanes was also monitored. The general premise for this monitoring was that more frequent lane changing manoeuvres and lane changes closer to the start and ends of the bus lane increase the risk to vulnerable road users. Officers also wanted to establish whether motorcycles entering the bus lane were causing a hazard, if there was any negative impact on cycling numbers and what percentage of PTW users were choosing to use the bus lanes.
- 3.11 During the trial, the A259 bus lanes were also the subject of a trial of bus lane cameras which was widely publicised. Monitoring shows that 96% fewer cars used the bus lane in a 24 hour period than in 2013. Reductions were similar for goods vehicles. This resulted in significantly fewer lane changing manoeuvres.
- 3.12 The data has been passed to the Council's Parking Enforcement team who are proposing permanent sites for bus lane cameras. These figures suggest cameras will have a positive impact on safety by reducing manoeuvres as well as keeping the bus lanes clear.
- 3.13 The trial did not alter the numbers of pedal cyclists using the bus lanes. East Sussex County Council (ESCC) has undertaken a safety assessment of the A259 between Telscombe Cliffs and the B&HCC boundary at East Saltdean. The assessment did not identify any major operational or road safety issues. Between 4 May 2013 and 23rd May 2014 one collision was recorded, involving a pedestrian crossing the bus lane in front of a motorcyclist, whilst traffic in the general traffic lane was stationary.

- 3.14 The number of motorcyclists using this section of the bus lane has gradually increased over the duration of the trial with the number of motorcyclists using the general traffic lane decreasing proportionately. ESCC has concluded that the introduction of motorcyclists and cyclists into the bus lane has not resulted in any injury accidents over the duration of the trial.
- 3.15 On the A23, where there were no camera trials and no changes were detected in cyclist numbers during our trial period, the number of PTW's using the bus lane increased significantly.
- 3.16 The number of private cars entering the bus lane dropped and overall there were fewer lane changes at the start of the bus lane and where the lane finishes, lane changing behaviour does not appear to have been affected. There was a significant reduction in the number of light goods vehicles entering the bus lane before it finishes at the southern end. Officers consider it reasonable to conclude this may be as a result of publicity around the trial.
- 3.17 Officers conclude that discontinuing motorcycle access on the A23 would be difficult to justify given the low numbers of collisions involved. The new TRO with the additional measures suggested leaves the Council with the option to revoke the new order if future casualties are a cause for concern.

4. ANALYSIS & CONSIDERATION OF ANY ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS

Future Trial Sites

- 4.1 Initial consultation on the trial resulted in objections because the trial scheme was not universally applied to all bus lanes in the City. In deciding whether to make permanent and extend the duration of existing trial areas, the opportunity for creating new trial areas was re-examined. This has resulted in the following conclusions;
- 4.2 The A270 Lewes Road complies with Department for Transport guidance as a suitable site. A permanent scheme in this location would remove the need for a delay in starting the scheme (to collect baseline data) and the additional costs in monitoring. The combined width of the new A270 Lewes Road southbound bus lanes and cycle lanes varies between 4.5 and 5m. This means they are wider than the Department for Transport recommended minimum width of 4m and could now be considered for shared use by PTW's.
- 4.3 The A270 is, however, more heavily trafficked than the A23 with more side turnings and sites such as the Moulsecoomb campus of Brighton University, which generate more pedestrian and cyclist movements, as well as major junctions at Coombe Road, The Highway (Bevendean), Moulsecomb Way and Coldean Lane. These sites create a risk of higher casualties and officers consider it would be better to retain the option to suspend a trial if necessary.
- 4.4 The Highways Agency is the Highway Authority responsible for the short section bus lane on the A270 north of Stoney Mere Way which extends up the slip road towards the A27. The Highways Agency do not have any objection to the trial

the Council is proposing for the A270 but have indicated traffic order costs would be rechargeable and the Council would be expected to liaise with the Highways' Agency's service providers Balfour Beatty/ Mott MacDonald (Joint Venture) in respect of any signing amendments and to meet related costs.

- 4.5 Given that a trial on this route would benefit PTW users accessing both University campuses and the Amex Stadium, inclusion of this short stretch would be desirable.

4.6 Edward Street

Upon completion, the Edward Street bus lanes will be operational at peak times only., due to the loading concerns of business fronting the route. A 2006 study reviewing Bristol City Council's scheme to allow motorcycles in bus lanes, showed that part-time lanes were much less safe for motorcyclists than full-time lanes.

- 4.7 In addition to this, there are a significant number of side roads that break the bus lane where the visibility for emerging traffic is restricted by the building line. For these reasons officers do not recommend introduction of the PTW trial on this route.

4.8 Other central city bus lanes

A review of the remaining bus lanes operating in the City shows that they all fall below the Department for Transport recommended minimum width of 4m. Collision data analysis shows that pedestrian and cyclist casualties have reduced on these routes in the past year. Research evidence from schemes in London and elsewhere indicates that allowing PTW into narrow bus lanes can have a negative impact on vulnerable road user safety. Prior to this trial, Sussex Police also recommended that central city lanes be excluded for these reasons.

- 4.9 Three wheeled motorcycles and motorcycles with side cars are currently excluded from the trial, because the majority of these vehicles have a much wider wheel base. It is likely that they would therefore need to cross the solid white line delineating the bus lane to pass a stationary bus at a stop, increasing the risk of collisions with vehicles in the general traffic lanes.
- 4.10 Sussex Constabulary's Roads Policing Unit has confirmed that they are happy to follow this guidance for the bus lanes scheme. This means riders will not be stopped if they are using the designated A259 & A23 lanes during the trial provided that they observe all other Highway Code rules.

5. **COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT & CONSULTATION**

- 5.1 The experimental 18 month Traffic Regulation Order to establish the trial came into force on 4 May 2013 and was open for comments until 3 November 2013. The Council's Legal Team has advised that these comments did not need to be considered until the Committee had formally considered a proposal to make the order permanent.
- 5.2 Four responses were received, including two from the same person.

- 5.3 One person objected to the trial on the grounds that it excluded three wheeler motorcycles with narrow wheel bases. The current police policy on these vehicles (see section 3.15) was explained to the respondent who was appreciative of the informal exemption (explained above at 4.4.1 & 2) but has not withdrawn the objection.
- 5.4 Another person, employed at the University, asked why the trial could not be extended to the Lewes Road Bus lanes when they are completed. This person believes it would make the journey safer and made the point that the route is heavily used by motorcycles. The respondent felt that some drivers on the Lewes Road deliberately try to squeeze motorcycles out and that being in a separate lane would avoid this problem.
- 5.5 A submission, on behalf of the Brighton branch of the Motorcycle Action Group (MAG), warmly welcomed the idea of an extension to the trial and commented that anything that gives the riders of powered two wheelers more road space would be very welcome. MAG pointed out that excluding PTW from bus lanes restricts the available width of road space for PTW to manoeuvre in and therefore adversely affects their safety.
- 5.6 The MAG also points to a growing trend across the country for bikers to use bus lanes and urges the Council, following the trial, to consider the default position to be that the riders of powered two wheelers are allowed in all bus lanes unless there are any truly valid reasons for banning them.
- 5.7 A further four informal submissions in support of the scheme were received via the Sussex Safer Roads Partnership. These all praised the scheme, with two pointing out that the greater visibility the riders felt in the lanes made them feel safer and praised the courtesy of bus and taxi drivers. One spoke of the road rage from drivers experienced as a scooter rider while riding in general traffic lanes in the city.

6. CONCLUSION

- 6.1 PTW's remain a small proportion of Brighton & Hove's total daily traffic, yet road casualties are high considering the number of road users. To date this PTW's in Bus Lanes trial has not produced conclusive evidence that road safety will be made any worse by such schemes on the city's busy arterial routes.
- 6.2 A period of further monitoring of the permanent scheme on the A23 from November 2014 and a further trial on the A270 in 2015/16 will ensure that the Council has the necessary evidence to make a final decision on a wider scheme which would see outer ring arterial routes with bus lanes including PTW, while retaining a restriction on shared use in the central city.

7. FINANCIAL & OTHER IMPLICATIONS:

- 7.1 The capital costs associated to the recommendations of this report will be funded from the Local Transport Plan (LTP) capital programme. The total budget allocation for trial motorcycle schemes is £18,000 in the 2014-15 financial year

as approved at Policy and Resources committee, which includes £10,000 of 2014-15 LTP allocation and £8,000 of previous financial years underspends

Finance Officer Consulted: Steven Bedford

Date: 09/09/14

7.2 Legal Implications:

7.2.1 The Council's powers and duties under the Highways Act 1980 and the Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984 must be exercised to secure the expeditious, convenient and safe movement of all types of traffic including motorcyclists, cyclists and pedestrians.

7.2.2 The Council has to follow the rules on consultation set out by the government and the courts. The Council must ensure that the consultation process is carried out at a time when proposals are still at their formative stage, that sufficient reasons and adequate time must be given to allow intelligent consideration and responses and that results are properly taken into account in finalising the proposals.

7.2.3 After the proposals are formally advertised, the Council can, in the light of objections and other representations received, decide to re-consult either widely or specifically when it believes that it would be appropriate before deciding the final composition of any associated orders. Where there are unresolved objections to the Speed Limit Orders, then the matter is required to return to Environment, Transport & Sustainability Committee for a decision

7.2.4 An Experimental Traffic Regulation Order will be required to introduce the changes to the Vogue Gyratory and Stony Mere Way area and advertised in accordance with the relevant legislation

7.2.4 Experimental orders can continue in force for up to 18 months.

7.2.5 Objections can be made to an Experimental Order for six months from the date that it is made. Any objections to the experimental order must be considered before any order giving permanent effect to the changes is made.

7.2.6 There are no adverse human rights implications arising from this report

Lawyer Consulted: Katie Matthews

Date: 09.09.14

Equalities Implications:

7.3 There are no equalities implications in addition to considerations already made regarding vulnerable road users.

Sustainability Implications:

7.4 The council's Environment protection team has calculated that Brighton PTW emissions contribute a low percentage to ambient NO₂ and estimate a contribution to roadside NO₂ of around 1 to 3% from PTW depending on the road link.

- 7.5 Bus lanes are always likely to have more capacity than the general traffic lane. Therefore any vehicle is likely to have reduced journey time, improved MPG and lower emissions if it has access to the relatively free flowing bus lane.
- 7.6 Larger powered bikes have very different performance specifications, bigger engines and higher emissions than bikes with smaller engines. DVLA figures in the first quarter of 2014 show PTW registrations in all engine classes have been static in Brighton and Hove for the past two years but are still well below pre-recession levels.

SUPPORTING DOCUMENTATION

Background Documents

1. The Governments' Motorcycling Strategy - DFT February 2005

2. DFT Traffic advisory leaflet 2/07 – The use of bus lanes by motorcycles