

**CABINET MEMBER FOR REGENERATION AND DEVELOPMENT  
28th May, 2012**

Present:- Councillor Smith (in the Chair); Councillors Clark, Godfrey and Dodson.

An apology for absence was received from Councillor Pickering.

**G1. PROPOSED CYCLING IMPROVEMENTS IN AND TOWARDS ROTHERHAM TOWN CENTRE.**

Consideration was given to the report and appendices presented by the Transportation and Highways Projects Manager that referred to proposals to improve the cycling infrastructure in and around the Rotherham Town Centre.

Previous investment had been made to improve routes and facilities towards and into the Town Centre, but it was now considered that further investment was needed to provide a more continuous, direct and attractive route for cyclists wishing to access or cross the town centre to access services including employment, retail and education.

The submitted report noted the improvements that had been undertaken from the Masbrough, Moorgate and Templeborough directions into the Town Centre. However, the roads that were available for cyclists to travel around the town centre, such as the A630 Centenary Way, carried large volumes of traffic, including HVGs, and travelled at high speed.

In response to these pressures, a number of proposals had been made in order to improve access and facilities for cyclists: -

- It was proposed that the pedestrianised streets of the Town Centre be opened up to cyclists through the changing of the current no vehicles restriction, to a no motor vehicles restriction and the erection of new signage. As the streets had been designed for vehicle access to accommodate loading and unloading, pedestrians and vehicles had good visibility of one another, a principle that would extend to cyclists using the same space.
- An amendment to the Traffic Regulation Order in place was proposed so that motor vehicle access would be prohibited between 10.00 am – 4.00 pm, instead of the current 10.00 am – 5.00 pm.

Allowing cyclists into the pedestrianised zone was essential to the development of a continuous and direct cycle network and to complete the routes across the Town Centre.

Other suggestions were in the initial stages of investigation, and included: -

- The introduction of a continuous cross Town Cycle route, from Westgate and Main Street to Clifton Park via High Street and Doncaster Gate.
- To extend the current shared use cycle route between Worrygoose roundabout to the Canklow side of the Rotherway roundabout, which

would include a contra-flow cycle lane on the service road at the side of West Bawtry Road.

- Cycling in Clifton Park was currently prohibited by a by-law. It was suggested that investigation commence with the Green Spaces team into removing the by-law to allow cycling in the Park.

Financial issues in relation to the proposals were considered.

Consultation would be undertaken in relation to the proposals with town centre businesses and street market traders.

Discussion ensued, and the following issues were raised and clarified: -

- Safety issues around cycling in pedestrianised areas;
- Enforcement and preventative measures;
- Secure cycle parking in and around the town centre.

Resolved: - (1) That the Director of Planning and Regeneration, in accordance with delegated powers, promote a Traffic Regulation Order to permit cycling within the pedestrianised areas as shown in the report submitted, and that as part of the promotion of the Traffic Regulation Order, businesses and street market traders within the pedestrianised zone be consulted with on the proposal to allow vehicle access during the hours of 10.00 a.m. and 4.00 p.m.

(2) That preliminary design and consultation work be undertaken on the introduction of a cycle link from Westgate to Clifton Park and that the outcome be presented to the Cabinet Member for consideration.

(3) That detailed design and consultation be undertaken on the proposal to extend the existing shared use footways on Bawtry Road between the Woorygoose and Rotherway roundabouts towards Canklow, as detailed in the report submitted and on Drawing No. 126/18/TT577 and, subject to no objections being received to the proposal, that the scheme be implemented.

(4) That investigations be undertaken into permitting cycling on identified route through Clifton Park.

## **G2. PROPOSED 20 MILES PER HOUR ZONE WITHIN ROTHERHAM TOWN CENTRE.**

Consideration was given to a report presented by the Transportation and Highways Project Manager proposing the introduction of a 20 mile per hour speed restriction on the majority of roads within the Rotherham Town Centre.

The proposal had been made to signify to drivers the different road environment of the Town Centre, due to its high levels of pedestrian activity. An analysis of the road accidents that had occurred in the streets where the proposal was suggested had been undertaken and was set out in report.

The benefits of reducing speed to 20 miles per hour included: -

- A slight reduction in injury accidents through an estimated reduction of speed by 1 or 2 miles per hour could potentially lead to a 6-12% reduction in accidents;
- Promotion of walking and cycling in the Town Centre as a more attractive activity;
- The use of a lower design standard for highway works, leading to increased flexibility and possible cost reductions.

There were no proposals to alter the access arrangements for buses, Town Centre visitors or delivery vehicles.

A number of speed surveys had been undertaken to compare which method would be more appropriate to implement and a copy of the survey had been displayed at Appendix A.

Analysis had also been provided in relation to the costs of implementing each method proposed, a comparison of the costs and associated signage and furniture requirements.

It was felt that the implementation of a 20 miles per hour zone in Rotherham Town Centre was the best option in relation to limiting streetscape and sign clutter.

Discussion ensued, and the following issues were raised: -

- Enforcement of 20 miles per hour zone;
- Maintenance of road surface around speed cushions and roundels.

Resolved: - (1) That detailed design and consultation on the introduction of a 20 miles per hour zone in the Rotherham Town Centre be undertaken and that, subject to no objections being received, the proposal be implemented.

(2) That, in accordance with delegated powers, the Director of Planning and Regeneration promote a Traffic Regulation Order to introduce a 20 mile per hour zone in the Rotherham Town Centre, in the areas shown on Drawing No. 126/46/TT85 within the report submitted.

**G3. PETITION RELATING TO THE WITHDRAWAL OF FREE TRANSPORT ASSISTANCE TO ASTON FENCE JUNIOR & INFANT SCHOOL AND ASTON ACADEMY.**

Consideration was given to the report presented by the Principal Officer for Education Transport detailing the receipt of a letter and petition following a decision by the Cabinet Member for Town Centres, Economic Growth and Prosperity on 23<sup>rd</sup> January, 2012 (Minute No. G86 (Withdrawal of Free Transport Assistance to Aston Fence Junior and Infant School and Aston Academy refers) which stated that: -

“Free transport assistance, in the form of zero fare bus passes, be not renewed for pupils living on the Coalbrook Estate, Woodhouse Mill, attending Aston Fence Junior and Infants School and Aston Academy, with effect from 1<sup>st</sup> September, 2012. Pupils would no longer be classed as “eligible” due to the existence of an available safe walking route.”

Following communication of the resolution to parents and carers, correspondence had been received from Orgreave Parish Council expressing the belief that the walking route was not safe, and cited the road conditions along the route, including heavy goods traffic accessing a building site, as unsafe for primary school age children.

The Parish Council also disputed that the route was a safe walking route as it ran alongside roads with speed limits of between 40 miles per hour and the national speed limit. It also stated that the decision to withdraw the free bus service would lead to an increase in parking outside both schools, resulting in congestion for local residents.

It was noted that although the petition contained 300 signatures, many of these were from Sheffield residents and Rotherham residents outside of the affected area. The proposed action involving both schools would affect 49 pupils.

The decision taken on 23<sup>rd</sup> January, 2012, was consistent with the Council's Policy where a risk assessment for an available walking route had been confirmed.

It was noted that there may be future changes to the use of industrial premises and road infrastructure in the area scoped by the Available Walking Route Risk Assessment. Either of these may prompt a review of the risk assessment, although this would be the case of any other area within the Rotherham boundary.

Discussion ensued, and the Cabinet Member questioned the Principal Officer for Education Transport on: -

- Distances in miles walked by the children of the Coalbrook Estate to Aston Fence Junior and Infant School and Aston Academy;
- The existence of a new available walking route risk assessment, which had not been available when the original zero fare passes had been issued.

Resolved: - (1) That the concerns raised by Orgreave Parish Council be noted.

(2) That the decision taken on 23<sup>rd</sup> January (Minute No. G86 refers) by the Cabinet Member be reaffirmed as consistent with the Council's policy,

**G4. PROPOSED TEMPORARY OFFER OF REDUCED PARKING CHARGES FOR COUNCIL EMPLOYEES TO EASE PARKING PRESSURE ON THE MASBROUGH AREA.**

Consideration was given to the report presented by the Streetpride Network Manager, Environment and Development Services, in relation to a proposal to alleviate parking pressures in the Masbrough area by the temporary offer of reduced parking charges for Council employees.

The report noted that there had been reports of pressure on on-street parking in the Masbrough area since the Council's Town Centre buildings had re-

located to Riverside House. A number of complaints had been received, and in particular from businesses in the area, many stating that their business had been severely affected due to these pressures.

A survey had been undertaken by the Council's Transportation Unit in relation to parking in Masbrough, which had shown a large increase. A consultation exercised had been commenced that was likely to result in the adoption of parking restrictions.

A proposed way of addressing these concerns in the interim period was to offer Council employees who were not currently permit holders the opportunity to purchase daily parking at a rate of £1.50 per day for three months. A minimum requirement of the offer would be that employees purchased ten full days of parking. It was estimated that the new car park at Sheffield Road had the capacity to accommodate a further 100 cars on a daily basis.

The risks and uncertainties associated with the offer were considered. These included staff being unwilling to sign-up to the offer, and the potential for other cars to 'backfill' any spaces that were freed up in Masbrough by the offer.

Discussion ensued on the proposal.

Resolved: - (1) That the report be received and its content noted.

(2) That the proposal to offer a three month reduced cost parking permit for the Sheffield Road car park for Council employees who did not already hold a parking permit be approved.