

CHELTENHAM TRANSPORT PLAN PHASE 4

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| Cabinet Date | 20 December 2019 |
| Environment and Planning | Cllr Nigel Moor |
| Key Decision | Yes |
| Background Documents | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. GCC Traffic Regulation Committee December 2019: report and additional documents 2. Addendum - GCC Traffic Regulation Committee recommendation December 2019 3. Cheltenham Borough Council Cabinet decision November 2019 4. Cheltenham Borough Council, Full Council decision January 2019 5. Cheltenham Transport Plan (CTP) Phase 4 Amendments, GCC Lead Cabinet Member briefing December 2018 6. GCC Local Transport Plan (LTP) 2015-2031 |
| Location/Contact for inspection of Background Documents | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. http://glostext.gloucestershire.gov.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=268&MId=9586&Ver=4 2. <i>Link to Addendum with TRC recommendation (to be published after TRC meeting on 16/12/2019)</i> 3. https://democracy.cheltenham.gov.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=166&MId=2980&Ver=4 4. https://democracy.cheltenham.gov.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=143&MeetingId=2949 5. https://www.gloucestershire.gov.uk/highways/major-projects-list/cheltenham-transport-plan/phase-4-amendment-boots-corner-trial-changes/ 6. https://www.gloucestershire.gov.uk/transport/gloucestershires-local-transport-plan-2015-2031/ |

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| Main Consultees | <p>A wide range of consultees engaged as part of the statutory public consultation on the original Experimental Traffic Regulation Orders (ETROs) for Phase 4 and all amendments to Phase 4, including:</p> <p>Cheltenham residents Cheltenham businesses and Business Improvement District GCC and Cheltenham Borough Council elected members for Cheltenham Cheltenham Borough Council Cheltenham Development Task Force Statutory consultees (police, fire, ambulance, road haulage, freight transport and bus operators) User groups</p> |
| Planned Dates | <p>There has been a public consultation on the relevant CTP Phase 4 ETROs (including any amendments) between June 2018 and December 2019. As the ETROs will lapse 18 months after the original ones were made they must be made permanent or abandoned by 28th December 2019.</p> <p>Should these ETROs be made permanent then local mitigation measures on some roads would commence in early 2020.</p> <p>Should these ETROs be abandoned then works to reinstate the former traffic regulations, lines, signs and other highway infrastructure would be implemented as soon as practically possible after 28th December 2019.</p> |
| Divisional Councillor | All Cheltenham divisions |
| Officer | Philip Williams Lead Commissioner Community Infrastructure Philip.williams@gloucestershire.gov.uk |
| Purpose of Report | To consider the recommendation of the TRC in respect of the amended versions of the ETROs for Phase 4 of the CTP and to decide whether to make them permanent or to abandon them. |
| Recommendations | That Cabinet: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Considers the recommendation of the TRC and decides whether to make permanent or to abandon the amended versions of the ETROs for Phase 4 of the CTP. 2. Delegates authority to the Lead Commissioner: Highway Authority to implement its decision 3. Commits to continue working with key stakeholders to improve transport and access in Cheltenham town centre. |
| Reasons for recommendations | <p>To comply with the council's legal obligation to consider feedback to the recent public consultation on the amended ETROs.</p> <p>To provide clarity about the future status of experimental changes made to the highways and transport network in Cheltenham town centre and surrounding areas.</p> |

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| | To support the delivery of the Council's strategic objectives and policies. |
| Resource Implications | The resources for implementing the Cabinet's decision can be managed within existing budgets. Investment in upgrading traffic signals on the A4019 is not predicated upon this decision and is within the draft Highways Capital Programme for 2020/21. |

MAIN REPORT CONTENTS

1. Background

- 1.1. Cheltenham Borough Council asked the County Council, as local Highways Authority, to assist it with implementing the CTP by making changes to the road network in Cheltenham town centre. These are intended to support its vision for enhancing the town centre public realm and delivering a wide range of CTP objectives including economic growth and modal shift (increasing bus trips, walking and cycling) to reduce congestion and carbon emissions.
- 1.2. The CTP started in 2013 as a joint project funded by the Department for Transport and it has been implemented in phases. Phase 4, the most recent, was implemented in June 2018 as a trial. This approach reflected uncertainty in predicting how traffic would redistribute or reduce in response to a restriction at Boots Corner to prioritise buses, taxis, pedestrians and cyclists.

2. Consultation

- 2.1. The changes made in Phase 4 have been implemented as ETROs and public consultation since June 2018 has enabled the council to listen to public feedback and make adjustments, the most recent of which were made in June 2019.
- 2.2. There has been significant public interest both in favour and against this scheme. 775 formal representations were received in respect of the original Phase 4 ETROs which were then amended by the council with the aim of addressing many of the concerns raised.
- 2.3. A further public consultation on the amended ETROs, for the scheme currently on the ground, took place between June and December 2019. 159 formal representations were received. These were primarily from local residents and included some businesses and a county councillor whose division includes part of the town centre. Information about all representations received during the original ETRO consultation, the amended ETRO consultation and the council's response are included within the background papers.
- 2.4. In such cases the County Council's constitution requires that a Traffic Regulation Committee be convened to consider all the views expressed and to make a recommendation. This committee will meet on 16th December 2019. It is considered appropriate that the final decision is taken by the County Council's Cabinet rather than by an officer.
- 2.5. The *Traffic Regulation Committee Report: Cheltenham Transport Plan Phase 4* has been written primarily to inform Traffic Regulation Committee members attending the public meeting in Cheltenham on 16th December. It is also directly relevant to this Cabinet decision. It outlines Phases 1-3 to give context, explains details of Phase 4, reviews the public feedback and amendments we have made, and analyses public feedback received since the amended scheme was

introduced in June 2019.

- 2.6. To help understand the wider effects of the changes the TRC report includes detailed Traffic Monitoring before and during Phase 4, data on Road Safety, public transport use, air quality and equalities considerations.
- 2.7. Given the close proximity of the TRC Meeting to the Cabinet meeting, the notes of that meeting and its recommendations to Cabinet will be circulated one or two days in advance as an addendum to this report.

3. Cheltenham Borough Council's Decision

- 3.1. A link is provided on the front page of this report to the full report and decision of CBC's Cabinet which met on 5th November 2019. CBC's Cabinet agreed that:
- 3.2. *In light of the economic and other evidence, and based upon GCC traffic flow data, CBC air quality data, and wider considerations, CBC urge the GCC Traffic Regulation Order Committee (TRO) and GCC Cabinet to make the Experimental Traffic Regulation Order (Phase 4) of the Cheltenham Transport Plan permanent.*

Cabinet authorise the Managing Director – Place & Growth to write to GCC and the TRO committee to make CBC's position clear.

- 3.3. The letter of support from CBC's Cabinet has been received by GCC and is included as an appendix to the TRC Report.

4. Traffic Data

- 4.1. Section 5 of the TRC Report provides details of traffic flow surveys at 28 sites across the town centre throughout the CTP project, as well as Bluetooth journey time monitoring and analysis of total vehicle volumes across Cheltenham between 2015 and 2019.
- 4.2. Traffic monitoring shows that eight sites experienced short term increases of over 20% but these were only short term trends and most have now dropped below that level. Two northbound routes, to the immediate west and east of Boots Corner, have experienced larger percentage increases which have since stabilised.
- 4.3. Options have been developed to mitigate concerns expressed about the impact of traffic using the northbound route via Rodney Road/Winchcombe Street and passing through the High Street between John Lewis and Regent Arcade. Should the Phase 4 scheme be made permanent then it is recommended that soft traffic calming be introduced in early 2020 to slow traffic approaching the High Street.
- 4.4. Improving traffic flow on the other northbound route via St James' Square and St George's Street would adversely impact on the capacity of the A4019 near

the Brewery. Therefore improvements to signals to improve journey times on the A4019 are being examined with significant additional funding in the draft Highways Capital Programme for investment in 2020.

- 4.5. Overall there has been a significant reduction in traffic on roads in the town centre since Phase 4 was introduced, with no evidence of wider displacement. This is supported by Bluetooth journey time data on key routes and evidence of significant (4-5%) growth in bus use that bucks a national trend. Albion Street and High Street/Bath Road are amongst several roads that have seen large traffic reductions, helping to improve air quality for local residents.
- 4.6. In conclusion, the changes made by Phase 4 have had no detrimental effects on the majority of the road network. There are however flaws that ought to be addressed should the ETRO's be made permanent as the mitigations are feasible.
- 4.7. The reduction in traffic across the network provides space and a new opportunity to simplify public transport routing, create new pedestrian spaces, improve cycle routes and make the town centre more attractive to residents, businesses and visitors. These changes could not have been made as part of a trial.

5. Options

- 5.1. Option 1 is to make the ETROs permanent. This could be implemented immediately and would be within existing resources.
- 5.2. Option 2 is to abandon the ETROs and revert back to what was in force prior to the trial starting in June 2018. This would require additional works that have been estimated at around £60k: to cease camera enforcement at Boots Corner, revert back to earlier parking and loading restrictions, remove loading bays and make changes to lining and signing in the town centre and on approach roads.
- 5.3. Both options can be implemented within existing budgets in the short term. In the longer term it is likely that further funding would be needed in both scenarios to ensure that the town centre transport network operates efficiently, supporting broader objectives that include accommodating Cheltenham's housing growth, improving air quality and ensuring that visitors and residents of all ages have a range of transport options.

6. Risk Assessment

- 6.1. Failure to make a clear and timely decision would result in the current ETROs lapsing on 28 December 2019. This would have significant adverse road safety and congestion implications for an area where parking and access need to be managed effectively to enable the town centre to function.
- 6.2. A balance must be struck between the needs of different stakeholders, some of which conflict. The TRC report shows the extent to which officers have taken into consideration data from various sources and feedback from the public

consultation that has been underway during the 18 month ETROs period to ensure that Cabinet is aware of all the key issues in reaching a decision that is informed and balanced.

7. Officer Advice

- 7.1. It is recommended that Cabinet considers the options and the recommendation of the TRC and makes a clear decision that reflects local and national policies and provides certainty to inform future investment in Cheltenham town centre and its transport network.
- 7.2. As the original CTP Phase 4 ETROs were implemented on 28th June 2018, and cannot run for more than 18 months, they will expire on 28th December 2019. Whatever the outcome of Cabinet's decision the council's 5 day call in procedure would confine implementation of the decision until 1st January 2020. Therefore it is proposed to implement the decision under the council's procedures for urgent implementation of Cabinet decisions.

8. Equalities Consideration

- 8.1. The Due Regard Statement has been regularly reviewed throughout the implementation of all the phases of the CTP. The main concerns expressed related to disabled access and parking, where additional provision has been introduced. Overall the current scheme has a positive impact.
- 8.2. Cabinet members should read and consider the Due Regard Statement in order to satisfy themselves as decision makers that due regard to protected characteristic groups has been given.

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| Report Title | Cheltenham Transport Plan Phase 4 |
| Statutory Authority | Highways Act 1980 Traffic Management Act 2004 Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984 |
| Relevant County Council policy | Gloucestershire Local Transport Plan 3 (2015-2031) Gloucestershire Air Quality and Health Strategy |
| Sustainability checklist: | |
| Partnerships | Cheltenham Borough Council and Cheltenham Development Task Force. |
| Decision Making and Involvement | GCC Traffic Regulation Committee. |
| Economy and Employment | One of the aims of the CTP is to improve the public realm and High Street within the town centre and to make it more accessible by bus, on foot and by bike, leading to a more vibrant economy. |
| Caring for people | Improvements to disabled parking have been made to support those who have a disability. |
| Social Value | Monitoring has identified reductions in traffic and air pollution. |
| Built Environment | The scheme aims to improve the public realm, air quality and road safety within the town centre. |
| Natural Environment' including Ecology (Biodiversity) | N/A |
| Education and Information | N/A |
| Tackling Climate Change | Carbon Emissions Implications? Positive Vulnerable to climate change? Certain user groups would be more vulnerable than others. |

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| Due Regard Statement | Has a Due Regard Statement been completed? Yes |
| Human rights Implications | Considered within the TRC report. |
| Consultation Arrangements | Statutory public consultation on original and amended ETROs between June 2018 and December 2019. Additional non-statutory consultation has also taken place during this period with local stakeholders. |