



WOKING JOINT COMMITTEE

DATE: 24 SEPTEMBER 2014
LEAD OFFICER: DOUGLAS SPINKS, DEPUTY CHIEF EXECUTIVE, WOKING BOROUGH COUNCIL (WBC) & GEOFF McMANUS, NEIGHBOURHOOD SERVICES BUSINESS MANAGER, WBC
SUBJECT: PROPOSED AMENDMENTS TO THE BOROUGH COUNCIL OF WOKING (WOKING TOWN CENTRE) (TRAFFIC REGULATION) ORDER 1994
AREA: WOKING TOWN CENTRE / GOLDSWORTH EAST & HORSELL VILLAGE

SUMMARY OF ISSUE:

To approve the advertisement and implementation of an amendment to an existing Traffic Regulation Order (TRO) to fully pedestrianise Commercial Way between Chapel Street and Cawsey Way (see plan appended to this report).

The amendment to the TRO is sought to enable the provision of a high quality urban environment as part of a major public realm improvement scheme in Woking Town Centre.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

Woking Joint Committee is asked to agree that:

- (i) Proposed amendments to the Borough Council of Woking (Woking Town Centre) (Traffic Regulation) Order 1994 to prevent vehicles proceeding along Commercial Way between Chapel Street and Cawsey Way junctions 24 hours / 7 days a week be advertised.
- (ii) Any objections to the proposal will be reviewed by the Area Team Manager, Neighbourhood Services Business Manager, following consultation with the Chairman, Vice Chairman and Members of the Committee; and
- (iii) Following the advertisement of the amendment to the TRO, to implement it subject to no irresolvable objections.

REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS:

To enable the provision of a high quality urban environment as part of the major public realm improvement scheme being implemented in the Town Centre.

1. INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND:

1.1 A Traffic Regulation Order (TRO) is the legal instrument by which transportation authorities implement most traffic management controls on their roads under the Road Traffic Regulations Act 1984.

1.2 Commercial Way is currently the subject of the following TRO's:

- Borough Council of Woking (Woking Town Centre) (Traffic Regulation) Order 1994 and 2009
- The Surrey County Council The Borough of Woking (Town Centre Pedestrian Areas) (Prohibition of Cycling) (Amendment) Order 2012
- The Surrey County Council (Woking Town Centre) (Pedestrian and Cyclist Shared Use) Order 2012.

1.3 The TRO's relate to the following

- a) Prohibition of waiting at any time
- b) One Way (Chapel Street to Cawsey Way)
- c) Direction of vehicle travel restricted from Chapel Street to Cawsey Way
- d) No right turn onto Cawsey Way from Commercial Way
- e) Pedestrian Zone (Mon – Sat 10.30am – 4.00pm)
- f) No vehicle to proceed from Commercial Way/Chapel Street junction to Commercial Way/Church Path junction.
- g) Restrictions do not apply to cyclists on Commercial Way between Chapel Street and Cawsey Way junctions
- h) Cyclists restricted between the hours of 10.00am and 4.00pm Monday to Sunday between Chapel Street and Church Path junctions.

1.4 The amendments being sought to the existing 1994 TRO relate to items a) b) c) d) and e) above. In effect all these restrictions would be rescinded and Commercial Way would be pedestrianised between Chapel Street and Cawsey Way.

1.5 Exemptions to the 1994 TRO on Commercial Way between the Chapel Street and Cawsey Way junctions apply to emergency vehicles, vehicles relating to roadworks or statutory services, vehicles in the service of a local authority, holders of permits, a building contractor in an emergency, a shopfitter in an emergency, funerals and vehicles specially authorised by the Highway Authority or Police.

2. ANALYSIS:

2.1 Woking Town Centre is going through a period of major transformation. The Borough Council has made substantial investment in the improvement of Jubilee Square and the Wolsey Place and Peacocks Shopping Centres and public realm

improvements in Commercial Way are nearing completion. Victoria Square, a major scheme for the regeneration of the western end of the Town Centre is being planned as a joint venture between the Borough and County Councils together with Moyallen. These proposals all seek to secure the long term health and vitality of the local economy.

2.2 New restaurants which will have outside seating areas on the north side of Commercial Way are under construction and they will be completed within six months.

2.3 The removal of all vehicles (except for certain exemptions listed in paragraph 2.5 below) will improve the environment in Commercial Way. It will make it easier and safer for pedestrians and cyclists to move through this area. There are more pedestrian movements than vehicle movements on Commercial Way and, therefore, the proposed changes would better reflect the balance of how the town centre public realm streetscape is used. This is consistent with the general statutory obligation to exercise traffic regulation order powers in such a way as to secure the expeditious, convenient and safe movement of traffic (vehicular and pedestrians). The proposals are also consistent with other more detailed statutory considerations, e.g.

- Avoiding danger to persons using the road concerned and/or preventing the likelihood of such danger arising.
- Facilitating the passage on the road concerned of pedestrians
- Preserving and improving the amenities of the area through which the road concerned runs.

It is, therefore, expedient for the proposed TRO to be made.

2.4 The part of Commercial Way which is the subject of this request, is temporarily closed to all traffic in order to enable the implementation of the public realm improvements. This has been helpful as no significant problems have arisen to date.

2.5 The proposed TRO amendments are as follows and affect the Borough Council of Woking (Woking Town Centre) (Traffic Regulation) Order 1994

- No vehicles to proceed along Commercial Way between Chapel Street and Cawsey Way junctions 24 hours / 7 days a week.

This would be the same restriction that is currently in place on Commercial Way between Chapel Street and Church Path junctions.

The following TRO exemptions would apply:

- Fire brigade, ambulance and police
- Vehicles in connection with building operation/demolition, underground services, maintenance and improvements
- Vehicles in the service of a local authority in pursuance of statutory powers or duties
- Buggies

These would be the same exemptions that are currently in place on Commercial Way between Chapel Street and Church Path junctions.

There will be no changes to cycling restrictions currently in place.

3. OPTIONS:

- 3.1 Failure to agree this proposal would damage the amenities of the Commercial Way area and endanger pedestrians in that area.

4. CONSULTATIONS:

- 4.1 Informal consultations have been undertaken with affected parties as part of the current temporary road closure. Assuming the Committee agrees, the advertising of the proposed amendment to the TRO will give a formal opportunity for representation to be made.
- 4.2 There have been 10 responses to the initial consultation. The majority of these raise concern about the loss of the undercroft parking accessed between William Hill and HSBC. This area provides 4 parking spaces, and is also used by refuse collection vehicles and deliveries. Arrangements for cash collection vehicles and the delivery of security documents are also raised as concerns by two businesses. One respondent has raised concerns about congestion which occurs on the section of Chapel Street which is not included in the TRO amendment. Surrey Fire and Rescue Service raised no issues of concern.
- 4.3 As part of ongoing discussions, the Borough Council will work with the commercial businesses and disabled badge holders affected by the proposals to seek acceptable alternative arrangements.

5. FINANCIAL AND VALUE FOR MONEY IMPLICATIONS:

- 5.1 The costs of amending the TRO will be borne by existing Borough Council budgets.

6. RISK MANAGEMENT:

- 6.1 It is possible that objections to the amendments will be raised and it may be necessary to find solutions through negotiation. The risks associated with not seeking to make the proposed amendments relate to pedestrian safety.

7. LOCALISM:

- 7.1 The proposal will bring positive benefits to the local area.

8. EQUALITIES AND DIVERSITY IMPLICATIONS:

- 8.1 Alternative solutions for disabled drivers will be explored whilst recognising the existing off street parking which provides direct lift access into the two main shopping centres.

9. OTHER IMPLICATIONS:

Area assessed:	Direct Implications:
Crime and Disorder	No significant implications arising from this report.
Sustainability (including Climate Change and Carbon Emissions)	The proposal will improve the quality of the environment in Commercial Way.
Corporate Parenting/Looked After Children	No significant implications arising from this report.
Safeguarding responsibilities for vulnerable children and adults	No significant implications arising from this report.
Public Health	This scheme will reduce the risk of personal injury collisions.
Human Resource/Training and Development	No significant implications arising from this report.

10. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS:

10.1 The part of Commercial Way from Chapel Street to Cawsey Way is currently closed to westbound vehicles between the hours of 10.30am and 4.00pm on Mondays to Saturdays inclusive.

10.2 The full pedestrianisation of this stretch of Commercial Way will result in significant environmental improvements and it will contribute to the long term health and vitality of the local economy.

10.3 The Joint Committee is therefore asked to authorise the advertising of proposed amendments to the Borough Council of Woking (Woking Town Centre) (Traffic Regulation) Order 1994 to prevent vehicles proceeding along Commercial Way between Chapel Street and Cawsey Way junctions 24 hours / 7 days a week.

10.4 The Committee is also asked to agree that any objections received can be resolved by the Area Team Manager and Neighbourhood Services Business Manager, in consultation with the Chairman, Vice Chairman and Members of the Committee

11. WHAT HAPPENS NEXT:

11.1 Subject to approval of the Joint Committee, the amendment to the TRO will be advertised and public notices will be displayed in the press and on site.

11.2 Any objections to the proposed will be reviewed by the Area Team Manager and Neighbourhood Services Business Manager, following consultation with the Chairman, Vice Chairman and Members of the Committee.

11.3 If there are no irresolvable objections, the amendment will be made and all necessary signage installed.

11.4 If there are irresolvable objections, a Public Inquiry would need to be held (this is a statutory requirement due to the nature of the proposed TRO).

Contact Officer:

Douglas Spinks, Deputy Chief Executive – 01483 743440

Geoff McManus, Neighbourhood Services Business Manager – 01483 743707

Consulted:

Informal consultation has been undertaken with the frontagers, Borough and County officers, the Leader of the Borough Council and the Portfolio Holder.

Borough Portfolio Holder

Cllr Gary Elson – 01932 340649

County Council Cabinet Member

n/a

Annexes:

Appended plan/map

Sources/background papers:

- Traffic Regulation Orders as listed in Section 1 of this report.
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