

Bus lane and camera enforcement policy

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1. Executive summary

This document sets out the framework to enable efficient and consistent bus lane and bus lane enforcement across Surrey.

The objective is to maintain reliable and timely bus services, through introducing and properly enforcing bus lanes, bus gates and bus only streets.

2. The case for efficient, reliable and well managed bus lanes

The provision of bus priority measures across the Surrey road network is crucial in ensuring journeys are more reliable and bus users in Surrey are able to get to the destinations they need to, including places of education, employment, healthcare and leisure. This paper considers bus priority measures, focused on the use of properly enforceable bus lanes, bus gates and bus only streets.

Congestion is a major constraint across our road network and has a significant role to play in the delays experienced by all road users, but especially local bus services. Therefore, the purpose of bus priority measures is to improve journey reliability times from stop to stop, which makes local bus services more efficient and cost-effective. Enforcement of these measures is crucial to ensure robustness and continued success in improving journey times.

From previous research completed, including findings from the Surrey-wide Local Transport Review and the Knowledge Transfer Partnership, improving reliability is a key factor in attracting new passengers on local Surrey buses. Getting more people using the bus then increases patronage and revenue, which, in turn, leads to a reduction in subsidy paid to the operators.

Being able to improve bus journey times from the enforcement of bus priority measures will also lead to better relationships being developed with operators. With the County Council being committed to such measures, operators may be keen to invest further in their fleets, for example adding wifi, charging points, audio/ visual next stop information and smarter ticketing solutions. Such enhancements will also lead to an increase in patronage and revenue and a reduction in subsidy paid.

3. Legal context

Surrey County Council has the power to enforce bus lane contraventions under section 144(3)(b) of the Transport Act 2000 and Schedule 8 of the Traffic Management Act 2004 and to delegate, if we so choose to Borough and District Councils. The delegation to Borough and District Councils is under powers in the Local Government Act 2000, together with associated regulations.

The Bus Lanes (Approved Devices) (England) Order 2005 provides information as to the equipment which can be used for enforcement, as specified within Schedule 1, which supersedes the Transport Act 2000 provisions. In order to enforce a penalty notice, the equipment must be an “approved device” which is able to produce a record

4. Introducing camera enforcement and new or amendments to bus lanes

The decision to enable camera enforcement of bus lanes in Surrey will be made by the Director for Infrastructure & Operations in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Highways. New bus lanes or amendments to existing bus lanes will be considered by the Cabinet Member for Highways at the formal public Cabinet Member decision meeting. This will include authority to advertise and make relevant Traffic Regulation Orders (see section 6) and determine any objections. Consultation will be undertaken with relevant Divisional Members.

To ensure bus lanes and camera locations meet the objective of maintaining reliable and timely bus services; sites, lanes or streets identified for potential bus lane or camera enforcement should be properly assessed and the proposals supported by the county council's Passenger Transport team.

There must be a comprehensive communication plan to raise awareness of the planned bus lanes or camera enforcement, which includes local residents, businesses and those people that are likely to be affected.

5. Operating camera enforcement

The County Council will decide who operates the enforcement of each camera or cameras within a geographical area.

Department for Transport guidance and code/s of practice (for authorities outside London) will be followed. This will ensure that camera systems and enforcement are managed properly, with appropriate training and qualifications for camera operators and back office staff.

Where there is more than one authority/agency operating camera enforcement in Surrey there will be an additional working code of practice to ensure consistency in enforcement. This will be compiled by the enforcement authorities/agencies, and regularly updated as required. Enforcement authorities/agencies should aim to harmonise the enforcement regime, processes and even systems, hardware and software where possible.

Sign and road markings will be at the required level for successful camera enforcement. This is likely to be at a higher level than required by the Traffic Signs Regulations and General Directions.

6. Traffic Regulation Order process

The legal order (Traffic Regulation Order or abbreviated to TRO) outlines the hours of operation, conditions and who can and who cannot use a bus lane, gate or bus only street.

It is important that there is flexibility in each TRO so that the most appropriate controls are placed for each location. In order to retain some consistency in approach there will be some conditions that are common to all TROs on bus lane, gates and bus only streets in Surrey:-

- The current TROs stipulate what vehicles are permitted through bus lanes, bus gates and bus only streets, to include any public service vehicles of sixteen seats or more
- where taxis are permitted this will apply only to “Hackney Carriages” licenced by the borough or district council. Private hire vehicles will not be permitted.

Consultation for TROs

To introduce a new TRO, a formal process has to be followed. Local residents, businesses and those affected by a proposed new bus lane, gate or bus only street will be consulted.

The consultation should include making people aware that the council may in the future introduce camera enforcement to enforce the TRO, so that their views can be taken into consideration before the legal order is made. This consultation requirement will apply to all new bus lane, gates and bus only streets in Surrey.

7. Review

This policy may be modified, altered or amended at any time.

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