

SURREY COUNTY COUNCIL

CABINET MEMBER FOR HIGHWAYS DECISIONS

DATE: 15 SEPTEMBER 2020

**LEAD OFFICER: KATIE STEWART, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR ENVIRONMENT,
TRANSPORT AND INFRASTRUCTURE**

SUBJECT: BUS LANE A30 LONDON ROAD CAMBERLEY



SUMMARY OF THE ISSUE:

In February 2020, Cabinet approved a bus lane enforcement policy and delegated decisions regarding the operation and enforcement of bus lanes to the Cabinet Member for Highways and Director for Infrastructure and Delivery.

This report seeks approval to consult on the amendment of hours of operation of the westbound A30 London Road bus lane and reducing the classes of vehicle permitted to use it. This report also seeks approval to consult on the removal of some sections of the bus lane. If approval is granted, authority is to be delegated to the Director for Infrastructure and Delivery to deliver the suggested public consultations.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

It is recommended:

1. To approve the undertaking of a statutory consultation to amend the hours of operation of the westbound A30 London Road bus lane to twenty-four hours a day, seven days a week, and to review reducing the classes of vehicle permitted to use the bus lane.
2. To approve the undertaking of a statutory consultation to remove sections of the westbound A30 London Road bus lane:
 - i. Between Park Street and Lower Charles Street
 - ii. Between Lower Charles Street and Grand Avenue
 - iii. Note it is also proposed to remove the section of bus lane between Frimley Road and 431-437 London Road, however, this is subject to gaining approval for increased hours of parking restrictions in the parking bays outside 423-437 and 443-457 London Road.
3. If it is agreed to approve recommendations 1 and 2, to delegate authority to the Director for Infrastructure and Delivery to deliver the suggested statutory consultations.
4. To review the outcome of the consultation responses before confirming any changes.

REASON FOR RECOMMENDATIONS:

The westbound A30 London Road bus lane has been in operation for over fifteen years, however, as part of the Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP) funded A30 London Road major scheme, a review of its operation has identified some changes which can be made to improve its effectiveness.

In order to make any amendments to the bus lane, a statutory consultation must be undertaken to change the existing traffic orders which govern the usage of the A30 London Road bus lane. The Cabinet Member for Highways is requested to approve the undertaking of these statutory consultations and review any objections in consultation with the Director for Infrastructure and Delivery before deciding how to proceed.

Any agreed changes to the bus lane will be delivered as part of LEP-funded A30 London Road major scheme.

DETAILS:

Background

- 1 The westbound bus lane on the A30 London Road has been in operation for over fifteen years, however, as the number of vehicles using the A30 London Road has increased, this has led to more congestion, not just at peak times, and is impacting local bus operations. It is therefore important that some changes are made to the bus lane to make it more effective. This will allow for local bus services to travel more efficiently within the Camberley area.
- 2 Local bus services are a key mode of transport, providing sustainable alternatives to the private vehicle. It is therefore vital to provide sufficient infrastructure to allow for local bus journeys to be completed more reliably. In terms of the proposal to amend the hours of operation and reduce the classes of vehicle permitted to use the bus lane, this will help to improve journey times, which will help attract more bus users and increase patronage levels on the local bus network. This will also support the operations of local bus operators in the Camberley area.
- 3 It is also proposed to remove the following sections of the A30 London Road bus lane:
 - i. Between Park Street and Lower Charles Street
 - ii. Between Lower Charles Street and Grand Avenue
 - iii. Note it is also proposed to remove the section of bus lane between Frimley Road and 431-437 London Road, however, this is subject to gaining approval for increased hours of parking restrictions in the parking bays outside 423-437 and 443-457 London Road. This is explained in more detail below in paragraph 6.
- 4 By removing these sections of the bus lane, it is anticipated that this will provide enhancements to westbound traffic movements through the junction with A30 London Road/ Lower Charles Street. The removal of the bus lane between Park Street and Lower Charles Street will also provide a widened

shared footway and cycleway in this section. Such measures will encourage further walking and cycling within the Camberley town centre area.

- 5 Whilst the removal of these sections of the bus lane will have a minimal impact on local bus operations, the loss of these sections will be mitigated by intelligent bus priority measures being delivered on the A30 London Road and an improved flow of traffic. This will provide a greater benefit to all motorised vehicle users. Over time, local bus operations have evolved, with two bus journeys per hour between Park Street and Lower Charles Street, and twelve bus journeys per hour between Lower Charles Street and Grand Avenue.
- 6 Regarding point iii, paragraph 3, raised above, the removal of this section of the westbound A30 London Road bus lane is dependent upon changes to the parking outside the shops. This will be covered within a separate consultation on the parking at this location, to be led by Surrey County Council officers, in accordance with the decision from the Surrey Heath Local Committee meeting on 27th February 2020. Such consultation will be delivered later within the A30 London Road major LEP scheme programme. It must be noted that local bus operators have highlighted their support for the removal of this section of the bus lane, on condition that changes to the parking arrangements are made.
- 7 Detailed design drawings are available to view as attached in Annex 1.
- 8 All of the above will contribute to greener futures and accelerate modal shift from private vehicle to more sustainable modes of transport. Such measures will also help us to achieve our 2030 Community Vision objectives including:
 - i. Residents live in clean, safe and green communities where people and organisations embrace their environmental responsibilities.
 - ii. Journeys across the county are easier, more predictable and safer.
- 9 If it is agreed to approve the undertaking of statutory consultations to review the operation of the westbound A30 London Road bus lane, this will be completed and fully funded as part of the A30 London Road LEP-funded major scheme.

Operational Issues

- 10 Bus lanes are intended for use by local bus services (and cycles) but other classes of vehicle are allowed to use them, such as motorcycles, hackney carriages, mini cabs and heavy good vehicles (HGVs). Since the A30 London Road bus lane was installed, design standards have changed and the Department for Transport (DfT) have issued new guidance and regulation governing the layout and usage of them.
- 11 The westbound bus lane along A30 London Road can currently be used by HGVs and motorcycles, in addition to cycles and hackney carriages. The changes to bus lane design standards mentioned above mean HGVs are no longer permitted to use bus lanes, unless they are at least 4m wide, and any HGV usage of bus lanes requires authorisation from the DfT regardless of the width. The A30 London Road bus lane is generally 3m wide and therefore HGV use should now be prohibited.
- 12 Bus lanes can also provide a better facility for cycling. In a 3m wide lane, it may not be possible for another vehicle to overtake a cyclist without moving into the

adjacent traffic lane. Similarly, there can be safety issues arising if cyclists are pushed out of the bus lane when passing other vehicles, so it is important to minimise the total number of vehicles using the lane and provide a safer journey experience for buses and cyclists. Therefore, in order to promote more freely flowing bus lanes, and make them more attractive and safer for buses and cyclists, it is necessary to consult on reducing the class of vehicle permitted to use the bus lane.

- 13 The westbound A30 London Road bus lane is currently operational during the hours of 7am-09:30am and 4pm-7pm, Monday to Friday. Traffic levels have increased in the fifteen years since the bus lane was introduced, with significant traffic congestion being reported along the A30 corridor during a wider range of times and days of the week. This includes the daytime inter-peak periods and later into the evening, as well as on Saturday and Sunday. It is therefore proposed to consult on extending the operational hours of the bus lane to twenty-four hours a day, seven days a week, to increase bus journey consistency and create a safer cycling facility for longer periods of the day. It is important to note that a critical issue is capacity at the junctions, and this is being addressed and improved as part of A30 London Road LEP-funded major scheme.
- 14 The proposals described above will not alter existing arrangements whereby vehicles can cross over the bus lane to make a left turn, access adjacent premises or park on private land.
- 15 It should also be noted that the section of westbound bus lane that is proposed to be retained (i.e. between Grand Avenue and Frimley Road) with extended hours of operation to twenty-four hours a day, seven days a week, does not have any direct frontages which may require any deliveries and/or servicing from the street. Therefore, it is not anticipated that any issues will arise as a result to the changes in hours of operation.

CONSULTATION:

- 16 Engagement with local bus operators has confirmed that they are fully supportive of the proposals identified to make the bus lane operational twenty-four hours a day, seven days a week, and to reduce the classes of vehicle permitted to use the bus lane. They are also supportive of removing the sections of bus lane specified, mitigated by the delivery of intelligent bus priority measures and the improved flow of traffic. Improvements to the bus lane are fundamental to provide more reliable local bus services in Camberley and beyond.
- 17 In order to implement any changes, we will need to amend the traffic orders governing the bus lanes. This will require a twenty-eight-day statutory consultation period and we plan to include all the changes described above in the consultation.
- 18 To notify the local community and stakeholders as to when the consultation starts, we will put up street notices and letter drop properties that could be impacted by the proposals. We will also have a dedicated webpage on the Surrey County Council website with information on the proposed changes and details as to how to provide feedback.

- 19 The Surrey Heath Local Committee have approved measures associated with the A30 London Road LEP Major Scheme. Surrey Heath Borough Council have also been engaged with in regards to the proposed matters identified to be consulted on.

RISK MANAGEMENT AND IMPLICATIONS:

- 20 There is a risk that some of the proposed changes will not be supported by all highway users. The statutory consultation will identify potential objectors to the proposals and these views can be taken into account when deciding how to proceed.

Financial and Value for Money Implications

- 21 The recommendations to approve the undertaking of a statutory consultation to review the hours of operation and reducing the classes of vehicle permitted to use the A30 London Road bus lane and a statutory consultation on reducing sections of the bus lane will cost approximately £3,000.
- 22 The delivery of the two public consultations will be fully funded as part of the A30 London Road LEP Major scheme and any works to be completed in removing parts of the bus lane will be programmed as part of this scheme. LEP funding has already been secured for these activities.

Section 151 Officer Commentary

- 23 Although significant progress has been made over the past twelve months to improve the Council's financial position, the medium-term financial outlook is uncertain. The public health crisis has resulted in increased costs which are not fully funded in the current year. With uncertainty about the ongoing impact of this, and no clarity on the extent to which both central and local funding sources might be affected from next year onward, our working assumption is that financial resources will continue to be constrained, as they have been for the majority of the past decade. This places an onus on the Council to continue to consider issues of financial sustainability as a priority in order to ensure stable provision of services in the medium term.
- 24 The Section 151 Officer supports the proposal, as the costs of these consultations, and any subsequent implementation of changes, will be met from existing identified budgets and do not materially change any future costs.

Legal Implications – Monitoring Officer

- 25 It will be necessary to carry out a statutory consultation in accordance with the Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984 in order to amend the extent, operating times and classes of vehicle permitted to use the westbound A30 London Road bus lane.
- 26 An approved local authority has the power to enforce bus lanes by the imposition of civil penalty charges in accordance with the Bus Lane

Contraventions (Penalty Charges, Adjudication and Enforcement) (England) Regulations 2005. The Bus Lane Contraventions (Approved Local Authorities) (England) Order 2005 enables Surrey County Council to undertake those powers of enforcement. This function may be delegated to Borough and District councils under powers in the Local Government Act 2000 and associated regulations.

Equalities and Diversity

- 27 The recommendations in this report have no material impact on existing equalities policy and therefore a full equalities impact assessment is not deemed necessary.
- 28 Before any changes are made on the highway, a comprehensive statutory consultation will be carried out with users and interested parties and feedback fully considered before any final decision is made.

WHAT HAPPENS NEXT?

- 29 If approved, a statutory consultation will be undertaken on the proposal to amend the hours of operation of the westbound A30 London Road bus lane and reduce the classes of vehicle permitted to use the bus lane. A statutory consultation will also be undertaken on the proposed removal of some sections of the westbound A30 London Road bus lane.
- 30 To review the outcome of the consultation responses with the Director for Infrastructure and Delivery before confirming any changes.
- 31 If it is agreed to make the necessary amendments to the hours of operation, reduction in classes of vehicle permitted to use the bus lane and the removal of some sections of the bus lane, these will be delivered as part of the A30 London Road LEP-funded major scheme.

Contact Officer:

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Consulted:

Passenger Transport Projects Team
Parking Strategy and Implementation Team
Transport Policy and Major Projects
Surrey Heath Borough Council.
Stagecoach

Annexes:

- Annex 1 – A30 London Road LEP Major Scheme Detailed Design

Sources/background papers:

- Bus Lanes and Bus Lane Enforcement, Cabinet, 25 February 2020
- A30 London Road LEP Major Scheme Business Case
- Surrey Heath Local Committee Decision Notice, 27 February 2020