



Brent

Emergency Provision Report to the Chief Executive

12th May 2020

Report from the Strategic Director of Regeneration and Environment

COVID-19 Transport Response & Emergency Measures

Wards Affected:	All Wards
Key or Non-Key Decision:	Key
Open or Part/Fully Exempt: <small>(If exempt, please highlight relevant paragraph of Part 1, Schedule 12A of 1972 Local Government Act)</small>	Part Exempt – Appendix D is exempt as it contains the following category of exempt information as specified in Paragraph 3, Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act, namely “Information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the authority holding that information)”
No. of Appendices:	Three: Appendix A Community Protection/Environment and Regulatory Approach Appendix B Overview of measures introduced by other Local authorities Appendix C Priority locations in Brent Appendix D – (Exempt) Financial Quotes
Background Papers:	n/a
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1.0 Purpose of the Report

- 1.1 To brief the Chief Executive on the proposed transport response to COVID-19, looking at the effect on transport in the borough and plans to introduce measures in the short, medium and longer term.
- 1.2 This report provides the Chief Executive with an overview of the emergency measures taken by other authorities, as well as outlining strategies for longer term planning as part of our COVID-19 response.
- 1.3 It provides details of priority locations identified in town centres for urgent measures that should be introduced to support social distancing.

- 1.4 The contents of this report were discussed and agreed by the Policy Coordination Group on 11th May 2020.

2.0 Recommendation(s)

- 2.1 To agree to implement emergency measures to support social distancing that have been identified in our town centres, as detailed in **Appendix C**.
- 2.2 To agree to allocate £80,000 from Brent Capital budgets to implement robust emergency footway widening measures as described in paragraphs 3.16 and 3.17 below.

3.0 Background

- 3.1 The onset of the COVID-19 pandemic resulting in the Government implementing lockdown measures and social distancing requirements has dramatically changed how streets are being used across London. It is anticipated that physical distancing may be needed until the end of the year and possibly beyond.
- 3.2 As expected, there has been a marked decrease in the use of cars. Although there is no specific data on Brent, Greater London Authority (GLA) data shows that road traffic in outer London reduced by around 50% in the first week of lockdown compared to the same period in 2019 in outer London.
- 3.3 However, essential trips are still made by Brent's residents for groceries, medicine, exercise and work, some of which are most likely key workers. There is some anecdotal evidence that traffic speeds have increased and also of pedestrians having to step out into the road to comply with physical distancing measures, resulting in a road safety risk.
- 3.4 The lockdown period has demonstrated that a reduction in motor vehicles has resulted in a significant reduction in NO2 pollution. The GLA have reported a reduction of around 40% at roadside locations for Outer London and similar reductions have been observed in Brent.

Supporting social distancing and sustainable travel

- 3.5 In recent weeks, London boroughs have announced a number of short term and longer-term transport and infrastructure measures to support the COVID-19 response. Action is also being taken in other UK cities as well as internationally.
Appendix B provides an overview of measures introduced by other Authorities.
- 3.6 There is a growing public interest in our plans to introduce social distancing measures and develop our transport response strategy to enable safer and greener travel. There is a fear that as lockdown measures are eased, traffic volumes may increase resulting in road safety issues. Also, that there may be a second spike in the pandemic, which would result in the reintroduction of the lockdown restrictions.

- 3.7 There is a need to implement more immediate measures to support social distancing. The initial focus is on town centres to prioritise and introduce measures to support social distancing and active travel, a cross-council group of officers have gathered evidence of pressures which are typically at bus-stops, queues at busy premises and at narrow pavements. Interventions might include signage, barriers and line marking that help extend the width of footways or provide cycle lanes, as well as messaging at bus stops and on buses (TfL) on lamp columns and in shop windows, providing distance markers, suspending parking restrictions, removing clutter on narrow pavements, suspending licences to display goods, and targeted enforcement.
- 3.8 Officers in Community Protection, Environment Enforcement and Regulatory Services have been working closer together to support the education and enforcement of COVID19 restrictions. Days of action working in partnership with the police and other external partners have already taken place, targeting areas where there are frequent reports of social distancing issues, particularly in Harlesden, Kilburn and Kingsbury town centres.

Appendix A provides information on the Community Protection/Environment and Regulatory approach to COVID-19.

Appendix C identifies priority locations in Brent for interventions to support social distancing.

Communications

- 3.9 A key area of work will be introducing messaging to support compliance to social distancing requirements. Officers are liaising with TfL on measures at bus stops and on buses and our officers in our communications team are looking at how signage and distance markers can be provided in ‘hot spots’, both on street and on display in local shops windows. Figure 1 below provides examples of simple signage that can be provided to remind people to social distance.

Fig 1. Examples of social distancing signage



Arrangements will also be made to provide information on introducing emergency measures and on the development COVID-19 Transport Response plans on our website.

Temporary footway widening measures

- 3.10 There are numerous types of barriers available on the market and different authorities have used different specifications for road widening measures. **Appendix B** -

Overview of measures introduced by other Local authorities provides images of some of the measures introduced.

- 3.11 Officers have the view that more robust measures would be required in some of our busier town centre locations if they are left in place for an extended period of time, to minimise ongoing maintenance and enforcement costs.
- 3.12 In response to concerns raised in Kilburn, Camden have arranged for footway widening along Kilburn High Road, opposite Willesden Lane to Brondesbury Villas. This section of the High Road has a number of busy shops and narrow pavements. Arrangements have been made to install approximately 300m of a robust water (or gravel) filled barrier system within the next couple of weeks, with gaps for buses and service vehicles. They have opted to purchase rather than rent as it is more economical for longer periods. The cost of purchasing the barrier, tape and signs and installation is approximately £60 per linear metre, a total of £18,000. There are also ongoing costs for visits maintenance visits, £10,152 for 2 visits a month for 6 months. Figure 2 below are images of the barriers and reflective tape Camden have specified.



Fig 2. Water Filled Barrier – 1 to 1.5M Red with Mesh

- 3.13 See Appendix D for details on cost quotes (exempt information)
- 3.14 Conway AECOM have informed us that they have approximately 200 (2m) pedestrian barriers and 500 cones in stock that could be installed immediately, with further stock available if required. Figure 3 below is an example of the standard pedestrian barriers available.



Fig. 3 Example of standard pedestrian barriers

- 3.15 See Appendix D for details on cost quotes (exempt information)

- 3.16 In conclusion, as the temporary measures are likely to be in place for an extended period of time, it would be more cost effective to purchase and install more robust equipment. The extent to which the footway can be safely widened will depend on carriageway widths and measures will need to be installed in accordance to regulatory requirements. Equipment purchased could be removed and stored in the Council depot at a future date, and disposed of as necessary.
- 3.17 The cost of providing robust measures in town centres and in priority locations (approximately 760 linear metres in total) as detailed in **Appendix C**, is estimated to be in the region of £65,000 with an additional £13,000 for weekly visits over a six month period, and £500 per week thereafter.
- 3.18 There are also a number of products available on the market that would be useful for installing cycling amenities. These will be explored as we develop further plans. Figure 4 below is an example of measures for providing segregated cycle lanes.



Fig. 4 Example of measures for segregated cycle lanes.

Future measures to support social distancing and modal shift

- 3.19 Officers are currently drafting a COVID-19 Transport Response for consideration by Members in the near future. This will focus on future measures to extending social distancing measures to outside schools, tube/train stations and places of worship to address any emerging issues once lockdown measures are eased, as well as school streets, cycle lanes, low traffic neighbourhoods, and measures to support the Mayor for London's new Streetspace plan;

The Mayor of London, Sadiq Khan, said: “*The capacity of our public transport will be dramatically reduced post-coronavirus as a result of the huge challenges we face around social distancing. Everyone who can work from home must continue to do so for some time to come. The emergency measures included in our major strategic London Streetspace programme will help those who have to travel to work by fast-tracking the transformation of streets across our city. Many Londoners have rediscovered the joys of walking and cycling during lockdown and, by quickly and cheaply widening pavements, creating temporary cycle lanes and closing roads to through traffic we will enable millions more people to change the way they get around our city.* (06 May 2020)

- 3.20 Prioritisation will link to public health, air quality hot spots, BAME groups and areas of deprivation that have been affected by the pandemic, amongst other criteria that can be used to set out our future strategies and programmes.

- 3.21 The longer term focus will be to develop more permanent ‘Healthy Streets’ measures to support our strategies and modal shift towards greener and more sustainable travel .
- 3.22 There is clearly a need to plan for a modal shift away from car usage as part of the transport response to the COVID-19 recovery. As working practices and travel choices will change, public transport use is expected to be significantly reduced in London. Investing in walking and cycling infrastructure will support the local economy, safer and greener travel, and help forge a healthier and more sustainable future.

4.0 Financial implications

- 4.1 TfL are in severe financial difficulty due to a significant reduction in income from buses and tube journeys. They will not be providing grant LIP funding 2020/21 but funding will be allocated to schemes that support the Streetspace programme. They are currently seeking a £45m investment from Government that will be used to assist boroughs in delivering such measures over the next six months. Therefore, schemes that have already been identified for the £2.247m LIP 2020/21 programme, as approved by Cabinet on 11th November 2019, will be subject to review as will funding for other programmes such as for the Liveable Neighbourhoods and for Bus Priority programmes. However, the funding that will be made available has yet to be confirmed along with the criteria for allocating funding and there is an urgent need to implement footway widening measures.
- 4.2 Officers have estimated the cost of implementing the schemes identified in **Appendix C**, including ongoing maintenance for a six month period. This is estimated to be in the region of £80,000. Additional funding may be required if there is increased demand.
- 4.3 The cost of the emergency footway widening measures can be funded from the existing departmental capital budget allocation.

Capital investment decisions

- 4.4 There will be a need to consider the current Brent capital budget allocations and whether they should be realigned to emerging priorities.
- 4.5 Any further short-term measures that are requested by residents or identified by officers as lockdown eases, or that are formed as part of a longer term transport recovery response would need to be costed and funded. Officers will discuss future funding opportunities with TfL.

5.0 Legal Implications

- 5.1 Emergency temporary measures (such as widening pavements using barriers) do not require a Traffic Management Order (TMO) under the Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984. They can be implemented under s75 of the Highways Act 1980.
- 5.2 Measures which restrict traffic would be subject to a Traffic Management Order (experimental, emergency, temporary or permanent), which can be made under Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984. Experimental and emergency traffic orders do not require consultation. Temporary and permanent traffic orders will be made in line with:

the 'Local authorities' traffic orders (procedure) (England and Wales) regulations 1996 (the 1996 regulations) as amended for permanent orders
the 'Road traffic (temporary restrictions) procedure regulations 1992 (the 1992 regulations), as amended for temporary orders.

- 5.3 This requires require the order to be advertised in the London Gazette, Brent and Kilburn Times online with on-site notices and stakeholders to be emailed. The Department for Transport (DfT) guidance is being followed in relation to procedural requirements for all traffic management orders during Covid 19. For permanent orders, as per DFT guidance information of proposals will be put on our consultation portal and our publication notice will reflect a change in wording and highlight how these documents can be obtain and the location of where they can be viewed online. We will also erect site notices at the area affected by the proposals which will also advise where documents can be viewed online or copies can be obtained from.

6.0 Equalities Implications

- 6.1 S149 of the Equality Act 2010 provides that the Council must have due regard to the need to eliminate discrimination, advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations between those who share a protected characteristic, and those who do not.
- 6.2 Rising inequality is a risk of the COVID-19 pandemic. Wealthier residents have better access to green space and are more likely to own a car. Therefore, the risks identified in this paper are more likely to be experienced by residents in lower socio-economic groups in more deprived areas. Designing an effective transport response can help to rebalance these inequalities.

Report approved by:

AMAR DAVE
Strategic Director Regeneration & Environment