



Glasgow City Council

Environment, Sustainability and Carbon Reduction City Policy Committee

Report by Executive Director of Neighbourhoods and Sustainability

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COVID-19 – MEASURES TO ENABLE PHYSICAL DISTANCING: SPACES FOR PEOPLE

Purpose of Report:

To provide Committee with a progress update on the measures that the Council has undertaken, as part of the Spaces for People funding programme, to enable physical distancing across the city.

Recommendations:

Members are asked to note the contents of the report.

Ward No(s):

Citywide: ✓

Local member(s) advised: Yes No consulted: Yes No

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1. Background

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to provide Committee with a progress update on the measures that the Council has undertaken, as part of the Spaces for People funding programme, to enable physical distancing across the city.
- 1.2 The Spaces for People programme is a series of temporary travel infrastructure measures in the city centre, neighbourhoods and active travel routes that supports physical distancing across the city and helps stifle Covid-19.
- 1.3 On 28 April 2020, the Cabinet Secretary for Transport, Infrastructure and Connectivity, Michael Matheson MSP, announced a £10m funding package for temporary walking and cycling measures to be administered by Sustrans. The Council made a bid of £3.5m to this 'Spaces for People' fund and was successful in securing the full amount. [On 4 June 2020](#), the City Administration Committee (CAC) approved the acceptance of the funding.
- 1.4 On 14th August 2020, the Council was notified that it had been successful in securing a further £4m of Spaces for People funding, making a total of £7.5m Spaces for People investment in Glasgow. The acceptance of this additional funding was approved by the CAC at its meeting on [3 September 2020](#).
- 1.5 Some of the Spaces for People measures include footway widening, automation of traffic lights to reduce waiting time at pedestrian crossing points and bus boarders built out into the road at busier bus stops, and infrastructure to encourage cycling for everyday journeys, helping to ease demand on public transport, including the creation of pop-up segregated cycle lanes across the city.
- 1.6 This Committee previously considered an update report on the Spaces for People measures at its meeting on [8 September 2020](#).

2 Strategy

- 2.1 The objectives of our strategy for the Spaces for People (SfP) measures remain as:
- To inhibit the resurgence of Covid-19 post-lockdown by facilitating physical distancing.
 - To encourage economic recovery by supporting safe operation of businesses.
 - To ensure that active travel provides a safe and physically distanced option for travel that does not negatively impact on air quality, traffic congestion or carbon emissions.

3 Progress to date

- 3.1 Significant progress on the design and implementation of Spaces for People measures has been made in the last few months, complemented by a high

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profile communications and engagement campaign across all mediums (including TV and radio) to ensure awareness, understanding and to instill confidence in our communities that safer spaces are being created in a bid to suppress Covid-19.

- 3.2 The Spaces for People programme project team has delivered over 28km of segregated cycle lanes with more to come, provided additional footway spaces for businesses to operate in a Covid safe manner, created queuing space around key transport hubs and ensured that residents and visitors have safer access to local greenspaces to exercise.

4. City Centre

- 4.1 It was envisaged that as the Covid-19 restrictions eased and businesses re-opened, those that rely on footfall and face to face customer contact, would find conditions particularly challenging and the space available limited.
- 4.2 For the city centre, a street-by-street approach was initially undertaken, with priority given to increasing pedestrian space around our transport hubs, core shopping streets and any identified pedestrian pinch points.
- 4.3 As these measures are anticipated to be in place for a significant period of time and are in extremely high-profile areas of the city, the Council has committed to installing more robust and aesthetically pleasing measures to improve the look and feel of the city centre and make it a more attractive place to walk/shop.
- 4.4 Ambitious plans to re-allocate road space in George Square, the city's primary civic space to walking, wheeling and cycling, were drawn up and have been implemented using water filled barriers. These measures will soon be replaced by "softer" planters, seats and other street furniture.
- 4.5 Large scale hostile vehicle mitigation rated planters and trees will be used to green the space as well as restrict vehicle movement and protect pedestrians. Two of three contracts have been awarded and are due to be completed before the end of March subject to shipping of the specialist materials for the planting. A third contract is being let to complete complementary work in St Vincent Place and Queen Street and these works should be complete by 15th May.

Visualisations of the finished project are shown below:

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George Square

4.6 Similar measures are proposed for Merchant City - materials have been procured and will be installed after review of the final positions in consultation with local businesses.

4.7 Covid restrictions have gone on longer than we predicted and therefore our city centre has not seen the anticipated return of workers or the public. Footfall remains light. Many of the original planned interventions are not yet needed and have not been implemented. As a result, there is a significant underspend in this area of the budget. It is not clear if travel patterns will change in the long term as a result of Covid restrictions. Temporary footway widening measures remain in place around our main transport hubs and shopping areas, however further measures may be needed elsewhere as and when restrictions ease.

5. Neighbourhood Space

5.1 A primary aim of the Council's [SfP Neighbourhood plan](#) is to identify rat runs that could be temporarily closed to motor vehicles to encourage walking and cycling in local neighbourhoods or to provide additional space for exercise. An early example is the closure of Kelvin Way.



Kelvin Way active travel corridor

5.2 This project has been very well received by residents/park users and the parents and children of the local primary school. The addition of high-quality planting has softened the visual impact of the measures and has received high praise from the general public.

5.3 The first of a number of planned “Low Traffic Neighbourhoods (LTN)” has been installed within the Dennistoun area of Glasgow to reduce traffic volumes and increase footway space in the area. 3 other LTNs are currently under consideration.

6. Active Travel Routes

6.1 The Spaces for People programme has created temporary “pop up” cycling infrastructure that encourages active travel to be considered an attractive, viable choice for everyday journeys.

6.2 Each temporary cycle scheme considers adjacent population densities, areas of SIMD, road safety issues, local facilities such as access to parks and NHS facilities, impact on public transport corridors, speed limits, deliverability, impact on the public transport network and connectivity into the wider cycle network, when deciding on which schemes to take forward.

6.3 To date, the City Council has used the funding to deliver 28KM of segregated cycle ways throughout the city. In all cases this has been achieved by the reallocation of carriageway space from general vehicle traffic. Segregation

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has been added to existing cycle lanes at Clarence Drive and Corkerhill Road. We have also created brand-new temporary pop-up cycle lanes at:

- Clyde Street/Broomielaw, Dumbreck Road
- London Road (Phase 1 and Phase 2)
- Great Western Road (Duntreath Avenue to Lincoln Avenue)
- Gorbals Street
- Cumbernauld Road
- Provanmill Road
- Bilsland Drive
- Hawthorn Street
- Kelvin Way.

6.4 Many of these routes are in high profile areas and have supported and fast tracked the city's long-term aspirations to increase our safe cycling infrastructure. Monitoring of these routes has begun and in some cases, for example, Broomielaw, there has been a 100% increase in cycle traffic along the routes.

6.5 Work on the cycle network is continuing with further construction contracts having been awarded and programmed for completion by the 31st of March 2021. The Council will be progressing the implementation of segregated cycle lanes at the following locations:

- Brockburn Rd.
- Braidcraft Rd.
- Howard Street.
- Royston Rd.
- Cambridge Street.
- Wallacewell Rd.

These projects will add a further 10km of segregated cycle routes within the city.



Bilsland Drive Temporary Cycle lane

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7. Park and Stride

- 7.1 The City Council had planned to provide two separate Park and Stride sites on the outskirts of the city Centre with open air car parking and links to active travel infrastructure. These locations were to be the S.E.C. and the Emirates Arena, however as these sites are now being used as a national vaccination centre and a mass Covid test centre respectively, this work stream has been halted.

8. Parks and open space

- 8.1 Glasgow is blessed with many beautiful Parks and Open Spaces. During the pandemic these have become a lifeline to the citizens and as such have seen significant increase in visitor numbers. This at times has created difficulties in maintaining physical distancing. This funding stream is being spent on increasing signage within parks and providing wayfinding on routes to ensure social distancing can be maintained. Works are ongoing within this workstream and are fully committed with contracts awarded for delivery before end of March.

A programme of vegetation clearance to remove obstruction on public footways is also being undertaken.

9. Pedestrian Priority at Junctions

- 9.1 Early on in the SfP programme a simple but effective measure was to [remove the need for pedestrians to use the push buttons at crossings](#), reducing the risk of cross contamination. This was done by setting the priority to green for pedestrians and triggering a vehicle phase only when actuated by a vehicle. The alteration of priority at these crossings and junctions has proven to be extremely popular and is now being rolled out more widely throughout the city. These works are ongoing and are proposed to be complete before the end of March.

10. Maintenance of SfP Measures

- 10.1 Any intervention to create additional space for people to walk/cycle or wheel will only be successful if it is maintained properly - this is especially true within the city centre built environment where there has been a bedding in period whilst people get used to the new arrangements and adapt their behaviour. Ongoing inspection and maintenance of the barriers being used for footway widening has been taking place on a regular basis to ensure their safety and effectiveness.
- 10.2 Scotland recently experienced its worst winter weather in over a decade putting our winter maintenance plan to the test. The winter maintenance team worked hard to test new gritting and snow clearance methods to accommodate the new

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layouts associated with the temporary infrastructure and looking at innovative equipment to help with this task. Standard bulk gritters have been supplemented with smaller machines able to access the new cycle lanes.



George Square snow clearance of SfP area.

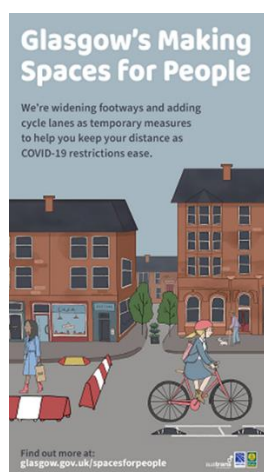
11. Communications and Engagement

- 11.1 The dedicated communications workstream ensures that our strategy to manage our road network differently to facilitate physical distancing in response to Covid-19, is highly visible and understood. Our dedicated web page provides up-to-date information and is supported by other media campaigns.
- 11.2 A marketing mix of TV, radio, digital, newsprint and outdoor advertising has been created using a simple Spaces for People animation style/branding; supported robustly by social media which has helped us reach and interact with a significant audience over the course of the campaign to date. Our campaign has been highly complimented and recommended as a model for others.
- 11.3 Keen to hear from the public, in collaboration with Sustrans Scotland, we made available a Commonplace Mapping Tool. This interactive channel enabled users to highlight 'pinch points' across the city centre and neighbourhoods, where emergency temporary measures such as pavement widening and new cycle lanes could be introduced to help people maintain physical distancing and suppress a resurgence of the virus.
- 11.4 The platform closed on 10 July 2020 after being open for suggestions for several weeks. Over 16,000 contributions were received and have informed future Spaces for People plans, with temporary interventions prioritised that offer the greatest benefit to public health, balances the needs of all users, and can be delivered in a short timeframe.

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- 11.5 Examples of projects that were taken forward (in whole or in part) due to suggestions made on Commonplace include the segregated cycle lanes on Clarence Drive, additional cycle parking in the city centre and the addition of a segregated cycle lane within Kelvin Way which has been closed to vehicular traffic since May 2020.
- 11.6 Our communications and engagement plan has been shared with other local authorities and our Communications Officer has also spoken with several other Councils on a one-to-one basis (at their request) to share our engagement approach.
- 11.7 The role of the communications team will continue to be invaluable throughout the remainder of the project. Examples of materials used are shown below.



SfP billboard advert.



SfP newspaper wrap.

12. Permanence/Removal of SfP Installations

- 12.1 The City Administration Committee at its meeting in June 2020 agreed that all temporary measures implemented under the scheme (SfP) should be evaluated with a view to making them permanent where possible and with full local consultation and that a further report be submitted to the appropriate committee evaluating where this was possible before any relevant Temporary Traffic Regulation Orders and other temporary measures expired.
- 12.2 It is the Council's intention to work with Sustrans to agree a monitoring and review process and thereafter to appoint an independent consultant to carry out a review of the SfP measures and make recommendations on which ones should be made permanent. It is proposed that this review would take place from April/May onwards and a report presented to Committee for decision thereafter.
- 12.3 Existing funding of £949,605 within this project will be carried over to 2021/22 to aid making these routes a legacy of Spaces for People or where appropriate removing them.

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13. Ongoing Maintenance

- 13.1 At this point in time we are unable to foresee when restrictions will be eased however it seems likely that restrictions will still be in place beyond May, therefore it is prudent for the City Council to continue to plan for many of the SfP measures mentioned above to remain in place for some time to come. The estimated cost is £224,759 to be carried over to financial year 21/22.

This maintenance will include:

- Regular safety inspection of all installations
- Routine maintenance of barriers and planters
- Replacement of damaged/vandalized equipment and plants

14. Financial Projections

- 14.1 The City Council intends to make a request to Sustrans to carry over £1,174,364 of Spaces for People programme funding into financial year 21/22.

In Summary:

Original Budget Award	£7,500,000
Forecast Spend by 31 st March 2021	£3,727,935
Forecast Spend by 15 th May 2021	£4,629,395
Requested carry over to 21/22	£1,174,364
Downturn	£1,596,241

15. Policy and Resource Implications

Resource Implications:

Financial: The Scottish Government has awarded the Council £7.5M for Spaces for People out of the £38,251,168 available.

Legal: The project team will need to draft and make various Temporary Traffic Regulation Notices and Orders in order to implement the measures.

Personnel: Due to the speed and urgency required to deliver this project, resources have been seconded from across Neighbourhoods and Sustainability, together with external consultants to plan and design the works, with implementation undertaken by both the Roads Trading Operation

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and External Contractors.

Procurement:

Works will be procured according to Standing Orders. Although it is envisaged that elements of the work will need to be issued via direct award under emergency powers contained within.

Council Strategic Plan:

The measures outlined in this report support the following Strategic Plan themes:

- A Thriving Economy
- A Vibrant City
- A Healthier City
- A Sustainable and Low Carbon City
- Resilient and Empowered Neighbourhoods

More specifically, the measures make an important contribution towards the Council's commitment to 'prioritise sustainable transport across the city' (Priority 55).

Equality and Socio-Economic Impacts:

Does the proposal support the Council's Equality Outcomes 2017-22

Generally supportive of the stated outcomes.

What are the potential equality impacts as a result of this report?

An initial EQIA screening has been undertaken and is being regularly updated with a steering/working group in place for this. Every effort will be made to ensure the needs of those with protected characteristics are fully considered in the planning and delivery of measures.

Please highlight if the policy/proposal will help address socio economic disadvantage.

Improving opportunities for access to sustainable and/or active travel and enhancing local environments through improving conditions for cycling/walking can help address barriers to social mobility, improve access to services and can help to address problems of physical and mental health and wellbeing.

Sustainability Impacts:

Environmental:

The measures will have a positive environmental impact. They will enhance existing and create new conditions for promoting and supporting sustainable forms of transport.

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Social, including opportunities under Article 20 of the European Public Procurement Directive:

In the medium to longer term, the measures will promote cycling and walking as a commuting choice.

Economic:

The measures will encourage economic recovery by supporting safe operation of businesses.

Privacy and Data Protection impacts:

No data protection impacts identified.

16. Recommendations:

Members are asked to note the contents of the report.