



**Glasgow City Council**

**City Administration Committee**

**Report by Executive Director of Neighbourhoods and Sustainability**

**Contact: George Gillespie Ext: 79106**

**Item 3**

4th June 2020

**COVID-19 – MEASURES TO ENABLE PHYSICAL DISTANCING POST  
LOCKDOWN (SPACES FOR PEOPLE)**

**Purpose of Report:**

To outline the measures that the Council is progressing to enable physical distancing in the city centre, local neighbourhoods and on the wider road network once the current lockdown is relaxed.

**Recommendations:**

Members are asked to:

- (1) note the contents of the report;
- (2) instruct officers to accept the £3.5m 'Spaces for People' funding from Sustrans; and
- (3) instruct officers to proceed to roll out the measures identified in the report.

Ward No(s):

Citywide: ✓

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

## **1. Introduction**

- 1.1 This report outlines the measures that the Council is progressing to facilitate physical distancing in the city centre, local neighbourhoods and on the wider road network as the current lockdown is relaxed.

## **2. Background**

- 2.1 As we move towards a relaxation of the lockdown, it is important that we consider what measures we need to take as a Council to manage our road network differently to facilitate physical distancing, help prevent a second wave of Covid-19 and allow the city economy to start to recover.
- 2.2 It is anticipated that physical distancing will be needed for a significant period of time post lockdown and that there may be reluctance from the public to use public transport. We will therefore consider short term measures to support physical distancing to help combat Covid-19 infection and a medium to longer term approach to enable sustainable travel choices.
- 2.3 Officers are already considering short to medium term measures which we could implement post lockdown. Those measures are likely to include making more space for pedestrians both in the City Centre and at heavily trafficked local shopping areas. In the medium to longer term, we will review how we could facilitate and promote cycling and walking as a commuting choice. Expansion of the school car free zones across the city also needs to be considered, together with local measures to discourage rat running.
- 2.4 It is essential that we focus on measures that will be most effective in preventing the spread of disease and we will therefore be working with Sustrans and other local authorities to develop an over-arching strategy that all local authorities could apply.
- 2.5 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 which will be administered by Sustrans. The Council made a bid of £3.5m to this 'Spaces for People' fund and on 25<sup>th</sup> May 2020 were notified that we were successful in securing the full amount. We will continue to work with Sustrans (and other partners) to roll out measures over the coming months.

## **3. Strategy**

- 3.1 The objectives of our strategy are:
- 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.

## **4. Action Plan**

### 4.1 We will take measures to:

- Facilitate safe pedestrian movement around the City Centre by widening footways where appropriate.
- Support business operation and recovery both in the City Centre and at local hubs by widening footways and providing queuing space where appropriate.
- Facilitate safe access to community facilities, local parks and public transport hubs by widening footways.
- Review and assess where we can implement temporary strategic cycling routes to promote cycling as a transport option.
- Encourage longer term behaviour change towards active travel choices.
- Develop a communications plan to encourage people and businesses to think carefully about how they travel and the choices available to them. Much of this will require to reflect guidance being given nationally.

4.2 Every effort will be made to ensure the needs of disabled people are fully considered in the planning and delivery of measures and the project team will endeavour to ensure that the measures reflect the considerations identified in the recent briefing paper issued by the Mobility and Access Committee for Scotland (MACS).

4.3 It is also important that we build in lessons learned from early pilot schemes, such as those already delivered on Clyde Street and Dumbreck Road, into future schemes, and be willing to amend implemented schemes should the need arise.

## **5. Specific Actions**

### **City Centre**

5.1 As the Covid-19 restrictions ease and businesses re-open, those that rely on footfall and face to face customer contact may find conditions particularly challenging and the space available limited. For the city centre, a street-by-street approach will be undertaken with temporary measures introduced to allow priority to be given to pedestrian space around our transport hubs, core shopping streets and any identified pedestrian pinch points.

5.2 Measures for consideration as part of this workstream include:

- Implementation of the George Square Experimental Traffic Regulation Order (ETRO).
- Removal of on-street parking to facilitate more space for walking and cycling.

- Changes to waiting and loading restrictions.
- Selective road closures where feasible.
- Making narrow footways with limited space one-way for pedestrians, with perhaps additional crossing points.
- Identify how to encourage and facilitate responsible queuing at bus stops.
- Identify and target the key walking routes from Glasgow's main public transport interchanges.
- Identify and target potential cycle routes through the city centre linking to strategic routes.
- Increase the green man time at junctions or reduce the traffic light cycle times to aid pedestrians.
- Change pedestrian crossings to be automatically set at the green man and requiring to be activated by vehicles, rather than on pedestrian demand.
- Discuss with Transport Scotland or Department for Transport, the possibility of a dispensation to trial e-scooters in the city centre.
- Investigate the potential to increase the number of bikes and electric bikes available in the Mass Automated Cycle Hire (MACH) bike scheme.
- Installing additional on street cycle parking where space is available.

5.3 The area being considered is shown in Appendix 1, and will result in 25km of kerbside road lanes in the City Centre being reallocated for walking and cycling.

5.4 In most cases, widening of the space for pedestrians will necessitate the removal of on-street parking and will result in the reduction of revenue to the Council on the basis that parking enforcement is reintroduced post-lockdown. The continued provision of disabled parking and servicing facilities for shops will also have to be considered.

### **Neighbourhood Space**

5.5 This work stream facilitates the temporary re-allocation of road space for physical distancing outside shops, and will primarily involve the removal of kerbside parking. An initial review of local centres identified from the City Development Plan 'Network of Centres' Supplementary Guidance has resulted in a long list of potential sites for consideration. This has been supplemented by local knowledge and intelligence around pinch points which are emerging. Areas under consideration include Partick, Shawlands, Maryhill and Dennistoun. Areas such as Pollok, Drumchapel, Easterhouse and Castlemilk will also be examined.

5.6 Environmental Inspection staff will keep areas under review, allowing issues to be addressed as they arise, implementing further measures, or indeed removing measures as required.

5.7 An early action scheme has been developed in Partick (incl Partick interchange) to act as pilot, and the learnings from this will be rolled out to other areas.

- 5.8 It is also the aim to identify current rat runs that could be temporarily closed to motor vehicles to encourage walking and cycling in local neighbourhoods or provide additional space for exercise.
- 5.9 Finally, early implementation of planned School Car Free Zones will be investigated, if suitable schools can be identified. This could encourage parents to utilise walking, cycling or public transport for the school run, rather than using private cars to transport children.

## **6. Wider Road Network - Temporary Active Travel Routes**

6.1 It has been identified that in several areas, people are taking up active travel for both essential journeys and for their recommended exercise. In some locations this is placing significant strain on the network and physical distancing is proving a challenge. The Councils' Bike for Life report identified that more people would be prepared to consider active travel if supporting measures were put in place. This work stream seeks to provide additional space for active travel and for safe physical distancing to be practiced.

6.2 Options for consideration include:

- Key congestion hotspots on the network where walking/cycling space is under pressure and temporary cycle lanes can be implemented (primarily by converting road lanes to cycle lanes). Early interventions have been implemented on Clyde Street/Broomielaw and Dumbreck Road which have acted as pilot schemes and lessons learned will be carried forward into other similar interventions.
- Develop additional routes that could serve essential journeys or areas currently being used for exercise. These will not only be informed by the officers' knowledge but also by suggestions received from local members, active travel campaigners, organisations and the general public.
- Identify possible Park and Stride or Park and Cycle routes that could be developed.
- Identify areas for possible point road closures with exemptions for cyclists to prevent rat running, reduce vehicle speeds but still permitting cyclists.
- Identify possible Quietway routes that could be easily signed.
- Identify possible temporary routes through Glasgow parks currently under pressure, e.g. Glasgow Green, Pollok Park, and which may tie in to other on-road temporary routes (Glasgow Green/Clyde Street).
- Where possible, seek to accelerate existing developed schemes, such as those listed below.
  - Great Western Road – Duntreath Avenue to Lincoln Avenue
  - South City Way including bus gate on Gorbals Street.
  - London Road - Kirkpatrick Street to Braidfauld Street.
  - North East Active Travel Route to Stobhill Hospital.
  - Extend South City Way to Battlefield linking the New Victoria Infirmary Hospital.
  - Hawthorn Street/Bilsland Drive.

- 6.3 Each temporary cycle scheme will consider, 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 and connectivity into the wider cycle network.

## **7. Communications**

- 7.1 A separate Communications Team has been established to assist in developing a communication and engagement strategy to ensure that work to develop the Physical Distancing Network is highly visible, understood and supported. Iterative webpages have been created within the Council website, and these will be augmented with engaging and informative content as work progresses. Plans are also in place to support two-way communication with stakeholders and audiences.
- 7.2 A range of online and offline communication and engagement platforms will be utilised to reach as broad an audience as possible, this will include the opportunity to receive suggestions on the locations/form of measures to an online portal. This work is viewed as being absolutely critical in explaining to the public what we are doing and how their travel behaviour can assist in suppressing the spread of Covid-19.

## **8. Legal Process**

- 8.1 The public health nature of the current Covid-19 situation, the urgent need to provide additional space to enable physical distancing and the temporary nature of the proposed measures will require the use of temporary traffic regulation notices (Safety Notices) and orders (TTROs) under Sections 14(1) and (2) of the Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984 (RTRA). The reason for making a Safety Notice or a TTRO under these powers is because of the likelihood of danger to the public as a result of the Covid-19 situation. The use of these powers is in line with recent guidance issued by Scottish Ministers.
- 8.2 These Safety Notices and TTROs will be required in circumstances where it is necessary to restrict traffic on roads (eg road closure) or where it is necessary to suspend designated parking or some other statutory requirement (eg. a banned turn). A TTRO can be in force for a period of up to 18 months but takes approximately 3 weeks to promote and so if the Council considers it necessary for the restriction to come into force without delay, a Safety Notice can be made immediately and can be in effect for a period of up to 21 days. This allows the restriction to be implemented immediately and for the TTRO to be promoted as a follow-on measure.
- 8.3 These powers are the same powers used to implement road restrictions for emergency situations such as burst water mains, gas escapes or major road subsidence. Most recently, the powers were used to close roads associated with the NHS Louisa Jordan temporary hospital. The powers are delegated to officers under the Scheme of Delegation.

- 8.4 The process and notification requirements for making a Safety Notice or TTRO are set out in the Road Traffic (Temporary Restrictions) Procedure Regulations 1992 as amended (“the Regulations”). In line with the Regulations, before making the Safety Notice or TTRO, the Council will notify Police Scotland and Scottish Fire and Rescue Service of the Safety Notice or Order.
- 8.5 In addition to the statutory requirements, officers will notify ward members through a ward notification in the same way as is done for restrictions associated with roadworks. The Regulations require that Safety Notices are advertised on street and this will be undertaken in line with normal procedures. The TTROs will be advertised in a newspaper, again in line with standard procedures. In addition, information on restrictions will be made available online and through social media channels.
- 8.6 It is important to note that there is no statutory provision for objections within this process. The temporary nature and the urgency to implement measures mean that the process for objections associated with permanent traffic orders is not appropriate nor feasible. If any party wishes to challenge the Safety Notices or TTROs that would require them to commence a court process.

## **9. Longer Term Behaviour Change**

- 9.1 Although the above measures are primarily aimed at facilitating physical distancing in the short term, it is envisaged that in the medium to long term, they will also encourage people to change their travel choices and choose active travel on a more permanent basis. There is considerable potential to support a higher proportion of trips in the city by walking and cycling – half of journeys made in the city are less than 3km in length, whilst 46% of households in the city do not have access to car. We will therefore continue to investigate measures which embed that behaviour both at local level and with colleagues across Scotland, looking at both infrastructure and non-infrastructure measures including improving access to bikes, community-led projects, training and creating accessible environments for all.
- 9.2 We will engage with the public and stakeholders on a new transport policy framework and associated measures as part of our ongoing work on three new transport plans in Glasgow:
- An updated Local Transport Strategy (a Glasgow Transport Plan)
  - A City Centre Transformation Plan
  - A Liveable Neighbourhoods Plan

This work also includes updating the existing Strategic Plan for Cycling, potentially in the form of a new Active Travel Plan for the City. These plans will set out clear goals for an inclusive, vibrant, healthy and carbon neutral city, and the role of active travel in helping to achieve these.

## **10. Implementation**

- 10.1 Where possible, delineation of road space converted to walking and cycling space will be done as unobtrusively as possible using signing and lining. However, in most cases physical barriers will be required to provide an element of safety and to ensure motorists do not enter an area set aside for pedestrians and cyclists. Options for these barriers include pedestrian barriers, planters, concrete blocks or rubber kerbs (orcas) and the pros and cons of each of these are currently being considered. Appendix 2 provides examples of a potential kit of parts for the works. Additionally, it should be noted that discussions have been held with the City Urban Design lead to explore ways of 'softening' the impact of any measures adopted.
- 10.2 The availability of Traffic Management Contractors together with the kit required to build the measures will be a significant challenge to delivering these measures quickly. Discussions are ongoing between the project team and Council procurement officers to determine the best way to streamline the procurement process where possible. Discussions about potential procurement options for these standard materials are also ongoing with Sustrans.

## **11. Programme**

- 11.1 The programme for implementing the above measures will be developed in detail as further information on the issues regarding funding, procurement, Traffic Regulation Orders (TROs) etc is available. It will also be guided by Government guidance on the easing of restrictions. Every effort will be made to ensure suitable measures are in place in advance of the demand for them.

## **12. Funding**

- 12.1 As this is an unprecedented situation, the introduction of physical distancing measures is not currently budgeted for and significant additional funding will be needed. As previously mentioned, on 28 April, the Cabinet Secretary for Transport, Infrastructure and Connectivity, Michael Matheson MSP, announced a £10m funding package which will be administered by Sustrans.
- 12.2 The Council made a bid of £3.5m to this 'Spaces for People' fund and on 25<sup>th</sup> May 2020 were awarded the full £3.5m, and the Council will now work with Sustrans (and other partners) to roll out the measures over the coming months. A further £20m of funding has also been made available to Councils and we will liaise with Sustrans regarding making an additional bid.
- 12.3 As the space needed to increase the space available for walking and cycling in Glasgow is likely to come from parking reduction, we need to also consider the impact of the associated loss of parking revenue.

### **13. Scottish Government Covid-19 Guidance**

- 13.1 The First Minister and the Scottish Government have noted that construction/civil engineering is not considered an essential operation unless it is contributing to the battle against Covid-19. Any works would require site operatives to work on site installing barriers etc. Due to the nature of the works i.e to provide 'safe space' for pedestrians and cyclists, it is the view that they are essential works.

### **14. Design Standards**

- 14.1 Safety will, as usual, be the highest priority however there must be an acknowledgement that these are temporary measures installed within an existing environment, and we will not be able to make changes to the existing environment of the scale and scope of those we might implement for a permanent infrastructure project. For example, we may need to ask cyclists to dismount or give way at some parts of a temporary route to facilitate servicing of businesses, bus stops or junctions etc. which cannot be altered short term. This means that these measures may not always be perfect, but we will we will accept some areas where users may be inconvenienced in the interest of enabling a bigger route to be implemented.

### **15. Conclusion**

- 15.1 This report outlines the measures that the Council is progressing in order to assist in facilitating physical distancing following an easing of the current lockdown. These include footway widening, reallocation of road space for cycling, road closures and longer term behaviour change initiatives.
- 15.2 A number of obstacles need to be overcome in order for these measures to be implemented timeously. These include, funding, procurement and availability of materials. Discussions are on-going to resolve these. A medium to long term benefit of providing temporary measures to facilitate physical distancing may be that some can become permanent and active travel becomes the preferred choice for more people.

### **16. Policy and Resource Implications**

#### **Resource Implications:**

- Financial:* The Scottish Government has indicated that a funding pot of £10M is available and the Council has secured £3.5M.
- 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 will be 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 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. 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.

*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.

## **17. Recommendations:**

17.1 Members are asked to:

- (1) note the contents of the report;
- (2) instruct officers to accept the £3.5m 'Spaces for People' funding from Sustrans; and
- (3) instruct officers to proceed to roll out the measures identified in the report.