

## Report to the Cabinet

Meeting to be held on Thursday, 7 December 2017

### Report of the Head of Service - Highways

#### Part I

Electoral Divisions affected:  
Accrington South; Accrington  
West and Oswaldtwistle  
Central;

**(Various Roads, Accrington Town Centre, Hyndburn Borough) (Suspension and Various Parking Restrictions) Experimental Order 2017; (Various Roads, Accrington Town Centre, Hyndburn Borough) (Suspension, One Way Traffic, Prohibition of Driving, Prohibition of Driving (Except Goods Vehicles) and Bus Lane) Experimental Order 2017**

(Appendices 'A' - 'D' refer)

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#### Executive Summary

This report sets out two Experimental Traffic Regulation Orders which suspended elements of existing restrictions and introduced various parking restrictions, one way traffic, prohibition of driving, prohibition of driving (except goods vehicles) and bus lane, on various roads in Accrington town centre associated with the opening of the George Slynn Bus Station and the decommissioning of the Peel Street Bus Station. Approval is sought to make the Experimental Traffic Regulation Orders permanent in order to facilitate further proposed Traffic Regulation Orders in the town centre associated with the Town Square public realm improvements.

The proposals have been advertised in the local press and by way of notice on-site and objections have been received.

This is deemed to be a Key Decision and the provisions of Standing Order No. 25 have been complied with.

#### Recommendation

The Cabinet is recommended to approve the making permanent of two Experimental Traffic Regulation Orders as described above and as set out in the schedule and plans attached at Appendices 'A' to 'D'.

## **Background and Advice**

Lancashire County Council, in partnership with Blackburn with Darwen Council, is implementing a rapid transit bus route scheme (Pennine Reach) along the Accrington – Blackburn – Darwen corridors. As part of the scheme Lancashire County Council is proposing to implement a scheme of waiting restrictions, one-way streets, loading only bays, bus lane and no entry restriction within the town centre area in Accrington to compliment the operation of the new bus station. The site of the old bus station will be decommissioned and the measures introduced are intended to assist in managing traffic and parking following these changes.

The Pennine Reach scheme's aim is to improve connectivity and economic growth in Hyndburn and Blackburn with Darwen.

The operation of the new bus station, parking and loading areas, together with the operation of the one-way system and bus lane was subject to change as the network impacts of re-locating the bus station in the town centre could not be fully predicted. Therefore the changes have been made by way of two Experimental Traffic Regulation Orders (ETRO) to enable modification of the proposals once the bus station is operational, if necessary. One Experimental Order covers the static (waiting and loading) type restrictions and the second Experimental Order covers the moving traffic (prohibition of vehicles/driving and one way street) type restrictions. It is usual for separate Orders to be created for 'moving' and 'static' restrictions and this is done for operational reasons. The initial 6 month period after the making of the Experimental Orders represents the consultation period during which objections can be made. The Orders can be in force for an experimental period of up to 18 months.

The ETROs also apply to areas of Accrington town centre which are part of a Hyndburn Borough Council public realm improvement scheme which is currently under construction. This improvement scheme requires further Traffic Regulation Orders which will overlap with the ETROs which are the subject of this report and therefore it is considered appropriate to make the ETROs permanent to avoid delays to the commissioning of the public realm works.

### **Effect of the Orders:**

*(Various Roads, Accrington Town Centre, Hyndburn Borough) (Suspension and Various Parking Restrictions) Experimental Order 2017)*

The effects of this Order can be seen at Appendix 'A' and Appendix 'B'.

*(Various Roads, Accrington Town Centre, Hyndburn Borough) (Suspension, One Way Traffic, Prohibition of Driving, Prohibition of Driving (Except Goods Vehicles) and Bus Lane) Experimental Order 2017)*

The effects of this Order can be seen at Appendix 'C' and Appendix 'D'.

## **Consultations**

The changes to Accrington town centre as part of the Pennine Reach Scheme had been developed in consultation with Hyndburn Borough Council.

Originally, two ETROs came into force on 5 June 2016 introducing traffic management measures throughout the town centre area. During the initial 6 month consultation period comments were received regarding the operation of the ETROs including four written formal objections.

The objections focused on the location of the taxi rank on Church Street, particularly in relation to the loss of delivery/disabled parking space and fumes entering the shops from waiting taxis leaving their engines running. Concerns were also raised about vandalism to the shop fronts by customers waiting for taxis and the difficulty for disabled customers in crossing Church Street from the disabled parking bays on Holme Street due to the volume and speed of traffic.

Changes were incorporated relating to the location of the daytime taxi rank on Church Street by moving it further north away from the shops, providing a loading bay and re-introducing the daytime prohibition of waiting outside the shops to allow deliveries and disabled parking as before.

There was also a common theme in the objections requesting the direction of traffic flow on Holme Street be reverted back to its original direction to provide a route through the town centre and relieve a reported bottleneck at the St James Street/Paradise Street junction.

Officers do not support the request to return the traffic flow on Holme Street to its original direction as the officers' original concerns regarding the creation of a priority route through the town centre are still valid. The route requested by the objectors, on one-way streets, would attract additional traffic and sever pedestrian routes from the on-street parking areas into the town centre.

The lack of formal limited waiting bays on a section of King Street following the sudden closure of an adjacent car park to the public was also raised. As there were no formal parking facilities available in that location prior to the ETRO, this was considered as a request and not an objection. However, the opportunity has been taken to introduce an additional limited waiting bay on King Street.

In order to address the concerns which were raised, and after discussion with Hyndburn Borough Council, a second pair of ETROs to which this report relates were proposed to re-introduce most of the original measures but also incorporate the changes agreed above.

## **Current Experimental Traffic Regulation Orders**

### **Consultations**

The two current ETROs came in to force on the 20 February 2017 and are operational for a period of up to 18 months. Formal consultation was carried out in the initial 6 month period between the 20 February 2017 and 20 August 2017 by way of advertisement in a local newspaper and the posting of notices on site. The County Councillors for the affected divisions were informed but have not raised any formal objections although they have commented on the proposals. Objections were received to the ETROs.

### **Objections**

An objection was received jointly from the leaders of the political parties elected to Hyndburn Borough Council requesting the direction of traffic flow on Holme Street be reverted back to its original direction. The Chamber of Trade also maintained its objection to the direction of traffic flow on Holme Street.

Officers have further considered the traffic flow on Holme Street and maintain their original concerns. Officers will continue to work with Hyndburn Borough Council to investigate alternative measures and are currently considering a proposal to reverse the direction of traffic flow on Cannon Street, between St James Street and Church Street to address the objectors concerns.

Local shopkeepers have raised concerns about the road markings for the night time taxi rank on Church Street which are reported to be confusing to drivers and mistakenly preventing them from loading and unloading and are also discouraging the disabled blue badge holders from waiting on the single yellow line daytime restriction.

It is proposed to create a 30 minute limited waiting bay operating between 8am and 6pm which will be within the night time taxi rank outside the shops. The hours of operation of the taxi rank would be amended to 6pm to 6am to allow a two hour unrestricted time period between 6am and 8am for deliveries and servicing of the shops. This would also require the road markings to be amended which should remove any confusion for drivers regarding the availability of parking. This has been agreed in principle with Hyndburn Borough Council. This change would require a separate Traffic Regulation Order which is not part of the recommendation within this report.

Approval is therefore sought for the making permanent of the Experimental Traffic Regulation Orders as most recently advertised, as set out in the schedule and as shown on the plan attached at Appendices 'A' to 'D'.

## **Implications:**

This item has the following implications, as indicated:

### **Risk management**

The Experimental Traffic Regulation Orders aim to support the effective operation of the new George Slynn Bus Station in Accrington. Failure to implement the Experimental Traffic Regulation Orders will prevent the police and civil enforcement officers from enforcing the prohibitions and restrictions which has potential road safety implications for highway users and could detrimentally effect the operation of the Pennine Reach Priority Bus Scheme. Failure to implement the ETROs could also impact on the delivery of the Accrington Town Square public realm scheme as further Traffic Regulation Orders are required to implement the scheme which overlap with measures in the ETROs.

### **Financial**

The costs of making the Experimental Traffic Regulation Orders will be funded from the approved Pennine Reach Bus Priority Scheme Capital allocation. The estimated costs of the statutory advertisement is £1,000.

### **List of Background Papers**

Paper	Date	Contact/Tel
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None

Reason for inclusion in Part II, if appropriate

N/A