

EXPERIMENTAL TRAFFIC REGULATION ORDER UPDATE – THE STRAND DERBY

SUMMARY

- 1.1 In February 2013, following a request from Derbyshire Constabulary, an Experimental Traffic Regulation Order (ETRO) was introduced by the Council's Traffic Management Team. The effect of this was to close off The Strand Derby to all traffic in the early hours of Saturday and Sunday mornings between midnight and 5.00am.
- 1.2 Following monitoring of the traffic flow on Victoria Street and Albert Street there were concerns that the traffic gaining access to these areas was compromising the objectives of the ETRO which was to reduce the amount of traffic at the junction of The Strand and The Wardwick.
- 1.3 In March 2013, the ETRO was modified to prevent any access by vehicles to The Wardwick, The Cornmarket and St James's Street via Albert Street and Victoria Street and the times were amended to between midnight and 4.00am.
- 1.4 This has resulted in considerably fewer vehicles entering Victoria and Albert Street and has produced a more sterile area for pedestrians.
- 1.5 Traffic Management have received positive feedback following the implementation of the scheme from Derbyshire Constabulary, the Street Pastors, the Taxi Marshalls and Door Supervisors.
- 1.6 The ETRO will continue in its current format until a decision is made in three months time.

RECOMMENDATION

- 2.1 To note the report.

REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATION

- 3.1 The Chair and Vice Chairs have requested updates on the scheme at three and six monthly intervals.

SUPPORTING INFORMATION

- 4.1 On the 15 February 2013, an Experimental Traffic Regulation Order was implemented which closed The Strand to all traffic in the early hours of Saturday and Sundays mornings, between the hours of midnight and 5am. An exemption for access was also included in the order, which permitted vehicles doing so legitimately to drive down Albert Street and Victoria Street.
- 4.2 Officers from Derby City Council undertook site visits to monitor the performance of the closure, ensure compliance with the barrier and observe traffic flows on Albert Street and Victoria Street. In its inception, the barrier caused some confusion to vehicles approaching from Cheapside and Bold Lane, which on occasion resulted in conflict at the junction. However this conflict has since eased, given that drivers have now familiarised themselves with the regularity of the restriction. A view which is shared by the police.
- 4.3 Traffic flows on Victoria Street and Albert Street were monitored on CCTV and appeared greater than prior to the closure, given the numbers of Private Hire Vehicles and private vehicles which were gaining access. The number of vehicles travelling along Victoria Street and Albert Street when the road closure was in place was a great cause for concern and compromised the benefits achieved at the junction with The Strand and Wardwick.
- 4.4 On 22 March the ETRO was modified, removing the exemption for vehicles gaining access to Wardwick, Cornmarket and St James' Street via Albert Street and Victoria Street. Additionally the hours of operation were amended to midnight to 4am on The Strand to best reflect the times when the restriction was considered necessary. This has resulted in considerably fewer vehicles using Victoria Street and Albert Street, and has produced a more sterile area for pedestrians. However on occasion the police have stopped private hire/ private vehicles, issued a warning and made them turn around. To date no driver has been prosecuted for committing such an offence.
- 4.5 The following comments have been received from Chief Inspector Pont at Derbyshire Constabulary:
 - I believe that the closure of The Strand has been very worthwhile
 - It creates a semi-pedestrianized area with the only vehicles coming along Victoria Street onto The Strand being Hackney Carriages and buses which are highly visible from a long way and give pedestrians time to see them and move out of their way
 - Occasionally private or Private Hire Vehicles contravene the restriction at Albert Street and come along Victoria Street. They are normally stopped by patrolling police officers (we no longer have officers specifically employed doing this) and they are turned around and given advice. Repeat offenders

may be identified and prosecuted but this has not been necessary so far

- As the restriction is becoming more well-known there are less vehicles approaching the barrier, being surprised and having to turn round. Better signage may help this further
- Stopping the flow of traffic from The Strand into The Wardwick creates a much safer environment. Prior to the closure there were many 'near misses' as cars come around the tight corner and met pedestrians crossing the road
- As well as reducing the chance of road traffic collisions, the road closure makes a much calmer atmosphere on The Wardwick. This can be seen very clearly at midnight when the traffic stops and the street becomes quieter. Tensions are reduced and people seem happier and calmer. This mirrors the experience at Chesterfield. I was somewhat sceptical when told about this effect but having witnessed it recently on 3rd and 4th May; I can confirm it is correct
- My experience on the Bank Holiday Weekend of 3rd to 5th May was very useful. The Sunday night was just as busy as the preceding nights but without the benefit of the closure it was easy to compare the difference. Sunday night went back to the old chaotic, aggressive and dangerous night we used to see before the closure was used
- I have received comments from Street Pastors, Door Supervisors and Taxi Marshalls, all who are in favour of the closure

- 4.6 In light of the above, Traffic Management are recommending that the ETRO continues in its current format and a decision is made whether to make it permanent in three months' time, when the scheme has been in place for six months.

Additionally consideration will also be given to include bank holiday Sundays in the restriction.

OTHER OPTIONS CONSIDERED

- 5.1 Not applicable.

This report has been approved by the following officers:

Legal officer	Olu Idowu
Financial officer	Amanda Fletcher
Human Resources officer	-
Service Director(s)	John Tomlinson
Other(s)	-

For more information contact: Background papers: List of Appendices:	Sandra Mansell, Tel. 01332 641931, e-mail sandra.mansell@derby.gov.uk None Appendix 1 – Implications
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IMPLICATIONS

Financial

- 1.1 None directly arising from this report.

Legal

- 2.1 None directly arising from this report.

Personnel

- 3.1 None directly arising from this report.

Equalities Impact

- 4.1 None directly arising from this report.

Health and Safety

- 5.1 None directly arising from this report.

Carbon commitment

- 6.1 None directly arising from this report.

Value for money

- 7.1 None directly arising from this report.

Corporate objectives and priorities for change

- 8.1 The information set out in this report supports the corporate priorities so the people of Derby **enjoy being safe and feeling safe** and the Council provides **good quality services that meet local needs**.