

Southend-on-Sea Borough Council

Agenda
Item No.

Report of Deputy Chief Executive (Place)

to

**Traffic Regulations Working Party
& Cabinet Committee**

on

1st November 2018

Report prepared by: Peter Geraghty,
Director for Planning and Transport

**Queensway Right Turns
Junction Improvement**

**Cabinet Member: Councillor Moring
Part 1 Public Agenda Item**

1. Purpose of Report

- 1.1 For the Traffic Regulations Working Party and the Cabinet Committee to review the proposed amendments on Queensway at the junctions with Whitegate and York Road.

2. Recommendations

2.1 The Traffic Regulations Working Party and Cabinet Committee will:-

- a) Note Officers comments and agree implementation of the Queensway Right Turn Improvement scheme;**
- b) If approved, further agree that in the event of there being no objections to the proposals, and the Traffic Regulation Order be confirmed; &**
- c) Note that all unresolved objections will be referred to the Traffic Regulations Working Party for consideration.**

3. Background

- 3.1 Around one third of trips to the town centre are made by car, one third by walking and cycling and one third using the bus and train. Traffic arrives along two major routes (A127 and A13) and is then directed around or through the central area. This leads to congestion, especially during high seasonal peaks, which limits economic growth and residential development. Congestion also interferes with the potential to improve facilities for walking, cycling and public transport access. Traffic accessing the main car parks circulates unnecessarily and leads to confusion over access, parking and alternatives.

- 3.2 Congestion and journey delays make Southend Town Centre a less attractive place to visit. By improving car park access which subsequently reduces town centre traffic volumes and associated travel delays will make the town more appealing to visitors.
- 3.3 The air quality in the town centre is poor which is exasperated by idling vehicles queued in traffic. In order to improve air quality traffic volumes need to be reduced and traffic flows improved.
- 3.4 Maximum occupancy is currently not achieved at either the Warrior Square or York Road/Tylers Avenue car parks. It is anticipated that occupancy levels can be increased by improving vehicular access.

4.0 Scheme Proposals

- 4.1 This scheme seeks to eliminate the issues highlighted in section 3 by allowing vehicles travelling south to right turn from Queensway. This will reduce the volume of vehicular traffic in the town centre, most notably Chichester Road. In order to achieve this, a number of physical changes to the highway are required which are explained in sections 4.2-4.7 and the drawings in Appendix 12.1.
- 4.2 Kerb realignment to the central reservations on the southbound approaches to both Whitegate and York roads to allow the construction of right turn lanes to both junctions.
- 4.3 Installation of traffic signals at the junction with Whitegate Road to ensure the safety of right turning vehicles and prevent excessive queuing at the junction.
- 4.4 Kerb realignment on Whitegate Road at the junction with Queensway to allow both right and left turning traffic into Whitegate Road from Queensway.
- 4.5 It is proposed to close the accesses to Warrior Square Car Park from Warrior Square which will ensure that all access/egress to the car park is via Queensway and Whitegate Road and not from the town centre network.
- 4.6 Currently, there is a Toucan crossing at the junction with York Road which crosses the southbound carriageway to the north of the junction. It is proposed to relocate the southbound crossing to the south of the junction to reduce crossing times when the additional right turn lane is installed.
- 4.7 There are associated changes to traffic signs, street lighting and road markings as shown in the drawings in Appendix 12.1.
- 4.8 To allow the above changes to the highway, some alterations to Statutory Undertakers Plant are required at the junction with Whitegate Road with both Cadent (Formerly National Grid) and Vodafone apparatus affected.

5.0 Traffic Regulation Orders (TRO's)

- 5.1 In order to facilitate the construction phase some alterations to the current TRO's are required, these are identified in sections 5.2 & 5.3.

5.2 One Way Street

5.2.1 The TRO prohibiting people from causing a motor vehicle to proceed in a westerly direction on Whitegate Road from the junction with Queensway to the junction with Chichester Road will be revoked. This will be replaced with a TRO that prohibits motorists from causing a motor vehicle to proceed in a westerly direction on Whitegate Road from the junction with the improved car park access to the junction with Chichester Road.

5.3 Parking Restrictions

5.3.1 Two sections of Payment Parking (Zone_TC) 9am-6pm (Tariff_1) will be revoked on the north and south side of Whitegate Road at the junction with Queensway and replaced with No Waiting at Any Time restrictions.

5.3.2 One section of No Waiting At Any time restriction at the existing western car park exit will be revoked and replaced with a section of Payment Parking (Zone_TC) 9am-6pm (Tariff_1) restriction.

6. Key Risks

6.1 Stakeholder support: Works are proposed in highly sensitive locations within the town centre, which will require support from residents, commuters, and business owners.

6.2 Traffic delays during construction.

7. Mitigation of Risks

7.1 Effective communication with all Stakeholders through multiple channels clearly identifying the benefits of the proposals and the resultant positive impact on the Town Centre.

7.2 Well planned traffic management operating at off peak times outside of high seasonal periods will limit traffic delays during construction.

8. Reasons for Recommendations

8.1 To ensure best use of limited resources on justifiable projects that address and resolve network management issues.

8.2 To reduce congestion and improve air quality in the town centre.

9. Corporate Implications

9.1 Contribution to Council's Vision & Corporate Priorities

9.1.1 Local Transport and Implementation Plan, Safe and Prosperous.

9.2 Financial Implications

9.2.1 The Major Projects and Strategic Transport Policy Group has successfully bid for funding to implement this project from the DfT.

9.3 Legal Implications

9.3.1 All changes are to comply with the relevant legal requirements as appropriate

9.4 People Implications

9.4.1 All necessary works will be undertaken by existing staff.

9.5 Property Implications

9.5.1 None.

9.6 Consultation

9.6.1 No consultation has been completed at this stage.

9.7 Equalities and Diversity Implications

9.7.1 The prioritisation of the Traffic & Parking Working Party's programme is on the basis of improving safety, reducing accidents or improving pedestrian/traffic flows. The objectives of improving safety takes account of all users of the public highway including those with disabilities.

9.8 Risk Assessment

9.8.1 None.

9.9 Value for Money

9.9.1 All works are undertaken by the Council's term contractors which have been through competitive tendering process.

9.10 Community Safety Implications

9.10.1 The prioritisation of the Councils' Working Party's programme is on the basis of reducing accidents or improving traffic flows and takes into account the implications for community safety.

9.11 Environmental Impact

9.11.1 All schemes are designed to improve quality of local environment

10. Background Papers

10.1 None

11. Appendices

11.1 Appendix 1 – Plan showing proposed amendments to the road layout