

Report of
Copers Cope
Ward Councillors

LONDON BOROUGH OF BROMLEY

PART 1 PUBLIC

Decision Maker: ENVIRONMENT AND COMMUNITY SERVICES PORTFOLIO HOLDER

For Pre-Decision Scrutiny by the Environment & Community Services PDS Committee on:

Date: Thursday 11 March 2021

Decision Type: Non-Urgent Executive Non-Key

Title: WESTGATE ROAD AND ALBEMARLE ROAD TRAFFIC MANAGEMENT CHANGES

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Ward: Copers Cope

1. Reason for report

This report sets out the results of the Ward Members' Alternative Survey of Residents and seeks approval for the recommendations arising therefrom.

2. **RECOMMENDATIONS**

That the Portfolio Holder approves:

- 2.1 The Albemarle Road Experimental Cycle Scheme be left in place for the present time but with the re-introduction of two way traffic on an experimental basis between junctions at Westgate Road and St Georges Road whilst retaining the segregated cycle lane;
- 2.2 The railway bridge in Westgate Road continues to have one way traffic over the bridge and that traffic be one way South (as present); and
- 2.3 The scheme be reviewed again within 18 months so that post-lockdown traffic can be measured and residents views re-evaluated.

3. COMMENTARY

Background

- 3.1 Having been consulted on the questions to be put to our residents, many of whom are very angry about the introduction of this scheme without prior public consultation or warning, the Ward Councillors had their recommended 5 questions rejected. The Department survey went ahead based on only 2 questions.
- 3.2 We regarded the Department questionnaire as inadequate because:
- We know that some residents like the Albemarle Road and Westgate scheme as it is, now that traffic has settled down. The Department survey did not allow this option.
 - Other residents like some aspects of the scheme but were not given the chance to say what could be improved, particularly no chance to say how traffic could best flow over Westgate hump-back bridge. The Department survey did not allow the option of one way traffic over the Bridge.
 - The Department's questions seemed to be railroading our residents into voting for changes to the traffic scheme that they may not want.
 - The Department survey did not allow residents with no internet access to respond.
- 3.3 The Ward Councillors therefore decided to conduct our own survey to give residents the opportunity to more fully express their views. Our questions (see Appendix A) had been amended and approved by Bromley's Environment Portfolio Holder.

4. ALTERNATIVE SURVEY – METHOD AND RESPONSE

- 4.1 We printed 3,500 copies of our Alternative Survey together with a letter explaining our reasons for carrying out this exercise. We arranged for its door to door distribution in the same area of our Ward that the Department survey had been delivered. Our delivery took place between 21 – 25 February and the closing date for responses to be received was 12 noon on 8th March 2021.
- 4.2 The 5 questions we posed all had (a) or (b) or n/a answer options. Other comments and suggestions were also invited, and these were frequently made – sometimes at great length. In the analysis spreadsheet we sought to summarise useful comments.
- 4.3 Unlike the Department survey, residents could respond by email, on our website, or by dropping a paper response into any one of 3 secure addresses. We provided these letterboxes in the centre of each of the 3 major roads affected: Albemarle Road, The Avenue and Foxgrove.
- 4.4 We were surprised at the high response and strength of feelings. In previous surveys a 1-2% response was considered good. Responses received by the deadline were:
- 113 on our website
241 on paper
221 by email
575 total = 16.4% response to the 3,500 questionnaires circulated.
- 4.5 We were aware that other residents' associations and organisations had also carried out surveys but not restricted them to the area directly affected. In order to keep our results directly relevant and comparable with the Department survey, 62 submissions were disallowed. These were from the website responses. Responses on paper and by email were all included, even when the sender wished to remain anonymous.
- 4.6 A total of 513 responses were analysed, each with the source identified as follows:

w = 51 website responses allowed
p = 241 paper responses submitted
e = 221 emailed responses
513 total analysed

d = 62 website responses disallowed as out of area but with comments recorded
575 total received

5. ALTERNATIVE SURVEY – OUTCOME AND CONCLUSIONS

5.1 ALBEMARLE ROAD

- 1) Do you wish to
- (a) continue the experimental traffic scheme with or without the adjustments offered below; or
 - (b) end the experimental scheme and remove most elements of it?

(a) = 49% (b) = 46% n/a = 5%

- 2) If you wish the scheme to continue, do you wish to
- (a) continue the scheme with traffic flows as they are at present; or
 - (b) re-introduce two way traffic between junctions at Westgate Road and St Georges Road whilst retaining the segregated cycle lane?

(a) = 33% (b) = 28% n/a = 39%

Ward Members conclude that opinion is very evenly split. As traffic levels are nowhere near the pre-lockdown levels, we recommend leaving the scheme in place for the present time and possibly re-introducing two way traffic on an experimental basis as in 2(b) above.

5.2 WESTGATE HUMP-BACK BRIDGE

- 3) Do you wish to
- (a) continue to have one way traffic (see options below), or
 - (b) re-introduce two way traffic on Westgate Bridge (see options below)?

(a) = 50% (b) = 42% n/a = 8%

- 4) If you wish the one way traffic to continue, do you wish to
- (a) have one way traffic South (as present) running from The Avenue into Albemarle Road; or
 - (b) have one way traffic North running from Albemarle Road into The Avenue?

(a) = 41% (b) = 9% n/a = 50%

- 5) If you wish to re-introduce two way traffic and the experimental scheme in Albemarle Road continues, do you wish to
- (a) control traffic across the bridge with traffic lights (adjustable for tidal flows but will cause tailbacks); or
 - (b) revert to uncontrolled two way traffic?

(a) = 26% (b) = 24% n/a = 50%

Ward Members conclude that, again, opinions are very evenly split. However there is a majority wishing to continue to have one way traffic over the Bridge and a large majority wishing to have one way traffic South (as present). The conclusion is that we should save further tax payers' money and leave arrangements on Westgate Bridge as they are, perhaps with enhanced signage.

- 5.3 Copies of the spreadsheet analysing our alternative survey results are available, but may be redacted to comply with confidentiality requirements.