



Report of Director of City Development

Report to Scrutiny Board (Infrastructure, Investment & Inclusive Growth)

Date: 4 September 2019

Subject: Policy review – Powered two wheeler access to with flow bus lanes

Are specific electoral wards affected? If yes, name(s) of ward(s):	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
Has consultation been carried out?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
Are there implications for equality and diversity and cohesion and integration?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
Will the decision be open for call-in?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
Does the report contain confidential or exempt information? If relevant, access to information procedure rule number: Appendix number:	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No

Summary

1. Main issues

- This report responds to a request from the Board to discuss Leeds City Council's current policy around motorcycle access to bus lanes.
- Powered Two Wheelers (PTW) are not permitted in bus lanes in Leeds but they are allowed to use High occupancy vehicle lanes. The Motorcycle Action Group (MAG) support a change of the current policy and would like Leeds to allow to PTW use with flow bus lanes. This report presents the issues surrounding this policy position and provides supporting evidence to show what is being done regionally and nationally.
- West Yorkshire Combined Authority have detailed within their Transport Strategy 2040 to improve road safety conditions and facilities for motorcyclists, and, where possible, a phased programme of allowing motorcycles to use bus lanes. In West Yorkshire at present motorcycles are only permitted in one Wakefield bus lane, on a trial basis.

2. Best Council Plan Implications

- This report rehearses the issues in relation to the request for motorcycles to be allowed to access bus lanes in the city in terms of their contributions to the "Be safe and feel safe" and "move around a well-planned city easily" outcomes and identifies

issues both positive and negative. The position in terms of Sustainable infrastructure is also similar as are those for health and well-being.

- Overall whilst bus lanes may offer added utility and convenience for PTW users with potentially neutral effect on sustainability, issues in terms of the continued utility and functionality for supporting the growth in bus use and reliability which are identified alongside aspects of potential concerns with respect to road safety.

3. Resource Implications

There are no resource implications arising from this report. However, if there were to be a change in policy this would require modifications to the Traffic Regulation Order, associated signing and lining alterations, onsite assessments and road safety audits, an education campaign and any future monitoring.

Recommendations

- Scrutiny Board members are requested to note and consider this report.

1. Purpose of this report

- 1.1 This report provides general background and information relating to the policy position surrounding Powered Two Wheelers (PTW) to use of bus lanes.

2. Background information

- 2.1 In April 2019 the Motorcycle Action Group (MAG) requested a review of Leeds City Council's current policy to not allow PTWs to use with flow bus lanes.
- 2.2 PTWs are not permitted in bus lanes in Leeds but are allowed to use high occupancy vehicle lanes of which there are three (A647 Stanningley Road, A63 Pontefract Lane and Roundhay Road). Riders of PTWs also have the option, subject to the conditions, to 'filter' through slow moving queueing traffic as per Rule 88 of The Highway Code.
- 2.3 The general purpose of bus lanes is to improve the reliability of bus services by giving priority to buses over other vehicles on congested parts of the road network. It is acknowledged that buses have greater efficiency of road space over many other motorised traffic modes and therefore the use of a bus lane puts greater emphasis on the through put of people rather than the number of vehicles.
- 2.4 In Leeds there is currently a total of 35 bus lanes varying in length, road characteristics, hours of operation and direction of travel (inbound/outbound). This equates to approximately 22.3km currently in operation. Taxis and cyclists are generally permitted to use bus lanes because they're classed as sustainable travel modes and, more specific to cyclists, it addresses road safety concerns.
- 2.5 In terms of the vision for Leeds moving forward, Leeds City Council are progressing the Leeds Public Transport Investment Package (LPTIP); this is a £270 million investment in bus improvements. It consists of:
- **Major Bus corridor improvements** including increased priority on A58 north-east, A61 north and south, A647 and A660.
 - **New Leeds High Frequency Bus Network:** over 90% of core bus services (on main bus corridors) will run every 10 minutes between 7am and 8pm. Network reviews will optimise travel times and create new routes.
 - **New bus provision:** Bus operators in Leeds have been investing in new, cleaner, vehicles which reduce NOx emissions by nearly 90%. Facilities will include audio & visual next stop announcements, free Wi-Fi, improved seating and USB/wireless charging opportunities.
 - **City centre bus gateways:** Improvements to Leeds City centre simplifying the road layouts to reduce congestion, increase bus priority, and improve pedestrian and waiting environments.
 - **1,000 upgraded existing bus stops** with real time information (RTI) information displays together with real time travel information on mobile devices and new ways to pay for travel.
- 2.6 Leeds Interim Transport Strategy 2016 recognises buses as an essential part of the network with buses making up 15% of commuter journeys and the role they play in

reducing congestion and improving air quality. Through the delivery of LPTIP the aim is to transform the bus network and achieve the ambition to double bus patronage by 2026. The LPTIP business case relies heavily on the unhindered benefits buses receive from the bus priority measures implemented.

- 2.7 Leeds City Council are also pursuing a number of measures to encourage motorcycling, these include proposals to increase secure motorcycle parking in the city centre, gain acceptance of the Motorcycle Design Toolkit and establishing a single motorcycle point of contact.
- 2.7.1 The picture regionally is mixed in relation to PTW using bus lanes. Following an independent study carried out by Aecom in 2016, West Yorkshire Combined Authority within the West Yorkshire Transport Strategy 2040, support a phased approach to allow PTW in bus lanes, subject to the conditions. Policy 29 within the document states:
- “We will improve road conditions and facilities for motorcyclists, designing our infrastructure to remove issues that could affect motorcycle safety, introducing, where possible, a phased programme of allowing motorcycles to use bus lanes....”*
- 2.8 The initial proposals for the phasing included a trial within Wakefield in one bus lanes that started late 2016 and a further trial within Calderdale which has yet to take place.
- 2.9 In West Yorkshire currently Leeds, Calderdale, Bradford & Kirklees do not permit PTWs in bus lanes. Discussions with the West Yorkshire authorities over the principle of PTWs in bus lanes are ongoing.
- 2.10 Nationally there isn't a clear decision on this subject. Current guidance, the Department for Transport's Traffic Advisory Leaflet 02/07: The Use of Bus Lanes by Motorcycles encourages an objective assessment of each bus lane with a list of issues that should be considered. These include;
- The safety implications involved in restricting motorcyclists to general traffic lanes, against the possible problems of allowing motorcyclists into the bus lane;
 - The effect on other vulnerable road users, especially pedestrians and cyclists;
 - The possible impact on bus journey time reliability due to additional traffic in the bus lane;
 - The reduction in congestion for other traffic on routes currently used by motorcyclists;
 - The potential for modal shift if motorcycling is seen as a more convenient means of transport;
 - The potential for overall improvements in transport efficiency;
 - Local publicity to help advise road users of a policy change; and
 - Continuity of bus lane routes which admit motorcycles.
- 2.11 DfT advice also notes various monitoring and research projects have been carried out to determine the effects of these schemes on both motorcyclists and other road users. However, the research does not lead to clear conclusions and goes on to suggest both potential benefits and disbenefits.

- 2.12 Five out of the 10 Core cities currently do not permit motorcycles in bus lanes and Transport for London only allow PTWs in red route bus lanes. Leeds City Council has carried out its own research and made contact with 75 local authorities, 29 of whom allow Motorcycles in bus lanes (see appendix A).
- 2.13 On all the available evidence regarding PTWs in bus lanes the results are mixed and largely inconclusive; there are also conflicting views on the outcomes of some of the Transport for London (TfL) research.
- 2.14 The first study carried out on behalf of TfL took place in 2010 to assess the impact of an experimental scheme to allow motorcycles onto with-flow bus lanes. The study reviewed data that was collected over a 10 month period. As brief summary of the findings are detailed below;
- There was a small increase (4%) in the number of motorcycles using main routes.
 - Bus and general traffic lane speeds were largely unaffected.
 - PTW speeds increased as did the number of motorcycles exceeding the speed limit. On 30mph routes, the number of PTWs travelling at or exceeding the speed limit increased from 37% before the change to 46.7%.
 - Collision rates involving cycles significantly increased.
 - Motorcycle collision rates appeared to rise significantly. The increase in PTW collisions generally involved cars turning left into and out of side roads.
 - The severity level of PTW collisions increased. 25% increase of collisions with slight injuries, and a 50% increase of serious injuries.
- 2.15 A second study was conducted by TfL in 2011 and used an additional 10 months of data to compare with the original study's findings. The most significant findings of this study were:
- Collision rates for motorcyclists had not changed significantly from the first trial, suggesting those findings were reliable.
 - Collision rates of cyclists with motorcyclists on Transport for London Road Network bus lane roads increased significantly compared to elsewhere, though numbers were small.
 - Motorcycle collision rates had also increased significantly on enforcement corridor sites.
 - Cyclist & pedestrian collisions had not changed significantly.
 - PTW collisions predominantly involved cars and over 80% of injuries were slight.
 - 40-50% of motorcyclists were exceeding speed limits, consistent with the previous trial.
- 2.16 With regards to the Wakefield trial, this was carried out on a new bus lane that became operational in December 2016. A study was undertaken after 1 year and then a standalone survey was carried out in June 2018. This piece of work primarily focused on usage, accidents and public feedback. The conclusion of the Wakefield trial states 'The survey results reveal a modest level of motorcycle usage of the bus lane. The actual level is somewhat seasonal & climate sensitive which mirrors motorcycle use in general. However there appears to be a significant proportion of motorcyclists who are choosing not to use the bus lane. The scale of sample is relatively low & the outcome of the evaluation is not totally conclusive.'

- 2.17 There is of course the environmental impact that needs to be considered. The European Commission's Motor Vehicle Emissions Group noted that in comparison to cars, motorcycles could achieve a saving in fuel of 55% to 81% on urban journeys. Motorcycles also produce fewer harmful emissions. A motorcycle produces 43% fewer particulates, 45.5% fewer Sulphur Oxides, 50% fewer Hydrocarbons, 50% fewer Oxides of Nitrogen, 50.3% less Carbon Monoxide and 64.7% less Carbon Dioxide per kilometre than a car.
- 2.18 The past five year full accident history shows that there have been a total of 906 collisions (all severities) on Leeds City Council's road network that involved a PTW. Only 23 (2.5%) of the collisions occurred on a section of road where a bus lane was present and the motorcycle was travelling with flow or crossing the bus lane. See appendix 2 for a summary table.

3. Main issues

- 3.1 The key considerations around whether or not PTW should be allowed access to bus lanes relate to three main issues;
- Impact on road safety
 - Impact on bus priority
 - Environmental impact
- 3.2 In all of the above there is insufficient and inconclusive evidence to support a position as to whether PTW should be allowed to use bus lanes.
- 3.3 What is known is that road space is a finite resource with limited capacity. Bus lanes are primarily introduced as a method of improving journey time reliability of bus services and in turn makes this mode of transport a more attractive proposition for commuters on what are generally congested parts of the road network. In order for these to work effectively the number of priority users must be limited otherwise the overall benefits of the bus lanes are eroded. Allowing PTWs to use existing bus lanes increases the number of vehicles using this type of provision and may erode the benefits to public transport users and impact on Leeds City Council's ability to achieve its ambition of doubling bus patronage by 2026.
- 3.4 There are a number of potential safety issues that need to be considered if PTWs are allowed to use bus lanes. These relate to speeding, conflict with non-motorised users (NMUs), lane changes/overtaking manoeuvres primarily due to buses picking up and dropping off and variations in bus lane width, as well as visibility concerns both in terms of general traffic exiting and entering side roads and turning across the path of motorcycles.
- 3.5 The complexity and scale of the bus priority measures in Leeds compared to other neighbouring authorities complicates allowing PTWs access to all bus lanes. Any potential change or trial of PTWs in bus lanes would have to consider these issues on a case by case basis. However, continuity across this type of provision is a key consideration and because of the differences and suitability between some of the bus lanes within Leeds it might not be possible to achieve this, which could lead to misunderstanding and/or contravention of restrictions.
- 3.6 The table below highlights the advantages and dis-advantages of allowing motorcycles to use bus lanes:

Advantages	Disadvantages
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reduction in congestion for other traffic on routes used by motorcyclists. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Potential delays to bus services and reliability. Potential for congestion in general traffic lane due to increase triggering of bus gate and longer green times on bus lane.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Potential modal shift from cars to motorcycles with reduced emissions. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Possible impact on bus journey times as additional traffic in bus lanes. May be perceived negatively by cyclists and pedestrians, which could reduce walking and cycling levels.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Possible reduction in motorcycle casualties as less conflict with general traffic. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> May be perceived negatively by cyclists and pedestrians, which could reduce walking and cycling levels. Potential road safety risks for motorcyclists, particularly in terms of lane changes and manoeuvres at side roads.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Lower fuel consumption and reduced journey times for motorcycle riders. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Inconsistency across the city and the districts. Motorcycle riders will have to check individual lanes to see if they can access.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> In line with West Yorkshire Transport Board recommendation. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increased pressure from other user groups to access bus lanes, including private hire vehicles.

- 3.7 Bus lanes require a Traffic Regulation Order (TRO) which provides the legal basis for enforcement, they also have to be clearly signed in accordance with current regulations. If PTWs were permitted access to bus lanes then it would require changes to both the TRO's and also the associated signage. There are currently no estimated costs for this change.
- 3.8 Allowing PTWs access to bus lanes will increase the frequency or the length of time which priority is afforded at signalised bus gates. Although in theory this change might reduce the number of vehicles with the general traffic lane, it could have a negative impact and create further delays through more frequent triggered or extended green times on the bus lane.
- 3.9 Finally, Leeds City Council continues to monitor the regional and national situation closely, however, it is worth noting that the Transport Policy team regular receive requests for bus lane access from other vehicle groups, including private hire.

4. Corporate considerations

4.1 Consultation and engagement

- 4.1.1 There are no specific consultation and engagement implications pertaining to this report. Individual bus priority schemes have been subject to scheme specific consultations as will any change of transport planning policy.
- 4.1.2 The Leeds Public Transport Investment Programme (LPTIP) was developed off the back of extensive consultation as part of the Leeds Transport Conversation. This process involved engaging a wide range of groups. Connecting Leeds have advised the biggest theme to come out of LPTIP feedback from motorcyclists is the request to allow PTWs to use bus lanes.

4.2 Equality and diversity / cohesion and integration

- 4.2.1 An EDCI is not required for this report. Appropriate EDCI screenings/assessments are undertaken for individual bus priority schemes in the course of project development and reporting. Similarly where a change in policy or process were to be introduced an EDCI screening or assessment would be undertaken.

4.3 Council policies and the Best Council Plan

4.3.1 Best Council Plan Implications

- Outcome: Be safe and feel safe. Allowing motorcycles in bus lanes would be positive for motorcyclists, possibly negative for pedestrians and cyclists.
- Outcome: Move around a well-planned city easily. Allowing motorcycles in bus lanes would be positive for motorcyclists, possibly slightly negative for bus users.
- Sustainable Infrastructure: Improving transport connections, safety, reliability and affordability. Allowing motorcycles in bus lanes would be positive for motorcyclists, possibly negative for pedestrians and cyclists on safety.
- Sustainable Infrastructure: Improving air quality, reducing pollution and noise. Allowing motorcycles in bus lanes would be positive if it encouraged mode shift from cars to motorcycles. Negative if it discouraged walking and cycling.
- Priority: Health and wellbeing - Supporting healthy, physically active lifestyles. Reducing health inequalities and improving the health of the poorest the fastest. KPIs Children who are a healthy weight at age 11. Percentage of physically active adults. Negative if it discouraged walking and cycling.

Climate Emergency:

- 4.3.2 Bus lanes play a key role in addressing bus reliability issues and supporting modal shift, which in turn contributes to achieving a more sustainable and lower carbon approach to transport provision now and in the future. Therefore there is a need to ensure that this type of priority measure works effectively and safely so that the benefits are maximised.
- 4.3.3 West Yorkshire Transport Strategy 2040: 'Motorcycles are another convenient, affordable and efficient form of transport in their use of fuel and of road space. Levels of motorcycle usage could increase due to the lower costs associated with motorcycles and the limited alternative transport options in some areas. Policy no: 29 We will improve road conditions and facilities for motorcyclists, designing our infrastructure to remove issues that could affect motorcycle safety, introducing, where possible, a phased programme of allowing motorcycles to use bus lanes;'

- 4.3.4 Leeds Transport Vision Healthy and Sustainable Leeds objectives. Allowing motorcycles in bus lanes would be positive if it encouraged mode shift from cars to motorcycles. Negative if it discouraged walking, cycling or public transport usage.
- Healthy Leeds - A transport system that has a positive effect on people's health and wellbeing and raises health standards across the city through the promotion of walking and cycling and the reduction of air pollution.
 - Sustainable Leeds - A transport system that does not harm the environment and will specifically reduce the impacts of air and noise pollution, greenhouse gas emissions and energy consumption.
- 4.3.5 Allowing motorcycles in bus lanes would potentially have negative impacts on the Leeds Cycling Starts Here Strategy aims:
1. Make cycling a natural everyday choice
 2. Improve safety, convenience for cycling and health and wellbeing across the city
 3. Improve environmental sustainability, better air quality and reduce pollution of all types

4.4 Resources, procurement and value for money

- 4.4.1 There are no resource implications arising from this report. However, if there were to be a change in policy there would be resource implications in order to facilitate the necessary amendments to the Traffic Regulation Order, associated signing and lining alterations, on site assessments and road safety audits, an education campaign and any future monitoring.

4.5 Legal implications, access to information, and call-in

- 4.5.1 There are no legal implications arising from this report which is for Members' information and consideration only. A change of the policy would require amendments to the existing Traffic Regulation Orders.

4.6 Risk management

- 4.6.1 There are no specific risk management implications. The report details some of the concerns that may arise if PTW are allowed to use with flow bus lanes within Leeds and the consequences this may have on road safety, sustainable travel choices and bus service reliability.

5. Conclusions

- 5.1 This report has provided information to Members' detailing Leeds City Council's current policy position to not allow PTWs to use with flow bus lanes. The Motorcycle Action Group would like this policy changing, however, both locally and nationally, there are inconsistencies and inconclusive evidence to address concerns relating to the impact a change of policy might have on road safety and bus services (reliability/journey times). The report has rehearsed the Strategy position and operational considerations related to this request and the Council's current position particularly reflection the future role of bus lanes in the effective provision of quality bus services in the context of the LPTIP and the ambition to double bus use by 2027.

6. Recommendations

6.1 Members for the Scrutiny Board (Infrastructure, Investment & Inclusive Growth) are requested to note and consider the contents of this report.

7. Background documents¹

7.1 None

¹ The background documents listed in this section are available to download from the council's website, unless they contain confidential or exempt information. The list of background documents does not include published works.

Appendix 1: List of local authorities Leeds City Council has contacted

Contacted authorities	Currently Allowed?
Barnsley	No
Bedford	Yes
Belfast	Yes
Birmingham	Yes
Blackburn with Darwen	No
Blackpool	No
Bolton	No
Bournemouth	No
Bradford	No
Brighton and Hove	Yes
Bristol	Yes
Buckinghamshire	Partial (1 Lane only)
Bury	No
Calderdale	No
Cambridgeshire	Yes
Cardiff	Yes
Central Bedfordshire	No Bus Lanes in Borough
Cheshire West and Chester	No
Coventry	Yes
Derby	Partial (2 lanes only)
Devon	No
Doncaster	Yes
Dudley	No
Durham	Yes
East Sussex	Yes
East Yorkshire	Yes
Edinburgh	Yes
Essex	Yes
Glasgow	No
Halton	No
Hull City Council	Yes
Kirklees	No
Knowsley	No Bus Lanes in Borough
Lancashire	No
Leeds	No
Leicester	No
Leicestershire	No
Liverpool	No
Luton	No
Manchester	No
Newcastle	Yes
Newport South Wales	Yes
North East Lincolnshire	Yes
North Lincolnshire	Yes
Norwich City	No
Nottingham	No
Nottinghamshire	No

Oldham	No
Peterborough	Yes
Plymouth	Yes
Poole	No
Portsmouth	No
Reading	Yes
Rochdale	No
Salford	No
Sefton	No
Sheffield	Yes
South Gloucestershire	Yes
South Hampshire	No
Southampton	No
Southend on Sea	No
St Helens	No
Stockport	No
Stoke on Trent	No
Sunderland	Yes
Swansea	No
Tameside	No
Trafford	No
Wakefield	Partial (1 lane only)
Walsall	Yes
Warrington	No
Wigan	No
Wirral	No
Wokingham	No
Wolverhampton	No

 = Core City

Appendix 2: Recorded Road Injury Collisions involving PTW within Leeds District

Table 1 – Total number of recorded injury collisions involving PTW in Leeds for the previous five years.

Year	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018
Total No. of PTW collisions	204	197	189	177	144

Note – 2019 data isn't provided because the information is incomplete.

Table 2 – Total number of recorded injury collisions for the past five years involving PTW where a bus lane is present and the motorcyclists is travelling with the bus lane flow or crossing it.

Bus priority Lanes	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	Total
A63 East Leeds Link IB HOV Lane, AM Peak (0700-1000)	1					1
A63 East Leeds Link OB HOV Lane, PM Peak (1600-1900)					1	1
A64 York Road OB Bus Lane, with bus gate at end			1			1
A647 Stanningley Road IB HOV Lane, AM Peak (0700-1000) and PM Peak (1600-1900)	1					1
A653 Meadow Road/Victoria Road IB Bus Lane, segregated north of Sweet Street	1					1
A660 Otley Road IB bus lane, AM Peak (0730-0930)	1	2	1	1		5
B6159 Selby Road IB Bus lane, leads to IB guideway on B6159 Selby Road		2				2
Burmantofts Street IB Bus Lane					1	1
Canal Street OB Bus Lane, with bus gate at end	1					1
Chapeltown Road IB Bus Lane, AM Peak (0730-0930)		1				1
City Centre Public Transport Box, varying access restrictions & times	2	1	2	1		6
Cross Gates Road IB Bus Lane, AM Peak (0730-0930)			1			1
Tong Road IB Bus Lane, AM Peak (0730-0930)					1	1
Total of PTW (with flow) where a bus lane is present	7	6	5	2	3	23