

## POWERED TWO-WHEELER WORKING GROUP: IIIG SCRUTINY BOARD

26 JULY 2021 – 2.30PM

### MEETING NOTES

Attendee	Role
Cllr J Bentley	Board Member
Cllr L Martin	Board Member
Cllr M Shazhad	Board Member
Cllr J Goddard	Board Member
Cllr A Hussain	Board Member
Cllr J Taylor	Board Member
Cllr P Truswell (Chair)	Board Member
Cllr P Wadsworth	Board Member
Cllr J Illingworth	Kirkstall Ward Member
Richard Manton	MAG Representative
Colin Brown	MAG Representative
John Nettleship	MAG Representative
Tom Lonsdale	MAG Representative
Gillian MacLeod	Transport Development Services Manager
Vivian Elby	Transport Planning Technician
Rebecca Atherton	Principal Scrutiny Advisor

**Apologies:** Cllrs Buckley, Dye, Gettings & Sharpe

#### **Board Discussions**

1. In his opening remarks the Chair asked participants to note:
  - a. The Scrutiny Board (Infrastructure, Investment & Inclusive Growth) cannot decide whether a trial of the use of bus lanes by powered two wheelers goes ahead - the Board can only make recommendations in this regard to the Executive Board.
  - b. The Board's remit relates to decisions taken in Leeds and members would not take a view on decisions taken in other cities.
  - c. The working group had been arranged to discuss the proposed trial on the A65 and would not re-open debate about the relative merits of a city-wide trial.

2. Officers, Cllr Illingworth and MAG representatives were invited to provide a five-minute introduction setting out their views on the proposed trial of the use of bus lanes by powered two wheelers on the A65 in Kirkstall.
3. Gillian MacLeod outlined the criteria used to identify the site on the A65 as the preferred location for a trial. Key considerations included the width of the bus lane, updated advice about cycling infrastructure as set out in Local Transport Note 1/20 and a new national bus strategy. Responses to member requests for specific data were highlighted within Appendix 1 of the agenda pack.
4. Cllr Illingworth highlighted the similarities between cyclists and those using powered two wheelers, noting both are vulnerable road users involved in a disproportionate number of road traffic accidents. He went on to set out four concerns about the proposed trial:
  - a. Due to variations in bus lane infrastructure, any trial data could not be extrapolated to inform future decisions about the mixed use of other segregated lanes.
  - b. The trial could create an increased risk to primary-school aged children cycling on that stretch of road, thereby discouraging active travel.
  - c. Any benefits from such a trial would be difficult to quantify.
  - d. The route, as understood by local ward members, is not an uninterrupted stretch of road but instead incorporates several minor junctions.
5. Cllr Illingworth also sought reassurance about ways in which current speed limits could be enforced to reduce risks for young cyclists.
6. Richard Manton introduced the views of MAG, noting the increased risks for powered two wheelers as roads become narrower to accommodate segregated bus and cycle lanes.
7. He outlined positive engagement with West Yorkshire Combined Authority about the use of bus lanes by powered two wheelers and the subsequent challenges of engaging with constituent authorities about individual trials.
8. The environmental benefits of encouraging the general use of powered two wheelers, as opposed to single occupancy cars, were noted by MAG representatives and the Board was asked to contrast the approach to single track vehicles in Leeds with that of other European cities.

9. It was suggested that the only stakeholders to express concern about the trial were local ward councillors. MAG advocated progressing a trial so that the evidence gathered could be used to more accurately inform future policy.
10. Officers outlined the way in which the proposed trial would operate, including monitoring the impact on cycling and the collation of collision statistics.
11. The Board discussed the relative risks posed to cyclists by powered two wheelers and buses. It was noted that any increase in the volume of vehicles using bus lanes would also increase risk to cyclists.
12. The Board explored the risks posed by powered two wheelers “weaving, filtering and overtaking” - and the likelihood of other road users being able to anticipate such manoeuvres - where there is shared use of a segregated lane.
13. MAG representatives noted that other cities that have provided bus lane access to powered two wheelers have not reported concerns about “weaving.” MAG representatives suggested powered two wheelers were most likely to leave a bus lane when conducting legal manoeuvres that all road users would experience on a typical stretch of unsegregated road – such as overtaking a bus. Members were asked to distinguish between weaving, filtering and changing lanes.
14. It was suggested by MAG that the nature of concerns being raised – such as the potential for ‘risky’ behaviours – would be best examined through the gathering of tangible evidence during a trial.
15. A number of members agreed that without a trial there is no evidence upon which to base future decision making about shared use of bus lanes.
16. It was acknowledged that excess speed is statistically more prevalent amongst users of powered two wheelers. A lack of local flexibility around options for speed mitigation measures, which might reduce the risk associated with excess speed, remained a concern for Board members.
17. The criteria for the deployment of static speed cameras was discussed along with the limitations of some camera locations and elements of enforcement technology.
18. It was confirmed that there are no plans for additional cameras as part of the A65 trial but officers informed the Board that they would seek to work with police partners with a view to carrying out an enforcement event during the trial period.

19. The Board was informed that the Safer Roads Partnership has written to the Department for Transport to advocate greater flexibility on the siting of fixed and mobile enforcement cameras.
20. Board members queried the timing of ward member consultation and suggested it would have been helpful to begin that process earlier to provide greater opportunity to address the concerns now being raised.
21. Officers agreed and acknowledged there had been a delay in progressing the proposed trial. This was attributed to the need to rapidly re-direct officer resources to respond to the Government's Active Travel Fund within short timescales and the operational pressures that emerged during the pandemic.
22. Members noted Council policy aims to encourage active travel and the use of public transport.
23. Members sought clarity over what would constitute a successful trial, and how any data gathered from the exercise could then be applied to other bus lanes. Should a trial go ahead the Board recommended that officers monitor the particular impact on the number of children cycling.
24. Members sought clarity about whether journey time or road safety was the primary aim of the trial. It was noted that in the data provided only 2% of collisions involving powered two wheelers took place on roads where there was a bus lane. Without tangible evidence of how a trial could improve road safety, Board members discussed concerns about whether the proposals represented value for money.
25. In response MAG representatives reiterated the view of their organisation that allowing powered two wheelers to use bus lanes would improve road safety as well as reducing journey times, particularly where risks to vulnerable road users increase in severe weather conditions. They underlined the increased risks for motorcyclists as a result of the compression of available road space to create dedicated cycle and bus lanes.
26. MAG reiterated the benefits a city-wide trial over a site-specific trial, arguing it would allow widespread publicity, clear messaging, and a reduced risk of powered two wheelers incurring fines by straying into bus lanes where the trial does not apply.
27. The Board discussed whether shared use of segregated lanes should be a recommended design feature of new road infrastructure.
28. It was noted that there may be potential in future to consider whether private hire vehicles should also have greater flexibility to use bus lanes.

29. Participants highlighted the risk that a single scheme in isolation could cause confusion for motorists using powered two wheelers.
30. Officers clarified the process for securing a TRO in the case of a trial being progressed and noted that officers would endeavour to secure further baseline data to assist in monitoring the impact of the project.

### **Concluding Remarks**

31. MAG representatives reminded the Board that the preference of their organisation was for a city-wide trial to take place. However, in the absence of that being an option for consideration they strongly recommended the swift implementation of the trial on the A65.
32. MAG welcomed the comprehensive data supplied in advance of the meeting. Representatives remained of the view that no evidence had been presented to demonstrate why a trial should not take place. MAG went on to argue that evidence does exist from other trials to support shared access to bus lanes.
33. MAG suggested the criteria, based on bus lane width, used to identify the location of the proposed trial on the A65 was in itself flawed. MAG reiterated the importance of consistency in approach. MAG also outlined their work with cycling bodies, underlining the close alignment of all single-track vehicle users as vulnerable road users.
34. Cllr Illingworth concluded that data from other trials remains inclusive in terms of quantifiable benefits and cannot therefore be regarded as statistically relevant. He also remarked that due to the number of variable factors any data gathered from a trial could not be extrapolated to other sites.
35. Cllr Illingworth remained concerned about the lack of consultation at an earlier stage in the development of trial proposals. He advocated a need for further engagement with local people before a trial is implemented.
36. Cllr Illingworth remained very concerned about any increase in physical risk to children cycling on the A65, and the potential for a perceived increase in risk discouraging children from cycling. Cllr Illingworth also noted a lack of information within the proposals about volatile organic compounds emitted from motorcycles.
37. Officers concluded by noting that the A65 provides the only suitable location for a trial of powered two wheelers using bus lanes in Leeds. It was noted that there may be potential for future trials as part of new infrastructure but no such options are yet available and would not fall within the scope of current deliberations.

## **Recommendations**

38. Members were reminded that any recommendations to the Executive Board would have to be ratified in a formally constituted Board meeting.
39. The Chair asked members to indicate whether they were:
  - a. Supportive of the Board recommending to Executive Board that the proposed trial of powered two wheelers using the bus lane on the A65 is progressed.
  - b. Supportive of providing an initial indication to Executive Board that in due course other segregated routes such as the A647 and A61/A639 should similarly be considered as possible locations for powered two-wheeler access to bus lanes.
40. The vote was inconclusive with regard to recommendation A with equal votes being cast and will therefore be referred for a full Board vote at the next physical meeting.
41. A majority of members supported recommendation B in principle, albeit on the understanding that further information would be required to inform any future recommendation including in relation to cost and feasibility. No decision could be made in relation to these schemes at the current time due to the stage of development of the infrastructure schemes.