

PORTFOLIO HOLDER DECISION RECORD



Report subject	Whitecliff Rd ETRO
Decision maker	Cllr Mike Greene (Portfolio Holder for Transport and Sustainability)
Decision date	Not before 25 January 2021
Decision taken	To revoke the Experimental Traffic Regulation Order (ETRO) to remove the EATF (Emergency Active Travel Fund) Tranche 1 point road closure from Whitecliff Road at Keyhole Bridge.
Reasons for the decision	<p>Decisions regarding Traffic Regulation Orders (TROs) including ETROs are delegated to the Portfolio Holder.</p> <p>The Portfolio Holder has considered the results of the consultations to date, and the equalities, environmental, safety and wider community impact of keeping the closure in place and decided to revoke the Order prior to the end of the initial six month period.</p>
Call-in and urgency:	This decision is subject to a call-in period.
Corporate Director	Corporate Director of Regeneration and Economy
Responsible officer	Richard Pearson
Wards	Parkstone and Poole Town; (Traffic diverted also has impacts in Parkstone)
Status	Open
Background	<p>Background:</p> <p>The existing Experimental Closure on Whitecliff Road at Keyhole Bride was installed at pace with limited consultation and engagement with local ward members owing to the timescales dictated by the EATF Tranche 1 programme. EATF Tranche 1 measures had to be devised within 7 days, started to be delivered on the ground with 4 weeks and completed on the ground within 8 weeks of commencement. The original 6 month consultation period was to run from 19/8/20 to 21/02/21.</p> <p>This bridge is very narrow (2.7m wide) with no footway. The collision rate has historically been relatively low with no casualties at the bridge itself in the last 5 yrs. There were 3 road casualties at or near to the bridge in the last 10yrs. Two of these were at the bridge itself and in both cases pedestrians were struck by vehicles negotiating the narrow passage under the bridge. Before</p>

	<p>the ETRO trial the approaches to the bridge, particularly from the Whitecliff side had poor visibility, which meant that pedestrians had to step into the highway not knowing whether or not a car was approaching from the opposite end (Parkside).</p> <p>Although a relatively low collision rate the closure was trialled primarily to create a low traffic route to make it more attractive to pedestrians and cyclists and to potentially benefit the vulnerable, elderly, and mobility/visually impaired people that may in the past have avoided this entry to the park due to the perceived danger. In winter the bridge floods and without vehicles present this makes it easier to resolve this issue in the longer term if the closure were to be retained.</p> <p>There have been no formally recorded casualties reported to the Council during the trial itself. Officers have recently been alerted to concerns regarding “speeding cyclists” and near misses with pedestrians as a result of the closure to vehicular traffic as part of the experiment.</p> <p>Observations have been made regarding the behaviour of pedestrians and cyclists and no incidents or near misses have been witnessed.</p> <p>The sight line issue relating to the previous layout that permitted cars has the potential to be replicated for cyclists approaching from the Lilliput direction however no conflict has been observed in practice and it is apparent that most cyclists are approaching via the Harbourside Park and the access gate and in negotiating the gate they have naturally had to dismount or slow down.</p>
Options appraisal	<p>The options available are to retain the closure, modify it or remove the closure now, carry out a review at the end of 6 months as originally planned or allow the trial to run for a longer period up to a maximum of 18 months. The Portfolio Holder has requested that the measure be removed.</p>
Consultation undertaken	<p>The closure has been facilitated by utilising an Experimental Traffic Regulation Order (ETRO) process which in itself is a consultation.</p> <p>During the experiment the Council has continually run an informal consultation to systematically capture informal feedback from the public:</p> <p>The most recent report with timing breakdown (issued 23 November 2020) advised the following:</p> <p>Period 1 - 19 Aug 2020 to 14 Sept 2020: 46% for vs 50% against from 114 people.</p> <p>Period 2 - 15 Sept 2020 to 8 October 2020: 54% for vs 43% against from 37 people.</p> <p>Period 3 - 9 October 2020 to 23 November 2020: 79% for vs 18% against from 201 people.</p> <p>Overall, up until 11th Jan 2021 – 270 (60%) agree or strongly agree with the measure, 164 (37%) disagree or strongly disagree with the measure.</p> <p>An ETRO requires the Council to record formal objections (and support) for the measure and therefore a formal consultation has also been in operation</p>

to capture written feedback from the public and this is summarised in the table below:

Whitecliff Road (ETRO/2)

Timing of responses		Response type				
		Support	Object	Comment	Query	Total
Pre-Implementation	Before advert date *	0	2	2	0	4
	12-day period between advert date & installation date (07/08/20 – 19/08/20)	1	6	3	1	11
Post Implementation	First 4-week period (19/08/20 – 16/09/20)	7	10	1	1	19
	Second 4-week period (16/09/20 – 14/10/20)	11	1	1	0	13
	Third 4-week period (14/10/20 – 11/11/20)	58	9	20	3	90
	Fourth 4-week period (11/11/20 – 09/12/20)	41	7	22	4	74
	Fifth 4-week period (09/12/20 – 06/01/21) **	10	0	2	0	12
Total		128	35	51	9	223

*Information about the scheme was made public prior to the advert being published.

**Currently ongoing – figures are provisional.

ETRO/2 has the most correspondence in the period from 23rd Oct to 23rd Nov.

Following the press release issued by the Council on 15/10/2020 declaring an intent to remove the scheme - following the resurfacing works in Poole Park, there have been 178 messages compared to the total of 223.

Of these, there were 109 separate messages of support, 16 objections, 34 comments and 7 queries.

The number of comments reflect several instances of follow-up correspondence. One person accounted for 14 of these and a handful of others also provided between 2 and 5 messages each.

One response received was on behalf of a family of four and the respondent specifically asked for it to be treated as 4 separate messages of support.

It would appear that many of the people who have messaged in since 15/10/2020 were wrongly informed and had the impression that a decision to remove the scheme had been made.

A leaflet was also distributed by a third party (BH Active Travel <https://www.bhactivetravel.uk/>) which mistakenly stated that Keyhole Bridge was re-opening on 21/11/2020.

This did not relate to ETRO/2 and instead referred to separate works at the Whitecliff Road junction as part of the on-going access improvements works in Poole Park that resulted in the park roads being closed until mid Nov 2020.

A holding response was issued on 17/11/2020 to clarify the situation.

	<p>Discounting the correspondence received after the confused information, a report of the feedback dated 6th Oct showed 9 formal expressions of support and 14 objections.</p> <p>In addition, if the informal responses are considered before this miscommunication then in early October there were 54% support for the measure compared to 43% against.</p> <p>The Council is not under an obligation to make a decision that aligns with a consultation outcome but must also consider the wider operational and legal issues.</p>
Financial/Resource implications	Negligible. The temporary bollards and planters used to facilitate the closure can be utilised elsewhere and were designed to be easily installed and removed in line with the experimental nature of the measure.
Summary of legal implications	Removing the measure will revoke the ETRO and this will need to be advertised.
Summary of sustainability impact	<p>The installation of the measure aligns with national and local Transport Policy by creating a more attractive sustainable travel route although if removed, the route will still be available to sustainable modes.</p> <p>Poole Park is closed to through traffic until 10am. i.e. during the morning traffic peak period. In effect the measure diverted up to approximately 3,000 vehicles around the public highway network which is approximately 380m longer. A previous study in 2016 indicated that diverting traffic on this longer route during the pm peak increased journey times, in the worst case by more than 3 minutes.</p> <p>See Appendix D</p>
Summary of public health implications	Broadly neutral.
Summary of equality implications	<p>By removing the point closure there are some negative impacts on pedestrians, including the young, elderly and disabled who will find it more difficult to travel through keyhole bridge safely.</p> <p>However, making the route more attractive to cyclists may increase the frequency and speed of cyclists and the consequential risk of pedestrians individuals being struck by cyclists if the measure is not removed (this could be addressed by adjusting the existing measure).</p> <p>There is some increased risk that a disabled person may find it harder to access the park if not in a vehicle, however the removal of the point closure would improve access to the park by disabled drivers.</p> <p>Overall the decision is regarded as negative. The Equality Impact Assessment screening form is included at the end of this report and the EIA can be found in Appendix C.</p>
Summary of risk	The Council is under a statutory obligation to investigate and seek to bring forward measures to reduce casualties as per section 39 of the Road Traffic

assessment	<p>Act 1988. There may be safety benefits of removing vehicle traffic from the bridge route and reducing traffic in the Park. This traffic will be displaced onto routes around the park and there may be safety disbenefits of doing that.</p> <p>The Council is under a statutory duty under the Traffic Management Act to ensure the efficient use of its road network. Removing the traffic route through the park permanently and diverting traffic around it is likely to make the road network less efficient and will increase journey times in the vicinity.</p> <p>See Appendix B.</p>
Conflicts of interest declared by Cabinet member consulted on this decision	None.
Background papers	EATF T1 and T2 Cabinet Report July 2020.

Equality Impact Assessment: conversation screening tool

[Use this form to prompt an EIA conversation and capture the output between officers, stakeholders and interested groups. This completed form or a full EIA report will be published as part of the decision-making process]

Policy/Service under development/review:	EATF T1 – Keyhole Bridge
What changes are being made to the policy/service?	Decision to revoke ETRO
Service Unit:	G&I
Persons present in the conversation and their role/experience in the service:	Richard Pearson – Transport Network Manager/Professionally qualified with 30 yrs experience Richard Barnes
Conversation dates:	
Do you know your current or potential client base? Who are the key stakeholders?	All park and road users and so users have all protected characteristics.
Do different groups have different needs or experiences in relation to the policy/service?	Yes. Disabled may typically have increased access problems.
Will the policy or service change affect any of these service users?	Yes.
[If the answer to the three questions above is ‘don’t know’ then you need to gather more evidence and do a full EIA. The best way to do this is to use the Capturing Evidence form]	
What are the benefits or positive impacts of the policy/service change on current or potential service users?	<p>Whitecliff Road is one of multiple interim highways schemes, to deliver pop-up and temporary interventions to create an environment that is safe for walking and cycling. Initiated by Department of Transport, (DfT) funding, with the purpose to enable continuation of the transport network but still maintain social distancing during the Covid-19 pandemic.</p> <p>The aim is to embed walking and cycling as part of long - term commuting habits and reap the associated health, air quality and congestion benefits. As a condition of the funding the schemes need to be started within 4 weeks of receiving the DfT funding and completed within 8 weeks. BCP Council aims to deliver the schemes to ensure the Government funding is used to enable active and sustainable travel for people to get around while maintaining social distance. For the period of the funding allocation, public transport is discouraged to avoid overcrowding. Creating better spaces for cycling and walking will encourage local sustainable travel, to try to avoid escalating car use which has detrimental impacts in terms of congestion, air quality and health.</p> <p>Whitecliff Road specifically aims to create a safer environment to travel to and through the area on foot and/or by bicycle with safer and more sustainable access to the Poole park area. A further aim is to reduce the number of</p>

	vehicles driving through Poole Park itself.
What are the negative impacts of the policy/service change on current or potential service users?	By removing the point closure there are some negative impacts on pedestrian and disabled who will find it more difficult to travel through keyhole bridge safely due to the present of motor traffic. Those using motor vehicles will find the park more accessible from the Lilliput direction.
Will the policy or service change affect employees?	No, or only in so far as they are also road users.
Will the policy or service change affect the wider community?	Yes. The removal of the measure will increase traffic through the park although it will simultaneously also reduce traffic on the diversionary route.
What mitigating actions are planned or already in place for those negatively affected by the policy/service change?	The measure was experimental and therefore the decision to remove the measure is returning the situation to the previous status quo.
Summary of Equality Implications:	<p>The decision to remove the closure has both negative and positive impacts on different user types. However the decision may be regarded as negative overall.</p> <p>A full EIA is included in Appendix C.</p>

For any questions on this, please contact the Policy and Performance Team by emailing performance@bcpcouncil.gov.uk