Leicester City Council Scrutiny Review

Bus Lane Policy and Enforcement in Leicester City

A Report of the Transport and Climate Change Scrutiny Commission

March 2013
Transport and Climate Change Scrutiny Commission

Chair: Councillor Neil Clayton
Vice Chair: Councillor Paul Newcombe
Commission Members: Councillor Hanif Aqbany
Councillor Gurinder Singh Sandhu
Councillor Nigel Porter
Councillor Veejay Patel

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Minutes from Transport and Climate Change Scrutiny Commission meetings

The minutes from the Transport and Climate Change Scrutiny Commission in relation to this review can be accessed on line at:
Chair's Foreword

As part of its measures to improve bus services in Leicester, Leicester City Council has recently introduced camera enforcement on bus lanes in the city centre at Charles Street and Causeway Lane.

With more camera enforcement being planned in 2013, it seems prudent for the Transport and Climate Change Scrutiny Commission to review the Council’s policy towards who can and can’t use the City’s bus lanes, and when.

Bus lanes give priority to buses and cut down on journey times where roads are congested with other traffic. This in turn, makes services more reliable and more attractive to potential users. They also have the additional benefits of assisting in the reduction of pollutants as well as providing a safer route for the increasing numbers of cyclists on our roads. Any proposed changes to the current enforcement regime must, therefore, balance the likely outcomes of those proposed changes with the need to preserve the existing and proven benefits.

The Commission was grateful to receive evidence from both sides of bus lane enforcement. The evidence was stimulating and provided much food for thought for Commission members. I would personally like to thank all of those that participated in our evidence session of 23rd January, as well as those who took the time to contribute written submissions.

Councillor Neil Clayton

Chair, Transport & Climate Change Scrutiny Commission
1 Executive Summary

1.1 This report concludes the Transport and Climate Change Scrutiny Commission’s review into the Council’s bus lane enforcement in Leicester.

1.2 The Council has, over time, received representations from a number of sectors/groups who have put forward their case for inclusion in the use of bus lanes, whether this is universal access, or in certain priority locations at certain times. As such the Commission wished to take a view on the following two main areas:

- Whether we should maintain the current arrangements for who can use bus lanes during the hours of operation, namely buses, hackney carriages and cyclists only;

- Whether our bus lanes should operate for 24 hours a day or be individually tailored to the needs of the particular location.

Conclusions and Recommendations

1.3 The Commission makes the following conclusions as part of this review:

1.3.1 The Commission has some sympathy for private hire taxi firms where restrictions may confuse and alienate potential customers and where this may have a knock-on effect for public disorder;

1.3.2 However, the Commission feels that private hire firms should not be exempt from bus lane restrictions in the same way as hackney carriages We believe that there are other actions that can be taken to mitigate the specific issues presented by private hire vehicles in their evidence to the Commission (see 1.4.1 below);

1.3.3 The Commission would not support bus lane restrictions being lifted for the freight and haulage sector;

1.3.4 The Commission believes that bus lanes work most effectively in areas where there is consistency of approach, both in terms of restrictions on vehicle types and in the times they are in operation;
1.4 The Mayor is asked to consider the following recommendations:

1.4.1 Take appropriate action, possibly by means of re-routing city centre bus lanes and bus gates as part of the Haymarket Bus Station project, to ensure city streets can be made as accessible as possible to private hire vehicles during the late night, early morning period;

1.4.2 Consider the implications of converting all bus lanes in Leicester to 24/7, exploring fully the impact on businesses;

1.4.3 Further consider the merits of piloting the use of bus lanes by motorcycles, in line with a number of other authorities in the UK. We request that transport officers accumulate further evidence, from authorities that have already piloted such arrangements, before we make a firm recommendation on this point. This is discussed further below (from section 2.6).

Financial and Legal Implications

1.5 Financial Implications

The Gross Bus lane enforcement income to date is £830k and forecast net surplus for the year is £500k. The 2012/13 budget strategy set a surplus budget of £200k for Bus lane enforcement, rising to £250k in 2013/14 and then falling back to £200k for 2014/15 and subsequent years.

The surplus can be used in the provision or operation of, or of facilities for public passenger transport services; and the purposes of a highway improvement project.

Paresh Radia – Principal Accountant

1.6 Legal Implications

If no changes are proposed to the current bus lane/gate provisions such as times and vehicles allowed to enter them, then there are no legal implications. However, if changes are proposed to them then the Traffic Regulation Orders will need amendment which will require legal procedures to be followed before they can become operational to incorporate the changes.

Jamie Guazzaroni – City Barrister
2 Report

2.1 This review was conducted ostensibly through a public evidence session conducted on 23rd January 2013. At that evidence session the Commission heard from existing users of bus lanes, namely the bus companies. We have also, since then, received representations from Cycle City.

2.2 The evidence session on 23rd January also allowed the Commission to hear from, and question, representatives from other sectors that would like to be exempt from the bus lane restrictions in Leicester. These included private hire firms, motorcycles and the freight and haulage sector. The minutes of this session are available at:

http://www.cabinet.leicester.gov.uk:8071/documents/g5092/Printed%20minutes%20Wednesday%2023-Jan-2013%20.pdf?T=1

2.3 The meeting on 23rd was based around written submissions by key witnesses prior to the meeting. These submissions are attached to this report at Annex B below.

a. Freight and Haulage

2.4 The Commission acknowledges that some authorities have piloted HGVs having access to bus lanes or have introduced lanes expressly for the use of goods vehicles. However, the Commission does not believe that, based on the evidence provided, there is merit in exploring that arrangement in Leicester. We do not accept the argument that the transportation of freight is akin to the transport of people and we believe that there could be significant safety concerns, especially for cyclists, were large freight vehicles allowed to use bus lanes at peak periods. We also note the comments from the Leicester Chamber Of Commerce, which doubt the demand for current restrictions to be lifted. The Commission is comfortable that the majority of deliveries by goods vehicles can be, and generally are, deliberately timed to be out of peak hours.

2.5 The Commission is, nevertheless, mindful of the potential consequences of having a blanket 24 hour restriction on bus lanes across the city. That is why we are suggesting to the Mayor that the benefits of implementing 24/7 bus lanes restrictions - in terms of consistency and ease of understanding for all drivers - be balanced against the negative impacts on the freight and haulage sector.
b. Motorcycles

2.6 A number of other local authorities across England have piloted and/or introduced permanent arrangements to allow motorcycles to use bus lanes. The majority of authorities that have introduced such arrangements have tended to retain restrictions on motorcycles in city centres (normally bus gates).

2.7 The most high profile relaxation of bus lane restrictions for motorcycles has happened in London. This happened after two trial periods which, whilst improving journey times for motorcycles, also concluded that there was both an increase in cycle accidents and motorcycle collisions along those trial routes.

2.8 In considering whether the London case has provided a useful template for Leicester to follow, the Commission remains unclear exactly what the key drivers would be to make changes. In particular, we make the following comments:

Improving air quality

2.9 There is no commitment in the Council’s Climate Change Action Plan or Air Quality Action Plan to increase the use of motorcycles on our roads as a means of delivering environmental improvements. Neither do those key policy documents suggest there are significant environmental benefits by reducing journey times for motorcycles.

2.10 Whilst it is true that motorcycles are more fuel efficient than most cars, and thus emit less carbon dioxide, they emit more carbon monoxide and other harmful gases. This seems especially true of larger motorcycles above 400cc. As DVLA statistics suggest that around 75% of new motorcycles licensed in the UK are at least 500cc it seems fair to conclude that more motorcycles on our roads could, in fact, be detrimental to the local environment.

Reducing Congestion

2.11 Whilst the Council’s Local Transport Plan 3 states that “motorcycles offer economy, easier parking, reduced journey times and greater convenience when compared to the car” it stops short of identifying whether motorcycles can play a role in significantly reducing congestion.

2.12 There are perhaps two reasons to believe that it would have a negligible impact on overall congestion rates in Leicester. Firstly, LTP3 estimated that motorcycles made up only 0.2% of commuter traffic. Removing such a small

\[ \text{LTP3 p.188} \]
amount of traffic from busy lanes would be unlikely to ease overall congestion. Secondly, the overall trend in the UK over the last few years is that motorcycle ownership and usage has gone down. It is questionable, therefore, that the figure of 0.2% could be easily turned into a figure that would have a more significant impact on congestion.

Road Safety

2.13 Leicester’s Local Transport Plan also acknowledges that “pedal cyclist, powered two wheelers and pedestrian casualties remain unacceptably high”\(^2\). A key consideration for the Commission, therefore, would be whether allowing motorcycles to use bus lanes would be likely to improve or worsen road safety in the city.

2.14 The trials in London confirmed that there was an increase in the percentage of motorcycles travelling above the speed limit along trial routes. Evidence compiled in the last decade by, *inter alia*, the Royal Society for the Prevention of Accidents (RoSPA) suggests that motorcycles are disproportionately dangerous compared to other vehicles on the road. For example, it is claimed that “despite forming only 1% of road traffic, motorcyclists account for 18% of road deaths and serious injuries.” It also adds that “motorcyclists are seven times more likely to be involved in an accident than a car.”\(^3\)

2.15 Therefore it could be concluded that allowing motorcycles to use bus lanes, giving them the opportunity to increase their speed, and potentially attracting more motorcyclists into the city, might have significant implications for road safety in Leicester.

Value for Money of changing current restrictions

2.16 The final point the Commission wanted to draw in relation to motorcycles using bus lanes, was around the potential cost of invoking any changes to the current regime. As the number of motorcycles on the road as a proportion of overall vehicles is so small, the cost of monitoring impacts, as well as the capital costs involved in altering signage and road markings, would need to be evaluated before embarking on a pilot.

Potential pilot for motorcycles in Leicester

2.17 Irrespective of the above, the Commission remains mindful of the number of other authorities who have followed the London model and altered their bus

\(^2\) LTP3 p.178
\(^3\) RoSPA policy paper ‘Motorcycling Safety’ – June 2006
lane restrictions to permit their use by motorcycles. The time constraints of this review have not allowed us to delve into why those authorities have changed their approach, and what evidence they may have used to elicit those changes.

2.18 We would, therefore, ask the Mayor and his officers to gather as much evidence as possible from other authorities before determining whether it is appropriate to pilot the use of bus lanes by motorcycles in Leicester.

c. Private Hire Taxis
2.19 The Commission received evidence from a small handful of the largest private hire taxi firms in Leicester as part of this review. It is clear from the evidence that there is strong feeling within the sector concerning the distinction between hackney carriages and private hire vehicles (PHVs). This has, of course, been subject to a high profile case in the High Court which defended the distinction and allowed London to continue to permit hackneys to use bus lanes, but not PHVs.

2.20 The Commission is inclined to accept the High Court’s ruling and to conclude that private hire vehicles are ostensibly in a different market place to hackney carriages. In addition we feel that there may be real disadvantages to allowing private hire vehicles to use the City’s bus lanes. Firstly, we believe that the visual distinction between private hire vehicles and normal cars is small and may encourage more cars to use the bus lanes illegally. It is also conceivable that the sheer number of journeys undertaken by PHVs could, at its worst, undo the benefits of reduced bus journey times.

2.21 Nevertheless, we also accept the evidence of the PHV firms, that there are occasions where the distinction between hackneys and PHVs is unhelpful. This is particularly prevalent amongst passengers who see a hackney able to take a ‘short cut’ through a bus lane and becoming irritated when their PHV is forced to take the ‘longer route’.

2.22 In particular, the Commission was keen to understand whether there were public order benefits to PHVs being able to use certain sections of the bus lane network at key times, namely around clubs and pubs in the early hours of the weekend. Witnesses placed particular emphasis on the situation around Church Gate and Causeway Lane and the effect this had on customers who were often inebriated.
2.23 The Commission asked Leicestershire Police for their views on this specific problem. They responded by saying that they would be supportive of moves to relax bus lane rules in the Charles Street and Causeway Lane areas of the city during the early hours⁴.

2.24 In light of the evidence and the views of the police we are asking the Mayor to consider dealing with the problems associated with the enforcement of the Church Gate/Causeway Lane bus lanes. Although this can be done through the relaxation of enforcement we understand that the Mayor’s proposals regarding the Haymarket Bus Station may precipitate the re-routing of roads and, particularly bus lanes, in that area of the city. We strongly urge the Mayor to take our view in relation to PHVs into consideration when finalising plans for the proposed road layout.

**d. Times that Bus Lanes should be in operation**

2.25 Leicester’s bus lanes currently operate a variety of arrangements. Whilst the assumption is that bus lanes should operate 24/7, exceptions have been made where there are businesses that front the Highway (such as Welford Road), to allow for kerbside parking in off peak hours.

2.26 There is a significant amount of anecdotal evidence that supports the view that driver behaviour is best reinforced through the consistent application of bus lane operating times. This would lend credence to the argument that all bus lanes should operate on a 24/7 basis (all bus gates must, in any event, be enforced on that basis unless special authorisation is granted by the Secretary of State).

2.27 This is a view shared by bus companies as it is rightly pointed out that if there is congestion outside of peak hours it is still preferable to have the buses running on time.

2.28 Although the purity of a 24/7 model is attractive, the Commission has received enough evidence to suggest there may be negative repercussions. Not only in areas such as Welford Road, where parking opportunities help local businesses to thrive, but also on arterial routes where freight and haulage firms can currently drive at off peak times with impunity.

⁴ Letter from Graham Compton, Senior Traffic Management Officer (Leicestershire Police) to Commission (Annex A)
2.29 It is, therefore, the Commission’s recommendation that the Mayor should consider introducing blanket 24/7 bus lanes but that any proposal needs to determine the precise impact on the business interests as outlined above.
Dear Mr Armstrong,

BUS LANE ENFORCEMENT

I refer to your e-mail dated 28th February 2013 concerning the above. This matter has been discussed with both the Commander of the Central Local Policing Unit and the Head of the Roads Policing Unit, with the following response.

Public Order in the City Centre
It is felt that a relaxation of the 24/7 bus lane camera enforcement in Charles Street and Causeway Lane would be of benefit to the police during the early hours. This would assist in promptly clearing the streets of persons leaving public houses and night clubs, thereby reducing the risk of public disorder.

Any action to introduce camera equipment at other inner core may also have disbenefits as far as public order in the city centre is concerned, unless changes to operating times are included with the equipment.

Who should use the bus lanes?
This has been an ongoing question since the introduction of bus lanes in Leicester. Notwithstanding my undermentioned comments, the general consensus seems to be that the current exemptions are still fit for purpose. However, should the council feel the time is right to extend the exemption to ‘private hire’ vehicles then no police objection would be raised.
**Should Bus Lanes Operate 24/7?**
The Force has always maintained the view that bus lanes are primarily designed to assist bus drivers and passengers during traffic peak periods, i.e. 0700 x 0930 hours and 1600 x 1830 hours. This criteria is already in place at some sites in the city. Such an outcome is likely to have the approval of the motoring public without incurring delays for public service vehicles.

One possible outcome of this review could be the introduction of consistent bus lane operational times across the whole of Leicester. This would be a positive step forward, which would be of benefit to both the public and the police alike.

A change along these lines may also effect the operation of the bus lane cameras.

**Conclusion**
The Force fully supports the review of bus lane enforcement by the Scrutiny Committee and feels it is opportune to look at the current operating procedures, particularly in view of the introduction of bus lane/gate cameras.

Any action that the council takes to assist the Force in dealing with potential public order incidents in the inner core will be warmly received. Whilst in general terms the existing bus lane exemptions are still appropriate, the Force would support a rationalisation of their operation, with an emphasis on the peak time periods. This is considered to be a more meaningful way forward than the current fragmented approach.

The option of retention of the status quo but introducing an exemption for the private hire vehicles in the inner core of the city is not considered to be a viable way forwards.

Yours sincerely,

Graham Compton
Senior Traffic Management Officer
Traffic Management Section
Annex B

Scrutiny Review
Bus Lane Enforcement in Leicester City

Evidence Pack

23rd January 2013
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This pack includes the following evidence:

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Arriva

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Leicester Rutland RMT

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Section D – Freight and Haulage

Road Haulage Association
Freight Transport Association
Leicester Chamber of Commerce

Section E – Private Hire Taxi Evidence

Club Private Hire Ltd
Swift Fox Cabs

Section F - Sample invitation to submit evidence
Section A

Bus Company Evidence

Centrebus
16th December 2012

Thank you for your email. As you know, Centrebus is Leicester’s third bus operator, and operates a number of lower frequency services for the City Council, the important Circle Line service around the city, and more frequent services on routes parallel with First, routes 22 (A,B) and 54 (A).

We also have experience of providing services in a number of other towns and cities around England.

A summary of our principle comments/issues concerning bus lane provision are as follows:-

1. The dependability of bus services is the most important factor in delivering a high level of passenger satisfaction, and achieving patronage growth. Dependability is delivered through certainty; that the bus will arrive, and at the predicted time. Whilst operational factors within our control do affect, the main cause of disruption is traffic, and an effective bus lane network is essential in this.

2. Leicester has invested in a cohesive strategy for bus lanes. This is recognised and is welcomed by Centrebus, as are future proposals, for example in respect of Narborough Road. The benefits are also being seen. Peak time delays for our network, whilst still an issue, are less significant in Leicester than in other areas we operate such as Luton, where the bus lane network is less well established or delivered. So we have seen improvements in service reliability over recent years here because of that investment.

3. Delay remains, but tends to be confined to certain pinchpoints, the area around LRI being a particular problem, also Narborough Road/Upperton Road area (which is in hand) and Causeway Lane/Inner Ring Road (which has been widely highlighted at liaison meetings). These issues can be strategically dealt with, although the cost and political issues are recognised.

4. Once bus lanes are in place, the degree of success or otherwise is determined by the design, the use operators make of them, and enforcement. The latter is a significant concern in Leicester and Centrebus welcomes the City Council's policy to improve it.

5. We have been surprised by the extent of abuse being experienced following the introduction of enforcement cameras in Charles Street and at Causeway Lane. It really has highlighted the extent of the problem. The volume of infringement being seen demonstrates how a lack of enforcement can mitigate the benefits of a bus lane, and damage the delivery of the economic case.

6. Misuse of bus lanes can be down to both ignorance and abuse. The former needs to be addressed by having clear rules in place for adherence, which are understood by road users generally. The latter can only really be dealt with through strict enforcement in our experience. Given the availability of both civil
and police enforcement staff, we recognise that the only truly effective and economic enforcement mechanism will be camera based.

7. With respect to misuse due to ignorance, we are concerned about the reduced effectiveness of bus lanes with restricted operating hours. The case for these seems limited – by definition access is restricted at times when the road space taken up is most needed, and access opened when it is not. However, the lack of clarity it puts to other motorists (open to them at some times, or on some days), creates a culture that driving in a bus lane is an acceptable behaviour. We see higher levels of misuse on bus lanes with restricted operating hours and we believe it is for this reason.

Concluding, Centrebus is highly supportive of a pro-active approach to bus lane enforcement in the City, keen to work with the council to ensure that this is delivered in a publicly acceptable way, and pleased with the progress that has been achieved so far.

Let me know if you need any further information or view.

Dave Shelley
Commercial Director

forwarded by CENTREBUS LTD your local bus service provider
Arriva  
7th January 2013

I refer to correspondence received from Gordon Armstrong inviting our views on bus lanes in Leicester.  

As the provider of an extensive and comprehensive network of commercially operated bus services in Leicester and Leicestershire the provision of well thought out and correctly enforced bus lanes are of significant importance to us and our customers. They provide the means for our services to avoid some of the very serious traffic congestion issues that Leicester currently experiences and some of the benefits may be summarised as follows:

- Bus lanes make services more reliable
- Bus lanes reduce journey times
- Bus lanes make services more predictable
- Bus lanes make timetables more achievable and help us to make better use of resources
- Speedier and more punctual bus services improve customer confidence and provide very good reasons for modal shift to public transport
- Bus lanes can assist in the reduction of pollutants as there is a reduced need for buses to keep stopping and starting in queuing traffic

Ideally bus lanes should be in operation 24 hours a day with their use being restricted to buses, cycles and emergency vehicles. This makes them much easier to understand for other motorists and therefore reduces the risk of misuse. The correct enforcement is critical as an illegally parked vehicle in a bus lane creates a brick wall effect with the potential to seriously disrupt the service.

Leicester currently benefits from a number of well thought out bus lanes and associated bus priority measures. These include the extensive network of well-established bus lanes along Hinckley Road, Welford Road, London Road and Humberstone Road. Another very useful scheme is the one at Sanvey Gate which in addition to a bus lane also benefits from a bus gate at its junction with Northgate Street, thereby allowing buses get to the head of the traffic at this busy junction.

A more recent and very welcome initiative is the installation of ANPR cameras on part of Charles Street and Causeway Lane which has helped to improve the timekeeping of public transport by significantly reducing the impact of traffic that was incorrectly using these sections of bus only road.

We believe that a bus friendly network of roads incorporating initiatives to speed up services through the use of bus lanes and bus gates at key road junctions and hot spots can make a big impact on reducing traffic congestion as well as facilitating the growth of bus usage by making bus travel much more attractive to current and potential users.

I would be more than happy to discuss this matter further at your proposed evidence session on Wednesday 23rd January 2013 at the Town Hall in Leicester.

Yours sincerely,

S. P. Smith  
Area Business Manager Leicestershire
I hereby write to you in relation to reports to be presented to City Mayors Cabinet on bus lanes enforcement policy in City Of Leicester. After consultations with many hackney carriage and private hire members our views in relation to these reports are as follows.

Recent bus lanes cameras enforcement in two parts ie; Charles street and st Peters lane has made very big impact on reducing congestion levels in City Centre during all day hours of bus operation. Although from past many years Charles street have always been very well sign posted with “restricted access signs” but unfortunately it was not helping at all to stop such restricted vehicles from entering these areas, which in return was always making it a very high risk area to pedestrians, wheelchair users, full of congestion and very densely polluted.

It has also significantly helped in improving public transport vehicles service timetable, which in return now do offer a timely regulated service and in return more members of public have faith in utilising these vehicles especially busses and hackney taxis.

Camera enforcement has also helped in reducing carbon emissions as traffic jams and waiting times have been gradually decreased due to cameras restricted use of such bus lanes. Bus lanes enforcement have also helped enormously other emergency fire and police vehicles accessibility during emergencies.

There are still many areas of City where bus lanes are in operation (with no enforcement) but can be very productive to support a efficient public transport network for future, but unfortunately due to lack of enforcement millions spent on making them are proving to be waste of money. for example bus lanes around Duns lane, Braunstone gate, St Nicholas circle, Rutland street, Horsefair street, Town Hall, London Road bus stops at Train station both ways are always seen blocked up with other users and busses including park and ride services at present are not able to meet required timetable targets, which is often very upsetting once public puts trust in using these facilities and is usually a negative service experience for next planned journey.

In our members view public service vehicles usage should be kept at very high priority, reliable and encouraging also only such vehicles should be allowed to use the bus lanes. Allowing to share bus lanes in city with other vehicles will be futile during hours of bus operation. Present camera enforced bus lanes are working perfect. Cameras also needed to be implemented in other bus lanes as Leicester has no tram or any other sort of reliable public transport system in place.

Bus companies should be allowed to fix mobile enforcement cameras on board so mobile enforcement can help for busses which travel in and around City in 24 hours bus lanes. Flashing camera enforcement awareness signs can help in stopping unauthorised vehicles usually they are used for speed limit awareness etc.

I shall be very thankful for your time taken in reading our members views.
Yours Sincerely

Gurpal Singh Atwal (branch secretary)
LeicesterRutland RMT Branch
e-mail  Leicesterrutland@rmt.org.uk
contact  07929 342 042
Section C

Motorcyclist Group Evidence

Leicester & District Motorcycle Action Group
8th January 2013

Please accept the following as a submission from the Leicester & District Motorcycle Action Group (MAG) to the City Council Transport Scrutiny Commission (Bus Lanes) in association with the attached supporting evidence.

The Motorcycle Action Group applauds the Council's decision to review vehicular access to the City's bus lanes and welcomes the opportunity to submit our views on the topic. We hope you find them positive and we look forward to the oral evidence session on the 23rd January 2013.

Motorcycle access to bus lanes in the UK was first approved in Bristol in June 1995 following the suggestions made by the Avon Motorcycle Forum a stakeholder group working with the Local Authority. A 6 month trial witnessed no adverse safety issues for those using any mode of transport and the scheme became permanent at the start of 1996. Since then, trials of between 6 and 18 months have been conducted in Swindon, Reading, Bath, Hull, Sunderland, Birmingham, Bedford, Belfast, London and many more local authorities, all of which have decided to grant motorcycle access to some or all of their bus lanes.

Some of the trials focused on issues of road safety, others on improving traffic flow and reducing urban traffic emissions.

In essence, we would like the Commission to consider the following key points:

All powered two wheelers (PTW) can be part of the solution to improve urban traffic flow and reduce congestion and air pollution.

Encouraging PTW use can add significantly to local economies, not least through travel time saved (see English language version of TML study from Belgium http://www.tmleuven.be/project/motorcyclesandcommuting/20110921_Motorfietsen_eindrapport_Eng.pdf

Ensuring convenience and isolating vulnerable road users from those road users who can inflict injury, can help to promote PTW use, thus improving traffic flow for all.

The first issue for Local Transport Authorities should be to examine/re-examine the reasons for excluding PTW's from bus lanes in the first place – and suspend prohibition unless valid and evidenced-based reasons can be found to support their exclusion.

NB: it is crucial to distinguish between hard evidence of safety impacts and the concerns of some road users groups.
There is an overwhelming body of evidence from trials of PTW access to bus lanes throughout the UK to show that it has net benefits to the safety of cyclists and PTW riders and no significant negative impact to pedestrians or any other road users.

Although trials have been conducted throughout the UK, the most extensive trials have been by TfL in London, which continued from 2004 to 2011. This series of experiments was conducted in the face of well-funded and concerted opposition by some cycling groups and the results were consequently highly scrutinised by all concerned.

The result of these trials was the decision to allow PTW access to all with-flow TfL bus lanes throughout the Capital.

The environmental and economic benefits of PTW access to bus lanes are significant and clearly evidenced by the TfL Study of Emissions and Journey times (attached).

The key central London Borough run by Westminster City Council has recently extended PTW access to all their with-flow bus lanes following the success of the measure in half of their bus lanes since 2005. Further, the WCC Director of Transportation has confirmed that he has recommended that the Council make the current trial scheme a permanent measure in 2013.

Most recently the Green Party controlled Brighton and Hove Council has instigated trials on some of their routes, when initial consultation raised no local objection and garnered the support of the local MP.

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"In particular the Commission is keen to know whether there are certain bus lanes and routes in the city that you feel are more significant when determining whether motorcycles should be eligible..."

Ideally we would like to see motorcycles allowed to use all bus lanes on a permanent basis. However, we are aware that previous successful widespread inclusions have been preceded by a limited trial on selected routes to assure the local authority that more widespread permanent inclusion is viable. We believe that the evidence accrued nationally so far (see attached) renders this strategy unnecessary and duplicitous.

IF, however, LCC feel the need to undertake such a policy we would suggest the following as priorities:

Horsefair Street>Halford Street>Charles Street (inclusive) as this would enable a far quicker, shorter more economical and less carbon emitting passage across the city than the current arrangement.

Of the main arterial routes into and out of the city we feel that Hinckley Road, Welford Road, Uppingham Road, Aylestone Road, and London Road would benefit most from the inclusion of motorcycles in bus lane access though we do not exclude Abbey Lane or Groby Road. Noe do we accept that this is an exhaustive or definitive list. We hope that following a positive outcome to the initial review, we may be invited to
participate in further consultation on the particulars. Again, we would stress that our primary wish is for motorcycles to be allowed into ALL bus lanes.

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We hope the above will be of use and look forward to expanding on the issues raised during the oral evidence gathering, although we will be happy to answer any further questions and hope you will not hesitate to get in touch should you feel we can be of any help.

Yours faithfully,

Ian Underwood
Branch Rep
Leicester & District Motorcycle Action Group.

Appendix D1 - Evidence for the Greater London Assembly Transport Committee Scrutiny Panel on the use of Bus Lanes by Motorcycles (13 February 2004)

Appendix D2 – Traffic Advisory Leaflet (February 2007)

Appendix D3 - Key Findings from a recent Transport for London (TfL) Study on Powered Two Wheeler (PTW) emissions in relation to bus lane use.
Appendix C1

Evidence for the Greater London Assembly Transport Committee Scrutiny Panel on the use of Bus Lanes by Motorcycles

13 February 2004

Introduction

This proof of evidence has been prepared to give an overview of the advantages of permitting the continued use by motorcycles of the three experimental bus lanes in Greater London, and to argue for the extension of that experiment.

In this document the term motorcycle is used to cover all powered two wheeled vehicles and therefore excludes tricycles and motorcycle-sidecar combinations.

We will examine the policy background in relation to motorcycles, and argue that encouraging modal shift from cars to motorcycles is to be encouraged.

We will examine the road safety and other issues associated with permitting the use of bus lanes by motorcycles.

Because of a lack of published data relating to the roads where the experimental use of bus lanes by motorcycles has been permitted, it is difficult for outside bodies to reach any firm conclusions, and therefore some are drawn from anecdotal evidence. It would perhaps be useful if we could be provided with base-line data relating to vehicle flows and accident rates in the periods preceding and following the introduction of the experiment.

Finally, we will examine use of other cycle facilities by motorcycles.

MAG’s position on the use of bus lanes by motorcycles is included below.

The Policy Background

The Transport White Paper\(^5\) states that,

‘Mopeds and motorcycles can provide an alternative means of transport for many trips. Where public transport is limited and walking unrealistic, for example in rural areas, motorcycling can provide an affordable alternative to the car, bring benefits to the individual and widen their employment opportunities.

Whether there are benefits for the environment and for congestion from motorcycling depends on the purpose of the journey, the size of motorcycle used and the type of transport that the rider has switched from. Mopeds and small motorcycles may produce benefits if they substitute for car use but not if people switch from walking, cycling or public transport.’\(^6\)

\(^5\) DETR (1998)

\(^6\) p43
MAG has interpreted this statement as meaning that motorcycles are to be given a higher status in the transport hierarchy than the private car.

MAG recognises that the aim of the White Paper is to encourage a modal shift towards the upper end of this hierarchy. Therefore, we consider policies which discourage unnecessary private car use in favour of more sustainable transport solutions are not only desirable but also essential in helping to achieve sustainable development.

The Mayor’s Transport Strategy\(^7\), follows a similar approach to motorcycles to the Transport White Paper.

In this Strategy, paragraph 4G.26 notes that, ‘Motorcycles, mopeds and scooters can offer quick, relatively low cost private transport and are more space and fuel efficient than cars, although they can generate relatively more pollution and noise.

This is augmented by Proposal 4G.1, which states, ‘A London Motorcycle Working Group will be established by Transport for London to include user groups, the police and the boroughs. This group’s work will include measures to enhance and extend the provision of parking for motorcycles and mopeds, particularly in areas of high demand. Opportunities will be explored to improve road safety and reduce emissions and noise pollution. It will also review the evidence and if appropriate consider experiments to allow motorcycles and mopeds to share bus lanes.’ (emphasis added)

The Current Situation

Motorcycles are currently permitted to use some bus lanes in various towns and cities in England, including Bristol, Bath, Swindon, Birmingham, Colchester and Hull. The Northern Ireland Roads Division has also introduced an experimental scheme to permit motorcycles, including mopeds and scooters, to use certain bus lanes from 22 March 2004.

There has also been the successful use of the M4 bus lane by motorcycles and in the City of London motorcycles, along with buses, taxis and cycles, are able to proceed southbound on Moorgate while cars must turn right into London Wall.

Because a bus lane is a separate vehicle lane, it is possible for vehicles in that lane to pass a queue of slower-moving, or even stationary, traffic on the left hand side.

Motorcycles are able to ‘filter’ through traffic. This means taking advantage of the gap that exists between two traffic lanes to make progress past slower-moving traffic. If motorcycles are able to use the left-hand bus lane, then this filtering will be between lanes of traffic travelling in the same direction rather than coming into potential conflict with on-coming traffic.

Since 2002, the experimental use of bus lanes by motorcycles on parts of the A13, the A23 and the A41 has been permitted. As noted above, there is a lack of clear evidence as to what effect this has had on accidents involving motorcycles in those locations.

**Conflict with Other Road Users**

There have been concerns expressed, most notably by the cycle lobby, about potential conflicts between motorcycles and other users of bus lanes. Pedal cycles

\(^7\) GLA (2001)
and motorcycles are both narrow and manoeuvrable, their riders share a common understanding of the need to give each other room. It is less hazardous for a pedal cycle to be overtaken in a bus lane by a motorcycle that by a bus or a taxi as the manoeuvre can be completed within the space of the lane and with no vehicle having to encroach onto another lane. Although buses, and to a lesser extent taxis, are potentially slow moving vehicles that stop frequently, it is the duty of all road users to take account of prevailing road and traffic conditions, and motorcyclists are fully capable of overtaking, where it is safe to do so, a stationary bus or taxi.

At the time when taxis were permitted use of bus lanes fears of conflict then proved unfounded.

Where there is a potential for conflict is in vehicles either emerging from a junction on the left or turning left from the regular slow of traffic who fail to spot a motorcycle, or even a bicycle. This issue can be addressed by better driver and rider training and greater publicity of motorcycles using bus lanes.

Road Safety Considerations
Provisional statistics produced by TfL (2003) do not paint the safety record of motorcycles in a very good light. Whilst there has been a fall in accidents for both bicycles (down 0.7%) and motorcycles (down 7.6%), compared to the similar period in 2002, there has been an increase in fatal accidents for both modes of transport (up 25% and 11% respectively).

What these figures cannot take account of is the increase in motorcycle use over the same period, and the effect that the use of bus lanes by motorcyclists has on accident statistics in those locations.

MAG recognises, and is concerned that, increased motorcycle use has resulted in an increase in motorcycle casualties.

MAG would welcome more research into the contributing factors of accidents involving motorcyclists and, in this instance, would also welcome the statistics being analysed according to the type and size of motorcycle. Such research has been carried out by Essex County Council, and can be seen in ECC (2001: 15-16)

MAG welcomes the Government’s target for a reduction in road traffic accident casualties by 40% by the year 2010.

MAG is of the opinion that this target can, in part, be achieved through better highway design and management and increased driver awareness. By driver awareness we recognise that both car and motorcycle drivers need to be made aware of the issues surrounding road safety.

Role of motorcycles in beating congestion
For people who live more than a comfortable bicycle ride away from places of employment, entertainment or shops, the motorcycle can provide a relatively low cost and convenient commuting and transport solution.

Motorcycles are exempted from the Congestion Charge. One of the main arguments presented to TfL by MAG, and others, was that, whilst being outwardly less ‘environmentally friendly’ than bicycles, the motorcycle can cause less congestion than a bicycle. Whilst it is possible for a line of traffic to be held up by a slow-moving bicycle on a narrow road, this situation does not arise with a motorcycle. When moving, a group of motorcycles can achieve higher vehicle flow rates than a line of cars, and when parked it is possible to fit as many as six or eight vehicles into the
space required for one car. It is also possible to utilise spaces for motorcycle parking that would be unsuitable for car parking, thus freeing-up road-space for other uses.

Use by PTW of Cycling Facilities and potential measures for mitigation of problems
As well as the unauthorised use of bus lanes by motorcycles⁸, some motorcyclists use advanced stop lanes (ASLs, also known as cycle reservoirs). These ASLs are designed to allow cyclists to wait in safety ahead of motorised traffic before moving off. Motorcyclists also use these reservoirs for the same reason. Because of the greater acceleration of motorcycles compared to cars it means that the potential for conflict in the sense of being rammed from behind, is reduced. What they do not prevent is flouting of traffic lights by any road user. There has been an experimental use in the London Borough of Newham of the use of ASLs by motorcycles. Reports from Newham suggest that at the ground level cyclists had no real conflict with motorcyclists’ use of this safety area.

MAG is not aware of any issues surrounding the use of bicycle only lanes by motorcycles. This could, therefore, represent a way to increase cycle safety by encouraging cyclists to use cycle lanes where provided.

Some motorcyclists use bicycle parking spaces because of the security measures these provide. A resolution to this issue could be the introduction of more secure motorcycle parking facilities, namely those where some form of rail is provided to lock a motorcycle to.

Conclusion
MAG urges TfL to release their accident and vehicle flow data with respect to the experimental use of bus lanes by motorcyclists. To halt these trials before the data can be properly and independently analysed would be detrimental to the needs and aspirations of motorcyclists. Schemes elsewhere in the country show that they can be successful.

MAG therefore urges Transport for London to continue with these trials, and to extend the trials on a rolling basis. It also urges TfL to allow use of Advanced Stop Lanes by motorcycles.

⁸ Although these problems are not restricted to motorcycles, cars are also known to use bus lanes and advanced stop lanes.
In the early 90s the Motorcycle Action Group and other motorcycle organisations mooted the idea of motorcycle access to bus lanes in the County of Avon. The idea was approved as part of the strategy of the Avon Motorcycle Forum and gained the support of local councillors and highway engineers.

This led, in June 95, to the introduction of a six-month experimental scheme in Bristol. The scheme was granted permanent status at the end of the experimental period, during which, no accidents or adverse road safety effects had been observed. There are no current plans to review the scheme.

Since 1995 other councils have introduced experimental Bus Lanes or no car lanes trials in Swindon, Reading, Bath, M4, London (3 bus lane trials) and Sunderland (no car lane).

Concerns continue to be raised about further plans for motorcycle access to urban bus lanes. MAG contends that these concerns can be resolved by dialogue between interested groups. MAG is concerned that arguments against motorcycles in bus lanes appear to be based more on poorly informed conservative reactions than on any firm evidence. Indeed, articles that have appeared on the issue from some quarters are often badly researched and contain an alarmist element that is entirely unacceptable in the context of rational debate.

Support and opposition to bikes in bus lanes generally comes from three main sources:

- Highways officers (engineers or road safety staff) working for the local authority.
- Local police force traffic management officers.
- Other bus-lane users or would-be users (cyclists, pedestrians, taxi or bus companies).

However, MAG has found that any or all of them can be very supportive, either from the start or after dialogue. This is because concerns about motorcycle use can be addressed, simply by the interested parties entering into discussions with an open mind.

Some of the objections that have been raised are outlined below.

**The Department of Transport won’t allow it.**

The Department of Transport guidance referred to was issued some years ago. Although it does advise motorcycles guidance should not normally be among those vehicles permitted, it also says that local authorities are able to allow any type of vehicle. This point was confirmed by John Bowis the Minister for Road Safety. In a letter to Sir David Knox MP, dated 6th November 1996 he said:

‘Local authorities already have the power in law to introduce bus lanes, and allow them to be used in addition by other types of traffic. They must use their judgement of local circumstances as to what is appropriate in a given situation.’
There is no Government Policy.
The Secretary of State for Transport in May 2003 was asked in the House of Commons if he would make it the policy of the Government to have consistent rules governing the use of bus lanes by motorcyclists.

David Jamieson answered: “My Department has published guidelines for the introduction and use of bus lanes, but it is for the local highway authority to decide whether other vehicles should use bus lanes.

We are monitoring the effects of motorcycling in bus lanes in trials being carried out in conjunction with highway authorities. This will allow the Department to provide more clear cut advice about motorcycling in bus lanes to authorities.”

There's no suitable road sign in the official traffic signs manual
The Department of Transport gave its backing to the original experiment in Bristol and approved a revised version of the standard road signs used to advise which vehicles may use a bus lane.

Motorcycles are dangerous; we don't want to encourage them
The common assumption is that because motorcycle users, pedestrians and cyclists are vulnerable, they - and not the vehicles that hit them - are dangerous. The perversity of this argument is that most motorcycle user casualties arise from collisions with other vehicles, usually cars, in built-up areas, where the motorcycle has right-of-way and is travelling below the speed limit. Allowing motorcyles to travel independently of these other vehicles helps reduce potential conflicts.

Pedestrians would be put in danger.
Allowing motorcycles to travel outside the main traffic stream would make them more visible to people crossing the road. This is more likely to improve pedestrian safety.

Cyclists would be put in danger.
Pedal cycles and motorcycles are both narrow and manoeuvrable, their riders share a common understanding of the need to give each other room. Added to this, being overtaken by a motorcycle is less hazardous than is the case with buses, taxis, etc.

Bus schedules will be disrupted.
Given the manoeuvrability and space efficiency of motorcycles, adverse effects should not be experienced, indeed motorcycles in bus lanes are not adding to congestion elsewhere on bus routes.

Enforcement will be more difficult
Seeing motorcycles in bus lanes does not encourage drivers of other vehicle types, e.g.: cars and goods vehicles to invade the bus lanes. Road signs used to designate bus lanes clearly identify which vehicles are permitted.

Motorcycles break speed limits, allowing them to use bus lanes would encourage this.
A lot has been made about the problems of speeding motorcyclists, with some commentators painting a picture of out of control motorcyclists creating urban chaos. The reality is somewhat different.

Motorcyclists are all too often on the receiving end of the results of bad driving (Over 60% of urban motorcycle accidents are caused by other road users). Because of this, motorcyclists have a keen sense of self-preservation. This is supported by practical and theory novice motorcycle training that is of a higher standard than that of most other road users. Riders are aware that a rogue car or erratically ridden cycle
could pull into their path at any time and, in the main, ride defensively and at a sensible speed.

The speed of commuter traffic tends to be self-regulating, with the speed of all bus lane users further regulated by the speed of the buses that use them.

Department of Transport figures have shown that motorcycles are more likely to comply with urban speed limits than cars. 1995 figures show that the average speed of motorcycles in urban areas was 30 mph, whereas the average for cars was 33 mph. 48% of motorcycles complied with 30 mph limits as opposed to 28% of cars. This does not mean that motorcyclists can avoid their responsibilities on the overall speeding issue, but given that a massive 72 percent of cars are driven over the 30 mph limit, worries about speeding motorcyclists should be put in context with the overall picture before alarmists views are propagated.

"The attractions of motorcycling as both a safe and reliable way of beating ever increasing traffic jams and an exhilarating leisure activity are becoming obvious to a wider public than ever. Anyone who rides, or even takes a close interest in motorcycling matters, knows that there is a lot more to choosing and owning a machine than considerations of high performance or top speed."

**Lord Falkland, Secretary to the Parliamentary All Party Motorcycle Group**

Problems with speeding motorists of all classes should be solved by a combination of education and more effective enforcement measures.

Further information on motorcycles in bus lanes can be obtained from: MAG UK, PO Box 750, Rugby, CV21 3ZR
Tel: 0870 444 8 448 Fax: 0870 444 8 449 Email: public-affairs@mag-uk.org
The Use of Bus Lanes by Motorcycles

The Government’s Motorcycling Strategy, published in February 2005, seeks to facilitate motorcycling as a choice of travel within a safe and sustainable transport framework. The strategy recognises that motorcycling has become increasingly popular and offers a number of benefits, by:

• offering a cheaper alternative to the car;
• providing independence and mobility;
• widening employment opportunities, especially where public transport is limited;
• providing a shorter journey time in congested traffic conditions; and
• reducing overall congestion as motorcycles generally occupy less space than cars.

Since 1995, several authorities have made permanent a number of experimental Traffic Regulation Orders allowing motorcyclists to use bus lanes. Various monitoring and research projects have been carried out to determine the effects of these schemes on both motorcyclists and other road users. The research does not lead to clear conclusions, but suggests both potential benefits and dis-benefits. As with any scheme, the decision to allow motorcycle access to bus lanes should be taken with care to mitigate foreseeable and avoidable risks.

The Strategy gave an undertaking to review the advice given in Local Transport Note (LTN) 1/97, on the use of bus lanes by motorcycles. Local highway authorities are able to permit classes of vehicles other than buses into bus lanes. However, because of concerns about safety and lack of any evidence at the time, LTN 1/97 recommended that motorcycles should not normally be permitted to use them. This Traffic Advisory Leaflet now revises the guidance on that point in LTN 1/97 and encourages a more objective assessment to be made.

The local highway or traffic authority is best placed to decide whether or not to allow motorcycles into with-flow bus lanes. Each case needs to be examined on its own merits, taking into account the positive and negative aspects in reaching a balanced view.

For the purpose of this leaflet, the term motorcycles refers to solo powered two-wheelers including mopeds and scooters.

ISSUES TO CONSIDER
Some of the factors which should be taken into consideration are listed below. This is not an exhaustive list, but these are the factors identified through workshops and consultations with stakeholders and a number of local highway authorities that have been involved in implementing similar schemes.

Policy
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.
Pedal cycles are also normally allowed to use bus lanes for safety reasons. However, highway authorities often allow other vehicles into bus lanes, such as taxis and more recently motorcycles, in line with their wider local transport policies. In relation to motorcycles, policy considerations may 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. Ideally, once legitimately in a bus lane, motorcyclists should not have to check each subsequent section of bus lane to see if they are allowed to use it. A route which allows the intermittent use of bus lanes by motorcyclists can be confusing to users and may pose enforcement difficulties for the highway authority and police. Highway authorities should aim to ensure that, as far as practicable, policies over the use of bus lanes are consistent where routes cross boundaries.

**Safety Assessments and Audits**

Road safety audits are intended to identify road safety problems, with the objective of minimising the number and severity of casualties. Road safety audits are not mandatory for local authorities. However, when allowing motorcycles into bus lanes, authorities should consider undertaking appropriate levels of safety assessment as part of their decision processes. Although it will be possible to identify some safety issues, for example those relating to highway layout, the mix and flow of traffic, queuing characteristics, and pedestrian activity, others may not be evident until the lane is used by motorcyclists. Monitoring, particularly in the early days of operation of the lane, will be essential in confirming safe operation.

Guidance on safety audits is given in:

1. Road Safety Audit, HD 19/03

**Visibility**

Other road users can have greater difficulty discerning motorcyclists because of their relatively small combined frontal area compared to a bus. The presence of other road vehicles and roadside obstructions, such as street furniture and vegetation can add to this difficulty. Remedial design work may be required to ensure the maximum intervisibility, especially at junctions. A high proportion of collisions between motorcycles and cars in urban situations are thought to be due to poor intervisibility. Where motorcycles are allowed into bus lanes, this may improve intervisibility due to the lack of other general traffic in that lane.

**Pedestrians**

Pedestrians are also vulnerable road users and the following should be considered:

- Special note should be made of major generators of pedestrian traffic such as schools and hospitals. This information can be used to establish pedestrian desire lines so that additional informal, or formal crossing facilities can be considered;
• Pedestrians should be actively encouraged to use proper crossing places by siting crossings on or close to desire lines. Where this is not practicable, footway design features can help encourage them to cross in safer places;
• Pedestrians may expect only clearly visible or slow-moving vehicles to be using a bus lane. The introduction into the lane of highly mobile motorcycles with a small front profile, possibly overtaking a bus and then re
• entering the lane, could introduce new conflicts; and
• Bus stops are also a possible source of problems, as pedestrians crossing between traffic to board or alight a bus may not expect to have to take into account an overtaking motorcycle in a bus lane.

Pedal Cycles
Pedal cyclists are allowed to use with-flow bus lanes because they are more likely to be involved in a collision if required to ride in the main traffic lane with buses passing on their nearside. Any potential conflict between motorcycles and pedal cycles should be considered.

Turning vehicles
Turning vehicles are a general risk at junctions, both to other vehicles and to pedestrians who are crossing. Examining accident records will show collision types and probable causes. This information will help to assess whether there will be a change if motorcyclists are to be allowed into the bus lane.

For example, a motorcyclist in a general traffic lane has to cross a bus lane to turn left into a side road. If this type of collision is listed in the accident record, a benefit may be expected by allowing motorcyclists into the bus lane. However, there may be an increased risk of vehicles turning across the path of motorcycles in the bus lane. If the information points towards an intervisibility problem remedial measures should be considered, such as moving a bus stop to the downstream side of a junction; or implementing a Traffic Regulation Order (TRO) to ban turning movements, parking or loading.

Bus Access Control and Bus Gates
Certain layouts may preclude permitting motorcycles to use a bus lane. Examples of this are bus lanes with access control that pass through a pedestrianised area or those provided with a bus gate facility or bus pre-signals. At sites such as these, buses equipped with a transponder pass over detectors in the carriageway causing bollards to retract or the traffic signals to change to or stay on green.

Motorcyclists attempting to gain access through an access control or bus gate will not be given a green signal as the signals will not detect them. This could result in motorcyclists having to make potentially dangerous manoeuvres to continue their journey.

Narrow bus lanes
Bus lanes should be at least the minimum preferred width of 4 metres, or more wherever possible. Narrower lanes, say 3 metres wide, may not allow buses to pass cyclists safely without encroaching into the general traffic lane.

A narrow bus lane with high bus flow rate increases this problem. The introduction of motorcyclists into such a bus lane could make the situation worse and increase the possibility of a motorcyclist moving into the general traffic lane to pass a bus, thus increasing the potential for conflict.
**Frequent Bus Stops**

Frequent bus stops can encourage last minute lane-changing by motorcyclists, resulting in a potential conflict with moving traffic in the general traffic lane. An assessment of bus stop positions should be carried out if this is a problem. Consideration should be given to bus stop laybys and the potential conflict caused by some bus drivers pulling out of these without seeing a vehicle in the bus lane.

**TRAFFIC REGULATION ORDERS**

TROs are required for bus lanes and form the legal basis for enforcement. Where solo motorcycles are to be allowed to use bus lanes, this must be explicitly stated in the Order. Introducing motorcycles into an existing bus lane will require the TRO to be amended.

**SIGNING**

Traffic Signs Regulations and General Directions (TSRGD) diagrams 958 and 959 show both the bus and cycle symbols. Cycles are included as a matter of course for safety reasons and taxis can be included if desired. But to add any other class of vehicle to the sign, special authorisation is needed.

Department for Transport (DfT) working drawings NP 958.4 and 959.4 give sign design details. The motorcycle symbol is for a solo machine and it is not envisaged that motorcycle combinations would be allowed into a bus lane. Special authorisation for signs will continue to be required until the additional variants are prescribed in any update to TSRGD. The road markings used will be the standard with-flow bus lane markings and no special authorisation is needed.

The Traffic Signs Policy Branch of the DfT should be contacted for advice. Detailed information on bus lane layouts and signing can be found in the Traffic Signs Manual, Chapters 3 and 5.

Requests for special authorisation, to use signs to diagrams NP 958.4 and 959.4 on schemes allowing motorcycles to use bus lanes, should be sent to the Traffic Signs Policy Branch, with a copy to the relevant Government Office. The application letter should describe the location and extent of the relevant bus lanes.

**CONSULTATION**

Consultation with all those likely to be affected by a traffic scheme generally results in better acceptance and fewer problems with implementation. When considering introducing motorcycles into a bus lane, consultation with those representing motorcyclists, bus and freight operators, taxi drivers, pedestrians, equestrians, cyclists and disabled people is recommended. It is also recommended that the local police are consulted early on in the development of any proposals. TRO advertisement and statutory consultation procedures will also apply.
Appendix D3

Key Findings from a recent Transport for London (TfL) Study on Powered Two Wheeler (PTW) emissions in relation to bus lane use.

Evaluation of Journey Time and Emissions of PTWs in Bus Lanes

Executive Summary of results

Emissions: PTW use of bus lanes compared to PTWs in general traffic lanes

- PTW use of bus lanes cuts their CO2 emissions by an average of between 0.5% and 9.0%
- PTW use of bus lanes cuts their emissions of Oxides of Nitrogen by an average of between 0.5% and 10.0%

Fuel Consumption: PTW use of bus lanes compared to using general traffic lanes

- PTW use of bus lanes cuts their fuel consumption by an average of between 0.4% and 9.0%

Emissions of Cars compared to PTWs in bus lanes

- Petrol cars of comparable size to small, medium and large PTWs emit an average of between Twice and Five times more CO2 than PTWs using bus lanes.
- Petrol cars of comparable size to small, medium and large PTWs emit an average of between Twice and Five and a half times more Oxides of Nitrogen than PTWs using bus lanes.

Fuel Consumption of Cars compared to PTWs in bus lanes

- Petrol cars of comparable size to small, medium and large PTWs consume an average of between Twice and Five times more fuel than PTW using bus lanes.

Presented to the Westminster City Council Road User Forum as a useful basis for considering an extension of the TfL Bikes in Bus Lanes trial onto all WCC bus lanes.

Dr Leon Mannings,
Transport Policy Advisor, Motorcycle Action Group (MAG) UK
Meeting date: 12.01.11
Further to your email regarding sectors to be included in bus lanes, the Road Haulage Association would ask for our views on this matter to be taken into consideration.

Muswell Hill in London was the first area to allow freight to share the bus lanes, this has since been joined by Exeter, Newcastle, Croydon and Bristol to name a few.

We consider trucks to be the equivalent of “freight buses”, they are moving important commodities instead of people. It is in everyone’s interest to get the freight in and out of our cities as quickly and efficiently as possible, this can be helped by allowing freight drivers to use the bus lanes, thus reducing congestion and of course helping the environment, by keeping the vehicles moving instead of idling in traffic.

I have attached the RHA’s official press release on freight using bus lanes.

Should you require any further information, please don’t hesitate to contact me.

With kind regards,

Rhys Williams, Area Manager
Appendix D1

What is a Freight Bus?
Freight Bus is a term coined by the Road Haulage Association to describe goods vehicles that are essential to the urban economy and to highlight why they should be considered as priority vehicles, alongside passenger buses. Such goods vehicles have been allowed by local councils to drive legally within bus lanes. Other terms used to describe such priority lanes include “no car”, “high-occupancy vehicle” or “essential-user” lanes.

Why have Freight Buses?
A number of local authorities have agreed to allow goods vehicles to use bus or no-car lanes. The concession is granted because the relevant local authorities recognise the importance of the haulage sector to the local economy, particularly in urban areas where businesses and residents rely on regular deliveries of goods. Given that road congestion is an issue in most urban areas, particularly in the proximity of retail and commercial premises, a few councils have agreed to include goods vehicles amongst priority road-users.

How do Freight Buses benefit local areas?
Freight Buses help to keep the local economy moving. Regular bus lanes were created to ensure that the public could get to work, schools, shops and hospitals without suffering delays due to lack of road capacity and congestion. Where goods vehicles are allowed to use bus lanes, journey times for deliveries become more reliable which benefits businesses and residents. In addition, car traffic does not have to share the same space as larger commercial vehicles, which helps to free up the remaining road capacity.

What has the RHA done to promote Freight Buses?
As one example, in 2010 the Midlands and Western region of the RHA was successful in securing the agreement of South Gloucestershire Council that HGVs above 7.5 tonnes should be allowed to use the High Occupancy Vehicle (HOV) lane of the A4174 Avon Ring road, which provides a vital link to the eastern side of the Bristol conurbation. The RHA’s first attempt at getting the council to allow HGVs to use the HOV lane were turned down, however persistence paid off when further representations were accepted. An important finding of South Gloucestershire Council was that agreeing to allow HGVs into the HOV “would have a minimal affect” on its operation.

Freight Bus schemes in operation
In addition to the South Gloucestershire Council scheme, the RHA is aware of the use of a variety of no-car lanes. In Newcastle, there are no-car lanes that are open to buses, lorries, taxis, motorcycles and bicycles but closed to cars from 7am to 7pm.

Are there alternatives to Freight Buses?
Congestion can be tackled in a variety of ways. However, it is challenging to secure the cooperation of all the relevant parties that need to work together in order to help improve the situation. Examples of possible alternative solutions to congestion might be: Lorries could be allowed or encouraged to deliver out of normal working hours. However, there remains opposition from some local residents and businesses would have to agree to pay staff to receive goods out of hours. Hauliers could be encouraged to invest in technology that could provide information to the driver about traffic flows. While helpful, however, most drivers have a good local knowledge of road conditions. Greater consideration of issues affecting goods vehicles could occur when the Highways Agency or local authorities are developing traffic management schemes. Local authorities could be encouraged to provide adequate loading and parking spaces for lorries near retail or other commercial premises.
Freight Transport Association  
8th January 2012

Introduction

The Freight Transport Association welcomes the opportunity to provide evidence for the eligibility of HGV's to use Bus Lanes. Due to the time constraints I have been unable to take this to our Freight Council for comment however below is our opinion on behalf of our members.

Freight Transport Association

FTA is one of Britain's largest trade associations, and uniquely provides a voice for the whole of the UK's logistics sector. Its role, on behalf of over 14,000 members, is to enhance the safe, efficient and sustainable movement of freight across the supply chain, regardless of transport mode. FTA members operate over 200,000 goods vehicles - almost half the UK fleet - and some 1,000,000 liveried vans. In addition, they consign over 90 per cent of the freight moved by rail and over 70 per cent of sea and air freight. FTA works with its members to influence transport policy and decisions taken at local, national and European level to ensure they recognise the needs of industry's supply chains.

Response

Bus Lanes were first introduced to provide priority access in and out of urban areas and to reduce journey times and congestion - thus improving the reliability of services. There are a number of examples around the country, in particular, Tyne and Wear, Exeter, Bristol, Leeds and South Gloucestershire where councils have taken this concept further and developed Essential User Lanes or No Car Lanes and High Occupancy Vehicles (HOV) lanes and ultimately HGVs access lanes, which highlights the ability to fully utilise these schemes at little detriment to other road users. A study completed by Tyne and Wear has shown to deliver faster journey times for all users.

The shared lanes are particularly useful in areas where there are regular deliveries of goods - for example in close proximity to retail and commercial premises. Space is now a premium and businesses can not afford to stock pile goods, therefore the efficient delivery of goods is crucial to businesses and consumers. Providing an Essential User route which links retail and commercial areas to motorways and major routes would give the greatest benefit to all road users and the local community.

The freight industry would also benefit from a less congested infrastructure allowing goods to be delivered more efficiently, the positive impact of reduced congestion would be less time spent idling in traffic. As this is a factor in causing increased vehicle emissions including NOx this would also assist helping improve air quality.

Where specialist lanes are introduced, attention needs to be made to signage. Where HGVs are able to use the lanes, road surfaces would need to be clearly marked and signposted. Confusion as to whether a vehicle is eligible will lead to under use for fear of
potential enforcement action. FTA appreciates that not all sections of the road infrastructure would be suitable to develop the shared lanes concept, for example short sections of the bus lane network. In Exeter the shared routes are roads which lead out of the city and apply to vehicles over 7.5t. To keep the shared lanes simple it would be preferable to have conformity, if lanes change from bus lanes to shared lanes then this would also lead to confusion and would cause issues from the need to switch lanes. A lorry routing strategy would assist with this issue. Once the shared lanes are established FTA would welcome the opportunity to work with Leicester City Council in developing the scheme and communicating the new initiative via our internal communications teams. Additionally a Freight Map showing the preferred freight routes could be made available via Leicester City Councils website.

Sally Gibson (Midlands Policy Manager)
Leicester Chamber of Commerce  
11th January 2013

The Chamber position is fairly straightforward:

**Based on present peak hour bus lane restrictions:**

We are not aware of strong demand for access to bus lanes from the freight sector, particularly into the city centre. Many retail deliveries by large goods vehicles are time to occur before normal trading hours, before restrictions apply. Any changes of the morning bus lane restriction tending to converge with the closed period for the city centre pedestrian zone could cause concern, however.

There is more likelihood of interest from the Courier sector, as a proportion of their timed deliveries, especially to offices, overlap with peak periods to some extent. I am not aware of specific interest from the home delivery sector.

We have no specific evidence regarding the private hire sector, but presume that localised de-restrictions that mitigate access to hospitals, educational establishments and similar sites to provide drop off services, segregated from general parking, might be considered.

**In the event of introducing 24 hour restrictions:**

This would be a substantial step and need extensive design work with large vehicle manoeuvre requirements factored in. Further consultation would be appreciated.

Access for large freight vehicles to bus lanes on arterial routes would become of substantial interest, as conflict with private motor vehicles would increase. A phased introduction in conjunction with clear policies on loading/unloading and effective enforcement would be highly desirable. Until traffic patterns settle down after introducing such restrictions and permissions, the case for access for further classes of vehicles is not clear.

I will happy to attend the Scrutiny Commission’s meeting on 23 January, either to speak to the above or as a member of the public.

Max Boden  
Policy Manager  
Leicestershire Chamber of Commerce
Club Private Hire Ltd
28th December 2012

In reply to your email there will be a member of my organization attending the meeting regarding private hire vehicles and bus lanes.

My feelings on this are very strong as we carry more of the public in Leicester than any other public service. We operate 24/7/365, providing transport for many people who without us would be home bound, not to mention the disabled/elderly. The transport commission do not accept us as a public transport even though they accept hackney carriage as public transport we do the same job. Furthermore since 1976 taxis where classified as hackney and private hire. The councils act fact.

Since the bus lanes where policed our cars are having nothing but trouble with passengers as they think we are trying to have them over when we have to take a different route as opposed to the most direct one.

Keith Brown, Director Club Private Hire Ltd
Swift Fox Cabs
7th January 2013

Swift Fox Cabs strongly urge you to consider private hire vehicles to be included in the list of vehicles that may use the bus lanes along with the hackney vehicles. I am a director of this company who has been trading for over 45 years, we have seen a dramatic change over the years in the taxi and private hire trade. This last change to install cameras at the junction of Charles Street and Humberstone Gate as well as Causeway Lane has caused us significant problems. I believe other routes are also being considered but these two are by far the most important ones that affect us.

We operate both hackneys and private hire vehicles, which has led to lots of confusion with our customers. A customer may book a journey with us one day that happens to have a hackney vehicle allocated and get charged one price while the next time a private hire vehicle is sent and the customer is charged at a different price. This is because the private hire car has had to take a longer route to the hackney, which has increased the fare, as we operate a metered system.

Potential customers are also affected because they come into the city to use Leicester’s extensive and new shopping facilities and then cannot be picked up with their shopping due to restrictions for the Private Hire vehicles. They then have to walk to our nearest legal pick up points, this in turn puts them off shopping in the city so trade is lost to the retailers as well as ourselves.

This same problem occurs when our passengers are picked up from our office at the weekend, which is based on Church Gate. A hackney going to any route that uses Vaughan Way simply goes down Causeway Lane and up towards the Holiday Inn while a private hire vehicle has to turn left from Church Gate and go around the block via Mansfield Street and Abbey Street. This obviously incurs a higher meter charge than the hackney that went down Causeway Lane and leads to customer dissatisfaction. Especially when two groups of friends go from our offices to the same destination but happen to travel in different car styles, one in a hackney and one in a private hire.

These two issues alone have caused us lots of complaints and lost trade as our customers just think that the driver is over charging or going the long way around deliberately.

We have also experienced loss of trade during the evening period due to the delay in getting to venues in the Charles Street area. We have experienced both lack of bookings and incurred more no pick-ups. This is because the hackneys that do not work for us are able to drive up and down Charles Street and customers are using them more as Swift are taking longer to get there. This has increased more during the terrible wet winter that we all have endured.

In the evening especially at weekends there are higher amounts of people in the city that rely on Private Hire Vehicles to get them home, when there is a delay or they are told to walk to pick up points these people are in the city longer than needs be. This then can lead to issues with alcohol related incidents and increased call for the police and emergency services.

Our complaints have increased enormously not only regarding extra fares but also because we cannot get to our passengers as quickly due to these longer routes that have to be taken by the private hire vehicles, especially during rush hour. Our account customers based on Charles Street such as Ramada Encore, Bistro Live, Mark & Spencer’s and...
Shopmobility etc. are also receiving what in their opinion, is a poor service from our company that they are certainly not used to.

Whilst I appreciate that buses need to get around the town as quickly as possible, so do private hire vehicles. We transport over 2 million passengers a year and this service is vital to the public that uses us.

I request that during your review you please reconsider the use of bus lanes and allow private hire vehicles along with the hackneys to use the bus lanes in order that we also are able to provide the service that the public deserve along with the hackneys and the buses. Swift Fox Cabs have not increased their tariff for several years unlike the bus companies and the hackneys and yet the customer now has to pay more for no reason other than the vehicle simply cannot use the bus lanes.

I understand the need to increase revenue with the use of these cameras, but by restricting the private hire vehicles full use of the city centre also affects, the consumer, the retailer, emergency services and inevitably the Council.

Tracey Whitehead, Director Swift Fox Cabs
Section F

Sample invitation to submit evidence to the Commission:

The Chair of the above Scrutiny Commission, Councillor Neil Clayton, invites you to submit evidence to his review of bus lane enforcement policy in the city. The commission are seeking views from existing users of the city’s bus lanes as well as those sectors/groups that wish to be considered for inclusion. The Commission will draw conclusions from the evidence received and will make their recommendations to the City Mayor.

As such you are welcome to provide evidence to the Commission on behalf of bus companies in Leicester. This would usefully explain your views on who should be entitled to use the bus lanes in Leicester and at what times. This should consist initially of a written submission with any supporting background information you feel the Commission need to take into consideration. The submission should be returned to this email address by close of play 8th January 2013 at the latest.

In particular the Commission are keen to know what difference you believe the bus lanes have made to bus services in Leicester, in terms of efficiency and regularity of service, and how these benefits have been passed on to users.

In addition, the Commission will be holding an oral evidence session on 23rd January in the Town Hall in Leicester from 5.30pm. This will provide an opportunity to present your evidence directly to members of the Commission and to allow for further debate. If you would like to attend that session please let me know when you submit your written evidence. I will then confirm the detailed arrangements with you at least a week before 23rd.