

RNIB – Royal National Institute for Blind People

REASON FOR THE REPORT

1. To provide the Committee with a briefing about concerns from the RNIB in relation to changes that are made to the public realm, that support increased use of sustainable transport and active travel methods and the impact on the visually impaired community.

STRUCTURE OF THE PAPERS

2. Attached to this report are:
 - Appendix A – Presentation
 - Appendix B – Accessible Presentation (word document)
 - Appendix C – RNIB: Key Principles of Inclusive Street Design

BACKGROUND

3. Visually impaired people can often experience difficulty navigating urban areas, especially if the location of seats signs and bins etc. is not carefully considered.
4. The use of appropriate tactile paving can assist with orientation and is essential to warn of danger such as flights of steps, as well as indicating road crossings. Warning tactile and signage should always be installed to indicate shared routes with cyclists. The camber of the route is also useful as this helps indicate the centre of the path.
5. Inconsiderate behaviour by some cyclists travelling along community routes can impact on the personal safety of visually impaired people. Cyclists are very hard to hear and can approach very quickly without being detected. It is often impossible for a visually impaired person to know where they are to move out of their way, and feelings of intimidation and danger can result in that individual avoiding the route.

6. [A BBC news article from September 2022](#) notes that changes made in Sheffield creating shared paths for bikes and pedestrians made navigating the city 'hard work' for the visually impaired community. There were also issues noted about getting off buses directly onto cycle paths and not a safe space on the pavement.

ISSUES

7. The Council's Transport White Paper: Transport Vision 2030 – Changing how we move around a growing city, asks 'Why do we need to change that way we travel around Cardiff? With one of the reasons noted as it needs to be 'a city for everyone' and goes on further to say:
 - *Travelling around our city is not always as easy as it should be, especially for people who are often the least mobile in our society. People with disabilities or reduced mobility, those with specific access needs, older people and children and young people should be able to enjoy all our city has to offer and get to the places they need to go easily and affordably. Jobs, training, schools, health-care services, leisure opportunities and childcare facilities should all be connected by our transport network. We need to make sure that everywhere in our city is open and accessible to everyone.*
8. 'Stronger, Fairer, Greener' states that a fairer city '*can be enjoyed by everyone. and where every citizen is valued and feels valued*', and a greener city '*is connected by convenient, accessible, safe sustainable transport options.*' Commitments to achieve this include:
 - Deliver a city that is open and accessible to all, and work towards a transport system that all people have the confidence to use.
 - Develop a city-wide campaign to promote active travel.
9. To ensure that the designs for any new or reconfigured transport infrastructure do not make getting around the city more difficult, we must listen to the concerns being raised.

WAY FORWARD

10. Representatives from the RNIB have been invited to make a presentation to share some of their concerns with the Committee and answer Member's questions.

Legal Implications

The Scrutiny Committee is empowered to enquire, consider, review and recommend but not making policy decisions. As the recommendations in this report are to consider and review matters there are no direct legal implications. However, legal implications may arise if and when the matters under review are implemented with or without any modifications. Any report with recommendations for decision that goes to the Cabinet/Council will set out any legal implications arising from those recommendations. All decisions taken by or on behalf of the Council must (a) be within the legal powers of the Council; (b) comply with any procedural requirement imposed by law; (c) be within the powers of the body or person exercising powers on behalf of the Council; (d) be undertaken in accordance with the procedural requirements imposed by the Council e.g. Scrutiny Procedure Rules; (e) be fully and properly informed; (f) be properly motivated; (g) be taken having regard to the Council's fiduciary duty to its taxpayers; and (h) be reasonable and proper in all the circumstances.

Financial Implications

The Scrutiny Committee is empowered to enquire, consider, review and recommend but not to make policy decisions. As the recommendations in this report are to consider and review matters there are no direct financial implications at this stage in relation to any of the work programme. However, financial implications may arise if and when the matters under review are implemented with or without any modifications. Any report with recommendations for decision that goes to Cabinet/Council will set out any financial implications arising from those recommendations.

RECOMMENDATION

The Committee is recommended to:

- i. Consider the information in this report, and the presentation and any further information presented at the meeting; and
- ii. Determine whether they would like to make any comments, observations or recommendations on this matter to the Cabinet Member for Transport & Strategic Planning / Director of Planning Transport & Environment, Head of Planning and Head of Transport.

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10 November 2023