

# Street Lighting and Traffic Signals Review

**Cabinet**

**Date: 5 September 2012**

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Author: Cabinet Member for Leisure and Strategic Transport  
Head of Highways and Transport

Wards: All Wards

Locality Affected: All Locality Areas

Parishes Affected: All Parish Areas

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## **1. Purpose and Reasons**

- 1.1 This report has been prepared in response to a Motion (113) approved at Council on the 23rd of February 2012.

“This Council welcomes the decision by the Administration to end the streetlight switch off trial scheme.

This Council believes that this decision is a reflection of the Administration's willingness to listen to and engage with ward members and the general public.

This Council requests that the Cabinet Member for Council Transformation, Sustainability, Strategic Planning and Transport note the success of making the traffic lights at Mannington roundabout only operate part time and develop a programme to convert other traffic lights at similar junctions. This programme should be presented to Cabinet within 6 months.”

- 1.2 This report also provides an update on the Traffic Signal Review originally approved by Cabinet in April 2011.

## **2. Recommendations**

Cabinet is recommended to:

- 2.1 Reaffirm that there are no plans to conduct street light switch-off trials in the future.
- 2.2 Agree that in recognition of the benefits of the reduced off-peak delays to traffic and public support for the scheme, the part-time operation of the traffic signals at Mannington should continue but still on a trial basis until a full 12 month review of driver behaviour is available for analysis in March 2013.
- 2.3 Note that the Traffic Signal Review Stage 1 of all roundabouts, junctions and pedestrian crossings controlled by traffic signals in Swindon is now complete and that future decisions on individual signal installations arising from the review will be undertaken through the Local Transport Plan (LTP3) implementation Plan process.

Further information on the subject of this report can be obtained from Robert Sanders 466391, [bsanders@swindon.gov.uk](mailto:bsanders@swindon.gov.uk).

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- 2.4 Authorise the Head of Highways and Transport to undertake a trial of Pedestrian Countdown Timers in Swindon, subject to approval by the Department for Transport,
- 2.5 Reaffirm that work on the Bruce Street Bridges and Meads roundabouts to improve junction efficiency and reduce delays has been prioritised within LTP3.
- 2.6 Advise the Council of the recommendations set out above in response to the Council Motion of the 23<sup>rd</sup> February 2012.

## **3. Detail**

### Street Lighting Trial

- 3.1 In July 2011 the Council conducted a trial switch-off of 433 street lights across the Borough with the aim of reducing light pollution, reducing energy wastage and reducing cost. In March 2012 the trial was terminated following a motion to Council at its meeting of 12th January 2012, (Minute 96 refers), and the subsequent decision by Cabinet to reverse the budget saving from switching off some street lights during non-peak times at its meeting of 15<sup>th</sup> February 2012. (Minute 85 2011/12). As a result of this decision, there are no plans to conduct street light switch-off trials in the future. However, Officers are currently looking into a range of technical solutions that will enable energy costs to be reduced.

### Mannington Roundabout - part time signal trial.

- 3.2 The trial of part time signals at Mannington began on the 15<sup>th</sup> of November 2011 and the first phase ran until the 2<sup>nd</sup> of February 2012. During that time, the site was subject to detailed monitoring of traffic flows, delays, conflicts and injury accidents. Full details of the outcome of this work are contained in the Trial Study Report – Mannington Roundabout Part-Time Trial, Halcrow 26<sup>th</sup> June 2012.
- 3.3 The Trial Study Report of this first phase concluded that the part-time signal strategy provides benefits in terms of reduced off-peak delays to traffic, which is supported by the public feedback we have received. However, following an analysis of the limited amount of injury accident data available for the phase one trial period and the indication that it gave of more injuries during part time working than during full time working, it also recommended that at full road safety review is carried out. This will need to consider a 12 months injury accident, but as the validation and updating of the shared injury accident database by Wiltshire Police generally takes 2 months, the data will not be available until March 2013.
- 3.4 An interim update of the available injury accident data (currently available to 30/05/2012) shows that in an equal period before the commencement of part time operation there was one serious and one slight injury at this junction and in the same period since commencement of part time operation there have been three slight injuries. Detailed analysis is required over a longer period to allow for when construction works were in progress and for drivers to become familiar with the part-time signals.

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- 3.5 The Trial included Road Safety Audits that recommended a number of minor changes to signing and carriageway marking, additional high friction surfacing and a review of the forward visibility on the circulatory carriageway of the roundabout (presently restricted by the high mound on the central island). The estimate of the cost of the additional works will be considered as part of the full 12 month review.

## The Swindon Traffic Signal Review.

- 3.6 The Stage 1 of this two stage Review is now complete. It considered all roundabouts, junctions and pedestrian crossings in Swindon that are controlled by traffic signals.
- 3.7 The full review process and its outcomes are contained in the Halcrow report Swindon Traffic Signal Review Stage 1.

Stage 1 assigned sites to the following four categories:

- 3.7.1 Category 1 - possible removal /switch off of traffic signals subject to outcome of full investigation and costing at Stage 2.
- 3.7.2 Category 2 - improved operation subject to outcome of full investigation and costing at Stage 2.
- 3.7.3 Category 3 - retain current signals but optimise times to ensure efficiency.
- 3.7.4 Category 4 – those sites already being investigated as part of another scheme.
- 3.8 The selection of sites for progression to Stage 2 will be made through the LTP3 Implementation Plan Process. Stage 2 will consider the costs, benefits and risks.
- 3.8.1 Category 1 signals under consideration are:
- Cricklade Road/Chapel Street
- Polaris Way Bus Gate
- Queens Drive Frobisher Drive
- Wroughton Park and Ride bus entrance
- 3.8.2 There is also an opportunity to trial Pedestrian Countdown Timers at one of the six sites identified in Stage 1 in consultation and with the approval of the Department for Transport.
- 3.9 The Meads Roundabout and Bruce Street Bridges junctions on Great Western Way are already subject to investigation as part of an approved scheme and the findings of the Traffic Signals Review can be considered as part of this work.

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## 4. Alternative Options

- 4.1 Any alternative options for those sites selected for the Stage 2 review will be considered in detail.

## 5. Implications, Diversity Impact Assessment and Risk Management

### Financial and Procurement Implications

- 5.1 The Stage 2 reviews will be funded from the LTP3 budget. Schemes arising from Stage 2 will be subject to their own business case and funded either from LTP3 or, where appropriate, Section 106 funding.

### Legal and Human Rights Implications

- 5.2 Legal and human rights legislation has been considered in the preparation of this report and its recommendations are considered to be compatible with convention rights. In accordance with the principle of proportionality, any interference with the convention rights of individuals is justified by the overall benefit to the community. Any inconvenience that may result from the introduction of any proposal would be outweighed by the overall environmental and road safety benefits provided.

### All Other Implications (including Staff, Sustainability, Health, Rural, Crime and Disorder)

- 5.3 Sustainability – the intention of the Traffic Signal Review is to improve junction efficiency and reduce delays but will consider the needs of Public Transport and of walking and cycling.

### Links to One Swindon, Strategic Objectives, Plans and Policies

- 5.4 One Swindon Priority: I like where I live - there will be targeted improvements of our roads

### Diversity Impact Assessment

- 5.5 A Diversity Impact Assessment has not been completed for this report. This is because it simply proposes that further investigations are carried out into potential changes to the operation of traffic signals at certain locations. A Diversity Impact Assessment will be carried out as part of this further level of investigation.

### Risk Management

- 5.6 Risk to the Council's reputation arising from not reviewing traffic signal operation.
- 5.7 Possibility of an unexpected outcome to public consultation on specific proposals.

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## 6. Consultees

- 6.1 The Board Director Finance, Revenues, Benefits and Property (Section 151 Officer) and Director of Law and Democratic Services (Monitoring Officer) are consulted in respect of all reports.

## 7. Background Papers

- 7.1 Trial Study Report – Mannington Roundabout Part-Time Trial, Halcrow, June 2012
- 7.2 Swindon Traffic Signal Review Stage 1 Halcrow, December 2011

## 8. Appendices

None

## 9. Key Decision/Decision in Forward Plan

This is not a Key Decision and is included in the Cabinet Forward Plan for September 2012.