

# CABINET MEETING

13<sup>TH</sup> SEPTEMBER 2021

## COVID-19 PUBLIC REALM MEASURES

**Purpose:**

To review the public realm measures introduced in Carmarthen, Llanelli and Ammanford in response to the Covid-19 pandemic and determine their future application.

**Recommendations / key decisions required:**

To adopt the recommendations as set out within the report as follows:

Recommendation 1.

That the speed limits set out in Schedule 1 be promoted as permanent speed limits.

Recommendation 2.

That the parking areas set out in Schedule 2 as Experimental Orders be confirmed as permanent, and Traffic Regulation Orders created accordingly.

Recommendation 3.

That the parking areas in Carmarthen be effectively removed as set out in Schedule 3.

Recommendation 4.

That the temporary 'Access Only' traffic order on Water Street, Carmarthen be promoted as permanent and enforced.

Recommendation 5.

That the pedestrianisation measures in Carmarthen and Llanelli town centres be removed as no longer necessary for covid related reasons (Option 2).

**Reasons:**

To ensure the continued safety and convenience of road users, the support of local businesses and to remove measures no longer required for covid reasons.

Relevant scrutiny committee to be consulted NO

Cabinet Decision Required YES

Council Decision Required NO

**CABINET MEMBER PORTFOLIO HOLDER:-**

Councillor Hazel Evans. Cabinet Member for Environment.

Directorate: Environment

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# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

## CABINET MEETING 13<sup>TH</sup> SEPTEMBER 2021

### COVID-19 PUBLIC REALM MEASURES

- **BRIEF SUMMARY OF PURPOSE OF REPORT.**

Our town centres are key focal points within Carmarthenshire. They represent centres of retail, leisure, business, services and administration and in many ways are a barometer of the County's health and vibrancy.

The Covid-19 pandemic has unfortunately had a profound impact on town centres with lockdown restrictions closing shops and leisure facilities, and many businesses and administrative services being scaled down with staff working from home where possible.

As the first stage of lockdown restrictions began to ease towards the summer of 2020 temporary covid related changes were made to Carmarthen, Llanelli and Ammanford based around three key themes:

- **Build:** building public confidence and creating an environment that people want to visit.
- **Empower:** empowering people to move safely around towns
- **Support:** supporting the recovery of towns.

In each of the towns physical measures were introduced around these key themes. From the 3<sup>rd</sup> August 2020 legal orders were put in place to temporarily introduce a range of specific speed limit, parking and access measures which were supported by targeted public messaging to reinforce social distancing and COVID-19 hygiene practices.

Since the temporary measures were implemented the COVID-19 situation has changed with movement and business restrictions being implemented and eased in accordance with changing circumstances. During this period, continuous monitoring has been undertaken to ensure the measures remain appropriate. An on-line consultation exercise was undertaken between November 2020 and January 2021 with businesses and members of the public. Regular town centres surveys of footfall and air quality monitoring have also been completed (Appendix A and B).



This report provides a review of the temporary measures introduced, the consultation undertaken regarding these measures and current government advice (Appendix C). The report also includes reference to the regeneration aims being developed for our towns, the supporting monitoring which has been undertaken and the longer term Welsh Government Transport Strategy and Active Travel aspirations (Appendix D).

The report provides options for discussion along with recommendations for engineering measures which were introduced in response to the covid pandemic in Carmarthen, Llanelli and Ammanford town centres.

### **Carmarthen**

Within Carmarthen Town the public realm changes in response to covid included:

- The introduction of area wide 20mph limits to create safer town centre streets.
- Reallocating on-street parking areas to create space for pedestrians, and creating additional parking areas at other locations,
- Pedestrianising Quay Street through Nott Square to King Street (10am to 4pm, Monday to Sunday) to create safe pedestrian space, enable social distancing during covid and support outdoor trading for local businesses.
- Creating additional loading / unloading areas on Spilman Street (works pending)
- Introducing an Access Only restriction on Water Street where the footways are narrow
- Advisory directional signing on narrower pedestrian routes to reduce conflicting movements.



Carmarthen plan  
July 2020.pdf

Since the changes were made modifications have been made in Blue Street following detailed discussions with local businesses and in Lammas Street to ease bus movements.

## Llanelli

The central area of Llanelli including Stepney Street and Vaughan Street was already pedestrianised and links through to the Elli Centre. A review of this area in the summer of 2020 concluded that ample space already existed for social distancing. Focus therefore concentrated on the Cowell Street and Stepney Street (west) areas where higher footfall tended to be concentrated along narrower footways. The public realm changes in this area included:

- The introduction of an area wide 20mph limit to create safer town centre streets.
- Pedestrianising the Cowell Street (northern section) and Stepney Street (western section) between 10am to 4pm, Monday to Sunday for covid reasons.
- The creation of compensatory disabled parking and time limited parking in adjacent roads.
- The creation of outdoor areas to support local businesses.



Llanelli Plan July 2020.pdf

## Ammanford

The central Quay Street area of Ammanford has been pedestrianised for several years and a review of the area indicated that sufficient space already existed to enable social distancing and for businesses to trade outdoors. The focus of attention was therefore directed towards the surrounding streets and particularly towards Carregamman Lane, the adjacent car park and also Margaret Street car park where the footfall was higher and the pedestrian routes narrower. The public realm changes were developed to include:

- The introduction of an area wide 20mph limit to create safer town centre streets.
- Widening footways to create additional pedestrian space (work pending at Bus Station).
- Directional signing to reduce pedestrian conflict.



Ammanford Plan July 2020.pdf

## Consultation

A consultation exercise was undertaken with businesses and members of the public between the 16th November 2020 and the 4th January 2021. Due to covid restriction this was undertaken as an on-line exercise. A full report of the consultation is attached with the main findings summarised below.

### Business Consultation

52 businesses responded to the consultation with the results summarised for Carmarthen (35 responses) and Llanelli (9 responses) tabulated below:

| Carmarthen Town Businesses<br>N=35  | Number of businesses |       |         |          |                   |
|---|----------------------|-------|---------|----------|-------------------|
|   | Strongly agree       | Agree | Neither | Disagree | Strongly disagree |
| Covid-19 has had a general negative impact on trade since March 2020 with a general downturn in economic performance. | 30                   | 5     | 0       | 0        | 0                 |
| Week on week trade has improved since restrictions were lifted on 2 July 2020.  | 2                    | 10    | 6       | 13       | 4                 |
| Week on week trade has improved since 5th of August when Covid-19 measures were introduced within the town.           | 1                    | 3     | 7       | 13       | 11                |
| The town centre changes have decreased the risk of Covid-19 transmission.   | 4                    | 6     | 13      | 5        | 7                 |
| Town centre changes have improved pedestrian safety.  | 6                    | 11    | 6       | 7        | 5                 |
| The town Centre changes have reduced traffic noise and vehicle pollution.   | 8                    | 9     | 7       | 8        | 3                 |
| The town centre changes have improved the feel and look of the town centres and make it a place people want to visit. | 7                    | 2     | 6       | 10       | 10                |

Additional comments were received from businesses in Carmarthen both for and against pedestrianisation. Key themes highlighted as a challenge presented by pedestrianisation have been around:

- Access for people with mobility impairments.
- Difficulties in arranging deliveries either side of the restricted hours of pedestrianisation.

In Llanelli responses were received from 9 businesses and are summarised as follows:

| Llanelli Town Businesses<br>N=9   | Number of businesses |       |         |          |                   |
|---|----------------------|-------|---------|----------|-------------------|
|   | Strongly agree       | Agree | Neither | Disagree | Strongly disagree |
| Covid-19 has had a general negative impact on trade since March 2020 with a general downturn in economic performance. | 7                    | 1     | 1       | 0        | 0                 |
| Week on week trade has improved since restrictions were lifted on 2 July 2020.  | 0                    | 1     | 1       | 2        | 5                 |
| Week on week trade has improved since 5th of August when Covid-19 measures were introduced within the town.           | 0                    | 0     | 1       | 2        | 6                 |
| The town centre changes have decreased the risk of Covid-19 transmission.   | 0                    | 3     | 5       | 0        | 1                 |
| Town centre changes have improved pedestrian safety.  | 1                    | 3     | 4       | 1        | 0                 |
| The town Centre changes have reduced traffic noise and vehicle pollution.   | 0                    | 3     | 5       | 1        | 0                 |
| The town centre changes have improved the feel and look of the town centres and make it a place people want to visit. | 1                    | 1     | 5       | 1        | 1                 |

Additional comments were received both for and against the measures.

The consultation with businesses in Ammanford drew only four responses but the public realm changes have been much lighter in terms of their impact with a greater emphasis on social distancing messaging.

## Public Consultation

The public consultation results provided a greater number of responses, 286 in total, which are summarised on a town-by-town basis below. This figure is comparatively low for a consultation exercise of this size related to key town centre changes.

| Carmarthen Town Centre<br>N=191  | AIS  | Strongly agree | Agree | Neither | Disagree | Strongly disagree |
|--|------|----------------|-------|---------|----------|-------------------|
| The town centre changes have decreased the risk of Covid-19 transmission.  | 0.10 | 16.7%          | 24.0% | 26.0%   | 19.8%    | 13.5%             |
| The town centre changes have improved pedestrian safety.   | 0.36 | 24.1%          | 26.7% | 21.5%   | 16.2%    | 11.5%             |
| The town centre changes have reduced traffic noise and vehicle pollution.  | 0.32 | 24.2%          | 23.7% | 23.2%   | 17.9%    | 11.1%             |
| The town centre changes have improved the feel and look of the town centres and make it a place I want to visit. | 0.03 | 23.6%          | 18.8% | 15.7%   | 20.4%    | 21.5%             |

In general, the views tend towards positive responses as indicated by the Average Index Score (AIS) but views are relatively mixed. Further additional comments were submitted by 101 respondents with particular themes emerging around:

- Access for people with mobility impairments in King Street.
- Support for King Street being pedestrianised.

There were 86 responses received from members of the public regarding Llanelli which are summarised in the table below.

| Llanelli Town Centre<br>N=86   | AIS  | Strongly agree | Agree | Neither | Disagree | Strongly disagree |
|--|------|----------------|-------|---------|----------|-------------------|
| The town centre changes have decreased the risk of Covid-19 transmission.  | 0.20 | 17.4%          | 26.7% | 27.9%   | 14.0%    | 14.0%             |
| The town centre changes have improved pedestrian safety.   | 0.48 | 29.1%          | 24.4% | 23.3%   | 11.6%    | 11.6%             |
| The town centre changes have reduced traffic noise and vehicle pollution.  | 0.57 | 27.9%          | 26.7% | 29.1%   | 7.0%     | 9.3%              |
| The town centre changes have improved the feel and look of the town centres and make it a place I want to visit. | 0.08 | 24.4%          | 19.8% | 16.3%   | 18.6%    | 20.9%             |

There is again a general positivity in responses as indicated by the AIS score particularly in support of improved pedestrian safety and reduced traffic noise and pollution. Specific additional comments were submitted by 41 respondents both for and against pedestrianisation with negative comments centring on access for people with mobility impairments.

There were 41 responses related to Ammanford which with views being generally balanced.

## **Additional Stakeholder Consultation**

Following the Preliminary Executive Board meeting of the 4<sup>th</sup> May 2021 additional consultation has taken place with key stakeholders in Carmarthen, Llanelli and Ammanford. However, this has in some respects been superseded by changing advice from Welsh Government regarding covid related precautions.

Welsh Government updated its Covid advice effective from the 7<sup>th</sup> August which moved Wales down to covid alert level 0. From this date Welsh Government advised that there would be no legal limits on the number of people who can meet in private homes, public spaces or at events. Welsh Government advice also explained that the transmission of coronavirus is most strongly associated with close and prolonged contact in indoor places and that face coverings remain a legal requirement indoors, with the exception of hospitality premises.

In addition, the updated Welsh Government advice set out physical distancing as a key way to stop coronavirus spreading and that people should exercise caution and think about physical distancing from people they don't live with.

Following this recent change in advice a further meeting was requested by County Councillor members for Carmarthen Town which was subsequently held on the 13<sup>th</sup> August 2021. Members expressed a view that in light of the revised national guidance and following recent conversations with local businesses vehicular restrictions in King Street could now be lifted. Members also expressed the view that traffic restrictions in the Nott Square area where there are high pedestrian volumes were helpful.

A submission was also received on behalf of Carmarthen BID but it should be noted that this was submitted prior to the change in Welsh Government advice. The BID Manager set out the findings of consultation it had undertaken with businesses in King Street which indicated a view that the pedestrianisation measures in King Street were accepted for covid reasons but warned that views could change with a lifting of restrictions. The BID Manager put forward a separate option to restrict the pedestrianisation of King Street from Thursday lunchtime to 6pm on Saturday for a trial period to be monitored and reviewed.

Prior to the changes in Welsh Government advice, consultation with Llanelli stakeholders indicated support for the recommendations regarding parking and speed limits and support of a relaxation in the pedestrianised hours of Cowell Street and Stepney Street (west).

Consultation with the Ammanford Task Force also indicated support for the recommendations included within this report for the temporary 20mph speed limits in Ammanford to be made permanent.

## **Town Centre Regeneration**

Due to the impact of Covid 19 on the economy, the authority is urgently reviewing its strategic priorities and developing an Economic Recovery Plan. This will enable the authority and its key partners to co-ordinate and target available resources to contain the scale of the downturn and to stimulate demand and confidence, ensuring that the Carmarthenshire's economy can recover as quickly as possible.

As part of the overall strategic recovery plan the authority is developing specific economic recovery masterplans for the primary town centres within Carmarthenshire namely: Carmarthen; Ammanford and Llanelli. The economic recovery masterplans for these towns provides a focus on priorities and a new strategy for future delivery to ensure continuity of business within the town centres, whilst also providing plans that will enable Carmarthenshire to unlock future funding opportunities.

The regeneration plans for Carmarthen include specific reference to King Street and Queen Street and discuss the potential redesign of the street environment to create a more attractive and usable space that is welcoming to pedestrians and one which creates opportunities for street stalls, tables and chairs and events. The Masterplan recommends a feasibility study to develop these ideas, which could potentially include pedestrianisation with managed vehicular access. This may well find an accord with the results of the public consultation element in Carmarthen which indicated support for pedestrianisation. The Recovery Masterplan recommends that a strategy be developed for stakeholder and public consultation in this respect.

The regeneration plans for Llanelli identify Cowell Street and Stepney Street as a key area in the town where a focus on rejuvenating the western side of the town to encourage footfall, support local businesses and improve the appearance, accessibility and safety of the street environment should be promoted. Similar to the Carmarthen approach, the Masterplan proposes a feasibility study to investigate options for permanent enhancements of the public realm, including the potential introduction of pedestrianisation.

## Public Realm Options

Many of the public realm changes were underpinned through legal orders drafted on either a temporary or experimental basis which are valid for up to 18 months from the start of August 2020. Changes within the town centres were implemented as follows:

- Speed Limits – Temporary Orders
- Parking changes – Experimental Orders
- POD and Access – Temporary Orders

Experimental orders can be removed or confirmed whereas temporary orders, introduced to ensure public safety during covid, need to be either removed or replaced by permanent orders. Further temporary orders would require the consent of Welsh Government.

## Traffic Management (Speed Limits)

The traffic management interventions of reduced speed limit to 20mph offer long term road safety and active travel benefits and are in line with proposed Welsh Government legislation for 20mph speed limits in urban areas.

The current speed limit orders will expire in January 2022. Given the benefits these lower speed limit bring it is recommended that the speed limits introduced are made permanent through the statutory Traffic Regulation Order process as scheduled below:

| Schedule 1. Temporary 20mph Speed Limits to be made permanent |  |
|---|--|
| a. Ammanford  | Baptist Lane, Heol Wallasey, Carregamman Lane (East), Quay Street, Hall Street, Lloyd Street, Road leading to Hall Street car park   |
| b. Carmarthen   | Blue Street, Dark Gate, Lammas Street, Mill Street, Friars Park, Notts Square, Little Bridge Street, Bridge Street, Quay Street, St. Mary's Street, Queen Street, St. Peter's Street, John Street, Cambrian Place, Chapel Street, Little Water Street, St Andrew's Road, Hall Street, King Street, Church Lane, Red Street, Orchard Street (South), Woods Row, Furnace Road. |
| c. Llanelli   | Cowell Street, John Street, Stepney Street (west), lanes to rear of John Street, Cowell Street, Stepney Street and Murray Street.  |

## Parking Areas

Parking changes were introduced through Experimental TROs which can either be removed or made permanent. There are a number of parking changes which have proved particularly successful, and it is suggested that these be made permanent, whereas others have been less successful and should be removed.

| Schedule 2. Experimental Parking Areas to be made Permanent |  |   |
|---|--|---|
| a. Carmarthen   | a) John Street                                       | Bus bay converted to disabled parking   |
|   | b) Lammas Street outside number 19 (butchers)        | Loading / unloading bay in place of double yellow lines.  |
|   | c) Lammas Street outside numbers 32 & 33             | Disabled bays in place of double yellow lines   |
|   | d) Lammas Street outside numbers 36 & 37 (newsagent) | New parking in place of double yellow lines.  |
|   | e) Lammas Street outside numbers 103 to 105          | New parking in place of double yellow lines   |
| b. Llanelli   | 1. Lloyd Street                                      | New parking in place of double yellow lines.  |
|   | 2. Murray Street outside numbers 13 to 21            | Shared use bay with limited waiting parking during day, taxi at night in place of double yellow lines and taxi parking. |
|   | 3. Murray Street outside numbers 32 to 46            | limited waiting bays in place of double yellow lines.   |

| Schedule 3. Experimental Parking Areas to be removed. |   |   |
|---|---|---|
| a) Carmarthen   | 1. Blue Street between 20 and 33 (outside shops)  | Remove measures and return to pre-covid arrangement |
|   | 2. Lammas Street outside number 18 (estate agent) | Remove barrier only, no TRO involved.               |

## Traffic Management (Access Only)

Water Street in Carmarthen is currently subject to a Temporary TRO which permits access only to the properties along the road. This temporary order will expire in January 2022. The road was previously used as a popular short-cut through to Catherine Street. The footways along Water Street are particularly narrow in the vicinity of a fish & chip shop, and public house. The change to 'Access Only' was introduced to limit traffic along the road and thereby reduce the risk to pedestrians who were likely to step off the narrow footways to pass.

Despite the regulatory traffic signs in place the road has continued to be used as a short-cut by some motorists with Police enforcement at a low level. Two options are available:

Option 1. Remove the 'Access Only' order and signage which would return the road to pre-covid arrangement. There would be a continuing risk to pedestrians stepping off the carriageway as the town becomes busier although there is a 20mph speed limit in place.

Option 2. Make permanent the 'Access Only' Order and enhance enforcement either by the Police or, subject to feasibility, through the introduction of an enforcement camera.

Given the safety benefits associated with the 'Access Only' Order it is proposed that this should continue as set out in Option 2.

## **Pedestrianisation**

The most impactful change made within the town centres are the pedestrianisation of key town centre streets as set out in the schedules below.

| Schedule 4. Temporary Pedestrianisation of Streets |  |
|--|--|
| a) Carmarthen                                      | Quay Street, St. Mary's Street, Hall Street, Bridge Street, Little Bridge Street, Nott Square, King Street and Queen Street. |
| b. Llanelli  | Cowell Street, Stepney Street (west).  |

The pedestrianisation measures were introduced through Temporary Traffic Regulation Orders considered necessary to ensure public safety due to the covid pandemic and are valid for up to 18 months. This 18-month period will end in January 2022.

The recent Carmarthen members were of the view that the prohibition of driving restrictions which effectively pedestrianise King Street was no longer necessary and should be removed. Members did however express a concern regarding traffic accessing the Nott Square area.

The current legal Order for restricting vehicular access includes King Street through to Quay Street and includes Nott Square, Bridge Street and Little Bridge Street, St. Mary's Street and Hall Street. The options for consideration and the legal implications of these are set out below:

### **Option 1 – maintain the existing pedestrianisation 10am to 4pm Monday to Sunday.**

The current legal Order is valid until the end of January 2022. The Order was introduced as part of a programme to protect the public from Coronavirus in accordance with Welsh Government Guidelines. The continuation of the Order beyond this date for the same reasons would require the consent of the Welsh Ministers. The introduction of similar restrictions for non-Covid reason would require the prescribed statutory process for the making of an experimental or permanent Road Traffic Regulation Order to be adhered to.

### **Option 2 – remove the pedestrianisation and return to pre-covid arrangements.**

No legal order revocation would be required and the barriers would be removed. In Carmarthen the Nott Square area and Quay St would then revert to being subject to the prohibitions of driving which the County Council had started enforcing in the Squares prior to covid.

In Cowell Street, Stepney Street (west) and John Street parking arrangements should then be changed back to the arrangement pre-covid.

**Option 3 – remove pedestrianisation of King St but retain the prohibition for Nott Square, Quay St, Bridge Street, Little Bridge Street, St. Mary’s Street and Hall Street.**

This proposal would necessitate a new temporary Order which would have to be for the same reasons cited for the introduction of the original/existing Order, namely as a measure necessitated by covid, but because of the statutory limitations on the duration of temporary Orders the new Order would not extend beyond January, 2022. The continuation of the new Order after January 2022 would be subject to the same provisions as outlined in Option 1

**Option 4 – modify the pedestrianisation to be effective 11am to 3pm, Tuesday to Saturday.**

This proposal replicates the requirements of Option 3.

**Option 5 – as proposed by Carmarthen BID modify the pedestrianisation to be effective from Thursday lunchtime to 6pm Saturday.**

This option would require the revocation of the existing Order and the creation of a new Traffic Order. The process would be as in Option 3 but a clear covid related rationale and justification would be required. In any other circumstance it will be necessary to follow the prescribed statutory procedure for the making on an experimental or permanent order and it should be noted that under such order shall not be made with respect to any road which would have the effect (except under special circumstance) of preventing for more than 8 hours in any period of 24 hours access for vehicles to any premises situated on or adjacent to the road.

On expiry or earlier revocation of the current restrictions imposed for King Street and the Nott Square area then the existing permanent prohibition of driving orders created in 1993 and 1998 would come back into force. These Orders, which are suspended under the existing temporary order, are:

1. *The County of Dyfed (Little Bridge Street, Bridge Street, Quay Street and St. Mary’s Street, Carmarthen) (Prohibition of Driving) Order 1993.*
2. *The County of Dyfed (Guildhall Square, St. Mary’s Street, Nott’s Square and King Street, Carmarthen)(Prohibition of Driving) Order 1993.*
3. *The County of Dyfed (Hall Street, Carmarthen)(Prohibition of Driving) Order 1998.*

These Orders, which effectively restrict access into the named streets, were previously enforced by the police. However, Carmarthenshire County Council applied to Welsh Government in 2018 for powers to enforce moving traffic contraventions and this was subsequently granted. These powers included the ability to enforce prohibitions of driving which the Council’s Parking Services Team undertake with a camera enforcement vehicle. Prior to covid an initiative was brought forward to enforce the restrictions in the Nott Square and Guildhall Square areas which had a significant impact on the number and purpose of vehicles entering into these areas.

## Recommendations

**Recommendation 1.** That the speed limits set out in Schedule 1 be subject to advertising in accordance with statutory Traffic Regulation Order Procedures and proposed as permanent speed limits.

**Recommendation 2.** That the parking areas set out in Schedule 2 as experimental be confirmed as permanent and Traffic Regulation Orders created accordingly.

**Recommendation 3.** That the parking areas in Carmarthen be effectively removed as set out in Schedule 3.

**Recommendation 4.** That the 'Access Only' order on Water Street be made permanent and enforced as set out in Option 2.

**Recommendation 5.** That the pedestrianisation in Carmarthen and Llanelli town centres be removed as set out in Option 2 and the Nott Square area be enforced by the Parking Services Team in accordance with the longstanding Orders which were suspended by the temporary Order

## Air Quality

Carmarthenshire County Council’s Public Health Team have undertaken additional monitoring of Carmarthen and Llanelli Town Centres in addition to their normal monitoring regime to help inform on the impact the Covid related town centre changes may have had on air quality.

Any changes to traffic flows and traffic speeds will often impact on the local air quality, whether positively or adversely. Supporting active travel can also improve air quality if it encourages less use of vehicles. Traffic restrictions, on the other hand can sometimes displace the pollution onto other road networks, for example when that traffic is diverted or increases congestion on other routes.

The Public Health Team have analysed local diffusion tube monitoring and compared this with trends with the surrounding networks to draw conclusions. The main pollution concerns in our towns relate to Nitrogen Dioxide (NO<sub>2</sub>) from road vehicles with declared Air Quality Management Areas (AQMA) where levels exceed annual statutory limits in “hotspot” locations in both Llanelli and Carmarthen.

In Carmarthen, there is a network of diffusion tubes monitoring Nitrogen Dioxide (NO<sub>2</sub>) in the Air Quality Management Area (AQMA). Two additional sites were set up to monitor air quality and assess the impacts of the measures. One in King Street, which was subject to temporary vehicle restrictions and another in Spilman Street which runs parallel. In King Street, the monthly levels observed during August to December remained low, there was a tube missing in September upon collection, but results were obtained for the remainder of the year.

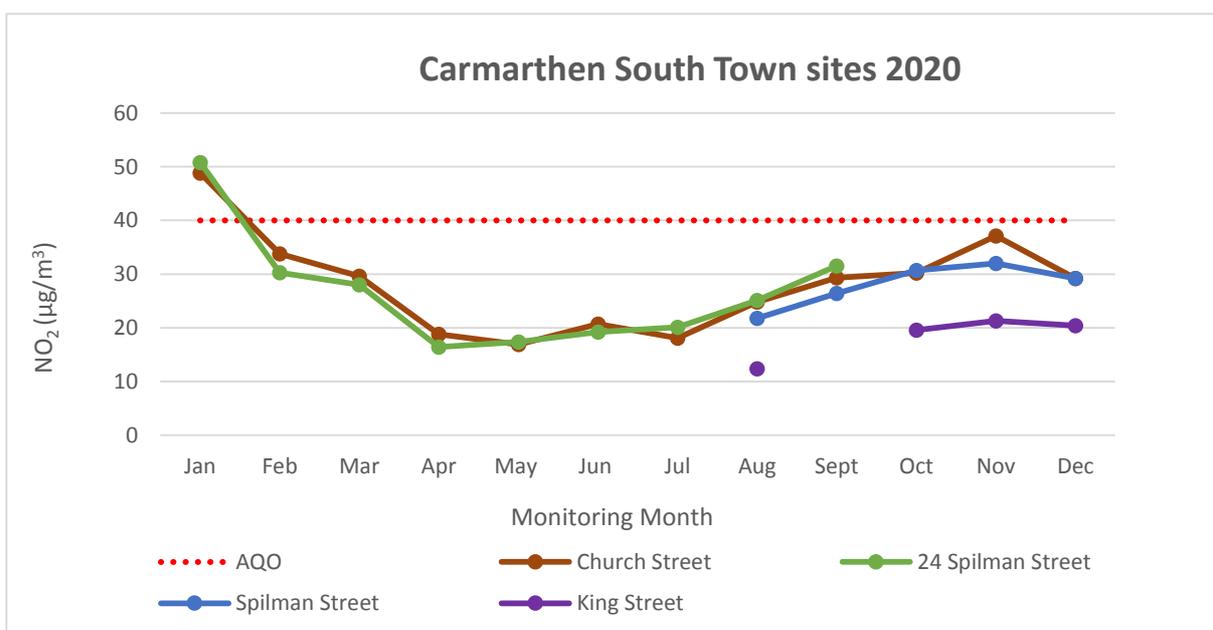


Figure 1: Carmarthen Town centre results (south east)

In Carmarthen, exposure to NO<sub>2</sub> levels have remained low in King Street and the measures do not appear to have displaced pollution levels in an adverse manner on the surrounding routes.

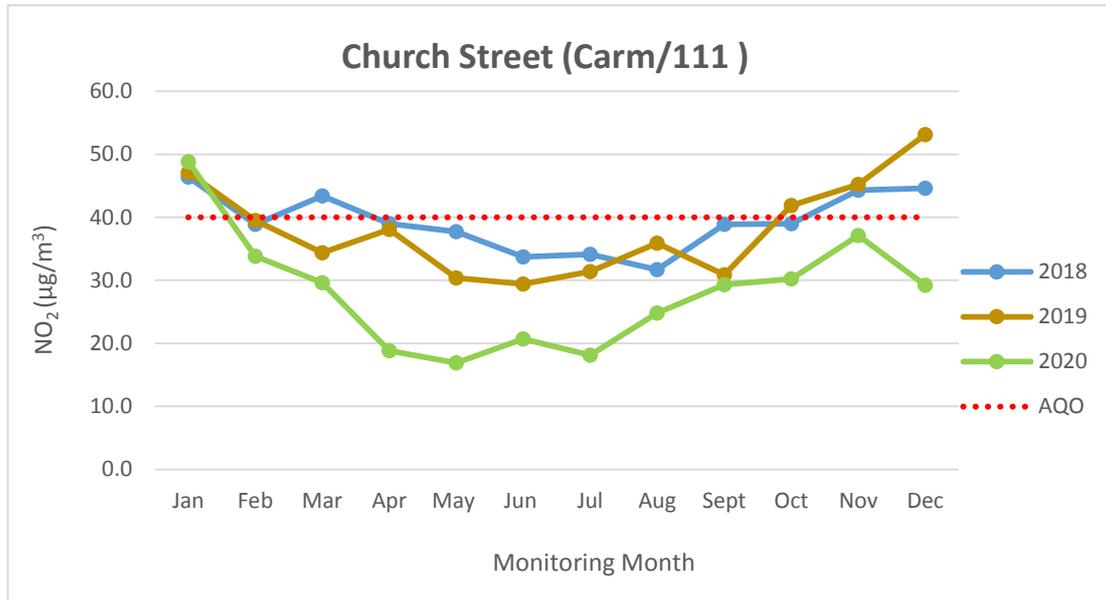


Figure 2: Church Street results compared to previous years

On those surrounding routes pollution levels remain below that seen in previous years and there are no significant increases, compared to general trends for the area.

In Llanelli diffusion tube monitoring sites were set up in John Street and Cowell Street from August 2020 in addition to established sites in the surrounding area.

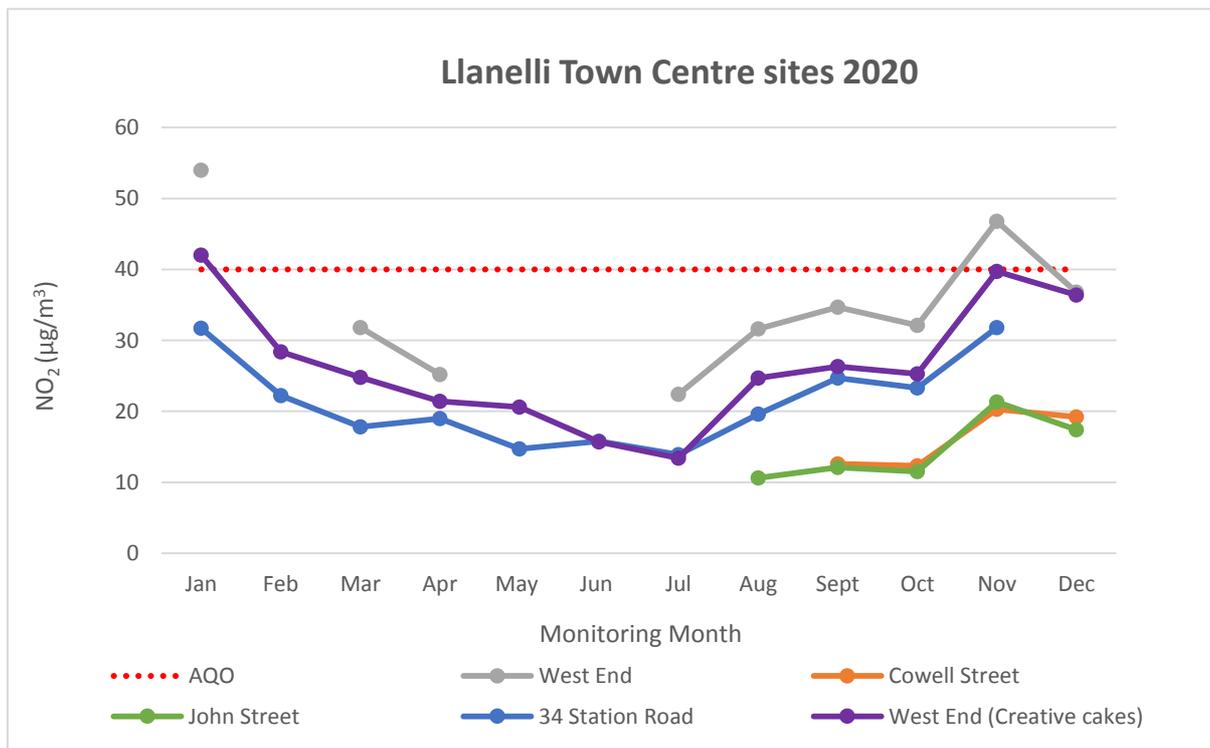


Figure 7: Results of Llanelli Town Centre sites

Air pollution in John Street and Cowell Street is significantly below other areas of the town centre.

In conclusion, where levels are already reasonably low (below  $20\mu\text{g}/\text{m}^3$ ) impacts from improvement measures tend to be less noticeable compared to those areas with higher levels of  $\text{NO}_2$  and higher traffic counts. Town Centre areas such as King Street, Cowell Street and John Street tend to be narrower and more 'canyonised' than the surrounding main roads which can make it more difficult for road traffic pollutants to disperse.

Any reduction to traffic in town centres improve air quality and particularly exposure to shoppers during peak times. The results of the monitoring of air quality indicate that pollution in the pedestrianised areas is relatively low and well below AQ thresholds.

## APPENDIX B

### Town Centre Footfall

Automatic pedestrian counters in our key towns provide an illustration of how footfall levels in towns has dropped dramatically due to Covid-19 and of how the lockdown restrictions have caused footfall levels to fluctuate.

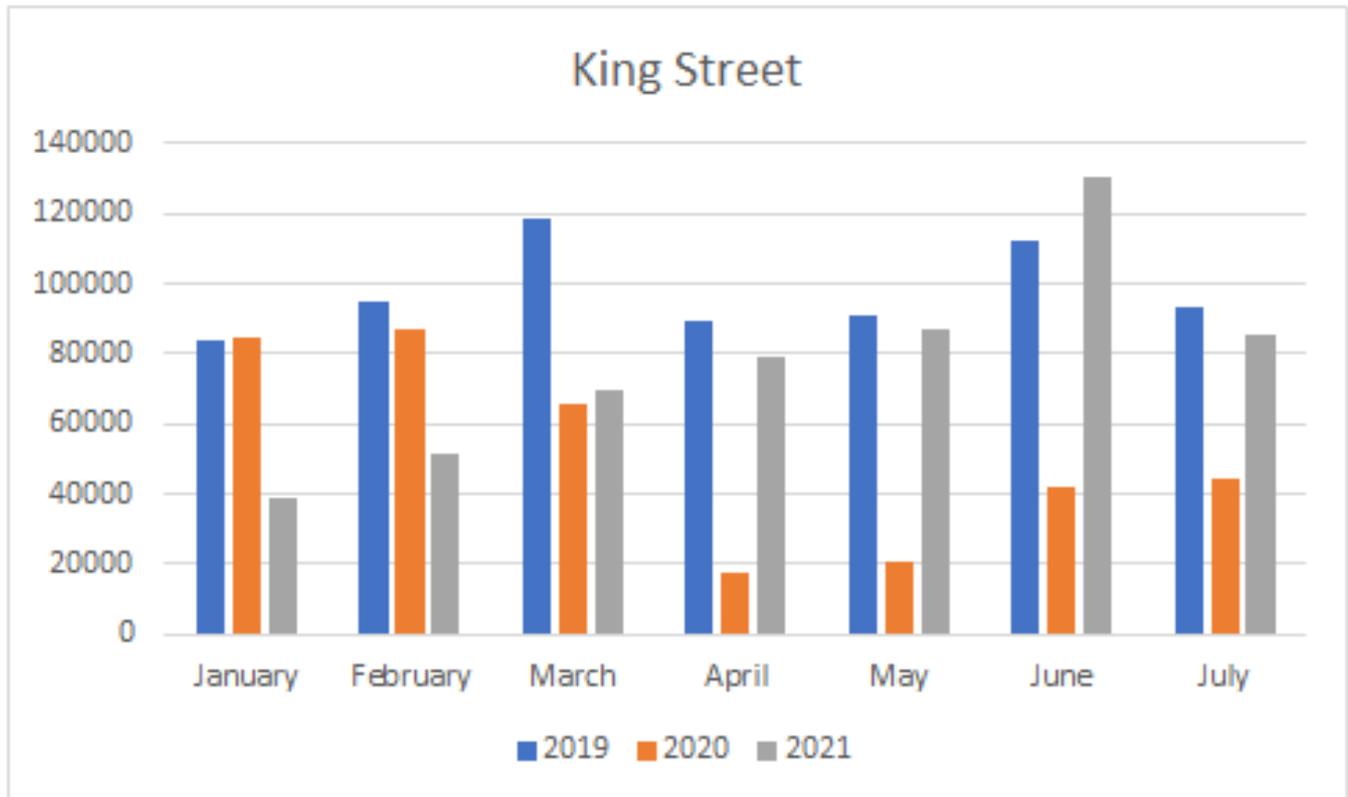


Figure 4. Footfall levels in King Street.

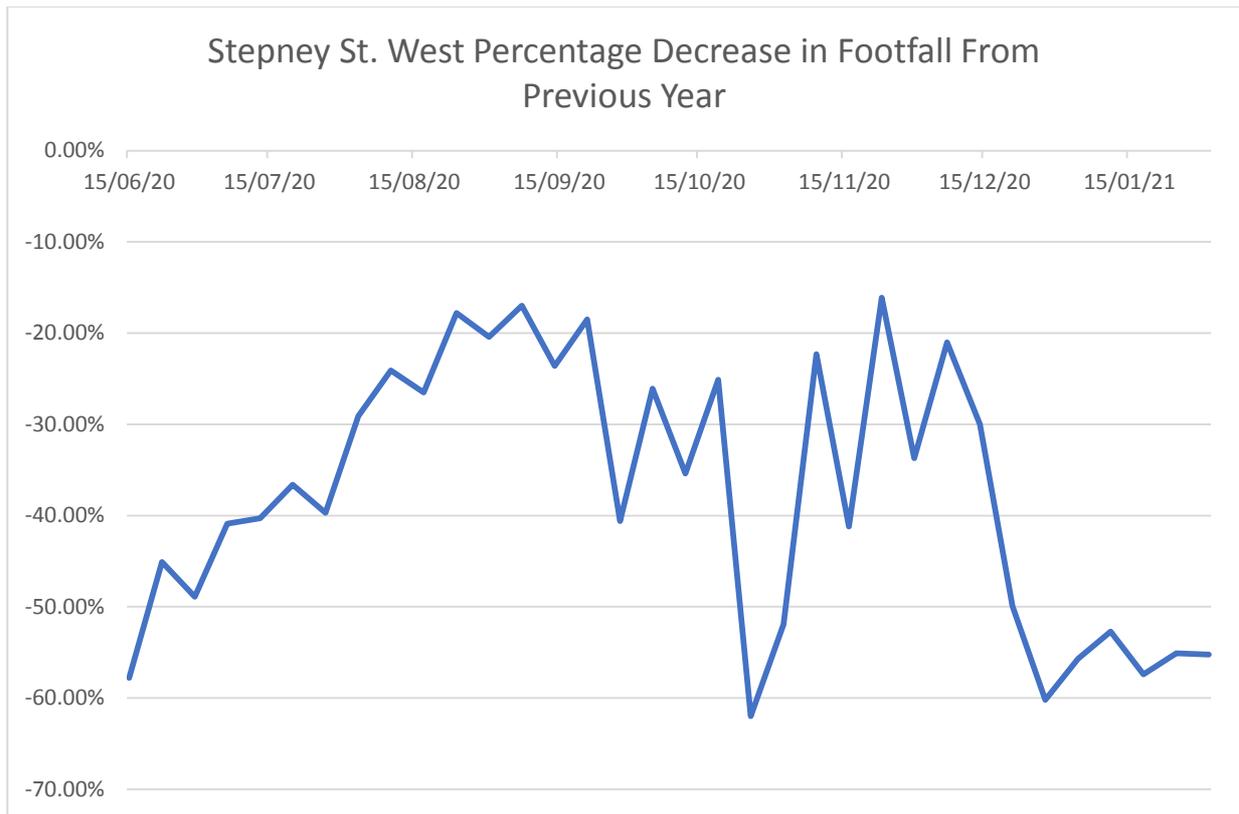


Figure 5. Footfall levels in Stepney Street West, Llanelli as a percentage decrease from previous year levels.

Additional analysis from the footfall counters indicates the peak pedestrian hours during the day for all days of the week with a comparison between 2019 (pre-Covid) and 2020 (during Covid).

**Hourly Comparison (Week 33 : Mon 12 Aug 2019 - Sun 18 Aug 2019)**

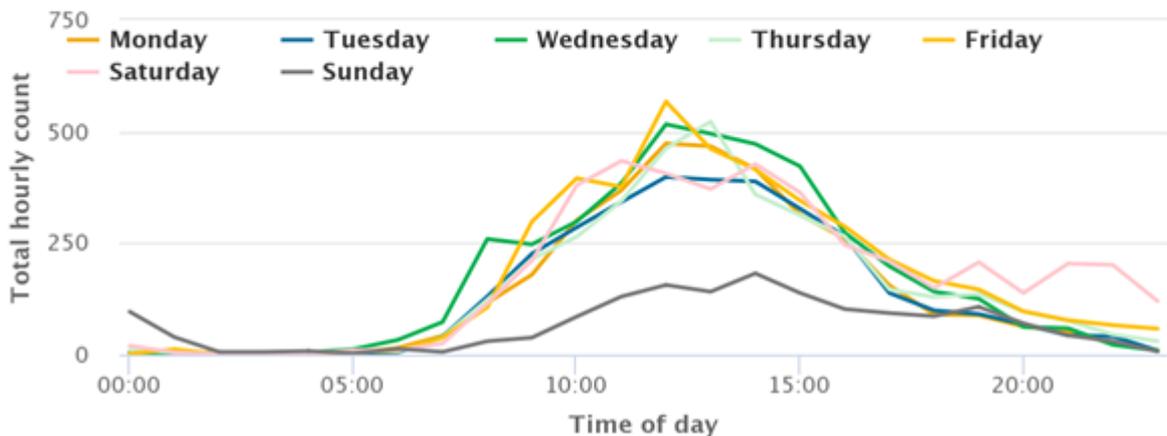


Figure 6. Footfall levels though the day for all days in August 2019 in King Street.

### Hourly Comparison (Week 33 : Mon 10 Aug 2020 - Sun 16 Aug 2020)

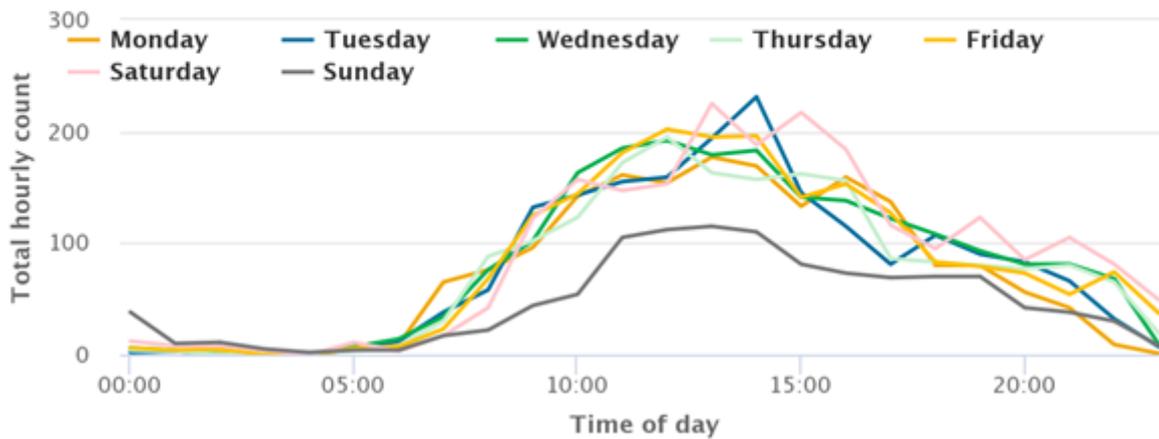


Figure 7. Footfall levels through the day for all days in August 2020 in King Street.

### Hourly Comparison (Week 33 : Mon 12 Aug 2019 - Sun 18 Aug 2019)

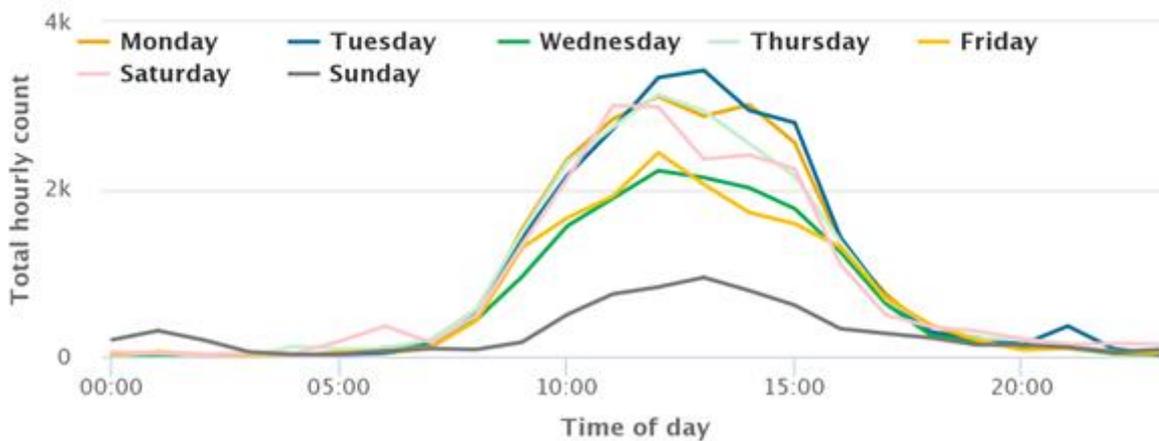


Figure 8. Footfall levels through the day for all days in August 2019 in Stepney Street.

### Hourly Comparison (Week 33 : Mon 10 Aug 2020 - Sun 16 Aug 2020)

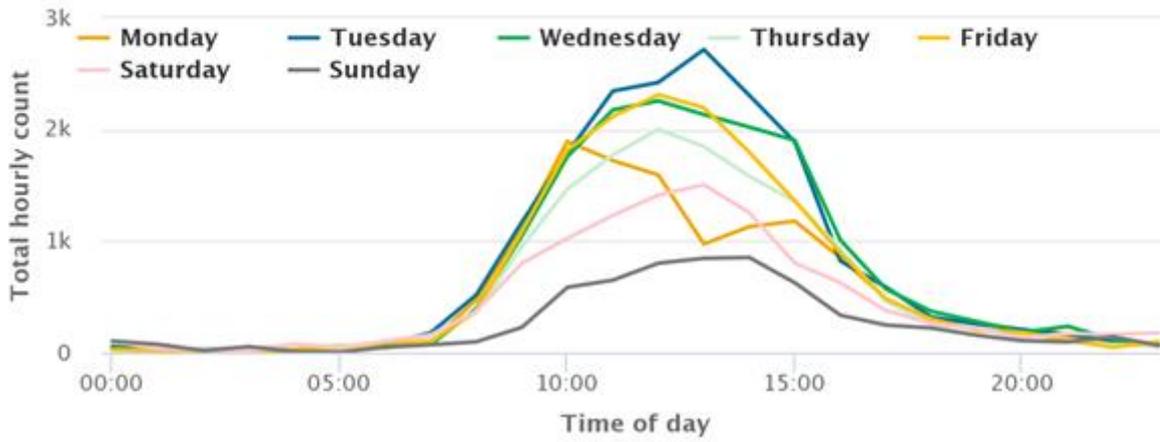


Figure 9. Footfall levels through the day for all days in August 2020 in Stepney Street.

## APPENDIX C

### Welsh Government Guidance – Coronavirus (COVID-19) (from Saturday 7<sup>th</sup> August 2021)

Complete the move to alert level 0:

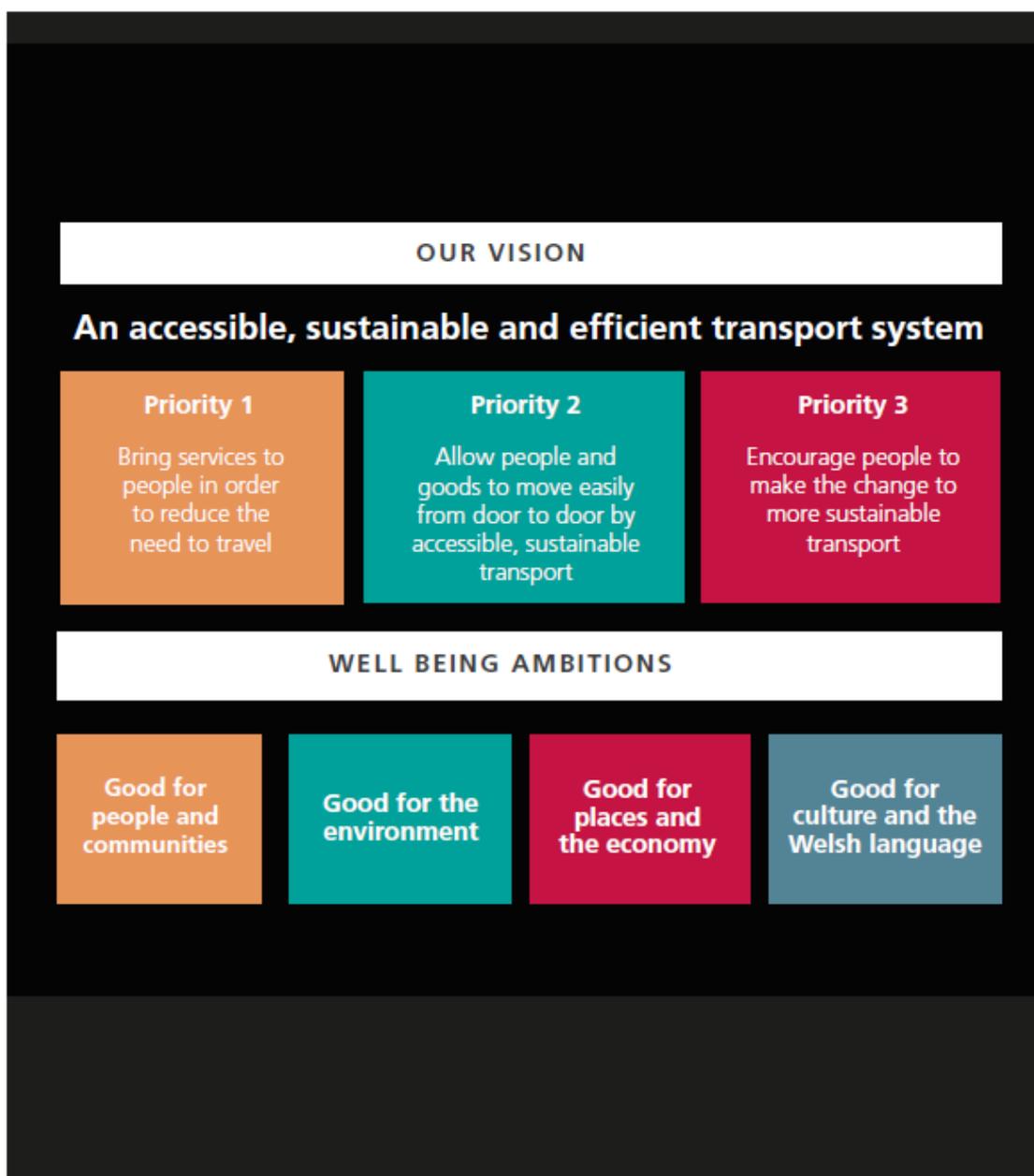
- remove legal restrictions on the number of people who can meet indoors, including in private homes, public places or at events
- all businesses and premises can open, including nightclubs
- people should still work from home wherever possible
- face coverings will remain a legal requirement indoors, with the exception of hospitality premises. This will be kept under review.
- fully vaccinated adults, people under 18 and vaccine trial participants will not need to self-isolate if they are a close contact of someone with coronavirus.

Access to the guidance is available at: <https://gov.wales/coronavirus>

Welsh Government guidance related to the development and implementation of the temporary measures is available at: <https://gov.wales/creating-safer-public-places-coronavirus>

### Wales Transport Strategy

In March 2021 Welsh Government published *Llwybr Newydd: the Wales Transport Strategy 2021* which built around three key priorities:



<https://gov.wales/llwybr-newydd-wales-transport-strategy-2021>

The recommendations within this report are structured towards supporting these key priorities within the context of responding to the Covid pandemic and the proposed measures to be retained going forward which seek to 'lock-in' and promote sustainable travel options. This very much aligns with our Active Travel projects to promote walking and cycling in our towns.

|                                  |   |
|----------------------------------|---|
| <b>DETAILED REPORT ATTACHED?</b> | <b>YES</b><br><b>Consultation Report</b><br><b>Equality Impact Assessment (Still in progress)</b> |
|----------------------------------|---|

# IMPLICATIONS

I confirm that other than those implications which have been agreed with the appropriate Directors / Heads of Service and are referred to in detail below, there are no other implications associated with this report:

Signed: **S Pilliner** Head of Service, Highways and Transportation

|   |            |            |            |                        |                       |                 |
|---|------------|------------|------------|------------------------|-----------------------|-----------------|
| Policy, Crime & Disorder and Equalities | Legal      | Finance    | ICT        | Risk Management Issues | Staffing Implications | Physical Assets |
| <b>YES</b>                              | <b>YES</b> | <b>YES</b> | <b>YES</b> | <b>NONE</b>            | <b>YES</b>            | <b>YES</b>      |

## 1. Policy, Crime & Disorder and Equalities

The public realm changes introduced in the town centres, and particularly in Llanelli and Carmarthen, were developed to safeguard visitors during the Covid pandemic and support economic recovery. The changes include the removal, reallocation and creation of on-street car parking, new speed limits and access restrictions.

On-street parking restrictions are enforced by Carmarthenshire County Council, the speed limits are enforced by Dyfed Powys Police and access restrictions can be enforced by both authorities.

In Equality Impact Assessment has been undertaken and is attached.

## 2. Legal

A number of the public realm changes are supported by Traffic Regulation Orders which were created as either Experimental Orders or Temporary Orders in August 2020 in response to the Covid pandemic. Both forms of Order are valid for up to 18 months.

Speed Limits. The 20mph speed limit were introduced as Temporary Traffic Regulation Orders and it is recommended that these be taken forward with permanent orders created. This would involve following the statutory process for creating or changing speed limits.

Parking Areas. The revised parking arrangements were introduced through Experimental Traffic Regulation Orders. These Orders can be confirmed by the authority and permanent Orders made. Temporary parking areas suggested for removal would be revoked as necessary.

Pedestrianisation. It is recommended that the pedestrianised areas be modified which may require the creation of a new Temporary Traffic Regulation Order.

### **3. Finance**

The public realm changes were supported through Welsh Government's *Funding for Sustainable Transport Covid Response* grant and any subsequent changes identified within this report will be funded through this grant. Should the grant not be extended there will be a requirement for future revenue funding. This will largely relate to the pedestrianised areas where the barriers to prevent traffic are implemented and removed daily and the security officer stationed at King Street. This implication would also be reconsidered at a future public realm review.

### **4. ICT**

The Access Only restriction in Water Street is enforceable by the Police or by Carmarthenshire County Council through the use of an approved device as a moving traffic offence. To date the County Council has only enforced moving traffic offences through the use of the camera enforcement vehicle operated by the Council's Parking Services Team. An approved static camera can also be used to enforce moving traffic offences. If this is taken forward the camera enforcement system would be linked to existing camera enforcement regime operated by Parking Services.

### **6. Staffing Implications**

The pedestrianisation element of the public realm changes require the daily installation and collection of barriers and signs associated with the pedestrianised areas and, in the case of King Street, an officer supplied by a security company regulates access and provides directions and advice.

This report includes options which would impact on this arrangement and there may therefore be staffing implications.

### **7. Physical Assets**

All public realm changes are detailed and discussed within this report.

# CONSULTATIONS

I confirm that the appropriate consultations have taken in place and the outcomes are as detailed below

Signed: S Pilliner

Head of Transportation and Highways

**1. Scrutiny Committee – not at this stage.**

**2. Local Member(s)** - A consultation exercise has been undertaken and a separate report of this is attached. Further discussions are to be arranged.

**3. Community / Town Council** – A consultation exercise has been undertaken and a separate report of this is attached. Further discussions are to be arranged.

**4. Relevant Partners** - A consultation exercise has been undertaken and a separate report of this is attached.

**5. Staff Side Representatives and other Organisations - not applicable**

**CABINET MEMBER PORTFOLIO  
HOLDER AWARE/CONSULTED**

YES – 24/08/2021

**Section 100D Local Government Act, 1972 – Access to Information  
List of Background Papers used in the preparation of this report:**

**THERE ARE NONE**