



Local Sustainable Transport response to Covid-19: Community 'monitoring' engagement summary report

Contents

Contents	2
Purpose of this report.....	3
Background to the proposed scheme	3
List of stakeholders.....	3
Timeline for proposed scheme development	Error! Bookmark not defined.
Summary of engagement and consultation activities carried out to date	4
Feedback from preliminary community engagement stage..	Error! Bookmark not defined.
Feedback from consultation stage	1
Next steps.....	Error! Bookmark not defined.
Scenario 1 – the proposed scheme goes ahead with no modifications .	Error! Bookmark not defined.
Scenario 2 – modifications are suggested for the proposed scheme	Error! Bookmark not defined.
Scenario 3 – the proposed scheme is rejected and no request is made to consider viable alternative proposals.....	Error! Bookmark not defined.
Appendices and further reading	2
Appendix 1 – full breakdown of quantitative data from online survey for [town]	2
Appendix 2 – database of comments received with regards to proposals for [town]	Error! Bookmark not defined.

Purpose of this report

The purpose of this report is to summarise the results of the first 'community monitoring' survey with respect to the Council's [Local Sustainable Transport response to Covid-19 for Ruthin](#).

Background to the proposed scheme

On 7th May 2020, the Welsh Government published [a statement requesting submissions of interest](#) for what it called local sustainable transport measures in response to Covid-19, stating "We are asking for initial expressions of interest by 21 May to allow us to gauge the overall funding requirement. We will then seek additional information as required before considering the proposals further. We envisage measures to be introduced from early summer". The intention of the scheme was to facilitate social distancing measures in town centres and to encourage and promote active travel during the pandemic period.

In response to this call for expressions of interest, Denbighshire County Council submitted expressions of interest for schemes in four towns, including Ruthin.

Following a successful bid for funding, the Council ran a consultation around the proposed active travel response schemes which ran from 9th to 24th July.

The consultation for Ruthin received 606 responses of which approximately 81% were viewed as being generally supportive of the proposals.

In late October 2020 works to install the temporary scheme were completed and on 12th November a 'monitoring' survey was launched.

Update on the Scheme

In mid-February 2020 the temporary scheme was removed.

List of stakeholders

The list of stakeholders that the Council has engaged with includes (but is not limited to):

- County Councillors for Ruthin

Local Sustainable Transport response to Covid-19: 1st 'community monitoring report' for Ruthin

- The Town Council for Ruthin
- The wider business community of Ruthin
- The residential community of Ruthin

Summary of engagement and consultation activities carried out to date

To date, the following engagement and consultation work has been carried out:

Date	Activity Summary	Stakeholders involved
19 th June 2020	First 'Town Centre Recovery' working group meeting	Mainly internal (Council) officer working group
21 st June 2020	Online public surveys launched for residents and businesses with specific regards to concerns around re-opening town centres	Businesses in Rhyl, Prestatyn, Rhuddlan, St Asaph, Denbigh, Ruthin, Llangollen and Corwen Visitors to town centres (local and from elsewhere) to the above-named towns
9 th July 2020	Public consultations launched for temporary Local Sustainable Transport proposals	County Councillors for Ruthin, the Town Council, and the wider business and residential community of Ruthin
12 th November 2020	Community monitoring launched for temporary Local Sustainable Transport scheme in Ruthin	Respondents to previous July consultations, members of <i>Y Panel</i> (online citizen panel), membership of several Ruthin-based Facebook groups, wider community of Ruthin (via council website and print press)

Summary of resident/visitor survey

189 respondents accessed the resident/visitor survey. The sample size is smaller than in the July 2020 consultation (approximately 34% of July's total). Consideration should be given to the fact that some respondents may not be satisfied or dissatisfied enough with the temporary scheme to wish to pass comment on it.

Local Sustainable Transport response to Covid-19: 1st 'community monitoring report' for Ruthin

The responses that were provided were cross-referenced against the July 2020 consultation so that changes in the general mood can be mapped over time. Any follow-up surveys would need to allow for similar benchmarking to take place.

Respondents expressed majority support for most of the individual aims or elements of the scheme, including:

- Widening pavements has made social distancing easier, according to 63.16% of respondents
- Supporting cafes, pubs and restaurants to introduce outside seating has made the town feel more welcoming, according to 43.86% of respondents
- Introducing the one-way system in order to implement the other measures was an acceptable decision, according to 53.25% of respondents
- 58.37% of respondents said that they were accessing the town in safer ways or that they felt safer to access the town in the same ways

Some residents felt that other aims or elements of the scheme were not working well:

- The scheme had not encouraged more people to walk or cycle, according to 50.29% of respondents
- 46.47% of respondents felt that overall the scheme was not working well, compared to 38.82% of respondents who felt it was working well and 14.7% of respondents who felt it was too soon to day.

Point to note: in regard to the 'café culture' question, the largest percentage of respondents agreed that introducing outside seating had made the town more welcoming – however Wales has been in a national pandemic lockdown for most of the data collection period and the Council is unaware of any hospitality or similar businesses having been able to take advantage and actually implement these measures before requiring to close down in compliance with the law.

Resident/visitor survey comments

Approximately 40% of all respondents who provided comments to further clarify or refine their 'multiple choice' responses opted to provide comments that covered more than one of the following general categories:

- Positive comments, and where further specified, individual elements of the scheme
- Negative comments, and where further specified, individual elements of the scheme
- Neutral observations/suggestions, and where further specified, details.

Most commonly, combinations of comments were either positive statements combined with neutral observations/suggestions or negative statements combined with neutral observations/suggestions. Some respondents did leave comments which could be sorted into all 3 categories. The former

Overall, comments loosely mapped the 'tick box' answers with the biggest support being for: active travel generally; the one-way system; and widening the pavements to allow for better space for pedestrians – especially parents/carers of young children.

The biggest concerns around the scheme were: around the aesthetic of the temporary scheme (how it looked); road safety concerns – particularly in the one-way streets where the carriageway has effectively been widened for vehicles but also on the Square where several respondents mentioned that vehicles had been seen to bypass the roundabout; and concerns about the impact of the scheme on traders; and general concern about the impact/inconvenience for the traders on affected one-way routes.

Observations or suggestions that were considered neither positive nor negative (or did not relate directly to the scheme) included: suggestions for other active travel/road safety measures in the areas where the temporary scheme has been installed – such as a lower speed limit, or speed bumps; suggestions for other active travel/road safety work around the town and in the surrounding rural areas; and a suggestion that it was too soon to pass judgement on the effectiveness of the temporary scheme to date.

Summary of business survey

22 respondents accessed the business survey. There was not a separate survey for businesses in the July 2020 consultation however in this survey respondents were asked if they responded to the July consultation.

NOTE: due to the small response size it is not recommended to take the comments and views expressed below as representative of the general business community in Ruthin. A number of businesses have been unable to trade for the majority of the data collection period and planned engagement with them (hand-delivered letters and a chance to have a conversation with a Council officer about the scheme) were cancelled due to the ongoing lockdown and 'stay at home where possible' advice. Alternative provision to deliver letters via Royal Mail will be required for any further engagement relating to this temporary scheme, until further notice.

Not all of the 22 respondents answered each question. Overall:

- 11 respondents (64.71%) disagreed or strongly disagreed that widening pavements had made social distancing easier, and 6 respondents (35.29%) agreed or strongly agreed
- 3 respondents (50%) agreed or strongly agreed that the temporary measures had led to an increase in active travel, and 3 respondents (50%) disagreed or strongly disagreed
- 11 respondents (64.71%) disagreed or strongly disagreed that allowing some businesses to introduce outside seating would make Ruthin centre feel more welcoming, 5 respondents (29.41%) agreed or strongly agreed, and 1 respondent (5.89%) felt it was too soon to say
- 12 respondents (70.59%) disagreed or strongly disagreed with introducing a one-way system to enable to measures, 5 respondents (29.41%) agreed or strongly agreed
- 12 respondents (70.59%) felt the scheme had a negative impact on both their business and on Ruthin generally; 4 respondents (23.53%) felt the scheme had a positive impact on both their business and on Ruthin generally; and 1 respondent (5.88%) felt it had made no difference.

In terms of supportive comments: 2 respondents (15.38%) were generally supportive of the temporary scheme

In terms of negative comments: 8 comments concerned road safety issues (e.g. crossing safely, obstructions in the carriageway), 6 comments concerned the aesthetic of the scheme. All other comments received were from single respondents.

Appendices and further reading

Appendix 1 – detailed engagement data report for Ruthin