NTBCC Transport and Environment Committee Update – September 2024

Low Emission Zone

Since enforcement of the new LEZ commenced from 1 June 2024, nearly 12,000 penalty notices have been issued of which over 1000 are for second or subsequent contraventions. The Transport and Environment Committee as well as the full Council at their August meetings considered an update report. As a result, some further temporary local exemptions were agreed as well as agreement that surplus funds would be directed towards projects on the periphery of the LEZ. We submitted a deputation to highlight some continuing concerns regarding displacement of traffic into residential areas and lack of enforcement on routes without fixed ANPR cameras.

Transport and Environment Committee Meeting – 12 September 2024

This will be the first meeting under the new Convenor, Stephen Jenkinson, following the resignation of Scott Arthur. The committee will be considering a number of issues relevant to our community including:

- **Supported Bus Services:** The Business Bulletin confirms that the Council is planning to continue to support the number 13 bus service on its existing route. We posted a question on our website about use of this service which resulted in 14 responses. These will be included in a summary that will be provided to the Council. As well as expressing a wish for this service to be maintained, there were some very helpful suggestions to increase use of this service.
- **Draft Princes Street and Waverley Valley Strategy:** TEC along with the Planning Committee and Culture and Communities Committee will be considering a report seeking approval of the draft strategy prior to public consultation commencing later in the year.
- **George Street Project:** TEC will be asked to approve an update report on actions agreed at the May 2024 meeting, a revised operational plan and the start of work to remove parking on George Street. The report does provide an updated financial analysis which includes assumptions for greater footfall, reduced vacancy rates and use of some of the income from the Visitor Levy. We have a meeting with the project team on 10 September to review the latest proposals. **If we wish to make a deputation to the TEC, it will need to be a verbal one as there will be insufficient time to submit one in writing.**
- **Tables and Chairs Permits:** It is proposed to revise the guidance for all new and renewing applications for permits to maintain at least 1.5m free pavement width as required (as an absolute minimum) by ESDG. The report does not address the 3.0m pavement width required by ESDG for busy pedestrian streets but does highlight the potential loss of revenue to the Council of fewer permits being granted.

Communal Bin Review

As noted previously, we have been invited along with other community councils to a workshop on 16 September to discuss how **residential amenity** should be considered in the siting of communal bin hubs. As the bin hubs have been installed under permitted development rights, there has been no requirement to consider residential amenity in their siting as there would have been had they been subject to the planning process. With regard to planning applications, the current Local Development Plan - Policy Des 5 Development Design - Amenity states that:

> *Planning permission will be granted for development where it is demonstrated that:*
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> *a) the amenity of neighbouring developments is not adversely affected and that future occupiers have acceptable levels of amenity in relation to noise, daylight, sunlight, privacy or immediate outlook.*

Based on this definition of residential amenity, proximity of bin hubs to the residential properties should be one of the main issues in their placement. Given the potential for bin hubs to act a magnet for fly-tipping and vermin as well as smells associated with food waste, these are issues which should also be

considered. Pavement widths should at least meet the minimum requirements of the ESDG to ensure that there is safe access for pedestrians and wheelers.

At our meeting on Monday, it is important to understand your views on the above factors and any others which should be included in the assessment of bin hub sites so that I can represent these views at the workshop.

Traffic Regulation Orders

At the recent City of Edinburgh Council meeting, it was confirmed that Councillor Margaret Graham has been appointed as Convenor of the new Traffic Regulation Orders Sub-Committee following resignation of Councillor Scott Arthur.

There are two Experimental Traffic Regulation Orders (ETRO) in our area to which we have objected when they were introduced as Temporary Traffic Regulation Orders under the Spaces for People initiative during the pandemic.

One of the ETRO (21/28A) includes the temporary cycle path on the south side of London Road. We had raised concerns that this cycle path was not fit for purpose due to the three bus stops along this section of road and the lack of any connectivity with other cycle routes. The introduction of this cycle path has also resulted in the loss of parking spaces which were particularly used by buses and coaches dropping off people attending events at the Playhouse Theatre. These vehicles are being displaced to adjacent residential streets adding to the demand for parking on those streets and/or allowing passengers to disembark/embark on Baxter's Place causing additional congestion. **It is proposed that we issue a formal objection by the deadline of 28 October 2024 to the continuation of this ETRO highlighting the specific concerns we have raised previously.**

The second ETRO (21/27B) includes the measures introduced along the corridor from Canonmills to Picardy Place. We have previously stated that some of the changes are recognised as being beneficial to pedestrians and should be made permanent while other measures are detrimental to pedestrians and to businesses operating especially on Broughton Street. **It is proposed that we also issue a formal objection to the continuation of this ETRO, but this is less urgent as the deadline for comments is not until February 2025.**

We were notified that a new TRO (24/23) had been advertised to make changes in various CPZ (including Zone 5A and Zone 6 in our area) to accommodate the introduction of new bin hubs but there is no detail available on the Council website. We have requested clarification of the plans but as yet, have not received a response.

Prepared by Mike Birch
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6 September 2024