

BATH AND NORTH EAST SOMERSET

MINUTES OF CLIMATE EMERGENCY AND SUSTAINABILITY POLICY DEVELOPMENT AND SCRUTINY PANEL MEETING

Thursday, 11th January, 2024

Present:- **Councillors** Andy Wait, Michael Auton, Jess David, John Leach, Alex Beaumont, Saskia Heijltjes, Grant Johnson and Shaun Hughes (in place of June Player)

Apologies for absence: Councillors: Anna Box

35 WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS

The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting, including Councillors Manda Rigby and Joel Hirst who were joining the meeting remotely (*the Chair thanked officers for making this possible*).

36 EMERGENCY EVACUATION PROCEDURE

The Chair drew attention to the emergency evacuation procedure.

37 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE AND SUBSTITUTIONS

Councillor Player gave her apologies, she was substituted by Councillor Hughes.

Councillor Box gave her apologies

38 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were none.

39 TO ANNOUNCE ANY URGENT BUSINESS AGREED BY THE CHAIRMAN

There was none.

40 ITEMS FROM THE PUBLIC OR COUNCILLORS - TO RECEIVE STATEMENTS, PETITIONS OR QUESTIONS RELATING TO THE BUSINESS OF THIS MEETING

Mike Earle made a statement regarding 'The three initial trial Liveable Neighbourhood Schemes (LTNs) and the public availability of relevant data'.
A copy is attached to the minutes.

Cllr Duncan Hounsell - B&NES ward councillor (Saltford ward) made a statement on Liveable Neighbourhoods with reference to Queen Charlton.
A copy is attached to the minutes.

Adam Reynolds made a statement regarding 'Low Traffic Neighbourhoods'. *A copy is attached to the minutes.*

Ceris Humphreys made a statement regarding 'My experience of the area in which the New Sydney Place and Sydney Road Liveable Neighbourhood is proposed'.

Racheal Hushon regarding 'Liveable Neighbourhoods'. *A copy is attached to the minutes.*

Professor Christine Harrington made a statement regarding 'Liveable Neighbourhoods' - Lead Person of the New Sydney Place and Sydney Road Action Group, and author of the submission of the New Sydney Place LTN Proposal in February 2021. *A copy is attached to the minutes.*

Robert Hardman made a statement regarding 'Liveable Neighbourhoods - the one way system in Lyme gardens'

Malcolm Baldwin, Chair - Circus Area Residents Association made a statement regarding 'The importance and context of the Circus Area/Catharine Place Liveable Neighbourhood implementation'. *A copy is attached to the minutes.*

41 MINUTES

The Panel confirmed the minutes of the previous meeting as a true record and they were duly signed by the Chair.

42 CABINET MEMBER UPDATE

Councillor Sarah Warren, Deputy Council Leader (statutory) and Cabinet She explained that the Cabinet have been working on the Budget proposals; Economic Strategy; Local Plan and SVEZ (Somerset Valley Enterprise Zone) along with the following:

- Sustainable Transport – consultation on schemes
- Bid to WECA regarding EV (Electric Vehicle) charging
- Transport Plan
- Social prescribing – Active Way Project Somerset Valley
- Renewable Energy – 2 care homes have solar panels which makes 5 buildings this year and 12 on the Council Estate.
- Retro fit – 'Green Homes' event was run in November
- Heritage retrofit
- WECA rural funding – applications have just opened.

Panel member questions:

Councillor Heijltjes asked if EV (Electric Vehicle) charging would be on roads rather than pavements. The Executive Director - Sustainable Communities explained that

this would be explored with the provider – it will be a partnership and will depend on the location. There will be engagement with ward members.

Councillor Johnson asked about the capacity regarding EV charging – will people have to leave cars charging overnight, potentially in a different street. The Executive Director stated that this was a useful consideration.

Councillor Heijltjes asked for an update regarding on street parking for E bikes and E scooters. The Cabinet Member confirmed that an officer will be visiting her ward as introducing E bikes has changed the parking arrangement.

Councillor Johnson asked for an update regarding solar panels on maintained schools. The Executive Director stated that she would update the panel on the pipeline for this.

Councillor Wait updated the Panel regarding solar panels in Keynsham – there is a meeting next week on this.

Councillor Heijltjes asked if the Transport Action Plan could be added to the workplan for the Panel. She also asked if there could be a School Streets audit. The Cabinet Member stated that work is currently being carried out on School Streets. She agreed to the Transport Action Plan update for the Panel.

43 LIVEABLE NEIGHBOURHOODS UPDATE

The Cabinet Member for Highways - Councillor Manda Rigby and Cabinet Project Lead for Highways: Councillor Joel Hirst gave a presentation which covered the following:

- Liveable Neighbourhoods programme
- Liveable Neighbourhoods programme funding
- Existing Liveable Neighbourhood trial schemes
- Existing Liveable Neighbourhood trial schemes – key outcomes from surveys and monitoring
- Existing Liveable Neighbourhood trial schemes – some public comments
- Proposed Liveable Neighbourhood trial schemes for Spring 2024
- Development of the Full Business Case
- Future development of the Liveable Neighbourhoods programme

Panel members raised the following points and asked the following questions:

Councillor Leach stated that Liveable Neighbourhood schemes must be well designed so that they do not have to be reversed. He asked how the preliminary designs are put together after the co-design workshops with residents. The Cabinet Member explained that the original suggestions come from the community which is then put through Highways Engineers and our consultants.

Councillor Heijltjes asked what the point of the scrutiny session is if the Single Member Decision will be made tomorrow. She asked that the decisions go to the Cabinet and that the business case be shared with the Panel. The Cabinet Member

stated that the Panel are scrutinising whether the Cabinet are doing things in line with what was laid out, individual decisions on separate schemes were not planned to come to the Panel.

Councillor Johnson (Paulton ward) stated that he did not know Bath as well as some others so it would have been useful to see some more detail (maps) showing before and after data from the current trials. The Cabinet Member stated that the Panel are checking that plans are in line with policies that have already been decided and stated that all information will be available on the website regarding the Single Member Decisions.

Councillor David explained that she had been involved in some community work which had identified a crossing point/traffic calming/pavement widening and asked if this type of work would still be taken forward if there are funding methods available. The Cabinet Member stated that none of the community work would be wasted and it is identifying funding streams that is the key determinant. Some of the schemes score highly due to the traffic restriction criteria. She stated that maybe some unspent money could forward such schemes. The overarching policy was about health and wellbeing and making it easier to walk and cycle.

Councillor Leach asked if several designs were considered for each scheme. The Cabinet Member explained that the officers and consultants got a shopping list of potential interventions. They did not have a 2/3 year period to look at every scheme possible. With the ETRO's – the trial is, in effect part of the consultation. We have done all we can to take in all evidence and tweaks can be made to the schemes on the ground.

Councillor Leach asked if other options were considered where modal filter location options were assessed. The Director of Place Management explained that the officers and consultants consider the best area for the modal filter based on feedback from the community.

Councillor Heijltjes stated that some of the 15 schemes include through traffic restrictions (eg Lyme Gardens) and other do not. The Cabinet Project Lead stated that the Lyme Gardens scheme is a proposal as part of a bigger piece. He stated that he is keen to explore the 'school street' element. Not all schemes could be worked up in the time so schemes that were deliverable in the timeline were identified. We tried to include a range of geographies.

Councillor Hughes asked if the Cabinet Member was happy with engagement in terms of the consultation response being balanced between residents and those living in areas of displacement. The Cabinet Member stated that some people will say we do too much engagement and others say not enough. We went out of our way to have drop-in sessions. We decided to go down the trial route which in effect is the consultation. We have to balance the responses such as the comparison between somebody having to drive 3 minutes longer and health and safety of the wider area.

Councillor Leach asked about the level of traffic analysis for each of the designs. Cathryn Brown - Senior Project Manager, explained that in the wider Liveable Neighbourhoods scheme the approach has been the trial and monitoring. Some have

had baseline monitoring before a pilot and then continued monitoring to allow comparison.

It was explained that Councillor Leach's further questions (with answers supplied by officers and the Cabinet Member) would be circulated to Panel members and appended to the minutes.

Councillor Heijltjes asked if the circulation plans could be brought to the Panel.

44 DEVELOPMENT OF DRAFT BUDGET 2024/25 - PROPOSALS WITHIN PUBLIC CONSULTATION (RELEVANT TO THE PANEL REMIT)

The Deputy Council Leader (statutory) and Cabinet Member for Climate Emergency and Sustainable Travel - Councillor Sarah Warren and the Cabinet Member for Highways - Councillor Manda Rigby introduced the item and answered the Panel questions along with Sophie Broadfield - Executive Director of Sustainable Communities and Chris Major – Director of Place Management.

Councillor Warren stated that local government is facing challenges in managing intense pressures on budgets and recently a number of councils have issued S114 notices. In 2013 our Revenue Support Grant from central government was £31m, this year, it's £800k. She explained that we can bid for government grants for one-off specific purposes but this involves working up competitive bids which takes a lot of officer time, and makes it difficult to plan. The pressures on spending, particularly in social care (statutory service), accounts for a large portion of the budget. This means discretionary areas - such as Green Transformation – have less available.

Councillor Warren stated that on Green Transformation - the proposed budget for next year we will sustain levels of funding to support the corporate priority on climate and ecological emergencies. Many of the new posts across Green Transformation and Strategic Transport teams are in place. She stated that the Council will: invest in renewable energy generating infrastructure on the Council estate, contributing to our 12MW target for Council-generated energy; work with partners to develop new renewables projects contributing to our district-level targets of an additional 300MW generating capacity by 2030; work with WECA and with local partners to support scale up of retrofit activity across the district; increase work with communities to raise awareness and support local action for climate and nature; implement biodiversity net gain through the planning system and continue to take action on sustainable transport.

(Delivery of significant improvements in public transport infrastructure through the City Region Sustainable Transport Settlement, A4 Bristol to Bath Corridor and Somer Valley Links projects. Developing an active travel masterplan to help shape and inform future roll out of active travel infrastructure. Working with the combined authority to develop and deliver electric vehicle charging points across the district. Earmarking £2m of our CAZ reserve to commence the build out of the Scholars' way cycle route, as well as a supplement for local highways improvement schemes

aiming to improve pedestrian safety around the district in support of our recent vision zero declaration).

Panel members raised the following points and asked the following questions:

Councillor David asked if there was any more information regarding the parks teams' operational strategy. The officer commented that the importance of open spaces is acknowledged, however these spaces cost £2.5m per year to maintain and a few options are being considered that would save money – this would be a small percentage of the overall spend. He further explained that the entirety of the model will be looked at and there may be some tough decisions regarding future development but there is a recognition of the importance of green spaces. He agreed to give the panel more information on the review.

Councillor Johnson asked about the additional top up payments regarding WECA and strategic transport. The Executive Director explained that there is a proposal to not provide the uplift to the transport levy as was done last year in recognition of the significant underspend regarding concessionary fares. The Cabinet Member added that she will continue to lobby the WECA Mayor to restore bus services. The Executive Director explained that it was a decision for the WECA Mayor on how to spend the top up.

Councillor Hughes asked about proposed changes to recycling centre opening times. The officer explained that there is consultation on a proposal to reduce opening hours in terms of opening on certain days of the week (while the Pixash site would remain open 7 days per week). He stated that there may be a reduction in hours to certain sites but that this is not a redundancy issue as there would be reallocation to other sites. He explained that the booking system works well and people will book on the days where sites are available (or if they have an urgent issues, use the Pixash site). He assured the Panel that there is still capacity to maintain the number of bookings and that this model is mirrored in other authorities.

Councillor Rigby – Cabinet Member for Highways – explained that there are two major proposals under this portfolio as set out below:

- Line painting – we have assets that require investment. We have fallen behind on resurfacing, potholes, line painting etc. and are trying to get back to a certain level. Health and safety is the priority regarding the programme.
- Extending emissions-based parking charges to other authority car parks. This is the sliding scale regarding car emissions. There are currently no charges in some car parks within the authority. She stated that there is a need to make places healthier and safer and offering free parking does not help us to maintain the asset. She stated that a turnover of car parking spaces is good for the high street. This is an extension of the principle in Bath of 'polluter pays'. She ended by stating that very few places up and down the country offer free parking.

Panel members raised the following points and asked the following questions:

Councillor Johnson stated that this is a U-turn on a decision on parking charges from 2 years ago. He stated that the arguments are counterproductive – parking is

restricted to 4/5 hours anyway, so people do not park all day every day. He added that the high street is fragile and charges would make this situation worse. He asked where there was detailed research as to why this should happen. The officer stated that there is limited data around overstays where there are no charges in the car park. It is difficult to prove a negative. He stated that there was formal consultation.

Councillor Hughes stated that Midsomer Norton high street cannot be compared to Keynsham high street where there has been significant investment to improve footfall. Bath also has a lot of money spent on it and by comparison, Midsomer Norton is neglected and some businesses will not survive. People will park in the Tesco car park which offers free parking. He added that there is not an issue with air pollution in Midsomer Norton and that cars are often a necessity and not a luxury. The Cabinet Member stated that she did not compare Midsomer Norton to Keynsham. She explained that the authority is under significant financial pressure and therefore has to look at all of its assets. We also want to reduce emissions and we want to be fair and equitable across the whole authority. She stated that communities will be listened to and this is being consulted on. Councillor Wait pointed out that car parking charges were in place in Keynsham before the developments in the high street and that there is a small car park in Keynsham which is free for two hours.

Councillor Leach stated that, in speaking to many residents in his ward, he had picked up a lot of support for emissions-based parking charges.

Councillor Auton stated that he shared the frustrations of the Councillors speaking on this issue and thought it was very important for towns to have free parking. He explained that he had spent 3 mornings and spoken to 80 people on the parking issue. 80% of those people were parking for less than 2 hours. He stated that if there must be charges, would the Cabinet consider allowing the first 2 hours free of charge. He stated that he is concerned about the impact on businesses and asked if there could be a permit for staff to park for the day. The Cabinet Member thanked Councillor Auton for his work in speaking to people about this and agreed that this could be discussed. She explained that there would be a TRO and full consultation and there could be a discussion on how to structure charges. Councillor Wait stated that, in Keynsham there was currently 30 minutes free parking.

Councillor Hughes stated emissions-based parking charges may work in Bath but he saw the method as punishing the poorest in Midsomer Norton.

Councillor Johnson asked about the 'TBC' in Annex 3 and also asked if a Housing Revenue Account was needed if the authority builds 300 houses. The Executive Director stated that she would get further information regarding the 'TBC' and that yes, the Council is committed to expand Council House building and confirmed that a Housing Revenue Account is needed over a certain number of houses.

45 PANEL WORKPLAN

The Scrutiny Officer Ceri Williams updated the Panel on the progress in the Task group.

The Panel noted the future workplan with the following suggested additions:

- Transport Action Plan
- Circulation Plan

A site visit to Pixash Recycling site was discussed. The local Councillors group will extend the invite to Panel members.

The meeting ended at 12.24 pm

Chair(person)

Date Confirmed and Signed

Prepared by Democratic Services

Proposal to install a modal filter on Sydney Road at the junction with (New) Sydney Place through an ETRO

I represent more than 70 households along and around New Sydney Place and Sydney Road, where large numbers of vehicles run to avoid the main A36. Life is intolerably unsafe and unhealthy for those who move around this area, including the elderly, disabled, children and visitors to Sydney Gardens.

We absolutely endorse B&NES proposal to create a modal filter on Sydney Road through an ETRO for the following reasons:

- Our Liveable Neighbourhood (LN) vision **aligns perfectly with B&NES' climate emergency plans**:
 - It **prioritises the public realm**, active travel, pedestrians, and cyclists over cars.
 - It **meets the recommendation that LNs should ideally be bordered by a main road** (i.e. A36).
- When progressed to significant community consultation, we had very high participation from a wide area, and the **highest percentage of support for an LN in Bath**.

Substantial recent and earlier evidence highlights the **need for an intervention**.

- For example, as early as 2003 the report from the three-year Sydney Gardens Traffic Scheme public consultation stated:

“The area is highly residential with recreational facilities...The speed and traffic volume on Sydney Road/ Sydney Place East (New Sydney Place) is considered to be unacceptable for the environment in this area. Pedestrian movement is impeded greatly by the impact of traffic. Measures to reduce this impact will be of clear benefit to both residents and pedestrians...” (2003, SGTSR)
- Many of the measures were not implemented.
- Twenty years later our area suffers from **excessive local and through-traffic**, which frequently travels at dangerous and life-threatening speeds in both directions to avoid the lights on the A36. (Only this week, a speeding, bouncing flatbed truck ‘threw out’ sheets of plywood that smashed the back of a parked car – fortunately not killing anyone.)

Objections now are hypothetical.

- Some drivers, most of whom do not live in our neighbourhood, object strongly to travelling the same distance round the other side of Sydney Gardens (which may take 60 seconds longer if lights are red).
- These objections must not override the **importance of this proposal** to the lives of our residents, pedestrians, and cyclists. Signage, Speedwatch (abandoned

because of the abuse), school children on outings, and the disabled with walking aids make no difference to drivers in a hurry.

- **The trial period would monitor and assess traffic behaviours.** The current concerns of residents in neighbouring roads would be carefully observed and any negative impacts addressed during the process.
- When our road is closed for film making, we monitored the traffic flowing freely along the A36. **Drivers adapt to new patterns**, as seen in established LNs.

With the negative publicity on our own government's watering down of climate change targets, **we urge councillors to vote through this environmentally significant proposal** that is part of B&NES bigger vision for Bath.

Prof Chrissie Harrington.

NB. The attached document shows 2 graphs. The first is evidence of our community traffic count comparing New Sydney Place/Sydney Road with the A36 in 2022 and shows the significant displacement of traffic onto our road. The second graph provides evidence of the highest level of support for an LN in New Sydney Place and Sydney Road in B&NES 2021 LN Consultation.

For the history, context, LN Submission, consultations etc., please see www.newsydneypplace.co.uk

Climate Scrutiny Panel - 11th January 2024

The £7.2m BaNES Liveable Neighbourhoods program is identified in the 6th October 2023 WECA Transport Report as the B&NES LTN (Low Traffic Neighbourhood) Program and is marked for completion by May 2026.

		OBC		FBC		Construction	
		Base	Revised	Base	Revised	Base	Revised
SGC LTN Yate	SGC	N/A	Skip	Oct 2025	Oct 2025	Sept 2025	Oct 2026
B&NES LTN	B&NES	N/A	Skip	Aug 2022	Feb 2024	Mar 2025	May 2026

[WEST OF ENGLAND MAYORAL COMBINED AUTHORITY COMMITTEE DATE: 6 OCTOBER 2023
REPORT TITLE: TRANSPORT INFRASTRUCTURE PR](https://westofengland-ca.moderngov.co.uk/documents/s7333/06.%204DG%20Transport%20Infrastructure%200DG%20Final.pdf)

[\[https://westofengland-ca.moderngov.co.uk/documents/s7333/06.%204DG%20Transport%20Infrastructure%200DG%20Final.pdf\]](https://westofengland-ca.moderngov.co.uk/documents/s7333/06.%204DG%20Transport%20Infrastructure%200DG%20Final.pdf))

Given Experimental Traffic Regulation Order trials (ETROs) typically run for 12 months, and allowing a short time for physical on-site works, **by Q1 2025, all BaNES LTN ETRO trials need to have started.**

The BaNES Liveable Neighbourhood program launched in 2021 and has delivered three trials in 3 years. It has now announced 4 more LTNs. The CRSTS1 program ends March 2027. Any unspent funds are required to be returned to the DfT. It is very much a 'use it or lose it' situation. It is unclear that the council is capable of spending the available DfT funding by then.

At the 6th October 2023 WECA Committee meeting I highlighted certain elements of the CRSTS1 program that are high risk. These include the M32 Sustainable Transport Corridor cancellation which alone is likely to release some £47.72M This gives BaNES council opportunities to get "a bigger share of the CRSTS1 pie" as WECA begins scrambling round to find shovel ready schemes in late 2025 to ensure that it doesn't return money to the DfT thereby potentially adversely impacting its CRSTS2 (2027-2032) allocation.

The concerns that the panel is invited to address or raise with council officials are:

- 1) Ensure the administration launches at least 10 LTN trials by the end of April 2024. It is generally recommended that trials start in spring so residents experience them over the summer.
- 2) Require a spending road map from the administration to ensure that £7.2m is spent by May 2026 with the ability to accelerate delivery to take advantage of high risk CRSTS1 elements likely to be cancelled. Commit to 15 LTN trials, but have **all** 24 outstanding LTN candidates 'shovel ready'.
- 3) Implement a less onerous LTN delivery pipeline. ETROs are a recognised form of public consultation. The administration's costly LTN over-consultation is creating risk to the implementation "burn rate".
- 4) CRSTS2 runs April 2027 to March 2032 and will include an LTN program. Recognise the council has an 8 year LTN delivery program, not one that ends in May 2026, and this needs clearly communicating and planning for at all levels within the council and the public.

LTNs truly transform residential areas and increase travel choices for all ages and abilities, particularly giving children travel independence. Let us collectively do our very best to ensure we implement as many as we can within current resources and ensure best use is made of all available funding.

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Queen Charlton village set to be free from “rat running” forever

Preventing “rat-running” through Queen Charlton village was included in a raft of flagship “Liveable Neighbourhood Schemes” proposed at the B&NES Council cabinet meeting on 23rd June 2021. The Queen Charlton scheme addressed problems arising from through traffic in this small village which has no pavements and one street light on the main road. Problems such as speeding, and lack of pedestrian safety. Project design and public consultation in 2022 were undertaken ahead of a 6-month experimental traffic regulation order. The scheme was monitored “live” and reviewed ahead of a decision expected soon about making the scheme permanent.

The single road through Queen Charlton village is not closed. To be clear - the approach road from Charlton Road is open to all vehicles and the section from Queen Charlton through to Whitchurch is open too— but open to pedestrians, cyclists, and horse-riders but not to motor vehicles. 78% of respondents to a public consultation on this ETRO while “live” expressed SUPPORT including comments about the area feeling safer especially for children and the elderly and that it was more pleasant for walking and cycling.

“Having been a runner and now active walker I have used Queen Charlton Lane for over 40 years, and it has become more dangerous for pedestrians due to excessive speed. Since the road closure it is a joy to walk without the fear of speeding cars. I walk the lane every day and hope the trial becomes permanent.”

“It has made an immediately noticeable difference by eliminating through traffic. I commute by cycle, and it now feels much safer, no longer used by cars travelling up to 60mph as a short cut from the main road.”

What has been the effect on the wider area? A study shows that *“the through-traffic restriction trial has significantly reduced traffic along Queen Charlton Lane and encouraged an uplift in active travel along this route, including walking and cycling. While the data shows that traffic on the principal alternative routes to Queen Charlton Lane has increased this is to be expected as the purpose of trial was to encourage commuter traffic to stay on the main roads. While the increase is not insignificant, it is felt that a considerable proportion of that change may be reflecting a general increase in traffic. It is therefore difficult to draw a definitive conclusion on the impact of the trial itself on these alternative routes. On balance, it appears that the volume of displaced traffic is relatively modest.”*

I would add that any increase in volumes on alternative roads is well within the capacities of those roads and junctions.

A Queen Charlton resident said to me *“This scheme has transformed our lives.”*

Whilst this LN scheme is different to urban schemes, I hope that this positive experience can reassure residents in other areas that their local LN scheme can also have profound benefits which become clearer over time.

I urge that the Queen Charlton ETRO be made permanent.

END

Cllr Duncan Hounsell
January 2024

- I am here as the coordinator of a Community Speedwatch Team, we conduct speedwatch sessions on Winifred's Lane and Cavendish Road in Lower Lansdown
- Before I begin I want to acknowledge that the subject of Liveable Neighbourhood traffic planning polarises opinion. There are residents who will accept a small amount of motoring inconvenience and there are some who want no change. I accept that this is a difficult situation for the Council and can only refer to the Council's policy objectives.
- In addition the Adopted Local Plan Partial Update policy SB24 details the requirement for traffic reduction and calming in our area at policy 220L. This is a statutory document.
- Our group formed following a serious collision which occurred at Cavendish Place several years ago. Cavendish Road is used as a rat run for traffic which has made it unsafe for local users of the road. Normally we see volumes of up to 400 per hour at peak times.
- At that time 656 residents in the area signed a petition calling for calmer streets in the Lansdown Area.
- There has been an extensive LN consultation process and design workshops which produced a significant level of support for interventions to be trialled in the area.
- Our Group now supports the proposed ETRO for Lower Lansdown, we support the trial because in our opinion after conducting sessions and observing the through traffic behaviour and volume we expect more accidents to occur if traffic is not reduced and calmed.
- The traffic volumes have increased and speeds are faster, (including larger vehicles).
- The speed limit of 20 mph is being violated to dangerous levels on Cavendish Road
- Children's walking and cycling routes to school are worsened by this situation
- The roads affected have many multiple occupancy flats, close to the roads, few with off street parking. Whilst there are a small number of single occupancy homes there are many private rented flats on the actual affected roads.
- Several factors are impacting and will impact further on the use of Cavendish Road if we do nothing
 - The Queen Square management has displaced north/south traffic into our area
 - Sat Navs are showing our local streets as fastest route into/out of town and to the Royal Crescent and Charlotte Street car park
 - Cavendish Road is an attractive/fast route for rat running.
- We believe that change is long overdue, the trial is a reasonable way of getting this positive change for the area.

Thank you for your time.

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Malcolm Baldwin statement – 11th January 2024 CES meeting.

The importance and context of the Circus Area/Catharine Place Liveable Neighbourhood implementation.

Good morning.

Chair and members of the Scrutiny Committee thank you for this opportunity of speaking to you again following my attendance and presentation at your Scrutiny Committee of September 2023 [see Appendix below].

Out of respect for the importance of the role of this particular Committee, I was conscious that in September it was not possible for me to comment upon the actual detail of our local community's LN proposals. Those proposals related to a much consulted upon and meaningful Liveable Neighbourhood within our Circus catchment area, which for all practical purposes also includes the neighbouring location of Catharine Place.

Indeed, let me first take this opportunity of apologising to members who may have, on that occasion, requested more detailed responses from me to their enquiries relating to potential individual street interventions within our proposals.

I felt at that time that awaiting a decision from our Highways Department on which elements of our overall proposals they might judge realistic to carry forward, within the likely constraints of financial and budgetary considerations, was a more prudent approach.

The above being said, I wanted today to take the opportunity to briefly re-emphasise both the importance and context of the recently announced proposals by our Council in relation to our Circus area and Catharine Place, as jointly they reflect an important element within the next suggested phase in our city's Liveable Neighbourhoods implementation.

Also, in fairness to this Committee and its members to put myself up for scrutiny if you have any more detailed questions specific to the recently announced LN proposals, as they importantly relate in their context to our CARA area.

Hence, in summary, the importance and context of the recently announced proposals:

- For CARA, the rationale for LNs has never been about mere traffic interventions.
- We have never adopted the view that our local Council should do everything for us.
- We have initiated significant public realm improvements in key areas of our catchment area, in particularly the last two/three years, in Margaret's Buildings and Julian Road and now are additionally focused on similar improvements in Saville Row and Bartlett Street.....all aspects of our public realm are included in this improvement process. (Note: Improved traffic management is an additional important part of this process).
- Our catchment area represents the second most significant visitor heritage attraction in our city * and the dangers in potential 'over-tourism' need urgent action to 'disentangle' significant levels of this visitor footfall from the toxic mix of excessive and often speeding rat-running and indeed from some more general traffic flows.

This 'disentangling' of excessive and toxic traffic movements will create a greatly more benign environment for pedestrians and cyclists alike.

- Our proposals, of which the two most important elements are reflected in the Council's most recent LN announcements, have always represented a meaningful, benign but relatively low-cost intervention.

- The nature of the significant heritage aspects of our catchment area, with its continually increasing local Bath-based and general tourist footfall, means that the improvement values delivered by these current proposals will be enhancements not just on a local basis but for our city as a whole.

I hope that, perhaps even on a 'multi-partisan' basis, this Committee can endorse the LN proposals for our CARA catchment area and encourage the turbo-charging of their implementation.

I recognise that we are not quite 'over the line' yet but the work of Highways officers and key councillors, such as in particular, Cllr. Joel Hirst and Cllr. Manda Rigby and her team has been exemplary to date.

Let's support them in getting this particular proposal over that line for the benefit of our city as a whole. That's what has always differentiated CARA's Liveable Neighbourhood proposals from others it adds real value not just to our local area but to our city as a whole!

* Included in CARA's catchment area:

The Circus.

The Assembly Rooms.

The main route from the city to the Royal Crescent (via 'upper' Gay Street or Bartlett Street).

The main route from the city to the city's parks area (via 'upper' Gay Street or Bartlett Street).

Malcolm Baldwin.

Chair - Circus Area Residents Association (CARA).

JL's PDS Meeting LN Update Questions

1. CE&S PDS Meeting of 11 Jan 2024

An update on the B&NES LN programme was presented to the CE&S PDS Panel at its meeting in Keynsham on 11/01/24.

What happened with the early LTNs implemented in London from 2020 onwards showed that, to be successful, LTNs need to be designed with care. I am not sure we are there yet with the LNs we are going ahead with here in B&NES. I had a number of questions on the process B&NES has followed for designing its LN schemes, some of which I was able to ask at the PDS meeting within the time available. The remaining questions will be answered by email and both the questions and answers will become part of the public record of the meeting.

My questions plus the answers where provided at the meeting are as follows.

Question 1 – How and by whom were the preliminary designs for each LN produced? The co-design workshops with local residents indicated residents' desires and requirements. But residents are not Traffic Engineers; I understand that the output from each of those workshops was interpreted as statements of requirement, at best as design suggestions, but not as preliminary designs themselves. Who took the output from each co-design workshop and came up with each of the preliminary designs proposed for these LNs?

Answer 1 – it was a combination of officers and contract engineers together.

Question 2 – I have received conflicting answers in the past when I have asked whether preliminary designs were produced by the contract engineers or by Council officers or by Council members. In a conversation I had in early December 2023 with the contract engineers about the Walcot LN preliminary design, the engineers said they were not tasked with producing that preliminary design but were presented with it by officers. In a subsequent meeting I had with the Cabinet Member later in December 2023, she said that it was the engineers who had produced the preliminary design. May I see a copy of the Schedule or Scope of Work covering the work the contract engineers were asked to undertake by B&NES for their part of the B&NES LN Programme? I do not need to see any commercially confidential aspects of the contract, just the specification of the work the contract engineers were asked to undertake.

Answer 2 – a response will be provided within five working days.

Question 3 – were the contract engineers asked to consider alternative possible preliminary designs and were the contract engineers or anyone else tasked with performing a comparative analysis of different possible preliminary designs for each LN?

Answer 3 – For each LN, the preliminary design chosen was the one judged to have the most suitable location for the primary intervention (usually the modal filter).

JL's PDS Meeting LN Update Questions

Question 4 – were the contract engineers or anyone else tasked with doing any traffic analysis or traffic impact assessment for the proposed preliminary or final designs for each LN?

Answer 4 – No. The approach is to collect traffic data beforehand and traffic data afterwards and assess the traffic impact from the data.

Question 5 – were the contract engineers or anyone else tasked with doing an Equality Impact Assessment for the proposed preliminary or final designs for each LN?

Question 6 – were the final designs subject to consultation with and/or signed off by suitable representatives of disabled residents?

Question 7 – were the final designs subject to consultation with and/or signed off by the emergency services?

Question 8 – were the final designs subject to consultation with the local residents who would be affected by each design?

Question 9 – given the lack of analysis of, and consultation on, the final designs, does the Cabinet Member consider it appropriate that these designs should be implemented using ETROs? The ETRO process essentially treats residents as guinea pigs in order to find out what the consequences, intended and unintended, of each design on residents' lives and wellbeing might be?

Question 10 – if it turns out that a design has hugely harmful unintended consequences on local residents, is there a way that the ETRO could be terminated before the minimum term of six months has expired, or would residents be forced to suffer those consequences for at least six months regardless of their severity?

Question 11 – In para 2.12 onwards you say that engagement has taken place with ward members for each of the remaining LN areas to help you understand the issues these designs might create. What was the purpose of that engagement: was it just to identify those issues, to modify the designs to address or minimise the adverse impacts identified, to deprioritise those LNs that might have significant issues associated with them, or something else?

JL's PDS Meeting LN Update Questions

1. CE&S PDS Meeting of 11 Jan 2024

An update on the B&NES LN programme was presented to the CE&S PDS Panel at its meeting in Keynsham on 11/01/24.

What happened with the early LTNs implemented in London from 2020 onwards showed that, to be successful, LTNs need to be designed with care. I am not sure we are there yet with the LTNs we are going ahead with here in B&NES. I had a number of questions on the process B&NES has followed for designing its LN schemes, some of which I was able to ask at the PDS meeting within the time available. The remaining questions will be answered by email and both the questions and answers will become part of the public record of the meeting.

For the five proposed LN ETROs in 2024:

Yes, specifically at the request of Members, the Project Team identified measures originating from the co-design workshops which were appropriate for ETROs and then instructed our consultants, in consultation with Highways colleagues, to create preliminary designs. This has been a significant piece of work conducted over the last quarter.

For the wider LN schemes:

The Project Team identified measures originating from the co-design workshops and then instructed our consultants, in consultation with Highways colleagues, to create preliminary designs.

Question 2 – I have received conflicting answers in the past when I have asked whether preliminary designs were produced by the contract engineers or by Council officers or by Council members. In a conversation I had in early December 2023 with the contract engineers about the Walcot LN preliminary design, the engineers said they were not tasked with producing that preliminary design but were presented with it by officers. In a subsequent meeting I had with the Cabinet Member later in December 2023, she said that it was the engineers who had produced the preliminary design. May I see a copy of the Schedule or Scope of Work covering the work the contract engineers were asked to undertake by B&NES for their part of the B&NES LN Programme? I do not need to see any commercially confidential aspects of the contract, just the specification of the work the contract engineers were asked to undertake.

JL's PDS Meeting LN Update Questions

The Councill Officer Project Team worked closely with consulting engineers to identify possible measures for inclusion in the preliminary designs for the Walcot LN. Based on the co-design output and a technical review, residents' priorities were shortlisted and developed into outline sketches along with the ward members. These were developed into preliminary designs by our consultants.

The preliminary design was based on a shortlist of measures. This SM decision has now been postponed until the FBC is approved. However, the shortlist formed the scope of work for the engineers who continue to work very closely with our project and highways teams, and who have also been integral to delivering the community engagement throughout the project (since 2021).

Question 3 – were the contract engineers asked to consider alternative possible preliminary designs and were the contract engineers or anyone else tasked with performing a comparative analysis of different possible preliminary designs for each LN?

Yes, alternative designs have been considered. As part of this, the benefits and dis-benefits of each design have been discussed.

Question 4 – were the contract engineers or anyone else tasked with doing any traffic analysis or traffic impact assessment for the proposed preliminary or final designs for each LN?

No. This is because the decision was taken early on in the project to adopt a “consult, design, test, monitor, decide” delivery model, rather than a “design, predict, provide” delivery model.

Question 5 – were the contract engineers or anyone else tasked with doing an Equality Impact Assessment for the proposed preliminary or final designs for each LN?

For the five proposed LN ETROs in 2024:

Equality issues have been considered throughout the design process. There is an overarching EQuiA for the project which underpins the whole project, and it has recently been updated.

JL's PDS Meeting LN Update Questions

Question 6 – were the final designs subject to consultation with and/or signed off by suitable representatives of disabled residents?

For the five proposed LN ETROs in 2024:

Equality issues have been considered throughout the design process. Should the trials go ahead, then individual EQulAs for the 5 schemes will be developed and consultation with groups through the Independent Equality Advisory Group will take place. You can find out more about how we ensure inclusive designs at our LN website at www.bathnes.gov.uk/liveableneighbourhoods (See Approach to developing LNs)

Question 7 – were the final designs subject to consultation with and/or signed off by the emergency services?

For the five proposed LN ETROs in 2024:

Emergency access has been considered throughout the design process and we have discussed the trials with representatives from Avon Fire and Rescue and SWAST, which resulted in us in making some small changes to the proposed designs. Further consultation will happen should the trials go ahead.

For the wider LN schemes:

Not formally at this stage as the designs are not finalised and the FBC has not been approved. Once these have been submitted as part of the FBC and approval given, consultation will take place.

Question 8 – were the final designs subject to consultation with the local residents who would be affected by each design?

For the five proposed LN ETROs in 2024:

*We took the decision to go straight to experimental trials after consulting on the design with highways and emergency services and ensuring that the designs aligned with the sentiments expressed at co-design and in earlier consultations. They aim to address issues that we know people in the area feel strongly about, and they are technically sound. **It is essentially a six-month consultation.***

JL's PDS Meeting LN Update Questions

During the trial we would monitor traffic and air quality impacts. In this way we can allow people to get used to change and draw on a range of evidence before deciding whether to make schemes permanent or not.

For the wider LN schemes:

Not formally at this stage as the designs are not finalised and the FBC has not been approved. Once these have been submitted as part of the FBC and approval given, consultation will take place.

Question 9 – given the lack of analysis of, and consultation on, the final designs, does the Cabinet Member consider it appropriate that these designs should be implemented using ETROs? The ETRO process essentially treats residents as guinea pigs in order to find out what the consequences, intended and unintended, of each design on residents' lives and wellbeing might be?

The ETRO process is designed to do "learning by doing" We have consulted our highways team and the emergency services on the design, and our team of engineers work to national and local design standards, including government best-practice guidance on inclusive mobility.

The aim of introducing a trial scheme is to allow people to experience the change (both positive and negative) over a six-month period before we decide whether to make it permanent. We can also monitor the impact on traffic and air quality to ensure our decision is based on evidence. Fear of change is common, and people's views can often change once they have experienced and become used to the change being proposed.

Question 10 – if it turns out that a design has hugely harmful unintended consequences on local residents, is there a way that the ETRO could be terminated before the minimum term of six months has expired, or would residents be forced to suffer those consequences for at least six months regardless of their severity?

No, it takes a minimum of 6 months for the behaviour to change and to get enough data to evaluate the impact of the interventions.

JL's PDS Meeting LN Update Questions

Question 11 – In para 2.12 onwards you say that engagement has taken place with ward members for each of the remaining LN areas to help you understand the issues these designs might create. What was the purpose of that engagement: was it just to identify those issues, to modify the designs to address or minimise the adverse impacts identified, to deprioritise those LNs that might have significant issues associated with them, or something else?

The purpose of the engagement with ward members was to “test the temperature” of the elected ward members of public perceptions of the draft designs, to help prioritise what interventions should be included in the FBC with the limited resources we know are available. All the feedback from ward members was reflected on carefully.

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JL's PDS Meeting LN Update Questions

1. CE&S PDS Meeting of 11 Jan 2024

An update on the B&NES LN programme was presented to the CE&S PDS Panel at its meeting in Keynsham on 11/01/24.

What happened with the early LTNs implemented in London from 2020 onwards showed that, to be successful, LTNs need to be designed with care. I am not sure we are there yet with the LTNs we are taking forward here in B&NES. I tabled a number of questions to the meeting on the process B&NES follows for designing its LN schemes. The first four of my questions I was able to ask at the PDS meeting within the time available. The remaining questions were answered in writing and I was assured that both the questions and answers would become part of the public record of the meeting.

My questions, the answers provided at the meeting, the official answers provided subsequently in writing by Cllr Manda Rigby dated 31/01/2024, my understanding from those answers and my current position on each issue are as follows.

Question 1

How and by whom were the preliminary designs for each LN produced? The co-design workshops with local residents indicated residents' desires and requirements. But residents are not Traffic Engineers; I understand that the output from each of those workshops was interpreted as statements of requirement, at best as design suggestions, but not as preliminary designs themselves. Who took the output from each co-design workshop and came up with each of the preliminary designs proposed for these LTNs?

Verbal answer in the meeting – it was a combination of officers and contract engineers together.

Official written response:

For the five proposed LN ETROs in 2024:

Yes, specifically at the request of Members, the Project Team identified measures originating from the co-design workshops which were appropriate for ETROs and then instructed our consultants, in consultation with Highways colleagues, to create preliminary designs. This has been a significant piece of work conducted over the last quarter.

For the wider LN schemes:

The Project Team identified measures originating from the co-design workshops and then instructed our consultants, in consultation with Highways colleagues, to create preliminary designs.

JL's PDS Meeting LN Update Questions

JL understanding from the written response – the Project Team (i.e. officers) identified measures originating from the co-design workshops and then instructed the consultants to work with Highways to create preliminary designs.

JL position – This depends on what “identified measures” means. If it means the officers identified the means of intervention and the locations of those interventions, then it agrees with what the consultant engineers told me when I asked them this question in December 2023. If it means the officers identified objectives (e.g. “stop rat running on this named street”) but not the means by which those objectives would be met, or identified the means but not the specific locations of those means, then it conflicts with what the engineers said.

Please would you clarify what you mean by the term “identified measures”, specifically does “identified measures” mean the objectives were identified but not the means, the means were identified but not the locations, or the means and the locations were identified?

If the answer to this question varies from LN scheme to LN scheme, please say so and then answer it specifically for the Walcot LN scheme.

Please can the consultants be asked to say if they concur with your answer?

Question 2

I have received conflicting answers in the past when I have asked whether preliminary designs were produced by the contract engineers or by Council officers or by Council members. In a conversation I had in early December 2023 with the contract engineers about the Walcot LN preliminary design, the engineers said they were not tasked with producing that preliminary design but were presented with it by officers. In a subsequent meeting I had with the Cabinet Member later in December 2023, she said that it was the engineers who had produced the preliminary design. May I see a copy of the Schedule or Scope of Work covering the work the contract engineers were asked to undertake by B&NES for their part of the B&NES LN Programme? I do not need to see any commercially confidential aspects of the contract, just the specification of the work the contract engineers were asked to undertake.

Verbal answer in the meeting – a response will be provided within five working days.

Official written response:

The Council Officer Project Team worked closely with consulting engineers to identify possible measures for inclusion in the preliminary designs for the Walcot LN. Based on the co-design output and a technical review, residents' priorities were shortlisted and developed into outline sketches along with the ward members. These were developed into preliminary designs by our consultants.

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The preliminary design was based on a shortlist of measures. This SM decision has now been postponed until the FBC is approved. However, the shortlist formed the scope of work for the engineers who continue to work very closely with our project and highways teams, and who have also been integral to delivering the community engagement throughout the project (since 2021).

JL understanding from the written response – the Project Team and ward members shortlisted residents' priorities and, following a technical review, developed outline sketches. These outline sketches were developed into preliminary designs by the consultants.

The shortlist formed the scope of work for the engineers.

JL position – The first part of this response adds slightly to Answer 1 but still needs clarification at a greater level of detail.

Please would you clarify what you mean by the term "outline sketch", specifically does "outline sketch" mean the objectives were identified but not the means, the means were identified but not the locations, or the means and the locations were identified?

Please would you say who took the co-design output, who undertook the technical review mentioned above, and who selected the possible measures for inclusion that residents were then asked to prioritise?

If the answers to these two questions vary from LN scheme to LN scheme, please say so and then answer them specifically for the Walcot LN scheme.

Please can the consultants be asked to say if they concur with your answer?

The second part ("The shortlist formed the scope of work for the engineers") does not answer my question.

Please would you say what the engineers were asked to do with the shortlist? Were they asked or invited to comment on it, compare it with alternatives, or to challenge it, or were they asked simply to accept it as is and develop preliminary designs from it without making any amendments to it?

If the answer to this question varies from LN scheme to LN scheme, please say so and then answer it specifically for the Walcot LN scheme.

Please can the consultants be asked to say if they concur with your answer?

Question 3

Were the contract engineers asked to consider alternative possible preliminary designs and were the contract engineers or anyone else tasked with performing a comparative analysis of different possible preliminary designs for each LN?

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Verbal answer in the meeting (Chris Major) – For each LN, the preliminary design chosen was the one judged to have the most suitable location for the primary intervention (usually the modal filter).

Official written response:

Yes, alternative designs have been considered. As part of this, the benefits and disbenefits of each design have been discussed.

JL understanding from the written response – Alternative designs were considered and the benefits and disbenefits of each design were discussed.

JL position – Part 1 of this question was specifically “Were the contract engineers asked to consider alternative possible preliminary designs” not “were alternative possible preliminary designs considered”. The original draft response said alternative designs were considered and discussed by ward members, Cabinet members and officers. The official response leaves it unspecified who was involved in considering alternative designs. The consultant engineers said they were not involved in the selection process and that is not contradicted by the official response.

Please answer the question “Were the contract engineers asked to consider alternative possible preliminary designs” not “were alternative possible preliminary designs considered”.

Please confirm that when you say “alternative designs have been considered” and “the benefits and disbenefits of each design have been discussed” whether they were considered and discussed by members and officers with or without the direct participation of engineers.

If the answer to this question varies from LN scheme to LN scheme, please say so and then answer it specifically for the Walcot LN scheme.

Please can the consultants be asked to say if they concur with each of your answers?

The answer to part 2 of this question “were the contract engineers or anyone else tasked with performing a comparative analysis of different possible preliminary designs” is that the benefits and disbenefits “have been discussed”. This makes it clear that no analysis beyond the superficial (“discussion”) was performed, i.e. no structured or unstructured comparative analysis was undertaken. The consultant engineers were not given alternative outlines to work from and they were not asked to perform any comparative analysis.

Question 4

Were the contract engineers or anyone else tasked with doing any traffic analysis or traffic impact assessment for the proposed preliminary or final designs for each LN?

Verbal answer in the meeting (Cath Brown) – No. The approach is to collect traffic data beforehand and traffic data afterwards and assess the traffic impact from the data.

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Official written response:

No. This is because the decision was taken early on in the project to adopt a “consult, design, test, monitor, decide” delivery model, rather than a “design, predict, provide” delivery model.

JL understanding from the written response – No. The approach is “design, implement as an experiment, assess what the impact has been from what happens”.

JL position – My question has been answered in the negative. No one was tasked with doing any traffic analysis or traffic impact assessment for the proposed preliminary or final designs for each LN.

Question 5

Were the contract engineers or anyone else tasked with doing an Equality Impact Assessment for the proposed preliminary or final designs for each LN?

Official written response:

For the five proposed LN ETROs in 2024:

Equality issues have been considered throughout the design process. There is an overarching EQuiA for the project which underpins the whole project, and it has recently been updated.

JL understanding from the written response – There is an updated overarching EIA for the project.

JL position – I did a search on the B&NES website for the overarching LTN EIA and found it (dated May 2020 – so hardly “recently updated”). It said the aim of the policy is for the schemes “not to disadvantage disabled people” and “that all opportunities to promote equality and mitigate any potential negative impacts” will be taken. The page also includes a template for developing individual scheme EIAs.

The original draft response said that there were individual EQuiAs for the three existing pilot schemes which had recently been updated and that the latest versions would be published on the Council’s webpages, w/b 15 Jan 2024. I searched the web pages but was unable to find them. It also said that individual EIAs would be published for each subsequent LN scheme when the decision is made to take that scheme forward under an ETRO.

Please provide a link to the EQuiAs for individual LNs so I can see what a scheme EIA entails.

Question 6

Were the final designs subject to consultation with and/or signed off by suitable representatives of disabled residents?

JL's PDS Meeting LN Update Questions

Official written response:

For the five proposed LN ETROs in 2024:

Equality issues have been considered throughout the design process. Should the trials go ahead, then individual EQuAs for the 5 schemes will be developed and consultation with groups through the Independent Equality Advisory Group will take place. You can find out more about how we ensure inclusive designs at our LN website at www.bathnes.gov.uk/liveableneighbourhoods (See Approach to developing LNs)

JL understanding from the written response – Consultation will take place through the Independent Equality Advisory Group.

JL position – I went to www.bathnes.gov.uk/liveableneighbourhoods to see the approach adopted. That said the approach “includes working with our local Independent Equalities Advisory Group to ensure ... our draft designs work for everyone – including vulnerable people and people with disabilities”. I am happy with that.

Question 7

Were the final designs subject to consultation with and/or signed off by the emergency services?

Official written response:

For the five proposed LN ETROs in 2024:

Emergency access has been considered throughout the design process and we have discussed the trials with representatives from Avon Fire and Rescue and SWAST, which resulted in us in making some small changes to the proposed designs. Further consultation will happen should the trials go ahead.

For the wider LN schemes:

Not formally at this stage as the designs are not finalised and the FBC has not been approved. Once these have been submitted as part of the FBC and approval given, consultation will take place.

JL understanding from the written response – There have been discussions with AF&R and SWAST. Further consultation will take place should trials go ahead.

JL position – There have been discussions and consultations but has there been sign-off?

Is each Emergency Service required to sign-off individual LN designs before they can be taken forward to implementation? Has any of the Emergency Services expressed concerns or reservations about any of the LN designs being taken forward in ETROs?

JL's PDS Meeting LN Update Questions

Question 8

Were the final designs subject to consultation with the local residents who would be affected by each design?

Official written response:

For the five proposed LN ETROs in 2024:

*We took the decision to go straight to experimental trials after consulting on the design with highways and emergency services and ensuring that the designs aligned with the sentiments expressed at co-design and in earlier consultations. They aim to address issues that we know people in the area feel strongly about, and they are technically sound. **It is essentially a six-month consultation.***

During the trial we would monitor traffic and air quality impacts. In this way we can allow people to get used to change and draw on a range of evidence before deciding whether to make schemes permanent or not.

For the wider LN schemes:

Not formally at this stage as the designs are not finalised and the FBC has not been approved. Once these have been submitted as part of the FBC and approval given, consultation will take place.

JL understanding from the written response – No. The approach is to go straight to ETRO. An ETRO serves as a six-month consultation. We will monitor traffic and air quality evidence and use that to decide whether to make the schemes permanent or not. However, for the wider LN Schemes (which I take means future LN schemes beyond the five experimental ones in 2024), consultation will take place.

JL position – An ETRO is not a consultation. Residents are made to experience the scheme and are not given an opportunity to forewarn the Council even if they can foresee dire effects that go beyond “fear of change”. It is not clear from the answer that resident input will have any bearing on the decisions made on whether to make any experiment permanent.

Please confirm that, for future LN schemes beyond the five experimental ones in 2024, there will be consultations with local residents.

Why is the situation regarding consultations with local residents different for the five experimental schemes proposed in 2024 than for future schemes?

Will the results of those consultations with local residents be taken into account when the designs that go forward for implementation are finalised?

Will the results of those consultations with local residents be taken into account when decisions are made on whether to make experimental schemes permanent or not?

JL's PDS Meeting LN Update Questions

Question 9

Given the lack of analysis of, and consultation on, the final designs, does the Cabinet Member consider it appropriate that these designs should be implemented using ETROs? The ETRO process essentially treats residents as guinea pigs in order to find out what the consequences, intended and unintended, of each design on residents' lives and wellbeing might be.

Official written response:

The ETRO process is designed to do "learning by doing" We have consulted our highways team and the emergency services on the design, and our team of engineers work to national and local design standards, including government best-practice guidance on inclusive mobility.

The aim of introducing a trial scheme is to allow people to experience the change (both positive and negative) over a six-month period before we decide whether to make it permanent. We can also monitor the impact on traffic and air quality to ensure our decision is based on evidence. Fear of change is common, and people's views can often change once they have experienced and become used to the change being proposed.

JL understanding from the written response – The Project Team (presuming that is what is meant by "we") considers it appropriate practice and this approach avoids resident "fear of change".

JL position – It also avoids residents being able to forewarn you of foreseeable dire effects that cannot rightly be dismissed as "fear of change".

The draft response said explicitly that "we believe this to be a sound approach". For some reason, that direct answer has been withdrawn and replaced with an indirect answer that leaves it implied that the Cabinet Member believes this to be a sound approach.

My question has been answered in the affirmative.

Question 10

If it turns out that a design has significant harmful consequences on local residents, is there a way that the ETRO could be terminated before the minimum term of six months has expired or would residents be forced to suffer those harmful consequences for at least six months regardless of their severity?

Official written response:

No, it takes a minimum of 6 months for the behaviour to change and to get enough data to evaluate the impact of the interventions.

JL's PDS Meeting LN Update Questions

JL understanding from the written response – No, regardless of the severity of the harm.

JL position – This makes it even more important that residents be able to forewarn of dire impacts. B&NES is making itself a hostage to (mis)fortune here.

Question 11

In para 2.12 onwards you say that engagement has taken place with ward members for each of the remaining LN areas to help you understand the issues these designs might create. What was the purpose of that engagement: was it just to identify those issues, to modify the designs to address or minimise the adverse impacts identified, to deprioritise those LNs that might have significant issues associated with them, or something else?

Official written response:

The purpose of the engagement with ward members was to “test the temperature” of the elected ward members of public perceptions of the draft designs, to help prioritise what interventions should be included in the FBC with the limited resources we know are available. All the feedback from ward members was reflected on carefully.

JL understanding from the written response – as stated in the written response.

JL position – The public does not get to see the draft designs until after they have been fixed. Certainly, Walcot residents will not get to see the proposed Walcot LN design until after it has been put forward to WECA in the business case.

The answer says that “All the feedback from ward members was reflected on carefully”. This omits that the Project Team went to considerable lengths to obstruct the Walcot ward members from giving their feedback.

- It took us three months of asking before we were able to see the proposed design and have it explained to us by the engineers (31 August 2023).
- It took another three months of insistent asking after that before I was able to put my written six-page critique of the proposed design to the engineers (05 December 2023), by which time (so I was told by the Cabinet Member) it was too late for any changes to be made.
- I asked during that second three-month period to put my alternative design in front of the engineers and each time my request was refused.

At the meeting on 05 December, the engineers and I worked through my critique of the proposed design in detail. The engineers confirmed that they found no faults in my analysis. Notwithstanding that, a decision was made by the Cabinet Member and her Assistant after that meeting and on or before 12 December to proceed with the design I had critiqued in a meeting that the ward councillors were not invited to participate in. The first meeting the

JL's PDS Meeting LN Update Questions

ward councillors had with the Cabinet Member after 05 December was for the ward councillors to be presented with a fait accompli – that the scheme would go ahead and with a design a ward councillor had objected to strongly and clearly.

Please explain how “The purpose of the engagement with ward members was to test the temperature of the elected ward members of public perceptions of the draft designs” when the public does not get to see the designs until after the designs have been fixed.

Please explain how “All the feedback from ward members was reflected on carefully” when you have, as I have explained in detail above, obstructed the ward members from providing their feedback, prevented the ward members from discussing an alternative design with the engineers, and have decided to proceed with a strongly critiqued design.