

STATEMENT TO CABINET MEETING – 10 NOVEMBER 2022
MALCOLM BALDWIN – CIRCUS AREA RESIDENTS ASSOCIATION

Subject: The "Liveable Neighbourhoods Strategy": the way forward!

The important word here is not "Liveable", it is not even "Neighbourhoods" it is "meaningful"!

Powers, I believe, have now been delegated to decide how best to prioritise and implement Liveable Neighbourhood (LN) 'interventions' within our local communities, subject to phased and effective public consultation.

This important delegation of powers will be judged as being a success if it indeed "turbo-charges" the implementation of at least one or two effective and substantial Liveable Neighbourhoods. The introduction of relatively minor traffic interventions, important though they are to their immediate local neighbourhoods, will not generate the far wider community and city-wide benefits of a substantive Liveable Neighbourhood which is required to test and yes challenge all the aspects and nuances of a 'fully fledged' scheme.

Cabinet, I am not one of those cynics who believe that as you edge towards next May's local elections you will merely initiate relatively minor traffic interventions in order to 'tick' some notional manifesto box. As I have said before in this chamber, I believe you are all braver than that, as I am sure are our officers, in creating some meaningful LNs in our city.

I can best speak of my own CARA neighbourhood, which has particular aspirations for an effective and meaningful LN. It is a community, contrary to some opinions, that reflects a very mixed and varied demographic and household profile.

As a local neighbourhood and community, we represent a perfect example of where a substantive Liveable Neighbourhood could, no should, be introduced.....and against a background of likely worsening local government finances our detailed concept would be, in many aspects, relatively low cost!

As you will see from our recent "CARA Bulletin", hopefully attached to this text for your attention, this has been a long journey for us which commenced in terms of dialogues with our ward councillors in September 2019.

In the meantime, as a community, we did not sit by and expect our Council to do everything for us. We have initiated and actually undertaken improvements to our area's public realm to commence the process of making our neighbourhood environment (representing circa 960 households) more liveable and attractive and by so doing encouraging greater active mobility.....that work continues! These are essential ingredients of a truly effective Liveable Neighbourhood.

Within CARA's LN concept are significant benefits to the city as a whole. Our catchment area represents a key heritage zone which is the next most popular visitor destination after the area immediate to the Abbey and the Pump Rooms. Introducing

a LN will improve our area for locals residents and visitors alike and act as a catalyst for the needed regeneration of the Saville Row and Bartlett Street Quarter.

Linked to the LN concept, we also continue to 'champion' our area's very particular need for more residents-only parking facilities (currently only 12.6% of total on street parking within our entire CARA catchment area!).

Cabinet, with powers being delegated to hopefully 'turbo- charge' the introduction of 'fully- fledged' LNs, let's ensure the mandate includes the introduction of at least some substantive, effective but really meaningful Liveable Neighbourhoods.....our city deserves no less!

Malcolm Baldwin.

Circus Area Residents Association (CARA).