

## **STATEMENT BY MALCOLM BALDWIN**

### **CABINET MEETING – 13 JULY 2023**

This evening Cabinet you will be asked to approve the draft Corporate Strategy for 2023 to 2027.

(In reality this administration's mandate has the almost unique opportunity of being extended for an eight-year term not merely a four-year term.....your new current majority is extremely unlikely to be completely overturned in a single electoral contest in four years' time!)

Key areas such as the general condition of our public realm, the level and quality of support we give to the more 'distressed' members of our community and the quality, speed and effectiveness of our response to the impending climate crisis all require not just repetition but new focus ..... time to press the re-set button!

Within the context of both public realm and climate response improvements, our ability to turbo-charge and implement carefully selected but MEANINGFUL Liveable Neighbourhoods (LNs) which bring real value to a particular local neighbourhood but also to our city as a whole is vitally important.

A few pertinent quotations:

"We are a Council that listens to residents and takes action."

Source: B&NES Liberal Democrat Manifesto May-2023.

"Liveable Neighbourhoods sensitively implemented and effectively monitored ARE achievable. The mandate you have should not be wasted.....the LN genie is well and truly out of the bottle, be brave [BOLD: see below] in your implementation!"

Source: Public statement to Cabinet - May 2021.

"The debate about LNs has never been about mere changes to traffic flows, but rather about a real vision of how we can make a positive difference to our city, its residents, its visitors and as a consequence to its local businesses and local economy as a whole." Cabinet, we need that regeneration!

Source: Public statement to Cabinet - June 2021.

"We will continue to work with residents on designing and delivering MEANINGFUL improvements, such as reduced rat-running and speeding, through our Liveable Neighbourhood programme."

Source: B&NES Liberal Democrat Manifesto - May 2023.

"We have two core policies - tackling the climate and ecological emergency and giving people a bigger say."

Source: B&NES Draft Corporate Strategy 2023-2027.

"Detailed designs for 15 [liveable] neighbourhoods are almost ready for publication".

Source: B&NES Draft Corporate Strategy 2023-2027.

"Our four values - bold, empowered, transparent and supportive - continue to underpin all of our work."

Source: B&NES Draft Corporate Strategy 2023-2027.

So four stated values act as a useful catalyst for four questions:

- **BOLD:** Why not introduce and energise officers to 'turbo-charge' a MEANINGFUL LN which would bring, by its location in a key central or near central location, real added value to a substantial local neighbourhood as well as to our city as a whole.....its residents, businesses and visitors?
- **EMPOWERED:** Why not involve/empower that relevant community and its representatives in further developing, alongside appropriate officers, the 'ground-up' concept that the community has already proactively designed?
- **TRANSPARENT:** When can the detailed designs for the stated ".....almost ready for publication" LN concepts be made available to the respective communities to which they relate?
- **SUPPORTIVE:** Where local communities or particular catchment areas have already been pro-active in delivering their own public realm improvements, with the support of often very supportive B&NES officers, why not reciprocate in initiating a meaningful Liveable Neighbourhood to underpin the work already commenced?

.....and one final question, unrelated to the Council's stated values above:

- What criteria will be used to re-prioritise the remaining LN area 'candidates' within the 15 designated in the "Liveable Neighbourhoods" document dated 23 June 2021?

Cabinet, it will be more than disappointing and could be judged by some as less than satisfactory if we are unable to see at least the commencement of the introduction of a substantive and meaningful Liveable Neighbourhood, such as that of CARA's concept, within our city within at least the last quarter of 2023.

It's time to press the re-set button!

Note:

Appendix (i) below: [Liveable Neighbourhood/LTN] Criteria Assessment - 17th March 2021.

(Above Appendix re-included for new Cabinet members who might not be familiar with this 'journey' which actually commenced for CARA in September 2019.)