

Deputations

Policy and Sustainability Committee

10.00 am Tuesday, 20th April, 2021

Virtual Meeting - via Microsoft Teams

Deputations

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Andrew Kerr

Chief Executive

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CITY OF EDINBURGH COUNCIL
POLICY AND SUSTAINABILITY COMMITTEE

Item No 3

20 April 2021

DEPUTATION REQUESTS

Subject	Deputation
3.1 In relation to Item 7.1 on the agenda - Adaptation and Renewal Programme Update	Jack Kane Community Centre (written submission attached)
3.2 In relation to Item 7.2(c) on the agenda - COVID-19 Engagement and Consultation Approach	a) South West Edinburgh in Motion (written submission attached) b) Silverknowes Community Group (written submission attached) c) Get Edinburgh Moving (written submission attached)
3.3 In relation to Item 7.5 on the agenda - Equality, Diversity and Rights Framework 2017-21 - Final Progress Report	Edinburgh Access Panel
3.4 In relation to Item 7.6 on the agenda - Equality and Diversity Framework 2021-2025	Edinburgh Access Panel



Item 3.1

'Community centres are the cornerstones of communities' 'People and these buildings will be at the heart of the recovery'

These words are not ours but the words of senior council officers going back nearly six months. This board were given assurances that structures and procedures would be in place immediately.

Why is it that we are still be denied discussions to plan a way out together, why is there no capacity to even have health and safety meetings for community centres and why are resources being dismantled and withdrawn from community centres before the pandemic is even over?

Convener, Vice Convenor and elected members of the Committee thank you for agreeing to hear this deputation from the Jack Kane Community Centre. Unfortunately, our experiences are not shaped by a positive and fruitful partnership whereby we can work together to maximise our collective response whilst reducing the impact on local people. In this board's opinion, community centres are hardly being viewed by the CEC as vital assets for the recovery and renewal for our city.

To this end:

1. We welcome that over half a million pounds of public funds have been provided to libraries and that officers energies and attention were focussed on opening libraries 'they are easier to open as they belong to the council'.
 - **Why is it then that not a single penny or officer expertise has been allocated to assist priority community centres?**
2. The centre has had a long existing CEC staff team which have complimented and integrated seamlessly into the work of the MC. These staff members have formed magnificent working relationships within the centre all of which has benefitted our community.
 - **Why then are CEC staff now being removed to other similar venues to carry out comparable work which will then have a detrimental impact and effect on delivering our shared services within this centre and area of deprivation. Furthermore, what scrutiny has been carried out by the decision makers to expose the impact on community services?**
3. It has now been nearly one year from our first deputation to this committee and yet CEC officers have not discussed any way forward. In fact, the rationale seems to be that local volunteers just need to 'get on with it' as the CEC have neither the capacity, direction or vision of how together community centres may assist and play a part in the recovery process.
 - **When will the CEC have a vision that is accountable, open and transparent so that conversations on the way forward can be developed?**

The North-East community centre management committees have been meeting with officers, unfortunately, what we are experiencing at these meetings is not recovery and renewal process which locates local people at the heart of the process. These meetings feel and look like a deterioration of services which have been ongoing throughout the pandemic. There has been little energy or enthusiasm alongside a distinctive lack of creative thinking on the way forward. In fact, we seem to be at the crossroads whereby more and more is being placed on to local volunteers who are running out of energy, good will or support from the CEC.

Our charity plays a significant role in providing services, our work both compliments and extends the work of the CEC, our services are essential, and our ambition is to work on behalf of the people and their needs before, during and after this pandemic. We will not stand by and watch as the removal of services and the lack of direction have a detrimental effect on our centre and more importantly our community.

John Witherspoon
Chairperson



SWEM

South West Edinburgh in Motion

Committee Services
City of Edinburgh Council,

Item 3.2(a)

16 April 2021

**Policy and Sustainability Deputation
South West Edinburgh in Motion (SWEM)
Item 7.2c COVID-19 engagement and consultation approach
Tues 20 April 2021**

Introduction

Thank you Convenor for allowing our deputation.

South West Edinburgh in Motion (SWEM) is a community group formed by residents and businesses in November 2020, following the council's vote approving Spaces for People plans for Lanark Road and Longstone in spite of:

- 300 email objections from the public (versus only 19 in favour and 10 neutral)
- Objections from Currie and Juniper Green & Baberton Mains Community Councils
- Serious concerns expressed around accessibility and safety for disabled people by Edinburgh Access Panel

SWEM committee members have embedded active travel in their daily lives for years and support a balanced approach to encouraging walking, cycling and bus journeys.

Our purpose is to push for proper consultation around any local travel proposals for the benefit of the whole community.

We acknowledge that COVID-19 required a different approach to consultation, but we consider that Spaces for People plans over-reached what was legitimate emergency response and were not justifiably included under this umbrella.

Our deputation today is not a response to this, but insights from this have informed our position.

We have two parts to this deputation:

1. Response to the report
2. Impact of this report on the recent consultation around retaining Spaces for People



SWEM

South West Edinburgh in Motion

1. Response to this report

We are very pleased to see this report come forward and welcome how it has been developed to reinforce the Council's commitment to effective consultation (2.3)

We are broadly supportive of the end-to-end approach.

We have suggestions for additional points or clarifications within the descriptions, measures within the draft Quality Standards.

1.2 Quality standard - GENUINE

- **Avoid biased and leading launch comments or supporting content.** For example implying individuals are completely satisfied with measures or proposals without supplying a balancing view. Or, constantly stating the council's desired way forward and objectives in a way that implies the project is the only way of achieving those objectives.
- **Avoid actual or perceived conflict of interest.** Agencies carrying out research or evaluating research should not stand to benefit from projects which are subsequently approved. Eg an agency that will be able to procure work for designing, implementing or auditing a project if it goes ahead, should not be leading a survey which is designed to inform whether or not that project goes ahead.
- **Clarify the definition of stakeholder v lobby group and add a specific policy point on this relating to the level of involvement of each in a consultation.** A stakeholder is usually an impacted organisation, or body representing impacted people or businesses, which is reactively responding to a proposal, for example the emergency services, or directly impacted residents or businesses. A lobby group is proactively proposing an initiative and actively recruiting new members to champion the issue whether or not they are directly impacted by a specific proposal. There is obviously a grey area between the two. However, there have been recent examples, where the views of lobby groups which have been given the status of a stakeholder, seem to have been given priority over feedback from other reactive stakeholders.

1.3 Quality standard - INFORMATIVE

- **Highlight if the project could conflict with other council objectives and avoid using any language or imagery which could mislead people about this.** For example with the recent Spaces for People consultation, there was considerable use of icons related to mobility issues, which could lead a member of the public to believe that this project aligned with the policy around equalities when, in fact, the opposite was true - and it was clear by that point, that the projects were a policy clash in terms of accessibility to pavements.
- **If different audiences require different surveys, then make a clear attempt to design the survey to meet their needs.** For example businesses recently completing the SFP survey found themselves with a survey identical to the survey for residents, with only one different content question. It completely failed to meet their needs.



SWEM

South West Edinburgh in Motion

1.4 Quality standard - INCLUSIVE AND ACCESSIBLE

- **Use pre-testing of complex surveys.** This would avoid over-complex and time consuming surveys that are very challenging and effectively block meaningful engagement.
- **Flag up-front likely time commitment involved.** It takes a lot of time to participate in a consultation (for example the recent Spaces for People consultation survey took at least 45 minutes to fill out properly and for some people it took 1 hr 30 minutes). Some individuals will have had to complete two surveys - both as a resident and a business



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South West Edinburgh in Motion

2. Impact of this report on the recent consultation around retaining Spaces for People

2.1 COVID-19 Engagement and Consultation Approach

During the pandemic, consultation and engagement exercises were suspended unless they had statutory or COVID related requirements.

There does not seem to be any suggestion that as part of this there was a statutory or COVID-related concession that a lower quality standard of consultation was acceptable (assuming of course that no physical distancing requirements would be breached).

The retaining Spaces for People consultation was run during this period.

We note that in the COVID-19 Engagement and Consultation Approach:

- Point 2.4 in the report emphasises that this “*policy formalises the Council’s existing consultations framework*” therefore **it is assumed that previous consultations largely fit within the requirements of this policy**, even although officially in point 2.5 the new approach to operations oversight will be fully established within three months of policy approval.” (assumed to be 20 July 2021)
- Point 3.6 that the “*The Council has also has statutory duties to consult when making changes to some services - such as traffic regulation and school building - and the Council must ensure that changes it makes do not unfairly disadvantage members of protected characteristics as defined by legislation*”
- Point 3.9 that “*Failure to ensure the Council has a robust approach could have significant consequences for the Council. Several UK bodies have been compelled to reverse operational and policy decision following court decision, including re-opening facilities that were closed and repeating consultation activity that was done to a poor standard. Some of these organisations have also been left with substantial legal costs as a result of the failure to ensure high quality consultation. While there have been relatively few legal challenges on consultation in Scotland, compared to England, it remains a risk to the Council that needs to be addressed.*”

We believe that the recent consultation around retaining Spaces for People failed to have a robust approach (3.9) in relation to Quality Standards for Consultation (9.3 Appendix 3), to the extent that the survey itself breached statutory duties around the Equality Act 2010 (3.6) and that the council’s existing consultations framework (2.4).

Part of these failings were due to the issue highlighted in 4.5 - “*Engagement between the Council and communities has been mixed, reflecting the insufficient time and capacity allocated to pre-consultation and pre-engagement phases that enable communities to share the objectives and scope of the activity.*” However even if this consultation needed to be done quickly, the existing 5,000+ communications to the Spaces for People inbox would have been a good source of information to shape this.

2.2 Consultation Framework

In the Consultation Framework criteria, this consultation would be likely to score high on five of the six criteria as follows:

- **Strategic** - Integral component of Council Business Plan/outcomes/pledges



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South West Edinburgh in Motion

- **Number of people likely to be directly impacted** - Greater than 10,000 (significantly greater)
- **Community/environmental impact** - Overall significant consequences for/impact on people, equality, economy or environment
- **Political/reputational impact** - Highly sensitive, will be subject to Committee debate and scrutiny. High reputational implications (major loss of confidence, adverse publicity or public outcry)
- **Project risk** - Could result in inability to fulfill Council’s statutory obligations and pledges

2.3 Quality Standards

There were several examples of failure to meet the quality standards within this consultation (those highlighted below are not a complete list)

2.3.1 Genuine

<p>Measures: Consultations are open for a minimum of 12 weeks to allow adequate time for consideration and response (unless there is an overriding licence or other regulatory or statutory requirement).</p>	<p>Actual: This consultation was originally for only 4 weeks, then extended to 6. In comparison the simultaneous winter festivals consultation was open was 12</p>
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2.3.2 Inclusive and accessible

<p>Measures: Supporting documents and multimedia are not overly lengthy or detailed</p>	<p>Reality: There were several complex supporting documents in the survey with long lists of schemes, and various drop down boxes with inconsistencies in layout and content as well as multiple errors</p> <p>eg Greenbank Road & Glenlockhart Road appear in Qu 13 but not in Qu 11 which they should if they are in Qu 13.</p> <p>Saying Bonaly School completed – but it’s not going in. Saying Juniper Green is completed, but the parent council there are unaware that anything has happened. There were many more examples like this.</p>
<p>Measures: Physical and language barriers to participation have been minimised. People are given a variety of methods and opportunities to provide their views.</p>	<p>Reality: A phone number to request paper copies of the survey was not provided in any offline environment.</p> <p>In spite of Covid restrictions claimed to block lamppost advertising of TTROs going in during the consultation</p>



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South West Edinburgh in Motion

	<p>period, the council used ads on lampposts to promote the consultation claiming they need to have these consultation ads up on lamp posts to reach people who can't use the internet so they can get paper copies. However, none of the ads had the phone number on them. They only had a web address.</p> <p>Even when lamp post ads were updated with stickers to update the closing date when they extended the consultation (following complaints about the restricted time it was open for), they didn't take the chance to add the phone number on at the same time, even though this issue was flagged at the full council meeting on 11 March.</p> <p>Even with email requests there were issues with people getting paper copies of the survey – when people requested them, they arrived without envelopes and addresses to return them.</p>
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2.3.3 Informative

<p>Measures: Enough information is given to ensure participants understand issues, can consider proposals and give informed responses</p>	<p>Reality: Participants were asked if they wanted 36 schemes not yet installed, to be retained. But the council had refused requests to publish these - therefore people were being asked their opinion on plans where no information was publicly available and the council had refused to provide it</p> <p>The survey ran during lockdown. So even the schemes that were in place should have had accessible plans and imagery for those who couldn't see them. Of the few plans that were published, all were technical drawings confirmed by officers to be 'not designed for public use'.</p> <p>Misleading content blocked true understanding of the issues - in council communications and tweets from individuals (evidence can be supplied on request)</p>
<p>Measures: There is clarity about what participants can and cannot influence through the consultation process</p>	<p>Reality: There is no clarity - it appears that even councillors do not know. In a response to a formal question at full council meeting on 11 March, the Transport Convener refused to commit to saying whether schemes which a majority of respondents wished to be removed would in fact be removed or retained.</p>
<p>Measures: Timescales for the process are clear</p>	<p>Reality: An advert remained on Lanark Road for the duration giving the original closing date when it had been updated to 5 April.</p>



SWEM

South West Edinburgh in Motion

2.4 Requested action

Therefore, given the level of evidence of failure to meet Quality Standards and the fact this is a consultation that scores very highly on the Consultation Criteria, SWEM believes it would not be appropriate for this consultation to report back in two months time to the Transport and Environment committee in June to inform decision making at that meeting.

If it did report back, it would severely undermine the visible commitment to this policy assuming it is approved by committee today.

Instead, there is an opportunity here to draw a line in the sand, and acknowledge that a well-meaning attempt to run a consultation during a pandemic was not successful. There is a chance to take a fresh approach to consultation meeting all Quality Standards to win the hearts and minds of the public in Edinburgh on the approach to active travel. This would evidence the council's approach to putting the best foot forward for the future and create a sustainable and achievable approach to meet the requirements of the City Mobility Plan by 2030.

We appreciate the time taken by councillors to review our submission.

Yours,

Prof. Derryck Reid

Deputation Request – Consultation for retaining Space For People measures to be redressed and re-run under the approved Edinburgh Council Consultation policy and quality standards.

Submitted by : Silverknowes Community Group

Contact : Mrs Mhairi Notman 2, Silverknowes Parkway, Edinburgh EH4 5LB
E Mail: mhairinotman01@hotmail.com

16/04/2021

Deputation: City of Edinburgh Council & NEPN

Formal Written Deputation from: Silverknowes Community Group

Policy and Sustainability Committee

Agenda item 7.2c Covid 19 engagement and consultation approach

Request : Spaces For People Projects to be re-run to ensure they follow new guidelines

Please accept this request as a consolidated voice of the residents and community of Silverknowes.

The proposed end of suspension of consultation and engagement due to covid 19 is imminent. We fully support principles outlined in this proposed engagement and consultation policy.

We request that the Spaces For People Schemes in Silverknowes and Edinburgh wide should be re-run to meet the requirements of this new Edinburgh council consultation policy. As this formalises the council's existing consultation framework, it is not unreasonable to expect that recent consultations largely correspond to this policy. As the consultation will report back after this policy has been approved, it feels appropriate that it is fully aligned.

The controversial SFP projects have popped up all over our city creating a huge wave of frustration to residents and business owners. This is an opportunity to develop a model for community engagement which strengthens relationships with the council and its constituents. The role of each community should be an integral part of any service delivery in our city. This action will support the new council consultation approach. (1.3)

Whilst we all understood an urgent requirement to protect the people of Edinburgh by creating safer spaces over the pandemic, the over enthusiastic roll out of some ill thought out SFP plans are extremely dangerous, others are viewed as over thought out and confusing. Some are simply not required or used.

No one is against supporting change if they are well thought out and communities are part of the journey of improving our network. Change management requires full quality process engagement supported by safety audits and risk analysis.

Trust is at an all time low as citizens bring into question accountability of measures forced on key stakeholders which are detrimental to the way they live and work. The City of Edinburgh Council's Best value assurances note; innovative engagement approaches and highlight more needs to be done to "embed community engagement as an integral part of service improvement and delivery (2.2) (2.3)

The council need to listen to the views of the community they represent. We as a community can clearly see the issues of the current SFP infrastructure in our neighbourhood but do not feel the recent consultation enabled us to effectively communicate our views around retention of the scheme, due to failures to meet basic quality standards Your policy (2.3-2.4) requires effective consultation with a commitment in having the ability to evidence how views were sought and what influenced decisions- Consultation framework 2.4- 2.5)

Perceptions of the council being untrustworthy were increased through the controversial on-line survey. It needs to be challenged .

We propose the only way to re-build trust & respected relationships is to re-run a robust SFP consultation that meetings ensuring all quality standards within the approved policy, to be able to engage with communities.

Community empowerment must be a priorit. Re-running the SFP consultation underpinned by the new councils' guidelines framework is a perfect place to start. (3.4-3.5-3.6)

We also request that the council is more transparent and responsible in collecting data. An example of this is clearly displayed when the council omits to include end-to-end responses, instead only showing consultation hub data. (e mails, letters, focus groups, petitions, complaints all seem to fall into a council black hole). We ask that you review this approach to be true and respectful to the people of Edinburgh. We have had enough. It will not be possible for trust to be rebuilt unless the council takes stock, listens and engages. (3.5)

The Council is required to consult where it is making substantive changes to services which are likely to impact on residents. The Council also has statutory duties to consult when making changes to some services – such as traffic– and the Council must ensure that changes it makes do not unfairly disadvantage members of protected characteristics as defined by legislation. We feel that this has clearly not been adhered to. This would be addressed under the new consultation process. (3.6-3.7)

Deliberative and participative processes are of growing importance to civic decision making in Scotland; the Council now have a great opportunity to re-establish a fresh approach to create better outcomes for a broader range of citizens and meeting Audit Scotland recommendations.(3.11)

Conclusion

By supporting our request to re-run current and future SFP Projects under new Edinburgh council guidelines

The following benefits will be driven

- Build broken relationships with Edinburgh council and residents
- Build broken relationships with business owners
- Build and re-establish trust
- Build an empowered joint planning committee
- Build fit for purpose "spaces"
- Build solutions which are supported by safety audits

- Ensure solutions take into consideration the impaired and disabled
- Meet Audit Scotland guidelines

By supporting our request to re-run SFP projects current and proposed would strongly support this directive, adding greater stability in council and residents' relationships across all council activities and services.



Get Edinburgh Moving

Item 3.2(c)

e: GetEdinMoving@gmail.com

w: <https://getedinburghmoving.godaddysites.com/>

The City of Edinburgh Council
City Chambers
High Street
Edinburgh
EH1 1YJ

Date: 16th April 2021

Dear Councillors & Officials,

**RE: CITY OF EDINBURGH COUNCIL POLICY & SUSTAINABILITY COMMITTEE MEETING 20/04/21 –
DEPUTATION IN RELATION TO AGENDA ITEM 7.2c - COVID-19 ENGAGEMENT & CONSULTATION APPROACH**

I am writing in relation to the above agenda item, and the development of a new consultation policy. Get Edinburgh Moving (GEM) is a local community campaign with 1,600 members, that was created in response to City of Edinburgh Council (CEC)'s East Craigs Low Traffic Neighbourhood Spaces for People proposals in 2020.

Firstly, I welcome the paper produced by Andrew Kerr in relation to the above, and specifically the key recommendation that the Policy & Sustainability Committee “will develop a model for community engagement which strengthens the role of communities in service delivery and decision-making processes, and through the work of the Community Empowerment Team”. As the paper states, it is also vitally important that CEC “recognises the need to strengthen community engagement, especially through pre-consultation activity that builds trust and creates consent in communities”.

GEM's experience of CEC's community engagement to date, through the TTRO and now modified ETRO processes for East Craigs LTN, has unfortunately fallen far short of a situation where the community feels empowered, listened to, and operating in a relationship of trust. Our broader concern is that this concern extends also to the current consultation in relation to gauging support for making Spaces for People schemes permanent.

In the case of the East Craigs TTRO, the Covid emergency was used as a smokescreen by CEC to bring forward long-held aspirations and plans that predated the Covid pandemic, supposedly avoiding the need for a consultation. In the 6 day Council 'notification window', 407 objections were received, with only 3 in support – a 99.3% objection rate. This conclusive demonstration of community opposition was ignored, and CEC voted for implementation. It is now well known that GEM procured legal opinion that argued the LTN would be unlawful, and subsequent counsel opinion sought by CEC substantively agreed with that position. Despite this, it was only after a specific threat of legal action was received by CEC, that it backed down.

CEC's next step was to modify the process, and bring forward plans for a LTN under an experimental traffic order (ETRO). While GEM recognises that significant consultation is included in this next phase, including a Community Reference Group, there are several areas where we believe that the consultation falls significantly short of the policy you are looking to formalise via this paper:

1. In the first phase of engagement, a survey has been created by CEC, its consultants AECOM, and the cycling pressure group Sustrans. AECOM is put forward as an independent market researcher – an untenable position when in fact it is a major supplier of design consultancy services to CEC. In short, AECOM stands to benefit financially from a consultation outcome leading to scheme design and implementation work. It is unfair to put AECOM in a position of 'independent market researcher', when it undeniably benefits from CEC's predetermined and desired outcome being achieved



2. Sustrans is a cycling pressure group – it should not be involved in designing consultations or feeding into surveys
3. The survey is designed to achieve a predetermined result. It focuses on drawing out answers that pain the status quo as negative and requiring improvement. There were no controls to ensure that survey responses were verifiably from within the area. It neglected to ask residents their views on the previous proposals brought forward. A full list of our concerns is appended to this deputation, in the form of a letter to Paul Lawrence
4. From discussions with CEC and AECOM representatives, we have no confidence that the views of local residents will be the most important factor – the concern is that if residents do not favour change, a scheme will be designed anyway, and CEC will decide what is best for residents. This goes to the heart of what is wrong with the approach, and why the consultation is not compliant with the new policy's fundamental tenets around engagement, empowerment, trust, and consent

GEM also has similar concerns in relation to the current consultation process around the Spaces for People Permanency consultation. In addition to the same issues as expressed above, there are no provisions to identify and verify local residents. Views are sought on schemes that are not even in place yet. The consultation is citywide, diluting the ability of local residents to make their voices clearly heard in relation to each scheme. There is no comfort that there will be a consultation on the decision as to whether each individual scheme should be made permanent, in which local residents are empowered and their views have primacy.

The suspicion is that CEC always intended to make these schemes permanent, and has used the Covid smokescreen to introduce them without consultation. It is now 'dividing and conquering' by de-localising the consultation exercise, introducing bias into the process and diluting the final say that should rest with local residents. It looks and feels like a shortcut, rushed job to get these schemes in place before the pandemic is over, and they must be withdrawn.

We note that the Keep Edinburgh Moving petition has gathered almost 15,000 signatures in opposition to the citywide SFP permanency consultation process – this dwarfs any petition on the CEC online petition portal, by multiples.

GEM's contention is that both the East Craigs LTN and wider permanency consultation fall short of meeting the standards brought forward in the consultation policy paper. As such, they should be scrapped, and replaced with fit for purpose processes that put local residents views front and centre of decision-making. It is untenable for CEC and its partners to ignore public opposition, and decide what is good for us.

With many thanks and regards,

David Hunter

Chair

On behalf of,

Get Edinburgh Moving

Community Group

e: GetEdinMoving@gmail.com

w: <https://getedinburghmoving.godaddysites.com/>

cc:

Paul Lawrence, Executive Director of Place;
Councillor Mark Brown
Councillor Robert Aldridge
Councillor Claire Bridgman
Councillor Susan Webber
Councillor Kevin Lang
Alex Cole-Hamilton MSP



APPENDIX: GEM LETTER TO PAUL LAWRENCE

Get Edinburgh Moving
e: GetEdinMoving@gmail.com
w: <https://getedinburghmoving.godaddysites.com/>

Paul Lawrence
Executive Director of Place
The City of Edinburgh Council
4 East Market Street
Edinburgh
EH8 8BG

Date: 5th February 2021

Dear Paul,

RE: EAST CRAIGS LOW TRAFFIC NEIGHBOURHOOD CONSULTATION

I am writing following our email discussions last week, and my subsequent meeting with Martyn Lings this week, in relation to the next steps for the consultation on the East Craigs Low Traffic neighbourhood proposals (LTN).

Firstly, please pass on my thanks to Martyn for his time and engagement.

My understanding of the current status is:

- Residents (defined as those living inside the 'rectangle' area bounded by Maybury Road, Queensferry Road, Drum Brae Road and Glasgow Road) will receive a pack through the post on or around Monday 8th February
- This will include details of the process for the consultation and design of a revised LTN
- Part 1 will be an online survey to ask questions around people's attitude towards traffic, modes of transport etc in the area – a hard copy survey questionnaire can also be requested, but will not be included in the pack
- The tight timescales for the part 1 survey response will be 8th – 28th Feb, although some leeway will be applied for late responses
- Responses will be collated, and findings published in March / April. These findings will then inform the scheme design
- Following scheme design, a part 2 consultation will open
- While the Part 1 survey details will be posted to residents, the survey will also be shared on the West Edinburgh Link website for completion by anyone, anywhere. While respondents will be *asked* whether they live in the affected area, and will be prompted for a postcode or street name, anyone on the planet would be able to enter any postcode or any street name, and their response would be counted as though they were a resident. There are no controls in place to ensure against such a scenario

As you know, on behalf of the community, I expressed several serious concerns with regard to the process:

1. Lack of inclusion of a hard copy survey risks excluding, or at least making it very difficult, for vulnerable and/or elderly people to participate in the process – their voices may not be heard as a result.
2. CEC will have no way of knowing that responses are from residents of the area, or not. The survey is therefore wide open to abuse, gaming and influence by pressure groups. There is significant anecdotal suggestion, and also Edinburgh-specific evidence, to suggest that such groups are motivated to do so.
3. I asked specifically for an (easily arranged) unique code to be included in the packs, to be referenced in responses, to protect against such potential fraudulent 'tampering' with responses. This was refused.
4. Martyn explained that the initial survey will ask general questions in the style of 'how do you feel about traffic speed in the area'. I reflected on the significant professional market research expertise that exists within the GEM organisation, and that we were aware of steps the council and GEM could take to game responses that would fit their narrative –



questions over which the community has had no input and has no control. In essence, asking 'would you like free / vague nice things', without detailing the implications, will generate a positive response.

5. I specifically suggested that questions include (among others) 'Are you in favour of road closures in the boundary of the proposed LTN?'; and 'Did you approve or disapprove of the LTN proposals brought forward last year – please provide commentary on your response?' Given the council is spending significant amounts of our money on this exercise, it is highly relevant (and vital) that the opportunity is used to ask residents for their feedback on the scheme as previously brought forward, in order to ensure best scheme design for part 2. Martyn confirmed that such questions would not be considered in the survey. At the very least, all comments from the summer 2020 Spaces for People notification responses must be taken on board in the review exercise.
6. Regardless of the above, the survey must include a free text area for detailed comments and feedback at this stage, not just later.

The inescapable conclusion is that the council is not seeking detailed views at this stage, because it is scared of asking for residents' views on a deeply unpopular scheme, and one that was overwhelmingly rejected by the area last year.

Its choice of questions is a deliberate attempt to 'game' responses to soft questions in order to frame / justify the council's intended next steps, ignoring any perceived negatives by not asking the questions.

Furthermore, the unwillingness to apply any control measures to ensure responses from within the directly affected area are clearly ring-fenced, again suggests that the council recognises it will rely on support from pressure groups from elsewhere in Edinburgh, or even elsewhere in the UK, to artificially boost support. This basic lack of governance calls the entire process into question, and leaves it open to inevitable abuse by highly organised and motivated pressure groups. The entire process is delegitimised as a result.

I'm afraid there is little confidence in such a process. The council claims that it is listening to residents, when the reality is that it is listening to Sustrans and Spokes, and refuses to ask the necessary questions to inform scheme design because it simply does not want to hear the answers.

I call on the council to reconsider: to ensure that genuinely directly affected residents' views are clarified beyond doubt and are given primacy in the process. Also, that it should take this golden opportunity to ask residents about the scheme brought forward last year, and for their suggestions for the design of the revised scheme.

I look forward to your response.

With many thanks and regards,

David Hunter

Chair

On behalf of,

Get Edinburgh Moving

Community Group

e: GetEdinMoving@gmail.com

w: <https://getedinburghmoving.godaddysites.com/>

cc: Councillor Lesley Macinnes
Councillor Mark Brown
Councillor Robert Aldridge
Councillor Claire Bridgman
Councillor Susan Webber
Councillor Kevin Lang



Alex Cole-Hamilton MSP

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