

Deputations

Transport and Environment Committee

10.00am, Thursday, 11th January, 2024

Dean of Guild Court Room - City Chambers

Deputations

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CITY OF EDINBURGH COUNCIL
POLICY AND SUSTAINABILITY COMMITTEE

Item No 3

11 January 2024

DEPUTATION REQUESTS

Subject	Deputation
3.1 In relation to Item 7.1 - Major Junctions Review Update	Spokes (written submission)
3.2 In relation to Item 7.2 – East London Street	New Town & Broughton Community Council (verbal submission)
3.3 In relation to Item 7.3 - Strategic Review of Parking: Progress Update	Westfield Street Residents (verbal submission)
3.4 In relation to Item 8.1 - Accessibility Commission	Spokes (written submission)
3.5 In relation to Item 8.5 – Trams to Newhaven	Community Councils Together on Trams (verbal and written submission)
3.6 In relation to Item 9.1 – Motion by Councillor Caldwell - Public Realm (scrutiny) along the Trams Phase 2	New Town & Broughton Community Council (written submission) Community Councils Together on Trams (verbal and written submission)

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Spokes Party deputation for TEC meeting - 11 January 2024

Agenda Item 7.1 Major Junctions Review Update (King's Road/Portobello High St Junction scheme)

Spokes Party is a local group of Spokes - The Lothian Cycle Campaign. We campaign to make walking, wheeling, and cycling safe, easy, and fun for everyone in and around Edinburgh East.

Summary of our position

We are deeply concerned, disappointed, and frustrated by the lack of progress, despite the political will of TEC, to deliver the King's Road/Portobello High St Junction safety scheme, given the two fatalities and the subsequent amount of voluntary work put in by community members such as ourselves. We urge TEC to:

1. Explain in full why the timetable outlined in the June 2023 TEC paper has slipped so badly (from expected delivery in summer 2024 to potentially spring 2026).
2. Agree that the scheme should be prioritised and resourced immediately, ensuring the team responsible for it has the leadership, skills, capacity, time, and resource to deliver it to a high standard without further delays. This should include options of contracting out elements of the work if the work cannot be done in-house effectively.
3. Ask officers to revisit the option of the long-term solution and the benefits/risks of proceeding with that now rather than doing the work in stages as previously expected and report back to TEC and stakeholders in parallel to starting work on the medium-term detailed design. This is because the time now expected by officers to deliver the medium-term scheme could be as late as spring 2026.
4. Investigate funding options from this year's [Transport Scotland's 'Active Travel Infrastructure Fund'](#) for the scheme designs and delivery. The Fund closes on 2nd February.
5. Provide monthly written progress updates via email to Portobello communities starting in February (including ward councillors, the Community Council, and Spokes Party).

Background

Spokes Party has been campaigning for years now for an urgent redesign of the junction following the deaths of Stuart Elliott (March 2019) and Heather Stronach (November 2020). Both Stuart and Heather were killed by HGV drivers as they cycled through the junction. Their deaths have been devastating for their families, friends, and colleagues, as well as for the local community. Nobody should face the risk of death in Edinburgh just for using a cycle to get around.

We worked hard with local councillors and other stakeholders to get the interim safety measures in place to temporarily ban HGV drivers from turning left into Sir Harry Lauder Road from Portobello High Street along with vital traffic calming measures on the diverted route through Northfield. The diversion was always intended to be short-term while alterations to the junction were progressed rapidly.

We also worked closely with the local community, ward councillors and council officers to produce outline design options for both this medium-term solution and a long term 'final' solution that had full agreement and support of all concerned.

We made a deputation on 15 June 2023 to TEC (Agenda item 7.5) supporting Option 3 as a medium-term measure and requested that all members of TEC support it. We also asked that the kerb lines be positioned correctly in this phase of work to allow future phases and connections on all arms of the junction. It's vital that the scheme is future proofed.

It is, therefore, frustrating and disappointing that several months have been wasted when real progress could have been made over the second half of 2023, and that nobody from the Council contacted ourselves, or as far as we know, other local stakeholders, to discuss the significant delay to the project or the reasons behind that delay.

In the June 2023 TEC paper (Agenda item 7.5) under 'Next Steps' it was stated that 'If Committee approve the recommendations, detailed design work will be undertaken for the preferred option and a contractor will then be procured to undertake construction. It is expected that delivery of the improvements would take place in summer 2024'. The paper went on to say that the scheme would be funded from the block allocation for Road Safety within the Council's Transport Capital Investment Programme.

The junction in its current state remains a hostile environment for everyone who walks, wheels and cycles despite the clear need for people to move between the various communities that surround the crossing without having to rely on a car. We have had recent reports of near misses by cyclists heading straight over the junction from Portobello by drivers turning left onto Sir Harry Lauder Road. Fishwives Causeway cannot be considered a viable alternative route for all as it only suits some routes and is not considered safe by many women in the dark given its isolation.

End

Hello,

Spokes would like to submit the below as a written deputation for item 8.1 (Accessibility Commission) at this week's Transport & Environment Committee:

Spokes are concerned that there is a lack of local disabled cycling representation in the proposed commissioners for the Accessibility Commission. We therefore request that Spokes are added to the list of organisations in Section 2.7. We have members with lived experience of using their cycles as essential mobility aids who would be willing to take part, and whose experiences and points of view would be useful to the commission.

I am hoping that I will also be able to give an oral deputation. However, this will depend on whether I have jury service, and I won't know that until Wednesday evening.

Thanks,
David French
Spokes planning group

Community Councils Together on Trams

e. cctt.coalition@gmail.com

Composite Deputation

Transport and Environment Committee - 11th January, 2024)

8.5 Trams to Newhaven

9.1 Motion by Councillor Caldwell - Public Realm (scrutiny) along the Trams Phase 2.

As a coalition of the four CCs (CCTT) along the TTN (Trams to Newhaven) route, we have engaged with the TTN project over several years on a monthly basis - *before and during* construction - and thanks to close cooperation from the TTN project team had the opportunity to collect a substantial body of information. Combined with our local knowledge as Community Councillors and residents along the TTN route, we feel qualified to comment on items 8.5 and 9.1 before today's TEC.

We are **disappointed with the slenderness of the 8.5 tram report**. Compared to the substantial four-volume Hardie report, this response to a unanimous Council motion in August last year does not appear to provide the required **clarity on governance**. While we were wholly supportive of depoliticising the TTN project oversight *during* construction, it is important for a variety of reasons that this is now returned to elected Councillors.

It is not clear to us why the mooted close-out report was not produced *before* the tram line was handed over to the operator and a number of CEC departments. Regarding the lessons learned exercise, CCTT has been in discussion with the TTN project team since 2022 [*sic*] with a session originally scheduled for April/May, then August 2023 and to date there has been no contact to find a new date.

If there are to be further major projects in the city, it would seem sensible to conclude the TTN project - the present major project - in an orderly fashion. We would therefore hope to see adequately allocated, dedicated high quality resources in place (in the form of the experienced TTN team) to manage defects resolution and design reviews (to address a considerable number of already identified shortcomings), as well as leveraging CCTT expertise through the long promised lessons learned exercise. This would go a long way towards keeping residents and business on board and overall supportive of the inevitable disruption that comes with such projects.

By contrast, we **welcome and support the motion from Councillor Caldwell (9.1)** which we believe will go a long way to ensuring a proper focus on the **wider outcomes** of the Trams to Newhaven project beyond the delivery of a working tram extension. There are many areas where we have identified issues with the design of the public realm associated with this project which have been dismissed as being of secondary concern, but for the residents and businesses along the new Tram route are regarded as being critical to its overall success. There needs to be a transparent review of the public realm delivered by the Trams to Newhaven project against current design standards and whether it is fit for purpose.

Deputation to Transport and Environment Committee meeting to be held on 11 January 2024 regarding item 9.1 Motion by Councillor Caldwell - Public Realm (scrutiny) along the Trams Phase 2

We welcome and support the motion from Councillor Caldwell which we believe will ensure a proper focus on the wider outcomes of the Trams to Newhaven project beyond the delivery of a working tram extension.

There are many areas where we have identified issues with the design of the public realm associated with this project which have been dismissed as being of secondary importance but for the residents and businesses along the new Trams route are regarded as being critical to its overall success.

This motion, if approved, will ensure that there is a transparent review of the public realm delivered by the Trams to Newhaven project against current design standards and whether it is fit for purpose.

Peter Williamson,
Chair New Town and Broughton Community Council

9 January 2024