

Committee Action Sheet - West/Central Area Committee

Meeting Date: 16/11/23

Updated 16/11/23

1. Minute reference: 22/19/WAC Open Forum Q1
 - Action: Head of Environmental Services to convene a multi-agency meeting to consider the issues being raised around use of e-scooters / e-bikes / e-mopeds on open spaces, with the aim of agreeing some deliverable management actions.
 - Progress: Head of Environmental Services has circulated an email and briefing note requesting initial meetings with representatives from City Council's Community Safety and Streets and Open Spaces services and Police, County Council and GCP. Meeting date being organised to take place between now and Christmas.
 - Progress: the initial multi-agency officer meeting to discuss issue of e-mopeds, e-scooters, e-bikes on open spaces is confirmed for 30th November.
 - Progress: This multi-agency officer meeting took place on 30th November and a note of meeting was shared with Market Ward Councillors Bick, Gilderdale and Porrer.
 - Progress 06/03/23: At the meeting, officers committed to gather further data/ evidence/ intelligence on the issue of irresponsible e-scooter/ e-moped/ e-cycle use in city centre, noting Midsummer Common as the main 'problem site'. Officers also supported proposed trial of behavioural change 'Respect' signage on Midsummer Common; and to pursue the development of a countywide targeted education/ awareness raising campaign, to be led by the Cambridgeshire Road Safety Partnership, as part of its 'Vision Zero' Plan.

A follow up multi-agency officer meeting has been scheduled for 22nd March to review progress on these commitments/ actions.
 - Progress 15/06/23: The three-way partnership involving City, County and Police continues to meet to plan and review progress on actions to tackle the misuse of these vehicles in public places. City Officers are currently finalising the design for the behaviour influencing signage for Midsummer Common, which aim to complete by end of month to be installed in the Summer. This represents a trial, which if successful could be rolled out to other locations.

In May, the City passed a motion on e-scooter and e-moped usage, which included the following resolutions:

- i. To request a report to the Environment and Community Scrutiny Committee within the next 6 months on the progress of the three-way partnership, identifying means by which the city council and partners might take this forward, exercising influence over, and potentially co-ordinating, the best use of existing powers in a concerted fashion to mitigate the adverse, and channel the positive effects of the phenomenon, including but not limited to engagement with:
 - The Police on the use of existing enforcement powers;
 - Highways and Trading Standards at the County Council;
 - The city council's own services with responsibility for public open spaces, (building on the recent initiative for 'Respect' signage on Midsummer Common), environmental enforcement and community safety;
 - The Combined Authority as local sponsor of the Voi licensed pilot in Cambridge
 - Delivery companies whose services utilise the novel vehicles
 - Interest groups in the city representing established users of spaces now also used by novel vehicles.
- ii. *To instruct the Chief Executive to write to the relevant government minister (copying in the city's MPs, the CPCA Mayor, the PCC and the LGA) in order to:*
 - *Request the urgent creation of a national regulatory framework for the novel vehicles, which recognises the need for controls over safety and anti-social use and empowers local authorities and the Police to take effective enforcement action;*
 - *Express the Council's concerns about the impact of the gig economy model on this issue and seek measures which also address that.*

Progress 29/08/23: Final plan of the proposals sent to Ward Councillors and Executive Councillors, stakeholders, etc for their consideration.

Progress 16/11/23: Respect Signage had been installed on Midsummer Common designed to improve the behaviour of electric scooter and moped users.

.....

2. Minute reference: 22/19/WAC Open Forum Q2

- Action: Head of Environmental Services to investigate the ability for the Council to acquire powers to enforce against engine idling. Would also look into what could be done regarding education about engine idling.
- Progress: Still under investigation, nothing to report as yet

- Progress: 06/03/23: Vehicle engine idling is illegal (Section 42 of the Road Traffic Act (1988)) but only enforceable by police officers whereby a £20 fixed penalty notice can be levied rising to £40 for late payment. That said, there are powers in the Road Traffic (Vehicle Emissions) (Fixed Penalty) (England) Regulations 2002, which, on application, would allow local authorities to enforce idling. These regulations allow a local authority officer, or designated person by the local authority, in the area of that authority, to issue fixed penalty notices in relation to stationary idling in that area. These relate to idling offences in Section 42 of the Road Traffic Act (1988), which are prescribed as fixed penalty offences for the purposes of these regulations. Previously only the police had the power to enforce these offences under the Road Traffic Act. For statutory Idling offences the fixed penalty allowed under these regulations is £20. The authorised officer/ designated person has to ask the driver to comply with the law and, if they don't, can then issue the fine, via a fixed penalty notice.

The regulations do mention 'district authorities' as one of the bodies which can use these powers, but clearly for the City Council this would have significant resource implications, in terms of investing in the necessary staff capacity to be able to undertake meaningful enforcement; at a time when the Council is having to make significant financial savings to deliver a balanced budget. Also, the City Council does not currently collect or hold data relating to idling issues in the city, other than a very small number of individual complaints; and, to do so, once again, would require significant resource investment. Vehicle idling is also not likely to be considered a local policing priority for Cambridgeshire Police enforcement.

Whilst any reduction in vehicle emissions is desirable, studies on idling impacts are thin on the ground and with mixed results. Whilst very local targeted action in areas of high exposure, such as a school might be significant, it is very unclear in terms of national objectives for regulated pollutants, that vehicle idling makes a measurable contribution. The idling issue is also diminishing as 'stop start' technology, hybrid and full electric vehicles (EVs) penetrate the fleet.

So, given the above, City Council officers HAD committed to investigate how we might publicise and promote better driver behaviour in collaboration with partner authorities, including the County Council and Police, through a coordinated programme of education and awareness raising. This builds on previous work undertaken jointly in the past, by the City and County Councils, on communication and education particularly around school zones, with at least one school in Cambridge adopting an anti-idling banner.

- Progress 16/03/23: Councillor Gilderdale advised she would speak with Joel Carre with the suggestion of signage, highlighting the suggestion of the school children competition.
- Progress 15/06/23: Police is currently the only authority with anti-idling enforcement powers but does not see this as a priority and will only enforce when witness a blatant traffic offence.
County Council currently has no legal powers to enforce against idling. To secure such powers, the County would need to apply to the Secretary of State for Transport
Any anti-idling signage in the public highway would need to be approved by the County (as Highway Authority). County currently don't have an approved anti idling Highway sign
Officers query the value/ impact of investing in developing anti-idling Highway signage for general use. However, officers would support use of such signage in school zone locations, where there is a clearly defined target audience and means of engagement, via the school.
To justify the use of such signage, officers would need to investigate and establish that a significant problem exists and secure approval of any resulting Highway sign design. This would require officer time and budget, which officers would find difficult to justify, given current workload priorities and the small consequential benefit to wider air quality.
- City would be willing to publicise the issue of idling in Cambridge Matters and highlight a few key locations where it has been identified as an issue and advice on switching off engines.
- The area already has double yellow lines; and or resident only parking restrictions and so the primary enforcement for breaches on parking restrictions should be through County's Parking Enforcement service.
- The Head of Environmental Services agreed to supply the Committee with details on what is required to apply for the Secretary of State for Transport to secure enforcement powers against idling.
Action: to consider at WCAC in November when the police will be present.
Progress 16/11/23: Sergeant Misik stated that the issue of engine idling was difficult to enforce.

-
3. Minute reference: 22/21/WAC Update on City Centre Recovery
 - Action: Head of Environmental Services to explore the potential for CCTV camera provision at the junction of Burleigh Street and East Road.
 - Progress 16/03/23: Head of Environmental Services has asked the Council's CCTV and Community Safety service managers to

consider the request. Both managers support the value of a CCTV camera at the location and have confirmed a pan/ tilt/ zoom camera supply and installation cost of c£12,000.

They are now exploring potential funding sources; and/ or the opportunity to redeploy an existing public space CCTV camera from elsewhere in the city, where it may no longer be providing any real community safety management value, ie. it is a low crime/ ASB area.

- Progress 15/06/23: Officers explored procuring a (PTZ) (pan; tilt; zoom) CCTV camera for the East Road and Burleigh Street junction. Each PTZ camera costs c£8-12k to supply and install. With no available budget to meet these costs, officers have been unable to proceed with procuring a camera.

The Council had recently invested over £600,000 upgrading the public space cameras across the city (100aprx) with a new digital network to support this.

To ensure City is maximising the value/ return on investment of its existing public space CCTV camera network (200+ cameras), officers were undertaking a review of all the public spare camera locations against ASB/ crime evidence to determine whether, or not, there are any locations, where existing cameras are no longer needed; and so can be re-located to other locations of need; and new locations where cameras are needed. If unable to relocate cameras, then results of review will be used to support a capital funding bid to cover the supply and installation of additional public space cameras.

Sergeant Misik confirmed that under the cycle crime initiative new PTZ cameras had been installed on Burleigh Street for the bike parks, offering additional coverage along Burleigh and Fitzroy Street.

Progress 16/11/23: Sergeant Misik advised that shared CCTV in the City Centre was monitored at the CCTV control room in Huntingdon, which could be accessed live. The footage could also be streamed to the Police's own control room in Cambridge. The Grand Arcade and Grafton Centre was not directly available but could be accessed very easily. The Police were also able to send a link to members of the public who could update their footage of an incident for the Police access. **CLOSE**

4. Minute reference: 23/8/WAC Open Forum

Action: Councillor Gilderdale to speak with Officers regarding the improvements to Jesus Green and how this can be brought forward working with external groups.

- Progress 15/06/23: Officers would explore with Executive Councillor support for budget bid to be put forward for consideration in the BSR for 2024/25 to support design development/ planning work. This would then feed into the procurement for a new operator for the Lido from March 2026.

Councillor Porrer to contact stake holder and ward councillors regarding the improvements to Jesus Green

Progress 14/09/23: Councillor Porrer would propose a meeting in October 2023.

Update: October 2023: Cllr Porrer has contacted officers to request a site visit with ward councillors and members of the Jesus Green Association to discuss options.

Progress: Cllr Porrer and other ward councillors, officers and members of the Jesus Green Association were meeting the following week to discuss how to move the project forward.

.....

5. 23/19/WCAC Open Forum

Action: Councillor Porrer to talk with the Public Realm Engineering & Project Delivery Team Leader regarding that despite prohibition notices on cycling at all entries and throughout Christ's Pieces, the Officer's decision that this was not a basis for enforcement action.

Progress 16.11.23: Public Realm Engineering & Project Delivery Team Leader stated the following, the current bye-law dates back from 1929. The legal advice received was that due to its age and changes since its unlikely to provide a sound basis for present day enforcement action. Even if it were possible the Community Enforcement team currently lack the powers to enable them to enforce against e-moped/ scooter/ bike issues. This would require the Chief Constable to bestow such powers under the Community Safety Accreditation Scheme. There would also be health and safety concerns for Council staff attempting to stop a rider travelling at speed. Sergeant Misik advised that enforcement was undertaken when the PSCO were on Christ's Pieces. Recently cycling enforcement had been undertaken on Fitzroy Street and Burleigh Street with support from Student Officers. Cycling on Christ's Pieces would be added to a new Student Officer project. **CLOSE**

.....

6. 23/19/WCAC Open Forum

Action: Councillor Porrer to talk to officers about Fitzroy and Burleigh Streets to investigate the possibility of parking bays specially for delivery scooters. Would also ask about the possibility of more market stalls in Fitzroy and Burleigh Streets to bring vibrancy to the area.

Update 16.11.23: The Public Realm Engineering & Project Delivery Team Leader stated the following, Officers at the City Council have tried to move the Environmental Improvement Projects (EIP) away from responsibilities that sit with the County Council (such as highway parking areas). The County Council's Local Highways Improvement (LHI) programme might be a possibility but must be mindful that the Greater Cambridge Partnership (GCP) are focusing again on a more integrated parking strategy which is intended to include consideration of this type of provision.

Some work had already been done on potential rental e-scooter bays but there had been some reluctance to take permanent changes forward given uncertainty around the current trials. DfT last week announced that there were no plans to legislate within the coming parliamentary session, and they are enabling Local Transport Authorities to extend existing trials a further two years until end May 2026.

Would advise Councillors who wish to take this forward to start with the County highways team, also checking with GCP.

Update on Market Stalls: Councillor Porrer noted there are ways of adding stalls to Burleigh Street and Fitzroy but this did take quite a bit of time and also required a licensing subcommittee and consultee input. Given the general plans in the Grafton area it would seem sensible for ward councillors to take this suggestion forward as part of the project. **CLOSE**

.....:.....

7. 23/19/WCAC Darwin Green

Action: Councillor Porrer to contact planning officers with the minutes of this item and to ask them to note that the Council show their support to residents and ask BDW to consult properly with residents of Darwin Green and elected councillors and to request an update on progress prior to the next WCAC meeting.

Update 16.11.2023: actions taking place since last West Central Area Committee on 14th September.

BDW submitted 3 discharge of conditions applications to cover the additional demolition process and mitigation measures required, that had not previously been submitted as part of these conditions. These are available to view online.

Reference: 07/0003/COND51A - Proposal: Submission of details required by condition 51 (Construction Environmental Management Plan) for Darwin Green One BDW2 of outline permission 07/0003/OUT

Reference: 07/0003/COND52E - Proposal: Submission of details required by condition 52 (Construction Method Statement) of outline permission 07/0003/OUT (Darwin Green One BDW2)

Reference: 07/0003/COND53 - Proposal: Submission of details required by condition 53 (Construction) for Darwin Green One BDW2 of outline permission 07/0003/OUT)

It was felt that the planning service conducted a strong engagement process with residents due to high levels of public interest and concern regarding the issues surrounding the required demolition. A near neighbour consultation process involving letter drops to over 140 properties has been undertaken. Also an evening drop in planning officer surgery at the newly opened Darwin Green Community Rooms was attended by local residents and residents associations representatives. These actions are additional to what would normally form part of a conditions discharge application.

A consultation has also taken place with Environmental Health and Highways officers, comments received from third parties, and as a result additional information has been requested from the developer. Such revised information was received on 13th November and will be subject to a second formal period of consultee consideration. Local resident's groups will be notified and can use this period to make any further comments should they wish to do so.

As a result, no firm demolition start date has been set. BDW have commenced weekly updates to local residents and the demolition contractors, Squibb, have also undertaken to provide updates. The mitigation measures submitted include dust suppression measures and a 24/7 operated telephone number to report any concerns during the demolition period.

Retail Units

BDW report that whilst there has been interest in the retail units all currently remain unoccupied. With the opening of the shared path, Darwin Green residents now have the option of a link to the retail units along Histon Rd to widen the present choice of nearby retail destinations.

Shared path

Noted from the last committee meeting, following the opening of the shared path to Windsor Rd residents raised concerns regarding the safety aspect of installed solar powered, motion activated lighting.

BDW have now changed to a mains fed permanent lighting system in response to concerns raised.

A discharge of condition application recently submitted by BDW to change the lighting and surfacing details of the shared path is due to be withdrawn and replaced with a non-material amendment application concerning only the path surface details.

Councillor Smith advised that the application could be considered at meeting of the Joint Development Control Committee on 12 December. If this was the case, the demolition works would not be starting until the new year.