

WEST CENTRAL AREA COMMITTEE

25 November 2021
6.30 - 8.45 pm

Present

Area Committee Members: Councillors Gehring (Chair), Porrer (Vice-Chair), S. Baigent, Bick, Nethsingha, Payne, S. Smith, Gay, Nethsingha and Rae

Officers:

Joel Carre-Head of Environmental Services
Jon Dixon and Jenny Nuttycombe-Greater Cambridge Planning Service
Sarah Steggles-Community Safety team
Gary Clift-Committee Manager

Other Officers in Attendance:

Greater Cambridge Partnership-Peter Blake and Sarah Prentice
Police Sergeant: Kevin Mišák

FOR THE INFORMATION OF THE COUNCIL

21/26/WAC Welcome, Introduction and Apologies for Absence

Apologies were received from Councillor Gilderdale.

21/27/WAC Declarations of Interest

No declarations of interest were made.

21/28/WAC Notes of last meeting

The notes of the meeting held on 9 September 2021 were noted.

21/29/WAC Matters and Actions Arising From the Notes

21/14/WAC-Open Forum-Insurance for residents groups

Cllr Porrer advised the committee there was not a straightforward solution unfortunately and having investigated sufficiently it should be closed as an action.

21/30/WAC Open Forum

Members of the public asked a number of questions, as set out below.

1. How Fitzroy and Burleigh Street cycling and e-scooter use can be better controlled as people seemed to ignore the instruction that it is pedestrian only 10-4 Monday to Saturday. Also that some people did not understand what the signage prohibiting use during that time meant.

Councillor Bick said in the longer term how those two streets are used were to be included in a city centre access strategy. It was the intention that this would better reflect the mixed use and requirement of these two thoroughfares.

In the immediate term the only solutions could be enforcement by the Police (who were at the meeting and may respond to the points made) and a review of the signage by council officers.

Action: Head of Environmental Services (signage)

2. Re. the footpath at Skater's Meadow. Councillors had been circulated advice the member of the public had received from the Rambler's Association and the Open Spaces Society. The committee was asked that in support of the City Council's Sustainable Transport Policy, will the committee and the City Council now actively support Cambridgeshire County Council Highways in implementing the original plan of County Council Officers:- to install key-operated bollards to prevent unauthorised motor vehicles driving on the footpath, to ensure the safety of pedestrian and cyclists using the footpath?

Councillor Nethsingha stated that she had been personally trying to resolve this matter since it was raised in the summer and agreed it was unsatisfactory, although noting that the the footpath was not unusable. Establishing land ownership was being pursued by the authorities to enable the County Council to pursue a course of action as there existed no chance of agreement amongst residents in the local area how to resolve the issue.

Councillor Gehring stated that he would send the information circulated from the Ramblers and Open Space Society to the County Council.

Action Cllr Gehring

3. Whether the bike racks moved from Bridge Street at the start of lockdown would be replaced. The Head of Environmental Services advised that 3 Sheffield Stands near Fitzbillies were removed. This was to permit easier movement of pedestrians. Overall more cycle parking has been added in the last year, but for these 3, there were no plans to re-instate.
4. Why there appears to be a total absence of policing and driver education on Maids Causeway despite this continual and flagrant law-breaking; what concrete steps the committee proposes to take in conjunction with the Police, City Council, County Council and local bus operators in order to remedy this nuisance; to confirm that the committee will ensure that the proposals of the Greater Cambridge Partnership are not likely to increase this nuisance (for example by virtue of an increased number of speeding buses); whether the proposals of the Greater Cambridge Partnership provide an opportunity for a radical redesign of Maids Causeway, to the benefit of residents, pedestrians and cyclists alike, for example with fully-segregated cycleways and increased green space as is proposed for sections of Newmarket Road.

Councillors Porrer and Bick replied. Anti social driving either car or motorbike was on the increase across the city. A trial of mobile 20mph flash signs are going to be deployed along Maids Causeway with help from the County Council. Local councillors were also investigating whether the council could deploy a mobile noise camera which would assist the police in gathering evidence to prosecute owners. This approach was being used successfully in a couple of London boroughs. Regarding Greater Cambridge Partnership's plans for Maid's Causeway, it was noted that this had been on a long list of potential schemes (to stop the cut through/rat running to Mitcham's Corner rather than via Elizabeth Way). Cllr Bick would investigate where this scheme had got to in the overall GCP programme development and report back.

Action Cllr Bick

5. Skateboarding is a hugely popular sport in Cambridge, but our facilities are not winter-appropriate. The installation of lights and CCTV would result in far more people using these facilities, reduce anti-social behaviour, and promote physical and mental wellbeing for Cambridge's young people. Our recent Light Sessions at Trumpington skatepark demonstrate the community's demand for this - around 50 skaters

attended and provided portable lights to make the park skateable. In both Jesus Green and Trumpington skatepark we see lighting on sports facilities neighbouring the skatepark. Skating deserves the same support.

The Head of Environmental Services undertook to contact camskate. Sgt Misik and Cllr Bick supported the proposal, noting that hours of operation, type of lighting would need to be sensitive to the neighbouring community and consulting local residents and ward councillors would be important.

Action: Head of Environmental Services

21/31/WAC Policing and Safer Neighbourhoods

Sgt Misik introduced the report. He picked up the earlier conversation raised in the open forum regarding Fitzroy and Burleigh streets and would add it to the local lists of concern, but highlighted that the signage could also be looked at.

Councillors raised concerns about e-scooters on open spaces, Christs Pieces, Parkers Piece. These issues are now being regularly raised by residents. Sgt Misik referred Cllrs to contact Voi to geo-fencing areas (speed control in designated parts of the city) for the remainder of the trial period.

Councillors requested that the police consider retaining anti-social driving, including e-scooters and e-bikes as a police priority. The other current areas of concern remain important as detailed in the police report.

Sgt Misik undertook to liaise with the city council officers on the evidence gathered on the use of Voi scooters so that the Combined Authority received co-ordinated feedback on the trial, noting that Councillor Porrer would like to be included in the correspondence bearing in mind the impact on Market Ward.

Action: Head of Environmental Services/Sgt Misik

21/32/WAC Making Connections: Have Your Say on Greener Travel in Greater Cambridge Consultation - WCAC

The committee welcomed the presentation from the officers and encouraged the public to participate in the current consultation.

21/33/WAC Greater Cambridge Local Plan – consultation

The committee received a presentation on the latest local plan consultation.

A member of the public asked: The Cambridge Assessment Site by Parker's Piece/Hills Road currently sits unused. I registered the site as being suitable for a new large concert hall for Cambridge, something that the City Council's Architect formally proposed in 1966 following confirmation by Sir Ivor Jennings QC in a speech in 1962 that the University would stump up 50% of the cost. The site is recommended for removal from the local plan. This is contrary to the commitment in your Indoor Leisure Facilities Strategy 2015-31 which says Cambridge needs a new large concert hall. The existing local plan has no clear site allocated for a concert hall. How do we go about getting this removal struck out? Who in The University is the decision maker who needs to be lobbied.

The planning officer advised that the area was designated for employment use in the adopted local plan. That site is not likely to come forward from the landowner for such cultural use. The council will continue to pursue cultural aspects of its planning policy, the well-being topic paper covers this in the current consultation.

The committee welcomed the current consultation and thanked the officers for their presentation.

21/34/WAC Oral update on City Centre Recovery-Head of Environmental Services

The committee noted that the update report from the head of environmental services had been circulated to all area committees this meeting cycle.

The committee thanked the officer for the update.

The meeting ended at 8.45 pm

CHAIR