

Councillor Joanna Wright
Cabinet Member for Transport Services
Bath and North East Somerset Council
Guildhall
BATH
BA1 5AW

13th August 2020

Dear Councillor Jo,

Liveable Neighbourhoods - Low Traffic Neighbourhood (LTN) Strategy paper

Thank you for taking the time from your busy schedule to discuss this important topic with us. We were also grateful for Gary Peacock's involvement in the discussion. We felt that the meeting was helpful in clearing the air on a number of points. As promised, I attach a copy of the aide-memoire we prepared for the meeting, which sets out the key issues as we see them.

FoBRA wants LTNs to succeed in Bath. However, we cannot give our unqualified support to the LTN strategy as it stands, because we believe that it fails to address the critical issue of the cumulative impact of LTNs on traffic movement in the city. This is not about the detail of a traffic movement plan; but the principle is fundamental to the successful introduction of LTNs in Bath.

You confirmed that you do not believe that the experience of Waltham Forest can be directly read across to the very different situation in Bath. Even there, however, increases of up to 28% were experienced on the boundary roads. Increases of this order on the main roads in Bath, which are often densely residential, not designed for traffic, and having some of the worst air quality in the city, would have a major adverse impact.

It would make it easier for us to support (subject of course to comment on points of detail), if the strategy paper could be amended to include this issue. You agreed to consider this.

We suggest an addition to the paper, covering the following matters:

"LTNs will displace traffic onto the surrounding road network, and will have a cumulative impact on traffic movement in the city. As part of the implementation phase, the main and local road networks will be identified and the pattern of traffic

movement resulting from the introduction of LTNs will be analysed. The aim will be to avoid increases in traffic levels outside the areas designated as LTNs. This is also essential to ensure that there is no negative impact on the Clean Air Plan (see page 31). To achieve this, measures may be required to reduce the overall volume of traffic entering and passing through the city. In line with the objectives of the Getting Around Bath Transport Strategy and the Bath Public Realm and Movement Strategy (see page 51), an aim will be to reduce traffic in the central area of the city."

I emphasise that we are looking to have this issue recognised in the strategy paper as a high-level policy matter, but not designing the road network at this stage.

You said that the Transport Delivery Action Plan for Bath was an important part of the overall transport picture. This has not been made public. We believe that the development of this plan would greatly benefit from the involvement of the key stakeholders in Bath; not just FoBRA, but bodies such as the BID, the Chamber of Commerce, the Bath Preservation Trust, the Universities, the RUH, etc. Our experience was that the involvement of stakeholder groups in the development of the Bath Transport Strategy was very helpful to the Council of the day and led to a better outcome (Cllr Paul Crossley may be able to comment on this).

You explained that the work was still at the stage of data collection, but that you are willing to involve stakeholders as the work develops. That was very good to hear. Our experience is that the earlier that stakeholders are involved, the better.

Towards the end of our meeting we touched on diversity in Bath's decision making or advising process, and the role and position of FoBRA in this. I made two promises: to include this aspect in the draft agenda which FoBRA will propose for its next meeting with the Council Leader on 2nd Sept; and secondly to ask my successor (because I stand down as FoBRA Chairman at our, delayed, AGM on 3rd Sept) to work with you to try to create a Residents' Association in your Ward. If this were to be successful, we might also hope that it would, in due course, apply to join FoBRA!

Finally, we hope you enjoy your break!

Yours sincerely

Robin Kerr, Chairman

Enc.

cc Cllrs. Dine Romero, Richard Samuel, Sarah Warren