

Council to consider setting rules for parking outside the City Chambers

Green Councillor Claire Miller raised the possibility of ending free parking in the City Chambers Quadrangle at last week's full council meeting. She pointed out that the quad had been closed during the summer without any apparent difficulty and that she believed this arrangement should continue.

Cllr Miller referred to the fact that the council had only that morning agreed the city centre transformation plans which will remove around a quarter of vehicles from the city, and suggested this was at odds with the car park outside the council's own front door.

Pointing out that there are some vehicle drivers who use the quad as a personal car park for lengthy periods, she demanded that it was stopped from 1 November 2019.

Although this was supported by some elected members across the chamber, it was felt that some legitimate and reasonable use might be acceptable subject to setting out criteria. (Some councillors and others do enjoy the right to park there for legitimate health-related reasons.)



The day after the council meeting the Scottish Youth Climate Strike took place in Edinburgh, with thousands processing past the City Chambers. On Twitter Cllr Miller reinforced her demand by saying "To clearly and loudly say they heard the young people, act on the actual climate emergency, stop defending the free car park and turn it into a beautiful space."

@CitizenSnagging tweeted a photo of the quad at the University where there was indeed car parking within memory.

Worth mentioning that Old College quad [@EdinburghUni](#) was a car park not so long ago? pic.twitter.com/2pyBpqPt7a

– Citizen Snagging, Esq. (@CitizenSnagging) [September 22, 2019](#)

Cllr Louise Young proposed that some investigation might be conducted to find out who is using the quad in this way. She

said : ““I am concerned that the Green motion seeks to implement a blanket ban on all motorised vehicles.

“It does seem to me to be a knee-jerk reaction to an issue we don’t actually know the scale or the source of the problem.” Councillors agreed to an investigation on current usage and setting criteria and proposals for future use.

The quadrangle is used for a bike hire cycle station, and the Lord Provost’s car is often at the front door to pick him up and take him to official functions from the City Chambers. (That said, he does not use the official car to get to the City Chambers, preferring to walk.) Otherwise the area is a constant flow of pedestrians with walking tour groups being shown round by their guides, and people using it to sit on one of the benches there. It is a rare occasion when we get to take a photo of it with no cars. Even in our photo below there was one solitary delivery van!



City Chambers Edinburgh Council. Photo Martin McAdam