

Questioning measures taken under Covid-19 emergency powers

Several councillors have posed questions about traffic measures in the city being implemented under the emergency Covid-19 legislation. There are also questions about the Low Traffic Neighbourhood proposed for East Craigs for the Transport Convener to answer at Thursday's meeting of the full council.

Some of the sting may have been taken out of discussion of the contentious East Craigs plans by the Transport Convener, Cllr Lesley Macinnes, stating this morning that the [final decision](#) on the East Craigs measures will be taken by the Transport and Environment Committee on 1 October 2020, rather than by delegated authority by the Council Leadership Team. (This is made up of the Chief Executive, Andrew Kerr, the Council Leader, Adam McVey and the Depute Council Leader, Cammy Day).

There are now written answers to all of these – you will find the Questions and Answers below.

Cllr Mark Brown (Cons) asks:

What were the key messages received by the Convener and Council Officers at the public meeting held on 28 August?

What practical suggestions put forward at the East Craigs Public Meeting on 28 August are being taken forward in the technical design and workings?

Cllr Susan Webber (Cons), Transport Spokesperson for the Conservative Group, asks:

On what basis is East Craigs being progressed as a Low Traffic Neighbourhood in preference to other areas of the City?

Cllr Whyte (Cons) asks:

Where Objections to the proposed Low Traffic Neighbourhood at East Craigs have been expressed by all three local ward Members, the constituency MSP, and the Community Council, as well as hundreds of residents in writing or through attendance at public meetings, in what way can the decision to progress the scheme be perceived as democratic or publicly supported?

Cllr Jim Campbell (Cons) asks:

“What Public Meetings on a Council decision has the Convener attended since her election, that were attended by more than the 500 to 600 residents that turned up to East Craigs meeting held at Gyle Park on Friday 28 August?”

Cllr Kevin Lang (Liberal Democrat) asks:

At the Policy & Sustainability Committee meeting of 14 May 2020, it was resolved that authority would be delegated to the Chief Executive in consultation with the Leader and Depute Leader of the Council, to implement temporary spaces for people schemes following the agreed five-day consultation period.

Can the leader confirm he has been consulted in relation to the implementation of each ‘spaces for people’ scheme?

Can he confirm the dates on which he was consulted in relation to the implementation of each individual ‘spaces for people’

scheme?

What comments did the leader provide in relation to each scheme when he was consulted?

Cllr Claire Miller (Greens) asks:

(1) Which neighbourhoods within the authority have been consulted regarding LTN options in their local area, broken down by year, and how many households/residents are there within each of these neighbourhoods?

(2) What type/method of consultation has been undertaken with each neighbourhood and what were the results from each neighbourhood?

The Council Leader, Cllr Adam Mcvey, in his monthly report, mentions the LTN measures.

Cllr McVey writes: "We're continuing apace with an ambitious package of measures to make it easier and safer to travel by foot, bike or wheelchair in the Capital. These schemes will result in some change on our streets to prioritise all of us in our City.

"We know there are some concerns around these measures, not least the plan for the first Low Traffic Neighbourhood in East Craigs, but there is also significant support in our communities for better active travel conditions, including in East Craigs, and we're eager to see these take shape across the city. An LTN, which builds on traffic modelling, research and consultation as part of the West Edinburgh Link project, will make for a quieter, safer and healthier area and ensure residents' spaces are prioritised. Of course, we're listening to concerns, and we've taken away a range of themes from input from residents and stakeholders which will change the

temporary scheme before it's implemented.

"Under the Spaces for People project we're in the process of installing more than 30km of pop-up cycle lanes, we've introduced access improvements at 67 schools, with many more to follow, and we're creating more space in nine local shopping streets to help people spend time in businesses as they reopen.

"We want to help people to travel safely by public transport too as services, shops and some workplaces begin to reopen. That's why we're delighted to be receiving £1.2m from the Scottish Government's Bus Priority Rapid Deployment Fund, along with neighbouring local authorities, as part of the South East Scotland Transport Transition Group. This funding will help us to progress a series of temporary measures to help make bus journeys as quick and reliable as possible as restrictions are eased and traffic increases. These improvements, along with Spaces for People, will support the city's sustainable recovery by incentivising clean, environmentally friendly travel."

Cllr Louise Young (Liberal Democrat) asks:

A request has been submitted for widening of the pavement at this school (one of the largest in the city) to help ensure safe distancing of P1/P2 parents and easy of pedestrian flow/independent pupil access to school. As this situation continues on a daily basis with around 100 parents, please advise on what date a decision will be taken and if approved, how long it will take to implement (mindful that is it just about repurposing a grass verge area).

Cllr Jason Rust (Conservative) asks:

Of the over 4,100 comments on the Common Space Portal, how many sought closure of Braid Road to vehicles?

(2) Of the over 4,100 comments on the Common Space Portal, how

many sought part-closure of Braid Road to vehicles?

(3) Who made the decision to close Braid Road to vehicles and are minutes available for the relevant meeting?

(4) What correspondence has there been between the Council and Lothian Buses regarding the impact of the closure of Braid Road and the interventions on Comiston Road on bus journey times?

(5) Why is a full-reopening of Braid Road not being considered at this time?

AND

Councillor Neil Ross in a Motion at 9.3 on the agenda **asks** about the Quiet Route from Greenbank to the Meadows

“Council

Notes the proposal for a Quiet Route from Greenbank to the Meadows involving six road closures in Morningside.

Notes the proposal has been made without notifying any residents living on or near the proposed route or permitting residents the opportunity to express their views on the proposals, either positive or negative, by way of public consultation.

Notes the proposal claims to tackle rat-running traffic but does not address speeding traffic on Hermitage Drive or Midmar Drive.

Notes the proposal includes two options for Braid Road, either to remain closed or to re-open for southbound traffic only.

Notes that the Council is proposing to implement the scheme by means of a Temporary Traffic Regulation Order despite the fact that there is no evidence that local residents and users of the route have any difficulties meeting the social distancing

rules on this route.

Notes that the Council's Commonplace online ideas tool collected twice as much support for protected cycle lanes on Whitehouse Loan than for closing that road to motor vehicles.

Notes the condition of the road surface on the proposed route, apart from Whitehouse Loan, is generally poor, especially on Canaan Lane, Cluny Drive, Braidburn Terrace and at the Braid Avenue/Cluny Gardens crossroads.

Believes that the level of danger of the transmission of Covid-19 infection between cyclists and other road users on the proposed route is so low that it does not justify using the Council's emergency powers to implement this scheme.

Believes that local residents should be allowed to express their views on traffic management and road use proposals in their communities and that their views should be taken into account before a decision is made on whether to implement such proposals.

Therefore proposes that the implementation of the Greenbank to Meadows Quiet Route using a temporary traffic regulation order should be paused and instructs officers to hold an informal public consultation in the next three months with residents living on or near the proposed route and the school communities of James Gillespie's High School and Primary School and NHS Lothian to identify levels of local support for

- 1) the existing proposals for a Greenbank to Meadows Quiet Route; and
- 2) an alternative proposal for the same route, not involving road closures, to
 - i) install segregated cycle lanes on Whitehouse Loan from Astley Ainslie to the schools; and
 - ii) prioritise future road re-surfacing

of Braidburn Terrace, the Braid Avenue/Cluny Gardens crossroads and the relevant sections of Canaan Lane and Cluny Drive that are part of the route; and

iii) introduce traffic calming measures along the length of Hermitage Drive and Midmar Drive;and

iv) re-open Braid Road and use the time available before re-opening to re-surface the sections that are in poor condition and to install appropriate traffic calming measures, such as raising the road surface at road intersections and installing a pedestrian and cycle crossing near the entrance to the Hermitage and a chicane at the corner ... [view the full agenda text for item 9.3](#)



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Braidburn Terrace. Photo: Martin P. McAdam
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