



CORSTORPHINE COMMUNITY COUNCIL – Submission to City of Edinburgh Council’s Transport & Environment Committee 1 October 2020

The Corstorphine Community Council wishes to make the following submission to the City of Edinburgh Council’s Transport and Environment Committee (TEC) as our residents are affected by the Low Transport Neighborhood(s) plans being discussed at the TEC meeting on 1 October 2020. Indeed, the Corstorphine CC has specifically been mentioned in the papers Committee members are considering.

BACKGROUND

The Corstorphine CC has consistently solicited the views of residents to inform and prioritise our activities. This was initially achieved through undertaking a **Placemaking Exercise** with the assistance of the City of Edinburgh Council. The Exercise involved utilizing a Scottish Government designed matrix to ascertain resident satisfaction on the services and facilities in the area. We conducted a series of public meetings and an online survey which provided significant numbers of contributions from residents across Corstorphine. The number one issue for residents was what can broadly be described as the Environment. There is a deep appreciation of the access residents have to green spaces such as parks and playing fields and a desire to move freely and safely within the area. Equally there was concern about increasing levels of traffic which would be exacerbated by building in the West of the City, poor air quality, traffic management and parking. There was such strong feeling on the latter matter that we held a **Traffic Management and Parking Public Meeting** which was attended by local elected representatives, Council officials, the Police and a large number of residents from across Corstorphine. The meeting was emotive with residents demanding immediate action on long standing problems.

Subsequently the Community Council hosted the Environment, Climate Change and Land Reform Committee of the Scottish Parliament. The Committee who were producing a report on poor air quality in Scotland singled out Corstorphine for attention and comment as St. John’s Road had the unwanted epithet of ‘the most polluted street in Scotland’.

The Community Council has also hosted representatives of the Transport and Environment Committee at one of regular monthly meetings to discuss action on pollution issues, particularly around the proposed Low Emission Zone (LEZ) for Edinburgh.

To reiterate Corstorphine CC has advocated on behalf of residents articulating the views and concerns they have expressed to us.

LTN(s)

The **East Craigs ‘Low Traffic Neighbourhood’ (LTN)** falls in part within the Corstorphine CC area that takes in Craigmount (East Craigs itself is part of Drum Brae CC area). During the one-week notification period Corstorphine CC received one written representation from a resident which was immediately forwarded to Council officials. We did not have the time and resources to widely canvass residents’ opinions during this period. There has been considerable local opposition to the proposals with a 2,500-signature petition opposing the LTN and crowd funding to challenge the City



Council in court. Members of Corstorphine CC attended the public meeting on Friday 28 August held in Gyle Park. National and Local elected representatives addressed a large crowd of residents, the majority of which appeared opposed to the introduction of the LTN in its current form. The principal reasons cited are misuse of Covid -19 powers to pursue an Administration agenda (the Community Council does not have the competence to comment on questions of legality); lack of resident consultation; mixed messages as to why the Council wishes the LTN to be introduced; and more. The City Council administration committed to review the LTN proposal considering the representations they had received. A revised LTN has been produced which in part reflects the requested changes and the Community Council welcomes this.

The **Corstorphine South LTN** has evolved from an initial proposal for a Filtered Permeability Scheme (FPS) in the Featherhall area of Corstorphine. Featherhall has long been identified as an area with chronic parking and 'rat running' issues. Corstorphine CC secured £50,000 of Council funding to establish a one-way system on Featherhall Avenue to address traffic flow problems. The one-way system had been overwhelmingly endorsed by the residents in a Council consultation following a trial. Council officials then approached Corstorphine CC with an alternative proposal for an FPS which would deal with the issues in a more holistic fashion. We have now been informed that the FPS will be part of a wider Corstorphine South LTN. We have no details of what this will encompass.

CONCLUSION

Corstorphine CC is entirely supportive of the health and safety rationale behind the 'Spaces for People' measures; recognises the intent behind Low Transport Neighbourhoods; continues to advocate for traffic management measures including combating parking and 'rat running' issues; and encourages provision for cyclists and walkers. We strongly advocate for an exacting Low Emission Zone (LEZ) for the whole City and not the two-tier LEZ that is currently proposed. We could hardly do otherwise with St. John's Road and Queensferry Road as two of the most polluted roads in Scotland within and adjacent to our area.

There are Corstorphine CC members who are informed; eloquent; and measured in their advocacy of active travel and related matters. This does not mean that they should be dismissed as 'activists'. Corstorphine CC is not 'anti car'. Rather we support the right of all our residents to move freely and safely and that includes cycling and walking.

Ultimately Corstorphine CC would be failing in our duty to a significant number of our residents if we did not advance their strongly held concerns about the introduction of the East Craigs LTN. Firstly, there are concerns about democratic accountability. Secondly there needs to be greater transparency from the Council administration about the strategy and methodology they are employing to achieve their objectives. Change and modal shift requires community buy in. This will not be achieved in a polarised and increasingly politicised argument. We believe that the Community Council as an apolitical representative body has a pivotal role going forward in achieving outcomes that all can appreciate as meretricious. The 'Say No East Craigs LTN ('Get Edinburgh Moving') Residents Action Group have been invited to join Corstorphine CC in the same manner as Residents Associations in Pinkhill and Forrester. We hope the Committee will accept and work with the Community Council.

I appreciate that this exposition is lengthy, but I felt it was important to correct any misapprehension about Corstorphine CC's motivation and give some context to our continued commitment to improving our areas environment and enriching the lives of our residents. We will continue to engage with the City Council in a collaborative manner to achieve these ends.



·CORSTORPHINE·
Community Council

STEVE KERR
Chairperson
Corstorphine Community Council