

TRAFFIC AND ROAD SAFETY ADVISORY PANEL – 22 April 2021

PUBLIC QUESTIONS (ITEM 4)

Under Rule 49 of the Executive Procedure Rules, members of the public may question the Chair of the Panel at meetings relating to matters within the terms of reference of the Panel. There is a time limit of 15 minutes for the asking and answering of public questions.

1.

Questioner: Ian Price

Asked of: Councillor Jerry Miles, Chair of Traffic and Road Safety Advisory Panel

Question: “At the 2nd March meeting it was suggested that a representative of motorists or businesses should be present at future meetings. Is there an update on how this suggestion will be taken forward?”

2.

Questioner: Anonymous resident

Asked of: Councillor Jerry Miles, Chair of Traffic and Road Safety Advisory Panel

Question: “The consultation on LTNs involved misinformation along 'Project Fear' lines, illegal fly posting, online abuse, verbal threats in the street. All have been reported and documented. This question is posted anonymously on the victims behalf due to fear of further action.
The Council failed to promote it's proposal and to actively counter the misinformation with factual responses. Leaflets were produced and distributed, funded by the ant-LTN group, and flyposted.
Examples provided with this question show statements that residents would be charged for permits, excessive levels of funding needed, council tax increased, and presenting unfeasible alternatives such as speed cameras which have no funding.
The low turnout in the neighbourhoods was due to residents not wanting to get involved in a heated atmosphere of misinformation and abuse.
Do councillors believe the consultation was fair and accurately represents the views of the residents of the neighbourhoods? If not, an investigation and a way forward proposal needs bringing back to this committee.”

3.

Questioner: Glenys Chiswell

Asked of: Councillor Jerry Miles, Chair of Traffic and Road Safety Advisory Panel

Question: “Assuming that the council votes to extend the trial period for the school

street schemes, what system will be put in place to ensure residents directly affected by them, will have fair and equal access to all the necessary services (eg tradespeople, deliveries, taxis etc) and visitors during the times of operation so that we can live normally like other Harrow residents? Many of these things cannot be scheduled and it seems that we are being penalised for living near to a school.”

4.

Questioner: Gerry Devine

Asked of: Councillor Jerry Miles, Chair of Traffic and Road Safety Advisory Panel

Question: “Not all of the restrictions introduced as part of the LTN have been significantly controversial. Indeed, even the groups who have strongly opposed the LTNs as a whole have acknowledged issues on particular roads and not opposed local interventions that do not impact through traffic. The closure of Beresford Road in LTN-02 creates little inconvenience for residents and no inconvenience for through traffic. It has been very successful in eliminating speeding on Beresford Road and Grafton Roads and so significantly increasing safety for people walking and cycling to Harrow Recreation Ground - in particular children and the elderly. As such, would the committee consider recommending that the emergency services are consulted to allow the trial closure of Beresford Road to be reinstated in full for a further 12month trial period, or made permanent?”

5.

Questioner: Karen Joliff

Asked of: Councillor Jerry Miles, Chair of Traffic and Road Safety Advisory Panel

Question: “When will the pedestrian crossing outside West Harrow tube station and rear entrance to Vaughan school be reinstated?”

6.

Questioner: Claire Tolley

Asked of: Councillor Jerry Miles, Chair of Traffic and Road Safety Advisory Panel

Question: “I’m delighted that the council are looking to extend the School Streets scheme to encourage sustainable travel for our children to and from school. However, given the council is also eliminating the Low Traffic Neighbourhoods which provide access to some of the schools in the scheme, how are they proposing to make those streets safe for the parents and children to walk/bike to those schools? The danger that has been a major reason behind parents not walking/biking in the first place will return at the very point you are forcing them out of their cars.

I bike my two children to school more than a mile away and with most residents having been ignoring the 20mph/emergency access only signs anyway, it has been increasingly dicey and will only get much worse when the road signs/planters are physically removed and the HGVs return with a vengeance - particularly as your report states no cameras can enforce the 20mph limit. So please can we understand what the strategy is to make our streets safe to walk/bike to school?"

7.

Questioner: Anonymous resident

Asked of: Councillor Jerry Miles, Chair of Traffic and Road Safety Advisory Panel

Question: "According to Department for Transport figures, in the 11 years since the introduction of the satnav function in Googlemaps in the UK, 3.9 billion more miles are now being driven down residential streets and other minor roads in London each year - a greater than 50% increase and it should be noted that there was no corresponding increase in overall traffic miles on A and B roads over the same period. This is also compared to no increase in the volumes of traffic on this category of "C" and unclassified roads in the entire 16 year period prior to this satnav function being introduced. This is compounded by the fact that Sustrans research suggests that driving a mile on a minor urban road is twice as likely to kill or seriously injure a child pedestrian, and three times more likely to kill or seriously injure a child cyclist, compared to driving a mile on an urban A road. Cut through traffic levels and speeds, driven by satnav, are now a big problem and this traffic is far more dangerous when carried on minor roads than main roads.

I have seen correspondence between a Conservative Councillor and a resident within the LTNs acknowledging that something needs to be done about the "significant" issues posed by traffic on a number of these roads but just saying that he supports alternative infrastructure interventions to LTNs. The forward to the recent consultation also promised that other measures were being considered. The Council's own report on the Consultation now notes that, "Without the LTN restrictions, the original issues of high volumes of traffic and speeding will return to the residential streets." Yet the Council's report also suggests that there is little or no funding available for alternative measures, which was the answer residents were given repeatedly before the LTN schemes came along. So given that we have bipartisan acknowledgement of the significant problem and support for a solution, if the LTNs are to be removed, will the committee now ask the Council's transportation team to draw up a comprehensive package of speed reduction and road safety measures for each of the LTN areas? Whilst these will be less effective at solving the issue than the LTNs themselves, please could this package of measures at least include 1. proper speed bumps and not just speed cushions which have proved entirely ineffective at addressing the speeding issues to date and 2. appropriate width restrictions given the issues of HGV through

traffic (particularly on Pinner View where it had been having a significant detrimental impact on residents's lives day and night with lorries ignoring the weight limit)."

8.

Questioner: Samantha Pali

Asked of: Councillor Jerry Miles, Chair of Traffic and Road Safety Advisory Panel

Question: "I'd like to know for the public LTN consultation when it was switched from being roadblocks to ANPR monitoring who made that decision, and were TARSAP committee members consulted prior to that being the formal consultation?"

9.

Questioner: Heshma Shah

Asked of: Councillor Jerry Miles, Chair of Traffic and Road Safety Advisory Panel

Question: "With there being an overwhelming sense of support for road calming measures, the main roads such as parkside way where there is an S bend close to Southfield park and Kingsfield avenue has seen many serious accidents such as the one in February involving a white vehicle. Why would speed cameras not be considered on the S bend as looking at pictures of it this was very very serious and this isn't the first time accidents like these have happened on this S bend and also how will you enforce the 20 mph throughout the roads?"

10.

Questioner: David Willis

Asked of: Councillor Jerry Miles, Chair of Traffic and Road Safety Advisory Panel

Question: "Considering the clear result and mandate presented by results of the various LTN/Cycling 'Consultations' - notably the 'StreetSpace' and 'CommonPlace' activities - it is now apparent that the Council has seriously underestimated their actual priorities as far as the Transport needs for the Residents are concerned.

Accordingly, as TARSAP has a long-standing dedicated Advisor as far as the minority Cycling group is concerned, is it not time to also appoint an Advisor on the Panel who represents the Majority - Motorists - in the Borough too?"

11.

Questioner: Ben Wealthy

Asked of: Councillor Jerry Miles, Chair of Traffic and Road Safety Advisory Panel

Question: “Whilst the outcome of the consultation on new Low Traffic Neighbourhood Schemes and cycle lanes is clear, it is also clear that the issues they were designed to contribute to addressing such as improving air quality, road safety, the vibrancy of local high streets and health and wellbeing remain.

Bearing in mind these schemes were part of a top-down government initiative, what lessons has the Traffic and Road Safety Advisory Panel learnt about how Harrow Council can lead more participatory conversations about future proposals so that we can tackle these challenges in positive and practical ways as a community?”

12.

Questioner: Anonymous resident

Asked of: Councillor Jerry Miles, Chair of Traffic and Road Safety Advisory Panel

Question: The definition of a ‘successful’ outcome to the LTN-02 trial was provided by David Eaglesham, Harrow Head of Traffic, Highways & Asset management on the 25th August 2020:

“A positive outcome would be a reduction in vehicle traffic within the LTNs and an increase in pedestrian and walking with no significant adverse effects on congestion and delay on the main roads. This would need to be assessed over a period of time, up to 6 months, in order to allow traffic patterns to settle and establish any meaningful longer term changes in traffic patterns.”

Comparing the Council’s own data for July 2020 and Feb 2021, the outcomes of the trial in LTN-02 appear to be as follows:

Vehicle traffic within the LTNs was reduced by 66% since the start of trial on weekdays between July 2020 and Feb 2021. This is a success.

Pedestrians traffic has increased by 85% between July 2020 and Feb 2021. This is a success.

Cumulative queue lengths on surrounding main road junctions have increased by 2% on weekdays and actually decreased by 20% on weekends.

Please note that schools were not open for either July 2020 or Feb 2021 surveys.

The LTN-02 trial (and other LTN trials) have therefore comprehensively achieved the ‘success’ criteria originally defined by the council at the beginning of the trial.

Despite this, the recommendation in the report is to remove these schemes with immediate effect which as stated in section 2.85 of the report will definitely result in traffic increasing on both the LTN roads and on the surrounding main roads, and will cost £25,000. In other words the report is recommending that Harrow Councillors choose to spend £25,000 to guarantee that traffic (and accompanying pollution) will increase on all roads over the coming months and years, while at the same time losing the opportunity to learn anything concrete about how LTNs function in Harrow outside Covid restrictions.

Considering the success of the actual trial against the stated criteria to date and its critical importance to Harrow's Strategic Objectives, could you please explain therefore why the trial of the existing LTN-02 scheme is not being considered for extension to see if public support increases over time (as has been achieved in other successful LTN areas), and to verify any remaining uncertainty regarding Covid impacts?"

13.

Questioner: Joshua Levine

Asked of: Councillor Jerry Miles, Chair of Traffic and Road Safety Advisory Panel

Question: "Will Harrow Council commit to continued traffic and pollution monitoring on both the existing LTN-02 & LTN-04 roads and surrounding roads so that a data baseline can be established for future reference regardless of whether or not the trial schemes are removed, and will Harrow Council likewise commit to reporting on the outcomes at each future TARSAP so residents are kept informed about how much the traffic and pollution is increasing in their roads year on year?"

14.

Questioner: Veronica Chamberlain

Asked of: Councillor Jerry Miles, Chair of Traffic and Road Safety Advisory Panel

Question: "According to the Harrow Walking, Cycling and Sustainable Transport Strategy 2019, the overall target for mode share of daily trips to be made by foot, cycle or public transport in Harrow is 64% by 2041. This is a very general and distant aspiration.

Given that the current mode share for cycling is around 1% of journeys in Harrow, what are the Panel's targets for Harrow's mode share of cycling in 2025 and 2030?"