

DEPUTATIONS FROM MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC

A period of not more than fifteen minutes shall be allowed at each ordinary meeting of the Council for the hearing of deputations from members of the public. Each deputation may be heard for a maximum of five minutes.

Deputations received:

(i) Deputation: Visitor car parking in Brighton

Ed Pearce, Cecil House Hotel

Stephen Hipwell, Granville Hotel (Executive committee member BHAA)

Sharon Callaghan, Strawberry Fields – (Executive committee member BHAA)

Max Leviston, Sealife Centre (Chair of Seafront Traders Association)

Presented by: Ed Pearce

- Increase of charges in Regency Square car park following renovation
- The impact of these price changes on local business
- Number of people now using the car park following renovation
- The impact of reduction in numbers on local business
- Pay by phone/card meters installed by the beginning of the summer season - when will these be in place?
- Negative feedback about the timing of the meters running through to 20:00
- There was a commitment to limit tariff increases to a range of 30-40%, and the increases are effectively double that in Regency Square

(ii) Deputation: Better Bus Area Proposals

Stephanie Clay
Carole Hayman
Rick Hurst
Jan Norris
Josh Pulman

The Better Bus Scheme will have a huge impact on the Carlton Hill area, this was not mentioned at all in the consultation. We hope to persuade you that far from being 'Better', the impact of this scheme will be negative for the local community.

The information on the scheme is not consistent, speaking in one place of a carriageway that is oversized for the traffic it carries and suggesting elsewhere that buses are held up by traffic. This is not the case, delays to buses occur in the section of the road at the end of the proposed scheme where the road narrows. This scheme will not shorten bus journeys as it claims.

Some local people have had an opportunity to comment on aspects of the scheme. Many local people did not receive a consultation form and did not know about the consultation day.

The scheme aims to improve the experience of cycling along Edward Street. Many of us cycle on Edward Street daily. We see no benefit in having a lane free of cars as the road width means that car drivers give us plenty of room already. Cars, buses and bicycles share the road with no problems. The main hazard for cyclists is not traffic but the appalling road surface on the westbound carriageway.

Over the past 18 months the amount and speed of traffic on Carlton Hill and surrounding roads has increased. The improved layout of the junction of Johns St and Carlton Hill makes Carlton Hill appear an inviting rat run. In the rush hour many motorists use the hill as a way of avoiding the lights and crossings on Edward St and the Steine. Cars speed up the hill, cut down White St or Blaker St or carry on up to Queens Park Rd. It is increasingly hard to cross Carlton Hill in the rush hour, the screech of brakes and the blare of horns is often heard. In June a pedestrian was knocked down by a car travelling up the hill. Traffic noise disturbs residents as cars are usually speeding and engines are at high revs to get up the hill, nobody takes any notice of the 20mph limit. The recent BHCC public health report recommends reducing noise and traffic levels in residential areas as a path to reducing the incidence of depression. Cycling on the hill is becoming more and more dangerous. If the scheme is implemented more traffic will use residential streets containing one school and the walking route to two schools and two nurseries. What measures are being taken to restrict the volume and speed of traffic in the area? Is it even a consideration or has the impact of the scheme on the surrounding area been overlooked? The quality of the air we breathe will decrease and not increase as the proposal claims.

Having all cars use one lane will make the road more difficult and dangerous for pedestrians to cross. The crossing on Edward Street near Amex is no longer sited where people wish to cross the road. The present scheme will not seek to remedy this. Why put an upgraded crossing in the wrong place? If the Edward Street development goes ahead then the crossings will need to be re-sited –why does this scheme not take account of that? This piecemeal development will not produce a pleasing environment or one that benefits the community.

The proposed raised entrances to roads leading off Edward St would be an obstacle to eastbound cyclists already dealing with a steep gradient. Traffic would already need to stop at the junctions and would not be slowed. Those with buggies and mobility issues are equally well served by ramped kerbs.

The scheme would cause disruption during construction and would bring no benefit to our community. On the contrary it will increase levels of traffic, decrease our air quality, make our roads less safe for pedestrians and cyclists. We urge the committee to abandon this flawed scheme and look instead at restricting traffic on Carlton Hill and improving the commercial area of St James St.

(iii) Better Bus Area Proposals- St James' Community Action Group

Steve Parry

1.) that the Better Bus Area proposals for Edward Street be reviewed to consider the whole area affected, in particular St James's Street

2.) A significant reduction in the number of buses travelling along St James's Street and rerouted to go EAST along Edward Street.

Our objective is to improve the environment in our area for the residents, visitors and people who work, shop and spend their leisure time in St James's Street and the immediate locality. One of our MAJOR priorities is to reduce the amount of traffic using St James's Street and we maintain that many, if not all of the buses could easily be rerouted to travel east along Edward Street. Our objection to the better bus plan is that the present proposal for a bus lane only going west leaves St James's Street as the corresponding east bound bus lane.

We are of the firm view that St James's Street with its narrow roadway designed for the age of horse drawn traffic and tall Georgian and Victorian buildings is unsuitable for the level of traffic flow involved.

As such, **we cannot support the Better Bus Plan** until there are changes to facilitate buses going east along Edward Street from Grand Parade and so wish to register our strong objections to the present plan. We also do not believe adequate consultation was undertaken with local businesses and residents and so are asking the committee and your officers to review the current plan.

**St James' Community Action Group (Local Action Team) Deputation to
B.H.C.C. Transport Committee**

Background material

Pollution

According to Brighton and Hove City Council data, St James's Street with 2,200 vehicles a day (600 buses) is more polluted than the A259 with 38,000 vehicles per day. The subsequent pollution is a major factor in lower life expectancy and increase in deaths. Transport planning cannot ignore these issues and it would be socially and medically irresponsible to do so.

Go-ahead Group (Brighton and Hove)

St James' Community Action Group has on more than one occasion approached our local bus company to discuss the problem of buses in St James's Street but has been repeatedly rebuffed.

Go-ahead Group (Brighton and Hove), have said that they do not need to consult the people who live on their routes, and that they can run their buses unrestricted by any democratic process.

If their contention, that they are not restricted to any outside body is correct, then the only option left will be to press for a full pedestrian precinct on at least part of the street which would remove all buses from the street or consider some form of judicial review.

The report of The Centre for Retail Research (CRR) warns that 20% of all retail space will close by 2018 (nationally that will be 62,000 shops and 316,000 jobs) due to the move to online shopping. St James's Street will not be immune to these changes. We would like to see Brighton and Hove City Council prioritise improvements in the street environment in St James's Street and surrounding area which has been neglected by successive councils of differing political parties.

We see this as being part of the Edward Street Quarter and the Better Bus Plans, supporting the community in maintaining its diverse leisure and shopping.

The St James' Community Action Group

Was reformed in November 2012 (replacing the previous body) and formally constituted in March 2013. It is the recognized LAT for the St James's Street area and already involves around 300 businesses and residents. General Meetings are held every three months, Working Group meetings are held as and when required

and a Steering Group currently meets every fortnight. Minutes are produced and published for each meeting and we maintain a web site and a Facebook page.

The St James' Community Action Group is a residents led group with no political affiliations and we actively maintain that position.

We welcome the help and assistance of B.H.C.C. elected members and officers.

The issues of shared space and transport are one of four priorities for action decided upon by our General Meeting.

SJCAG has started discussions with residents of adjacent areas to ensure that our approach unites the whole community and represents needs and wishes reflecting St James's Street area, Turner and Kemp Town