

ENVIRONMENT, TRANSPORT & SUSTAINABILITY COMMITTEE ADDENDUM

4.00PM, TUESDAY, 23 JUNE 2020

VIRTUAL MEETING (SKYPE)

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ADDENDUM

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WRITTEN QUESTIONS

A period of not more than fifteen minutes shall be allowed at each ordinary meeting for questions submitted by a member of the public.

The question will be answered without discussion. The person who asked the question may ask one relevant supplementary question, which shall be put and answered without discussion. The person to whom a question, or supplementary question, has been put may decline to answer it.

The following written questions have been received from members of the public:

(v) Walking and cycling in Kemptown – Martin Farley

"The Lockdown since March 2020 has had a very negative impact on shops, bars, restaurants and other traders in Kemptown. The Government's Emergency Active Travel Fund requires the council to introduce swift and meaningful measures to make it safer for cyclists and pedestrians, to be implemented within 8 weeks.

What proposals are being urgently developed to give local businesses a boost by allowing people to walk and cycle in Kemptown in a fully or partly pedestrianised environment so that people are attracted to the area, especially in the local shopping centres of St James Street and St George's Road?"

(vi) 20mph limits – Jonny Anstead

Low vehicle speeds are critical to safety, but also to enabling walking and cycling and independent movement for children. Under Covid that's more important than ever.

In my neighbourhood the 20mph limit isn't observed or enforced. Freshfield Rd is dangerously fast and with no decent crossing my 11-year old finds it impossible to cross alone.

Sussex Police admit under FOI that they don't enforce the limit, having issued just 3 penalties since 2013 on 20mph roads. Their policy is for street design to encourage self-enforcement.

What measures is the council taking to create a low speed culture in Brighton & Hove?

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:

(1) Deputation: Low Traffic Neighbourhood

Local environmental community group Hanover Action want a Liveable or Low Traffic Neighbourhood to be created across Hanover. Demand amongst residents to make the streets more open for people and closed to through traffic is very high here and has increased since lockdown began. People have enjoyed the reduction in traffic, while social distancing has been made more challenging by the narrow streets.

Numerous requests have been made by the residents of Hanover to the crowdsourcing website [WidenMyPath](#), for measures to reduce traffic and make active travel easier for cyclists and pedestrians.

Some streets in the area already have minimal traffic, and people in other streets want the same quality of life, improved social interactions, support of local retail, and ease of active travel enabled by a Liveable Neighbourhood.

Hanover Action are well placed to support the roll out of a pilot Liveable or Low Traffic Neighbourhood scheme in the area. We are committed to supporting council officers in many practical ways to bring this about. We are able to represent the residents and articulate local issues, and we are well set up to engage with further residents, to bring the community with us to lay the groundwork for such a pilot. We are also committed to taking care of subsequent practical measures, such as looking after street planters and trees, and of course using the streets to their full social potential. Essentially, we want to support BHCC's officers in any way we can to lighten the load and to make a pilot LTN in Hanover a great success that other areas of the city will want to copy.

The Department for Transport's emergency COVID-19 transport guidelines specifically mentioned low traffic neighbourhoods. Please can you commit to working with us, and harnessing the enthusiasm and commitment in Hanover as part of your emergency transport activity?

We would be grateful if you could share with us and the public how residents can feed in to the process and what the timescales are. We would also be grateful if you could share key decisions with us about the Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan and Emergency Access Travel Fund announced by the Government, in particular, how we might draw on the fund to benefit our area.

Supported by:

Lead Good (Lead Spokesperson)
Jackie Strube

Ian Macintyre
Ms Dinah Clarke
Sarah Gorton
Kristoffer Hewitt

(2) Deputation: Francis Street Safety Issues

Residents would like to know why we are still waiting for outstanding safety issues to be resolved in Francis Street which have been ongoing since 2014. This document also includes a timeline record of the efforts made by local residents regarding safety issues on Francis Street since 2014. We feel we have participated in so many actions, met with council staff, logged problems (as advised) in the street when they happen by photograph, gathered resident comments numerous times and sent hundreds of emails to various parties involved in potentially improving the street – to no avail. We feel we need to lay out clearly what we have done, and what’s been promised, and yet still no improvements have been made.

The current situation finds us with a dangerous street (residents have variously gathered proof/photographs, plus a safety audit carried out by the developers own auditors in 2016 admitted many problems) but still no improvements to date. We have been promised much but BHCC and Hyde have delivered little. It has been a very confusing situation for residents to deal with and campaign for: this issue has been going on for 5 years and for some resident representatives at times has felt like a full-time job and caused immense stress.

Summary of objections:

The safety issues have remained the same since day 1 of residents reporting them, but 5-6 years later despite interactions with Hyde/BHCC nothing has changed.

Many of our complaints and requests for information or response have gone ignored.

The last contact between residents and BHCC/Hyde appears to be Summer 2019 (see timeline) and since then there has been silence – this is unacceptable.

Summary of questions and demands:

Some thoughtful and progressive proposals for improvements were discussed by residents and council reps (Andrew Renaut and Louisa Greenbaum) in 2017 at a meeting in Presuming Ed Café. Barrows RA Chair Ross Harper also made a deputation to the council on our behalf that year. Our proposals went forward to an ETS meeting in July 2017 where they were received positively, and we had high hopes. Since then, we have heard from Andrew Rawlingson at BHCC that these have subsequently been watered down to much more minimal ‘remedial works’, missing out many features which are needed to prevent danger to life – why has this happened?

There appears to be a deadlock between BHCC/Hyde in terms of who is responsible for any works, and that any works are waiting on “drawings” in order to go ahead. These “drawings” have remained a sticking point for almost 2 years which seems absurd. What is the current situation?

Many residents are at their wits end with the situation in the street – there are no speed limit or one way signs, parents with children fear for their safety, wheelchair users (many residents in Francis St) and families with pushchairs are forced to walk in the road around parked cars and vans blocking the pavement, and cyclists face danger in the cycle lane as cars speed round the corner to enter the street from Ditchling Road end. These are just some of the issues we’re been telling you about for almost 6 years – does it really take someone to be

injured or killed for some improvements to be made? This is not about resident nimbyism or an “irritation” with traffic or noise; we are aware we live in a central part of Brighton and have our eyes open to the realities of that. What this is about is safety and, frankly, saving lives.

Supported by:

Stella Sims (Lead Spokesperson)

George Butler

Sarah Williams,

Richard Moyse Fenning,

Emma Harwood,

Colin Blanchflower

(3) Deputation: Seafront Signage

We are presenting this deputation to urge BHCC to put new "No Cycling" signs on the Lower Promenade, especially between the Peace Statue and the ramp by the Artists' Quarter. If physical distancing is to work in this area during the Covid period, it will be important to remind cyclists of the need to observe the byelaws and dismount.

We fully support the work of the Council in the Covid period to encourage more walking and cycling. We completely agree that it is important to increase the number of people cycling for pleasure and exercise, so there are fewer journeys made by car. We see the need for clear signage on the Lower Promenade as a coherent part of this strategy - encouraging people to cycle but reminding them of the need to respect the rights of pedestrians, and the importance of protecting their own health, and the health of others, during the Covid period.

The Lower Promenade is one of the few places in the City where pedestrians have a safe space to walk - especially when the need for distancing is forcing people to avoid contact on narrow pavements elsewhere and having to navigate roads amongst speeding traffic. Flashing orange "No Cycling" signboards have been placed at either end of the Lower Promenade by Hove Lawns, where there are also signs painted on the tarmac. There is no similar signage in the "Pedestrian Zone" on the Brighton side of the Lower Promenade.

The absence of clear signage does nothing to encourage those who may not be aware of the byelaw, or who may genuinely be confused. Signboards for the Shelter Hall works may also have encouraged the false impression that cycling has been allowed.

Failure to provide appropriate signage could put BHCC in breach of its duty of care to pedestrians on the Lower Promenade, including its own staff and other public officials who are entitled to a safe system of work. The absence of signage also makes it harder for staff if they try to take any enforcement action, to ask people to dismount.

And it makes the situation more dangerous for people with mobility challenges, including those that need to use cycles or other sorts of wheels even to be outdoors, and cannot access civic amenities on foot in exercise of their lawful rights or other privileges.

BHCC has emphasised the importance of maintaining distance in the current Covid period. Cllr Claire Moonan wrote on 20 March that it is crucial we take social-distancing messages seriously. The Head of Public Health, Alistair Hill, wrote recently that BHCC has put "stencil markings in parks and on the seafront to help people keep a safe distance". Even if the physical distance rule is reduced from 2m to something less, the presence of cyclists would still make distancing impossible in practice.

The Council's own Covid guidance to encourage more cycling in the Covid period cross-refers to the Highway Code: cyclists must not cycle on pavements, or ride in an inconsiderate manner. It is inconsiderate to cycle on the pavements in the Pedestrian Zone on the Lower Promenade - in the Covid period it is also a serious public health issue, for cyclists and everybody else.

We urge the Council to put up proper signage on the Lower Promenade to

require people to dismount, and as part of a coherent strategy to make more space available generally for people to walk and cycle safely in the BHCC area.

Supported by:

Chris Murgatroyd (Lead Spokesperson)

Rachel Ashworth

Hannah Bywaters

Jackie Jones

Nicola Maurice

Fraser Morrison

Simon Northmore

Harry Puckering

Dave Reeves

Honey Weston

Gerry White

Mariusz Wowra

Deputation - Seafront signage- Supporting Information

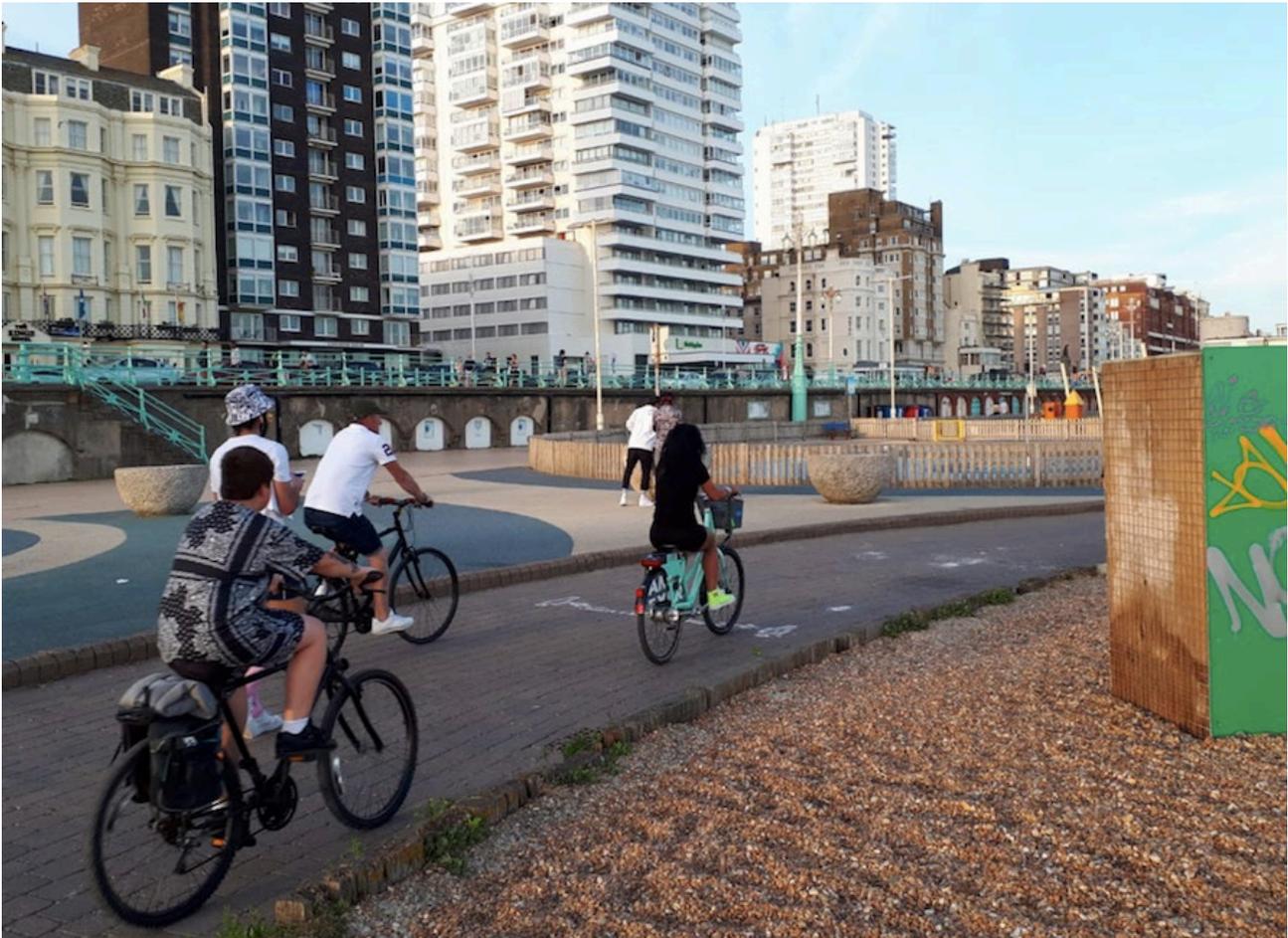
Please see below pictures of cyclists on the Lower Promenade.

- the first picture taken on Thursday 21 May shows how difficult it has now become to enforce the No Cycling bylaw in practice, with misleading signboards at the time appearing to condone cycling. The signboards have now been removed. The picture also shows how cyclists, who should not be cycling in the first place in contravention of the bylaw, are then failing to keep any distance - getting very close to people approaching them, and approaching people from behind who can't hear them, even cycling straight over the new spraypainted signs on the pavement designed to remind people to keep their distance.



- the second picture, also taken on Thursday 21 May shows the particular problem round the Shelter Hall site. Two cyclists are approaching from the east, forcing pedestrians out of their path, another is approaching from the west at the same time, meaning there is no space for pedestrians to keep their distance. The problem is compounded by the fact that others sit on the wall to the south side of the Promenade, making distancing even more difficult amongst those trying to make their way east-west and west-east on foot, funnelled into the narrowest part of the Lower Promenade between the Shelter Hall and the wall.





- the third picture, taken on Tuesday 26 May, shows that people continue to cycle on the Lower Promenade, even after the misleading signboards have now been taken down. Without proper signage, there is nothing to indicate that cycling is not permitted in the Pedestrian Zone on the Lower Promenade. The only notification is in small writing on the BHCC signboards at West Pier, West Street, and the Artists' Quarter.

There are links on the BHCC website to recent pieces on the importance of distancing, respect for others, and plans for walking and cycling by BHCC:

<https://new.brighton-hove.gov.uk/news/2020/consideration-and-respect-important-we-find-new-ways-move-around-city>

<https://new.brighton-hove.gov.uk/news/2020/please-keep-away-our-seafront-save-lives>

<https://new.brighton-hove.gov.uk/news/2020/new-temporary-cycle-lane-a270-old-shoreham-road>