

11 October 2016

Brighton &amp; Hove City Council

**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 depositions from members of the public. Each deposition may be heard for a maximum of five minutes.

Depositions received:

**(ii) Old Town Transport Scheme (Permanent East Street Weekend Closure to traffic)**

I am here to speak in favour of the proposal to permanently close East Street to traffic between the hours of 11am and 7pm Saturday and Sunday - speaking on behalf of a number of East street businesses and others in the locality which are fully supportive of making the trial weekend closure of East Street permanent.

This proposal has been in development for a long period of time as part of a bigger pedestrianisation plan and after consultation and numerous committee meetings resulted in the temporary closure of East Street on Saturdays and Sundays which has been a huge success.

In addition to the road closure at weekend the street has been redeveloped and all parking has been removed and extending loading bays have taken their place. The area has become more open, cleaner and we have experienced reduced criminal/dysfunctional activity due to increased visibility and overall change in the atmosphere. Business owners have taken more pride in their premises and the overall experience of East Street has vastly improved.

The Old Town Transport Scheme proposed a number of years ago was a proposal to reduce traffic in the 'Old Town' area and increase pedestrian access. East street is only a small part of this bigger picture but I believe the temporary weekend closure has had a profound impact on this, reducing the traffic in the area immensely and certainly the speed of traffic seven days of the week even when the road I open.

The weekend closure has given a more fluid and safer pedestrian route from the station, the North Laine through the south lanes through onto the seafront, a friendly and clear route for all members of the public offering a calm safe and stress free city centre experiences that makes people return to the City.

All of the local businesses that I have spoken to directly impacted by the weekend closure have responded positively, saying that it is good for Brighton, turning East Street into a destination street for tourists and residents. That the openness and vast improvements made to the pavements have made it a safer place. That the weekend closure echoes the mood of streets like Sydney Street which has shown long-term benefits of weekend closure.

Some business have gained weekend trade from outdoor dining licences, this has offered sustainability for them and allowed for increase employment during peak

times. A much needed boost to locals, traders and tourists alike thereby adding to the appeal of the city as a whole. The overall experience has allowed businesses to engage more as a community and claim responsibility for their surrounding area.

Permanent weekend closure of East Street will improve the environment around pool valley and perhaps inspire the council and the tenants of the pool valley area to make it a more attractive arrival to the city... offering coach visitors a more engaging city view

As somebody who has been actively involved in East Street developments for nearly 10 years, including attending a Local Action Team meetings for the area I have witnessed a real change on East Street over the last year and I believe that the greater Old Town area needs to be considered for further development and shared space consideration.

Supported by:

Olivia Reid (Lead Spokesperson)

Karl Jones

Nick Vardy

Fiona Mills

Minesh Agnihotri

Diego Cacciolatti

Matt Dimmack

Freddie Mitchell

### **(iii) Deputation to support the offer of funding for a children's playground in Stanmer Park.**

Members may remember the Deputation brought before the March Committee Meeting giving the reasons and progress on providing a Children's Play Area at Stanmer. This Deputation will detail the progress achieved since then, and the roadmap forward to ensuring the project is completed by next Spring/Summer. £30,000 was given to fund it to the charity, Fields In Trust, where with Grant Aid it brings the investment up to £36,000. These need to be committed by 31st March 2017.

Two site meetings have been held to identify a suitable site. The last meeting on September 8th looked at eight possible sights, and was attended by a members of SDNP, the planning authority, Fields In Trust, a B&HCC resident who works for a childrens' disability charity, the two lead officers from Parks Projects and the funders. The B&HCC Conservation officer had previously written to Parks Projects to advise that their department would leave the decision to be agreed between Parks and the SDNP.

The favoured site, from both Parks Projects and the SDNP's perspectives was adjacent to the enlarged car parks that are either side of the Lower Lodges, at the main entrance to the Park. This would have the least impact upon the landscape. It would be easily accessible to both able and less able-bodied children, and visually be compatible with the proposed siting of a kiosk to provide toilets, cycle hire and takeaway snacks and drinks. I have accompanied this Deputation with two sheets of paper showing a map of the area proposed with relevant photographs.

Following the site meeting, South Downs National Park have written to Parks Projects stating that the site is suitable to proceed with. Vicki Colwell, Senior Development Management Officer at SDNP has advised Parks Projects that "it is likely to be permitted development, providing that the equipment does not exceed 4 metres in height or 200 cu. metres in capacity".

Fields In Trust have written to say "I can advise you that following a cursory review of title, Fields in Trust has not identified any obvious legal issues to suggest that the area of land near Lower Lodges which has been identified for the proposed play area would be ineligible for protection with a Deed of Dedication. A full review of title would be conducted upon receipt of a formal application to confirm eligibility for dedication."

Parks Projects have obtained annual maintenance costs from a prospective supplier, and the funders are willing to discuss sponsoring these costs.

To enable this worthwhile project to be achieved, this Committee has to agree that the proposed play area is agreed to be dedicated for recreational purposes in perpetuity. This does not mean that the mix of recreational equipment cannot be changed, or even removed in future. However using the small area for the play area could not be used for non-recreational purposes, extremely unlikely in Stanmer Park! It is therefore requested that this Committee instructs Parks Project to bring a Report back to its December Committee Meeting to formally ask permission to proceed on the proposed site and enable B&HCC's Legal Team to complete the Deed of Dedication for the play area with Fields In Trust. This will enable the area to be prepared in the New Year, and equipment to be procured after tender process, and installed in time for the Summer season.

It is important now to implement this action as Parks Projects will be stretched to give time if the HLF bid is successful when the decision is given in early January. This small project will give hope to the visiting public that there is beneficial change coming to Stanmer Park now.

I wish to thank Paul Campbell and Rob Dumbrill of Parks Projects for their help in this proposal.

Supported by:

Jamie Hooper

Vivien Lockhart Hooper

John Scroggins

Paul West

Lynda West

Becky Jenner

Michael Shrimpton