

ENVIRONMENT CABINET MEMBER MEETING

Agenda Item 41

Brighton & Hove City Council

Subject: Deputations
Date of Meeting: 11 September 2008
Report of: Director of Strategy & Governance
Contact Officer: Name: Tanya Massey Tel: 29-1227
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Key Decision: No
Wards Affected: Various

FOR GENERAL RELEASE

1. SUMMARY AND POLICY CONTEXT:

1.1 To receive the following deputation presented at Council on 17 July 2008 and any deputations presented directly to the Environment Cabinet Member Meeting.

41. (i) Deputation concerning a request for a pedestrian crossing at Queen's Park Terrace.

Mr T Satterthwaite (Spokesperson)

"I am here on behalf of the parents, carers and staff of children at St Luke's Infant and St Luke's Junior Schools to present a petition about a crossing in Queen's Park Terrace.

As part of the Safer Routes to School Initiative in the area of St Luke's Infant and Junior Schools, the pedestrian island halfway along Queens Park Rise at the junction with St Luke's Terrace was removed and the pavement was widened. The intention was to make it safer for parents with their children to walk to school. Unfortunately the result has been exactly the opposite, we now have parents with their children, two times a day unable to cross the road. The road is quiet most of the day but in the mornings and late afternoon it becomes very busy and it can be impossible to get across and quite dangerous. You can have dozens of parents standing lined up along the edge of the road trying to get across, cars do not know they have to stop because there is no crossing.

In my own experience, which is why I became involved in this campaign, I was crossing the junction about six weeks ago with my young son who is three years old, the traffic was stationary and because it was stationary a motor cycle took advantage of that moment to weave through the traffic and missed me and my little boy by about three feet. The main reason being that there was no crossing, no signage so he did not know that he had to stop.

Myself and two other parents have led a campaign to obtain signatures for a petition to present to you. We have 389 signatures which if I could read out:

'We the parents and carers of children at St Luke's Infant School and St Luke's Junior School find the junction between Queen's Park Rise and Queen's Park Terrace dangerous and difficult to cross. We call on Brighton & Hove City Council to install a pedestrian crossing at this junction to improve safety and ensure the priority of pedestrians.'

Now, with the weight of various letters to the council there was a review carried out and my understanding is that the decision was to make no changes. I would assure you that anyone using the junction on a regular basis would profoundly disagree with that. We have some interest from virtually everybody who ever goes across that crossing from the school. There has been a mistake made which should be relatively easy to sort out. A zebra crossing with Belisha beacons is what is clearly needed, so that at quiet times of the day cars can come and go and at busy times cars know to stop and allow children to safely cross with their parents.

A final point I would make is that we ought to encourage children to be able to go to the park, which is at the bottom of this route, on their own safely. Without a crossing they cannot do this, so I do hope this petition will carry some weight with you and an urgent review will be begun."

**RESPONSE FROM COUNCILLOR GEOFFREY THEOBALD
Provided at the meeting of the Full Council on 17 July 2008.**

"Thank you very much Mr Satterthwaite for taking the time to attend this meeting this afternoon and to present the petition on behalf of the many people who have signed it.

May I say how sorry I was to hear about what must have been quite a frightening experience for you and your child.

Can I just emphasise the fact that the safety of road users, especially children, across the city is a very important issue. In this instance, as you mention, the current crossing arrangement was consulted on in 2006 and approved by the Environment Committee in January 2007. That had been designed, taking into account the response the council received to the public consultation and expert technical advice on road safety. I know that the School Travel team are aware of, and have been looking into, this matter with local Councillors and parents, and a number of further assessments and improvements have been made in response to concerns raised.

By continuing to work together with key people, such as Headteachers and parents, we can ensure that the benefits of schemes like this are maximised for both the school and local community.

As is the case with other similar schemes, officers will be visiting the site again early in the Autumn Term as part of the monitoring and evaluation process. However, given the level of concern that has been expressed by

you today and in the petition, I will ask them specifically to look at this matter again and give further consideration to possible alternative solutions that are both safe and feasible.”

