

LEIGHTON-LINSLADE TOWN COUNCIL PLANNING & TRANSPORT COMMITTEE 16 FEBRUARY 2022

Central Bedfordshire Traffic Management meeting on 1 February 2022 discussed the item titled “Leighton Buzzard High Street Traffic Orders.” The CBC Portfolio-Holder Cllr I Dalgarno then announced his decisions. This discussion paper records the discussion, decisions and implications.

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Decision	Comments	Implications for LLTC
<p>To give notice of and consult on an Experimental Traffic Order for Leighton High Street with a duration of a maximum of 18 months, to follow the current ETRO, that</p> <p>a) Allows buses to use the High Street again</p> <p>b) Allows cars to use the High Street again</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The achievability of permanent pedestrianisation relies on a) providing bus stops within or very close to the High Street, b) removing commercial delivery/courier vehicles from the High Street or restricting their use to times that remove the danger of vehicle/pedestrian conflict. 2. The debate preceding the Decision seemed to assume that permanent pedestrianisation of the High Street is an agreed strategic goal. It is not. Such a significant change would require a full public consultation. Cllr Dalgarno said more than once that this permanent pedestrianisation was part of the “Place-shaping” agenda and not within his remit. 3. Blue badge parking was mentioned only in passing. There has been much comment on social media on this issue. 4. Taxis relocating to Market Square, criticised at the Town Council meeting, received barely a mention. 5. An “economic benefit” was claimed during the discussion, but no evidence was adduced in debate or in the officers’ report. 6. Other possible developments, such as free parking, or making the High Street one way, or pedestrianising only the middle of the High Street, were also referred to as within the “Place-shaping” agenda. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Should LLTC discuss these two “elephants in the room” and promote some options-sharing, e.g. through discussions with the bus companies and by researching how other authorities regulate deliveries? Might regulation be an achieve-sooner alternative than waiting years for the LSS access road to be planned and realised? 2. CBC acknowledging the separation of the two issues of Covid-antidoting and planning the long-term future High Street. LLTC need to press CBC for partner status in the place-shaping planning process. We also need to identify which relevant interest groups need to be involved. 3. Can LLTC promote a discussion about whether changes to blue-badge parking are needed? 4. Probably following-on after the bus-stops discussion, should the taxi stand location be revisited? (groan!) 5. Town centre businesses need to be explicitly involved in the Place-shaping discussions, see 2 above. What’s the best way of doing that? 6. See 2. Above. The officers report to CBC’s 1.2.2022 meeting mentioned their papers sent to LLTC in 2015,

	<p>7. Cyclists were not mentioned.</p> <p>8. Partnership Cttee on 10.2.22 resolved to press CBC for a CBC information-giving campaign in readiness for the 10 March 2022 re-opening, coupled with positive enforcement.</p> <p>9. Partnership Cttee also called for all available high street parking spaces to be made half-hour free parking.</p>	<p>recently circulated by the Town Clerk. Those suggestions are worth revisiting by LLTC.</p> <p>7. Cyclists probably an interest group for 2 above, but should cyclist provision for the next 18 months ETRO 2 be reconsidered by P&T Cttee?</p>
To confirm as permanent the current TTRO making Lake Street one-way bus to ask officers to review the adequacy of signage.	No-one dissented from the Portfolio-Holder's view that the experimental change in Lake Street had been a success. The Town Council's Resolved Motion led to the Decision ask CBC officers to review signage. Point pressed at Partnership Committee on 10 Feb.	LLTC P&T Cttee should see and sign-off the small print associated with the "permanent" TRO that CBC will need to publish to verify it meets councillors concerns.
To improve facilities at both High Street and West Street stops, in ways not specified.	Electronic signage for e.g. bus arrival times was mentioned. No other specific improvements were mentioned, nor any suggestion of canvassing the views of passengers.	Should LLTC P&T Cttee form an LLTC view on what bus stop improvements are desirable and seek to influence CBC thinking? If so, it is urgent, eg Vivien is reviewing High Street bus stop amenities with CBC officers today, 11.2.22.
To ask CBC officers to produce some self-regulating way of enforcing restricted use of the High Street by vehicles.	There was general criticism of the widespread flouting of the ETRO's prohibition on vehicles entering the High Street. After 18 months, the only officer solution suggested was the possibility of using ANPR technology when, in the future, it is licensed for usage by local councils. The Portfolio-Holder appeared irritated that officers did not have solutions ready for the meeting such as remotely-operated rising bollards.	Rising bollards (at both ends of the High Street) would be expensive both to install and administer, whilst dozens of delivery vehicles can legitimately claim access and would need operating fobs. But Cllr Dalgarno seems set that manually-operated barriers are too expensive and voluntary use of eg padlocks is unworkable. How would regulating deliveries to certain days/times be enforced? Can LLTC create a dialogue with CBC officers to discuss and influence such issues?
To ask CBC officers to advise on whether ticketing of vehicles ignoring the High Street TRO is practicable.	It is surprising that CBC officers were unable to say whether enforcement measures such a ticketing could legally be done within the TRO.	LLTC might not have (or want) a locus in this particular aspect of managing compliance.