



Supporting greener modes of travel

To be successful and to encourage residents to use greener forms of transport instead of their cars, it is essential that alternative modes of transport are safe and easy to use, and the local infrastructure is adapted to accommodate them. I therefore hope in time to see concrete proposals for cycle hubs, cycle parking and cycle sharing to support people who choose to switch from travel by car to bicycle.

I would also like to see an evaluation of the local streets, to ensure they can provide clear and enjoyable walking routes to local schools and to assess if pavements need to be widened for families in the designated areas to accommodate this, as well as if there is sufficient funding available for these essential measures. Additionally, if the streets are to become truly safer for children travelling to school, on foot or by bicycle, it will be necessary to ensure that speed limits in the areas included in the scheme remain at twenty miles per hour. I hope to see one day the whole of Leicester become a twenty mile per hour City. Whilst I believe you and the Council are supportive, I am concerned that none of these options are explicitly included in the initial proposals.

Risk of social division

I am also acutely aware that schemes elsewhere in the country have divided communities. Similar schemes in London and Birmingham have, for instance, been perceived by some as displacing congestion rather than decreasing it, with no positive outcome for the environment, while also damaging community cohesion.ⁱ As noted by the Local Government Association (LGA) report "Stakeholder Engagement in an Emergency: Lessons from Low-Traffic Neighbourhoods", some of these negative perceptions are a result of the poor implementation of consultations, rather than the principle of the Low Traffic Neighbourhood scheme itself, particularly the tendency by Councils to use practical trials in place of, rather than in addition to, traditional consultations; this has often increased opposition to Low Traffic Neighbourhood schemes by giving critics the impression that they are being imposed from above without the consent of residents.ⁱⁱ When accompanied by poor communication from councils, this has generated considerable opposition and social division.

The need for proper consultation

I believe this is a real opportunity to engage support. I am therefore worried about the type and extent of consultation used for this pilot. I would like to see consultation based on real engagement so that more people can realise the benefits, which could hopefully lead to a potential reduction in car use. I urge Leicester City Council to listen to the advice from the LGA, which argues that "good schemes take time and, "pandemic emergency or not, rushed designs will be weaker and may ultimately fail in time if they do not secure broad public support". Thankfully, the timetable for the implementation of the Council's Low Traffic Neighbourhood pilots should be less constrained now that the Government has adjusted its guidance to address the issue of public support for these schemes; it has affirmed that measures to relocate road space "should be taken as swiftly as possible, but not at the expense of engaging local communities."ⁱⁱⁱ I will be doing all that I can to support the rebalancing of roads in favour of people.

I would therefore be grateful if you would consider implementing a full and engaging consultation exercise, which will allow basic problems to be identified before the practical