

Brighton & Hove City Council

Environment, Transport & Sustainability Committee

Agenda Item 40(c)

Subject: Deputations

Date of meeting: 15 November 2022

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.

Notification of a further Deputation has been received. The spokesperson is entitled to speak for 5 minutes.

3) Deputation: Gardner Street

Having conducted a poll via email and business visits during the w/c 31st Oct 2022, the vast majority of the stores on Gardner Street are positive towards the proposals. However, some points of concern were raised, these were:

- Congested pedestrian/disabled traffic with tables and chairs in the road maybe an issue for some stores. There needs to be a consensus of how tables will be positioned in the street.
- Delivery of goods. Is there a local loading bay that trucks/vans can be directed to?
- Scooter food delivery. Some of the restaurants have a large percentage of their taking come via Uber Eats and Deliveroo. They are worried that this might be reduced if there is not an area dedicated to pick up of delivery or a concession for delivery drivers.

Overall opinion however is wholly in support. Many of the businesses responded to our poll with simple statements such as: "I am in favour of the road closure." Or "We are very enthusiastic about the idea of making Gardner Street pedestrianised."

Others were clearer with their support in saying:

Business 1: "I am very much in favour of this traffic order. The businesses of Gardner street have been calling for this for at least twenty years. I think that for the businesses of Gardner Street to survive over the next few years it is going to be essential to restrict vehicle access, allowing us all to expand, and allowing free moving footfall."

Business 2: "I am totally in favour of the 7 day closure. Most of the traders have been waiting for this for many years. It will bring us in line with the true feel of the North Laine. I spoke to many shopkeepers over the summer who also were very keen for this to happen."

In relation to access:

Business 3: "I am, personally, in favour of closing Gardner Street to traffic during those times, or thereabouts. I'm aware that other places in Europe that have similarly closed similar areas to traffic, albeit more extensively and over larger areas, have seen an increase in visits and trade. In no small part I suspect that this is simply because closing the area to traffic reduces noise and otherwise makes the area less unpleasant to be in. I'm glad that provision has been made elsewhere for blue badge parking. However I don't think that that addresses another problem that I think disabled people, people with pushchairs, and, to a lesser extent, everyone else, has visiting Gardner Street when the road is closed to traffic. Furniture, A boards, and wares, in the North Laine area are often placed partially or even fully blocking the footpath. When Gardner Street is closed to traffic this problem can become worse in some areas, and particularly so when the

area is busy because of street furniture that isn't enclosed or otherwise prevented from being moved about. I think therefore that this problem should be addressed, perhaps by clearly demarcating areas for furniture and wares, or requiring some sort of 'enclosures' for tables and seating, or simply with some enforcement by the council."

Business 4: "We would definitely support a return to the pedestrianisation introduced during the pandemic. We felt it made the street a much more pleasant shopping experience. Obviously we would also be supportive of a disabled access solution. However the disabled parking spots outside our store appear to be used just as much by tradesmen as disabled members of the public, consequently our storefront is often obscured by white vans for a significant length of time each week. So providing alternative disabled access, but also taking appropriate measures to ensure it isn't being abused, would likely be the best solution."

To conclude, Brighton BID Ltd, the City centre Business Improvement District is in broad favour of the proposals and is keen to work with Brighton & Hove City Council to alleviate any negative consequences (intended or not) outlined in this deposition.

Supported by:

Gavin Stewart (Lead Spokesperson)

Paul Loman

Mark Stollar

Ian Baldry

Gary Lester

Adam Le Roy