

## Melton Road New and Improved 24 Hour Bus Lanes Objector's meeting 15/10/21

Present:

**Steve Richards** (LCC, Chairing the meeting), **Objector 3**, **Satbir Kaur** (LCC), **Pravin Godhania** (LCC), **Matthew Finch** (LCC),

**Steve Richards** opened the meeting and introduced everyone.

**Pravin Godhania** briefly summarised the Scheme.

The proposal comprises an extension of the existing bus lane on the inbound carriageway so that it now starts at a point opposite Indigo Restaurant by converting the nearside lane into a traffic lane. In the outbound direction, the bus lane starts after Lanesborough Road and finishing opposite Indigo Restaurant by re-allocating the nearside running lane.

**Steve Richards** invited the objector to expand upon her stated objections.

**The objector** explained that her objections were twofold;

- Querying why a bus lane should be enforceable 24 hours a day.
- Objecting to the proposals on the grounds that they were unnecessary and would increase congestion.

**Pravin Godhania** explained that the proposed 24-hour bus lane is in line with LCC's current practice and policy to encourage sustainable travel including mass transit such as public bus services. The council has been awarded funding for schemes that encourage sustainable travel in the City. The extension of existing bus lanes and creation of new bus lanes are part of a strategy to increase bus capacity for the future. The use of 24-hour bus lanes throughout the city has been decided upon to avoid confusion on the part of drivers. Originally bus lanes were usually only enforceable at peak times such as the morning and afternoon rush hour. However, now traffic flows are different and "Peak Spread" means that there is heavy traffic and congestion at various parts of the day.

**The objector** stated that she didn't think 24-hour bus lanes were necessary on the grounds of avoiding driver confusion as car drivers have a responsibility to follow the rules of the road and be observant including seeing signs and follow what they say.

**The objector** also stated that didn't think the new and extended bus lanes in question was necessary as inbound Melton Road becomes a single carriageway anyway and outbound the bus lane will begin at the point the dual carriageway starts when traffic would start flowing more freely for all vehicles.

**The objector** also stated that there could be better ways to encourage increased use of buses by measures such as free bus passes or discounted fares that would make bus use more attractive.

**Satbir Kaur** responded, saying that because the funding the council received was capital funding it could only be spent on infrastructure such as one-off schemes to create improvements for buses, cycling and walking.

**Satbir Kaur** also asked **the objector** “if the proposed bus lane was peak time only would you withdraw your objection?”

**The objector** replied that she would not withdraw the objection if this was the case as she still disputes the need for the new and extended bus lanes saying buses were usually quite empty and moved quickly.

**The objector** also criticised the way the TRO had been publicised saying that small notices on lamp posts meant not everyone was aware and also suggested more accessible formats would be better along with the use of community languages.

**Steve Richards** replied that he accepted that this was something the Council could do better, and we would look at better ways of engagement in the future.

**Satbir Kaur** added that an advert was placed in the Leicester Mercury as well.

**The objector** replied that the same issues of accessibility and community languages applied to that as well and suggested that better engagement or consultation would include public events where residents could speak to Council Officers and discuss their concerns. She also stated that whilst she supported the principle of improvements to public transport infrastructure, these would be better suited to inner city parts of Leicester.

**Pravin Godhania** said that there was a need to support a bus network that provided a choice for residents of all parts of the city. The aim of the scheme is not to put drivers off but encourage bus use.

The objector’s sister joined the meeting and asked if anyone from the council had actually been to the site of the proposals and observed the traffic or if any surveys had been conducted?

**Pravin Godhania** advised that, yes there had been site visits, site surveys and bus operators had been consulted.

The objector’s sister asked what the result of the surveying was.

**Pravin Godhania** advised that the surveys were conducted at peak periods and that the aim of the scheme was to be capacity neutral.

**Steve Richards** closed the meeting and confirmed with the Objector that she wished for her objection to stand.

Steve Richards advised on the next steps.