

Ref: NT/RP/CW/15.06.2021

16<sup>th</sup> June 2021

Councillor Caro Wild,  
County Hall,  
Atlantic Wharf,  
Cardiff CF10 4UW.



Dear Councillor Wild,

**Environmental Scrutiny Committee – 15 June 2021 – North West Corridor, Castle Street & City Centre East.**

On behalf of the Environmental Scrutiny Committee I would like to thank you and officers for attending Committee on Tuesday 15<sup>th</sup> June to discuss the North West Corridor, Castle Street & City Centre East reports.

In a bid to assist you and the service area, Members of the Committee have requested that I feed back the following comments and observations to you.

**North West Corridor**

In terms of future consultation, Members wish to stress the importance that consultation with a wide, far-reaching range of stakeholders is undertaken as part of this work at the most relevant and earliest opportunity.

Members also wish to reiterate that a key consideration for this work must be that of public behaviour and travel habits and it was felt by some that the Council can still do more to better educate and inform people of the benefit of alternative transport (to that of cars).

As requested at the meeting, Members wish to seek an update and clarity on the delivery of the BRT routes, including confirmation on if it will proceed, reasons for its delay, how you have engaged with private bus companies on the project and information on its anticipated timeline for implementation.

Members note that the next stage of the process is to consider the proposals in more detail, however Members would appreciate initial insight into what you, and officers deem as the 'top three' proposals which are likely to be implemented.

Finally, Members wish to stress the importance of the timeline in delivering transport projects. Although Members acknowledge the range of factors which could impact the delivery of a projects, Members are disappointed by the amount of transport projects which have been delayed. Further to this Members also hold concerns with regard to the amount of new developments proposed for the city prior to the establishment of an aligned transport infrastructure, meaning members of the public could fall into the habit of using cars, habits which are then difficult to change.

### **Castle Street & City Centre East.**

As detailed at the meeting, Members note that this is a temporary measure in order to continue gathering and analysing evidence in order to inform a more permanent scheme. Following our consideration, Members wish to request the following;

- Clarity and insight into how much of the decision to pursue Option 1 was due to the results of the consultation.
- How the decisions to re-open up Castle Street to private traffic has been levelled out against the issue of 'induced demand' and the principles of clean air.

As highlighted by a Committee Member, an argument put forward to justify the reopening of Castle Street is due to traffic being diverted into residential areas. Although Members acknowledge the comments made that the modelling conducted shows that when comparing and forecasting the options, there is greater improvement on road links in Option 1, the evidence provided in today's papers does not evidence the justification surrounding a current

displacement of traffic, as at present, no street is showing higher levels of NO2 levels than pre-pandemic.

In terms of segregated bus lanes, as highlighted by a Committee Member, it is disappointing to note that buses will only have a dedicated lane on the West direction of Castle Street. It is felt by Members only providing one segregated bus lane could be a significant disadvantage for buses at a time when we are trying to encourage members of the public to use public transport. Further to this, Members also hold concerns this could have on bus timetables and the 'stop start' nature for Castle Street traffic causing more pollution. Following on from their consideration Members wish to request to receive in 9 months time a report detailing how closely the actual activity has resembled the modelling that is predicted.

Surrounding electric buses, Members wish to seek further clarity and rationale surrounding if electric buses will be included on this key route, why it has not already been included and when there will be capacity to do so.

Thank you once more to you and the officer for attending the meeting. For ease of reference, the requests detailed in this letter are as follows:

### **North West Corridor**

- An update and clarity on the delivery of the BRT routes, including confirmation on if it will proceed, reasons for its delay, how you have engaged with private bus companies on the project and information on its anticipated timeline for implementation.
- Initial insight into what you, and officers deem as the 'top three' proposals which are likely to be implemented.

### **Castle Street**

- Clarity and insight into how much of the decision to pursue 'Option One' was due to the results of the consultation.

- How the decisions to re-open up Castle Street to private traffic has been levelled out against the issue of 'induced demand' and the principles of clean air.
- In 9 months time, Committee receives a report detailing how closely the actual activity on Castle Street since its re-opening, has resembled the modelling predicted in the papers.
- Further clarity and rationale surrounding if electric buses will be included on this key route, why it has not already been included and when there will be capacity to do so.

Regards,

Handwritten signature of Ramesh Patel in black ink.

Councillor Ramesh Patel

Chairperson Environmental Scrutiny Committee

Cc:

- Andrew Gregory, Director, Planning, Transport & Environment,
- Jason Dixon, Operational Manager – Transport Development and Network Management
- Gethin Shields, Planning, Transport & Environment
- Members of Cardiff's Environmental Scrutiny Committee