

**MEETING NOTE**

**Tramworks – Haymarket and City Centre Embargo**

Friday 28th November 2008  
 The City Chambers, Council Leader's Office

Present: Councillor Jenny Dawe (JD), Council Leader, CEC  
 Councillor Phil Wheeler (PW), Convenor for Transport, CEC  
 Councillor Nick Elliot-Canon (NE-C), Gorgie Dalry Ward  
 Marshall Poulton (MP), Head of Transport, CEC  
 Duncan Fraser (DF), Head of Strategic Services, CEC  
 Gary Turner (GT), Council Leader's Business Manager, CEC  
 Craig Torrance (CT), DA to Cllr Buchanan, CEC  
 Gordon Drummond (GD), Tram Operations Group  
 Graeme Birse (GBir), Chamber of Commerce  
 Michael Apter (MA), City Centre Retail Forum  
 Gordon Burgess (GBur), Leith Business Association  
 Joshua Miller (JM), West End Traders Association  
 Michael Dixon (MD), Federation of Small Businesses

Apologies: Councillor Tom Buchanan, Convenor for Economic Development

		Action
1	<p>Meeting called following correspondence received by JD and Tom Buchanan from business representatives.</p> <p>JD thanked the retailers for their support for the tram project.</p> <p>Meeting provides an opportunity to assess the current position of the tram project and to hear the issues in full from key retailers</p> <p>Not envisaged that any changes will be decided at the meeting but will allow officers to investigate options.</p> <p>GBir - Businesses have been working in very difficult circumstances for over a year</p> <p>Recognition that this is a crucial time for retailers with 30-40% of traders annual turnover of generated during the Christmas period</p> <p>GD - Has received much correspondence from retailers over a wide range of issues to do with the tram project. Much frustration over frequent small changes to the project which are undertaken without informing retailers</p>	
2	<p><b>Project Communications</b></p> <p>There was agreement that project Communications are not of the standard and quality that should have been expected. This has led to a number of surprises for retailers.</p> <p>JD - Communications failings are the subject of ongoing discussions</p> <p>MA - There is a difference in understanding between the project's Private and Public sector stakeholders. Messages are not being conveyed appropriately.</p> <p>GBir - current comms/marketing spend represents 0.001% of project budget - suggest the sum available should be re-examined</p> <p>GD - Agreements reached at Tram Operations Group (TOG) meetings are not being adhered to or recognised by Tie. GD not being informed when major changes to the project are being made.</p>	

<p>3</p>	<p><b><u>Christmas Embargo</u></b>  Embargo is crucial for retailers, especially in the current economic climate. Will provide a short respite from the high degree of disruption associated with the project.</p> <p>GBur - Willie Gallagher had offered a 5-week embargo across the City Centre with the caveat that there may be a request for the works to continue at Haymarket if they were very close to completion. MP agreed that this was his understanding.</p> <p>MA - Wants a clear east-west route for shoppers through Haymarket to the car parks at the East End without major diversions. People must be able to drive into the city centre, park and shop. Had spoken to MP on the 7<sup>th</sup> Nov to stress the need for Shandwick Place to be opened up to traffic</p> <p>GBur - There was an understanding that works would be back filled to open up access during the embargo period.</p> <p><b><u>Haymarket Phase 1</u></b>  DF - Haymarket Phase 1 comprises the area from the Haymarket Bar to Ryries</p> <p>MA stated that one week's notice given of a major extension to the duration of the work and the start of Phase 2</p> <p>JM - Suggestion that consent for the changes to the project timetable was granted by CEC Transport Service on 6<sup>th</sup> November but that the TOG meeting was told nothing of this.</p> <p>DF - Does not believe that a final decision had been taken on the extension of the works at this time but that discussions were ongoing</p> <p>DF commented on the works at Haymarket:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Road Safety Audit (published late October 08) has required slight changes to be made to the location of the tramlines at Haymarket.</li> <li>▪ If tramworks were suspended then roadworks would have to remain for safety reasons.</li> <li>▪ Changes to the temporary traffic management system currently in place would take several weeks to implement and would lead to considerable delays to the whole project</li> <li>▪ Feeling is that the current Traffic Management System is working.</li> </ul> <p><b><u>Haymarket Phase 2</u></b>  DF - Manor Place scheduled to be closed from 29.11.08. Stated that this is Phase 2 and is separate from works at Haymarket.</p> <p>MA - Start of Phase 2 is a clear violation of the embargo.</p> <p>JD – Requested that DF feedback to Tie that they should suspend the implementation of Phase 2 until after the embargo period</p> <p>NEC – Have the hours of work been looked into? Could working hours be increased to shorten the duration of the project?  GBur stated that, when there was a desire to get the works completed on Leith Walk for the start of Infracore, the area was prioritised and with extra resources being made available. Could the same be done at Haymarket?</p>	<p>DF</p>
<p>4</p>	<p><b><u>Mitigation Measures</u></b>  It was agreed that if the works cannot be suspended then efforts must be made to mitigate their impact</p> <p>Possibility of opening up car parks at Murrayfield to create a park &amp; ride facility up to and over the Christmas period. MP to talk to the SRU</p>	<p>MP</p>

	<p>JM – Can improvements be made to the current Traffic Management System? Tie must try to restore as many areas of work as possible. DF to feedback to Tie</p> <p>NE-C – Parts of Dalry Road being used as a builder’s yard – could these be cleared up to ease access?</p>	<p>DF</p> <p>MP DF</p>
<b>5</b>	<p><b><u>Open for Business - Signage</u></b>  GBir – Open for Business campaign being countered by traffic signs which imply that the city is closed</p> <p>Signs should convey a more positive message such as ‘Tramworks suspended’ or ‘Edinburgh Open for Christmas Shopping’.</p> <p>MP - Will look to convey a more positive message.  Six new Variable Message Signs will be placed on outskirts of the city by February ‘09</p> <p>Motorway/Trunk Road Signs – Controlled by Traffic Scotland – MP will discuss placing some promotional messages on them.</p>	<p>MP</p> <p>MP</p>
<b>6</b>	<p><b><u>Leith Walk Embargo</u></b>  Embargo on Leith Walk covers a different period from that in the City Centre and is scheduled to run from 12/12/08 – 19/01/09</p> <p>GBur - Traders had requested 8 week embargo. Tie offered 5 weeks with no negotiation</p> <p>Leith Walk deserves an extended embargo due to the extended duration of the works - area seen to have been ‘ravaged’ for 2 Christmas periods</p> <p>GD - Desire to bring start date forward to coincide with the city centre embargo</p> <p>DF to investigate extending Leith Walk embargo with Tie</p>	<p>DF</p>
<b>7</b>	<p><b><u>George Street</u></b>  GD – Assurances were made that George Street would be ‘put back as it was’. No mention was made of the turning circles which have been put in place and much parking has been removed.</p> <p>Why does George Street need to be altered now that buses have been returned to Princes Street? What chance of taking away the turning circles?</p> <p>DF – Advice from traffic consultants that as many temporary restrictions have been removed from the area as possible whilst maintaining public safety.</p> <p>DF - Access to Hanover Street will be allowed as long as it does not overload the junctions</p> <p>JM – Wishes to see road network returned to its previous state  DF - The previous road layout had safety failings and needed addressed regardless of the tramworks.</p> <p>JD – Asked DF to feed back to Tie the request to restore George Street to its previous state but stressed that public safety in the city centre is paramount</p>	<p>DF</p>

8	<p><b><u>Princes Street</u></b>  GD – Understands that there is a proposal to have uninterrupted tramworks on Princes Street running from the Mound to the West End (approx 600m) - no crossings between the gardens and the north side of the street. TOG have requested 1 or 2 crossing points</p> <p>MP - Tie are very much against having any crossings due to Health and Safety issues. The possibility of providing bridges to cross the Infraco works on Princes Street is to be looked into?</p>	MP DF
	<p><b><u>Project Governance</u></b>  JD – Should not need emergency meetings to resolve issues</p> <p>Questions were raised as to the relationship which should exist between the traders and Tie?  DF - Decisions can be influenced at public consultations and through the TOG</p> <p>GD – What should be the role of the Tram Operations Group? Future of the TOG to be discussed at next meeting in January  JD – Feels that, if decisions had been made at the time of the last TOG meeting but were not communicated then this constitutes a serious failing.</p> <p>MD - When decisions are being made the objectives of Tie are being put before the needs of local businesses. Need for a 'balance of advantage'</p> <p>MP - Papers being prepared for Full Council on the 18<sup>th</sup> with regard to Trams. This could provide an opportunity to look at governance and communications.</p>	GD MP GB JM PW  MP DF  MP
9	<p><b><u>Business Coordinator</u></b>  Current timescale sees appointment to post by March 2009 – viewed as too slow by retailers.  Is it possible to appoint an Interim Business Coordinator?</p>	MP
10	<p><b><u>Summary</u></b>  The following actions are to be carried out with immediate effect:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Communications processes to be improved</li> <li>▪ The future of the Tram Operations Group needs discussed further</li> <li>▪ Looking for CEC to take a greater lead on the project</li> <li>▪ More and better sign posting is to be provided</li> <li>▪ Haymarket Phase 2 works are to be suspended</li> <li>▪ Park and Ride facility at Murrayfield Stadium to be investigated</li> <li>▪ Extend embargo on Leith Walk to start at the same time as the city centre embargo and run until mid January</li> <li>▪ Look to reinstating George Street to the road layout which existed before the</li> </ul>	MP DF  GD MP GB JM PW JD PW MP  MP  DF  MP  DF  DF

	tram Temporary Traffic Measures were put in place	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▪ Princes Street – MP to discuss with JD and progress to be made on crossings</li></ul>	MP JD