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Report of: Councillor James Spencer

Cabinet Member Portfolio: Cabinet Member for City Management

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Summary

This report provides the Scrutiny Committee with an update on key aspects relating to City Management.

City for All Vision and Strategy (2021 – 2022)

- **Thriving Economy**

Alfresco support for Hospitality

The support for hospitality businesses, offering outdoor dining space, has been provided by the Council since June 2020. It has supported schemes in over 45 streets across the borough, providing an extra 17,000 covers for businesses, more than any other local authority in the UK. Over 850 licences have been granted with 450 of those being within ‘Alfresco’ areas. The current programme came to an end on 30 September 2021, as businesses can now operate to capacity indoors. The road closures and barriers that were in place have now all been removed. It should be noted that businesses can still apply for a licence to allow outdoor dining on pavements, providing there is sufficient space to enable access without support from the Council.

There were several locations where permanent schemes were already under development and a series of consultations took place in August and September asking residents and businesses if they supported the development of a permanent scheme and if so, whether they were in support of the temporary scheme remaining in place. All schemes came back with an extremely high level of support from residents and businesses and the temporary schemes in Central Covent Garden, St John’s Wood High Street, Elizabeth Street, Ecclestone Street, North Audley Street and Pimlico have remained in place.

Moving forward there are 11 areas where permanent public realm schemes are being developed, which could allow alfresco dining to be supported in the future.

LOCATIONS	WARD
St John’s Wood High Street	Abbey Road
Marylebone Lane	Marylebone High Street
North Audley Street	West End
Elizabeth Street	Knightsbridge & Belgravia
Ecclestone Street	Knightsbridge & Belgravia
James Street	Knightsbridge & Belgravia
Pimlico (Warwick Way, Denbigh and Churton Street)	Warwick
Soho	West End
Central Convent Garden	St James’s
Opera Quarter (Catherine, Tavistock and Wellington Streets)	St James’s
St Martin’s Lane	St James’s

- **Greener and Cleaner**

Movement Strategy Temporary Cycle Lanes

Throughout May and June 2020, as a response to the pandemic, 14 temporary cycling measures to support active travel and a non-carbon-based recovery were introduced across the City of Westminster to encourage people to travel by bicycle when moving around or through the City. Following an initial review three temporary cycle lanes were removed at Victoria Street, Strand Aldwych and Kingsway.

The remaining 11 schemes, totalling 13km, listed below, are currently being reviewed to recommend whether the scheme should be continued, altered, or removed:

LOCATION	WARD
Portland Place	Lancaster Gate
Paddington Area	Little Venice
Buckingham Palace Road	Lancaster Gate
Abingdon Street	West End
Queensway/Inverness Terrace	Bayswater
Westbourne Terrace Corridor	Little Venice
Harrow Road	Harrow Road
Lupus Street	Churchill
Northumberland Avenue	St James's
Paddington – Royal Oak	Little Venice
Bayswater Road	Bayswater

The review consists of three elements, monitoring (which has been ongoing for the last six months), feedback from key stakeholders (i.e. Transport for London and impact on the bus network.) and a consultation with residents and businesses.

The consultation will follow the same principles as the consultation on Alfresco. It will ask residents and businesses if they support the development of the current scheme, with any identified modifications that need to be made and if so, do they support the current scheme remaining in place. The consultation started on 10 November for a four-week period.

Following the consultation, the public's views will be considered by the Council alongside the monitoring report, and stakeholder comments, to determine if any facilities will be removed. This is expected to take place in the new year.

Electric Vehicle (EV) Charging Points

The Council's EV Strategy has set targets for the increase in the provision of charging infrastructure to both keep pace with the growing numbers of electric vehicles on the City's streets and to further encourage the transition from Internal Combustion Engine (ICE) vehicles.

The Strategy recognises that this market is still in its infancy, and as such recommends the use of an annual review, or action plan, to determine the extent of the rollouts required to both satisfy demand and acknowledge the latest technological developments. For the current year (2021/2022), through the action plan the Council has set a target of installing a further 500 charge points.

Currently there are 22 rapid charge points, with a 50kW output, on the public highway throughout the City, with 11 of them being exclusively for taxis and the remainder available to all EVs. A further eight will go live by the end of the calendar year, and they will all be publicly available, and we are working on introducing a further 30 in 2022.

There are currently 16 22kW charge points on the public highway provided by Source London, and we are expanding that number by a further 30 with the expectation that they will go live by the end of the financial year.

There are also approximately 820 resident charge points retrofitted into lamp columns and we have procured a new contract that will see an increase superior to 50% in that number. This additional roll out will focus on areas that have proved difficult to install into previously to ensure a more equable balance of charge points to resident owned EVs. In addition, we will dedicate over 400 bays alongside the resident charge points to make them dedicated resident EV charging bays to make it easier for EV-owning residents to connect to the points.

The roll out of identified locations is represented in the table below and also in the map available at the following link - [WCC City Highways: EV Charge Points \(jhumbl.github.io\)](https://jhumbl.github.io/WCC-City-Highways-EV-Charge-Points)

WARDS	EXISTING EV CHARGING POINTS	PRPOSED NEW CHARGING POINTS
Abbey Road	100	23
Bayswater	65	2
Bryanston and Dorset Square	39	50
Church Street	23	38
Churchill	17	28
Harrow Road	82	1
Hyde Park	33	45
Knightsbridge and Belgravia	51	32
Lancaster Gate	55	17
Little Venice	85	16
Maida Vale	82	1
Marylebone High Street	42	41
Queen's Park	87	0
Regent's Park	59	27
St. James's	36	22
Tachbrook	14	23
Vincent Square	25	32
Warwick	32	24
West End	32	49
Westbourne	46	8

Cycle Hangars

It is proposed to continue the roll-out of secure cycle storage assets across Westminster. New assets will be rolled out in three tranches:

1. Pre-approved locations – November 2021
2. Locations not requiring Traffic Regulation Order changes – December 2021
3. Locations requiring Traffic Regulation Order changes – February 2022

The pre-approved locations are listed below:

LOCATIONS	WARD	ASSET TYPE
Saltram Crescent/Fernhead Road	Harrow Road	Hangar
Princes's Square	Lancaster Gate	Hangar
Hallfield Estate	Lancaster Gate	Hangar
Gloucester Terrace	Lancaster Gate	Hangar
Gloucester Terrace	Lancaster Gate	Hangar
Cleveland Terrace	Lancaster Gate	Hangar
Grantully Road	Maida Vale	Hangar
Second Avenue	Queen's Park	Hangar
Third Avenue	Queen's Park	Hangar
Hall Road/Abbey Road	Regent's Park	Hangar
Horseferry Road	St James's	Hangar
Amberley Road	Westbourne	Hangar

E-Scooter

As part of the trial, the Council set out areas of the borough where the speed of e-scooters should be restricted, 'go -slow' zones and areas where e-scooters would not be allowed 'no-go' areas. These areas are managed by geofencing technology. After the trial started, it was recognised that the speed cap of 8.5mph (versus 12.5mph) posed safety concerns alongside running traffic in the carriageway, where the e-scooters are intended to be used as riders were feeling vulnerable against faster moving traffic. It was agreed that the removal of the 'go-slow' areas would be implemented across the borough. A blanket removal of the 'go-slow' areas was agreed to avoid confusion for riders, and it was agreed that small increase in speed would have marginal impact on pedestrian safety. The removal of the 'go-slow' areas is being monitored and can be reintroduced if required.

Additional information

- **Enforcement**

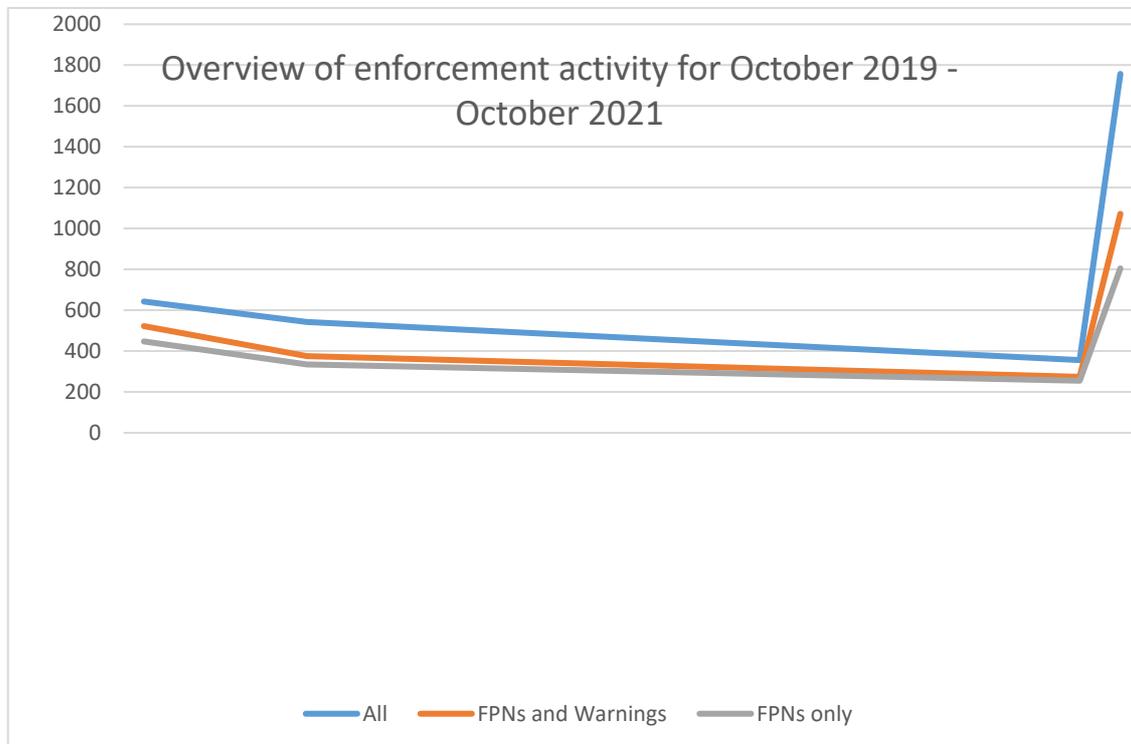
Post-pandemic has placed a renewed focus on the cleanliness of Westminster including but not limited to, waste enforcement, cleansing, highways obstructions and ensuring street works are well managed.

Key to this work is the need to improve the perception of the cleanliness of the city for our residents, businesses, visitors, key stakeholders and councillors and staff. Part of the ability to demonstrate this is by highlighting our key outputs. Our City Inspectors play an important part in this renewed focus as officers with the delegated authority to enforce against waste and other public realm environmental issues.

As well as increased enforcement, we have taken a renewed approach to partnership working internally and closer working with Veolia. This has resulted in cleaner streets and the enforcement actions through our teams increasing; which will help change the behaviours, so waste is presented on the streets at the designated times.

Enforcement data has been included for September and October 2021, as well as October 2019 and February 2020 as a comparison pre-pandemic. The table below shows an overview of enforcement activity, showing total enforcement activity including fixed penalty notices (FPNs), residential warnings, and waste investigations (which is essentially waste without evidence reported for clearance), total enforcement activity including FPNs and residential warnings, and FPNs only.

	October 2019	February 2020	September 2021	October 2021
All (including reporting waste for clearance)	643	543	365	1757
FPNs and Warnings	513	376	274	1072
FPNs only	447	334	255	805



- **Equal Pavement Pledge**

The Council has signed up to Transport for All's (TfA) equal pavement pledge. TfA state 'As lockdown restrictions gradually begin to lift and we look towards opening up and "building back better", there's never been a better opportunity to reset and centre accessibility at the heart of our plans.'

Westminster has signed up to the 7 pledges:

1. Listen and Act
2. Keep it clear
3. Cut the clutter
4. Mind the trash
5. Drop the kerbs
6. Protect the blue badge bays
7. Work with disabled experts.

The public realm team have recently engaged TfA to provide training to officers on how to consider and view accessibility on our streets and engage with experts early in the design of public realm schemes. A programme of dropped kerbs and accessibility improvements has been developed for Soho and across the borough. Funding is being sought from the capital programme to enable delivery. Work continues with our Licensing team and City Inspectors to ensure pavements are being kept clear of clutter and rubbish to ensure they are accessible.

As a result of Alfresco in Soho and audit was undertaken in partnership with the TfA to assess accessibility across the area. This led to the installation of 18 temporary ramps to support accessibility around the alfresco schemes. Following the completion of Alfresco many of the temporary ramps have been removed but 3 locations remain in place. A further survey of the area has been done and additional locations have been identified for improvement. Delivery is subject to agreement of a CPSR bid and delivery will be undertaken in coordination with the development of the Soho Vision.

- **Public Conveniences**

The Council is continuing to deploy 18 urinals and 12 portaloos facilities each weekend (Friday to Monday) at identified problem locations across the West End. The facilities are very well used and will continue to be deployed throughout the winter period.

The deployments of urinals are placed in the following areas:

The mobile urinals & portaloos are not mapped as they are frequently moved to new locations to match changing urination and fouling patterns. The live list of locations can be viewed at www.westminster.gov.uk/leisure-libraries-and-community/public-toilets#temporary-public-toilets

- **Broadwick Street, beside the automated public convenience (APC) site**
- **Broadwick Street, junction with Berwick Street**
- **Charing Cross Road, junction with Orange Street**
- **Great Windmill Street, junction with Shaftesbury Avenue**
- **Jermyn Street, junction with Haymarket**
- **Kingly Street, junction with Great Marlborough Street**
- **Oxford Street, junction with Great Titchfield Street**
- **Ramillies Street, junction with Ramillies Place**
- **Romilly Street, junction with Shaftesbury Avenue**
- **Soho Square, junction with Bateman Buildings**
- **Soho Square, junction with Carlisle Street**
- **Tenison Court, junction with Kingly Street**
- **Wardour Street, junction with Old Compton Street**

A new concept design for the Council's public toilets and site surveys commenced on 24 October 2021. The key objectives for the new design will include the installation of contactless payment barriers, increased closed-circuit television (CCTV) and security measures, green features and improved external 'wayfinding' signage.

The procurement process for the APCs have commenced and tenders have been received to replace the current units (five locations), as detailed below:

- **Harrow Road - Maida Hill Market (Harrow Road ward)**
- **Balderton Street, opposite Selfridges in Oxford Street (West End ward)**
- **Princes Street junction Regent Street (West End ward)**
- **Broadwick Street (West End ward)**
- **Regency Place, junction with Horseferry Road (Tachbrook ward)**

Tenders are currently being evaluated with the objective of commissioning works to take place early in the new year. The current APC units are more than 20 years old. The replacement units will be easier to maintain and remotely monitored so that closing times can be adjusted as required.

Due to the unacceptable activities taking place at Paddington Street Public Toilets, these toilets were closed on a temporarily basis for two weeks starting from 6 November 2021, to try to disrupt this activity. Monitoring at this location will continue.

Cabinet Member Decisions

Since the last report, as Cabinet Member for City Management the following decisions have been made:

- Highways Buildout for Trees
- Temporary Body Storage