

Public Document Pack



TRAFFORD
COUNCIL

AMENDMENTS FOR COUNCIL

Date: Wednesday, 17 July 2024

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Council – 17 July 2024

Green Party Group Amendment to motion 7a – Upgrading Trafford's Belisha Beacons

July 2024 marks exactly 90 years since Liberal MP and Minister for Transport, Leslie Hore Belisha, passed the Road Safety Act of 1934. One of the measures in this Act, to cut the huge number of fatalities on British roads, was the introduction of the now-familiar yellow beacons either side of zebra crossings.

In 2024, newer technology is available to make Belisha Beacons more effective on our busy streets.

This Council notes:

- Road safety continues to be a significant concern for our residents – especially for children making their way to the schools in our Borough each day.
- Belisha Beacons clearly mark the crossing points when it is dark, but when the sun is strong in the summer, or at a low angle mid-afternoon in the spring or autumn, the effect of the Beacons flashing virtually disappears in strong light.
- Therefore, at precisely the time children are using the crossing – the Beacons become very ineffective at alerting drivers to the fact they are approaching a zebra crossing at certain times of year.
- This issue is particularly pertinent on streets with an East-West orientation that catch direct sunlight at a low-angle.

This Council believes:

- The solution to the problem of Belisha Beacons disappearing in bright sunlight are the new-style Belisha Beacons with an 'LED halo'.
- The 'LED halo' Beacons provide a semi-circular ring of bright yellow LED lights that are still visible in strong daylight, alerting drivers they are approaching a zebra crossing.
- Many new-style Beacons can be seen in supermarket car-parks already, where they are clearly more effective than the old-style Beacons. However, Trafford Council has not adopted this design for the Borough's roads.

This Council further notes:

- Following initial conversations in Autumn 2023 between Timperley Councillors and Trafford Highways, there is a successful trial of the new-style Belisha Beacons in Timperley for the zebra crossing outside St Hugh's School.
- More recently, Trafford Highways have told Councillors that the particular product being trialled in Timperley North is:

"very simple to install as there is no requirement to dig down into the ground".

- Although this motion will bring safety improvements, in order to reach the council's Vision Zero target, it is likely that longer-term action will require some or all of these zebra crossings to be completely replaced with infrastructure that fully protects vulnerable road users.

This Council further believes:

- School children in all parts of Trafford should benefit from the added safety of Belisha Beacons that are more visible to drivers.
- Cost, as ever, remains a difficulty, so a phased approach to replacement will be necessary; ensuring when old-style Beacons fail or are damaged, they are replaced with new-style Beacons.

This Council resolves to:

- Phase out the old-style Belisha Beacons when they fail and upgrade them to the new-style 'LED halo' Belisha Beacons.
- Prioritize the upgrade of Beacons at pedestrian crossings where the road layout makes the flashing effect of the Beacons particularly prone to disappearing in strong sunlight.
- Prioritize the upgrade of Beacons at pedestrian crossings close to schools.

Council – 17 July 2024

Labour Party Group Amendment to motion 7a – Upgrading Trafford's Belisha Beacons

July 2024 marks exactly 90 years since Liberal MP and Minister for Transport, Leslie Hore Belisha, passed the Road Safety Act of 1934. One of the measures in this Act, to cut the huge number of fatalities on British roads, was the introduction of the now-familiar yellow beacons either side of zebra crossings.

In 2024, newer technology is available to make Belisha Beacons more effective on our busy streets.

This Council notes:

- Road safety continues to be a significant concern for our residents – especially for children making their way to the schools in our Borough each day.
- Belisha Beacons clearly mark the crossing points when it is dark, but when the sun is strong in the summer, or at a low angle mid-afternoon in the spring or autumn, the effect of the Beacons flashing virtually disappears in strong light.
- Therefore, at precisely the time children are using the crossing – the Beacons become very ineffective at alerting drivers to the fact they are approaching a zebra crossing at certain times of year.
- This issue is particularly pertinent on streets with an East-West orientation that catch direct sunlight at a low-angle.

This Council believes:

- The solution to the problem of Belisha Beacons disappearing in bright sunlight are the new-style Belisha Beacons with an 'LED halo'.
- The 'LED halo' Beacons provide a semi-circular ring of bright yellow LED lights that are still visible in strong daylight, alerting drivers they are approaching a zebra crossing.
- Many new-style Beacons can be seen in supermarket car-parks already, where they are clearly more effective than the old-style Beacons. However, Trafford Council has not adopted this design for the Borough's roads.

This Council further notes:

- Following initial conversations in Autumn 2023 between Timperley Councillors and Trafford Highways, there is a successful trial of the new-style Belisha Beacons in Timperley for the zebra crossing outside St Hugh's School.
- More recently, Trafford Highways have told Councillors that the particular product being trialled in Timperley North is:

"very simple to install as there is no requirement to dig down into the ground".

This Council further believes:

- School children in all parts of Trafford should benefit from the added safety of Belisha Beacons that are more visible to drivers.
- Cost, as ever, remains a difficulty, so a phased approach to replacement will be necessary; ensuring when old-style Beacons fail or are damaged, they are replaced with new-style Beacons.

This Council resolves to:

- Phase out the old-style Belisha Beacons when they fail and upgrade them to the new-style 'LED halo' Belisha Beacons.
- ~~— Prioritize the upgrade of Beacons at pedestrian crossings where the road layout makes the flashing effect of the Beacons particularly prone to disappearing in strong sunlight.~~
- ~~— Prioritize the upgrade of Beacons at pedestrian crossings close to schools.~~
- Prioritise them on a Health and Safety basis as they are best used where low sun is a visibility risk.

Note the installation of upgrades to zebras with the 'halo' LED has been trialled and is seen as a positive approach to improving visibility of zebras. For this reason there is now a programme of zebra upgrades on a phased approach already included in the current years capital programme. Therefore the issues highlighted in the motion have already been recognised and being addressed.

Council – 17 July 2024

Labour Group Amendment to motion 7b – Cost of Living: Reduce Bills and Tackle Poverty

This Council notes that the Cost-of-Living crisis is not over.

Between April 2022 and April 2024 the cost of a basic weekly food basket has increased by 25%.

Whilst energy bills were set to fall by 7% from July the Ofgem price cap is expected to rise again by around 10% in October, meaning bills stay 50-60% above pre-crisis levels.

We further note that bills could have already been lowered through an adequate programme of home insulation in line with net zero commitments. Rents in the private housing sector, where many of the most vulnerable households live, have continued to increase at a rate above headline inflation.

This Council calls on the new Government to:

- Abolish the two-child benefit cap ~~immediately~~ as soon as government finances allow.
- ~~Further Consider~~ extending and increasing ~~e~~ the Household Support Fund or any potential equivalent or replacement as an interim measure, enabling councils to help those in the most need throughout this coming winter.
- Rapidly end no fault evictions ~~and give the power to local authorities to control rents if the local rental market is overheated as is currently the case in Scotland.~~
- ~~Rapidly end competitive bidding for~~ Review the social housing decarbonisation fund ~~and expand available funding~~ so that it is more accessible for all local authorities and social housing providers ~~to can~~ maximise their work to shift to cleaner and cheaper energy in homes.
- As part of the Warm Homes Plan in the Labour Party manifesto, ~~B~~bring forward mechanisms for homeowners to more easily access ~~property-linked~~ finance to decarbonise heating and reduce energy costs; and for private tenants to also benefit from the new government's plan for all private rented sector homes to meet minimum energy efficiency standards by 2030 ~~insist that their landlords access property-linked finance on their behalf.~~

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Council – 17 July 2024

Liberal Democrats Group Amendment to motion 7b – Cost of Living: Reduce Bills and Tackle Poverty

This Council notes that the Cost-of-Living crisis is not over.

Between April 2022 and April 2024 the cost of a basic weekly food basket has increased by 25%.

Whilst energy bills were set to fall by 7% from July the Ofgem price cap is expected to rise again by around 10% in October, meaning bills stay 50-60% above pre-crisis levels.

We further note that bills could have already been lowered through an adequate programme of home insulation in line with net zero commitments. Rents in the private housing sector, where many of the most vulnerable households live, have continued to increase at a rate above headline inflation.

This Council calls on the new Government to:

- Abolish the two-child benefit cap immediately.
- Further extend and increase the Household Support Fund as an interim measure, enabling councils to help those in the most need throughout this coming winter.
- Rapidly end no fault evictions and give the power to local authorities to control rents if the local rental market is overheated as is currently the case in Scotland.
- Rapidly end competitive bidding for the social housing decarbonisation fund and expand available funding so all local authorities and social housing providers can maximise their work to shift to cleaner and cheaper energy in homes.
- Bring forward mechanisms for homeowners to more easily access property-linked finance to decarbonise heating and reduce energy costs; and ~~for private tenants to insist that their landlords access property-linked finance on their behalf~~ to bring forward mechanisms to support and encourage private landlords to access property-linked finance on their behalf of their tenants.

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