# Fitzwest Environmental Issues Topic Group - 22 October 2014, Newman St

Present: Alison Matthews, Chris Shaw, Gordon Tees

## Apologies: Wendy Shillam, Phil Parsons

We discussed the various issues on the environment that had been raised at the public meeting in July (see annex). We tried to divide them into issues on which Fitzwest could realistically make an impact, whether by direct action and/or through Westminster City Council, whether immediately or through the plan, and those to put into the 'too difficult/later' category. In both cases we sought to distinguish between the specific actions to be taken and the general principles behind such actions that might form part of the eventual neighbourhood plan.

## Where FW can have an impact

**Problems of noise from pubs and licensed premises** – WCC seem to have been diverging from their core hours policy on a regular basis – for example, the extension of the Riding House Café hours till 1am, recent granting of alcohol and live music licenses to a private club in Newman St till 11.30 Sun-Wed, 2.30 Thurs- Sat plus alcohol 7-10 am with breakfast!

In summer particularly people block roads and pavements – but these infringements of public space and the accompanying noise are not enforced by WCC or the police. It's left to residents to complain and ultimately, to seek a revocation of licenses

## **Possible solutions:-**

<u>A late night levy, whose proceeds are reserved for enforcement</u> **Action**: (research for plan?)

<u>Oblige licensees to meet with residents on a regular panel</u> so that issues can be raised on a regular basis, rather than in protest when they get out of hand. This would benefit licensees – repeated complaints and attempts to revoke their licences are troublesome for them; and residents, in having a means to raise concerns.

**Action:** AM to speak to Garry Wood from the Crown and Sceptre to muster licensees support for this – then FW broach it with the licensing committee

<u>Propose a 'three strikes you're out' policy for licence, noise, etc infringements</u> – if there are three (prosecutions? Complaints?) offences then a licensee would automatically be restricted back to WCC core hours. **Action**: (research for plan?)

#### Refuse inc flytipping, and oversize vehicles

Put up a sign at the end of Gosfield St – no oversize vehicles - and any other similar narrow streets

Action: GT and and CS to get upa local campaign now to propose this to WCC

Move recycling and refuse bins away from side streets onto main roads- if they are in a more public position, people will not dump their beds, building rubble etc, and enforcement is also easier. **Action**:? Campaign now or wait for plan?

<u>Better advertising and communication of WCC refuse collection services</u> – improve website Action: (research for plan?)

# Light pollution

Despite the existence of cheap sensor technology, many offices still leave their lights on all night.

Require/encourage offices to fit sensors to turn off lights automatically

Action; FW members at an individual level now, plus AM research for plan

Noise (and pollution) from idling delivery vehicles, air conditioning noise Solutions? Action?

# General principles for the plan:

First, need more data - Action: FW to speak to noise team, refuse team, research other councils

**'Peace Zone'** – no noise between 1 am and 6 am, to include pubs etc and rubbish collections. Educate visitors (and licensees) that this is a residential area (signs?).

**Noise from pubs** – Support WCC core hours policy (closing time 10.30 in the week and 11 at the weekend) and want it to be followed more closely. The existence of one late licence explicitly <u>not</u> to set a precedent for others – in fact the contrary, so that if one is granted others will not be, to avoid creeping 'Sohoisation'. Better enforcement (Late night levy. Residents and licensees to engage in dialogue).

# **Refuse collections**

All collections, including those from private contractors, to be made before 1 am or after 6 am

Residents (many of whom may be short-term) and businesses to be better informed about available WCC services eg regular collections, bulky waste removal – **website upgrade**, **better signposted services** (For example, there is a page about the Council's rubbish collection service for large items (<u>https://www.westminster.gov.uk/residential-bulky-waste</u>) which is a fantastic service: £21 for 5 items including fridges, cookers, beds, sofas and wardrobes! But if you type "waste" or "waste disposal" into the website search box, the page doesn't appear in the search results?

Or if WCC won't do it, we could put stuff on our website

# Light pollution

Require sensors, improve planning standards

# More difficult/later category (but may still merit attention in the plan)

**Air pollution** – FW supports Mayor and WCCs policies (get rid of diesel vehicles, reduce bus traffic on Oxford St)

WCC non-collection of **recycling** 

Light pollution – proximity of buildings

**Street and pavement maintenance** –recognition of problems of noise from poorly maintained road surfaces – some to be remedied shortly, a lot due to all the redevelopment/heavy lorries/resiting of infrastructure

Issue	FW impact		I	Issue	More difficult/Later	
	Solutions	Plan policy			Solutions	Plan policy
Pub noise and	Late night levy	Peace zone Better enforcement		All	Need more data to support plan	n/a
disruption	'Three strikes you're out' policy for infringements	Better enforcement		Air pollution	Reduce traffic Get rid of diesel cars	Support mayor and WCC policies
	Oblige licensees to meet with residents on a regular panel	WCC Core hours respected. No precedents set by rare exceptions				
	Education of licensees and clients – as above plus posters	Better awareness that FW residential area				
Refuse, fly tipping	Put up a sign at the end of Gosfield St	Lorries banned from narrow streets				
	Move bins off small streets	Reduce infractions, improve enforcement				
	Private contractors to pick up in same hours as WCC	Peace zone				
	Provision of skips every 6 months	Increased WCC services, improve information on existing services				
Light pollution	Encourage/require sensors	Encourage/require sensors		Light pollution	Planning standards - reduce proximity of buildings	Define proximity of buildings
Noise/ pollution from idling vehicles	?	?			?	?
Street maintenance	?	?			?	?

## Annex – issues raised at July 15 meeting

## Environmental Issues, including air quality, noise, street maintenance and refuse.

#### Issues

- Light pollution: buildings too close together, office lights on all night
- Air conditioning noise: restaurants, ageing equipment
- Noise team slow and inefficient
- Noise from alarms
- Deliveries/waste:
  - Eg Hotels engines running when parked
  - Street bins wrongly used
  - Different responses from different companies, and from different members of noise team
  - $\circ$  Fly tipping
  - Different companies streets never clean
  - o Recycling bins lids
  - How many fines issued?
  - Individual responsibility
  - o Bin lorries don't always fit down Gosfield St
  - Need consultation on location of bins
  - Does everyone know about services eg refuse removal
- Air pollution:
  - o Buses
  - Action on monitoring
  - o Reports
  - Reduction if Tehran can do it, why can't we?

#### Action

- Enforcement
- Information and statistics
- Be positive we can make improvements!