

ABERDEEN CITY COUNCIL

COMMITTEE	Communities, Housing and Infrastructure
DATE	19 th May 2015
DIRECTOR	Pete Leonard
TITLE OF REPORT	In Town Without My Car Day 2015
REPORT NUMBER	CHI/15/142
CHECKLIST COMPLETED	Yes

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

The purpose of this report is to gain approval for Aberdeen's participation in In Town Without My Car Day 2015 via an on-street public event to be held on Sunday 20th September 2015.

2. RECOMMENDATION(S)

It is recommended that Members:

- a) Approve Aberdeen's formal participation in In Town Without My Car Day 2015; and
- a) Instruct officers to progress the Temporary Traffic Regulation Orders (TTRO) to restrict traffic on the following streets between the hours of 0600 and 1800 on Sunday 20th September 2015 in order to facilitate an In Town Without My Car Day public event:
 - Schoolhill (between Blackfriars Street and Back Wynd);
 - Belmont Street (between Schoolhill and Little Belmont Street); and
 - Little Belmont Street.

3. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

Part-funding for meeting the event costs has been secured from the Scottish Government's Smarter Choices, Smarter Places allocation and Air Quality Action Plan grant scheme, while additional funding is being sought from the Council's Bus Lane Enforcement fund 2015/16, which is subject to a separate report to this Committee. The event will be predominantly staffed by Aberdeen City Council employees.

4. OTHER IMPLICATIONS

The proposal involves the closure of a public road to motor vehicles so there will be impacts on the travelling public. Experience from previous years suggests, however, that this will be minimal and easily manageable.

5. BACKGROUND/MAIN ISSUES

- 5.1 European Mobility Week (EMW) is an annual campaign promoting sustainable urban mobility, organised with the political and financial support of the Directorates-General for the Environment and Transport of the European Commission. The aim of the campaign, which runs from 16th to 22nd September each year, is to encourage local authorities to introduce and promote sustainable transport measures and to invite citizens to try out alternatives to car use. The week culminates in 'In Town Without My Car Day' (ITWMCD) when participating towns and cities initiate one or several permanent or temporary road closures within their area, restricting the movement of cars and reserving the area instead for pedestrians, cyclists and public transport. In this way, citizens can experience the enjoyment of being out in the streets without worrying about the discomfort and dangers usually presented by motor traffic.
- 5.2 Since its inception in 2002, the impact of EMW has been steadily growing both across Europe and around the world. In 2014, 2,013 local authorities from 44 countries officially registered for the campaign. Aberdeen was the only local authority in Scotland to do so and is regularly recognised as a best practice example of how to conduct an effective EMW campaign and ITWMCD event in Scotland.
- 5.3 Aberdeen City Council, working with partners in the Getabout group, has participated in EMW since 2009. The EMW programme usually consists of a series of sustainable transport themed events running throughout the week (in public areas, schools, universities, and local businesses), culminating in ITWMCD when the Council has, since 2010, formally closed a road to motor traffic for the day and filled it instead with information stalls, events and activities for members of the public to visit and to participate in. To reflect the aim of the campaign, the majority of these are on the themes of transport, sustainability, air quality and road safety, although, in recent years, efforts have been made to broaden the appeal of the event, to give it more of a fayre/gala atmosphere with additional attractions for children and families, while still imparting an important sustainability message.
- 5.4 In both 2013 and 2014 the event was held on Schoolhill and Belmont Street. These were the most ambitious and successful events to date in terms of scale, visitor numbers and feedback. The temporarily

pedestrianised space was devoted to a family event, with a number of attractions available to members of the public free of charge, including the Getabout Bicycle Roadshow, a bike doctor, rickshaw rides and electric vehicle demonstrations. A number of external organisations with a stake in clean and healthy forms of transport were also present to promote the work they do and the services they offer, including Co-Wheels, First Aberdeen, Stagecoach Bluebird, Aberdeen Cycle Forum, Adventure Aberdeen, the Council's City Wardens team and the MUSIC Project's 'Take Back the Streets' group. Local traders were also involved, taking advantage of on-street café areas to increase their sales. There was no negative feedback, as far as officers are aware, on the road closure itself, with traffic flows not unduly inconvenienced by the events and only one low-frequency bus service having to change route for the duration of the events.

- 5.6 Given the success of the 2013 and 2014 events, officers propose holding a similar event in the same location on Sunday 20th September 2015. Although full details have yet to be confirmed, officers anticipate such an event following the same format as previous years, with opportunities for attracting further events, exhibits and attractions being sought over the coming months. Hosting a large scale City Centre event of this nature for a third consecutive year will demonstrate the Council's commitment to sustainable living, overcoming air quality problems in the City Centre and encouraging our citizens and visitors to think more sensibly about their transport options.
- 5.7 It is therefore recommended that Members approve Aberdeen's participation in In Town Without My Car Day 2015 and instruct officers to progress the Temporary Traffic Regulation Orders (TTROs) to restrict traffic between the hours of 0600 and 1800 on Sunday 20th September 2015 in the following streets in order to facilitate an ITWMCD public event: Schoolhill (between Blackfriars Street and Back Wynd); Belmont Street (between Schoolhill and Little Belmont Street); and Little Belmont Street.

6. IMPACT

The contents of this report link to the Community Plan vision of creating a *sustainable City with an integrated transport system that is accessible to all* and will contribute to delivery of the Smarter Mobility aims of Aberdeen – The Smarter City: *We will develop, maintain and promote road, rail, ferry and air links from the city to the UK and the rest of the world. We will encourage cycling and walking, and We will provide and promote a sustainable transport system, including cycling, which reduces our carbon emissions.*

This project will assist in the delivery of actions identified in the Single Outcome Agreement (SOA) 2013, in particular the Thematic Priority of Safer Communities (Safer Roads) and the Multi-lateral Priority – Integrated Transport (Aberdeen is easy to access and move around in).

This report may be of interest to members of the public as it concerns a proposed free public event.

An Equality and Human Rights Impact Assessment (EHRIA) has been undertaken to accompany this report. This revealed that no negative consequences are anticipated for groups with protected characteristics. Given the nature of the event and some of the attractions proposed, there may in fact be positive impacts on the young and the disabled.

A Privacy Impact Assessment (PIA) will not be undertaken as the project will not impact on the privacy of any individual.

7. MANAGEMENT OF RISK

As with any public event, there will be risk of Health, Safety and Wellbeing hazards during the running of the event. A formal Risk Assessment, highlighting the potential risks and how the event organisers will minimise these, will be prepared once all the exhibitors/attractions are confirmed.

8. BACKGROUND PAPERS

None

9. REPORT AUTHOR DETAILS

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