

## **QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC**

### **Place Scrutiny Committee - Special Meeting Wednesday 24<sup>th</sup> June 2020 @ 18:30**

#### **Question 1 from Mr Stewart Ward to the Cabinet Member for Transport, Capital & Inward Investment**

##### **Question:**

**Can the Portfolio Holder explain in very great detail, as to why the decision to install the railings and contra flow system along the Western Esplanade from Southend Pier to Chalkwell Esplanade, was made behind closed doors and did not involve other councillors?**

##### **Answer**

Temporary barriers have been placed in the carriageway to give pedestrians extra room whilst adhering to self-distancing rules set out by the government.

The decision was made by the administration in accordance with government guidelines as a result of the Coronavirus pandemic. This decision was done under the delegated authority powers of the Administration and Gold group to support the increased volumes of cyclists and pedestrians. The decision was not made by myself in isolation but with the Cabinet which consists of 7 Councillors in conjunction with Senior Officers and Senior Highways engineers.

#### **Question 2 from Mr Stewart Ward to the Cabinet Member for Transport, Capital & Inward Investment**

##### **Question:**

**Has the portfolio Holder witnessed with his own eyes, the total lack of use that the newly created "open space" is receiving, apart from an odd hand full of people, as I always count the number of people who use it each time I drive along and its always in single figures for the entire stretch, no matter what time of the day?**

##### **Answer**

My answer to you is that I have witnessed that the newly created open space is working well but as I have said previously this is under continuous review.

The widened promenade was introduced in mid-May, as part of a package of measures to help protect public safety following the easing of lockdown restrictions announced by the Government.

The key principle of installing the contraflow was based on public safety and that remains our key priority at this time as we continue to tackle Coronavirus. We have

kept the contraflow under regular review and we will continue to monitor national announcements and advice around social distancing.

The newly created space has received very positive feedback from cyclists, pedestrians and blue light services in recent weeks.