

## Grange/Prestonfield Community Council - response to City Mobility Plan – April 2020

**Introduction:** Public consultation on the City Mobility Plan has proceeded in parallel with that for the Main Issues Report on the next Local Development Plan, “Choices for City Plan 2030”. Grange/Prestonfield Community Council has considered both sets of documents, responding to both consultations, albeit differently. In the case of “Choices” we have responded to the consultation hub questionnaire and sent in a further email commentary, summarising also our responses. At the GPCC online meeting on 15<sup>th</sup> April, it was decided that we would respond only by email to the CMP, reflecting more the over-arching broad-brush CMP, which does not need to be grounded in planning legislation.

**Edinburgh City Centre Transformation (ECCT):** The CMP refers back to and derives support from the 2019 CEC ECCT. Whilst much of the ECCT is supported by GPCC in principle, a great deal remains to be fleshed out, yet the CMP rather assumes that the ECCT is an adopted whole to build upon. With so much still to be clarified this cannot be assumed. Specifically the relation of the ECCT to Network Rail’s Waverley Station Masterplan remains unclear and the CMP does not clarify that uncertainty.

GPCC considers that both the ECCT and the Waverley Station Masterplan are missed opportunities to create in Edinburgh an integrated transport hub. With the need to look at the future of the present bus station within the next few years, such a hub could offer an all-weather interchange for all surface transport - rail, tram, bus, cycle, pedestrian and taxi/car dropoff creating a facility worthy of the capital of Scotland. The present arrangements are poor, doing little to encourage visitors arriving by train to return and the Waverley Station Masterplan seems intended to create commercial retail opportunities for Network Rail. How many more fast food outlets does the centre of Edinburgh need?

GPCC urges that the CMP be reviewed to look at the feasibility of an integrated transport hub, recognising that there are heritage, engineering, financial and security challenges as well as opportunities.

**CMP Overview:** The CMP partners *Choices for City Plan 2030* which looks to marry individual inclusivity and well-being in a fast-growing city with the related imperatives of income-generating development, infrastructure, housing and transport. CMP has a similar 2030 horizon, with intermediate stages and a full delivery strategy still to come. Widespread ‘governance and engagement’ is promised. As is the case with City Plan 2030, “The funding of this plan will be challenging..... (with the intention) to maximise external funding from both the public and private sectors.” That is a big problem that has just become much, much bigger, with the corona virus shutdown and its longer term impacts.

There is no percentage in looking to analyse the CMP for (micro) flaws. In essence, public transport, bikes and pedestrians progressively edge out car use and heavy commercial transport is curbed. The detail, or ‘major change programmes’, needed to bring about target changes will continue to be work in progress.

So, for all participants it will be a ‘journey’. Whether the ambitious targets are achievable is far from clear. GPCC offers the following thoughts:-

- The CMP is to replace the ‘Local Transport Strategy 2014 – 2019 (LTS)’. What key successes and failures have emerged from the LTS? What lessons are to be learned and what mistakes are to be avoided? Does the CMP properly reflect these or does it run the real risk of putting

ambition before ability? Can Tram3 be delivered and when? (The Strategic Sustainable Transport Study is only a preliminary assessment of Corridor 3 options for Bioquarter and beyond.)

- The CMP headlines its objectives as
  - People: health, wellbeing, equality and inclusion
  - Place: environmental wellbeing and climate change response
  - Movement: inclusive and sustainable economic growth to maximise efficiency of our streets.
- 'Movement' could become the top priority. Unless street efficiency is enhanced better to move people and goods around an urban landscape changing dramatically on account of change in retail, the economic benefits (productivity, cost reduction etc.) simply won't be delivered to fund People and Place objectives.
- Edinburgh City has a 6.6% growth in population targeted between 2018 and 2028, according to National Records of Scotland (24 March 2020). The increase out to 2038 is 11.4%. Migration into Edinburgh 'region' or hinterland intensifies the challenge. As is the case with City Plan 2030, the detailed targets in CMP are very ambitious and probably un-fundable in full. The city's debt profile is being hit hard right now. GPCC in its responses to "Choices for City Plan 2030" proposes resetting the adoption date of the new LDP to take account of the 2021 Census broad results, in view of the importance of population growth and changes.
- The pace of technology change and 'insertion' into how we are to 'get about town' in coming years is steep. It must not outstrip the ability of an ageing demographic and of low-income groups to cope with the need to be 'seamlessly connected' by smart phone and mobile banking.
- Our present corona virus national crisis is set to change our collective future priorities and way of life. At its starkest it is set to demand that the less well-off parts of the city are given a better 'crack of the whip' than hitherto. This likely new dynamic will need to be inserted into City Plan 2030 and CMP thinking, looking at different and maybe much lower growth scenarios and the implications.