

DELEGATED DECISIONS BY DEPUTY LEADER OF THE COUNCIL WITH RESPONSIBILITY FOR CLIMATE CHANGE, ENVIRONMENT & FUTURE GENERATIONS

MINUTES of the meeting held on Thursday, 14 November 2024 commencing at 2.30 pm and finishing at 3:45pm

Present:

Voting Members: Councillor Dr Pete Sudbury – in the Chair

Other Members in Attendance: Councillor Charlie Hicks (Agenda Item 2&5)
Councillor Donna Ford (Agenda Item 5&6)
Councillor Liz Brighthouse OBE (Agenda Item 5)
Councillor Trish Elphinstone (Agenda Item 5)
Councillor Mark Lygo (Agenda Item 5)
Councillor Glynis Phillips (Agenda Item 5)
Councillor Susanna Pressel (Agenda Item 5)

Officers: Jack Ahier (Democratic Services Officer), Paul Fermer (Director of Environment and Highways), Sean Rooney (Head of Highway Maintenance).

The Deputy Leader of the Council considered the matters, reports and recommendations contained or referred to in the agenda for the meeting [, together with a schedule of addenda tabled at the meeting/the following additional documents:] and agreed as set out below. Copies of the agenda and reports [agenda, reports and schedule/additional documents] are attached to the signed Minutes.

21 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST (Agenda No. 1)

There were none.

22 QUESTIONS FROM COUNTY COUNCILLORS (Agenda No. 2)

There was 1 question asked, with the question and answer available to view in an Addenda on the meeting page on the Council's website.

23 PETITIONS AND PUBLIC ADDRESS (Agenda No. 3)

Public speakers were invited to address the meeting. Other members of the public were present and were given the opportunity to make remarks if they wished. A list of speakers who registered to speak can be seen below:

5. Dark Skies – Street Lighting Illumination Proposals

- Cllr Mark Lygo
- Cllr Trish Elphinstone
- Cllr Donna Ford
- Cllr Liz Brighthouse
- Cllr Charlie Hicks
- Cllr Glynis Phillips
- Cllr Susanna Pressel
- Lisa Ward
- Oxford City Cllr Christopher Smowton
- Oxford City Cllr Lois Muddiman
- Bicester Town Cllr Sam Holland
- Katherine Kaye
- Patrick Coulter
- Tara Howard
- Dr Steven Knight

6. Household Waste Recycling Centre Network: Introduction of Booking System

- Cllr Donna Ford.

24 MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

(Agenda No. 4)

The minutes of the meeting held on 10 October 2024 were approved and signed by the Chair as a correct record.

25 DARK SKIES - STREET LIGHTING ILLUMINATION PROPOSALS

(Agenda No. 5)

The Chair invited public speakers to address the meeting and responded to their points in turn.

Officers acknowledged the failings of the report, thanked all contributors for their comments and committed to take onboard comments that had been made. Continuing, it was noted that the policy agreed in 2022 would also have been refreshed, along with the report before the meeting as they were interlinked, rather than isolated, papers.

The Chair noted the supporting parts of the policy were not all put together and also confirmed that officers did work with Thames Valley Police on the framework of the proposals.

The Chair highlighted that the reasons for switching off lights was to avoid waste of lights being on that didn't need to be, and that persistent night lighting causes public health impacts to sleep, as well being toxic to wildlife.

It was noted that the paper was flawed for what it did not say. The Chair confirmed that there was no intention for this to go ahead in Oxford City or for a cumulative 'big switch-off' at the same time as it was a National Grid function. It would be done to communities where they wanted it to happen.

The Chair noted that contributions at the meeting had reaffirmed the case-by-case approach that was needed, and that the countryside would be the appropriate place to start, rather than in urban areas.

The Chair noted that 55% of Councils have some type of Dark Skies policy.

The Chair accepted that the Equalities Impact Assessment was not up to standard.

The Chair noted the implications for crime, both positively and negatively, for having street lights on in areas and stated that the Council would work with the police moving forward.

The Chair thanked all speakers for their contributions and agreed to defer the recommendations in the report.

RESOLVED to:

Defer the recommendations below:

a) Approve the proposed Highway Street Lighting Profiles, specifically with regard to operational hours and illumination levels as set out in this paper.

26 HOUSEHOLD WASTE RECYCLING CENTRE NETWORK: INTRODUCTION OF BOOKING SYSTEM

(Agenda No. 6)

The Chair invited speakers to address the meeting and responded to their points in turn.

The Chair noted that these measures were partly a necessity in the short-term, due to Redbridge HWRC closing temporarily.

Officers noted concerns surrounding fly-tipping but pointed to other local authorities introducing similar measures where it had not increased.

Officers also noted that controlling demand was about tackling trade waste abuse, which does not impact genuine household waste users.

It was pointed out that the Ardley HWRC would be moved to a different site, which would cause a period of closure during the gap of moving, further adding to pressures.

Officers stated that they expected to make savings from the introduction of the scheme, which included the cost of implementing the scheme.

The Chair thanked speakers for their useful contributions and agreed to the recommendations in the report.

RESOLVED to:

- a) Approve the introduction of booking systems at Household Waste Recycling Centres (HWRCs), supported by the provision of Meet and Greet site staff.**
- b) Delegate authority to the Director of Environment and Highways in consultation with the Head of Legal Services and Deputy Monitoring Officer to agree modifications to the existing HWRC contracts with the contractors and enter into any necessary agreements.**

..... in the Chair

Date of signing