

## DELEGATED DECISIONS BY CABINET MEMBER FOR ENVIRONMENT (INCLUDING TRANSPORT)

**MINUTES** of the meeting held on Thursday, 19 March 2015 commencing at 10.30 am and finishing at 12.10 pm

**Present:**

**Voting Members:** Councillor David Nimmo-Smith – in the Chair

**Other Members in Attendance:** Councillor Nick Hards (for Agenda Items 2 and 7E)  
Councillor Jean Fooks (for Agenda Item 4)  
Councillor Charles Mathew (for Agenda Item 5)  
Councillor Laura Price (for Agenda Item 7E)

**Officers:**

Whole of meeting G. Warrington (Law & Culture); O. Jenkins (Environment & Economy)

Part of meeting

<b>Agenda Item</b>	<b>Officer Attending</b>
4 & 5	D. Tole (Environment & Economy)
7E	A. Field & T. Darch (Environment & Economy)

*The Cabinet Member for Environment considered the matters, reports and recommendations contained or referred to in the agenda for the meeting, and decided as set out below. Except as insofar as otherwise specified, the reasons for the decisions are contained in the agenda and reports, copies of which are attached to the signed Minutes.*

### 10/15 QUESTIONS FROM COUNTY COUNCILLORS

(Agenda No. 2)

Councillor Hards (Didcot West) had given notice of the following question to the Cabinet Member for Environment

“In view of the fact that illegal and inconsiderate parking is a major issue in Didcot, what steps will you take to persuade South Oxfordshire District Council that their recent announcement that they will not pursue Civil Parking Enforcement, needs to be reversed. SODC’s proposed developments affecting Station Road and Lydalls Road will add to the misery which is caused by travellers who refuse to use the car parks at Didcot Parkway Station. Also if the LTP4 plan to create access to the station from north Didcot is to proceed there will need to be an effective means of preventing other residential areas of Didcot from becoming a giant congested car park.”

### Response from the Cabinet Member for Environment

“County Council officers have worked closely with colleagues in both South Oxfordshire and Vale of White Horse and Cherwell in investigating the potential to undertake powers from Thames Valley Police for parking enforcement. Civil parking enforcement requires that both on street and local authority off street parking are included within any scheme. Therefore, in order to progress any form of scheme there is a requirement for both the County Council and District Councils to jointly submit a bid with a view to one authority passing operational control of their parking function to the other authority.

The work undertaken to date would suggest that any scheme to introduce parking enforcement would be costly (approximately £250,000 per district) with a pay-back rate of many years even in the most favourable modelling scenario (A countywide scheme operated by the County Council) and does not break even if delegated to District level and therefore adding an additional pressure to budgets. Not all District Councils were willing to progress a scheme and therefore a countywide model is not achievable.

Given that a District level scheme would create an additional pressure on budgets that would mean reductions in service in other areas, it is not considered to be the best use of public monies at this time. Officers of both authorities will continue to monitor the situation however, and should the situation change then the matter will be reviewed.

In the meantime, illegal parking is still enforceable by Thames Valley Police.”

### Supplementary Question from Councillor Hards

“How will the aims of LTP4 Science Vale be met when traffic in Didcot is impeded by illegal parking.”

### Response from the Cabinet Member for Environment

“As I have said above as neither the Vale of White Horse or South Oxfordshire District Councils are willing to progress a scheme to take on parking enforcement arrangements there is little more that can be done until this happens. This remains an issue in many parts of the County and in view of the current arrangements that exist we continue to do the best we can.”

## 11/15 PETITIONS AND PUBLIC ADDRESS

(Agenda No. 3)

<i>Speaker</i>	<i>Item</i>
Eileen Langley (Wootton Parish Council).	3. Petitions and Public Address <i>Submission made for Item7E - Bus Services Subsidies Review</i>

Councillor Jean Fooks (Local Member)	4. Cutteslowe & Wolvercote Junction Improvements
Michael Ryan (Bartholomew School Governor) Councillor Charles Mathew (Local Member)	) ) 5. Witney Road, Eynsham – ) Proposed Zebra Crossing )
Councillor Nick Hards (Local Member, Didcot West) Councillor Laura Price (Local Member, Witney South & Central)	) ) 7E. Bus Services Subsidies Review ) )

*Eileen Langley (Wootton Parish Council and also on behalf of St Helen Without Parish Council) spoke with regard to Item 7E and particularly Service 4. Her detailed comments are recorded under that item.*

## **12/15 CUTTESLOWE & WOLVERCOTE JUNCTION IMPROVEMENTS**

(Agenda No. 4)

The Cabinet Member for Environment considered a report (CMDE4) setting out objections and comments received in response to a formal consultation to introduce permanent traffic orders as part of the scheme proposals for the improvement schemes at Wolvercote and Cutteslowe junctions.

Councillor Fooks thanked officers for the amendment which had been taken on board and welcomed the schemes to improve both roundabouts and for the strategic link road itself. However she wished to bring to the attention of the Cabinet Member the situation regarding closure of Five Mile Drive which had prompted mixed views. She felt this needed to be kept under close review as there was potential for this to become a 'rat-run'. She also had concerns regarding proposed priority measures for cyclists and pedestrians at both roundabouts mentioning specifically the toucan crossing on the eastern arm of the Wolvercote roundabout and the need for a marked cycle track at the south west corner. With regard to the Cutteslowe roundabout she raised the potential problem of buses stopping north of the roundabout, the lack of lights on the Banbury Road south approach road and the toucan crossing on the north arm.

Responding to a question from the Cabinet Member with regard to Five Mile Drive she agreed that the majority view should prevail but there were concerns about vehicle movements and speeding.

Mr Eddy confirmed the purpose of the scheme was to improve flow on main roads and therefore it could be expected to see a reduction in traffic flow on Five Mile Drive. However that situation would be monitored. With regard to Wolvercote roundabout he considered that in view of the limited space available that cycle access had been

set at an appropriate level. He confirmed that the northbound entry on Cutteslowe was not signalised but detailed modelling indicated that it would work to a better level without. He undertook to let Councillor Fooks have details of other aspects of the scheme with regard to the northbound element.

Responding to the Cabinet Member he confirmed that signals would be linked to improve flow and maximise throughput.

The Cabinet Member felt that the time had come to go ahead and progress work on the major schemes. Therefore having regard to the arguments and options set out in the documentation before him, the representations made to him and the further considerations set out above he confirmed his decision as follows:

- (a) the proposed amendment to the TRO for a 30mph speed limit on A44 north of Wolvercote junction;
- (b) the proposed amendment to the TRO for a 40mph speed limit on A40 west of Wolvercote junction;
- (c) the proposed amendment to the TRO for a 40mph speed limit on A40 east of Cutteslowe junction;
- (d) the proposed amendment to the TRO for a 30mph speed limit on A40 North Way between Wolvercote and Cutteslowe junctions;
- (e) the proposed TRO for prohibition of right turn movements out of the garages (BP and BMW) on A40 west of Wolvercote junction;
- (f) the proposed new off carriageway cycle route at Wolvercote from A44 Woodstock Road (N) to A40 North Way;
- (g) the proposed new off carriageway cycle routes on A40 Elsfield Way from Cutteslowe junction to Jackson Road;
- (h) the removal of the 2 existing pedestrian crossings on A40 North Way between Wolvercote and Cutteslowe junctions.

Signed.....  
Cabinet Member for Environment

Date.....

### **13/15 WITNEY ROAD, EYNSHAM - PROPOSED ZEBRA CROSSING**

(Agenda No. 5)

The Cabinet Member for Environment considered (CMDE5) a report setting out responses to a consultation on a proposed zebra crossing on Witney Road, Eynsham close to Bartholomew School.

Speaking in support of the scheme and as a governor of Bartholomew School Michael Ryan referred to the school's consistent outstanding Ofsted rating, as a result of which the catchment for its current intake had extended considerably. Most of those children travelled to the school by public transport and were then deposited on the pavement in Witney Road opposite the school and despite a recently installed 20 mph speed limit indicator there continued to be frequent near misses of pupils being hit by motor vehicles. That had prompted the school to press for a crossing. However, he was now concerned at an apparent rise in costs of the scheme from an initial £15 - £20,000 (later £20 - £25,000) towards which the school had agreed a donation of £5,000 to somewhere in the region of £35,000 and that the County Council would be looking to the school to fund the gap. As a result of its own success the school currently required an additional eight-classroom block in September 2015 to cover an increase in pupil numbers from 950 to 1200. That put considerable pressure on funding and the school would need to seriously consider whether it could afford to increase their donation to this much needed scheme.

Councillor Charles Mathew endorsed those comments and emphasised the strong case for this scheme. He regretted the inconvenience which would be suffered by residents of the house adjacent to the proposed site but there was a need to make children as safe as possible not only when crossing to get to school but also when accessing the playing fields, which were also on the other side of the Witney Road. A balance needed to be struck against the obvious risks and whilst proposals for a 20 mph speed limit scheme throughout Eynsham would obviously help this crossing formed a vital element in ensuring the safety of many children.

Responding to a question from the Cabinet Member Mr Turner confirmed that he was not aware of a request to the school for further funding and he was confident that the additional funding would be found.

He then confirmed that resiting of the crossing had not been a viable option due mainly to health & safety issues. The proposed siting was the safest option.

The Cabinet Member acknowledged that the adjacent residents would be inconvenienced but felt that would be marginal as there was alternative parking available to them. He would also be seeking confirmation from officers with regard to potential funding issues highlighted by Mr Ryan but in the meantime and having regard to the arguments and options set out in the documentation before him, the representations made to him and the further considerations set out above he confirmed his decision as follows:

to approve the proposed zebra crossing on Witney Road as detailed in the report CMDE5.

Signed.....  
Cabinet Member for Environment

Date.....

**14/15 EXEMPT ITEM**

(Agenda No. 6)

The Cabinet Member for Environment agreed that the public should be excluded for the duration of item 7E since it was likely that if they were present during that item there would be disclosure of exempt information as defined in Part I of Schedule 12A to the Local Government Act 1972 (as amended) and since it was considered that, in all the circumstances of the case, the public interest in maintaining the exemption outweighed the public interest in disclosing the information on the grounds set out in the item.

**15/15 BUS SERVICE SUBSIDIES REVIEW**

(Agenda No. 7)

The Cabinet Member for Environment considered (CMDE7E) a review of subsidised bus services which included the Vale of White Horse and South Oxfordshire areas and some others elsewhere in Oxfordshire, which for technical reasons included some additional services which operated in both those areas.

Eileen Langley had spoken at Item 3 in support of retention of Service 4. There had been overwhelming support for the service including a petition and any reduction in service levels would seriously disadvantage many people. Furthermore increased numbers at Dalton Barracks were likely to have a considerable impact on patronage and she felt the community covenant should be honoured in this regard. She recognised that the County Council needed to make savings but she felt there was scope to do that while monitoring services to local communities but if a cut in service level was inevitable then she would prefer retention of some services such as the full early services.

Councillor Hards spoke in support of the Didcot Volunteer Centre car scheme and contract V32 (Services V32). He welcomed the news regarding increased patronage of the latter but sadly accepted that the late evening and weekend services did not seem to be commercially viable but hoped that levels of service could be reviewed as the town grew.

Speaking in support of retaining peak and off-peak Witney town services (Services 213, 214 and 215) following the withdrawal of services by Go-Ride Councillor Price questioned the wisdom of offering such a contract in the first place.

Mr Darch confirmed that when the contract had been awarded Go-Ride had considered that level of service to be viable and had therefore pursued the option to operate a commercial service. That had effectively rendered the County Council powerless to stop it even if it could have been predicted that it would fail as it did.

Responding to a question from the Cabinet Member he confirmed that prior to Go-Ride's operation Stagecoach had operated an hourly service and so the service offered by Go-Ride had been a significant step up but the company had felt it could work. He also confirmed that there was an option to continue the current level of service but at a cost.

The Cabinet Member suggested that an investment now in this service through contract W3A to Stagecoach for continuation of the existing service until June 2016 could result in increased patronage and therefore a more viable service and asked officers to take that forward subject to review at the end of that period.

Mr Darch then confirmed that it had been deemed necessary to re-run the procurement exercise for some services under review and as that exercise would not have been completed by the time of this meeting delegated authority was being sought for the award of some of the contracts under review.

Having regard to the arguments and options set out in the documentation before him, the representations made to him and the further considerations set out above the Cabinet Member for Environment confirmed his decision as follows:

- a) agree levels of subsidy for the services described in this report on the basis of the tender prices (and the periods of time) as set out in Supplementary Exempt Annex 2 subject to an amendment to Services 213/214/215 Witney Town to secure continuation of existing services until June 2016 pending further review at the end of that period;
- b) record that in the opinion of the Cabinet Member for Environment the decisions made in (a) above were urgent in that any delay likely to be caused by the call in process would result in service discontinuity and in accordance with the requirements of Scrutiny Procedure Rule 17(b) those decisions should not be subject to the call in process;
- c) delegate authority to the Deputy Director for Environment & Economy (Commercial) in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Environment to negotiate an appropriate level of ongoing contribution toward service 8 (Brackley – Hethe – Fringford – Stratton Audley – Bicester: Item AK) and service 90 (Lambourn – Ashbury – Swindon: Item L) with each contracting authority;
- d) delegate authority to the Deputy Director for Environment & Economy (Commercial) in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Environment to award contracts relating to the items below which were subject to a delayed competitive tendering exercise and where those contracts being awarded were substantially different to those laid out in Annex 2 to the report CMDE7E then local County Council Members should also be consulted:

ITEM C: Service 38

ITEM D: Services 40, 41, 42, 44 and 218

ITEM G: Service 63

ITEM J: Services 67/67A/67B

ITEM M: Services 94/95

ITEM Q: Service X47

ITEM U: Services 97/114/135

ITEM W: Service 134

ITEM Y: Services 120, 121, 123 and 124

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ITEM Z: Services 125, 126 and 131  
ITEM AP: Service 36

- e) thank those operators of subsidised services which had been declared commercial from June 2016.

Signed.....  
Cabinet Member for Environment

Date.....

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