

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

**MINUTES** of the meeting held on Thursday, 24 July 2014 commencing at 10.30 am and finishing at Time Not Specified

**Present:**

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

**Other Members in Attendance:** Councillor Jean Fooks (for Agenda Items 2 and 5)  
Councillor Susanna Pressel (for Agenda Item 4)  
Councillor John Howson (for Agenda Item 5)  
Councillor John Tanner (for Agenda Item 5)  
Councillor Laura Price (for Agenda Item 7)

**Officers:**

Whole of meeting G. Warrington (Law & Culture); M. Kemp (Environment & Economy)

Part of meeting

<b>Agenda Item</b>	<b>Officer Attending</b>
4.	A. Warren & P. Gannon (Environment & Economy)
5,6,7 & 8	D. Tole (Environment & Economy)
9	V. Fletcher (Environment & Economy)

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

### 38/14 QUESTIONS FROM COUNTY COUNCILLORS

(Agenda No. 2)

*Question from Councillor Jean Fooks*

The North Oxford CPZ was agreed at your February 27<sup>th</sup> meeting, we are now almost into August and the scheme is still not in place. Residents rightly feel very let down by the County Council. Can you give me and my constituents a firm date by which they will have received letters, seen the signs in place and been able to purchase permits if wanted, ready for enforcement as soon as possible thereafter?

Could I also request that a 'light touch' enforcement regime is used for the first two or three weeks, to enable people to get used to the scheme being operational at last?

*Reply from the Cabinet Member for Environment*

I am sorry that this has taken such a long time to implement but officers are working hard to fit this in alongside other priorities. I have been assured that letters with information on the approved scheme and how to apply for permits, along with permit application forms, will be sent out by post to all the residents next week. Permits will be issued from 16 August onwards.

All the signs (approx. 250 in total) have now been manufactured and the contractor will be erecting them during the second week of August and the Zone will become operational at the end of August. As is our normal practice with new schemes, the enforcement will initially involve the issuing of warning notices to vehicles without a permit or parking incorrectly.

*Supplementary question from Councillor Fooks*

Pleased that the scheme is at last proceeding to implementation although I have some concerns regarding the level of signage proposed. Could the Cabinet Member review the resources and priorities.

*Reply from the Cabinet Member for Environment*

Efforts would be made to make its implementation as effective and resourceful as possible.

### **39/14 PETITIONS AND PUBLIC ADDRESS**

(Agenda No. 3)

<i>Name</i>	<i>Item</i>
Councillor Susanna Pressel Councillor John Howson Councillor John Tanner	) ) 4. Frideswide Square, Oxford )
Councillor Jean Fooks	5. Proposed Parking Restrictions, Wovercote
Councillor Laura Price	7. Proposed Amendments to Parking Restrictions – Corn Street, Witney

## 40/14 FRIDESWIDE SQUARE, OXFORD - TRANSPORT AND PUBLIC REALM IMPROVEMENTS ENABLING WORKS

(Agenda No. 4)

The Cabinet Member for Environment considered a report (CMDE4) which focused on enabling works as part of the on-going process to transform Frideswide Square from a busy highway junction into a well-managed entry point to the City together with the results of formal consultation on required amendments to traffic regulation orders (TROs) and conversion of footways.

Councillor Pressel commented that the County Council's overwhelming priority seemed to be to keep motor traffic flowing as fast as possible, with pedestrians and cyclists considered a mere afterthought. Although she did not support shared use she could understand why some people might wish to see cycle lanes on the pavement where there was no alternative but here, in a large new scheme there really was an opportunity to achieve a "modal shift" and there ought to be a way to make the carriageways safe enough so that all cyclists were happy to use them. Pedestrians deserved to enjoy the new pavements without being forced to share them with cyclists, especially where those cyclists were zooming around in all directions.

Councillor Howson stressed the importance of this route for residents in his division and emergency services etc and highlighted:

- the importance of light phasing at the Worcester Street junction. This was a 4 way junction with traffic often backed up to Walton Street and St Giles;
- the Westgate and Oxpens redevelopment and access by London coaches. Better signposting would be needed to encourage use of Hythe Bridge Street.

Endorsing the earlier comments Councillor Tanner highlighted potential problems for:

- cyclist/pedestrian conflict at Becket Street/Osney Lane.
- Worcester Street junction where cyclists needed to be discouraged from using pavements and encouraged to use the carriageway to improve safety. For that reason he could not support the recommendation set out in paragraph 31(b).
- Worcester Street – need for clear surface marking at proposed pedestrian crossing.

Officers confirmed that the recommendation at 31(b) merely allowed for civil engineering works to be carried out below the surface in order to offset the more expensive option of retro fitting at a future date. Undertaking that work now did not mean a commitment to future shared use as a legal process would still need to be completed to achieve that. No final decision had been taken with regard to conversion of footway areas to shared use. Pedestrian usage remained a fundamental part of the ethos for this scheme and their needs would be taken fully into account. Lights would be co-ordinated in order to manage traffic flow to the optimum level.

In response to the Cabinet Member officers confirmed that although greater levels of traffic in Becket Street could compromise air quality within that specific area it was expected that levels over the area as a whole would not deteriorate.

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) to approve the making of Traffic Regulation Order amendments for Becket Street, Osney Lane, St Thomas Street and Woodbine Place, as advertised and shown in Annex 2 to the report CMDE 4;
- (b) to approve the conversion of footway areas to shared use at the Worcester Street/George Street/Hythe Bridge Street junction, shown in Annex 3 to the report CMDE4 but not its implementation at this time. Monitoring to be undertaken with a view to implementing later should the need arise;
- (c) to approve progression to implementation of the enabling works subject to any specific matters on the detailed design being resolved (including whether any specific provision for blue badge parking could be made in Becket Street and/or Hollybush Row) in consultation with the Deputy Director of Environment & Economy (Commercial) and the Cabinet Member for Environment.

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Cabinet Member for Environment

Date of signing .....

**41/14 PROPOSED PARKING RESTRICTIONS - WOLVERCOTE**

(Agenda No. 5)

The Cabinet Member for Environment considered (CMDE5) objections received to a formal consultation on proposals to introduce parking restrictions in several parts of Wolvercote village.

Councillor Fooks supported the proposals which would go some way to help protect and improve bus services. However, she had some concerns regarding pavement parking in the vicinity of the Jacobs Inn restaurant and suggested that switching the yellow lines to the opposite side of the road might help. She also referred to a report in the Oxford Mail which had referred to problems for buses at Clifford Place and Home Close although she was not aware of any problems.

Mr Tole accepted that there were difficulties for buses in this area and the situation would need to be kept under review. With regard to the situation at the Jacobs Inn he was reluctant to undertake anything in the short term but would undertake some local consultation in that area on a revised proposal and if no objections were received then something could be considered and introduced at the same time as the restrictions currently under consideration.

Responding to the Cabinet Member Mr Tole confirmed that some parking was available for displaced residents and the Bus Company had confirmed whilst that did not present constant problems there were occasions when it did. It was more of a problem at the eastern end of the village. He felt the proposals currently before the Cabinet Member represented a reasonable balance.

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

to approve the proposed parking restrictions for Wolvercote as advertised and amended as described in the report CMDE5, other than the proposed restrictions in the vicinity of Jacobs Inn which were to be the subject of further consultation.

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Cabinet Member for Environment

Date of signing .....

**42/14 PROPOSED PARKING RESTRICTIONS - VARIOUS LOCATIONS, BANBURY**

(Agenda No. 6)

The Cabinet Member for Environment considered (CMDE6) objections received to formal consultations on proposals to introduce or amend parking restrictions in two separate areas of Banbury.

County Councillor Mark Cherry (Banbury Calthorpe) had been unable to attend the meeting but supported the introduction of no waiting restrictions on Bankside as soon as possible.

Having regard to the arguments and options set out in the documentation before him and the representations made to him by the local member the Cabinet Member confirmed his decision as follows:

to approve the proposed parking restrictions for the two areas of Banbury as advertised but amended as described in the report CMDE6.

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Cabinet Member for Environment

Date of signing .....

**43/14 PROPOSED AMENDMENTS TO PARKING RESTRICTIONS - CORN STREET, WITNEY**

(Agenda No. 7)

..... The Cabinet Member for Environment considered (CMDE7) objections received to a formal consultation on proposals to amend parking restrictions in part of Corn Street in Witney.

Councillor David Harvey, Environment Portfolio Holder, West Oxfordshire District Council had in a written submission expressed disappointment at the amended proposals for Corn Street without any discussion with him or officers at West Oxfordshire District Council. After several years the present proposals to use a short length of the quite wide pavement for 'partial pavement parking' had been put together by professionally qualified officers and discussed with local residents to provide parking on both sides of the road with no hindrance to the flow of traffic in either direction, including buses. The proposals had been supported by Thames Valley Police and additional car parking spaces in Corn Street would also help to alleviate some of the parking congestion in neighbouring streets such as The Crofts and Holloway Road as well as Queen Emma's Dyke. He understood that the proposals had been criticised by some members of the public who were not Corn Street residents and, as a result, County officers had taken the decision to remove the partial pavement parking and he was disappointed that he had found this out informally. This change to the plan would result in eleven fewer, much needed, parking spaces being available and he requested that the Cabinet Member reconsider this situation and return to the original proposal to include the partial pavement parking on the north side of Corn Street.

Councillor Laura Price supported the amended proposals. Concerns had been expressed locally regarding walkway parking and the precedent that that might set for elsewhere in the town. Enforcement in the area was light touch and as free parking was planned nearby she could not see the need for the 11 extra spaces here. The responses to consultation appeared to bear out her concerns and she was not aware of much support for it.

Mr Tole confirmed that the revised proposals had been the result of further consideration in the light of comments received to the consultation.

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

To approve the proposed parking restrictions for part of Corn Street, Witney as advertised but amended as described in the report CMDE7.

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Cabinet Member for Environment

Date of signing

## **44/14 PROPOSED DISABLED PERSONS PARKING PLACE - WEST OXFORDSHIRE - PART 2**

(Agenda No. 8)

On 12 June 2014 and following consideration of objections received as a result of a formal consultation on proposals to introduce two new Disabled Persons' Parking Places in Charlbury, West Oxfordshire District the Cabinet Member for Environment had approved implementation of the proposed space on Market Street as advertised but, having listened to concerns expressed at the meeting, deferred the proposal to introduce a disabled persons' parking place on Browns Lane to enable further consideration and a visit to the site.

He also considered further written representations from:

Amanda Epps, Resident, Charlbury, who expressed disappointment that County Council officers were recommending that the needs of the able bodied had priority over those of Blue Badge holders in the issue of disabled bays outside the Coop store in Enstone Road. She found it particularly distressing that even the single bay now proposed would have to wait for the lengthy process of removing the bay on Playing Close to be completed. It had been almost 2 years since she had suggested this provision and it seemed the disabled in Charlbury would have to wait another 2 years to have the same shopping facility as their counterparts in other towns and villages. She suspected that the County Council's attitude to the disadvantaged in society was in breach of the Disability Discrimination Act and she intended to contact her MP, David Cameron on the matter. She hoped the Cabinet Member would ignore the advice given and allow the original proposal with the proviso that the bay on the Playing Close be removed as soon as possible.

County Councillor Rodney Rose (Charlbury & Wychwood) fully supported the introduction of a single disabled parking space on Brown's Lane, Charlbury but that that should not be subject to consultation to remove the existing disabled persons parking place on Pooles Lane. That should be undertaken separately.

Mr Tole referred to 2 further representations. The first from Charlbury Town Council who supported the disabled bays as originally proposed and also retention of the bay at Playing Close, which was regularly used by elderly residents and others generally for short periods. The second from David Moyes who questioned the need for the space in Playing Close and expressed the view that residents were likely to accept a space outside the Co-op, albeit not ideal, if that were removed.

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

- (a)** approve a single Disabled Persons Parking Place on Brown's Lane (outside the Co-op store);
- (b)** request officers to carry out a consultation to remove the Disabled Persons Parking Place in Poole's Lane.

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Cabinet Member for Environment

Date of signing .....

**45/14 POSITION STATEMENT ON MAJOR DEVELOPMENT PROPOSALS FOR GROUND-MOUNTED SOLAR PV ARRAYS**

(Agenda No. 9)

The Cabinet Member for Environment was being asked to endorse a proposed Position Statement on Major Development Proposals for Ground Mounted Solar PV Arrays for the County Council.

Officers referred to a late submission from the CPRE who, whilst welcoming the statement in principle had raised some concerns regarding a lack of reference to the Oxford Green Belt. National Planning Policy Guidance stated that many renewable energy projects would be inappropriate in the Green Belt and needed very special circumstances to justify them. Statements by government ministers in recent months had given even greater weight to this argument against allowing solar farms in the Green Belt. CPRE felt it would be highly inappropriate for the County, which helped set up the Green Belt in the 1950s, and supported its aims in successive Structure Plans, to now choose to ignore it in this policy statement on solar farms. These concerns were shared by the Oxford Green Belt Network. They requested that a decision on the statement be deferred to allow further consideration of this issue and also the position with regard to AONBs, where they felt insufficient weight had been given to the value of agricultural land and the potentially inadequate treatment of public rights of way and ensure that the final position statement was a more robust document to support renewable energy in appropriate locations.

Officers confirmed that position statements set out pre-application advice only and officers would continue to respond on specific applications. However, the process of putting together such statements was a new one and the representations from CPRE had highlighted some issues regarding appropriate levels of consultation which should be undertaken on these documents and officers were happy to reconsider these issues if the cabinet Member chose to defer.

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:

to defer consideration of the Position Statement: Major Development Proposals for Ground-mounted Solar PV Arrays to a future meeting to allow further consultation.

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Cabinet Member for Environment

Date of signing .....