

DELEGATED DECISIONS BY CABINET MEMBER FOR ENVIRONMENT (INCLUDING TRANSPORT)

MINUTES of the meeting held on Thursday, 29 April 2021 commencing at 10.00 am and finishing at 12.27 pm

Present:

Voting Members: Councillor Yvonne Constance OBE – in the Chair

Other Members in Attendance: Councillor John Howson (for Agenda Item 4)
Councillor Susanna Pressel (for Agenda Item 4)
Councillor Emma Turnbull (for Agenda Item 4)
Councillor Stefan Gawrysiak (for Agenda Items 5 & 6)
Councillor Charles Mathew (for Agenda Item 7)
Councillor John Sanders

Officers:

Whole of meeting G. Warrington (Law & Governance); P. Fermer, T. Shickle and A. Kirkwood ((Environment & Place)

Part of Meeting

Agenda Item	Officer Attending
4	E. Owens (Assistant Director Growth & Place) and R. Freshwater
5 & 6	M. Horton & L. Turner (Environment & Place)
7	G. Barrell (Environment & Place)

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.

1/21 **PETITIONS AND PUBLIC ADDRESS**

(Agenda No. 3)

Petitions

A petition was presented by Jamie Hartzell from the Jericho Low Traffic neighbourhood Group in the following terms:

“We call on Oxfordshire County Council to implement a northbound traffic filter on Walton Street at the same time as, and in addition to, their current proposals to limit southbound traffic in Jericho and Walton Manor. The precise position of this filter should be decided in consultation with the community. Only by introducing measures

that reduce or eliminate both northbound and southbound traffic can the Council's aims of introducing a low traffic neighbourhood and encouraging active travel be met."

Presenting the petition comprising of 1,100 signatures Mr Hartzell on behalf of the petitioners called on the County Council to introduce measures reducing or eliminating both northbound and southbound traffic in Jericho and Walton Manor. By comparison the Jericho Connections petition last year that called for the barrier to be re-opened had just 660 signatories but more importantly many of those had been from outside the area, from places as far away as Scotland, Egypt and even Argentina with only 387 of them from Oxford City which appeared to represent a familiar pattern from the anti-LTN, pro-car lobby and a recent petition against the Cowley LTNs had been found to have large numbers of signatories from abroad and seemed that activists with no connection to the area are piling in in support of a cause.

However, 96% of the signatories on this petition were from Oxford which was nearly three times as many local people for a low traffic neighbourhood as against and gathered in just 7 weeks whereas it had taken Jericho Connections 7 months to gather theirs.

Many of the comments in the petition stated how Walton Street was a much more attractive area to visit now traffic had been restricted and he quoted some of the comments directed at the Council itself:

"You need to hold your nerve and drive positive behaviour change, not cave in to a loud minority."

and

"If you insist on reintroducing northbound motor vehicles from Worcester Street to Walton Street you will be taking one of the most thoroughly retrograde steps in Oxford over the last few years, for no good reason at all."

He hoped as did many others that we still lived in a democracy and that the Council would be guided by the facts and not by the shouting. This petition clearly demonstrated that the majority of people were in favour of stopping through traffic in Jericho and Walton Manor.

He urged the Cabinet Member not to take Oxford backwards on its Active Travel, air pollution and climate change commitments but instead respect the views of the majority and introduce a scheme stopping all through traffic.

The petition was received and referred to officers.

The Cabinet Member took the opportunity to confirm that both the Director of Law & Governance and Head of Legal Services at Oxfordshire County Council had advised that it was acceptable for Item 4 to be considered during the pre-election period.

She then asked elected Councillors to restrict their comments when speaking to the business in hand and resist making any political statements and to other speakers to refrain from interrupting during the meeting and to respect other contributors.

2/21 OXFORD: JERICHO AND WALTON MANOR AREA PILOT SCHEME AND WALTON STREET EXPERIMENTAL PROHIBITION OF MOTOR VEHICLES

(Agenda No. 4)

In November 2019, the Cabinet Member for Environment had approved implementation of an Experimental Traffic Regulation Order (ETRO) to restrict motor vehicle access on Walton Street at its junction with Worcester Street. The 18-month period for that trial was due to conclude on 17 May 2021.

Prior to that date, a decision was required on whether the trial measure should be made permanent or whether it should be removed. Following formal consultation on the trial measures between November 2019 and May 2020, the Cabinet Member had decided in August 2020 to continue the experimental order pending consultation and progress on a local traffic neighbourhood scheme. Following receipt of Department for Transport (DfT) Active Travel funding in late 2020, an area pilot scheme for the Jericho and Walton Manor area, aimed at promoting active travel for the area, was consulted on between 5 March 2021 and 19 March 2021. The area pilot was proposed as an alternative to the current ETRO arrangements and this report details the outcomes of consultation on that pilot scheme.

Before considering the officer report and hearing from speakers the Cabinet Member wanted to remind the meeting of the background to and amount of work that had been undertaken through a number of county council led road safety measures and restricted traffic calming schemes in the Jericho and Walton Manor area, which had included measures on Kingston Road, St Bernard's Road and Hayfield Road/Aristotle Lane.. The area also showed a strong base for active travel measures and work to date had provided strong figures and a good basis on which to consider these trials and experiments. In addition to the specific schemes for traffic calming along the whole length of Walton Street and in Observatory Street and Frenchay Road a traffic filter had been provided on the western end of Polstead Road, Little Clarendon Street had non raised calming measures and raised side road entry treatments had been installed at junctions of all side roads along the Woodstock Road except Little Clarendon Street. Furthermore, a review of traffic accident data had suggested that it was unlikely that through traffic would have been a contributory factor in a great many of the incidents reported in this area. By drawing attention to this now illustrated how much care and attention Oxfordshire County Council had delivered to this area.

John Faux spoke as a resident of Jericho who worked in Kidlington. As a walker, runner, cyclist, motorcyclist, motorist and also passionate supporter of local businesses, he estimated that 90% of his journeys outside of work were to Walton

Street or Little Clarendon Street. Since Walton Street had been closed walking, running and cycling had become infinitely more enjoyable and considerably safer and while he had to drive a bit further to get in and out of Jericho that was acceptable when considering the positives now being experienced. Prior to the closure Walton Street had often been blocked or very busy with traffic and dangerous to cycle down. He believed a large part of this traffic was caused by rat runners and out of area motorists whose only interest was to cut through Jericho as quickly as possible with no interest in local businesses or residents wellbeing. A Low Traffic Neighbourhood using modal filters preventing through traffic would be a true win win scenario for all residents and businesses in the area. Motor traffic would significantly reduce as rat running wouldn't be possible while resident and business traffic could still come and go with little or no extra inconvenience. Residents had a safer less polluted environment, businesses would experience a much greater footfall and the opportunity to expand the use of the street table licenses to encourage a wonderful, exciting, vibrant and safe area along Walton street as had happened elsewhere in Oxford such as George Street. He urged the county council to resist going back to the bad old days of rat running, pollution and congestion and introduce a system using physical barriers to promote walking, cycling and support for local businesses.

Jamie Hartzell asked the Cabinet Member to override the recommendation before her and instead stop through traffic in Jericho and Walton Manor. He had already presented a petition in support of that but wanted to make it clear that on every single count the evidence suggested that traffic restrictions were what the majority of people wanted as did every single local councillor and even the Cabinet Member for Environment at her August 2020 meeting had said that "*The most important thing was to recognise that everyone wanted less traffic*" and yet Council Officers were recommending that she ignore all of these people and even her own view. In support of that claim he stated that:

- in the pre-barrier consultation back in 2019, 63% of respondents had supported closure.
- In the subsequent 6-month consultation, 51% of respondents expressed support, while only 43% objected.
- In the consultation just conducted, only 27% had been in favour of the proposals, but it was quite obvious that that this was because people wanted more traffic restrictions, not less. In the comments, 35% asked for a proper LTN Scheme, 20% said the scheme didn't go far enough, and 13% said they wanted to keep the barrier closed. This compared to only 8% who said they wanted no traffic restrictions at all.

The fact was that every time the Council had consulted on what the public wanted, there had been a clear majority in favour of restricting through traffic and yet there was now a recommendation that flew in the face of those facts. After 18 months of promises, the recommendation was to do nothing and that when even Jericho Connections had accepted that some traffic restrictions were the way forward. Waiting for the wider ZEZ was not a solution as that would merely be kicking the can down the road yet again and when that came up for consultation the council would

face exactly the same objections as now. He urged the Cabinet Member to respect the views of the majority and introduce a scheme that would stop all through traffic

Clive Bramley referred to the following points:

- climate emergency;
- health emergency caused by inactive lifestyles;
- cars in the UK had doubled since 2000;
- miles driven on residential roads had doubled since 2010;
- pollution in cities was largely caused by cars, with serious impacts on our and our children's health with the legality of allowing this to continue now being actively challenged;

To address all these issues, the government had clearly indicated that it expected local authorities to take measures to reduce the use of private cars and create environments that encouraged active travel. Prior to 2019 this neighbourhood had been a busy rat run and whilst the barrier addressed this, it had had unfortunate side effects leading to much local discussion. However, a consensus emerged accepting the need to reduce traffic, eliminate rat running and share the remaining traffic fairly. Oxfordshire County Council had then unilaterally proposed a poor scheme which had been roundly rejected in public consultation and now wanted to return to the pre barrier position, with the only protection for residents, pedestrians and cyclists being "advisory signs" that were universally ignored and speed limits that were not enforced. All the time, effort, expense and learning of the past two years was being wasted and the various promises of the Cabinet Member for Environment abandoned. There were alternatives such as a bollard in north Walton Street which could be removed for emergency services and which needn't be expensive and would more fairly distribute traffic north and south while preventing a return of the old rat run. The County Council needed to deliver a worthwhile scheme.

Danny Yee worked in Wellington Square and found walking along Walton Street vastly more pleasant now, with less traffic but mostly wanted to talk about the effects on the broader city. While the Walton Street filter had been in place he had been able to cycle with his eight year-old daughter to visit his sister, who lived on Plater Drive. However, with no restrictions on motor traffic using Walton Street it was now likely that he would revert back to driving that trip meaning there would be two more car journeys each time, increasing traffic not just in Jericho but in East Oxford and the city centre. While that was just one example Walton Street was a key cycling route for many destinations, since Woodstock and Banbury roads were too hostile for people who weren't fast and confident and indeed was part of a National Cycle Route. Through motor traffic endangered people walking and cycling on Walton Street at all times of day, every day, not just in peak hour. Some drivers used it as a short-cut even when there was no congestion, just to cut out two sets of traffic lights, often driving at high speeds in order to gain as much time as possible. Residents needed a solution that prevented through traffic with physical barriers or enforcement cameras and not just signs that would be ignored. The County Council's repeated statements of support for active travel seemed empty if they allowed motor traffic to dominate Walton Street as if it were a main road.

Kate Seal spoke on behalf of Cyclox but also as a resident. When she had moved to Oxford a few years ago she had become obsessed about where to park her car worrying that she had bought the wrong house, because it didn't have off-street parking. Once she had found a good parking space on the street outside her house, she started to cycle in order to protect that space. That had been a cautious start as she had never cycled in a city before and felt very unsafe. Despite that she was able to predict her arrival time for appointments and meetings, drop off anywhere along my journey and got some exercise. Since those cautious beginnings she had since the temporary Walton Street barrier was put up grown to love cycling because the road was quiet. Bike riding was a lot less risky without the rat runners following their satnav instructions and she didn't have to cycle defensively all the time. She had started to shop more locally and so supported local businesses and felt much safer and connected with her neighbourhood. The end result had been that her car became superfluous and she had sold it. The barrier had changed her from being car-centric to an active traveller. That had also happened with her lodgers who had arrived with cars, but then sold them and bought a bike. The County Council had received government funds expressly to encourage active travel but if through traffic in Jericho and Walton Manor wasn't stopped it was missing an obvious opportunity to support the Active Travel initiative but more importantly to take action on climate change. For these reasons and for the benefit of residents, visitors, traders and the environment she urged the County Council as a resident and on behalf of Cyclox to block through traffic in Jericho and Walton Manor as had been promised.

Pip McCallister spoke on behalf of Jericho Connections a group of around 260 people who lived or worked in Jericho, Walton Manor and Waterside and had been part of the consultation throughout alongside other groups. When this latest consultation had been launched – where a partial closure was put forward – they had decided to lend that their support. They had known that it wasn't perfect but knew there needed to be a compromise. They also didn't like the uncertainty of what would happen if the partial closure was rejected – would it re-open or remain closed nobody knew. However, now that the partial re-opening seemed to have been taken off the table, they had taken the view that Walton Street should re-open. The saga of Walton Street had dragged on for too long from the initial temporary closure, through the ETRO and then the debate on the unaffordable and unwanted full-on pedestrianization. The experiment had proved unsuccessful, but it had been tried. County officers and all the groups involved had researched, proposed and debated many suggestions and yet despite those best efforts no simple and affordable workable solution across the neighbourhood had been found. Re-opening as recommended now seemed the best way forward. Jericho Connections position and goals remained unchanged with Jericho always a destination, never a short-cut. Of course, they would have liked to have seen some of their ideas incorporated to help achieve keeping Jericho easily accessible for residents, workers, shoppers and visitors but that wasn't to be the case. There had been too much uncertainty for the community, workers, schools, visitors and businesses during this painful 18 month saga which needed now to come to an end in order to close this endless debate and start to rebuild our community. She urged that the officer recommendation be accepted.

Dr Kiki Isidoros stated that there had been community-wide applause for the recommendation by County Council officers to reopen Walton Street and halt the

over-the-top LTN proposals. Over a year ago, residents had analysed the Council's own traffic and pollution data and local socio-demographic data, proving Jericho was already low traffic and high active travel. Just three examples out of many were:

1. 'rat-run' traffic at south Walton Street was directly due to poor traffic management between St Giles and Hythe Bridge and non-Jericho drivers desperately trying to find congestion shortcuts;
2. three years of nitrogen dioxide (NO₂) measurements on Walton Street showed consistent annual means at 26/27µg/m³ level which were well below the regulatory and safe level of 40µg/m³;
3. Walton Manor/St Margaret's had eight times higher car ownership than Jericho (Jericho 330, Walton Manor/St Margaret's 2640). Two-car ownership in Jericho was 55, Walton Manor/St Margaret's was 600.

From the outset, local residents and traders, representing a clear majority of the community, had demanded that any actions should be based on proper evidence-based data. Instead, we had all now seen the negative impacts of ill-thought out decisions, creating divisive community relations, much distress to residents and traders, appalling traffic shifts on neighbouring streets and forcing drivers to make "longer journeys" emitting more pollution against their will. The officer recommendations should be fully implemented and the community who lived and worked in Jericho should be the primary drivers of change, not "outsiders" such as the method adopted by the JLTN group who had actively sought non-local signatures by advertising their petition widely on social media.

Patrick Davey strongly supported the Council and the Cabinet Member for Environment in the proposed re-opening of Walton Street. This was a vital issue and the background, politics, twists and turns and community reactions were now very well known. He believed this was the right decision for the right reasons and commended the bravery and sense of justice of those seeking to make this decision. Traffic issues were emotive, as traffic impacted greatly on the quality of our lives and did so intimately, moment to moment and day to day. Traffic management, therefore, required cardinal principles of equity, justice and a sense of fair play. This all meant that vehicle traffic should be minimised, everyone should take their fair share, that its impact should be controlled (e.g. speed reduced) while balancing the needs of the economy. A key principle was that traffic management should not rely on displacing traffic, especially through internal rat runs. The shutting of Walton Street, put simply, had not been fair because the entirety of Walton Street's fair share of traffic had been displaced northward, largely into St Bernard's Road which as a narrow residential street had not been for these traffic volumes (unlike Walton Street) and had had a terrible impact on residents' health, especially mental health. He believed that residents in St Bernard's Road had made the argument powerfully and politely that this injustice should be corrected and that the County Council had listened intently to that message. He strongly believed that reopening Walton Street would be just and equitable and, therefore, appropriate and while that was clearly part of an ongoing journey to a better future for the whole neighbourhood and one community be believed that by working together it would be possible to build a fine neighbourhood.

Kai Pischke advised that Walton Street was home to two Oxford colleges and lots of student accommodation and he felt students had been disproportionately impacted

by provisions for active travel. For most of them walking and cycling were the primary means of getting around with very few students owning cars and yet, compared to the rest of the community, it felt like they had been forgotten. Students in colleges had not been informed of the consultation directly. It had clearly been and continued to be a contentious issue and while lots of care had been taken to listen to the views of various groups it felt like students had largely been ignored. It was important that different channels were used to contact students and it would have been very helpful to at least inform colleges directly about the consultation. Along with a large number of residents, many students felt that the proposed pilot LTN was far too low in ambition with the primary purpose of any LTN being to reduce the number of cars and support pedestrians and cyclists in the area. It was obvious that this would come at some inconvenience to cars. Students wanted to be able to study in a quiet environment and visit shops on Little Clarendon and central Walton street without being overwhelmed by cars. The current ETRO was definitely not ideal but it should be a minimum with some form of control on through traffic and rat running. This was in the interest of shops, residents and especially students. As summer approached, more and more people would be out on the streets and this area was an amazing place to walk and spend time. Cars were damaging to the environment and to the atmosphere of Jericho and Walton Manor and opening the Walton Street barrier was absolutely the wrong decision for students.

Pamela Foley had lived in Jericho for more than 21 years and she was concerned about the climate change crisis. She had recycled, bought in bulk and reused containers and mended items for decades. As a freelance artist, she relied on her car to transport her work to exhibition sites around the country as materials were too heavy or bulky to carry on public transport. In addition, she had to drive to work sites and venues that were only accessible by car but as a responsible citizen, had bought a hybrid car many years ago to lessen the impact on our environment. When the barriers had first been put up to fix sinkholes on Walton Street, she had been mildly inconvenienced, having to drive greater distances than before in order to exit and enter Jericho. However, when she discovered that the barriers were to remain in place through an ETRO, due to the unilateral decision made by one county councillor, she had been angry. Where had been the consultation with Jericho residents? What was the justification for this act? Where was the baseline evidence? The process smacked of an undemocratic undertaking not expected in a modern society. The recommendation to now take down the barriers and to fully open the road, one of the very few thoroughfares in Oxford had been reached by county officers on the basis of sound research and conclusions on the traffic situation. That should not be ignored and she hoped that the Cabinet Member for Environment would now uphold the democratic process and implement those recommendations.

Bernadette Evans spoke on behalf of the Jericho Traders Association who had stated many times before that the road closure had been terrible for most Jericho businesses (pre and during Covid), so naturally they supported the council's proposal to fully reopen Walton Street. With all that central government was saying about doing all they could to help small businesses supporting our shopping neighbourhood by reopening the street was the right thing to do and the officer recommendation to reopen the road had been well received. To be able to rebuild our businesses, we need certainty and to have the goalposts constantly moved, as they had been with the various schemes being discussed had been detrimental to the morale of business

owners and made investment less likely and this negative impact could not be underestimated. She suggested that councillors should come and visit to hear the lived experiences of the impact that the closure had had and thoughts on the proposed ZEZ. Any changes needed to come from the business owners themselves as they were the ones taking the financial risks with incomes affected. It was difficult having something totally out of your control such as a road closure damaging your income but having no say in the matter. These things needed to be managed in a more collaborative way with the council and the businesses sitting down together and working out a plan. In summary she welcomed the proposal to remove the barrier with some traffic calming measures to prevent anyone wanting to use it as a cut through.

Abigail Vint speaking as a resident having moved to the area with her family five years ago had chosen Jericho for its vibrant, bustling, atmosphere as well as close proximity to the centre of Oxford. As non-retired residents of the community, they travelled to and from the city for work and prior to the pandemic, this closure had made the driving commute longer and therefore, potentially reversing the so-called claim of pollution reduction. As someone who lived just off Walton Road, traffic seemed to be at typical levels during rush hour for a busy city and backed up other times when other roads, such as Botley Road, had issues. Closing the main thoroughfare had simply pushed traffic onto the smaller streets, which were ill equipped to handle them. Cycling was often cited as the solution to limiting cars but that could be construed as very ableist and ageist by suggesting that everyone in the community could hop on a bike but Jericho had a large elderly community, many of whom relied on vehicles to travel in and out of the area easily. She had only recently recovered from balance issues and had not been able to cycle for a few years. As a family they were frequent customers to many of the local shops, bars & restaurants here in Jericho and she was concerned about the businesses and the significant drop they had seen in their trade since the closure of the road. It wasn't just locals who used these shops and many people looked at Jericho as a market town, popping in and out to pick things up but if the businesses leave, then Jericho will lose its vibrancy and simply be a bunch of houses. Finally, she no longer felt safe as a woman walking on her own down Walton Road in the dark whereas with the road open, there was more potential for the odd car to drive by late night, making it feel less desolate. She urged the Cabinet Member to make the right choice and open the road

John Mair had been due to speak next but due to connection problems had been unable to join the meeting. The Cabinet Member asked the Committee support officer to read his statement on his behalf:

"My name is John Mair a Jericho resident and I run *MY JERICO* which is a/the major source of weekly information for other Jericho residents. We have been the forum for discussion of the Walton Street Closure/the putative *LTN* for the last 18 months. There have been six *my Jericho* sessions on the issue (Most recorded and available at myjericho.co.uk).

I am going to focus on the Five or Six Cs

Closure- the ETRO and closure in May 2019 was an inspired, creative move by Councillor Constance. It created a petri dish to explore the idea of a low traffic neighbourhood in Central Oxford. That experiment should have been better planned and more closely monitored.

Communication-that has not been the strong point of the County Council. The original closure and the reasons for it not explained at all clearly. Since the rationale for continued closure has not been explained well-if at all. The average man/woman in the (Nelson)Street has very little clue why it was done, why it continued and how it might or might not be undone. There was an assumption that the community is digital savvy. It is far from. No public meetings-even pre lockdown, no use of community voices and platforms to get messages across. The PR function of the County needs close examination going forwards.

Consultation. That too has not left the County smelling of roses. 'Consultations' have been cursory and rushed. The one to impose the ETRO post the road works a well-kept secret, the recent one on the putative pilot scheme rushed and unclear. Just what were the figures for that?

Moving forward, the County should:

- a. Keep the Barrier/ETRO for another six-month period
- b. In that period develop a roadshow to physically explain the alternatives. Simple diagrams, simple words
- c. Take that roadshow to local gathering places-The Jericho Community Centre, St Margaret's Institute, local schools/ptas, the cinema and even the pubs. Cut through the noise and fog of propaganda.
- d. Garner some sensible and deeper local opinion that way. Control the voices of the utopians, luddites, ideologues and (frankly)fanatics. Let the people speak.

Three Cs. Very simple. It's now up to the fourth C - Councillor Constance to come up with a Compromise that works for the Community."

Sushila Dhall spoke as Chair of Oxford Pedestrians Association whose aim was to work for a walkable Oxford. Sadly, despite 25 years of campaigning, that aim had not yet been achieved. The main reason for that was that there was too little space for pedestrians and wheelchair users, with pavements narrow and crowded and often in a bad state of repair, full of obstacles, smelly with exhaust fumes and noisy with motor engines whereas roads, by comparison, were usually wider than necessary, well-drained, with good views and far better maintained than footways. However, for several months there had been the joy of a peaceful, clean, wide enough space to walk in on Walton Street. In the light of County policies of decades to improve conditions for walkers this had seemed a rare but very positive step forward. Residents at the south end of Walton Street had been able to use front gardens and sit on steps and the whole community had felt more alive and healthy. There had been space for people to walk, not on the narrow margins, but in the centre of the space which had made walking feel joyous. Now officers were recommending that the motor car should again dominate while we were expected to return to the margins. We recognise that motorists are the primary important group for this Council despite policies to the contrary, but we will not lose this small gain without protest.

We ask that you have the courage to stick by your policies and keep the road closed to motorised traffic and give the rest of us some space for a change.

James Salter posed the question "Why close it? and who did it serve? considering only the people who lived in the south of Walton Street. For them they got a quiet street. Why move to the centre of Oxford if you want peace and quiet? These people didn't use local shops and seem to care nothing for local businesses with all their shopping done online whereas we now had huge delivery trucks reversing towards the barrier as they couldn't turn around. Walton Street going north was now a speedway for boy racers and the impact on Observatory Street and St Bernard's Road had been huge. Any congestion on Walton Street had always been caused by the Botley Road and traffic lights and jams caused by badly timed buses holding up traffic in the bays on Frideswide Square. Closing Walton Street had served no purpose and it hadn't been a success. The Jericho community he had known for 40 years was being destroyed by rich old people who didn't have the commitments and busy lives that most of us had such as school runs, transporting goods, taking children to sports facilities out of town. Furthermore, when the pandemic was over no one could know what the roads would look like? A decision was needed to open up and let the area and businesses thrive once more. Jericho had been buzzing before the road had been closed but the road was now more dangerous than he had ever known it. It needed to be returned to being open fully, but with measures in place for traffic calming such as chicanes along Walton Street with traffic cones to see how that worked and they certainly wouldn't be any uglier than the present barrier. Plans to put in bus gates and a zero emissions zone would stop customers coming to our businesses in exactly the same way as the current road closure so if the intention was to preserve one of the best shopping districts in the country, then the County Council needed to work with the business owners and start supporting us. The barrier had to go with Walton Street reopened.

Kajsa Wilhelmson lived with her family on Walton Street on the north part just next to the Phoenix and across the street from Jericho Café. When moving to Oxfordshire they had initially hoped to live in the countryside but soon realised that the best of two worlds would be Jericho. Here was a village like area with a range of shops and restaurants but still with very little noise. They were able to walk to the train station, the children were able to take their school bus to Culham outside of the Blavatnik and be at least somewhat independent being able to safely walk /cycle into town and they needed only one car. Then the sink hole and subsequent barrier forced the children to cross and wait on more polluted St Giles as the bus could not pass through Walton Street, our petrol expenses went up as did the time spent in our car (plus 3 miles and at least 7 min every weekday) taking the children to various clubs but having to go around Walton Manor to get out of Jericho. The closure had meant that they got more traffic, in particular heavy lorries, as everything entering Jericho now had to pass by them with some lorries reversing at the Jericho Health centre or Great Clarendon street and passing them twice. The really big ones which could not reverse out of Jericho now came in through Little Clarendon street and parked just outside their house to unload continuing out of Jericho via Walton Manor, resulting in two big holes in the pavement now partly mended with asphalt. They then noticed proposals for a LTN suggesting restaurants and cafes could expand out on the street just below their bedroom windows which meant they would be closed off but with substantial extra amount of noise. They recognized others had substantial negative

effects from the new builds on the old Lucy plot/ Waterside given the amount of new traffic coming from there so they had been glad to see the compromise proposal as it looked like progress and then it was with great relief, we saw the current proposal. She urged the Cabinet Member to approve the recommendations.

Brenda Boardman spoke on behalf of the Coalition for Healthy Streets and Active Travel (CoHSAT) and Low Carbon Oxford North (LCON), which included the Jericho area who were asking the Cabinet Member not to support the motion in front of her today, because of:

- National policies – as the Secretary of State for Transport had stated in February 2021 that: ‘half of all journeys in towns and cities are to be walked or cycled by 2030’ we had to have policies that reduced car use now.
- Oxfordshire County Council policy for the whole county was to be zero carbon by 2050 but to comply with the objective of England’s Economic Heartland (EEH) that could be brought forward to 2040 some ten years sooner and so we needed to be tougher on carbon emissions now.
- Oxford City council’s consultation on an Air Quality Action Plan stated that the City’s air pollution should be reduced to 30µg/m³ of NO₂ by 2025 which was considerably below today’s levels. We needed to protect people’s health now.
- Oxford residents – at CoHSAT’s popup shop in July 2020, 68 people had commented, in writing, on the Jericho LTN with 58 (85%) of those positive or extremely supportive on implementation of policies on active travel.
- The Cabinet Member for Environment had herself commented that ‘everyone wants less traffic’ and that she ‘has not been persuaded that through traffic helps the business community’ in Jericho.

As this could be her last act as the Cabinet Member for Environment and Transport she suggested that it would be fitting for her to show her support for active travel and ensure there would be no return to a through route for cars in Jericho and Walton Manor and to progress with the development of the Jericho Low Traffic Neighbourhood, as promised.

David Wyatt spoke in support of the recommendations. Although currently not a resident he retained an affinity for the neighbourhood having been born in Walton Street, raised in Kingston Road, attended Phil and Jim school and then returned to live in Kingston Road for ten years later on and had used the shops, restaurants and cinema there all his life. He felt able to speak objectively as he did not have a street to defend or axe to grind but as someone who wanted to see Walton Street thrive. Businesses in the area who had had this ETRO blockade imposed on them in October 2019 without consultation or notice had suffered and it was this eclectic mix of shops which made Walton street what it was. The only thing that seemed clear through this whole process was that it has been very divisive to the community with little consensus pitching one road against another. He had sympathy with the impossible predicament in which the Cabinet Member found herself and it was untrue to say that she had promised to implement an LTN when in fact, papers and minutes from the relevant meeting were clear that there was no commitment to implementation of an LTN in any format, just a design and consultation. It had been designed, consulted on and the people had said no. More recently the junction of Worcester Street and George Street had been made traffic-light free and on early

reading of the situation, that had eased the traffic flow which should also ease traffic at the Walton Street/ Worcester Street junction. That could be monitored over time with implementation of the ZEZs helping this further. County officers had worked hard to find an equitable solution stating that had been challenging but had now, after carrying out due diligence and consideration, written a full report to reopen Walton Street. He felt it was time to and say enough was enough and revert to how things were pre the summer of 2019 and asked the Cabinet member to make that difficult decision, accept her officers' advice, remove the barrier and revert to the Status Quo of 2019.

Jacky Penning-Rowsall spoke on behalf of Oxford Friends of the Earth and as a resident of Jericho. The damaging effects of air pollution on human health had been well documented with children now rightly worried about this. A YouGov poll commissioned by Sustrans and published last week had found that 57% of the school children surveyed in the UK described the environment around their school as having too many cars and 40% thought that more people walking, cycling, and scooting was the best way to bring down air pollution near their school. Re-admitting through traffic to Walton Street would make it less safe for children to walk, cycle and scoot to school. Pollution levels were at their highest at peak times just when children were arriving at and leaving school. Unfortunately, the NO2 diffusion tube in Walton Street did not pick that up giving just monthly averages. There was new evidence almost weekly on the detrimental effects of poor air quality on health and so the current proposal to reinstate through traffic, thereby worsening air quality in this residential area, was shocking having a direct adverse effect on the children of St Barnabas School with County Councillors and officers responsible. The council should put its declared intentions on air quality into action now and keep through traffic out of Walton Street.

Stephen Brown quoted the following comment from the Cabinet Member that "The barrier stays until a Low Traffic Neighbourhood is agreed, funded, and implemented". Sadly, that had not appeared to be worth much as her officer recommendation, to reopen Walton Street totally to traffic, was a complete abdication of responsibility. The excuse that there was no consensus about how an LTN might be achieved was meretricious as there had always been a widespread shared agreement that the community wished to see an end to the through non-stopping traffic that had been a blight on the area for so long. The petition presented by the Jericho LTN emphasised this basic point and he suggested that the wording of the recent consultation survey offered so many options that the result was bound to produce inconsistency. So we await the return of the traffic jams backed up from Beaumont Street to the Blavatnik Centre, with stationary vehicles polluting the air, impatient drivers mounting the narrow pavements, with the ever present threats to pedestrian and cycling safety. The recent traffic jams in Beaumont Street were an unhappy reminder of how quickly and intensely traffic builds in central Oxford so why should we go back to these conditions?

He and others understood that any LTN needed to fit in with imminent city-wide measures, such as the anticipated ZEZ, but until this came along:

- What was the County Council going to do to protect us from pollution and ensure reasonable road safety?
-

How could the County Council be confident that the unstable sewer outside Worcester College, which Thames Water was required to monitor, would not collapse again with attendant serious public safety issues?

- How could pavements outside the restaurants and cafes be widened safely?

The simple answer, which could be achieved with minimal fuss and expense, would be to retain the existing barrier until the ZEZ was introduced. The Cabinet Member should make good on her promise of last year and her assurance then had followed an informed debate about all the issues facing Jericho and Walton Manor. Nothing had changed.

Joelle Mann who would be 79 in August had been living in Jericho since 1988. She had given up her car 8 years ago and now cycled everywhere and when she needed a car she rented one from one of the 4 Co-Wheels cars in the neighbourhood. Until the Walton Street barrier went up she had been gradually suffering from shortness of breath and had been diagnosed with asthma and prescribed two inhalers. However, since the barrier went up she cycled and walked into town regularly as there were no polluting fumes to make her asthma worse and she hadn't needed to use an inhaler for the whole of the last 15 months. She wanted a Low Traffic Neighbourhood scheme to enable Jericho residents, businesses and visitors of all kinds to come freely in and out of Jericho via the South end of Walton Street and to prevent drivers from using it as a short-cut. The current Council proposals stated the issues would be addressed by later schemes such as the wider ZEZ and connecting Oxford, but with a wider ZEZ all the same issues that were coming up now would come up again. The whole history of traffic in Oxford was that people in charge had made promises then pulled out and the Cabinet Member had herself in the past supported a Low Traffic Neighbourhood for Jericho but now officer advice was against that but she could still decide not to agree to what was being proposed.

Sarah Edwards spoke as a resident of Walton Manor who used Walton Street every day and sought assurance that we would not revert to a situation where Walton Street was open to unlimited through traffic. At the last meeting about the Walton Street barrier, the Cabinet Member had promised that it would be left in place until there was a Low Traffic Neighbourhood scheme. Plenty of people will be stating today the many advantages of creating a proper Low Traffic Neighbourhood scheme in this area and you know what those advantages are with the County Council's press releases and grant applications to government summarising them. She and many others were completely dismayed at the recent turn of events as after a huge amount of work by the community to develop proposals for a LTN scheme, we were led to expect that the County Council would work on a scheme for consultation. Instead we were presented with a totally unsatisfactory 'pilot' proposal which would have allowed car traffic straight through the area. The only other options were the crude ones of the current single barrier or none. She had been one of many who had responded to the consultation saying none of the above were suitable and we needed a proper LTN scheme. She urged the Cabinet Member to progress without delay the development of a Low Traffic Neighbourhood scheme, as promised and that the current barrier should not be removed until a scheme was ready for implementation. There were plenty of words from political parties on how they were going to do great things to encourage cycling, cut pollution, tackle climate change etc. but what counted was action and all too often those words were drowned out by the sound of another road

being built. The County Council had declared that it would tackle the climate emergency but seemed to have little idea what actions to take. Here was an example of what it could do to cut emissions while improving the mental and physical wellbeing of the community.

Chris Banton for Pedal and Post stated that the current closure had offered unique use for Walton Street for their cargo medical bikes but if this was removed it would result in delays to delivery times. If the barrier was removed he was left with a strong feeling of taking a backward step and lack of positive support for active travel plans. He strongly supported retention and urged the cabinet Member not to implement the officer recommendations.

Stephen Charters spoke in support of the officer recommendation to reopen Walton Street. As a resident of Jericho for 14 years he had felt the impact of the closure on the residents and businesses which had presented an obvious challenge and one not easily overcome. He offered his support for the following reasons:

- Despite several attempts at mitigating the unfair traffic burden of the scheme, it still significantly impacted on the residents of previously quieter side roads, when Walton Street was a far more suitable road.
- The closure had negatively impacted on the majority of businesses within Walton Street (as evidenced in the pre Covid business owner survey). These independent shops were part of the lifeblood of the community and they needed the street reopened even more so now when they were trying to build back their businesses after lockdown.
- The stated problem of rat running, one of the reasons stated for the closure as indicated by the single traffic survey undertaken a couple of years before the closure, was probably due to poor traffic management after the junction of Hythe Bridge Street/ George St/ Worcester Street had been made 4 way with traffic frequently stacking back from these traffic lights. Now the layout had reverted to a similar layout to what was previously there, only needing to stop traffic for the pedestrian crossings, traffic flowed much better from Beaumont Street towards Frideswide Square thus there was no need for drivers to deviate from St Giles through Jericho, removing the rat running.

He believed that the negative aspects of the closure far outweighed any positive benefits that might have arisen from the closure and Walton Street should be reopened. Monies spent on multiple failed attempts at trying to mitigate the closure would have been better spent working towards green infrastructure such as cycling facilities and on street electric car charging stations.

Salah Elmasri the owner of Opera Cafe on Walton Street spoke in support of the recommendations. The closure of Walton Street had been a considerable inconvenience with his customers having to drive much further to exit Jericho through tiny roads. Their business as with others relied on footfall and the ability of customers to travel conveniently to their shops and stores. Unfortunately, that wasn't the case anymore with the closure making vehicles drive much further to exit Jericho, which was in direct contrast to why the closure had been put in in the first place. When they signed their leases and invested years and thousands and thousands of pounds they relied on the demographics not being disadvantaged to

such an extent and on the history of Walton Street which had been thriving with trade for decades not changing. Despite the undeniable loss of trade due to the closure, they still had to pay the same rent and bills, let alone the challenges introduced economically by the pandemic. They had all spent years investing in their neighbourhood through life, jobs and had made the street burst with culture and in 2017, Jericho had been voted one of the coolest places to live in the UK. The closure of Walton street would change that as it would significantly reduce footfall in the area, with businesses starting to move on slowly and gradually, a loss to us all. One of the coolest places to live in the UK would be no more because we closed its main road. As a business owner in the area he fully supported the reopening of the road.

Ken Paul was a member of Jericho Connections but today was representing the views of three senior citizens who had felt excluded from this consultation, as they did not use or have access to the internet. They were all very long-time residents of Jericho with each supporting the case that Walton Street should re-open. He outlined their views and opinions, rather than necessarily his own or those of Jericho Connections.

- Access to the surgery in Beaumont Street was now a much longer journey by taxi, eating into their pensions;
- Likewise, with the withdrawal of the bus service and then PickMeUp bus, getting to town was now more costly as well;
- The return of the bus service would be very welcome but the continued closure made that even less likely;
- Pushing traffic down the narrower streets was dangerous, particularly Little Clarendon Street where people spilled out beyond the pavement and cyclists used it in both directions, which they considered an accident waiting to happen.
- Larger vehicles such as the delivery lorry to the Co-op should not be forced to drive down the narrow back streets;
- Emergency vehicles needed to have better access to Jericho and it risked lives if they needed to take longer routes;
- The closure of the road was affecting local businesses which were an important part of the community and an essential service for the elderly.
- It was unfair to risk the future of these businesses at the same time as the pandemic leading to empty or boarded up shops;
- Children had never played in the street along Walton Street but had done so in the back streets but these were the streets that the closure was forcing more traffic down;
- They would be very angry to see increases in traffic in Jericho (south), which some other proposals would promote.

They understood the pandemic had impacted the consultation process but didn't feel that anyone had really sought their views. The only way they now felt they could express their views was by refusing to vote in the local elections, which in some cases would be the first time they had done so. They supported the proposal to re-open the street.

City Councillor Alex Hollingsworth reminded the Cabinet Member that Coroner Philip Barlow had last week recommended that the Government should set legally binding targets for air pollution, after ruling that pollution should be listed as a cause of death

for 9 year old Ella Kissi-Debrah. Just as that news had been breaking, the report before you today was published by Oxfordshire County Council. A report on a low traffic neighbourhood that actively set out to increase the amount of traffic and pollution in our area. The contrast could not have been more stark. Let there be no mistake if this proposal was approved today then Walton Street would see the return of the nose to tail rat-running traffic coming down Little Clarendon Street to avoid queues on Beaumont Street and St Giles. The traffic count data from 2018 showed that between a quarter and a third of all traffic in Walton Street were doing just that. And as the lifting of lockdown in the autumn and the first day of reopening this spring clearly showed, those queues would reappear straightaway and with them the pollution and the dangerous and unpleasant conditions for cyclists and pedestrians, not to mention the residents of Walton Street. He had read the consultation report carefully and was at a loss to understand how the recommendation had been reached. The consultation made clear that there were three options on the table, and yet it recommended the Cabinet Member to agree the one with by far the lowest level of support and which did the greatest damage to our area. He urged that the recommendation be rejected and instead keep the current closure until a camera controlled bus gate could be installed in Worcester Street to remove through traffic during busy times. Then and only then should the current closure be removed

County Councillor John Howson expressed his consternation on reading the officer report. This had been a simple matter and after the stakeholder seminars he had thought that a consensus was being hammered out which recognised the underlying issue and its geographical context. Since 2017, he had been campaigning for better conditions for those living in the south of his County Division in relation to through traffic and in 2019 had presented a scheme to be brought to such a meeting as this for consideration. However, that scheme had never made it. In September 2019 he had spoken at the equivalent meeting to this which was a matter of record following which and certainly with no briefing or discussion with myself and he assumed other Councillors, the ETRO had been introduced, which was why we were here again today. While the ETRO had flaws, which related to residents in Jericho there were far greater flaws for those living in St Bernard's, Leckford and even Farndon Roads as well as Kingston Road in his Division, by forcing all local traffic northwards and he was no longer clear as to what the aims now were in relation to traffic in residential areas. If that aim was to deter through traffic from residential roads in order to make them safer for pedestrians and cyclists, then today's proposal failed dismally. However, it would relieve the pressure that the local geography had created for those living in the streets affected by the presence of the barrier.

If keeping through traffic to main roads was an accepted principle, as it had been for the past two years, then a solution that did that needed to be found. This is what he believed most who had replied to the present consultation were saying in one way or another, even though the format of the questions made such a response challenging, as many had pointed out. He did not support the consultation, as it had not offered a satisfactory solution for the residents that he represented neither could he support the officer's solution today, as it was an abrogation of responsibility to support active travel. A barrier or filter placed in a location that best served both the residents of Jericho and Walton Manor was the solution he believed most were striving to achieve.

However, there was one group that claimed they would benefit if the Cabinet Member accepted the officer recommendation: vocal local businesses. However, the number of empty shops in Jericho was less than in Queen Street with evidence suggesting pedestrian zones were not harmful to shopping.

The option that he would have liked was not on the table today. The Cabinet Member had taken hard decisions before, both over this barrier and on issues such as buses in Queen Street and she should recognise the need to support the views of those that live in the area for keeping through traffic away from residential roads without making lives intolerable for some residents as a consequence. This meeting was a result of a failure of the Conservative administration to understand the needs of two communities: Jericho and Walton Manor. To fail to meet the wishes of almost everyone rather than work for an agreed consensus was a grave disappointment.

County Councillor Susanna Presell thanked the Cabinet Member for enabling so many local representatives to address the meeting. There had been a great deal of arguments around health issues and the urgent need to improve air quality and reduce the number of people dying prematurely from air pollution and to persuade people to be more active and reduce obesity. We also knew that in all our policies our top priority must be to address the climate crisis and one of the best ways to do that was to reduce traffic on our roads. The government had been encouraging "active travel" and even offering finance to put new measures in place to promote it but what prevented people from walking and cycling more - road traffic which made cyclists feel unsafe and made roads unpleasant for pedestrians. Walton Street had been a different place in recent weeks, thronged with happy people, spilling off the pavements on to the roadway, filling the tables and chairs outside the cafes and restaurants and strolling around just for fun. It had become her favourite cycle route with many other cyclists clearly feeling the same. The shops seemed to be busy with cafes thriving, in spite of the constraints. What we seem to have now in Walton Street was a true "15 minute neighbourhood" which was a concept providing most of the things we needed within an easy walk from our homes. People used to jumping into their cars every day were now increasingly leaving them at home or even selling them all contributing to making Jericho an even more friendly community. However, that could all be put at risk by removing the barrier before an alternative had been put in place. Virtually no-one wanted the through-traffic back, piling up and down Walton Street. Even the businesses would not benefit as rat runners did not stop to buy things or visit restaurants. There was very little public parking in Jericho with footfall going down, if the barrier was removed! The report suggested that traffic speeds could be controlled with "community speed-watch" but based on evidence elsewhere in her division that would not work. If the barrier was removed those people who currently thronged the streets would stay at home or go elsewhere, rather than suffer the noise, pollution and danger, caused by all the extra traffic. Conscious of the need to maintain a social distance, they had become used to stepping off the narrow pavements in order to overtake a slower pedestrian or if someone was coming the other way. Many cyclists who had got used to feeling safe and having plenty of space would stay at home or use their cars again. Many pedestrians would feel unsafe and stay at home if they could not maintain a social distance on the pavements with narrowest ones in the southernmost section and which were among the most heavily used, by people walking from Jericho to and from the city centre with many people now walking in the road, because it was not possible to step off the pavement, with parked cars on the east side and a wall on the west side, in that sunken section.

While accepting the point in the report that the zero-emission zone and the bus gates would do the job that the barrier currently did neither of these was certain and the ZEZ might not be extended beyond the pilot scheme in the 6 city centre streets or possibly not in the near future anyway with bus gates even more uncertain. She was not suggesting that the barrier should be left in place for a long time but only until there was something in its place to prevent through traffic in Jericho. She realised this meant that according to the road traffic order it would mean saying that it was being made “permanent”, but that could be explained that it was hoped to remove it as soon as possible. Alternatively a couple of planters could be placed in Walton Street near the bike shop with a couple in Cranham Terrace and Allam Street and then reverse the flow of traffic in Observatory Street, as others had suggested giving everyone vehicular access to their homes and businesses but no through-traffic.

We should not be looking to remove the barrier now, when the future was uncertain and although the pandemic had meant huge changes and sacrifices some good could come out of it by taking this opportunity to change our City radically and improve our health and our quality of life and instead of re-opening streets to high volumes of motor traffic again we should work with the government to put active travel at the heart of our City and our town centres. We should not go back to square one, with through-traffic pouring along the residential streets of Jericho and repeat the mistakes of the past and its threats to our health. Walton Street must not be reopened until the bus gates were fully operational to protect the health of the people we represent and provide a safe, clean and peaceful life for all our children and grandchildren,

County Councillor Emma Turnbull regretted what had been a failure of imagination and leadership with regard to this issue. As had been pointed out the consultation had been inadequate presenting what was an ill-considered and ill-conceived option. There had been no thought for people with reduced mobility many of whom had felt let down. She hoped that the Cabinet Member would not support the officer recommendation.

County Councillor John Sanders had listened carefully to the many opinions and views put forward during the discussion but felt committed to supporting local councillors in support of retaining the barrier.

The Cabinet officer read out written representations received from Susie Shutt, Sabina Lovibond, Stephen Williams and David Morgan all in favour of retaining the barrier along with further representations from Joanna Gibbon who had called for a more holistic approach to traffic management and Jjoots Pharmacy who supported reopening. The Cabinet Member had received copies of the full text of each representation.

Robert Freshwater then reported that since publication of the report a further 41 emails had been received both by him and some directly by the Cabinet Member. 12 of those had been in support of implementing a full low traffic neighbourhood, 19 had supported retention of the barrier on Walton Street, 2 respondents supported reducing traffic levels by other means with 8 supporting removal of the barrier.

The Cabinet Member thanked everyone for their time and attention in making their submissions. Referring to her commitment to the introduction of LTNs, which were being trialled in other areas, she had hoped to establish a satisfactory scheme in the Jericho and Walton Manor area and the decision to keep the barrier in place had been made in order to design and consult on a LTN scheme in this area. Sadly, that had not been possible with local opinion divided and forcefully expressed on both sides of that divide. She accepted that the barrier had resulted in a more enjoyable neighbourhood for some but equally had imposed an unfair burden from additional traffic on some of the side streets. She acknowledged the frustration felt by the neighbourhood over the numerous trials but had to recognise the conclusion reached by officers that there was no overwhelming support for a scheme and efforts now needed to be made by both sides to try and come together to agree a scheme which shared the burden between all areas which would be difficult but hopefully would not be insurmountable. During the debate on these issues there had been a recognition that planned ZEZs could deliver a clear benefit but they were still a way off and Connecting Oxford was planned for 2023/24. In the meantime the various groups in the community needed to work with the County Council to develop a scheme which was deliverable and worked for all. She referred to future opportunities to enforce traffic measures such as moving traffic restrictions but confirmed that there was no authority to introduce camera enforcement.

Therefore, having regard to the information set out in the report before her along with the representations made to her at the meeting the Cabinet Member for Environment confirmed her decision as follows:

- a) to terminate the current Experimental Traffic Regulation Order on Walton Street, to not make the trial scheme permanent and remove all traffic management measures associated with the trial;
- b) not proceed with the Jericho and Walton Manor area pilot scheme consulted on by the county council, in recognition of local opinion provided during the consultation phase;
- c) note the wide range of important issues raised by those opposing, supporting, and neutral about the Jericho and Walton Manor area pilot scheme proposals.

Signed.....
Cabinet Member for Environment

Date of signing.....

3/21 HENLEY - A4155 MARLOW ROAD - PROPOSED PUFFIN CROSSING
(Agenda No. 5)

The Cabinet Member for Environment considered responses received to a statutory consultation on a proposed zebra crossing on the A4155 Marlow Road, Henley to

address concerns raised over the safety of pedestrians crossing Marlow Road near Swiss Farm.

David Palmer a resident at Swiss Farm Park Homes since 2000 explained that Swiss Farm was a community of 80 homes comprising 160 residents many of whom were elderly. In addition to this there was an adjoining camp site with 90 pitches and some 360 occupants during the summer months with potentially 520 people wanting to cross the road and walk into Henley. He regularly crossed this road to walk into Henley for recreation and shopping and on numerous occasions had had to wait for long periods of time to cross. There was also a bus stop across the road so this crossing would enable easy access for that. The officer report stated that when the traffic study had been completed there had been 3,624 car movements with 452 pedestrians attempting to cross the road. Including 6 wheelchairs and 101 accompanied under 16 year olds. He considered that that alone demonstrated the need for a crossing. This was not just about elderly residents but also the many families with young children that spend their holidays at Swiss Farm Camping and it was unacceptable to have to gain access to the town by first crossing a racetrack to get to the only footpath on the other side of the road particularly as there was now an acceptable solution. Costs were to be met by Henley Town Council and he asked the Cabinet Member to accept the officer recommendation to approve the puffin crossing on the Marlow Road.

Endorsing Mr Palmer’s comments Councillor Stefan Gawrysiak referred to the overwhelming support locally with 126 people in support and only 4 against. The road was heavily trafficked and the scheme fitted in with the Active Travel Agenda.

The Cabinet Member for Environment could see no real argument against provision and, therefore, having regard to the information set out in the report before her and the representations made to her at the meeting confirmed her decision as follows:

to approve the provision of a puffin crossing at A4155 Marlow Road, Henley, as advertised

Signed.....
Cabinet Member for Environment

Date of signing.....

4/21 HENLEY - GRAVEL HILL - PROPOSED ZEBRA CROSSING

(Agenda No. 6)

The Cabinet Member for Environment considered (CMDE6) responses received to a statutory consultation on a proposed zebra crossing on Gravel Hill, Henley to address concerns raised over the safety of pedestrians crossing Gravel Hill near its junctions with Hop Gardens and Paradise Road.

Tim Hoskins the Headteacher of Badgemore Primary School spoke in support of the scheme. Nearly 50% of the school's pupils lived on the other side of Gravel Hill and therefore had to travel across this dangerous road twice a day. and whilst he was very proud that many pupils were walking to school as part of their daily commute, crossing this road was a great worry to him as even with the new speed reduction in place, cars travelled too fast along the road with visibility tricky when looking up the hill. Adding a zebra crossing on Gravel Hill would not only make the road safer, but it would further encourage more families to walk to school thereby reducing pollution in the area. He and his staff all strongly supported the proposal to add a zebra crossing to Gravel Hill which he knew would be welcomed by the wider school community.

Endorsing Mr Hoskins' comments County Councillor Stefan Gawrysiak emphasized the problems regarding speed of traffic on Gravel Hill and the positive benefits to be gained from this crossing for the school, local residents and also Henley College which was nearby. There had been considerable support locally with 109 representations in support and 4 against. The scheme would be funded in part from S106 money with any shortfall met by Henley Town Council.

Officers pointed out that there was also £5000 CIL money allocated to this scheme which was expected soon and would therefore reduce any contribution which might be required from the Town Council

Therefore, having regard to the information set out in the report before her together with the representations made to her at the meeting the Cabinet Member for Environment confirmed her decision as follows:

to approve provision of a zebra crossing at Gravel Hill to address concerns raised over the safety of pedestrians crossing Gravel Hill near the junctions with Hop Gardens and Paradise Road.

Signed.....
Cabinet Member for Environment

Date of signing.....

5/21 WITNEY AND EYNHAM - PROPOSED BUS STOP BUILD OUTS

(Agenda No. 7)

Following formal consultation objections received in respect of bus stop build outs in Witney and Eynsham, proposed in response to passenger access concerns and operator needs to improve journey time reliability and help meet Equality Act (2010) strictures the Cabinet Member for Environment had on 17 December 2020 deferred a decision on the matter to enable further consultations with local County Councillors, parish/town Councils and bus operators. The report (CMDE7) now before the Cabinet Member set out the outcome of those further discussions.

Councillor Charles Mathew advised that following deferral he had consulted locally further on the options available for the Eynsham element. Although there had been

35 responses unfortunately no favourite option had emerged with all options having serious handicaps. Therefore, as there was no ideal solution he had reluctantly accepted the temporary solution as proposed by officers and with a review of the scheme after one year.

Officers accepted that there had been no stand-out scheme but considered what was now proposed was a good compromise with an opportunity to review any issues after one year.

Thanking the local member and officers for their careful follow up on this the Cabinet Member for Environment accepted that the Eynsham proposal represented a compromise scheme which would be monitored over the first year to evaluate any congestion issues that might occur. She noted that the schemes in Witney would progress on a permanent basis. Therefore, having regard to the information set out in the report before her together with the representations made to her at the meeting she confirmed her decision as follows:

to approve the two amended smaller permanent bus stop build outs in Witney and a year trial for the amended bus stop build out in Eynsham.

Signed.....
Cabinet Member for Environment

Date of signing.....