

DELEGATED DECISIONS BY CABINET MEMBER FOR ENVIRONMENT (INCLUDING TRANSPORT)

MINUTES of the meeting held on Thursday, 21 May 2015 commencing at 10.30 am and finishing at 11.30 am

Present:

Voting Members: Councillor David Nimmo Smith – in the Chair

Other Members in Attendance: Councillor Anne Purse (for Agenda Item 4)
Councillor David Bartholomew (for Agenda Item 5)
Councillor Arash Fatemian (for Agenda Item 6)

Officers:

Whole of meeting G. Warrington (Law & Governance); O. Jenkins, D. Tole & A. Kirkwood (Environment & Economy)

Part of meeting

The Cabinet Member 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. 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.

16/15 QUESTIONS FROM COUNTY COUNCILLORS

(Agenda No. 2)

Councillor Nick Hards

“Please can the Cabinet Member for Environment and Economy explain why there seems to have been no progress with the construction of the build out on Oxford Crescent which he authorised on 4th September 2014, although the 20 mph speed limit is now in place? Minute 49/14 refers. Mr Perry, whose son was killed on this road in 2013, has been asking when the work will be completed.”

Response by the Cabinet Member for Environment

“Following various meetings in early 2014 between Mark Kemp, Councillor Hards and Mr & Mrs Perry I agreed in May 2014 that Oxfordshire County Council would carry out a consultation with regard to the installation of a 20 miles per hour speed restriction and a build out with a raised table adjacent to it. It was also agreed that Oxfordshire County Council could provide £6000 of funding towards the project in

the financial year 2014/15 and that this would fund the installation of the lower speed limit but external funding would be required to implement the whole scheme.

The scheme was subsequently approved by me in September 2014 and the 20 miles per hour speed restriction implemented as agreed. Unfortunately external funding for the build out/raised table has not yet to come to fruition so I regret that currently Oxfordshire County Council are unable to finish the scheme.”

Supplementary by Councillor Hards

“I made some of my Big Society money available to pay for this project, and had understood that the amount was sufficient to cover the cost of the build out. Since that is apparently not the case, Mr & Mrs Perry would I believe wish to meet the cost of the build out using some of the money which they have raised in Freddie’s memory to pay for road safety measures. Please can the necessary paperwork be prepared to enable this to happen without any further delay.”

Response by the Cabinet Member for Environment

“I would like to thank Mr & Mrs Perry for their generous offer to cover the cost of the build out and assure them that on that basis I will ask officers to ensure that a way is found to deliver this scheme as soon as possible”

17/15 PETITIONS AND PUBLIC ADDRESS

(Agenda No. 3)

Speaker	Item
Councillor Anne Purse (Wheatley)	4. Proposed Parking Restrictions – Various Laybys on A40
Robert Pehrson (residents objecting) Tudor Taylor (Shiplake Parish Council) Councillor David Bartholomew (Sonning Common))) 5. Proposed 20 mph Speed Limit –) Shiplake))
Councillor Arash Fatemian (Deddington)	6. Proposed Pedestrian Crossing, A4260 Oxford Road/Broad Gap, Bodicote

18/15 PROPOSED PARKING RESTRICTIONS - VARIOUS LAYBYS ON A40

(Agenda No. 4)

The Cabinet Member for Environment considered (CMDE4) objections and comments received in respect of a consultation on proposals to introduce new parking restrictions in two laybys on the A40 between Oxford and M40 which involved the introduction of a 30 minute limit on the length of stay that vehicles could be parked in either layby.

Councillor Purse had particular concerns regarding the eastbound layby. That had a cycle track next to it between the toilets and hedge and it was inconceivable that that could be perceived as a safe route between Oxford and Wheatley. It was clearly nothing of the sort and it was imperative that every step should be taken to prevent any such classification. The real issue here centred on anti-social behaviour as much as anything and the only way to solve this problem would be to close the laybys as had been proposed in the past.

Mr Tole confirmed that the County Council had been approached by the police and residents of Shotover to introduce further controls at both laybys but particularly the westbound one. Both laybys figured highly on the police radar with regard to criminal activity and by using legislation principally designed to manage highway use to manage non-highway issues that would give the police further opportunities to visit. Closing the laybys had been considered but that could not be achieved as closure could only be undertaken on the premis that they were no longer required and that was clearly not the case here. There was also the consideration that the problem could move elsewhere. The original proposal had been to limit waiting for one hour but as that had been changed to 30 minutes at the request of the police to presumably facilitate more regular visits it seemed reasonable therefore to expect a high degree of vigilance in enforcement. He appreciated that whilst this was not a total solution he felt it should help the situation and it had to be remembered that the majority of use at these sites was legitimate. He confirmed that there were no plans to achieve safe route status but there were plans to clear vegetation on the westbound layby although that was not so easy to achieve on the eastbound one.

The Cabinet Member for Environment accepted that this was a mechanism to enable police to more regularly visit the site but that it was unlikely to be the end of the story. The situation would be monitored and reviewed but in the meantime and having regard to the arguments and options set out in the documentation before him, the representations made to him and the further considerations set out above he confirmed his decision as follows:

To approve the proposed parking restrictions as described in the report CMDE4.

Signed.....
Cabinet Member for Environment

Dated.....

19/15 PROPOSED 20MPH SPEED LIMIT - SHIPLAKE

(Agenda No. 5)

The Cabinet Member for Environment considered (CMDE5) representations received in response to a proposal to introduce a 20 mph speed limit on various roads in Shiplake and Lower Shiplake.

Robert Pehrson spoke on behalf of the 40 objectors against the proposals. He was not aware, apart from some marginal support for the proposals in Station Road, of any evidence of strong support for the remaining elements of the scheme. That lack of support seemed contrary to the village plan and brought into question the justification for spending £5,000 of public money in the current financial climate. With regard to Station Road there was a long history of speed control issues but speed limits alone would not be effective and he called for restoration of speed cushions. With regard to Memorial Avenue he understood that without additional traffic calming measures the proposals would not meet department for transport standards and indeed could compromise safety. He felt that the scheme had been well intentioned but had lost its way and he urged that the scheme in its current form be rejected to enable the parish council to reconsider the proposals in order to gain more support and achieve safer roads.

Tudor Taylor spoke on behalf of the Shiplake Village Plan Steering Group and parish council. Surveys undertaken in the village had identified speeding traffic as a major concern but little support for the use of rumble strips or road narrowing, which were seen by some residents as increased 'urbanization' of Shiplake. Surveys had indicated support for the use of traffic calming in Station Road with 58% of respondents from Lower Shiplake and 74% of those living on Station Road and the roads immediately joining it in favour. However, following further investigations it became clear that introduction of a 20mph limit in Station Road would necessitate the erection of a large number of new speed signs at both ends of the road and probably on 6 adjoining roads resulting in increased 'urbanization' of the area and considerable cost. Therefore the alternative of introducing a limit for all of Lower Shiplake had been investigated. That necessitated the addition of signs at three places only and removal of all existing de-restricted signs at the ends of private roads resulting in a substantial reduction in signage and costs. The zone proposal would ensure a uniform speed limit throughout Lower Shiplake including all private and public roads offering greater conformity and improved safety for the Lower Shiplake which is what the parish council were seeking to achieve. There were long standing issues with speeding traffic in the area and with the introduction of a zonal limit a high degree of self-compliance could be expected. The costs of introducing the scheme were low as were any increases in anticipated journey times. The scheme met LTP objectives and the parish council had the necessary resources and protocols to implement it successfully.

Councillor David Bartholomew confirmed that this had been very much a community matter. Promoted originally through a village plan it had been supported by the parish council who had asked him to facilitate in the process and he thanked Mr Kirkwood from Environment & Economy for his assistance with that. The plan itself had been put together by well-intentioned people and although not experts in survey work the

parish council had supported the recommendation. There had been a well organised campaign against the proposals and although support had not been so forthcoming he understood that to be normal in these cases. However, it was important that when the parish council voted on whether to fund the scheme or not that meeting needed to be publicised as widely as possible in order to give all concerned a full opportunity to make their views known and he asked the Cabinet Member to approve the recommendation with that in mind. The scheme would be funded by the parish council with no financial implications for the County Council and although there was some uncertainty at all levels it was a matter which would ultimately be decided locally.

Mr Tole corrected figures in paragraph 6 of the report to read as follows: “A total of 48 responses were received including **39** objections, **6** responses expressing support, and **3** that neither specifically objected nor supported the proposals but had concerns or comments”. Responding to a query regarding a lack of response from Thames Valley police he confirmed that responses were normally received from them only when they specifically objected to a proposal. Also officers had been aware that Lower and Upper Shiplake were separate communities but both had been included at the request of the parish council. Although this was very much a parish led proposal, which would not proceed without their funding, procedurally it was important to get Cabinet Member approval first and he confirmed a January 2017 deadline for implementation of the scheme. He felt the parish council had got the balance right with regard to visual impact and whilst there was a primary issue in Memorial Avenue, which would need further measures as speeds were well above what the DfT would want for a sign controlled road, he confirmed that the timed sign could be retained.

The Cabinet Member recognised that although this scheme would ultimately be funded by the parish council it was very much in keeping with the introduction of 20 mph zones county-wide and a decision now would enable the village and parish council to make a full and final decision as to whether it went ahead or not. Therefore, having regard to the arguments and options set out in the documentation before him, the representations made to him and the further considerations set out above he confirmed his decision as follows:

To approve the proposal to introduce a 20 mph speed limit in Shiplake as advertised.

Signed
Cabinet Member for Environment

Dated

20/15 PROPOSED PEDESTRIAN CROSSING, A4260 OXFORD ROAD/BROAD GAP, BODICOTE

(Agenda No. 6)

The Cabinet Member for Environment considered (CMDE6) objections and comments received to a formal consultation on proposals to install a new pedestrian crossing on the A4260 Oxford Road at Broad Gap in Bodicote.

Councillor Arash Fatemian supported provision of a crossing but further to the north, which was where residents currently crossed. It was important to consider broader developments and increased traffic flows and as there were currently delays at Broad Gap he was concerned that removing the slip road and moving the bus stop, as currently proposed, would exacerbate that problem. He had issues with the line taken by officers in paragraph 10 of the report insofar as there was a natural exit at the north western corner of the new development on Canal Lane which supported the view of the parish council regarding installation of a crossing to the north of Broad Gap in the vicinity of the current informal crossing. He also questioned the concerns expressed regarding visibility issues coming out of Broad Gap. There was indeed a compelling case for a crossing but not at its current siting and he was convinced that the needs of people would be better served if it was sited further north at the existing informal crossing and that a case should be worked up for that to be considered.

Mr Tole agreed that it seemed to make sense to use funding to improve the current line but that was not part of the agreed. There was clearly a demand to exit in the north-west corner and then down Broad Gap, which provided the shortest distance from the new development. Consultation could be undertaken on the option north of Broad Gap but there could lead to some objections due to the fact that that siting would involve more frontages plus potentially additional problems arising from the loss of grass verge and footway. Costs would be irrelevant as those would be borne by the developer.

The Cabinet Member for Environment appreciated the benefits of the shorter line but there was also some reluctance on his part to go against the views of the parish council. Therefore having regard to the arguments and options set out in the documentation before him, the representations made to him and the further considerations set out above he confirmed his decision as follows:

To defer consideration of the proposal to provide a crossing on the A4260 Oxford Road at Broad Gap in Bodicote to enable further consultation to be undertaken on provision of a crossing on an alternative site north of Broad Gap in the vicinity of the current informal crossing point

Signed.....
Cabinet Member for Environment

Dated.....

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..... in the Chair