

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

**MINUTES** of the meeting held on Thursday, 18 July 2019 commencing at 10.00 am and finishing at 10.25 am

**Present:**

**Voting Members:** Councillor Yvonne Constance OBE – in the Chair

**Other Members in Attendance:** Councillor John Sanders  
Councillor Nicholas Field-Johnson (Item 4)

**Officers:**

Whole of meeting G.Warrington (Law & Governance); J. Cox and N. Moore (Planning & Place). J. Wright (Community Operations)

*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.*

**42/19 PETITIONS AND PUBLIC ADDRESS**

(Agenda No. 3)

<i>Speaker</i>	<i>Item</i>
John White (Burford Town Council, Mayor) County Councillor Nicholas Field-Johnson	) ) 4. Burford Weight Limit ) )

## **43/19 BURFORD WEIGHT LIMIT**

(Agenda No. 4)

The Cabinet Member for Environment considered (CMDE4) a scheme promoting an 18 month experimental environmental weight limit covering the length of Burford High Street between the A40 roundabout to the south and the A361/A424 junction just north of Burford Bridge in response to concerns which had existed locally for many years regarding noise, vibration, air pollution and road safety issues associated with lorry traffic as well as the negative impact on the town's tourist economy.

The scheme was being taken forwards on a temporary, experimental basis initially in order to gauge the effect of diverted traffic on other towns and villages.

John White (Burford Town Mayor) expressed his support for the recommendation to introduce the experimental order. Reaffirming Burford Town Council's commitment to the scheme both financially and administratively it was a strong case with a long history going back to 1982.

The Cabinet Member referred to comments received from County Councillor Ian Hudspeth (Woodstock Division) regarding the need for robust air quality monitoring and M40 signing to discourage use of the A361 by lorries travelling south on the A44 through Woodstock. She also referred to a risk assessment carried out with Gloucestershire County Council and tests to be applied to monitor air quality at specified points adding that the scheme would be removed if those tests failed and costs had been built into the scheme to cover that eventuality. She recognised Burford Town Council's commitment to the scheme including enforcement and data collection although the County Council could not delegate its prosecution responsibility. She understood that Highways England had indicated that if signing off the M40 was permitted those costs could be in the region of circa £23,000 to £30,000 but acknowledged comments from officers that the number of lorries using the A361 was low so in their opinion signing would be of little use. The scheme did now include a sign on the A361 at Banbury and the need for a sign on the M40 itself could be considered at a later date. With regard to air quality she felt it was important to start with a pre-condition on that issue prior to the experiment coming in.

Councillor Nick Field-Johnson expressed his support for the scheme which was desperately needed to offset further damage to buildings and the local environment. Regarding air quality issues he considered it imperative that a minimum % increase should be agreed before the experimental order was put at risk rather than the suggestion of stopping the order immediately if any increase was reported.

The Cabinet Member then for the record referred to the following written submissions from other County Councillors whose divisions would be affected by this scheme:

Councillor Charles Mathew – “felt that increased traffic levels on A40 would be undesirable.”

Councillor Ian Hudspeth – “We can all agree that we want to remove the ‘cross county’ (ie conducting no business within the county) HGVs from using inappropriate routes that go through Oxfordshire's towns and villages. The reason the vehicles do

this is to avoid the A40, but with the possibility of future investment approaching £150 million on the A40 which would improve traffic flow that might not be necessary, so we must ensure that we do not discriminate against HGVs that are conducting business within Oxfordshire providing jobs and supplying shops within the county. This could make them uneconomic and more polluting with extra mileage.

I am pleased to see that monitoring will take place to see what, if any displacement takes place that had an adverse impact on other locations such as Bladon and Woodstock, if that was the case then then the experiment must stop immediately.

Air quality monitoring must take place monthly in Bladon and Woodstock to ensure that there was no adverse impact on the health of the residents especially in Bladon as the primary school is located on the A4095. Should there be an increase in air pollution levels, then the experiment must stop immediately.

Is there provision for re-signing on the southbound M40 approach to junction 11? This clearly signs towards the A361 which encouraged drivers to turn off at this junction going through South Newington before arriving at the A44/A361 roundabout which would have directional signage indicating vehicles should travel south on the A44 through Woodstock which was not acceptable. If the sign on the M40 was not changed then this should not progress”

Councillor Liz Leffman - “If lorries came off the A40 at Witney and used the B4022 to go through Finstock and Charlbury towards Chipping Norton, then they had a choice of several routes; one to continue on the B4022 up to Enstone then joining the A44, which required HGVs to turn right at a very tricky junction in the town, a second was an unclassified road through Spelsbury unsuitable for HGVs and a third through the town and access the A361 by going over the bridge near the station. Although there was a weight restriction on this bridge, we regularly find that that rule is breached. Please could HGVs using the B4022 route be monitored not just on Witney Road, but also on the routes that go through Charlbury towards the A361 and Chipping Norton?”

I also note that the table that relates to paragraph 15 does not include the B4022. Could the Cabinet member reassure me that if there was a 50% + increase in HGVs on this road it would be taken as seriously as on other routes?”

Councillor Hilary Hibbert-Biles – “As most Councillors are aware Chipping Norton has a huge issue with HGV’s transiting the centre of town through to Stow and Moreton on the A44 and traffic on the A361 through to Burford, Lechlade and Swindon. Chipping Norton is an AQMA. There have within the past 5 years been two deaths and a serious accident plus several near misses. Anything that helped alleviate the issues in Chipping Norton I would support. However, if this pilot produced more traffic and air quality issues in Chipping Norton I would expect that the pilot not be repeated. Chipping Norton had more reasons to have a weight limit and I look forward with anticipation to OCC putting a weight limit in place with a lorry route which had been in LTP2,3 and 4.”

Councillor Pete Handley – “a Burford Weight Limit was long overdue and would make so much difference to the traffic and I support.”

In response to some of the comments the Cabinet Member noted that the traffic modelling had concluded that the alternative A road network meant that local villages would not be affected. Recognising the appalling air quality levels in Chipping Norton she noted the potential for positive benefits for Chipping Norton as evidenced by the personal representations from the Chipping Norton Mayor when this had been considered initially in November 2018 and their financial involvement in the scheme now. She noted the comments from Councillor Mathew and Councillor Handley and from Councillor Hudspeth regarding air quality and signing which had been referred to earlier in the meeting.

Therefore noting:

- the impact of HGVs through Burford on the A361 and the long campaign to address that;
- the availability of alternative A routes to take traffic away from small villages;
- proposals for traffic monitoring (including HGV totals) at 6 sites as identified in the report;
- proposals for air quality monitoring in Witney, Chipping Norton, Woodstock and Bladon;
- provision for adequate signing and enforcement by Burford Town Council;
- consideration to be given to possible further signing off the M40;
- costs of the scheme to be borne by Burford Town Council;
- an exemption scheme for local businesses including Hickman Bros Landscaping in Fulbrook and the Car Recovery Company at Carterton;

and having regard to the information set out in the report and the representations made to her at the meeting both written and oral the Cabinet Member for Environment confirmed her decision as follows:

approve implementation of the experimental weight limit order for Burford as recommended in the report for a period of 18 months to commence when signing was in place.

Signed.....  
Cabinet Member for Environment

Date of signing.....

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