

DELEGATED DECISIONS BY DEPUTY LEADER OF THE COUNCIL (INCLUDING TRANSPORT)

MINUTES of the meeting held on Thursday, 6 September 2012 commencing at 10.00 am and finishing at 10.40 am

Present:

Voting Members: Councillor Rodney Rose – in the Chair

Other Members in Attendance: Councillor Jean Fooks (for Agenda Item 2)
Councillor John Sanders (for Agenda Item 2)
Councillor Michael Waine (for Agenda Item 4)
Councillor Charles Shouler (for Agenda Item 4)

Officers:

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

Part of meeting

Agenda Item	Officer Attending
4.	D. Round and A. Wisdom (Environment & Economy)
5.	D. Tole (Environment & Economy)
6E.	A. Field and T. Darch (Environment & Economy)

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

14/12 QUESTIONS FROM COUNTY COUNCILLORS

(Agenda No. 2)

Councillor Jean Fooks

“Local residents are very pleased that the promised 50mph speed limits have now been installed on the A40 east of the Cutteslowe roundabout. However, there is concern that the signs are so placed that motorists may not see them; the sign just east of the roundabout is so close to the roundabout that drivers are more likely to be looking ahead at the traffic than at signs on their left; the small repeater signs are some distance away and only just before the entrance to the car park for Cutteslowe Park, which has a short access slip-road anyway. Would it be possible to move the sign some 10-20 metres east – or could 50mph roundels be painted on the road to

ensure that drivers are aware of the new limit here, when they have been used to a 70mph one?

I have also been asked if it would be possible to have an 'advance speed limit' sign of some kind – of a type that I have seen elsewhere in the country – to warn drivers from the east that they are about to reach a new speed limit area?"

Reply from the Deputy leader of the Council

"The new 50mph speed limit replaces the national speed limit that previously applied on this stretch of the A40 Oxford northern bypass. The 50mph signs by Cutteslowe roundabout are in exactly the same position as the national speed limit signs, and we are not aware of any concerns of drivers understanding of the previous limit.

The cost of relocating the signs would be significant, especially as they are required to be illuminated.

50mph roundels would be a cheaper option but would still be comparatively expensive to provide and maintain given the traffic management required for this very busy road.

In view of the costs and that the limit has been only recently introduced, a more appropriate course of action would be to monitor the speeds here within the next 3 to 6 months and then to assess the need for any supplementary measures, subject to the availability of funding.

There are no approved temporary signs to advise of new speed limits (other than the specific case of new 30mph limits in roads that have street lighting and where the speed limit was previously higher) , and this is not therefore an option here."

Supplementary question

Can I have an undertaking that monitoring will be carried out and that you consider at that time the provision of advisory signing for *speed limit ahead* as used elsewhere in the country.

Response from the Deputy Leader

Yes.

No. My priority for spending is elsewhere.

Councillor John Sanders

"To what extent has the impact to users of the substantial cuts in subsidised bus services in Chipping Norton and Charlbury been considered by officers and by the Cabinet Member for Transport and Deputy Leader?"

Response from the Deputy leader of the Council

“I regret that I do not know what “substantial cuts” the Member is referring to. The Member will have received a list of the service changes with the documentation sent out by the Bus Services Manager and I list the changes here:

Service 23A, Wednesdays and Saturdays. Saturday service withdrawn due to low patronage

Service 50, Monday to Friday service maintained, Sunday service under discussion with Warwicks CC.

Service 243, service incorporated into new E2. Three return journeys reduced to one inward and two return journeys to better reflect actual passenger usage. Service increased to run on five days per week from two days per week.

Service 811, increased from one return journey to two return journeys.

Service C1, timetable maintained.

Service S3 (Sundays), timetable maintained.

Service T1, service incorporated into new E1. Reduced from four on demand journeys to two timetabled journeys.

Service X8, hourly timetable maintained.

Service X9, hourly daytime timetable maintained but withdrawn commercially from Ramsden (now covered by new service E2). Friday and Saturday evening service withdrawn because of low patronage.

I hope the member will agree from this list that, whilst there are some limited reductions to reflect low patronage, the network has been maintained.”

Supplementary question from Councillor Sanders

Contrary to your response I do feel that substantive cuts have been made and I will discuss that with officers but in the meantime are you able to confirm that when cuts are made the County Council is able to gauge the impact on users?

Response from the Deputy Leader

I do not consider that cuts to services have been made. My priority is to maintain services where they are needed and services have been reduced only where it has been shown that there is little or no patronage.

15/12 PETITIONS AND PUBLIC ADDRESS

(Agenda No. 3)

The Deputy Leader of the Council had agreed the following requests to address Item 4

G. Grace

R. Cantelli

County Councillor Michael Waine

County Councillor Charles Shouler

16/12 BICESTER TOWN CENTRE ACCESS IMPROVEMENTS

(Agenda No. 4)

The Deputy Leader considered (CMDDL4) proposals to improve access to Bicester town centre for all modes of transport.

Mr Grace who had particular concerns regarding Queens Avenue considered the proposals would only serve to increase speeds and volume of traffic thereby increasing NO2 emissions in that area, which already exceeded annual mean levels set under the Environmental Act 1995. There were also additional threats to Queens Avenue, particularly to the natural spring in a private garden fronting the Avenue and to several mature trees and green verge, which were at risk with no agreed replacement plan. He called for a full EIA to be carried out and suggested traffic calming measures could be used to prevent traffic.

Mr Cantelli's main objection related to North Street. North Street was wide with parking on either side with mixed use and not just residential and he felt the report did not accurately reflect that. The proposals would radically change its character and all businesses in North street had been opposed to the change. He considered the proposals for North Street would not alleviate traffic problems but could, perversely, have the opposite effect to what it was hoped to achieve and therefore the status quo should be preserved.

Councillor Michael Waine accepted that the scheme would inevitably affect the long standing habits of many people but he was broadly in favour. The scheme had the potential to address real problems, particularly on Buckingham Road and had been introduced to improve traffic flow and create a better environment in Bicester and not just, as some had perceived, to alleviate weekend congestion emanating from visitors to the Bicester Village retail outlet. He did, however, have some concerns regarding the right turn out of Bucknell Road and suggested that that should be reviewed in 12 months.

Councillor Charles Shouler also broadly supported the scheme which was the first major review in Bicester since 1991. Changes to the 5 arm roundabout would promote significant benefits for Buckingham Road, access to the multi storey car park would be improved and replacement of the lights in St John's Street was a key element. Changes to North Street would benefit residents many of whom had praised the scheme and although there might be some detrimental effect to businesses he felt that that would not prove to be as bad as some had feared. He supported a 12 month review of the right turn out of Bucknell Road.

Mr Round confirmed that it was a District Council responsibility to declare air quality management areas and in this case Cherwell District Council had chosen not to do so. However, by reducing the stop start nature of traffic and improving traffic flow in the Queens Avenue area it was hoped that air quality levels would improve. Monitoring was currently carried out and county officers would continue to work closely with Cherwell District Council. With regard to concerns regarding retention of the character of Queens Avenue itself he advised that if this stage of the process was approved then the next stage would consider detailed design and again it was hoped, as part of that stage, to be able to retain as many trees as possible. Regarding North

Street the scheme had been designed to address problems in Bicester in totality and did not lend itself to removing one element in isolation. The scheme was multi modal offering benefits to bus users, pedestrians and cyclists as well as car users and extensive modelling suggested the scheme would be robust enough to cope with expected growth over the next 10 years. Overall results from the consultation had been 59% in favour and amendments had been made to the scheme to meet some of the concerns expressed, which included those made by Mr Palmer Clark a resident of St John's Street. Mr Round confirmed that officers would be happy to review the Bucknell Road right turn after 12 months and that discussions were being held with Sainsburys regarding the timing of the works in the context of the Manorsfield Road development.

Having regard to the arguments and options set out in the documentation before him, the representations made to him at this meeting and the further considerations set out above the Deputy Leader of the Council confirmed his decisions on this matter as follows:

- (a) note the responses received as part of the consultation;
- (b) agree proposed changes to the scheme, as outlined in paragraph 11 to the report CMDL4;
- (c) subject to approving the changes, approve the scheme for detailed design and construction;
- (d) authorise the Deputy Director for Environment & Economy (Strategy & Infrastructure Planning) in consultation with the Deputy Leader of the Council, to make minor amendments to the scheme; and
- (e) approve the making of the Oxfordshire County Council (Bicester) (Traffic Regulation) (Amendment) Order 20** as advertised and set out at Annex 9 to the report CMDL4;
- (f) ask officers to undertake a review of the turning restrictions at the junction of Bucknell Road and Field Street twelve months after scheme construction, in particular, the impact of the removal of the right-turn ban from Bucknell Road.

Signed
Deputy Leader of the Council

Date

17/12 PROPOSED PARKING RESTRICTIONS, MARSH LANE AREA, OXFORD

(Agenda No. 5)

The Deputy Leader considered (CMDDL5) proposals to introduce parking restrictions on Marsh Lane and adjoining streets in Marston, Oxford to address local concerns regarding the impact of the redevelopment of Court Place Farm.

Mr Tole advised that the Parish Council supported the scheme.

Having regard to the arguments and options set out in the documentation before him, the representations made to him at this meeting and the further considerations set out above the Deputy Leader of the Council confirmed his decisions on this matter as follows:

to approve the parking restrictions as set out in this report and as advertised in the Oxfordshire County Council (Various Streets, Oxford) (Waiting and Loading Restrictions) (Variation No. 3) Order 20**.

Signed

Deputy Leader of the Council

Date

18/12 BUS SERVICE SUBSIDIES

(Agenda No. 6)

The Deputy Leader considered (CMDDL6E) a review of subsidised bus services in the Chipping Norton and Charlbury areas.

With regard to the Oxford-Chipping Norton-Stratford-upon-Avon service (50/S3) officers advised that they were still waiting for an indication from Stagecoach Warwickshire with regard to the amount of subsidy required to continue to operate a Sunday service from Chipping Norton to Stratford. It was noted that if that quote proved too expensive then withdrawal of the service was a possibility. If that proved to be the case the Deputy Leader asked officers to discuss a possible alternative with Stagecoach Oxfordshire to fill the resulting gap in Oxfordshire by extending the S3 to Over Norton on Sundays.

With regard to Service X9 (Witney-Charlbury-Chipping Norton W45) the Deputy Leader agreed to award Contract PT/W45B to Stagecoach Oxfordshire as set out in Option 2 in the Exempt Annex. Officers advised, however, that Stagecoach might decline the award of that contract in isolation for operational reasons.

Having regard to the arguments and options set out in the documentation before him, the representations made to him at this meeting and the further considerations set out above the Deputy Leader of the Council confirmed his decisions on this matter as follows:

- (a) agree the subsidy for the services described in the report CMDDL6E on the basis of the tender prices (and the periods of time) as set out in Supplementary Exempt Annex 2 to that report but amended as above with regard to Item K;
- (b)** agree that the decisions made in (a) above were urgent in that any delay likely to be caused by the call-in process would result in service discontinuity and in accordance with the requirements of Scrutiny Procedure Rule 17(b) those decisions should not be subject to the call in process.

Signed
Deputy Leader of the Council

Date