

DELEGATED DECISIONS BY CABINET MEMBER FOR ENVIRONMENT (INCLUDING TRANSPORT)

MINUTES of the meeting held on Thursday, 1 September 2016 commencing at 10.00 am and finishing at 10.06 am

Present:

Voting Members:

Councillor Ian Hudspeth (In place of Councillor David Nimmo Smith)

Other Members in Attendance:

Councillor Jean Fooks (for Agenda Item 2)
Councillor Steve Curran

Officers:

Whole of meeting G. Warrington (Law & Governance); C. McCarthy and O. Spratley (Environment & Economy)

The Leader of the Council 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.

80/15 QUESTIONS FROM COUNTY COUNCILLORS

(Agenda No. 2)

Councillor Jean Fooks

The resurfacing works on the Cutteslowe and Woodstock roundabouts have meant that traffic has had to be diverted along Davenant Road in particular. Unfortunately they have had heavy vehicles of all kinds using the road as well as the buses and much other traffic – and not only during the hours of closure of the roundabouts. HGVs and others fail to follow diversion signs earlier and it looks as if SatNavs have started to direct people along this road at all times. It is not suitable for the large volumes of traffic currently using it day and night .

It would be very helpful if the County Council could ensure that residents are forewarned about traffic diversions – both when and why they will occur.

I am asking that the Council takes responsibility for this when appropriate – this would much reduce the concerns.

I also ask that the Council investigates how to influence SatNav directions to avoid drivers being sent along unsuitable routes – this is a wide problem I know but with so many people now relying on a satnav, they need to be directed along suitable roads rather than just the shortest.

Reply from the Cabinet Member for Environment

Residents are not typically informed of diversions because where practicable traffic is routed along a similar type of road. However, where this is not the case, and traffic has to be diverted on to a road of a different nature, such as a residential road, then residents are and will continue to be informed.

I will however re-iterate the importance of this to the project team as I appreciate that knowing about this and why it is happening is important for residents.

The ability for the council to influence SatNav companies is difficult, and depending on the system used may only be updated periodically and not register temporary changes such as diversions. Information such as diversions and closures are publicised by the council electronically and available for SatNav providers to utilise. The County Council has, and will continue to when opportunities arise, look to work with providers to improve traffic information within SatNavs.

Supplementary question from Councillor Fooks

I'm pleased to see that some notification is given when traffic is diverted down a road of a different nature. However, there is now regular and unsuitable traffic down Davenant Road and that needs to be dealt with. In light of that and the view that traffic authorities do have some powers to require SatNav companies to blank out such routes would you please do what you can influence those companies to do that?

Reply from the Leader of the Council (Cabinet Member for Environment)

“Unfortunately not all satnav companies agree to use updated network information and whilst some haulage companies do use industrial satnav systems which direct vehicles to the more suitable routes some lorry drivers do not and use car satnav systems, which do not have up to date information regarding lorry route diversions. However, I am happy to do what I can to influence SatNav companies.”

81/15 HS2 - QUALIFYING AUTHORITY DECISION

(Agenda No. 4)

The High Speed 2, Phase 1, Hybrid Bill granting planning permission for the construction of a high speed railway between London and West Midlands. will be the subject of a number of conditions requiring the nominated undertaker (the party/parties to construct the railway) to obtain consent or approval for detailed submissions.

Local Authorities along the route would be responsible for approving matters of detail with regards to the scheduled works in the Bill In terms of carrying out the function of approving the detailed HS2 submissions and the Bill gives each Authority a choice between having a wide or narrow range of controls over the approval of construction details. Those Authorities opting for a wider range of controls are referred to as “Qualifying Authorities”.

The county council therefore needed to decide whether or not to sign the HS2 Planning Memorandum, the effect of which would mean the county council became a Qualifying Authority, for the purposes of the HS2 Bill and successful delivery of this major infrastructure. In doing so the county council would be expected to sign up to a service level agreement (SLA) with HS2 to ensure that the authority could deliver commitments made by signing the Planning Memorandum. In addition, this agreement would set out the terms by which the county council could recover costs associated with the extra burdens as determined on behalf of the Secretary of State of Transport.

In considering the report (CMDE4) the Leader of the Council recognised that whilst it was important for the County Council to safeguard its interests at this stage of the process he reaffirmed that the County Council’s neutral position with regard to HS2 would not change in the light of any decision taken today. In the light of that and the information before him he confirmed his decision as follows:

- (a) agree to Oxfordshire County Council becoming a Qualifying Authority in relation to the High Speed Rail (London-West Midlands) Bill;
- (b) delegate authority to the Director of Environment & Economy in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Environment, to undertake all necessary steps required to become a Qualifying Authority, including the signing of the Planning Memorandum and Service Level Agreement.

Signed.....
Leader of the Council

Date of signing.....

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