

Coventry City Council
Minutes of the Meeting of Cabinet Member for City Services held at 3.00 pm on
Monday, 29 January 2018

Present:

Members: Councillor J Innes (Cabinet Member)
Councillor Lakha (Deputy Cabinet Member)
Councillor T Sawdon (Shadow Cabinet Member)

Other Members: Councillors R Bailey, J Birdi, J Lepoidevin and P Seaman

Employees:

N Cowper, Place Directorate
G Hood, Place Directorate
L Knight, Resources Directorate
R Parkes, Resources Directorate
A Walster, Place Directorate
C Whitehouse, Place Directorate
M Wilkinson, Place Directorate

Public Business

30. Declarations of Interests

There were no declarations of interest.

31. Minutes

The minutes of the meeting held on 6th November, 2017 were signed as a true record. There were no matters arising.

32. Petition - Request for Road Safety Measures for Alderminster Road

The Cabinet Member considered a report of the Deputy Chief Executive (Place) concerning a petition bearing 466 signatures (430 paper and 36 e-signatures) which had been submitted by Councillor J Lepoidevin, a Woodlands Ward Councillor, who attended the meeting and spoke on behalf of the petitioners. The report had been requested by Councillor Lepoidevin following the receipt of a determination letter. The petitioners were requesting the installation of road safety measures on Alderminster Road.

The report indicated that Alderminster Road was a local distributor road, was part of a bus route and there were shops and Park Hill Primary School in the vicinity. A review of the personal recorded injury collision over the past three years revealed 2 personal injury collisions had occurred. Consequently Alderminster Road did not meet the criteria for a local safety scheme.

The Cabinet Member had previously considered the petition and agreed a number of actions which had been set out in the determination letter, a copy of which was set out at an appendix to the report. The agreed actions were:

- Existing road markings to be refreshed

- New waiting restrictions which were advertised on 17th November for double yellow lines at the junctions with Beausale Crescent, Ayhno Close and both sides of Alderminster Road between these junctions
- Installation of the new mobile vehicle activated signs on Alderminster Road before the end of February 2018
- Contact details to be forwarded to residents for the Community Speed Watch Initiative.

Councillor Lepoidevin expressed support for the agreed actions and enquired if these measures didn't alleviate the speeding traffic issues could the matter be revisited in twelve months. It was clarified that monitoring would be undertaken and if the problems weren't resolved then officers would relook at Alderminster Road.

RESOLVED that:

(1) The petitioners concerns be noted.

(2) It be endorsed that the actions confirmed by determination letter to the petition spokesperson, as detailed in paragraph 1.7 of the report are undertaken.

33. Petition - To Request that Coventry Council Landscape the Land at Whitley Common/ JLR Bridge over A444

The Cabinet Member considered a report of the Deputy Chief Executive (Place) concerning a petition bearing 111 e-signatures which was supported by Councillor R Bailey, a Cheylesmore Ward Councillor, who attended the meeting along with Mrs Hazel Hill, the petition organiser and they spoke on behalf of the petitioners. The petitioners were requesting that the City Council landscape the land at Whitley Common and the Jaguar Land Rover (JLR) Bridge over the A444.

The report indicated that the petition was referring to two areas of land, the first being an area of land on Whitley Common which had been used by Costain under an agreement as a temporary depot. The second area of land included a number of slip road verge embankments on the A444 constructed as part of the JLR bridge construction. Planning approval for the scheme at Whitley junction was approved in February, 2014 and included a condition regarding landscaping. Following completion of the main works, the site was handed back to the City Council in July 2015. The Council committed to ensuring that the landscaping scheme was undertaken and the remedial works to site compound area were executed. The Council pursued Costain to carry out the works which never transpired. Both parties later entered into a contractual dispute over a large number of items which took over six months to resolve.

In March 2017 a Settlement Agreement was entered into which removed the requirement of Costain to complete the landscaping works which would now be undertaken by the City Council. Unfortunately the planting season which ran from October to March had just ended. It was agreed that the landscaping scheme along the A444 involving over 2,600 trees and 1,500 ground cover shrubs would be undertaken during the following planting season. In addition the grounds

maintenance of the A444 verge areas was also handed back to the Council and some tractor felling was carried out to maintain site lines.

The Cabinet Member was informed that preparation works to prepare the steep banks for planting had been undertaken during December 2017. The remaining verge areas were to be cut using a tractor mounted flail. The planting of the trees and shrubs would be undertaken between January and March 2018.

It was proposed that the area of land on Whitley Common was to be cultivated and planted with wild flowers. Preparation works started in December with wild flower seeding being planned to take place in April and early May 2018.

Hazel Hill expressed support for the proposed works then provided a detailed timeline for all her dealings with the City Council over the previous two years which had led her to write to her local MP, Jim Cunningham. She outlined her concerns about a number of issues including receiving no responses to e-mail enquiries and, on a few occasions, being told that works would be undertaken only for nothing to happen. Councillor Bailey detailed his concerns about the frustrating situation and the lack of communication with the petition organiser.

Councillor Innes, Cabinet Member apologised for the delays in the works being undertaken and for the personal upset caused to Hazel Hill but clarified that the delays had been caused by the complicated contractual issues with Costain. She indicated that information regarding start dates had been passed on in good faith.

Councillor Sawdon, Shadow Cabinet Member, and Councillor Lakha, Deputy Cabinet Member expressed concerns about the lack of responses to e-mails from the petition organiser. Councillor Sawdon asked whether Costain had been removed from the Council's list of contractors and the Cabinet Member indicated that this would be investigated.

RESOLVED that:

(1) The work that has recently been undertaken to control vegetation growth on the A444 slip road verges be noted.

(2) The landscaping works proposed to be undertaken on the A444 slip road verges and the time scales for undertaking these works be noted.

(3) The proposed landscape renovation works to be undertaken on Whitley Common and the time scales for undertaking these works be noted.

34. Petition - Refurbishment of Roads and Pavements on Delaware Road

The Cabinet Member considered a report of the Deputy Chief Executive (Place) concerning a petition bearing 18 signatures which had been submitted by Councillor K Taylor, an Earlsdon Ward Councillor, who was invited to the meeting but was unable to attend. The petition organiser was also unable to attend the meeting. The petitioners were requesting that the City Council refurbish the roads and pavements at Delaware Road.

The report indicated that a recent site visit had been undertaken to Delaware Road. The carriageway surface of the road was micro asphalt and was about 25 years old. Findings indicated that where the road surface had failed there was evidence of a pink aggregate surface dressing. However although there were areas of structural failure to varying degrees, the road was still intact and safe. The pavements are a bituminous construction and had been subject to utility reinstatements over the years. Although showing signs of aging they were still in a safe condition. There were no defects exceeding the intervention level at the time of the visit.

The report put forward the following recommended treatment options for Delaware Road, once a priority score had been reached on the forward programme list:
Road – inlay treatment using either the retread process or laying new asphalt to a depth of 100mm to add strength to the road
Footways – reconstruct the areas of surface failure as necessary and then apply a footway slurry treatment to the full length.

The total costs of the works was anticipated to be £65,000.

RESOLVED that approval be given to the roads and pavements being held as sites on the City Council’s forward programme list and their condition be subject to ongoing monitoring and be prioritised and scored against all other similar sites citywide, and when a priority score is reached they be included in any future maintenance treatment programmes, budget permitting.

35. **Petition - CCTV to be Installed at Lentons Lane Cemetery**

The Cabinet Member considered a report of the Deputy Chief Executive (Place) concerning a petition bearing 474 e-signatures which was being supported by Councillor P Seaman, a Henley Ward Councillor, who attended the meeting and spoke on behalf of the petitioners. The petition organiser Nicola Wilson was also invited but was unable to attend. The petitioners were requesting the installation of closed circuit television (CCTV) at Lentons Lane cemetery following thefts from a number of graves.

The report indicated that there were 6 cemeteries under the control of the City Council and in the past there had been a number of requests for CCTV to be fitted at all of these sites. These requests had to be balanced against a number of considerations including that the majority of visitors wanted to visit a loved one’s final resting place in peace and deemed cameras to be an invasion of their privacy; it was impossible to supply a standard level of security cover for all graves and memorials, especially as many graves would be obscured due to general landscaping; the quality of any footage from CCTV would likely be insufficient to enable perpetrators to be identified; and the financial implications involving over £30,000 to set up a system with additional ongoing monitoring costs.

The Cabinet Member was informed that in the previous four years no reports of high value incidents due to vandalism had been reported to Bereavement Services. There were a small number of occasions throughout the year when low value, high sentimental items were taken from graves and from the Gardens of Remembrance. Although any thefts from graves were highly distressing for the

families concerned, there was no indication of a wide spread or major vandalism issue within the city's cemeteries. Between December 2016 and December 2017, there had been 36 reports of low value thefts from graves and the gardens of remembrance. These included 10 incidents at Lentons Lane cemetery. There had also been one report of anti-social behaviour at Lentons Lane.

Attention was drawn to a meeting which took place during November 2017 at Lentons Lane cemetery when Councillor Innes, Cabinet Member and officers met petitioners to gain an understanding of their concerns and to identify ways forward to address the problems being experienced.

The report highlighted that signs had now been erected in Lentons Lane cemetery advising visitors how to report theft and anti-social behaviour. Reviews and meetings were currently taking place regarding the activities around the opening and closing of the gates, regular patrols by the local Community Policing units and patrols carried out by the Council communications centre. Enquiries were ongoing regarding the pedestrian gate and the options available to remove the potential access of vehicles whilst maintaining easy access for wheelchair users. Enquiries were ongoing regarding the setting up of a direct complaints system for acts of theft to be pin marked on a map accessed via the Bereavement Services web pages.

Councillor Seaman detailed her concerns for families when items were taken from loved ones graves. She expressed support for the actions that were being undertaken to address the petitioners' concerns, in particular the proposed introduction of a direct complaints system for acts of theft.

RESOLVED that:

(1) The number of reported issues of anti-social behaviour recorded at Lentons Lane and other cemeteries over the past 12 months be noted.

(2) The cost of installing CCTV at Lentons Lane cemetery estimated at over £30,000 and its limited effectiveness be noted.

(3) The actions being taken by Bereavement Services to reduce anti-social behaviour at the cemetery be noted.

36. Objections to Proposed Waiting Restrictions (Variation 5)

The Cabinet Member considered a report of the Deputy Chief Executive (Place) concerning objections that had been received to a Traffic Regulation Order advertised on 17th November, 2017 relating to proposed new waiting restrictions and amendments to existing waiting restrictions in a number of Wards across the City. A total of 45 objections were received (including 1 multi-signature letter and one petition). In addition 8 responses in support of proposals were also received. 2 subsequent e-mails had been received from objectors to the Conway Avenue and Brackenhurst Road proposals and 1 from a supporter for the recommendation for Coral Close and these were reported at the meeting. A summary of the proposed restrictions, objections and responses were set out in an appendix to the report. All the respondents were invited to the meeting. Councillor Birdi, a Bablake Ward Councillor, attended in respect of a petition, bearing 130 signatures objecting to

the proposed parking restrictions in Brackenhurst Road. Olive French, the petition organiser was also in attendance. Councillor Williams, a Bablake Ward Councillor, also attended the meeting in respect of the proposed waiting restrictions in Brackenhurst Road.

Mr Wise attended the meeting in respect of the proposals for Binley Road and expressed his concerns regarding the installation of double yellow lines outside his house. He also raised concerns about parking issues in Coombe Street. Councillor Innes, Cabinet Member indicated that additional parking patrols would be undertaken in the vicinity.

Anthony French (speaking on behalf of the petition organiser), Brian Matthews and Lauren Innes highlighted the concerns that had arisen following the advertising of proposals for Brackenhurst Road. They detailed their support for the proposal not to implement the waiting restrictions. Councillor Birdi outlined his support for the petitioners. Councillor Williams also spoke in support of the recommendation. It was acknowledged that there should have been wider consultation prior to the restrictions being advertised.

Tim Tabram attended the meeting and spoke against the recommendation to install waiting restrictions at Cheriton Close highlighting that their implementation would create problems for residents on the Allesley Park estate. Councillor Innes, Cabinet Member drew attention to the number of complaints that she had received in her capacity as Ward Councillor.

Janet Hastings outlined her support for the recommendation not to implement the restrictions on Conway Avenue and Mr R Bains drew attention to the parking issues in Ebro Crescent, requesting approval for the installation of a larger dropped kerb. Councillor Innes indicated that additional parking patrols would be undertaken.

The cost of introducing the proposed TRO would be funded from the Highways Maintenance and Investment Capital Programme budget through the Local Transport Plan.

RESOLVED that, having considered the objections to the proposed waiting restrictions:

(1) The implementation of the restrictions at Binley Road, Cheriton Close, Ebro Crescent, Knoll Drive and the junction of Scots Lane/ Christchurch Road be approved.

(2) Approval be given that the restrictions at Brackenhurst Road and Kingsley Walk are not implemented but the situation is monitored and should the Police advise of issues relating to dangerous or obstructive parking occurring, then new proposals be advertised.

(3) Approval be given that the restrictions on Conway Avenue are not implemented.

(4) Approval be given that the restrictions are not implemented on Coral Close, but that a consultation is undertaken to determine if the majority of

residents are in favour of either no additional restrictions, or double yellow lines on one side of the road, then any new proposals be advertised as part of the next waiting restriction review.

(5) Approval be given that an extension (approximately 4m) to the double yellow lines on the western side of Coombe Street and the double yellow lines for junction protection at Torbay Road/ Winsford Avenue be advertised as part of the next waiting restriction review.

(6) Approval be given that the proposed Traffic Regulation Order is made operational.

(7) Traffic Enforcement officers be requested to undertake additional patrols at Binley Road/ Coombe Street and Ebro Crescent.

37. Temporary Hackney Carriage Vehicle Plate/Licence(s)

The Cabinet Member considered a report of the Deputy Chief Executive (Place) which sought approval for the issuing of two temporary hackney carriage vehicle plates/ licences to ADV/Electri Blue for the Nissan ADV Dynamo vehicle and two temporary hackney carriage vehicle plates/ licences for the London Electric Vehicle Company (formerly London Taxi Company) for the LEVC TX to allow the manufactures to assess their newly manufactured vehicles.

The report highlighted that on 19th September, 2011 the Cabinet Member introduced a limit/ cap on the number of hackney carriage vehicles that could be licensed by the City Council to 859. Consequently if the City Council wanted to license new vehicle makes and models for a trial period then approval would be required for a temporary plate/ licence.

Reference was made to the problems associated with poor air quality and older diesel vehicles and that the Council was keen to support the taxi trade in the movement to cleaner vehicles. The Cabinet Member noted that Coventry had recently been successful in a bid for £1.2m from the Office for Low Emission Vehicles (OLEV) Taxi scheme to deliver electric vehicle charging infrastructure to the city for electric taxis. Later this year OLEV was due to announce top up grant to support the taxi trade with purchasing purpose built taxis.

The report detailed the specifications for the new London Electric Vehicle Company's (LEVC) TX and the Nissan ADV Dynamo. LEVC intended to start a trial of ten TXs this summer with at least one vehicle being trialled in Coventry. ADV/Electric Blue wanted to trial two of their hackney carriage vehicles with disabled access and the 180 degree turning circle in Coventry. Both companies would be sourcing licensed hackney carriage drivers to undertake the trials.

RESOLVED that approval be given for four temporary hackney carriage vehicle plate/ licences to be issued for a period of twelve months from the point of issue, two for the Nissan ADV Dynamo and two for the London Electric Vehicle Company (LEVC) (formerly London Taxi Company).

38. Petitions Determined by Letter and Petitions Deferred Pending Further Investigations

The Cabinet Member considered a report of the Deputy Chief Executive (Place) which provided a summary of the recent petitions received that were to be determined by letter, or where decisions had been deferred pending further investigations and holding letters were being circulated. Details of the individual petitions were set out in an appendix attached to the report and included target dates for action. The report was submitted for monitoring and transparency purposes.

The report indicated that each petition had been dealt with on an individual basis, with the Cabinet Member considering advice from officers on appropriate action to respond to the petitioners' request. When it had been decided to respond to the petition without formal consideration at a Cabinet Member meeting, both the relevant Councillor/petition organiser could still request that their petition be the subject of a Cabinet Member report.

Members noted that where holding letters were being sent, this was because further investigation work was required. Once matters had been investigated either a follow up letter would be sent or a report submitted to a future Cabinet Member meeting.

RESOLVED that the actions being taken by officers as detailed in the appendix to the report, in response to the petitions received, be endorsed.

39. **Outstanding Issues**

The Cabinet Member noted that there were no outstanding issues for consideration.

40. **Any other items of Public Business**

There were no additional items of public business.

(Meeting closed at 5.10 pm)