

Coventry City Council
Minutes of the Meeting of Cabinet Member for City Services held at 3.00 pm on
Wednesday, 13 September 2023

Present:

Members: Councillor P Hetherton (Cabinet Member)
Councillor G Lloyd (Deputy Cabinet Member)
Councillor M Heaven (Shadow Cabinet Member)

Other Members: Councillor Caan (for Item 16)

Employees (by Directorate):

Law and Governance M Salmon, C Taylor

Transportation, Highways and Sustainability P Bowman, R Little, J Seddon, N Thomas, M Wilkinson

Apologies: Councillor G Ridley (for Item 17)

Public Business

14. Declarations of Interests

There were no disclosable pecuniary interests.

15. Minutes

The minutes of the meeting held on 2nd August were agreed and signed as a true record. There were no matters arising.

16. Petition 48/22 - Dane Road Pathways

The Cabinet Member for City Services considered a report of the Director of Transportation, Highways and Sustainability, which responded to a petition requesting all pathways on Dane Road be improved. The petition was supported by Councillor K Caan, an Upper Stoke Ward Councillor, who, together with the Petition Organiser, attended the meeting and spoke on behalf of the petitioners.

The petition submitted contained 79 signatures and in accordance with the City Council's procedure for dealing with petitions, those related to road safety and parking issues were heard by the Cabinet Member for City Services. The Cabinet Member had considered the petition in advance of the meeting and requested that the petition be dealt with by Determination Letter rather than a formal report being submitted to the meeting.

On receipt of the Determination Letter, the petition organiser advised he wanted the issue to be considered at a Cabinet Member for City Services meeting.

A report indicated that Dane Road pathways had been included in the 2022/23 and 2023/24 annual maintenance programme and so far, Council had replaced

30% of the pathways on Dane Road. The remaining pathways were in a similar condition to the 30% that had been replaced. The Shakespeare Street to Walsgrave Road section was ranked 5th on the forward programme with 30 sites rating equally, and 46 sites scoring higher. The construction and overall condition of the pathways had been assessed and it was noted that it was a flagged pathway with a Breedon gravel verge which was in safe condition. There was a school on Dane Road, and therefore a safety inspection was carried out every 3 months.

Councillor K Caan and the Petition Organiser spoke in support of the petition, explaining that the petition had been raised due to pavement damage caused by dropped and uneven kerbs, cracked and part paving slabs and tree root damage and raised the following concerns:

- Dropped kerbs causing residents to drive over the pavements causing damage.
- Works had not been carried out to rectify damage raised by the surveys carried out at 3 monthly intervals.
- Reactive maintenance was not considered sufficient to resolve the issues.
- Gravel was causing severe impacts on housing and vehicles.
- Difficulties incurred by all pavement users.

Officers responded, advising that the 3 monthly surveys would continue, however, only a finite resource was available to rectify any defects. Officers advised that works had been undertaken to the worst area of pathways on Dane Road first.

Due to the number of issues causing damage to the Dane Road pathways, the Cabinet Member for City Services suggested a site visit.

RESOLVED that the Cabinet Member for City Services having considered the petition:

- 1. Note the petitioners' concerns.**
- 2. Arrange a visit to enable the Cabinet Member for City Services to meet with the Petition Organiser and Petition Sponsor on site at Dane Road.**

17. Petition 07/23 - Broad Lane - Persistent Flooding

The Cabinet Member for City Services considered a report of the Director of Transportation, Highways and Sustainability that responded to a petition bearing 140 signatures requesting that the Council pursued negotiations with partner authorities and stakeholders to resolve the matters relating to flooding of the Upper Brookstray. Councillor Heaven, the Shadow Cabinet Member for City Services, spoke to the Petition on behalf of the Petition Sponsor, Councillor G Ridley, who was unable to attend the meeting. The Petition Organiser also attended the meeting and spoke on behalf of the petitioners.

In accordance with the City Council's procedure for dealing with petitions, those relating to flooding were heard by the Cabinet Member for City Services. The Cabinet Member had considered the petition prior to this meeting and requested that the petition be dealt with by a formal report being submitted to this meeting.

The report indicated that extreme rainfall had occurred in June 2023 and the flooding on Sunday 18th June was being investigated by the Council, the Environment Agency and Severn Trent.

To help reduce the risk of flooding to date, the Council as Highway Authority, had carried out drainage improvements to the traffic island at the junction of Banner Lane with Broad Lane. Additionally, as part of this, the Council raised the level of the road resulting in less overland flow risk to the homes at Goldthorn Close. The Council, as Lead Local Flood Authority, had also carried out improvements to the drainage arrangements at Hockley Lane to reduce risk of flooding to homes and at the junction of Hockley Lane and Broad Lane.

Severn Trent had installed depth monitors in the foul sewers and surface water sewers in the area on Hockley Lane and at the junction of Broad Lane / Hockley Lane, which measured the depth of flow in the sewer network to increase understanding of performance of the sewers, aid ongoing hydraulic modelling of the sewers and provide advance notice of any blockages building up. Severn Trent Water also regularly cleaned their drainage at Broad Lane and removed large items of debris in August 2021 from the large diameter pipework at the Banner Lane junction with Broad Lane. Further camera surveys of the drainage were being planned as a part of their investigation into the flooding.

The Environment Agency cleaned the trash screen at the junction of Banner Lane with Board Lane to reduce risk of pipework blockage and also continuously monitored the depth of water in the river.

The Council had been working in collaboration with the Environment Agency as they had been considering options to reduce the risk of flooding at this location. Land surveys of 77 properties had been carried out, together with surveying drainage channels to inform their hydraulic modelling. Following the first stage modelling, the Environment Agency concluded that the flood risk was a combination of river flows, surface water and sewer flooding. Because of this, closer working of the Environment Agency with Severn Trent and the Council was occurring.

The Environment Agency had ruled out a 23000 cubic metre water storage option upstream to reduce flood risk because this did not adequately protect the number of homes needed.

Building on the success of the flood reduction measures at Allesley and with the agreement of upstream land-owners outside Coventry, a means of slowing the flow into the river was being installed. 20 measures had been installed so far and more were planned in upstream land (Appendix A to the report referred). These measures were being rolled out nationally and were proving to be successful.

Officers recommended supporting the Environment Agency in their business case to reduce flood risk. Based on the success of the measures rolled out at Allesley, the most economical options would be Property Flood Resilience in combination with the Natural Flood Management (Appendices B and C to the report referred).

It had been determined that the Council would continue to work with the Environment Agency and Severn Trent, in an effort to reduce the risk of flooding at the Brookstray, Upper Eastern Green.

The Petition Organiser, with the consent of the Cabinet Member for City Services, tabled a document setting out his concerns.

The Shadow Cabinet Member confirmed her agreement to the Council's commitment with the multi-agency approach to the flooding and the recommended way forward and asked questions and received information from the officer relating to the issues presented, including: possible future development/106 section contributions; a future report on the investigation into the flooding which took place in June 2023; data from Severn Trent relating to the depth monitors on Hockley Lane and the junction of Broad Lane/Hockley Lane; cleaned drainage at Broad Lane; the trash screen at the junction of Banner Lane with Broad Lane and camera surveys; availability of land surveys of 77 properties affected and measures installed to slow the flow into the river, installation timescale and cost.

The Cabinet Member thanked the Flood Risk Manager and his team for their work on the issue of flooding.

RESOLVED that the Cabinet Member for City Services:

- 1) Notes the petitioners' concerns.**
- 2) Endorses the action to support the continued work with the Environment Agency and Severn Trent in an effort to reduce the risk of flooding at the Brookstray, Upper Eastern Green.**

18. Car Parking Charges - Annual Review 2023/24

The Cabinet Member for City Services considered a report of the Director of Transportation, Highways and Sustainability, that sought approval for the implementation of a revised parking tariff structure across the Council operated on and off-street parking facilities, following a review of charges.

In February 2023, the Council approved the Chief Operating Officer (Section 151 Officer) Budget Report 2023-2024 which included a series of financial proposals for the Council's revenue and capital budget for 2023/24. The report proposed an increase in parking fees by an average of 5% to grow car park income by an additional £150k per year.

The City Centre Car Park Strategy set out the aims and policies for managing parking within Coventry city centre. It included objectives relating to the management of supply and demand for parking to encourage economic growth. Car parking charges were a mechanism available to the Council to help manage on and off-street parking to encourage turnover of spaces in the seventeen Council operated off-street car parks in Coventry, providing approximately 3,500 parking spaces.

Car park prices in Coventry had remained unchanged since 2017 despite inflation running at 25% since then. This was the only time that charges had increased

since 2010. The existing tariff structure (Appendix 1 to the report referred) was coherent and, in the main, was consistent across the Council's parking facilities.

All car park operators, including the Council, must run their car parks as a commercial operation to be financially viable and deliver financial targets. Parking income had understandably declined during the COVID-19 pandemic and had not recovered to pre-pandemic levels, currently 20% less than it was before the pandemic.

It was proposed that a schedule of on and off-street parking charges be agreed that reflected the Council's need to grow income and rising operational costs, whilst not acting as a deterrent to car users. It was anticipated that a growth in income could be achieved through other measures rather than a direct increase in the cost of daytime parking and, as such, most rates would remain the same representing a cost reduction in real terms.

The Parking Services Manager indicated that in respect of the footfall relating to the impact of the charges, the impact on local shops, and encouraging people into the city centre, an analysis had been undertaken.

The Cabinet Member emphasised there were no increases in day-time car parking charges to city centre car parks from Monday to Saturdays, it was only evening and Sunday charges that would be increased.

RESOLVED that the Cabinet Member for City Services:

- 1) Approves the revision to the car parking tariff structure in line with the proposals set out in the report.**
- 2) Subject to the approval of recommendation 1) above, instructs officers to commence the process of amending the relevant Traffic Regulation Orders and advertising the relevant Notice of Variations to the said Traffic Regulation Orders and the Off-Street Parking Order.**
- 3) Approves a recommendation to make Wellington Street and Holmsdale Road car parks chargeable in accordance with the tariff structure for suburban car parks, subject to consideration of any objections in accordance with the applicable legislation.**
- 4) Subject to the approval of recommendation 3) above, instructs officers to commence the process of advertising the Notice of Variation to formally vary the Off-Street Parking Order.**

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

The Cabinet Member for City Services considered a report of the Director of Transportation, Highways and Sustainability in respect of petitions received relating to the portfolio of the Cabinet Member for City Services and how officers proposed to respond to them.

In June 2015, amendments to the Petitions Scheme, which formed part of the Constitution, were approved in order to provide flexibility, and streamline current practice. The change had reduced costs and bureaucracy and improved the service to the public. These amendments allowed for a petition to be dealt with or responded to by letter without being formally presented in a report to a Cabinet Member meeting.

In light of this, at the meeting of the Cabinet Member for Public Services on 15 March 2016, it was approved that a summary of those petitions received which were determined by letter, or where decisions were deferred pending further investigations, be reported to subsequent meetings of the Cabinet Member for Public Services (now Cabinet Member for City Services), where appropriate, for monitoring and transparency purposes.

Appendix A to the report set out petitions received relating to the portfolio of the Cabinet Member for City Services and how officers propose to respond to them.

RESOLVED that the Cabinet Member for City Services endorses the actions being taken by officers as set out in Section 2 and Appendix A of the report in response to the petitions received.

20. **Outstanding Issues**

There were no outstanding issues.

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

There were no other items of public business.

(Meeting closed at 4.15 pm)