

Coventry City Council
Minutes of the Meeting of Cabinet Member for City Services held at 11.00 am on
Monday, 15 August 2016

Present:

Members: Councillor J Innes (Cabinet Member)
Councillor M Hammon (Shadow Cabinet Member)

Other Members: Councillors J Birdi, M Lapsa and J McNicholas

Employees:

C Archer, Place Directorate
P Beesley, Place Directorate
T Cowley, Place Directorate
L Knight, Resources Directorate
S McGinty, Resources Directorate
K Seager, Place Directorate
M Wilkinson, Place Directorate

Apologies: Councillor R Lakha (Deputy Cabinet Member)

Public Business

9. Declarations of Interests

There were no disclosable pecuniary interests.

10. Minutes

The minutes of the meeting on 25th July 2016 were agreed and signed as a true record.

There were no matters arising.

11. Removal of Vegetation and Associated Raised Bed Structures at Honeyfield Road (outside numbers 6 & 11) and Edmund Road (outside numbers 4 & 28)

The Cabinet Member considered a report of the Executive Director of Place concerning a petition, bearing 32 signatures, requesting that the City Council removed the planted bushes and the associated raised bed structures outside 6 and 11 Honeyfield Road and 4 and 28 Edmund Road. The petition was submitted by Councillor Birdi who attended the meeting and spoke on behalf of the petitioners. The petition organiser was also invited but was unable to attend.

The report indicated that the petitioners were requesting the removal of the bushes and raised bed structures as they were an 'eye sore' for the area and for visitors to the nearby Nanaksar Gurdwara Gursikh Temple. The planters were showing signs of deterioration and there were safety concerns due to overhanging thorny vegetation and an environmental concern due to litter and possible vermin infestation. Reference was made to the recent programmed vegetation maintenance visits and to the site visit following the receipt of the petition.

It was recommended that the existing planters, vegetation and surrounding bollards be removed at all four locations. In addition the existing footway would need to be excavated and resurfaced with a tarmac finish. The anticipated cost of the work was approximately £9,000 and would be funded from a future highway capital maintenance programme, which was subject to approval by Cabinet. It was proposed to undertake a consultation exercise to ensure that local residents and Ward Councillors were in support of this proposal.

Councillor Birdi expressed support for the proposal requesting that the programme of works be brought forward to an earlier date.

RESOLVED that:

(1) Agreement be given to establish via consultation with local Ward Councillors and the occupiers of the properties where the raised beds are located on the recommended option before their removal as it is not clear from petition signatures if this has been done prior to submission. This will confirm if there is a local community consensus for the work to be carried out.

(2) Following consultation and with majority consensus, approval be given for the removal of all shrubs, raised bed structures, stone bollards and surrounding slab footway in the four specific locations detailed in the report and replacement with tarmac footway and new bollards. This work is for inclusion in the 2017/18 maintenance programme of work, subject to Cabinet's approval of the Capital Highway Maintenance budget at their meeting in March, 2017.

12. Objection to Proposed Closure of Part of Cox Street Car Park

The Cabinet Member for City Services considered a report of the Executive Director of Place concerning an objection that had been received to the proposals for the part closure of Cox Street car park. The objector was invited to the meeting for the consideration of this item but did not attend.

The report indicated that Cabinet, at their meeting on 9th February 2016 (their minute 113/15 referred) and Council on 23rd February 2016 (their minute 125/15 referred), approved the partial disposal of the surface car park for the development of up to 1000 bed student housing.

Following the selection of the preferred developer, the formal closure procedure commenced with public notices inviting written objections to the part closure. One objection was received on concerns about the loss of parking spaces and the impact this might have on those using the swimming pool and leisure centre in Fairfax Street. Although accepting there may be other car parks nearby, the objector's main concern was whether people would be prepared to make the additional walk especially on dark nights.

It was recognised that the reduction of spaces at Cox Street would cause disruption to the existing users of the car park. 144 spaces were being retained on site in Cox Street car park with the anticipated nearest exit from the retained car park increasing the walk to the swimming pool and leisure centre facility by

approximately 100 metres. The car park under the ring road was lit and the route from the car park to the entrance of the swimming pool, which was on the public highway, was also lit.

There were two other public car parks which are within close proximity of the swimming pool and leisure centre at Lower Ford Street and Grove Street and these would remain accessible by the public throughout the construction phase of the development. These car parks had the greatest spare capacity at evenings and weekends.

As part of the finished development, the developer had committed to provide circa 170 spaces under the building which would be made available to the public. These spaces would be available at the same parking charge rate as the Council run car parks nearby. This commitment had been legally secured by way of a development agreement.

Councillor Hammon, Shadow Member raised a concern about the impact of the part closure of the car park for visitors to the nearby Britannia hotel. It was agreed that officers would liaise with the hotel regarding the closure and recommend that the hotel keep their visitors updated about the development.

Due to the timescale for dealing with this matter and in accordance with Paragraph 19 of the City Council's Constitution, Councillor J McNicholas, the nominee of the Chair of Scrutiny Co-ordination Committee, attended the meeting for the consideration of this matter and agreed the need for urgency such that call-in arrangements would not apply. The reason for the urgency being that, to enable the first phase of the development to open for the academic year commencing September 2017, a planning application needed to be submitted in early September 2016 for consideration at Planning Committee on 29th September 2016. If the application was not submitted in time then the programme of works would be delayed and the timescales for opening would not be achievable.

RESOLVED that, after due consideration of the objection:

1) The objection be rejected and the car park closure procedure and the development be allowed to continue.

2) The objector be informed in writing of the Cabinet Member decision.

3) Officers be requested to speak to the representatives of the Britannia Hotel informing them of the part closure of Cox Street Car Park.

13. Objections to Proposed Waiting Restrictions

The Cabinet Member considered a report of the Executive Director of Place concerning objections that had been received to a Traffic Regulation Order advertised on 30th June, 2016 relating to proposed waiting restrictions and amendments to existing waiting restrictions in Bablake, Binley and Willenhall, Earlsdon, Foleshill, Longford, Upper Stoke, Westwood, Whoberley and Woodlands Wards of the City. A total of 37 objections were received, 2 of which were subsequently withdrawn by the objectors. In addition, 1 request for an extension to proposed double yellow lines and 4 letters supporting proposals were received. A

summary of proposed restrictions, objections and responses were set out in an appendix to the report.

All the respondents were invited to the meeting. Apologies had been submitted by Councillor Bigham, Mr and Mrs Douglas, Mr G Graham, Miss T Hill, Sharon Knowles and Claire Southan. Councillor Lapsa, a Westwood Ward Councillor, attended the meeting on behalf of an objector and requested additional information in respect of the restrictions for the Tile Hill area. It was clarified that a residents parking scheme due to Tile Hill Station commuter parking problems had been consulted on and surveys undertaken however there had been a less than 15% response rate. It was intended to consult with residents via a Street News since a 60% agreement rate was required.

The officer informed of a further objection that had been received in respect of the restrictions for the Tile Hill area. This meant that 38, not 37 objections had been received in total, of which 3 related to the Tile Hill area proposals. The issues raised were highlighted, and the officers advised that these issues did not change the recommendation to approve that these waiting restrictions were installed as advertised.

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

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

1) The implementation of the restrictions as advertised on Arbury Avenue/Astley Avenue junction, Balliol Road/ Wyke Road/ Wykeley Road junction, Brookside Avenue, Morgans Road, Robin Hood Road/Stretton Avenue, Stretton Avenue/Fawley Road, William McCool Close be approved.

2) The implementation of a reduced length of double yellow lines on Bennetts Road/Herders Way (reduce to 15 metres each side of the junction), on Harvey Close (reduce by 2 metres on southern side of road) and on Rochester Road, western side on Raven Cragg Road (reduce by 1 metre) be approved.

3) Approval be given that the proposed double yellow lines are not installed on Buckingham Rise/Amersham Close & Buckingham Rise/ Chalfont Close.

4) Approval be given for the implementation of the restrictions as advertised on Ebro Crescent, but not, initially, to install the trip rail barrier on the roundabout and to monitor the effect of the changes.

5) Approval be given that the double yellow lines on Hurst Road are not removed.

6) The reduction in double yellow lines as advertised in the Arden Street Area, apart from Myrtle Grove, where the proposed double yellow lines are to be reduced (installed on the southern side of the road only) be approved.

7) The installation of the waiting restrictions as proposed in the Tile Hill area be approved; but not to consider an extension to the double yellow lines on Station Avenue at this time but to monitor the situation.

8) Approval be given that the proposed Traffic Regulation order is made operational.

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

The Cabinet Member for City Services considered a report of the Executive Director of Place that provided a summary of the recent petitions received that had been determined by letter, or where decisions had been deferred pending further investigations and holding letters had been 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. Attention was drawn to the fact that if 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 were informed that where holding letters had been 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 a Cabinet Member meeting. Members expressed support for this new process for dealing with petitions.

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

15. Outstanding Issues

The Cabinet Member noted a report of the Executive Director of Resources that contained a list of outstanding issues and summarised the current position in respect of each item.

In respect of item 1 headed 'City Centre Maintenance Contract' Councillor Hammon, Shadow Cabinet Member expressed concerns relating to the state of the ringroad that was looking 'tired' and to the number of weeds along the side of the road. The officers undertook to investigate.

16. Any other items of Public Business

There were no other items of public business.

(Meeting closed at 11.40 am)