

Coventry City Council
Minutes of the Meeting of Cabinet Member for City Services held at 3.00 pm on
Monday, 25 February 2019

Present:

Members: Councillor P Hetherton (Cabinet Member)
Councillor R Lakha (Deputy Cabinet Member)
Councillor T Sawdon (Shadow Cabinet Member)

Other Members: Councillors R Bailey and G Williams

Employees:

C Archer, Place Directorate
R Goodyer, Place Directorate
G Hood, Place Directorate
L Knight, Place Directorate
R Parkes, Place Directorate
C Whitehouse, Place Directorate

Public Business

59. Declarations of Interests

There were no declarations of interest.

60. Minutes

The minutes of the meeting held on 21st January, 2019 were signed as a true record. There were no matters arising.

61. Petition - Adopt the Roads of Burlywood Close, Seashell Close and Mistyrose Close, Allesley Grange

The Cabinet Member considered a report of the Deputy Chief Executive (Place) concerning a petition, bearing 38 signatures, which had been submitted by Councillor Williams, a Bablake Ward Councillor, who attended the meeting and spoke on behalf of the petitioners. The petition organiser was invited but was unable to attend. The report had been requested by Councillor Williams following the receipt of the determination letter. The petitioners were requesting that the Council adopt the roads of Burlywood Close, Seashell Close and Mistyrose Close, Allesley Grange.

The report indicated that the roads were residential streets off Browns Lane in Allesley. A location plan was set out at an appendix to the report.

The determination letter had advised that it was not the Council's intention to proceed with the adoption of the roads for a number of reasons. The main consideration was that any request for an un-adopted highway to be adopted by the Highway Authority could only be requested by the freehold owner(s) of the land. In addition the request would need to be made by notice pursuant to the

requirements of Section 37(1) of the Highways Act 1980. In the case of Burlywood Close, Seashell Close and Mistyrose Close, the roads were not offered for adoption by the original developer and therefore the design and construction had not been agreed or approved by the Highway Authority.

The Cabinet Member was informed that should the residents wish to pursue the request for the City Council to consider the adoption of the roads, they would need to approach the freehold owner(s) and ask for them to pursue the request through the correct legal procedure. A copy of the determination letter was set out at a second appendix.

Councillor Williams highlighted the resident's concerns about having to pay Council tax and a fee to the current Management Company to cover the costs of maintaining the grassed area and repairing the roads and footpaths. In addition, the utility companies wouldn't provide broadband because the roads hadn't been adopted. He indicated that he had been in discussion with the Management Company about the adoption issue.

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 1.5 of the report, are undertaken.

(3) Councillor Williams be requested to consult with residents and to raise the request for the roads to be adopted with the freehold owners of the land asking that they follow the necessary legal procedure.

62. Petition - Residents Parking at Radford House, Brownhill Green Road

The Cabinet Member considered a report of the Deputy Chief Executive (Place) concerning a petition, bearing 11 signatures, which had been submitted by Councillor Williams, a Bablake Ward Councillor, who attended the meeting along with the petition organiser Craig Morgan and they spoke on behalf of the petitioners. The report had been requested by the petition organiser following the receipt of the determination letter. The petitioners were requesting a residents parking scheme on the road outside Radford House, Brownhill Green Road.

The report indicated that Radford House was a block of 12 flats located on Brownhill Green Road between Radford Road and Holloway Field. Brownhill Green Road was a long local distributor road running from Radford Road to Coundon Wedge Drive. The majority of the road was residential. Holloway Field was local residential road. A location plan was set out at an appendix to the report. The plan also showed the extent of the adopted highway. There were 17 garages owned by Whitefriars Housing located adjacent to Radford House. These garages were let separately from the flats.

The determination letter had advised that the Council was not able to propose a residents' parking scheme on the public highway for residents of Radford House as there were no large attractors nearby that would generate high levels of all-day

parking by non-residents. If additional parking was required, the petitioners would need to direct their request to Whitefriars Housing who owned the block of flats and the adjacent garages and land. A copy of the determination letter was set out at a second appendix.

Attention was drawn to a the recently advertised traffic regulation order for the installation of double yellow lines at the junctions of Brownhill Green Road with Holloway Field and with Brackenhurst Road. This was proposed in response to road safety concerns raised by residents regarding visibility issues at the Holloway Field junction due to cars being parked close to the junction. A 30-signature petition was received objecting to the proposals, advising of the limited parking in the area. The decision was made at the Cabinet Member for City Services meeting on 21st January 2019 not to continue with the double yellow line proposal until this petition requesting residents' parking had been considered.

Craig Morgan informed of the parking issues in the vicinity of Radford House and how residents parking would solve these problems. It was agreed that a meeting be set up to discuss the resident's concerns.

RESOLVED that:

(1) The concerns of the petitioners be noted.

(2) The actions confirmed by determination letter to the petition spokesperson, as detailed in paragraph 1.5 of the report, be endorsed.

(3) Arrangements be put in place for a site visit with officers, Councillor Williams, representatives from Whitefriars and local residents to look at solutions to address the parking concerns.

63. Petition - Request for Speed Limit Reduction Measures on Gretna Road

The Cabinet Member considered a report of the Deputy Chief Executive (Place) concerning a petition, bearing 31 e-signatures. The petition organiser was invited to the meeting but was unable to attend. Councillor Sawdon, a Wainbody Ward Councillor, spoke in support of the petitioners. The report had been requested by the petition organiser following the receipt of the determination letter. The petitioners were requesting speed limit reduction measures on Gretna Road.

The report indicated that Gretna Road was a long straight residential road. As it was a cul-de-sac, it wasn't a through route and a number of vehicles tended to park on the street. A location plan was set out at an appendix to the report.

The determination letter had advised of the importance of targeting road safety measures in the city, highlighting that Coventry was continuing to work towards becoming a safer speed city and ensuring that funding was utilised carefully. A review of Gretna Road showed no personal injury collisions had been recorded in the last three years.

As the petitioners had raised concerns about speeding, they were advised of the Community Speed Watch initiative and provided with the relevant contact details. This initiative was a speed monitoring and awareness scheme that was co-ordinated by the Police and run by a group of local volunteers who used speed detection devices to monitor traffic and identify speeding drivers on a specific road or small area. A copy of the determination letter was set out at a further appendix to the report.

Councillor Sawdon drew attention to the night time speeding traffic, requesting the installation of traffic calming measures to address the problem. It was agreed that the mobile Vehicle Activated Sign could be utilised at the location.

RESOLVED that:

(1) The petitioners concerns be noted.

(2) It be endorsed that the actions confirmed by the determination letter to the petition spokesperson, as detailed in paragraphs 1.5 and 1.6 of the report, are undertaken.

(3) Arrangements be put in place for the mobile Vehicle Activated Sign to be located in Gretna Road.

64. Petition - Request that the Council Thins the Trees on London Road between Tonbridge Road and Abbey Road

The Cabinet Member considered a report of the Deputy Chief Executive (Place) concerning a petition, bearing 12 signatures, which had been submitted by Councillor Bailey, a Cheylesmore Ward Councillor, who attended the meeting along with the petition organiser Raymond Barker and they spoke on behalf of the petitioners. The petitioners were requesting that the Council thinned the trees on London Road between Tonbridge Road and Abbey Road and undertook street cleansing at the location, particularly in the autumn.

The report indicated that the trees in question were street trees that stood in the footway outside 260 – 290 London Road. They were Lime species and lined the verges of London Road on both sides of the road, providing valuable amenity to those who lived in the area and to those who travelled along the London Road, entering or exiting the city.

The Cabinet Member was informed that the requested works would have no positive effect on the way in which these trees on this section London Road affected the local residents who lived nearby. If the trees were pruned the regrowth would be quick and the new leaves that regrow within one growing season, would be larger than normal, there-by making the problem worse. This would then lead to more requests for pruning or possibly removal.

The trees did overhang the boundary garden walls of these properties, but this was normal for most street trees present in the city and for many trees in private ownership that stood near to a boundary. There was no duty on any land/tree owner to prevent trees from encroaching. The only duty was to keep them in good health and condition.

The Cabinet Member was informed that if agreement was given to action the request, this would set a precedent that couldn't be sustained. Adverse pruning to keep all trees within the confines of the highway across the city would be very expensive and the City Council did not have resources available to do this. The trees were pruned annually to remove the trunk growth that appeared each spring and could encroach onto the footway and road. This work removed all the growth up to 6m high.

The report also referred to the request for street cleansing. Reference was made to the 2016 review that had led to a reduction in cleansing operations across the City including street sweeping, litter collection, litter bin emptying and weed control amongst other activities. This had arisen following the reduction in Government funding. The area of London Road was cleansed all year round on a weekly basis through manual and mechanical cleansing methods. During the autumn when the leaves were falling, there was a specific team who cleared the leaves from footpaths between October and early January. The frequency of this was dependent on the weather conditions and the rate in which the leaves were falling, but areas were inspected on a fortnightly basis.

Mr Barker detailed his concerns about the trees that were overhanging his garden, including the issue that the trees were still growing. He informed that a wall was cracking because of the tree roots. It was clarified that residents could trim back branches that were overhanging their land. Councillor Bailey highlighted the requirement to clean the roads and footpaths, indicating that there was no evidence to suggest they were cleaned on a weekly basis.

RESOLVED that:

(1) Having considered the content of the petition, the concerns of the petitioners be noted.

(2) The request for tree works to thin the trees be declined.

(3) It be noted that the requested works will have no positive effect on the way in which these trees, on this section of London Road affect the local residents who live nearby.

65. 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.

It was 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.

The Cabinet Member was informed that petition e160 relating to Traffic Calming Measures on Barker Butts Lane and Moseley Avenue was to be removed from the appendix since further investigations were still to be undertaken. In addition, petitions e107 and 81/17 concerning parking issues at Hollyfast Road, Westhill Road and Gaveston Road needed to be added to the list, the agreed actions being proposed new double yellow lines at the junctions of Hollyfast Road/ Westhill Road, Gaveston Road/ Woodclose Avenue and Gaveston Road/ Welgarth Avenue to be advertised as part of the next review of waiting restrictions. A determination letter was to be issued.

RESOLVED that:

(1) The actions being taken by officers as detailed in the appendix to the report, in response to the petitions received, be endorsed.

(2) Petition e160 concerning traffic calming measures on Barker Butts Lane and Moseley Avenue be removed from the list to allow for further investigation.

(3) Petitions e107 and 81/17 concerning parking issues at Hollyfast Road, Westhill Road and Gaveston Road be added to the list and a determination letter be issued.

66. Outstanding Issues

There were no outstanding issues for consideration.

67. Any other items of Public Business

There were no additional items of public business.

(Meeting closed at 3.45 pm)