

Coventry City Council
Minutes of the Meeting of Cabinet Member for City Services held at 2.30 pm on
Monday, 9 December 2024

Present:

Members: Councillor P Hetherton (Cabinet Member)
Councillor S Nazir (Deputy Cabinet Member)

Other Members: Councillor F Abbott (for Minute 35)
Councillor T Sawdon (Shadow Cabinet Member)

Employees (by Service):

City Services and Commercial C Archer, D Keaney, J Seddon, M O'Connell, A Walster,
C Knight

Law and Governance O Aremu, M Salmon, C Taylor, A West

Others in Attendance: Rhiannon Evans, Active Travel England
Phil Havenhand, Travel for West Midlands

Apologies: Councillor M Heaven (Shadow Cabinet Member)

Public Business

33. Declarations of Interests

There were no disclosable pecuniary interests.

34. Minutes

The minutes of the meeting held on 8th November 2024 were agreed and signed as a true record.

There were no matters arising.

35. Binley Cycleway - Section 7 (Clifford Bridge Road)

The Cabinet Member for City Services considered a report of the Director of City Services and Commercial, relating to the remaining section of the Binley Cycleway to be completed along Clifford Bridge Road, between its junction with B4027 Brinklow Road and its junction with Dorchester Way. The consideration of the report also included responding to two petitions, one relating to the proposed Cycleway and one relating to tree felling along the Clifford Bridge Road.

Binley Cycleway, including a section along Clifford Bridge Road, was identified as a strategic cycle route connecting Coventry City Centre with the University Hospital Coventry and Warwickshire (UHCW) via Binley Business Park within the West Midlands Local Walking and Cycling Infrastructure Plan (WM LCWIP).

Funding to construct the Cycleway was secured from the West Midlands Combined Authority (WMCA) and Active Travel England (ATE) from the Transforming Cities Fund, Active Travel Fund Tranche 2, Active Travel Fund 3 and Active Travel Fund 4.

Most of the Binley Cycleway had been completed, including the additional section, funded through Active Travel Fund 4, connecting Allard Way to the New Century Park residential estate. The remaining section to be completed was along Clifford Bridge Road, between its junction with B4027 Brinklow Road and its junction with Dorchester Way.

This remaining section had been subject to four specific rounds of consultation and engagement between 2021 and 2024. The final scheme design had been reviewed by Active Travel England (ATE) and Travel for West Midlands (TfWM).

Following the November 2023 Cabinet Member report, the engagement in January 2024, and advertisement of associated Notice of Proposals (NOP), Notices of Intent (NOI) and Tree Felling Notices (TFN), 178 representations were received across the Notices.

The scheme had generated a lot of public interest, which was why four rounds of engagement had been held whilst developing the proposals, and a wide range of views had been expressed. These included the identification of alternative routes that could be taken for the Cycleway, avoiding this section of Clifford Bridge Road, and comments on detailed aspects of the scheme design, such as the impact on car parking, access to driveways and side roads, pedestrian safety, vehicle speeds, access to the Hospital and the need to deliver high quality cycle routes to encourage cycling. Officers have ensured that the final scheme proposals responded to these key items whilst achieving the objective of delivering a high-quality cycle route, linking the Hospital area with Binley, which would complete the Binley Cycleway.

Once the Clifford Bridge Road (Section 7) was completed, the full Binley Cycleway, would provide a spine route from which further routes could link, with future route options including Hipswell Highway, a connection to Coombe Abbey Park, and a link through Binley to Willenhall and the cycleway along London Road, the first section of which was currently under construction. This section of cycleway was part of a wider network being developed that would link residential areas with key employment sites, education and healthcare facilities, and transport interchanges and would encourage more local journeys to be made by active and sustainable travel in line with adopted transport and climate change strategies.

Subject to approval, the intention would be to construct Section 7 during 2025.

The Cabinet Member also considered two petitions that had been submitted as follows:

Petition 32/23 and e44/23 – Clifford Bridge Road Cycle Lane Development

Petitions bearing 1510 signatures (paper petition 32/23, 1420 signatures, e-petition e44/23, 90 signatures). The petitions had been sponsored by Councillor F Abbott, a Wyken Ward Councillor, who attended the meeting for the consideration of this item along with the Petition Organiser.

e-petition e17/24-25 - Save the Trees on the Clifford Bridge Road

A petition bearing 4273 signatures. The petition had been sponsored by Councillor F Abbott, a Wyken Ward Councillor and Councillor J Blundell, a Wainbody Ward Councillor. Councillor Abbott attended the meeting along with the Petition Organiser and Councillor Sawdon attended the meeting to substitute for Councillor Blundell, who was unable to attend.

Councillor F Abbott, the Petition Sponsor, the Petition Organiser, and Councillor R Thay, spoke in support of the Clifford Bridge Road Cycle Lane Development petitions, highlighting their concerns, including the following:

- Comments made to the original designs were ignored.
- Engagement with Ward Councillors throughout the consultation period had been disappointing.
- Slowing traffic down on Clifford Bridge Road would increase emissions due to stationary traffic.
- Residents would be driving out of their driveways straight onto the road, which was dangerous. The space was not wide enough.
- Residents were not convinced safety concerns had been resolved.
- There were concerns around the junction and the safety of floating bus shelters for the visually impaired.
- Residents' concerns were around the width of the parking bays – currently parking bays were 3 metres wide; the recommendations were to reduce this to 2 metres wide.
- At the November 2023 meeting, the Cabinet Member approved the revised cycleway design on the provision that the safety issues raised by residents were addressed however, residents do not feel these have been actioned.
- The Cabinet Member report indicated that all reports had been issued however, residents had not received the new safety report, visual displays or disability reports.
- The Clifford Bridge Road cycleway was the missing section of the cycleway, and it felt like it had to be completed.

The Cabinet Member invited other members of the public to present their concerns, which included the following:

- Residents had been promised a segregated cycle lane however, only one small section from Tesco's to University Hospital Coventry and Warwickshire (UHCW) was segregated.
- Bromley Drive, Stoke Green – there were safety issues crossing the carriageway for all users.

- No safety improvements were being addressed on the Clifford Bridge Road.
- The projected number of daily users cycling from the City Centre to UHCW would likely be low.
- Residents were not reassured that safety issues had been addressed including reversing vehicles off driveways and crossing the cycle path.
- Speeds that cyclists could achieve of up to 20mph on the downhill gradient, high volumes of traffic and frequent queuing vehicles, had not been taken into account.
- On street parking bays restrict cycle width to a single lane.
- There was a danger to school children walking to and from Caludon Castle School.
- Clifford Bridge Road was not wide enough, and officers had imposed too many additional safety hazards.
- There was a fear that scrambler motorbikes, currently using the Clifford Bridge Road, would use the cycle path, creating a danger.

Officers responded to the comments made and advised the following:

- This was the third reiteration of the scheme and officers had listened to concerns raised, and in response, looked at the scheme with a more shared use path in order to maintain road width. When this was consulted on, residents raised a number of safety concerns and so did cyclists. Officers looked to maintain the width of the road with adequate visibility, and this was the current scheme.
- Officers had listened to residents' safety concerns and worked through the safety standards to address them.
- Safety was the top priority.
- The current scheme best met concerns and standards and had been subjected to Coventry City Council, West Midlands Travel and Active Travel England checks.
- Alternative routes had been thoroughly investigated.
- Residents who reversed onto the cycle path would not encounter a dissimilar situation to that on the Binley Road – not uncommon.
- One issue was cyclists using pavements which was a safety concern particularly on the downhill section.
- Locally and nationally, there was no evidence to suggest having driveway crossings where there were cycle lanes in place, had increased accidents.
- Warning signs could be erected to stop cyclists using the pavements.
- The Royal Society for the Prevention of Accidents (RoSPA) had been thoroughly involved in the Road Safety Audits. A forthcoming Stage 2 road safety audit could be shared with residents.
- Floating bus stops were common and had been implemented around Coundon and Binley cycleways. There would be a suitable bus stop platform for users to embark and disembark safely. There was no evidence of personal injury collisions around a Bus Stop Border in recent years.
- Parking spaces would be narrower to maintain the road width. These were in accordance with the design standard and there was a buffer of 500mm each side.
- Part of the road safety audits covered visibility reports which were all in accordance with safety design standards. The figures could be shared with residents.

- An Equality Impact Assessment Report (EIA) had been completed and could be shared with residents. The completed EIA was a live document which was being kept under review as the proposal for the delivery of the work progressed.
- Officers had met with individual residents regarding specific concerns and alterations had been made accordingly.

The Cabinet Member sought assurances from officers on the following matters:

- Officers had been contacted by residents requesting a site visit to discuss individual concerns and these had been undertaken.
- Officers had posted notices and had met with 13 residents at their request to look at localised matters. From these discussions, amendments had been made, sections of shared space adjusted and misunderstandings clarified.

Councillor T Sawdon, the Petition Sponsor (substitute for Councillor J Blundell), the Petition Organiser, and Councillor F Abbott, spoke in support of the Save the Trees on the Clifford Bridge Road petition, highlighting their concerns, including the following:

- Would the trees be removed if the cycleway was not proposed.
- How many trees were being removed, what species were they, how many were diseased and how many had Tree Preservation Orders (TPO's). Also, could the trees life expectancy be 500 years?
- Similar situations had been seen in both Sheffield and Plymouth Local Authorities who had both removed trees unnecessarily.
- Active Travel England promoted all forms of active travel, this included pedestrians, as well as cyclists and the removal of the trees was not the answer.
- Given the strength of feeling of the residents, it did not seem appropriate to proceed with the proposed scheme which had the support of a 4,000-signature petition. In addition, 920 residents had recently taken part in a tree hug.
- The cycleway could be built without the trees being removed.
- No trees had been removed as part of the London Road cycleway.
- An alternative route could be considered.

The Cabinet Member sought assurances from officers on the following matters:

- Council's lead Arboriculturist had assessed the trees which were to be removed for safety. Seven Ash trees were showing early signs of Ash die back. It would be 10-15 years before these trees were unsafe and needed to be replaced.
- The 26 trees would be replaced with 32 new trees, including 2 Birch trees, Maple trees, 6 Cherry trees, 3 Mountain Ash trees and 8 Ash trees. The Oak tree and a Thorn tree would be retained. Some of these replacement trees were native species and would be planted in a specific growing pit enabling quicker growth.

- The Sowe Valley was felt to be the best alternative route by residents to avoid tree loss however, trees would be required to be felled too on this alternative route. This route was also deemed to be unsafe due to its rural location and lack of lighting at night.
- The London Road had avoided tree loss by working with local Ward Councillors and the community and had achieved it through narrowing the road.
- Where the road had been narrowed to facilitate a cycle lane, officers had monitored the road before and after implementation and confirmed that speed had dropped.
- In respect of Stoke Green cycle path, where trees were identified, the City Council ensured they were looked after. Stoke Green needed to create space around the trees and the width of the road had to be reduced.
- The new trees would be planted in planting pits with support, which will enable them to grow quicker and more successfully.
- Officers were not aware of any trees with Tree Preservation Orders on them on the Clifford Bridge Road.
- Diseased trees were a safety hazard and dependent upon their location, some were left to decay naturally eg. in a woodland, but those posing a risk to public safety, would be felled e.g. on a pavement or highway.
- As trees became older, diseased or stressed, they were less efficient at removing carbon from the air.

The Cabinet Member invited members of the public to present their concerns, which included the following:

- There was nothing wrong with the trees and residents felt that they should not be felled.
- The signs of stress the trees were showing, were due to protection of residents, pedestrians and road users.

The Head of Legal and Procurement Services clarified speaking times for members of the public and also the need to consider the Council's duty to maintain the safe passage and the re-passing on roads and highways for the benefit of all residents. He further clarified the process for Traffic Regulation Orders and the specific rules regulating them.

RESOLVED that the Cabinet Member for City Services:

- 1) Notes progress in response to the recommendations made within the 15 November 2023 Binley Cycleway – Section 7 (Clifford Bridge Road) report.**
- 2) Considered the responses, representations and objections to the Tree Felling Notices, Notice of Proposal and Notices of Intent.**
- 3) Considered the petitioners concerns relating to the proposed cycleway and tree felling.**
- 4) Approves the construction of Section 7 – Clifford Bridge Road Cycleway.**

36. **Petition 33/23 - Stoney Stanton Road - Residents Parking Area**

The Cabinet Member for City Services considered a report of the Director of City Services and Commercial, which responded to a petition requesting a residents parking area on part of the Stoney Stanton Road.

A petition with 11 signatures had been received requesting a residents' parking scheme outside 673 to 693 Stoney Stanton Road. A second related petition with 114 signatures had also been received requesting the extension of the adjacent Zone EW1 residents' parking scheme on Bryn Road and Crabmill Lane to include Silverton Road. A previous parking survey showed that Silverton Road met the parking availability criteria (less than 40% of spaces available during the weekday daytime) for a residents' parking scheme. Therefore, the request met all three criteria required for a residents' parking scheme to be considered, as set out in the Council's Residents' Parking Policy.

On receipt of the Determination Letters, the Petition Organisers advised they wanted the issue to be considered at a Cabinet Member for City Services meeting.

The cost of introducing residents' parking schemes was funded from the Highways Maintenance and Investment Capital Programme budget through the Local Transport Plan.

Councillor S Nazir and the Petition Organiser spoke in support of the petition, highlighting their concerns, including the following:

- There was no parking for residents on Stoney Stanton Road and Silverton Road due to businesses parking their cars on the roadside.
- Residents were incurring parking tickets.
- Industrial waste bins meant accessibility to and along the pavements was poor.
- A degree of flexibility was required to allow businesses to park on Stoney Stanton Road during the day and residents to park in the evenings.

Officers responded, advising of the need to be mindful of the potential impact on businesses and that residents of Stoney Stanton Road could park in Crabmill Lane and Silverton Road, if space was available.

RESOLVED that the Cabinet Member for City Services:

- 1) **Considered the petitions summarised above.**
- 2) **Approves the advertising of Traffic Regulation Orders as part of the next review of waiting restrictions to:**
 - **Extend the Zone EW1 residents' parking scheme to include Silverton Road.**
 - **Make 673 – 693 Stoney Stanton Road eligible to apply for parking permits for Zone EW1.**
 - **Amend the waiting restriction outside 673 – 693 Stoney Stanton Road to make it shared-use (Limited Waiting Mon-Fri, 8am-6pm, 1 hour, no return within 2 hours / Permit Holders EW1 Only Mon-Fri, 8am-6pm).**

37. **Petitions Determined by Letter and Petitions Deferred Pending Further Investigations**

The Cabinet Member for City Services considered a report of the Director of City Services in respect of petitions received relating to the portfolio of the Cabinet Member.

In June 2015, amendments to the Petitions Scheme, which forms part of the Constitution, were approved in order to provide flexibility and streamline current practice. This change had reduced costs and bureaucracy and improved the service to the public.

These amendments allow 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 are deferred pending further investigations, be reported to subsequent meetings of the Cabinet Member for Public Services (now amended to Cabinet Member for City Services), where appropriate, for monitoring and transparency purposes.

Appendix A to the report set out petitions received and how officers proposed 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.

38. **Outstanding Issues**

There were no outstanding issues.

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

There were no other items of public business.

(Meeting closed at 5.50 pm)