CAMBRIDGE CITY JOINT AREA COMMITTEE (CJAC): MINUTES

Date: Tuesday 24th October 2017

Time: 4.30pm – 5.30pm

Place: Kreis Viersen Room, Shire Hall, Cambridge

Present: County Councillors Adey, Jones (Vice-Chairwoman), Manning, Meschini, A Taylor and Whitehead (substituting for Cllr Kavanagh)
City Councillors Baigent, Bird, Blencowe (Chairman), Robertson and Tunnacliffe.

Apologies: County Councillor Kavanagh

Also in attendance County Councillor Harrison

8. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest under the Code of Conduct. The Chairman advised that the Monitoring Officers of the County Council and the City Council had each issued a dispensation, for item 5 (Parking Charges), from the provisions of the Members' Code of Conduct in respect of the debate relating to this matter.

9. MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD 13th JUNE 2017

The minutes of the meeting held on 13th June 2017 were approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

10. PETITIONS

None.

11. PARKING CHARGES

The Committee received a report seeking its views on proposals to change permit fees for residents' parking and on-street and off-street parking charges. The Committee was advised of two errors in the report, for which officers apologised.

- West and East Coleridge had been transposed in report paragraph 1.6; the four schemes going for consultation in October were Accordia, Newnham, Staffordshire and West Coleridge, and the three being developed for consultation probably in early 2018 were Elizabeth, Victoria and East Coleridge
- line 6 of the table at Schedule 1, in Appendix 2, had been omitted; a corrected Schedule 1 is attached to these minutes as Appendix 1.

By way of update, members were advised that, following additional forecasting and the filling of some vacant posts, the deficit of £13k in permit costs and revenue, set out in report paragraph 2.2, was now £21k.

Speaking as local member for Market division, Councillor Nichola Harrison expressed great concern at the proposed rise of 88% in the charge for visitors' parking permits, a rate of increase far above the rate of inflation since the last permit

price review. She said that this greater cost would bear heavily on older residents, many of whom needed to make or receive visits by car to and from friends and family. If for example a friend took somebody to a medical appointment, it was normal social behaviour to stop afterwards for a cup of tea at their home. The cost of permits had in the past been based on administration and enforcement costs, not on bus fares, so this price rise represented a change in policy; it was of course desirable to encourage the use of alternatives to the car, but this price rise would hurt some of the most vulnerable city residents. It was not logical to use parking charges as a means of tackling the problems of congestion.

Commenting on the proposed parking charges, members

- pointed out that those receiving medium/long-term care could obtain a free medical permit for visits by carers

- noted that the £5 administration fee would be applied to temporary hire car and tradespeople permits, not to the main residents' permit

- reported that a number of residents had mentioned that on-street parking charges had changed to cover seven days a week, while non-residents could park free of charge in residents' parking zones outside the hours when restrictions applied

- suggested that residents should be asked if they were happy for the zone restrictions to apply for more days a week. Officers advised that the hours of operation for a particular scheme could be changed on the basis that this was at the local Councillor's request and had the backing of residents

- expressed support for the proposed increases in permit prices, pointing out that the cost of visitors' permits had remained the same for many years

- commented that the timing of so unexpectedly large an increase in visitors' permit costs was unfortunate, coinciding as it did with proposals for several new residents' parking schemes, and that it made little sense to link the charge to the price of park and ride tickets, because many of the roads in question were not served by park and ride buses

- observed that increasing the price of permits was one way of encouraging people not to use their car; research had shown 30% of traffic in cities was made up of drivers looking for parking spaces, and sending out the message that there was no free parking in Cambridge would make a considerable contribution to reducing levels of congestion and air pollution

- suggested that the profile of those using visitors' permits should be examined more closely, whether they were for example older and more vulnerable people, or visitors from outside Cambridge; there was a risk that the increase would penalise a group of people who were less able to afford it

- pointed out that those visiting elderly friends and relatives were not travelling at peak times; others observed that some roads, such as Mill Road and the railway station area, were almost always congested

- pointed out that the proposed 88% increase was on quite a modest sum, and that the most disadvantaged in the city were probably unable to afford to run a car, so the increase would not necessarily affect the poorest residents. The cost of a tradespeople permit was minor compared with the cost of having work done

- enquired about the level of abuse of visitors' permits, and the costs of enforcement. Members were however advised that increasing enforcement would not necessarily increase income; the costs of enforcement were part of the cost of running the scheme.

Closing the discussion, the Chairman said that the Committee had raised a number of points for consideration by the parent committees.

It was resolved to consider and comment on the proposals for changes to

a) Residents' and Visitor Parking Permit Charges
b) On-Street Parking Charges
c) Off-Street Parking Charges

12. TRAFFIC REGULATION ORDER OBJECTIONS ASSOCIATED WITH TWO-WAY CYCLING IN ONE-WAY STREETS

The Committee received a report inviting it to determine objections to two-way cycling on various specific restricted streets within Cambridge, following on from discussion at the Committee's meeting on 24th January 2017. Members noted that two-way cycling in Brookside was no longer being recommended, and that the majority of the objections received had concerned streets in the Newtown area, of which the majority had concerned Brookside.

Martin Lucas-Smith of the Cambridge Cycling Campaign addressed the Committee, welcoming the proposals for two-way cycling, saying they would decriminalise those already cycling to their own doors against the flow of traffic. In roads with two-way cycling, there had been no significant change in collision statistics over a ten-year period. Mr Lucas-Smith urged that two-way cycling be permitted in Brookside too. Collision data there had shown only two collisions in the last ten years, neither of which had involved contraflow cycling. The Newtown Residents' Association had said three years ago that they wanted to develop a wider traffic reduction scheme, but no scheme had yet emerged. Problems caused by the dropping and collecting of schoolchildren in Brookside should be tackled by challenging the parents' behaviour, rather than refusing to allow contraflow cycling.

Discussing the objections, members

- pointed out that St Eligius Street was nearby and parallel to Brookside and was one-way in the opposite direction, so cyclists could travel down St Eligius Street as an alternative to cycling against the flow in Brookside

- given that people were already cycling against the direction of traffic in the streets under consideration, drew attention to the importance of making it clear to drivers that cyclists would be coming the opposite way; the signing installed as a result of these proposals would ensure this

- drew attention to the importance of near misses as an influence on people's views about the safety of contraflow cycling. There were methods available of measuring near misses, and it would be useful to have such evidence available for the next discussion of two-way cycling in one way streets.

It was resolved unanimously to

a) Implement works in order to allow two-way cycling on the streets listed below, as advertised.

1) Guest Road
2) Collier Road
3) Emery Street/Road
4) Perowne Street
5) Sedgwick Street
6) Catharine Street
7) Thoday Street
8) Ross Street (from St Philip's Road to Mill Road)
9) Hemingford Road
10) Argyle Street
11) Coronation Street (west of junction with Panton Street)
12) Norwich Street
13) Union Road
14) New Square

b) Agree not to progress any changes to Brookside

c) Inform the objectors accordingly.

13. CAMBRIDGE CITY LOCAL HIGHWAY IMPROVEMENT MEMBER PANEL MEMBERSHIP

The Committee received a report asking it to agree membership of the Local Highway Improvement (LHI) Member Assessment Panel for the 2018/19 programme of improvements. Members noted that the panel would meet in late January / early February 2018 to prioritise applications for LHI funding in 2018/19.

It was resolved to

a) agree that the Cambridge City Local Highways Improvement Member Panel consist of three City Councillors and three County Councillors

b) appoint County Councillors Jones, Kavanagh and A Taylor, and City Councillors Baigent, Blencowe and Tunnacliffe as members of the panel.,

c) agree that a member of the panel who was unable to attend a panel meeting be authorised to nominate another member of the same Council to attend as a substitute or alternate.

Chairman