

Wiltshire Council

Full Council

18 May 2021

Item 13 – Urgent Executive Decisions

From Andrew Nicolson

To the relevant Cabinet member

Question (P21-17)

On Item 13, some 25 urgent decision were taken in the last year. Only one of them at the most, "[Approval for creating safe spaces for waiting, walking and cycling](#)" seems to be directly related to the climate emergency or the Council's agreed intention to make Wiltshire Carbon neutral by 2030. Is there nothing urgent to be done, or no sense of urgency?

Response

Six-monthly reports are provided to Cabinet and Council which set out our progress in tackling the climate emergency. In the past year, two reports have been provided, in [July 2020](#) and [February 2021](#). The next progress report is due in July 2021.

Where the 'urgency' of decisions is mentioned in this report, this refers to the legal definition of urgency under the Executive Arrangements 2012 which is defined as a Cabinet decision which must be made without the clear 5 working days notice, as is usually required. The council aims to deliver a number of areas of work as a priority, however this is different from the technical definition of urgent decisions in this case.

Question (P21-18)

The decision to abruptly remove cycle lanes in Salisbury and Chippenham is not on the list. Yet it involved the removal of an amenity. What was the hurry, when both the removed cycle lanes have been in the Council's LTP Cycling Strategy since 2012?

Response

In May 2020 Central Government published statutory guidance on how the Government expected local authorities to make significant changes to their road layouts to give more space to cyclists and pedestrians, and stated that measures should be taken as swiftly as possible, and in any event within weeks. In response the Council introduced five 'pop up' cycle schemes across the County. The basis of the routes chosen being to offer an alternative to using public transport.

In November 2020 the Council undertook a Consultation exercise on the installed 'pop up' schemes. Public feedback indicated that the measures introduced on Bristol Road Chippenham and Brown Street / Exeter Street Salisbury were not supported and the decision was made to remove them. The other supported 'pop up' schemes are in the process of being converted to permanent facilities.

The routes in Chippenham and Salisbury were not included in the Cycling Strategy 2012.

As set out the 'pop up' measures did not prove popular. It is not considered they were removed in a hurry, having been in place for approximately 6 months.

The routes could be subject to revised measures to improve cycling facilities if supported and brought into the upcoming Local Cycling Walking Infrastructure Plans (LCWIP) being developed by the Council.