

Item Called-in following an Individual Executive Member Decision: Active Travel Experimental Road Closures and Prohibition of Motor Vehicles on Lawrences Lane Thatcham, Station Road Newbury and Deadmans Lane Theale Consultation

Committee considering report:	Scrutiny Commission
Date of Committee:	20 June 2023
Portfolio Member:	Councillor Denise Gaines
Report Author:	Gordon Oliver
Forward Plan Ref:	ID4317

1 Purpose of the Report

- 1.1 This report presents the call-in request submitted on 21 March 2023 for the Scrutiny Commission to review the Individual Executive Member Decision (ID4317) of 16 March 2023 concerning Active Travel Experimental Road Closures and Prohibition of Motor Vehicles on Lawrences Lane Thatcham, Station Road Newbury and Deadmans Lane Theale Consultation.
- 1.2 The call-in has been submitted in accordance with Parts 5 and 6.9 of the Council's Constitution.

2 Recommendation

- 2.1 In accordance with the call-in request dated 21 March 2023, it is recommended that Members of the Scrutiny Commission review the Individual Executive Member Decision (ID4317) of 16 March 2023 concerning Active Travel Experimental Road Closures and Prohibition of Motor Vehicles on Lawrences Lane Thatcham, Station Road Newbury and Deadmans Lane Theale Consultation.
- 2.2 Having reviewed the Individual Executive Member decision, the Scrutiny Commission should either:
 - (a) Confirm the Individual Executive Member's decision; or

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- (b) Propose amendments and refer the matter back to Executive for further consideration

3 Supporting Information

Executive Decision

3.2 The Active Travel Experimental Road Closures and Prohibition of Motor Vehicles Consultation report was presented for consideration as an Individual Executive Member Decision by the Executive Portfolio Holder for Planning, Transport and Countryside on 16 March 2023. The report recommended that:

- (a) the proposed prohibition of motor vehicles orders on Lawrences Lane Thatcham and Deadmans Lane Theale are not introduced as advertised in the experimental Order and the Experimental Order is formally rescinded and that the supporters and objectors are informed accordingly;
- (b) the proposed prohibition of motor vehicles order on Station Road Newbury is introduced as advertised and that the objectors are informed accordingly

3.3 The Executive Portfolio Holder for Planning, Transport and Countryside resolved that:

- (a) The proposed prohibition of motor vehicles order on Station Road in Newbury is introduced as advertised and that the objectors are informed accordingly.
- (b) The proposed prohibition of motor vehicles order on Deadmans Lane in Theale is not introduced as advertised and that the supporters and objectors are informed accordingly.
- (c) The decision as to the introduction of the proposed prohibition of motor vehicles order on Lawrences Lane in Thatcham is deferred so that officers can undertake further work to investigate ways in which the restriction could be implemented and enforced such that it safely meets the needs of both local residents and vulnerable road users. Respondents to the consultation to be updated accordingly.

Call-in of the Decision

3.4 In accordance with the Council's Constitution six Elected Members (Councillors Lee Dillon, Jeff Brooks, Adrian Abbs, Alan Macro, Erik Pattenden and Tony Vickers) called in the Individual Executive Member's Decision (ID4317). The basis for the call-in is that Members wish to be sure that, in relation to Deadmans Lane, Theale, the following have been taken into consideration:

- (1) The lane is extremely narrow, particularly its northern stretch. It is difficult for vehicles to pass pedestrians and almost impossible to pass prams, pushchairs, etc.
- (2) It is almost impossible for vans or minibuses to pass pedestrians, particularly in its northern stretch.
- (3) There is a blind double bend about half way along.

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- (4) There are no formal passing places and no passing places at all along the 200m long northern stretch between Englefield Road and the double bend
- (5) If two vehicles meet in the northern stretch then either one has to reverse up to 200m and out into Englefield Road, which is dangerous, or one has to reverse up to 200m along the narrow lane and round the blind double bend, which is also dangerous.
- (6) The section of lane proposed for closure does not serve any homes or businesses, just Theale Green School's rear car park and playing fields.
- (7) Theale Green students cross over the lane to and from the school's bus park.
- (8) Many Theale Green students walk along the lane to and from Englefield Road.
- (9) The lane is much used by walkers and, to a lesser extent, by cyclists. It is occasionally used by horse riders, too.
- (10) Residents from the care home in The Green are often walked along the lane by their carers'. The residents have learning disabilities and are physically disabled. They have to be physically supported by their carers'. This causes difficulty when encountering motor vehicles.
- (11) Very few motor vehicles use the lane, but when they do it causes difficulties for other users.
- (12) If physical barriers are required, then the southern one would presumably be sited just to the north of the school's car park entrance. This is only 63m from the Spring Gardens junction, which could act as a turning point. Any physical barrier and accompanying signage would be visible from this junction. Presumably there would also be "no through road" signs at this junction. If a vehicle entering from the southern end ignores the signs, then the 63m reversal to Spring Gardens would be much safer than the 200m reversal they might have to do if the lane is not closed.

3.5 The Members of the Council who submitted the call-in request proposed that the following alternative course of action should be followed:

- (1) The lane be closed to motor traffic, except that requiring access to Theale Green School playing fields or to maintain the lane, between its junction with Englefield Road and the entrance to the Theale Green School car park.
- (2) If necessary, physical barriers be erected at its junction with Englefield Road and immediately to the north of the entrance to the Theale Green School car park.
- (3) Prominent and clear signage warning of the closure be erected at its junction with Englefield Road and immediately to the north of the entrance to the Theale Green School car park.
- (4) "No through road" signs be erected at its junctions with Spring Gardens and with Church Street. Spring Gardens is a cul-de-sac.

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3.6 The call-in request confirmed that the decision is not considered to be contrary to the policy framework, neither is it considered to be contrary to or not wholly in accordance with the budget.

Role of the Scrutiny Commission

3.7 The role of the Scrutiny Commission is to review the Individual Executive Member’s Decision.

3.8 The Commission will produce a report with its findings to the next meeting of the Executive (i.e. the meeting following the call-in request) unless there are exceptional circumstances why this cannot be achieved. In these circumstances the Chairman of the Commission and the Leader of the Council will agree a revised timetable.

3.9 The report will either confirm the original decision or propose amendments to it in any way it thinks fit and shall give reasons for its final decision. If the Commission upholds the Executive decision, that decision shall take immediate effect.

3.10 It should be noted that any matter which has been the subject of a call-in request may not be the subject of a further call-in request

4 Appendices

Appendix A – Active Travel Experimental Road Closures and Prohibition of Motor Vehicles on Lawrences Lane Thatcham, Station Road Newbury and Deadmans Lane Theale Consultation Report (Individual Executive Member Decisions, 16 March 2023)

Background Papers:

[Printed decision for Individual Executive Decisions, 16 March 2023](#)

Subject to Call-In:

Yes: No:

- The item is due to be referred to Council for final approval
- Delays in implementation could have serious financial implications for the Council
- Delays in implementation could compromise the Council’s position
- Considered or reviewed by the Scrutiny Commission or associated Task Groups within preceding six months
- Item is Urgent Key Decision
- Report is to note only

Wards affected: Theale

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Appendix A: Individual Executive Member Decision Report