

Title of Requisition:

Pedestrianisation of Newbury Town Centre: Transparency and timely decision-making

This Council notes that:

1. A report concerning the impact of the pedestrianisation trial within Newbury Town Centre has entered the public domain, giving rise to significant public interest and concern.
2. The report has not yet been formally published or clearly addressed by the Council, leading to uncertainty among residents and, in particular, local businesses.
3. Ongoing uncertainty regarding access, traffic arrangements, and town centre configuration risks adversely affecting business confidence, investment decisions, and footfall.
4. A clear and transparent decision-making process is essential to maintaining public trust in the Council, and supporting the local economy.

This Council believes that:

1. Transparency, wherever lawful and practicable, is fundamental to good governance.
2. Avoidable delay and uncertainty can themselves have negative economic consequences for town centres.
3. It is in the best interests of residents and businesses that the Council provides clarity on both the substance of the report and the timetable for decision-making.

This Council resolves to:

1. Call on the Executive to publish the report relating to pedestrianisation proposals, together with any supporting information, as soon as practicable, subject to any necessary legal, commercial, or confidentiality considerations.
2. Request that the Executive provide a formal public statement setting out:
 - the status of the report;
 - the scope of any proposals under consideration; and
 - the anticipated process for decision-making.
3. Request that the Executive bring forward, where practicable, a clear and accelerated timetable for consideration of pedestrianisation proposals, and that this timetable be communicated publicly.
4. Request that the Executive ensures appropriate engagement with affected local businesses and other stakeholders as part of the decision-making process, with particular regard to economic impacts.

5. Affirm that any future decision should be taken following proper consideration of economic, accessibility, and environmental factors, in accordance with the Council's policy framework.