

Executive Board – 19 March 2007

Recommendations from Area Committees

Central, South and West Area Committee - Tuesday 13 February 2007

143. OPEN SESSION

Councillor Oscar Van Nooijen, in his capacity as a governor of Cherwell School, referred to a letter that the Chair of Governors had written to the Chief Executive concerning the repair of the Thames towpath.

Councillor Jean Fooks, Portfolioholder for Cleaner City, reported that the County Council had written offering to make £400,000 available for work to repair the towpath subject to the City Council making £100,000 available.

Councillor Susanna Pressel suggested that regular inspections should have been carried out and those lengths of the towpath that were in a poor condition should have been fenced off. She said that she felt that repairs should be carried out by the summer.

Councillor Sushila Dhall referred to the facts that repair of the towpath was a joint City/County responsibility and that the towpath between Port Meadow and Binsey was a public right of way. She said that she believed that repairs should have been carried out earlier and asked about the Environment Agency's responsibility.

Councillor Bob Price suggested that there should be some form of concordat between the City and County Councils, the Environment Agency and riparian owners concerning the repair of the towpath. He also referred to discussion at the recent Council meeting regarding the Capital Programme and said that a decision as to how additional funds might be made available for work to repair the towpath could be taken as part of the Capital Programme rationalisation exercise.

A member of the public referred to the poor condition of the towpath in the vicinity of Abbey Road. Councillor Pressel suggested that responsibility for repairing this section needed to be clarified.

County Councillor Deborah Glass-Woodin said that there was a need to ensure that funding was available to enable repairs to be carried out in the long-term.

Mr J. Power referred to the fact that the Environment Agency had done work to repair the towpath in the vicinity of the allotments in Botley Road.

Ms W. Skinner-Smith referred to the condition of the towpath in the vicinity of Abbey Road/Port Meadow area.

Councillor Pressel suggested that the Executive Board should ensure that the Council undertook its responsibility for repairing the towpath. Councillor Paul Austin Sargent agreed.

Resolved:-

- (1) to ask the Executive Board :-
 - (a) to arrange for a survey of the state of riverbanks in the city to be carried out;
 - (b) to agree that, following the completion of the survey, a report be prepared and submitted setting out appropriate repair work needed;
 - (c) to consider how funding can be made available to allow the work identified to be carried out;
 - (d) to agree that the City Council should act as lead body in carrying out repair work;
 - (e) to consider creating a concordat of all interested parties to ensure the long-term repair of riverbanks;

Comments from Councillor Fooks (Portfolio Holder)

A survey has been carried out and funding identified. A group including ward councillors will be set up to discuss with city and county officers what repair work should be done with the available funds. Longer term maintenance will be discussed once responsibilities are clear.