

This report is public	
Community Event Parking in Banbury and Bicester	
Committee	Executive
Date of Committee	16 June 2026
Portfolio Holder presenting the report	Portfolio Holder for Property & Assets, Councillor Pattenden
Date Portfolio Holder agreed report	1 June 2026
Report of	Assistant Director Property, Mona Walsh

Purpose of report

To seek Executive approval to delegate authority to the Assistant Director of Property, in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Property and Assets, to approve the temporary closure or operational use of Council parking spaces or car park areas in Banbury and Bicester for civic, commemorative and community events.

The proposal relates to the temporary use of parking areas to facilitate the operation of events and does not constitute the provision of free parking for event attendees.

Recommendations

The Executive resolves:

- 1.1 To delegate authority to the Assistant Director of Property, in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Property and Assets, to approve the temporary closure or operational use of District Council parking spaces or car park areas in Banbury and Bicester for civic, commemorative and community events where there is a **demonstrable public benefit**.
- 1.2 To confirm that commercial or profit-generating events will continue to be subject to the appropriate fees and charges in accordance with the Council's adopted schedule of fees and charges.

2. Executive Summary

- 2.1 This report seeks approval to delegate authority to the Assistant Director of Property, in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Property and Assets, to approve the temporary closure or operational use of District Council parking spaces or car park areas for civic, commemorative and community events in Banbury and Bicester.
- 2.2 Historically, requests of this nature have been supported where there is clear public benefit, including events such as Armed Forces Day and Christmas Light Switch On

events. At present, each request requires separate Executive approval where parking income is foregone. This proposal establishes a proportionate governance framework that enables timely decision making while retaining appropriate Member oversight.

- 2.3 The proposal relates to the temporary use of parking areas to facilitate events taking place and does not provide free parking for attendees. Where approved, specific parking spaces or operational areas may be temporarily closed to allow event infrastructure, public gathering space, ceremonial activity or event management arrangements to be safely accommodated.
- 2.4 Organisers of established and new civic, commemorative and community events need to satisfy Council requirements i.e. to provide appropriate public liability insurance (minimum £10 million indemnity) and comply with the Council's public protection requirements.. (See 4. Details). For smaller events, organisers and charities are less likely to satisfy these requirements.

Implications & Impact Assessments

Implications	Commentary
Finance	<p>This will be carried out within agreed budgets.</p> <p>Rachel Ainsworth, Finance Business Partner, 13 May 2026</p>
Legal	<p>On the basis of the information set out at paragraph 3.3 of this report, this is a non-key decision to be made by the Executive.</p> <p>As clarified at paragraph 2.3 of the report, a decision to delegate authority not to charge for use of parking places within the Council's car parks is not itself a disposal. The decision will however set the framework within which terms may be agreed for short-term leases of the parking places to be made between the Council and the town councils [and others], which are disposals of an interest in land. The Council has the power to let the parking places on a free from charge basis, where there is a legitimate purpose for doing so, such as the civil and community events referenced in this report.</p> <p>Adrian Thompson, Principal Solicitor – Property , 13 May 2026</p>
Risk Management	<p>The principal risk is that, without a clear and consistent approach, the Council could be seen as applying support for community events unevenly, which may undermine confidence and partnership working locally. This will be mitigated through transparent eligibility criteria, proportionate decision records under the agreed delegation, and assurance that organisers meet required safety and insurance standards before any suspension is applied. This and any further arising risks will be managed through the service operational risk and escalated to the Corporate Risk Register as and when deemed necessary.</p>

				Celia Prado-Teeling, Performance & Insight Team Leader, 13 May 2026
Impact Assessments	Positive	Neutral	Negative	Commentary
Equality Impact	x			<p>There are no impact to Equality, Diversity and Inclusion as a direct consequence of this report.</p> <p>Celia Prado-Teeling, Performance & Insight Team Leader, 13 May 2026</p>
A Are there any aspects of the proposed decision, including how it is delivered or accessed, that could impact on inequality?		x		<p>The report formalises existing arrangements for the temporary operational use or closure of limited parking areas to facilitate civic, commemorative and community events. Event arrangements will continue to be managed through established Council processes, including consideration of accessibility, pedestrian movement, disabled parking provision and reasonable adjustments where required.</p> <p>The proposal supports inclusive participation in community events and does not restrict access to Council services or facilities for people with protected characteristics.</p>
B Will the proposed decision has an impact upon the lives of people with protected characteristics, including employees and service users?		x		<p>The proposal supports the delivery of inclusive community events and formalises existing operational arrangements for the temporary use or closure of parking areas where required to facilitate such events. Event organisers and the Council will continue to consider accessibility requirements, disabled access, pedestrian safety and reasonable adjustments through established event planning and Safety Advisory Group processes.</p> <p>No direct adverse impact on employees or service users with protected characteristics has been identified.</p>
Climate & Environmental Impact		x		<p>The report formalises existing arrangements for the temporary operational use or closure of limited parking areas to facilitate civic, commemorative and community events. These events are generally short in duration and limited in scale.</p> <p>In some cases, community events may have positive indirect impacts through increased town centre footfall, promotion of local activity and encouragement of pedestrian movement within town centres. Environmental considerations, including traffic management and public safety arrangements, will continue to be considered through the established event planning and Safety Advisory Group processes</p>

ICT & Digital Impact				N/A
Data Impact				N/A
Procurement & subsidy				N/A
Council Priorities	Economic Prosperity. These Events promote and bring people into the respective Town Centres creating potential income for the Council's car parks and visitors will also in all likelihood go onto use shopping, leisure, food and drink outlets within the Town Centres.			
Human Resources	N/A			
Property	This report has been written by the Assistant Director Property and therefore no further comments are needed. Mona Walsh, Assistant Director Property 27 May 2026			
Consultation & Engagement	N/A			

Supporting Information

3. Background

- 3.1 Cherwell District Council has historically supported a small number of established civic, commemorative and community events organised by Banbury and Bicester Town Councils through the temporary closure or operational use of specific Council-operated parking spaces or car park areas.
- 3.2 These events are primarily military or civic in nature and align with the Council's commitments under the Armed Forces Covenant, together with longstanding town centre events such as the Banbury Christmas Light Switch On. In the case of the Christmas event, activities are programmed alongside the Banbury BID Winter Market, which is subject to the appropriate event charging structure, and contribute positively to town centre vitality and footfall.
- 3.3 The car park areas utilised for these events are limited in scale and duration, and the associated income foregone has historically been modest relative to overall parking income.
- 3.4 Examples of such events include Armed Forces Day, Battle of Britain commemorations, Remembrance Parades, Civic Services and Christmas Light Switch On events in Banbury and Bicester. This list is illustrative and not exhaustive.
- 3.5 To date, some community events, including Pride-related events, have not required the closure of parking spaces or car park areas. However, should future operational requirements arise, the Council would seek to support such events in accordance with the principles set out within this report.

4. Details

- 4.1 For each approved event, a formal event agreement will be put in place setting out the agreed terms of use. Event organisers are required to provide appropriate public liability insurance (minimum £10 million indemnity) and comply with the Council's public protection requirements.
- 4.2 Organisers must also submit a Safety Advisory Group (SAG) Event Notification Form and supporting documentation, including an Event Plan, site plan, risk assessment, emergency plan, details of responsible committee members and any required road closure orders. Events will only proceed once all necessary documentation and statutory requirements are satisfied.

5. Alternative Options and Reasons for Rejection

- 5.1 The following alternative options have been considered:

Option 1: Require full payment of parking charges for all events

This option was considered but rejected. Military and civic commemorative events are held in recognition of public service and align with the Council's commitments under the Armed Forces Covenant. Requiring payment in these circumstances would be inconsistent with established practice and could undermine the Council's visible support for such events.

In the case of town centre civic and community events, the temporary closure of limited parking areas is typically operational in nature and required to facilitate the safe delivery of the event itself. These arrangements support wider town centre vitality, footfall and community engagement.

Option 2: Continue to require separate Executive approval for each event

This option was also rejected as it results in unnecessary administrative delay and repeated reporting for a small number of established, recurring events. Delegated authority provides a proportionate governance approach while retaining appropriate Member oversight.

6 Conclusion and Reasons for Recommendations

- 6.1 The proposed delegation formalises the Council's longstanding approach to supporting established civic, commemorative and community events through the temporary operational use or closure of limited parking areas where required to facilitate event delivery. The proposal does not provide free parking for attendees but enables appropriate operational flexibility to support events which provide clear community and town centre benefit.
- 6.2 Granting delegated authority to the Assistant Director of Property, in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Property and Assets, provides a proportionate governance framework. It removes the need for repeated Executive reports for recurring events while maintaining appropriate Member oversight and ensuring that commercial events remain subject to the Council's adopted fees and charges.

Decision Information

Key Decision	No
Subject to Call in	Yes
If not, why not subject to call in	N/A
Ward(s) Affected	Banbury Cross and Neithrop Bicester East

Document Information

Appendices	
Appendix 1	None
Background Papers	None
Reference Papers	None
Report Author	Mona Walsh, Assistant Director of Property
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Executive Director Approval (unless Executive Director or Statutory Officer report)	Executive Director for Place and Regeneration 4 June 2026