

NEIGHBOURHOOD SERVICES SCRUTINY FORUM AGENDA



Friday 21st April 2006

at 1.00 pm

in Committee Room B

PLEASE NOTE CHANGE OF TIME

MEMBERS: NEIGHBOURHOOD SERVICES SCRUTINY FORUM:

Cambridge, Cook, Cranney, Fenwick, Flintoff, Hall, Lauderdale, J Marshall, Richardson, Rogan and Tumilty

Resident Representatives:

Allan Lloyd, Linda Shields and Steve Gibbon

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

2. TO RECEIVE ANY DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST BY MEMBERS

3. MINUTES

3.1 To confirm the minutes of the meeting held on 24th March 2006 (*to follow*)

4. RESPONSES FROM THE COUNCIL, THE EXECUTIVE OR COMMITTEES OF THE COUNCIL TO FINAL REPORTS OF THIS FORUM

4.1 Response from the Culture, Housing and Transportation Cabinet Member Portfolio Holder to the Final Report: Scrutiny Enquiry into 20 mph Speed Limit Zones Outside of Schools in Hartlepool (Considered by the Cabinet on 27 February 2006) – *Head of Technical Services*

5. CONSIDERATION OF REQUEST FOR SCRUTINY REVIEWS REFERRED VIA SCRUTINY CO-ORDINATING COMMITTEE

No Items

6. CONSIDERATION OF PROGRESS REPORTS/BUDGET AND POLICY FRAMEWORK DOCUMENTS

No Items

7. ITEMS FOR DISCUSSION

No Items

8. ANY OTHER ITEMS WHICH THE CHAIRMAN CONSIDERS ARE URGENT

NEIGHBOURHOOD SERVICES SCRUTINY FORUM

MINUTES

24th March 2006

Present:

Councillor: Kevin Cranney (In the Chair)

Councillors: Rob Cook, Bob Flintoff, Gerard Hall, Carl Richardson and Victor Tumilty.

Resident

Reps: Allan Lloyd, Linda Shields and Steve Gibbon.

Officers: Charlotte Burnham, Scrutiny Manager
John Lewer, Public Transport Co-ordinator
Rebecca Redman, Research Assistant, Scrutiny
Joan Wilkins, Principal Democratic Services Officer

Also

Present: Robin Knight, Commercial Director, Stagecoach Hartlepool

67. Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors John Cambridge, Sandra Fenwick, John Lauderdale and John Marshall.

68. Declarations of interest by Members

None.

69. Minutes of the meeting held on 28th February 2006

Confirmed.

70. Responses from the Council, the Executive to Committees of the Council to Reports of the Scrutiny Co-ordinating Committee

No items.

71. Consideration of Request for Scrutiny Reviews Referred via Scrutiny Co-ordinating Committee

No items.

72. Consideration of Progress Reports/Budget and Policy Framework Documents

No items.

73. Draft Final Report – Scrutiny Investigation into Hartlepool's Local Bus Service Provision (Chair of the Neighbourhood Services Scrutiny Forum)

The Chair of the Neighbourhood Services Scrutiny Forum sought approval of the Forums Final Report on Hartlepool's Local Bus Service Provision prior to its submission to the Scrutiny Co-ordinating Committee and Cabinet on the 7th April and 15th May, respectively.

It was confirmed that the amendments requested by Members at the Informal Focus Group Meeting on the 6th March had been made to the Draft Final Report and the additional recommendations added as requested. Members indicated that they were happy with the report with the inclusion of the additional recommendations and took the opportunity to reiterate their views in relation to the following:-

- i) It was acknowledged that it would be better to have more than one main commercial operator in Hartlepool and that the investigation would have benefited from the involvement of all of Hartlepool's bus service providers, not just the main commercial operator. It was consequently highlighted that other commercial operators had been approached to participate in the investigation but declined the offer as they only operate a small number of services within Hartlepool. In addition Members were pleased that all buses were to be low level access by 2015 and commended Stagecoach for introducing low level buses on its Hartlepool services.

- ii) It was acknowledged that the service in Hartlepool had come on leaps and bounds, however, there continued to be some frustration regarding the level of subsidy Stagecoach receives from the Council.

Whilst it was felt that the re-negotiation of the subsidy contract held between the Authority and Stagecoach should be considered as part of the re-tendering process, a representative from Stagecoach assured the Forum that if the company could run all of its services/routes without subsidy it would do so. Although this was not possible it was highlighted that over recent years a number of routes had become commercially viable removing the need for subsidies. It was also highlighted that Stagecoach runs 95% of its mileage in the town commercially (without subsidy).

- iii) In response to the Chancellors announcement of free bus travel to all pensioners. Members expressed interest in how resources were to be distributed to enable this to occur.
- iv) In relation to the Darlington site visit Members reiterated their surprise at the Authority's willingness to subsidise bus services at whatever level necessary. It was noted that a number of Officers were consulted about this issue during the visit and a query was raised as to whether Darlington's elected Members were of the same opinion in terms of the use of the public purse in this way.
- v) Resident Representatives indicated that they were pleased to have participated in the inquiry and felt that this had been the first time that service users were able to discuss their problems and concerns directly with Stagecoach, the towns main commercial operator. It was also felt that another commercial operator should be approached as part of the re-tendering process.

In response to the suggestion that another commercial operator should be approached, Officer's assured the Forum that this had occurred in the past with little success and that the tendering process was open to all commercial operators should they wish to submit a bid. A number of commercial operators however failed to submit bids, as the provision of a service in Hartlepool was not economically viable for them.

- vi) In terms of mobility and bus transport attention was drawn to the problems created by drivers preventing buses from pulling right up to bus stops. It was felt that with all of the efforts being made to improve disabled access, including the provision of raised kerbs and low level buses, it was time for the public to play their part. Emphasis was placed upon the need for enforcement and the Stagecoach representative present drew attention to the effective use of mini bus borders in South Shields. Stagecoach indicated that they would be happy to contribute to the costs of installing such a deterrent.

Attention was also drawn to the lack of alternatives for disabled travellers with a lot of taxis unsuitable as a result of their conversion to using LPG gas which required larger areas to be occupied by fuel tanks.

The Chairman thanked all those involved in the investigation for their contribution to the formulation of the Final Report and apologised for the problems experienced at the beginning of the meeting with the circulation of the updated report. Members indicated that they were happy to approve the report for presentation by the Chairman to the Scrutiny Co-ordinating Committee and Cabinet.

Decision

The Draft Final Report was approved for submission to the Scrutiny Co-ordinating Committee and Cabinet.

KEVIN CRANNEY

CHAIRMAN

NEIGHBOURHOOD SERVICES SCRUTINY FORUM

21 April 2006



Report of: Traffic Team Leader

Subject: 20mph Speed Limits Outside of Schools – Progress Report

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 To give an update on the progress made on the key recommendations of the Scrutiny Forum final report.

2. BACKGROUND INFORMATION

- 2.1 In February 2006 the Neighbourhood Services Scrutiny Forum submitted a detailed report on the inquiry into 20mph limits outside of schools. A number of key recommendations were made and this report gives an update on the progress of these, along with the further work planned.

3. KEY RECOMMENDATIONS OF FINAL REPORT

- 3.1 **That the Authority compiles a 20 mph Speed Limit Zones Policy upon completion of a thorough consultation exercise with members of the public and partners which includes :-**

- (i) An agreed criteria for the implementation of mph speed limit zones outside of schools within Hartlepool;**

The criteria should be based around Department for Transport guidance on 20mph limits, particularly the following:-

- (a) 20mph limits should be self enforcing and should only be introduced where vehicle speeds are already low (85th percentile speed of 24mph or below) or where additional traffic calming measures are to be implemented as part of the scheme. The Police would be extremely unlikely to enforce a 20mph limit introduced with signs alone;

- (b) Appropriate traffic calming measures should involve the use of vertical deflections in the form of speed humps, cushions or raised junctions. Horizontal deflections such as road narrowings and chicanes can also be used, and no point within a 20mph limit should be further than 50 metres from a traffic calming feature (unless in a cul-de-sac);
- (c) Entrances to 20mph limits should be clearly signed, and the use of coloured surfacing can also help to highlight that motorists are entering an area where there is an increasing need to take care;
- (d) A 20mph zone is something that should be imposed over an area consisting of several roads, whereas a 20mph limit can be used for individual roads;
- (e) Appropriate locations for 20mph limits have been agreed with the emergency services and their views need to be taken into account in all instances.
- (f) On main roads, where 20mph limits would not be suitable, other road safety measures should be used, as detailed in part (ii).

The consultation exercise would include elected members, emergency services, bus companies, Education department, and the general public via Neighbourhood Forums, Hartlepool Mail and Hartbeat.

(ii) Alternative traffic calming/road safety measures that may be implemented at sites that are deemed inappropriate for 20 mph speed limit zones;

Not all roads are appropriate for 20mph limits, due to the associated physical traffic calming measures required. Some schools within Hartlepool are situated on main roads where traffic calming would have a negative impact on the emergency services and also increase congestion problems.

These schools are shown on the attached list, but these locations would be suitable for other road safety measures, as detailed below:-

- (a) **Vehicle Activated Signs** are effective in reducing speeds and highlighting the presence of a school to motorists.
- (b) **Pedestrian islands** (where there is sufficient road width) provide a safer crossing point and the reduced road width also helps encourage slower speeds.
- (c) **Central hatching** provides a narrower “driving lane” and again helps to encourage slower speeds.
- (d) **High visibility signing and carriageway markings** help to create the environment of a school zone and reinforce the message to drivers that they need to take extra care.

(iii) Proposals to tackle issues of enforcement and prosecution.

Since Hartlepool decriminalised its parking enforcement in July 2005, Hartlepool Borough Council Parking Patrol Officers have been able to enforce Traffic Regulation Orders outside of schools. This responsibility had previously been under the jurisdiction of the Police Traffic Wardens although, with few resources, enforcement was limited and infrequent.

Since July 2005, Parking Patrol Officers have visited several schools as part of a scheduled enforcement programme, which includes educating parents as well as issuing penalty charge notices against vehicles parked in contravention of the Traffic Regulation Orders. Patrol Officers have worked with staff from the road safety and travel planning teams, as well as teachers, parents and pupils, in order to actively publicise the importance of parking and emphasising road safety issues, before taking action against drivers.

In addition to the scheduled education enforcement programme, enforcement will continue to be provided at any school within the district, with officers reacting to parking enforcement issues that may arise.

(iv) Schemes and initiatives to educate children, parents, teachers and residents about road safety.

The Road Safety Unit delivers a comprehensive package of safety education, training and publicity initiatives in all schools in Hartlepool. Particular reference is made to practical on-road Year 3 pedestrian and Year 6 cycle training in all primary schools where over 2500 children are trained each year. The unit delivers education schemes to other year groups in these schools and, in partnership with Cleveland Police, Stagecoach Hartlepool, the Prison Service and the Magistrates Courts Service, runs crime and safety awareness days in secondary schools.

Throughout the year the Road Safety Unit undertakes mass town-wide publicity campaigns based around safer road behaviour including, seatbelts and child seats, mobile phones, drink and drug driving, responsible driving, speeding and illegal parking. These campaigns are designed to educate and change the attitudes of Hartlepool's residents to road safety.

(v) Commitment to partnership working.

The Council continues to work with its partners in this respect. Members of the North Neighbourhood Consultative Forum share the concerns of the Scrutiny Forum and have consequently approved funding for a 20mph scheme to be implemented outside of Clavering Primary School. This scheme should be implemented at the end of April 2006. The Northern Region Road Safety Engineer's Group are also to conduct a review of 20mph limits outside of schools which will aim to build on the good work of the Scrutiny inquiry.

3.2 That the Authority continues to strengthen links/working relationships with the emergency services, public transport operators, Northern Region Road Safety Engineering Group, Cleveland Safety Camera Partnership and the Cleveland Casualty Reduction Group.

The Council has strong links with the emergency services and bus companies who have been kept up to date with the Scrutiny inquiry through the Council's Traffic Liaison Group. The list of appropriate schools was agreed with them through this group.

Links with other partners continue to be strengthened in the common aim of casualty reduction.

3.3 That the Authority monitors and evaluates any 20 mph speed limit zones that are implemented at regular intervals.

Hartlepool's first 20mph limit was introduced in February outside of Rift House Primary School. Concerns have since been raised that the speed cushions installed do not slow traffic down to an acceptable level. A further speed survey is to be undertaken to determine whether this is the case and the results should be available for the meeting.

A vehicle activated sign has also been installed outside of Fens Primary School and again, a follow up speed survey will be carried out to determine its effect.

Road casualty data will also continue to be monitored outside of schools.

3.4 That the Authority considers a number of 20 mph speed limit zones pilot schemes outside of schools within Hartlepool.

A budget of £20,000 has been set aside from the Local Transport Plan for this financial year and the following 4 years, which should allow 2 schools to be treated each year.

Updated casualty data has been re-evaluated since the beginning of the Scrutiny inquiry, and no further accidents involving children being knocked down outside of schools at school times have been recorded.

The previous figures showed 2 accidents outside Rift House Primary School, where a scheme has subsequently been implemented.

They also showed 2 accidents outside of Manor College of Technology, 1 on Catcote Road outside of Brierton School, and one outside of St. Hild's School, which was a hit and run.

It is, therefore, recommended that Manor College be selected for a scheme this year, which would involve vehicle activated signs, but not a 20mph limit.

Members of the Forum's views are sought on this, and also the location of the second scheme for this year. Casualty data would suggest Brierton School, where a scheme involving pedestrian islands could be considered.

Members may also wish to prioritise locations in order to programme sites in for the forthcoming years. Speed surveys can be carried out if necessary, to assist with the prioritisation process.

3.5 That the Authority addresses road safety issues with a 'prevention is better than cure' approach.

The Council continues to feel that prevention is better than cure, as borne out by the road safety work outlined in section 3.1 (iv), but is required by Government to reduce casualties, with strict targets to meet by 2010. Failure to meet the 2010 targets would be likely to affect the authority's Local Transport Plan funding, meaning fewer schemes would be able to be delivered.

3.6 That the Authority submits a progress report on the recommendations contained within the final report, within six months, to the Neighbourhood Services Scrutiny Forum.

A further report can be presented to the Scrutiny Forum detailing the results of the consultation exercise, and also the findings of the Northern Region Road Safety Engineer's Group review. Further details of the schemes selected for implementation this year can also be reported.

4. RECOMMENDATION

- (i) That Members note the information contained in the report.
- (ii) That Manor College be approved for implementation this financial year.
- (iii) That Members agree a further site for implementation this year, and look to prioritise schemes for future years.

SCHOOL	ROAD AFFECTED	NUMBER OF CASUALTIES	APPROPRIATE FOR 20MPH	COMMENTS
Barnard Grove Primary School	King Oswy Drive	0	Yes	
Brierton Community School	Catcote Road, Brierton Lane	1 slight	No No	
Brougham Primary School	Brougham Terrace	0	Yes	
Clavering Primary School	Clavering Road	0	Yes	
Dyke House School	Raby Road Mapleton Road	0	No Yes	
Eldon Grove Primary School	Eldon Grove	0	Yes	
Elwick Hall CE Primary School	North Lane	0	No	
English Martyrs School	Catcote Road	0	No	
Fens Primary School	Mowbray Road	0	No	
Golden Flatts Primary School	Seaton Lane	0	No	
Grange Primary School	Owton Manor Lane	0	No	
Greatham C of E Primary School	Egerton Terrace	0	Yes	
Hart Primary School	Magdalene Drive	0	Yes	
High Tunstall School	Elwick Road	0	No	
Holy Trinity CE	Crawford Street	0	Yes	
Jesmond Road Primary School	Jesmond Road Percy Street	0	No Yes	
Kingsley Primary School	Kingsley Avenue	0	Yes	
Lynnfield Primary School	Sheriff Street Murray Street	0	Yes No	
Manor College of Technology	Owton Manor Lane	2 slight	No	
Owton Manor Primary School	Eskdale Road Wynyard Road	0	Yes No	
Rift House Primary	Masefield Road	2 slight	Yes	
Rossmere Primary School	Catcote Road Callander Road	0	No Yes	
Sacred Heart RC Primary School	Hart Lane	0	No	
St Aidan's CE Memorial Primary School	Loyalty Road	0	Yes	
St Bega's RC Primary School	Thorpe Street	0	Yes	
St Cuthbert's RC Primary School	Stratford Road	0	Yes	

St Helen's Primary School	Durham Street	0	No	
St. Hild's School	King Oswy Drive	1 slight	Yes	
St John Vianney RC Primary School	King Oswy Drive	0	Yes	
St Joseph's RC Primary School	Tower Street	0	Yes	
St Teresa's RC Primary School	Callander Road	0	Yes	
Stranton Primary School	Southburn Terrace	0	Yes	
Throston Primary School	Torbay Grove Anglesey Grove	0	Yes Yes	
Ward Jackson Primary School	Clark Street	0	No	
West Park Primary School	Coniscliffe Road	0	Yes	
West View Primary School	Davison Drive	0	Yes	

Total casualties in 3 year period – 6 slight.

No. of schools appropriate for 20mph limit – 25.

No. of schools inappropriate for 20mph limit – 11.