

NEIGHBOURHOOD SERVICES COMMITTEE

MINUTES AND DECISION RECORD

19 January 2015

The meeting commenced at 9.30 am in the Civic Centre, Hartlepool

Present:

Councillor: Marjorie James (In the Chair)

Councillors: Jim Ainslie, Allan Barclay, Keith Dawkins, Steve Gibbon and Brenda Loynes

In accordance with Council Procedure Rule 5.2 (ii) Councillor Carl Richardson was in attendance as substitute for Councillor Peter Jackson

Officers: Alastair Smith, Assistant Director, Neighbourhoods
Mike Blair, Technical Services Manager
Clare Clark, Head of Community Safety and Engagement
Phil Hepburn, Parking Services Team Leader
Garry Jones, Neighbourhood Co-ordinator
Peter Frost, Highways, Traffic and Transport Team Leader
Helen Beaman, Team Leader (Waste and Environmental Services)
Kate Ainger, Environmental Projects Officer
Denise Wimpenny, Principal Democratic Services Officer

54. Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were submitted on behalf of Councillor Peter Jackson and Gordon and Stella Johnson. It was reported that Mr Johnson had recently had a fall. The Chair requested that the Committee's best wishes be conveyed to Mr Johnson.

55. Declarations of Interest

None

56. Minutes of the meeting held on 15 December 2014

Received

57. Loyalty Road Yellow Lines (*Assistant Director, Neighbourhoods*)

Type of decision

Non-key

Purpose of report

To seek approval for the implementation of a section of double yellow lines in Loyalty Road (Appendix 1 refers)

Issue(s) for consideration

The Assistant Director reported that following concerns raised by residents via local Ward Councillors regarding vehicles parking on the bend in Loyalty Road opposite the entrance to Traveller's Gate, consultation had taken place with residents and Ward Councillors in August 2014 to seek their views on the proposal to install yellow lines as detailed in Appendix 2 of the report.

With regard to the results of the consultation, seven were in favour of the proposal, nine were against and one was unclear regarding their favoured option. The majority of objections were from residents of No's 47-54 Loyalty Road which were the houses adjacent to the lay-by. Whilst they were appreciative of the issues at the bend, they felt that the lines covered too large an area and should stop before they reached the lay-by.

Consequently a second consultation stage was undertaken in terms of reducing the yellow lines as detailed at Appendix 3 which resulted in seven in favour of the proposal and three against. Of the three objections received, one asked that the lines be extended to the length of the original proposal. However, this proposal received nine objections at the first consultation stage. The other two objections related to vehicles being displaced to the opposite side of the road, details of which were included in the report.

It was estimated that the scheme would cost approximately £600 and would be funded from the Traffic and Transportation budgets.

A resident, who was in attendance at the meeting and invited to speak, whilst supportive of parking controls in this location, the reasons for which were outlined, questioned the positioning of the yellow lines, as set out at Appendix 3. The resident expressed a view that the original proposal to extend the yellow lines, as detailed in Appendix 2, was a preferred option and would prevent drivers parking in front of the grass verge.

A lengthy discussion ensued in relation to the two options available to address this issue during which Members considered the concerns of the resident in attendance, the differing views from the consultation including the suggestion of the potential displacement of parked vehicles. Whilst the majority of Members supported the recommended proposal, as detailed in Appendix 3, one Member raised concerns regarding the potential displacement of vehicles to another area.

The Chair clarified that the position would be monitored for a three month period and feedback would be reported to a future meeting of this Committee. The Committee was advised that any objections received as a result of publication of a traffic regulation order would be reported to Committee.

Decision

- (i) That the proposed scheme, as outlined in Appendix 3, be approved.
- (ii) That the scheme be monitored for a three month period, feedback from which to be reported to a future meeting of this Committee.

58. Safer Routes to School Project – Rossmere and St Teresa’s Primary Schools *(Assistant Director, Neighbourhoods)*

Type of decision

Non-key

Purpose of report

To seek approval for a Safer Routes to School Scheme that would improve road safety and help promote walking to school by making improvements to the pedestrian environment (See Appendix 1)

Following discussion at a previous Neighbourhood Services Committee meeting in November 2014, there were now two options for the scheme and a decision was required in terms of which option should be progressed.

Issue(s) for consideration

The report detailed the alternative proposal and subsequent consultation outcomes following a request by this Committee in November 2014 that a further option regarding traffic calming at Balmoral Road be developed to include a chicane feature and build outs to assist children with crossing by narrowing the road. Plans showing the initial proposal for speed cushions on Balmoral Road were provided at Appendix 2 (Option 1) and a plan identifying the alternative scheme was also provided as Appendix 2 (Option

2).

Members were referred to the outcome of the initial consultation of the proposed scheme, details of which were set out in the report.

With regard to the alternative scheme for traffic calming in Balmoral Road, further consultation had been undertaken with 70 properties on Balmoral Road, Benmore Road and Bonnyrigg Walk, the outcome of which was included in the report. Residents were asked to express a preferred option, Option 1 being the original proposal with speed cushions on Balmoral Road or Option 2 the alternative proposals with a chicane, build outs and changes to junction lining. Of the twenty responses received, nine were in favour of Option 1 and ten in favour of Option 2. Due to a low response, additional door to door consultation had been undertaken, the outcome of which was provided the meeting. From the comments provided there was strong views both for and against both options, details of which were outlined.

At the time of writing the report a formal response was awaited from Cleveland Police. However, a response had since been received from the police which expressed support for Option 1, a copy of which was circulated to all Members.

With regard to the financial considerations, Members were advised that the estimated cost of Option 1 was £30,000 and the estimated cost of Option 2 was £32,000.

A resident, who was in attendance at the meeting, was invited to speak and expressed support for Option 1.

In the debate that followed, the Committee considered the responses to the consultation and recognised the mixed views of residents and the response from Cleveland Police in support of Option 1. Reference was made to the reasons for pursuing Option 2 and Members were pleased to note that this option had been explored including the feasibility of installing a central island. It was acknowledged that the suggestion of a central island could not be accommodated due to the width of the road and was therefore not a safe option.

Decision

- (i) That the Safer Routes to Schools Scheme, as outlined in Section 4 of the report, be approved.
- (ii) That the scheme should include traffic calming on Balmoral Road in the form of speed cushions (Option 1) as detailed in Appendix 2 of the report.

59. The Collection of Sea Coal (*Assistant Director, Neighbourhoods*)

Type of decision

Non-key

Purpose of report

To inform the Committee of the findings of a working group which was established to investigate the implications of the continuation of the practice of sea coaling on Council leased beaches in Hartlepool.

Issue(s) for consideration

The report provided background information in relation to the current scale of the sea coal industry in Hartlepool in response to concerns raised by Members. Evidence in a previous Committee report showed that as sea coaling operations had been scaled down, the amount of complaints had diminished significantly. However, given that there was still a number of public concerns it had been agreed that further investigation should be carried out into the potential implications of the continuation of this practice.

A multi-agency working group had been set up to analyse the scale of the problem and to review the risk and potential liability that existed in permitting the practice to continue. The findings of the working group were provided, as detailed in the report. Reference was made to the lease of the foreshore by the Council from the Crown Estate Commissioners which stated that the Council may 'not permit any person to drive any mechanically propelled vehicle on the demised premises' with the exception of the lifeguard service to which a variation to the lease had been granted for this purpose. The Council's insurers had indicated that the Council's public liability insurance would not cover any vehicles which had not been given permission to access the beach. It had become apparent that in the past, the situation regarding permission for vehicles to be on the beaches had not been clear and the police had not used their powers under the Road Traffic Act 1988.

Members were referred to the ecological impact of sea coaling on the shore wildlife together with the risk, financial and asset management considerations as set out in the report.

Two members of the public, who worked in this industry, were in attendance and highlighted the benefits of permitting such access and were keen to work with the Council to pursue the idea of adopting a scheme to enable sea coalers to legitimately access the beach.

In the discussion that followed, the Committee discussed the risk implications for the Council in allowing such practice to continue, hence the need to close the barrier situated at Station Lane onto Seaton beach and all access points in the ownership or under the management of the Council. The Chair highlighted that any forced access would be referred to the police for action. Members were supportive of the suggestion that the Council continued to work with the sea coaling industry in relation to potential future supervised access.

Decision

- (i) That the findings of the Sea Coal Working Group be noted.
- (ii) The Committee approved the closing of the barrier at the entrance to the foreshore at Station Lane to prevent unauthorised access and the erection of signage to indicate that vehicles were prohibited.
- (iii) The Committee supported the request to pursue the idea of adopting a scheme which would enable the sea coalers to legitimately access the beach to take off the coal to assist with cleansing.

60. 'Respect Your Neighbourhood' – Environmental Crime Campaign Update *(Assistant Director, Neighbourhoods)*

Type of decision

For information

Purpose of report

To update the Committee on the current progress to date of the 'Respect Your Neighbourhood' Environmental Crime Campaign.

Issue(s) for consideration

The Assistant Director reported on the background to the establishment and purpose of the Respect Your Neighbourhood Environmental Crime Campaign. The Respect Your Neighbourhood Initiative was intended to involve one co-ordinated day of action in each of the 11 wards, details of which were included in the report. The report provided details of the outcomes/actions taken/enforcement activity by ward as a result of the action days. The outcomes demonstrated the effectiveness of the Respect Your Neighbourhood Campaign .

With regard to the Rural West Ward, a Member requested that consideration be given to a future action day being held in Greatham.

In response to comments made that the potential reasons for the low level

of participation by the public may be as a result of action days being held in the winter months, it was suggested that the dates be rotated in future.

The Committee welcomed the initiative and the Chair took the opportunity on behalf of the Committee to thank the staff involved for their hard work in making the campaign such a success.

Decision

- (i) That the current progress to date on the 'Respect Your Neighbourhood' – Environmental Crime Campaign and comments of Members be noted.
- (ii) That the action dates be rotated in future.

The meeting concluded at 10.25 am.

P J DEVLIN

CHIEF SOLICITOR

PUBLICATION DATE: 26 JANUARY 2015