

NEIGHBOURHOOD SERVICES COMMITTEE MINUTES AND DECISION RECORD

13 July 2015

The meeting commenced at 10.05 am in the Civic Centre, Hartlepool

Present:

Councillor: Councillor Marjorie James (In the Chair)

Councillors: Jim Ainslie, Allan Barclay and Jean Robinson

Also Present:

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

Officers: Denise Ogden, Director of Regeneration and Neighbourhoods
Alastair Smith, Assistant Director, Neighbourhoods
Phil Hepburn, Parking Services Team Leader
Sarah Scarr, Heritage and Countryside Manager
Tracey Rowe, Community Regeneration Officer
Denise Wimpenny, Principal Democratic Services Officer

Prior to opening the meeting the Chair apologised for the slightly delayed start which was due to the need to seek legal advice.

8. Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were submitted on behalf of Councillors Steve Gibbon, Peter Jackson and Brenda Loynes

9. Declarations of Interest

Councillor Jim Ainslie declared a prejudicial interest in Minute 12 and indicated his intention to leave the meeting during consideration of this item of business. Councillor Ainslie also declared a personal interest in Minute 13.

10. Minutes of the meeting held on 15 June 2015

Received

11. Proposed Changes to Residential Parking Permit Scheme *(Assistant Director, Neighbourhoods)*

Type of decision

Non-key

Purpose of report

To review the current costs of resident permits and propose revision to the existing charges.

Issue(s) for consideration

The Assistant Director reported on the background to the current residential parking permit scheme. The current permit charges had been set by Members in 2008 when a phased two tier pricing policy had been approved which established non town centre permits at an annual charge of £20 but created a subsidised town centre zone where permits were offered at a discounted rate of £5.

It was reported that in 2007 consultation had taken place with all permit holders that fell within the higher permit zone to determine if individual streets wished to continue within the controlled zones. A significant number of streets opted out of the scheme, citing the revised pricing policy as the main reason for this decision. The geographical boundaries could result in neighbouring streets operating differing permit charges, often within the same permit zone. The current arrangement was perceived by many residents as being both confusing and unfair.

In order to address the perceived unfair charging issues an alternative scheme was proposed, which would unify the cost of all resident permits and remove the existing subsidised discounted areas. All qualifying residential properties would be offered an initial permit at the current discounted charge of £5. Those properties requiring additional permits would be charged an additional supplementary fee, dependent on the number of permits required, details of which were set out in the report. The benefits of the proposals together with the financial considerations were provided.

A member of the public, who was invited to address the Committee, raised concerns regarding the proposals and expressed a view on behalf of residents that permit charges should be abolished, the reasons for which were shared with the Committee. The Chair highlighted that the income generated was utilised to cover the cost of enforcement only and was not a profit making arrangement. The background to the reasons for the proposed changes was provided.

Members welcomed the proposals and were pleased to note that the revised charges provided a fairer and more balanced charging policy for residents and charges were significantly lower than neighbouring authorities. With regard to the hours of operation of the scheme, the Committee was of the view that the restrictions should be extended to 8.00 pm in the evening as opposed to 6.00 pm to assist any residents returning from work after 6.00 pm.

Decision

- (i) That the proposed revisions to the residents permit parking scheme be approved and that the current geographical subsidised area be replaced with a fixed permit cost per household.
- (ii) That the Chief Solicitor be requested to advertise the necessary Legal Order revisions showing the revised charge per household as:-
 - 1st permit - £5
 - 2nd permit - £10
 - 3rd permit - £20
 - 4th permit - £30
- (iii) That the operation hours of the scheme be extended to 8.00 pm.

Prior to consideration of the following item of business Councillor Ainslie left the meeting during consideration of this item in accordance with his earlier declaration.

12. Proposed Residential Controlled Parking Scheme – South Crescent, Headland *(Assistant Director, Neighbourhoods)*

Type of decision

Non-key

Purpose of report

To inform and seek the views of the Committee regarding a number of letters of objection which had been received following the formal advertising of the proposed resident only permit controlled parking scheme at South Crescent.

Issue(s) for consideration

The Assistant Director presented the report which provided background information to the decision taken by this Committee in September 2013 to defer a request from residents to introduce a residents only permit controlled parking scheme in South Crescent and that the issue be

considered as part of the emerging Neighbourhood Plan for the area. In addition Members had requested that the Parish Council be formally consulted for their views in relation to the scheme and consequential traffic displacement concerns.

The subsequent responses had been reconsidered in March 2015 when, despite objections from the Headland Parish Council and several residents, Members had approved the scheme in principle and requested that the Head of Legal Services formally advertise the Traffic Regulation Orders.

As a consequence of advertising the legal orders a number of letters of objection had been received from the Headland Parish Council, Headland Neighbourhood Planning Team and several local residents opposing the proposal, the key reasons for which were provided, as set out in the report.

With regard to one of the reasons for objection as set out in the report, “that the Neighbourhood Plan had been developed with the help of local volunteers...”, the Chair clarified that the Plan was at the consultation stage and not a final plan and had no weight in planning terms as suggested in the report.

A visual map outlining the area was provided to assist Members in their considerations.

The Chair sought the Committee’s views on the request for a disabled parking bay and highlighted the option to create a dedicated on street disabled bay. Members noted that disabled badge holders could currently park for up to three hours provided their blue badge was displayed. Members considered the various options and commented on the benefits of retaining the current arrangement.

A member of the public, who was in attendance and invited to speak, outlined the difficulties picking up disabled residents on the corner of South Crescent and asked the Committee to consider extending the double yellow lines to alleviate this problem. Members supported this request.

The Chair and Assistant Director responded to queries raised by the Committee in relation to the proposals. Following further discussion Members re-affirmed their decision taken on 16 March 2015 to proceed with the original scheme. In addition, the Committee was keen to engage with residents to assess the likely support (or otherwise) to a permit controlled resident parking zone for the Headland on a street by street basis.

Decision

- (i) That the decision taken on 16 March 2015 to proceed with the resident only parking scheme at South Crescent be re-affirmed.
- (ii) That consultation and engagement with residents be undertaken to assess the likely support (or otherwise) to a permit controlled

- resident parking zone for the Headland on a street by street basis.
- (iii) That the double yellow lines on the corner of South Crescent be extended as discussed.

Councillor Jim Ainslie rejoined the meeting.

13. North Linear Park Project *(Assistant Director, Regeneration)*

Type of decision

For information

Purpose of report

To notify the Committee of the proposal to submit a Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF) grant application based on the area around the former Hartlepool to Haswell railway line and the surrounding area. A report was being taken to the Regeneration Committee on this matter as the majority of the works covered by this application fell within the remit of that Committee. The proposed works include improvement works to public rights of way which fell within the remit of this Committee.

Issue(s) for consideration

Members were advised on the background to the proposal to submit an application to the Heritage Lottery Fund for a development grant to support the development of a project based around the Hartlepool to Haswell railway. In relation to public rights of way the application's access proposals centred on two new important paths that would link existing walkways and footpaths to the landscape that was 'out of reach' at the moment:-

Hart to Haswell Walkway to Public Footpath No 11 Hart

This new footpath would provide safe and traffic free enjoyment south to Hart Village and beyond as well as link the town with the new routes to the north, details of which were set out in the report.

Hart to Haswell Walkway to Brus Tunnel

This new route would provide a more enjoyable alternative to the existing section of the National Cycle Route that runs between these two locations, through an urban area of north Hartlepool. The new path would be located on the seaward side of the railway embankment between the golf course and the embankment and would give safe, enjoyable and traffic free links to the Headland and Hartlepool town as well as north of the England Coast Path and the Durham Heritage Path.

Following presentation of the report officers responded to queries raised in relation to the proposals.

The Committee welcomed the proposal and the opportunity to work with the Regeneration Services Committee to explore opportunities to increase cycling and walkways in the town.

Decision

The Committee noted the proposal to submit an application to the Heritage Lottery Fund in August 2015 for a development grant to support the development of a project based around the Hartlepool to Haswell Railway.

The meeting concluded at 10.50 am.

P J DEVLIN

CHIEF SOLICITOR

PUBLICATION DATE: 22 JULY 2015