

DURHAM COUNTY COUNCIL

At a Meeting of the **Highways Committee** held at the County Hall, Durham on **Wednesday 23 April 2008 at 10.00 a.m.**

Present:

Councillor H Douthwaite in the Chair

Members:

Councillors Bell, C Carr, Davies, E Foster, Gray, Holroyd, Knox, Mason, Meir, Morgan, Nugent, Pendlebury, Priestley, Pye and Walker.

Other Members:

Councillors Chapman and Cox

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Cordon, Southwell, and Young.

A1 Minutes

The Minutes of the meeting held on 12 March 2008 were agreed as correct and signed by the Chairman.

A2 Consideration of Traffic Calming- B6291 West Terrace and Coronation Terrace, Coxhoe

The Committee considered a report of the Acting Corporate Director, Environment regarding the consideration of the traffic calming scheme proposed for West Terrace and Coronation Terrace, Coxhoe (for copy see file of Minutes).

The Acting Corporate Director, Environment advised that since the report had been written, a letter from Coxhoe Parish Council had been received which re-affirmed their support for the scheme.

The Committee then heard the following representations:-

Mr Laing of Grange Farm advised of the reasons for opposing the road hump to be installed opposite his farm entrance. He explained how his farm vehicles, particularly a tractor with a trailer attached to it, would have to negotiate the road hump while turning into the access road. It would mean that the vehicle would be on an angle while turning causing it to be unstable.

Mr Walton advised that he would have similar difficulties with turning manoeuvres with the road hump outside of the Tarka Centre which is opposite to where he has a vehicle operating centre. He pointed out that there were two other farms in the locality that would be in a similar position.

In response the Acting Corporate Director, Environment, advised that this was the first he had been made aware that this was an issue. It had not been highlighted to the Authority during the consultation process. He advised that it may be possible to slightly move the road humps in question to alleviate this problem. He pointed out that generally manoeuvring over the speed humps at the correct speed should not cause a problem. Mr Laing and Mr Walton welcomed the offer from the Acting Corporate Director, Environment that following the meeting his staff would discuss with them whether it would be possible to move the road humps in question.

Councillor Morgan, the Local Member, advised that he too had not been aware of this issue until now. He was reassured, however, that they would find a solution to this. He advised that overall the scheme had been comprehensively described as to its origin, and that the speeding of vehicles through the centre of the community was a problem. He advised that he was satisfied that the measures to be taken would mitigate the risk of speeding, and advised of his support for the scheme.

Resolved:

The report together with the recommendations included therein be approved.

A3 A688/C30A/Unclassified Roads, Evenwood Gate- Proposed Amendment of a Speed Limit Traffic Regulation Order

The Committee considered a report of the Acting Corporate Director, Environment regarding the proposed amendment to the speed limit through Evenwood Gate (for copy see file of Minutes).

The Acting Corporate Director, Environment advised that he had received a letter from Helen Goodman, MP that re-affirmed her support for the scheme.

Councillor Priestley, the Local Member, advised that with this road being the link road to Blackpool, and the Lake District it was very busy. Local residents had put up with the situation of cars speeding on this stretch of road for many years. There had been one serious accident in 1989, and luckily there had been no further serious ones, although some other accidents had come close. He advised of his support for the scheme.

Councillor Pendlebury advised of his surprise that the police were objecting to this as the traffic does travel very fast along this road. It was fortunate in his opinion that there had been no further serious accidents along that stretch of road. He advised of his support to the scheme.

Councillor Bell advised that he knew this road very well as he often travels it. He supported the scheme, however, wished to know more about the police objecting to it.

He pointed out that Councillor Priestley had been campaigning for many years to get something done about the speed of vehicles on this road.

The Acting Corporate Director, Environment advised of the contents of the letter from Durham Constabulary. He pointed out that Durham Constabulary are no longer suggesting that the Authority is not meeting Department for Transport guidelines in terms of the classification of Evenwood Gate as a village. The Authority believe that with the physical measures proposed, average speed will reduce to 40 mph or below. In contrast Durham Constabulary believe that the speed will remain well above 40 mph putting the proposed speed limit at odds with the Local Speed Management Strategy. The Constabulary have asked for the authority to put in the engineering measures, and delay any speed restrictions until a later date once average speeds have been determined. The Acting Corporate Director, Environment advised that in his opinion both measures need to be introduced together to bring the speed of vehicles down to 40mph.

Councillor Bell believed that the installation of a gateway would make a difference as it had at Gainford, when it was installed some years previous.

In response to Councillor C Carr suggesting that it would be helpful if future similar reports could include the letter from the Constabulary as an appendix to the report, the Acting Corporate Director, Environment advised that it was not normal practice to do so, and that if any member wished to see the letter they are made available in the Members Resource Centre. He pointed out that a response such as this is often received from Durham Constabulary and they need to be pragmatic when looking at these.

Councillor E Foster advised of his support for the scheme.

Resolved:

The report together with the recommendations included therein be approved.

A4 Retirement of Chairman and Vice-Chairman

The Chairman advised that it would be his and Councillor E Foster's last meeting as Chairman and Vice-Chairman, respectively, of the Highways Committee as neither were standing in the forthcoming elections. He thanked members and officers for their support and advice.

The Acting Corporate Director, Environment gave a short presentation on the accomplishments of the Committee during their time as Chairman and Vice-Chairman, and both were presented with a gift. He thanked them for their hard work and advised that it had been a pleasure to work with them.

Members thanked them for their hard work and wished them well in their retirement.