

DURHAM COUNTY COUNCIL

At a Meeting of **Highways Committee** held in Committee Room 2 - County Hall, Durham on **Friday 1 March 2019 at 9.30 a.m.**

Present:

Councillor S Morrison in the Chair

Members of the Committee

Councillors D Bell, G Bleasdale, S Dunn, A Gardner, D Hicks, K Liddell, O Milburn, R Ormerod, A Simpson, J Turnbull and M Wilson

Also Present

Councillor D Freeman

1 Apologies

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors J Considine, S Hugill, C Kay, P Sexton and J Shuttleworth

2 Substitute Members

There were no substitute members present.

3 Minutes

The minutes of the meetings held on 20 and 23 November 2018 were agreed as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

4 Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest in relation to any items of business on the agenda.

5 Bishop Auckland - Parking & Waiting Restrictions Order 2019

The Committee considered a report of the Corporate Director of Regeneration and Local Services which proposed a number of changes to a Traffic Regulation Order covering Bishop Auckland (for copy see file of Minutes).

The Committee were informed that five separate areas had been reviewed as part of the traffic regulation order, with the proposed changes to three areas, attracting objections. The areas which had attracted objections were as follows:

Rear of the Newgate Centre, Tenters Street

A request had been received to introduce a loading only area in a bid to address obstructive parking and improve access for HGV's to the rear of the Newgate Centre. The proposal was supported from the local County Councillors, Bishop Auckland Town Council and Durham Constabulary. There had been six objections to the proposal.

The Committee were informed that the Newgate area was a retail area. Five objections related to the loss of free parking around the area. The proposed restrictions would enable current and potential new businesses to have access to the loading area of the Newgate Centre, which was currently unrestricted. Vehicles were often parked at the location and blocked access to the loading area. Some vehicles were believed to be owned by staff commuting to work who leave their vehicles in this location for the full duration of the day. Also included within the proposals were limited waiting parking bays to allow customers to park and use the local businesses, a disabled bay and taxi only parking bays. It was felt that vehicles blocking access to the loading area did have a detrimental effect on the businesses within the Newgate Centre and Newgate Street and could deter potential new businesses from taking residence within the area. Alternative parking was available in the surrounding area as well as the Newgate Centre car park and car parks on North Bondgate, Tenters Street and Kingsway.

Councillor O Milburn queried the use of the multi-storey car park at Newgate. The Strategic Traffic Manager confirmed that the car park used to be a Durham County Council car park and was now leased to Newgate Centre. The top level was very rarely used and the cost of parking was reduced to encourage use, however, it was a very large car park and available to use.

Councillor Turnbull queried if the management of the Newgate Centre could ask staff/business owners to utilise the multi-storey car park. The Strategic Traffic Manager confirmed that this arrangement could be offered.

The Strategic Traffic Manager informed the Committee that the Council were currently in discussion to introduce a further car park on Kingsway.

Durham Road

A request was received from Durham Constabulary to introduce formal restrictions on Durham Road to address obstructive parking, improve visibility and safety issues. There was support from Durham Constabulary and the local County Councillors. There had been two objections to the proposals.

The Committee were informed that the proposal was to introduce a double-yellow line restriction on the north and south sides of the road. Vehicles currently parked on the unrestricted sections of Durham Road forcing overtaking vehicles to cross the solid white lines. The no waiting at any time restrictions would reduce the need

to undertake this manoeuvre. The restrictions were required on both sides of the carriageway to ensure vehicles were not forced across the solid white lines. 21 respondents were in favour of the proposals and 2 were against the proposal, feeling that it was an inconvenience which provided no benefit. The other objector felt that the problem relating to speeding vehicles was near the dip (Durham Chare area).

Councillor Gardner explained to the Committee that he travelled the route regularly and fully supported the proposal as the present situation needed addressing.

Referring to the objections relating to Durham Road, Councillor Dunn explained that properties on Durham Road were large, detached properties with large drives and adequate access. Councillor Dunn fully supported the request by the Police.

Gib Chare/Castle Chare

A request was received from a local County Councillor in a bid to address obstructive parking and improve pedestrian access to Castle Chare located near to a historical fountain and pedestrian routes. The proposal was supported by the local County Councillor and Durham Constabulary. There was one objection to the proposals.

The Clerk informed the Committee that Councillor Zair was unable to be present at the meeting but wished for the following statement to be read out:

In relation to Gib Chair/Durham Chair, I submitted a petition from residents of the Dell and the Willows regarding obstructions to their drives. I receive complaints about cars and vans parking within The Dell and the Willows. Once the new restrictions come into place and things do get worse, I hope that residents parking can be implemented.

For anyone who knows the area between Castle Chair and the Historic Fountain there were a series of steep steps surrounded by trees. Whilst there have been pruning works carried out I feel that a handrail needs to be fitted for people's safety, particularly for use during wet weather and with Autumn when the steps are extremely slippery. Councillor Zair also wished for the installation of some lighting to make this area safer because it was extremely dark.

Moved by Councillor J Turnbull, Seconded by Councillor S Dunn and

Resolved

The Committee endorsed the proposal as presented and recommended to the Corporate Director to proceed with the implementation of the Bishop Auckland: Waiting and Parking Restrictions Order.

6 Durham City North East - Parking & Waiting Restrictions Order 2019

The Committee considered a report of the Corporate Director of Regeneration and Local Services which proposed the introduction of permit parking at Gilesgate and St.Giles Close in a bid to address obstructive parking and improve parking availability for residents. Following this, a request had also been received from the Fowlers Yard working group to address obstructive parking and improve the loading and unloading facilities. There was support from both local County Councillors and Durham Constabulary in relation to both proposals (for copy see file of Minutes).

The Strategic Traffic Manager informed the Committee that there were no objections received relating to the proposal at Fowlers Yard, however, there had been several objections to the Gilesgate/St.Giles Close permit parking proposal.

The proposed restrictions relating to the introduction of a permit parking scheme would improve the parking availability for residents of Gilesgate and St Giles Close. The area was at present, unrestricted, meaning that vehicles could be parked at the location without time limit. Some vehicles were believed to be staff commuting to work or students who parked their vehicles in this location for the full duration of the day. Within the proposals there were times that only residents with permits would be able to park their vehicles, reducing the amount of all-day parking in this location. The majority of residents had replied in favour of the scheme with 26 responses in favour and a total of 7 against. The request was received, by way of the introduction of 'permit parking' from local residents in a bid to address long stay commuter parking in the area. A survey was conducted, in line with Council policy to determine if the area was suitable for permit parking and the relevant criteria was met. Six objections were submitted at the informal stage of consultation and one objection was submitted at the formal stage. The objections received at both stages were summarised to the Committee and were detailed in the report.

Councillor Freeman informed the Committee that Gilesgate was the only area outside of the parking zone which created a problem for residents. 26 people supported the proposals from a limited number of properties which demonstrated clear support for the proposals to go ahead. The scheme was much needed and would be most welcomed. The objection came from someone who was not a resident and operated a business of holiday lettings. Councillor Freeman also queried why three parking permits were offered to households and felt that two permits would be sufficient.

The Committee then heard from a local resident. The resident lived at 147 Gilesgate, who explained that one of the objections detailed in the report related to his representations but was not an objection. The resident gave examples of vehicles that had been parked in the area for 3 weeks, without ever moving once. Other spaces were taken up by commuters and students. The resident was delighted that the overall majority.

The Strategic Traffic Manager informed the Committee that that three permits were offered for areas further outside the City Centre, two permits were offered within the City Centre itself and didn't see the reduction in permits as being an issue. However, the expectation for residents, was that three was a maximum of three but they didn't have to accept three.

Councillor R Ormerod expressed his support for the proposals relating to Fowlers Yard and was happy that a solution had been found with the Peoples Theatre which was run entirely by volunteers

In relation to Gilesgate, Councillor Ormerod had sympathy with the residents, given that there were no restrictions currently. There was no perfect solution but felt that permit parking was the best option.

Councillor Dunn applauded officers for the scheme but felt that permits should be limited to two permits per household in the area. There was a clear need for people to get to St. Giles and deposit for a certain length of time. There were HMO's in the area, some with around six students. Durham University encouraged students not to bring cars, however, it could not prevent them from doing so. The scheme would restrict the impact of people living in the location.

Moved by Councillor R Ormerod, Seconded by Councillor A Simpson and

Resolved

That the Committee endorse the proposal, as amended and recommend the implementation of the Durham City North East: Waiting and Parking Restrictions Order to the Corporate Director of Regeneration and Local Services.