

## **DURHAM COUNTY COUNCIL**

At a Meeting of **Highways Committee** held in Committee Room 2 - County Hall, Durham on **Friday 5 July 2019 at 9.30 a.m.**

**Present:**

**Councillor C Kay in the Chair**

### **Members of the Committee**

Councillors J Considine, O Gunn, D Hicks, K Hopper, I Jewell, K Liddell, O Milburn, S Morrison (Vice-Chair), A Reed, J Robinson, P Sexton, F Tinsley and M Wilson

### **Also Present**

Councillors O Gunn, A Reed, J Robinson and F Tinsley.

### **1 Apologies**

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors D Bell, G Bleasdale, S Dunn, S Hugill, P Jopling, R Ormerod, J Rowlandson, J Shuttleworth, A Simpson, K Thompson and J Turnbull.

### **2 Substitute Members**

Councillor I Jewell was substituting for Councillor J Turnbull.

### **3 Minutes**

The minutes of the meetings held on 1 February, 1 March and 20 March 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 item of business on the agenda.

### **5 Change to order of business**

The Chair of the meeting informed the Committee that he was proposing to change the order of business on the agenda given the number of objectors attending for each item.

## **Resolved**

That the change of the order of business be agreed.

## **6 Willington - Parking and Waiting Restrictions Order 2019**

The Committee considered a report of the Corporate Director of Regeneration and Local Services regarding objections received to a traffic regulation order in Willington (for copy see file of Minutes).

The Strategic Traffic Manager informed the Committee that several requests had been received from local Councillors to address ongoing obstructive parking, visibility and safety issues within Willington, specifically at the following locations:

- Cumberland Terrace
- A690 Commercial Street / High Street
- Chapel Street
- Bridge End

A presentation was shown to the Committee which detailed the locations, together aerial and street view images superimposed with the proposed traffic regulations.

The Strategic Traffic Manager informed the Committee that one objection had been received from a local resident in relation to the proposals for the Cumberland Terrace area regarding the proposed introduction of a 'no waiting at any time' located near to St Thomas RC Primary School. The objector had expressed concern that school staff would park in three allocated parking bays and the resident would not be able to park their vehicle. Furthermore, the resident had been informed by an estate agent who had advised them that their residential property value would reduce by up to £20,000 given the lack of parking. The resident also felt that the proposals would not stop congestion at school times.

The Strategic Traffic Manager explained that the proposals were important in terms of the location of the nearby school. Road safety was an important issue for both the school and parents. The Committee were informed that the width of the street could only accommodate parking for vehicles on one side of the road, however, problems occurred if a vehicle(s) parked on the opposite side of the road.

The local Councillors were then invited to address the Committee. Prior to speaking on the matter, Councillor Tinsley wished for it to be placed on record that a close relative resided at Cumberland Terrace and would be directly affected by the proposals and two of his children attended the local primary school.

Councillor F Tinsley thanked officers for their work and explained that much consultation had taken place. Councillor Tinsley fully supported the proposals for the Chapel Street and Bridge End areas and declared that he was a school governor at Our Lady of St. Thomas School.

In relation to Cumberland Terrace, residents and parents had raised concerns directly to local Councillors and through other forums such as Police and Communities Together (PACT) meetings. Safety issues and problems had been periodically witnessed. The proposals would see an element of parking retained for residents, an extension of the double-yellow lines extending to the A690 would help with visibility splays from Cumberland Terrace. It would also prevent people from parking close to the junction. Councillors had worked very closely with the school and had requested staff not to park in the three allocated bays. Councillor Tinsley explained that ultimately, safety was of paramount importance.

Councillor O Gunn echoed similar comments to Councillor Tinsley and explained that Cumberland Terrace had experienced ongoing problems around the school for a considerable period of time and felt that the proposals would provide a further aspect of safety for children, parents and residents.

The Committee then heard from the objector who lived at Cumberland Terrace. The objector indicated that they lived in house marked 'red' on the presentation. The resident felt that vehicle speeds up and down the street were excessively high and were disappointed that no provision had been made for speed humps. Referring to the three allocated bays, the resident queried where they would park, in the event of the allocated bays being occupied. The resident expressed concern that should their property be placed on the market there would be no parking available. Whilst the resident agreed with the double-yellow line element of the proposals they felt that vehicles would park and wait on the restricted area. The residents had a garage to the rear of the High Street which they could not access due to parked cars. The front door of their property exited directly onto the public footpath and referred to a recent issue whereby a Council vehicle damaged a hanging basket bracket belonging to the resident. The resident felt that the proposals presented would not make a difference and that people would continue to park in the manner already experienced.

In response, the Strategic Traffic Manager explained that the Council were not suggesting that the proposal would be perfect and suitable for all. Highways Officers had worked with all residents throughout the consultation to try and assist. Ultimately, Cumberland Terrace was a very busy area, with highway safety problems and the proposals were an attempt to try and make the situation better.

In response to a query from Councillor P Sexton regarding parking in the back lane, the Strategic Traffic Manager confirmed that vehicles did park along the length of the back lane.

**Moved** by Councillor K Hopper, **Seconded** by Councillor O Milburn and

## **Resolved**

That the Committee endorse the proposal to proceed with the implementation of the Willington Waiting and Parking Restrictions Order to the Corporate Director of Regeneration and Local Services.

## **7 Sedgefield – Parking & Waiting Restrictions Order 2019**

The Committee considered a report of the Corporate Director of Regeneration and Local Services regarding objections received to a consultation concerning changes to a traffic regulation order in Sedgefield (for copy see file of Minutes).

The Strategic Traffic Manager informed the Committee that several requests had been received from the local Councillors, Sedgefield Town Council, a local school and parents to address ongoing obstructive parking, visibility and safety issues within the Sedgefield area, specifically at the following locations:

- Rectory Row
- Spring Lane
- The Square / High Street
- North End / Whitehouse Drive

A presentation was shown to the Committee which detailed the various locations, together aerial and street view images superimposed with the proposed traffic regulations.

The Strategic Traffic Manager informed the Committee that the physical measures detailed in the report had attracted most comments and objections, as opposed to the traffic regulation order and summarised the proposals in respect of each area.

### **Rectory Row**

The Strategic Traffic Manager informed the Committee that the TRO proposal for Rectory Row was to remove a section of 'restricted waiting 8am-6pm' restrictions (single yellow lines) and remove a section of 'no waiting at any time' restrictions (double yellow lines) on Rectory Row to improve unrestricted parking availability in the area.

The non-TRO element of the proposal would see the introduction of two pedestrian buildouts to improve the safety of pedestrians during school pick up and drop off time. This would improve visibility and distance to cross Rectory Row for school children, parents and other pedestrians.

Two objections were received to the proposals, however, neither objector stated any reasons for their objections throughout the consultation process, both at the informal and formal stages.

### **Spring Lane**

The TRO would include the introduction of double yellow lines to reduce obstructive parking around a junction which were deemed necessary in the interests of road safety to improve the visibility when exiting Spring Lane onto West End. There was alternative unrestricted parking available in the area.

One objection had been received in relation to Spring Lane from a local resident who claims that the obstructions caused by vehicles was not as frequent as the County Council believed.

### **The Square / High Street**

The Strategic Traffic Manager informed the Committee that the proposed changes would include the amendment of the current 'restricted waiting 8am-6pm' restrictions (single yellow lines) and the introduction of 'limited waiting 2hrs no return within 2hrs Mon-Sat 9am-6pm' bays. The aim of the proposal was to try and free up more parking for local businesses and improve parking availability within the town. Existing 'limited waiting 2hrs no return within 2hrs' bays on the High Street would also be harmonised in line with other restrictions in the area. Therefore, the existing restriction would be amended to 'limited waiting 2hrs no return within 2hrs Mon-Sat 9am-6pm'.

One objection had been received to the proposed limited waiting bays on the High Street and felt that the area should remain without restrictions.

The Strategic Highways Manager explained that if the location was occupied by vehicles commuting to work and left for the full duration of the day this would negatively impact on income to the local economy and effect the productivity of the local businesses.

### **North End / Whitehouse Drive**

The Strategic Traffic Manager informed the Committee that the proposal was to improve road safety and reduce obstructive parking on the junction of North Road and White House Drive. The proposed amendments included the alteration of a current 'no waiting at any time' restriction (double yellow lines) and the introduction of a 'no waiting and no loading at any time' (double yellows with kerb ticks).

One objection had been received at both the informal and formal consultation stages which stated that the proposals would displace problematic parking in Sedgefield Town Centre further into residential areas causing problem for residents and in particular White House Drive. The objector also expressed concern that wagons would continue to load and unload in the area of the restrictions as they had no alternative point to do so.

At this point the Committee then heard from objections from those members of the public who had attended the meeting.

The first objector was speaking in relation to the proposals for the Rectory Row area. The resident had two concerns, one of which related to the consultation process. The objector felt that to extend the footway was simply money being wasted on a problem that did not exist. The resident suggested that the money ought to be used to repair potholes in the area instead. In response to the video footage referred to in the report the resident felt that precious resources should not be used because of one instance of bad driving.

Sedgefield was a conservation area with adequate provision for pedestrians and vehicles. Car parking was at a premium in Sedgefield whereby the loss of one car parking space created a problem.

Anti-social behaviour had seen a dramatic rise in the area over recent times and the proposals would encourage people to gather and create further anti-social behaviour.

The Strategic Traffic Manager, referring to the video footage explained that the junction encouraged people to drive in an inappropriate way. The proposal would result in pedestrians having to walk a shorter distance to cross the road safely, where at present any pedestrians had to walk the expanse of the carriageway which was very dangerous and was, in his view, an entirely appropriate proposal from a pedestrian safety point of view.

The Committee then heard from the objector to The Square/High Street proposals. The objector felt that the proposed limited waiting bays on the High Street should be left as they are, without restrictions.

The resident pointed out that Durham County Council planners had approved an application for offices in the area on the basis that staff would utilise on-street parking, however, the proposal detailed in the report would reduce the current on-street parking. The objector also felt that any restriction would cause current users, mainly people who worked locally, to park around access roads to The Square, which would affect residents and businesses causing even more problems experienced at present.

In response to the limited waiting bay, the two-hour limit would operate between 9 a.m. to 6 p.m. under the amended proposals. This would see two bays freed up and enable them to be used to access village facilities. The Strategic Highways Traffic Manager felt that on balance, the proposals would achieve what the Council had set out to do.

The Committee then heard from a local resident who supported the proposal for the Rectory Row area. The resident explained that vehicles undertaking and entering junction on the wrong side of the carriageway occurred on a regular basis. The resident recalled an incident where he had attempted to cross the road at The Golden Lion PH. A vehicle had undertaken a dangerous manoeuvre within the

junction and the objector explained that the vehicle would have collided with him if he had any form of limited mobility. The resident also explained that it was not unusual for vehicle to be parked up for 20 minutes and the occupants eating take-aways. The flats were occupied by elderly residents and Anchor Housing had indicated their support for the proposals which would ensure that dangerous manoeuvres could not be carried out.

The Committee then heard from Councillor J Robinson. Councillor Robinson explained that he lived at Whitehouse Drive and urged the Committee to support the proposals. Spring Lane was located 20 yards from Sedgefield Scout Hut which catered for 500 children on a weekly basis and the improvements were noted.

Councillor Robinson had witnessed the problems of the resident who had come along and expressed support for the proposals and explained that officers and Councillors had tried to devise a solution which would be acceptable to all residents and this had been shown during the consultation.

Councillor Robinson explained that he supported the proposals for the remainder of Sedgefield which would hopefully alleviate some of the problems experienced in an ever growing Town.

Councillor O Milburn explained that she had experienced similar parking issues in her Electoral Division and difficulties with people being able to cross roads. Councillor Milburn expressed her support in favour of the recommendations detailed in the report.

Councillor I Jewell explained that many Councillors had similar issues across the County in towns and villages, often due to the historic road design. Councillor Jewell was not a fan of build-outs, however, he could see why one was being proposed in the area central to peoples concerns in Sedgefield. Councillor Jewell felt that some difficulties could arise but it was very difficult to solve problems for all concerned.

**Moved** by Councillor O Milburn, **Seconded** by Councillor I Jewell and

### **Resolved**

That the Committee endorse the proposal to proceed with the implementation of the Sedgefield Waiting and Parking Restrictions Order to the Corporate Director of Regeneration and Local Services.

## **8 Crook - Parking & Waiting Restrictions Order 2019**

The Committee considered a report of the Corporate Director of Regeneration and Local Services regarding objections received to a consultation concerning changes to a traffic regulation order in Crook (for copy see file of Minutes).

The Strategic Traffic Manager informed the Committee that the Council were proposing to introduce a number of changes to the parking and waiting restrictions within Crook following requests from businesses and residents, specifically at the following locations:

- Crook Market Place
- Hope Street Car Park
- B6298 / Park Avenue Close
- Rear of Hope Street
- Hope Street
- North Terrace
- Emerson Street/Dawson Street junction
- West End Villas
- Addison Street
- A690/Dale View junction

A presentation was shown to the Committee which detailed the locations concerned, together aerial and street view images superimposed with the proposed traffic regulations.

The Strategic Traffic Manager informed the Committee that the main proposed change for the Crook area related to the proposed introduction of a 3-hour parking limit at Crook Market Place. Parking surveys had indicated that the car park was full by 9am, with around two thirds of the vehicles remaining parked for most of the day. Around 70 out of 90 spaces were occupied by vehicles which did not move for four hours or more. Between 10am and 3pm, the Market Place car park runs at 90-95% capacity. The effect of the time limit would encourage a greater turnover of use and improve the economic vitality of the town. Displaced vehicles would be expected to park in one of the other non-restricted car parks within the town. In addition to the survey work, an additional 81 staff had been relocated to the Civic Centre from other County Council offices which had placed additional pressure on parking availability.

14 objections were received during the initial consultation phase and 10 objections were received during the formal consultation phase. All objections related to the restricted parking proposals (Mon – Sat, 8am - 6pm, 3 hours, no return within 4 hours) at the Market Place car park.

All of the objectors worked in the town and used the Market Place to park daily. The comments received suggested that there were no viable alternative parking areas and felt that their only option would be to park in the surrounding residential streets. It was also noted that a number of objectors felt that the proposals would hinder businesses and their staff and that ultimately the scheme would be counter-productive. It was also argued by objectors that the restrictions would deter customers from using facilities and businesses in the town. One objector was opposed to parking charges being introduced.

The Strategic Traffic Manager explained that the survey work indicated that on average around 65 spaces were available (in each hourly period) in car parks near the Glenholme Boys Club and opposite the Football Club. Both of the car parks could be reached on foot within 5 minutes or so from the town centre and would be a viable alternative option for parking for workers.

The Chair of the meeting explained that one of the local Councillors, Councillor A Patterson was unable to be present at the meeting due to a prior engagement. Councillor Patterson had provided written representation which she had asked to be read out to the Committee in her absence. The representations were read out as follows:

*I write in support of the parking restriction proposals for Crook. I am sorry I am unable to attend today's meeting but would like to thank the Chair for allowing me to put forward my comments in my capacity as one of the elected members for Crook and as the Cabinet Portfolio Holder for Corporate Services and Rural Issues.*

*For many years Crook has had many issues around parking which is no different to other town centres. At present we have limited space available within the immediate town centre for visitors and tourists, which does not support the local economy. Tourists and visitors often struggle to park as there is limited signage and the central parking on the market place is taken up by people who work in the town. The traffic survey data indicates that most spaces are occupied all day limiting spaces for visitors. Meanwhile within a short distance of the town centre we have a high number of spaces left unoccupied for the majority of the day.*

*I have spoken at length with a number of local businesses and residents and also ran a social media campaign for feedback back in 2018. The majority of residents and businesses were in favour of restricting hours to solve the parking issues but were strongly against introducing parking charges. Those businesses against the restrictions however, did prefer that their customers were able to park on the market place.*

*Retail is changing in many towns and villages and long term sustainability is a challenge for all. In Crook we have a new Lidl store, an Aldi store under construction, which is due to open later in the year and a new Heron's store. Visitor numbers to Crook from the Dales are increasing for the weekly shop and we are becoming a more attractive "stop off" for visitors travelling to the Dales. We have always felt there was a missed opportunity for Crook to be the "Gateway to the Dales" and parking has always been one of the barriers for attracting visitors.*

*I note the majority of objections have come from people who work in the town. Whilst I accept that these people will be affected by the proposed changes, the changes would have a positive impact on the Town. People who live and work in the town have the option of walking to work or parking a little further away. It is only*

*an additional 40-100 m to walk from the other long stay car parks in the surrounding areas. The extra few meters would have a positive impact on health outcomes and free up much needed parking spaces.*

*When people visit the town they want to be able to park in the most convenient place which is the market place. At present we have people choosing to park on double yellow lines to visit the Barclays cash point as there are no spaces to park.*

*I also note that there have been several objections from Council staff. We now have more staff based at the Civic Centre in Crook which is helping to support the local economy. As the portfolio holder for Corporate Services I would like to make the committee aware that we have worked with employees who are new to the town to understand where alternative car parks are and we advise all our staff to be good neighbours. It is positive for the town that we now need to limit time in the market place car park and we will work with our staff to ensure that the changes, if agreed, are understood. It is important to us that we are a good employer and a good neighbour.*

*Introducing the restrictions would have economic benefits, environmental benefits and health benefits and I would urge the committee to support the Officer's recommendations.*

The Committee then heard from Councillor A Reed, one of the other local Councillors for the Crook area. Councillor Reed thanked Highways Officers for their hard work in dealing with a very difficult situation. There had been many staffing moves to Crook Civic Centre which inevitably lead to an influx of vehicles. The Market Square was a busy area comprising two bus stops, shops, takeaways, cash machine etc and was a difficult area to navigate during school time and on an evening.

People had complained about being unable to park at the Doctors surgery as a result of other businesses using the same car parking area. The post office at Bridge Street was experiencing similar issues through workers parking vehicles outside and heading off to work.

Councillor Reed explained that Heron Foods, Aldi and Lidl were all being attracted to the area which was extremely good news for Crook. Councillor Reed did express concern for one business located on North Terrace which was adjusting its business model to change its ways of working and offering customers a delivery option. However, the business was having to park several minutes away. Councillor Reed asked if consideration could be given to allow businesses in the area to prosper and assist them with some form of restriction that would allow them to park/load and unload their delivery vehicles.

The Strategic Traffic Manager thanked Councillor Reed for her comments and explained that the matter relating to the business on North Terrace would need to be looked at as a part of a separate issue.

Councillor D Hicks explained that Consett had experienced the same problem with workers using car park spaces in the main car parks and since similar arrangements had been introduced in Consett, the problems had been alleviated and had made a big difference.

Councillor Considine informed the Committee that she was aware of the issues in and around Crook and felt that there was sufficient parking nearby.

Councillor I Jewell felt that the proposals presented a positive move forward and the Council was doing its best for the area.

**Moved** by Councillor J Considine, **Seconded** by Councillor D Hicks and

### **Resolved**

That the Committee endorse the proposal to proceed with the implementation of the Crook Waiting and Parking Restrictions Order to the Corporate Director of Regeneration and Local Services

## **9 Newton Aycliffe – Parking & Waiting Restrictions Order 2019**

The Committee considered a report of the Corporate Director of Regeneration and Local Services objections received to the consultation regarding changes to a traffic regulation order in Newton Aycliffe (for copy see file of Minutes).

The Strategic Traffic Manager informed the Committee that the Council had received several requests to address ongoing obstructive parking, visibility and safety issues at the following locations within the Newton Aycliffe area:

- Hurworth Road
- Millennium Way
- Long Tens Way
- Greenfield Way
- Welbury Grove
- Middridge Village

A presentation was shown to the Committee which detailed the locations concerned, together aerial and street view images superimposed with the proposed traffic regulations.

The Committee were informed that the proposals for all areas would see the introduction of a 'no waiting at any time' restriction (double yellow lines) and summarised the proposals in respect of each area.

### **Hurworth Road**

Proposals had been requested by local business owners to enable current and potential new businesses to have access within and around the Hurworth road. The area was currently unrestricted, which meant that vehicles often parked and blocked access for vehicles and HGV's. Some vehicles are believed to be owned by staff commuting to work and are parked for the full duration of the day.

Two objections had been received and were detailed in the report. The Strategic Traffic Manager explained that the proposals would allow for loading and unloading for local businesses and for people to drop off and pick up passengers. The restrictions would improve accessibility, visibility and reduce the amount of obstructive all-day parking.

The objectors argue that the restrictions would adversely affect their businesses, however it is the council's belief that the wider benefits for the businesses on the estate outweigh such adverse impacts for these two objectors.

### **Middridge Village Hall**

Measures were requested by Middridge Parish Council to address obstructive parking near the Village Hall, which would improve movement of vehicles around the area.

One person had objected to the proposals on the basis that cars parked were not prohibiting access and were only doing so due to a lack of off-street parking. The objector felt that examples of obstructive parking were experienced elsewhere in the village.

### **Millenium Way / Moordale Road / Long Tens Way**

The proposals were requested by local business owners in a bid to reduce obstructive parking and improve road safety. There had been no objections to the proposal.

### **Welbury Grove**

The proposals had been requested by local residents in a bid to reduce obstructive parking and improve road safety. There had been no objections to the proposal.

### **Greenfield Way**

The proposals were to improve road safety with regards to parked vehicles on Greenfield Way as per the request from both local County Councillors. There had been one objection to the proposal. The objector was pleased that the Council were attempting to resolve an ongoing problem but felt that the only way to solve the 'chaotic' traffic problems would be to have a traffic management scheme that compelled all arrivals and departures from the school to follow a single route.

In response the Strategic Traffic Manager explained that the proposal of a traffic scheme to create a one-way system using undeveloped land would be costly and could potentially cause delays with commuters and road users of the current heavily trafficked area. The current proposals would improve the safety of pedestrians and road users with an instant benefit.

Councillor K Hopper explained that Greenfield Way was one of the main arterial routes in and out of the area and carried a lot of traffic and could understand why the area needed to be improved from a safety point of view.

**Moved** by Councillor I Jewell, **Seconded** by Councillor O Milburn

**Resolved**

That the Committee endorse the proposal to proceed with the implementation of the Crook Waiting and Parking Restrictions Order to the Corporate Director of Regeneration and Local Services.