

DURHAM COUNTY COUNCIL

At a Meeting of **Highways Committee** held in Council Chamber, County Hall, Durham on **Friday 18 October 2024 at 9.30 am**

Present:

Councillor G Hutchinson (in the Chair)

Members of the Committee:

Councillors O Gunn, P Heaviside, J Higgins, R Manchester, E Mavin, A Simpson, A Sterling, M Wilson and D Wood

1 Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors C Kay, R Ormerod and K Robson.

2 Substitute Members

There were no Substitute Members.

3 Minutes

The minutes of the meeting held on 17 September 2024 were confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

4 Declarations of Interest

Councillor A Sterling declared an interest in relation to item 5 - C16A Delves Lane and C58A Stockley Lane Proposed Speed Limit Change as Local Member for Delves Lane and her involvement in discussions on the proposed scheme. It was agreed that she could speak on the item as a Local Member but must leave the meeting afterwards.

5 C16A Delves Lane and C58A Stockerley Lane Proposed Speed Limit Change

The Committee considered a report of the Corporate Director of Regeneration, Economy and Growth that requested approval to progress the introduction of a

40mph buffer zone speed limit scheme on C16A Delves Land and C58A Stockley Lane (for copy of report, see file of minutes).

Kieron Moralee, Traffic Management Section Manager provided a detailed presentation which included a location plan of the proposals and associated buildings; a plan showing the extent of the speed limit change and a plan showing details of the proposals and objectors (for copy of presentation, see file of minutes).

The Traffic Management Section Manager reported that the Objector was unable to attend the meeting today but had provided further correspondence to uphold their objection that reiterated their previous comments.

The Chair asked Councillor A Sterling, Local Member for Delves Lane, to speak in respect of the proposals.

Councillor A Sterling addressed the Committee as a Local Member and stated this proposal had been ongoing before she was elected as a Member. She continued that when she was first elected herself and Councillor Walton met with Maxine Stubbs, Traffic Management Officer, Durham Constabulary and conducted a tour of their whole ward and discussed this particular area in great detail. She commented that it might be strange to increase a speed limit but this was very much for road safety, as you had a hard stop from a 60mph to a 30mph in an area that does not make sense and there was no reason for it to be a 30mph. Herself and the Traffic Management Officer believed that this buffer would slow down the traffic in a more gradual and natural way. She reassured Members that by increasing the speed limit would make it a safer environment for everyone and indicated that she would like to see the increase in the speed limit take place.

Councillor A Sterling withdrew from the meeting during the debate and decision on this item.

Councillor O Gunn indicated that these buffers were being introduced across the County. She commented that some statistics included within the report that these buffers work would have been helpful and asked for some examples of where these buffers worked to reduce speeds and acted as a buffer to reduce speeding in the area.

The Traffic Management Section Manager responded that the Speed Management Strategy closely followed the Department of Transport guidance where a lot of work goes into what works into making a speed limit credible. He continued that the 40mph buffer was not trying to change the behaviour of vehicles at that location they were trying to make other people on the network aware that this was the speed that vehicles are driving to and improve the roadside environment where it changes to a 30mph. Looking at compliance when hitting 30mph zones they do see success and if agreed today speed surveys following the introduction of the increased speed limit would be carried out.

Michelle McIntosh, Traffic Assets Team Leader provided details of success stories particularly in Stanhope that had been considered at this Committee. She indicated that they were not permitted to repeat the speed limit signage in villages where there was a series of street lights. This 40mph buffer zone allowed them to remind drivers of the speed limit by using repeated signage. She stated that they have had some successes and was happy to provide some data around this and commented that there were some similar proposals that they were currently looking at if Members wished to view the plans for these proposals.

Councillor D Wood **Moved** that the recommendation be agreed. This was **Seconded** by Councillor E Mavin.

Upon a vote being taken the Committee unanimously:

Resolved: The Committee endorsed the proposal, in principle, to introduce the 40mph buffer zone speed limit scheme on C16A Delves Lane and C58A Stockerley Lane with the final decision to be made by the Corporate Director under delegated powers.

Councillor A Sterling joined the meeting following the conclusion of this item

6 Easington and Hetton, Parking & Waiting Restrictions, Traffic Regulation Amendment Order 2024

The Committee considered a report of the Corporate Director of Regeneration, Economy and Growth that advised Members of objections received to the consultation concerning proposed changes to the Traffic Regulation Order (TRO) in Easington & Hetton (for copy of report, see file of minutes).

Kieron Moralee, Traffic Management Section Manager provided a detailed presentation which included a location plan of the proposals; location plans of the South Side/Stockton Road proposals locations and details of the representations received (for copy of presentation, see file of minutes).

The Chair noted that no Objectors or Local Members were in attendance to provide representations.

Councillor J Higgins **Moved** that the recommendation be agreed. This was **Seconded** by Councillor O Gunn.

Upon a vote being taken the Committee unanimously:

Resolved: That the Committee endorsed the proposal, in principle, to introduce the Easington & Hetton (Parking and Waiting Restrictions) Traffic Regulation

Amendment Order 2024, with the final decision to be made by the Corporate Director under delegated powers.