

DURHAM COUNTY COUNCIL

HIGHWAYS COMMITTEE

At a meeting of the **Highways Committee** held in the **Council Chamber, County Hall, Durham** on **Friday 8 December 2023** at **9.30 am**

Present:

Councillor G Hutchinson in the Chair

Members of the Committee:

Councillors T Duffy, J Higgins, E Mavin, D Oliver, G Smith, A Sterling, D Sutton-Lloyd (Substitute for Councillor J Howey) and D Wood.

1 Apologies

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors J Howey, C Kay, R Ormerod, A Simpson, F Tinsley and M Wilson.

2 Substitute Members

Councillor D Sutton-Lloyd was in attendance for Councillor J Howey.

3 Minutes

The minutes of the meeting held on 20 October 2023 were confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

4 Declarations of Interest

Councillor E Mavin declared an interest in relation to item 5, stating a relative of his resided at Front Street, Framwellgate Moor.

Referring to item 6, Councillor T Duffy, local member for Peterlee East division clarified that whilst both Peterlee West and East divisions were affected by the proposal, the streets in question were located within the Peterlee West division.

5 Framwellgate Moor - Proposed Traffic Calming

The Committee considered a report of the Corporate Director of Regeneration, Economy and Growth regarding representations received during the formal consultation period in respect of a proposal to introduce traffic calming to effect a 20mph zone on Front Street, Framwellgate Moor (for copy, see file of minutes).

Kieron Moralee, Traffic Management Section Manager, presented background to the proposal explaining that the scheme was part of the wider public realm works for the regeneration of Framwellgate Moor to enhance the retail area and the traffic calming and speed reduction measures would improve road safety. During the Covid-19 pandemic, a temporary 20mph speed limit was imposed as part of the emergency active travel project on Front Street, to encourage active travel during the time of reduced access to public transport. The traffic calming measure was proposed in order to support the existing 20mph speed limit and create a 20mph zone. The Committee viewed a presentation which detailed the scheme proposals (for copy of presentation see file).

During the formal consultation period, one objection had been received. The objector was unable to attend the meeting, however, further to their original objection as detailed in pages 11 to 12 of the report, a further email submission from the objector had been received which was circulated to the Committee in advance of the meeting. The Traffic Management Section Manager summarised the points made by the objector in their original submission and Durham County Council's response. With regard to the additional submission, the Traffic Management Section Manager explained this related to a request for a further speed table instead of speed cushions. The Traffic Management Section Manager responded that the introduction of a speed table would be expensive and it was not necessary as the steep bend was a natural speed reduction feature. Furthermore, the introduction of a speed table would not reduce the need for intermediate cushions along Front Street.

The Chair noted that the three local members had raised no objections to the proposal.

In response to a request from Councillor Wood who asked for details of funding for the scheme, Michelle McIntosh, Traffic Assets Team Leader, undertook to forward the information to Councillor Wood following the meeting. Councillor Wood commented that the additional submission seemed to be somewhat contradictory in that the objector requested an extra speed table however they also stated that, in the current economic climate, it was an unnecessary expense. In addition, the objector indicated their support for a 20mph speed limit but not a 20mph speed limit with speed cushions.

Councillor Wood stated he was satisfied that the points raised had been addressed and the objection should be set aside.

Councillor Oliver commented the proposal appeared to be a positive initiative and he asked for clarification on congestion and parking on Front Street. The Traffic Management Section Manager clarified that there was provision for off-street parking and there were double-yellow line restrictions on one side of the road. Both lanes of traffic were for the most part unrestricted.

Councillor Mavin seconded the recommendation.

Councillor Duffy spoke in favour of the proposal saying he was familiar with the area and the 20mph restriction and he raised his concern that removing the existing measures would lead to vehicles speeding.

Councillor Sterling also expressed her support for the 20mph speed limit, however, she felt that the proposal included a high number of speed cushions and asked for clarification as to why that was the case. The officers explained that design guidance was followed as best practice and that a number of speed cushions were required in order to provide uniformity and the consistency of spacing reduced the opportunity for speeding.

Moved by Councillor Wood, **Seconded** by Councillor Mavin

Upon a vote being taken the Committee unanimously:

Resolved

To endorse the proposal, in principle, to introduce the traffic calming scheme on Front Street, Framwellgate Moor to effect a 20 mph zone, with the final decision to be made by the Corporate Director, under delegated powers.

6 Peterlee & Horden - Parking & Waiting Restrictions, Traffic Regulation Order 2023

The Committee considered a report of the Corporate Director of Regeneration, Economy and Growth which advised Members of objections to the consultation concerning changes to the Traffic Regulation Order (TRO) in Peterlee and Horden (for copy, see file of minutes).

The Traffic Management Section Manager delivered a presentation which included a location plan of the proposal to introduce no waiting at any time restrictions at Pennine Drive, Peterlee (for copy, see file).

The Committee noted Pennine Drive was a major though route and residents had raised concerns regarding the manner of parking by parents of children attending nearby schools which can result in the carriageway being obstructed at the junctions of Van Mildert Close and Lorimers Close, leading to Pennine Drive.

Durham Constabulary had requested the restrictions be extended further north, as parking on the bend caused obstructions. The primary focus of the proposal, therefore, was road safety.

The Committee noted that during the formal consultation three objections were received, one was later withdrawn leaving two outstanding objections. The objectors were not present and the Traffic Management Section Manager summarised the objections and the Council's response as detailed on pages 25 to 27 of the report.

In moving the recommendation, Councillor Sterling commented that, on viewing the photographs of the junction on page 45 of the report, the proposal under consideration seemed eminently sensible.

Councillor Duffy stated he was familiar with the location and the high prevalence of inconsiderate parking and he questioned whether any enforcement action had taken place.

The Traffic Management Section Manager agreed to take Councillor Duffy's comments back to the service and he highlighted the importance of intelligence from Members which helps to inform where targeted enforcement may be necessary, particularly in rural areas. Councillor Sutton-Lloyd stressed that when measures are put in place, this should be followed-up to ensure they are having the desired effect.

Seconding the recommendation, Councillor Higgins stated that on visiting the location, he shared Councillor Duffy's concerns.

Moved by Councillor Sterling, **Seconded** by Councillor Higgins.

Upon a vote being taken the Committee unanimously:

Resolved

To endorse the proposal, in principle, to introduce the Peterlee and Horden Parking and Waiting Restrictions Traffic Regulation Amendment Order 2023, with the final decision to be made by the Corporate Director, under delegated powers.