

TRAFFIC MANAGEMENT SUB-COMMITTEE MINUTES - 1 NOVEMBER 2018

Present: Councillor Ayub (Chair)

Councillors Debs Absolom, Barnett-Ward, Ennis, Hacker, Hopper, Jones, Page, R Singh, Stanford-Beale and Terry.

Apologies: Councillor McGonigle.

23. FORMER TRANSPORT USERS' FORUM - CONSULTATIVE ITEM

(1) Questions

There were no questions submitted in accordance with the Panel's Terms of Reference.

(2) Presentation - Motorcycles within Local Transport Plans

Dave Scott-Lee and Peter Seymour, Representatives Reading Motorcycle Action Group, gave a presentation on Motorcycles within Local Transport Plans. They told the Sub-Committee that motorcycles should be part of the solution in terms of reducing congestion, reducing emissions and improving safety in towns. Research had shown that if motorcycles and scooters were accepted as a legitimate transport mode and fully integrated into transport policy, all road users would benefit and if one car driver in ten chose to start using a motorcycle or scooter research had shown that congestion was reduced by 40% and overall emissions reduced by 6%. In the Reading area 3.8% of registered vehicles were powered two wheelers (PTWs); currently only 1% of journeys were made by PTWs nationally in the UK. PTWs and bicycles acted in a similar way to reduce congestion and pollution but over different distances and the National Policy Chiefs' Council and Highways England advocated that a combined approach to travel on foot, by bicycle and PTW and public transport was only achievable by including PTWs in planning from the outset. Other authorities had included motorcycles in their planning and there was strong evidence that as the number of motorcycles increased congestion decreased and the accident rate went down. PTWs were not currently included in any local transport plan but potential benefits would not be realised without their inclusion.

A copy of the presentation slides was made available on the Reading Borough Council website.

Resolved - That Dave Scott and Peter Seymour be thanked for their presentation.

24. MINUTES

The Minutes of the meeting of 12 September 2018 were confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

25. QUESTIONS FROM COUNCILLORS

There were no questions submitted in accordance with the Panel's Terms of Reference.

26. WAITING RESTRICTION REVIEW UPDATE - 2018A DOVEDALE CLOSE

Further to Minute 16 of the previous meeting, the Director of Environment and Neighbourhood Services submitted a report providing the Sub-Committee with an update on the proposal relating to Dovedale Close/The Mount. A drawing of the advertised restriction was attached to the report at Appendix 1.

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The report stated that at the previous meeting the Sub-Committee had raised concerns regarding the length of carriageway that had been covered by proposals of new double-yellow lines from Dovedale Close to Albert Road junctions. It had been agreed that a decision on this proposal, which had formed part of the 2018A review programme, should be deferred so that officers could consider whether it would be appropriate to create a gap in the yellow line restriction for parking on The Mount. Officers had reviewed this section of The Mount and had considered that the original recommended proposal remained the recommended proposal for implementation. Applying the Highway Code rule of no parking within 10m of a junction, there would remain a gap that would be insufficiently long to accommodate parking for the majority of vehicles. The removal of parking at this section would also benefit visibility for traffic exiting Dovedale Close and for vehicles approaching the junctions of Clifton Park Road and Albert Road. The report therefore recommended that the Sub-Committee agree to implement this restriction as it had been advertised during the statutory consultation. This would allow the Traffic Regulation Order for the 2018A programme to be made and the implementation of the programme instructed.

Resolved -

- (1) That the report be noted;**
- (2) That the implementation of the Dovedale Close/The Mount restriction, as advertised, to complete the agreements for the 2018A programme, be agreed;**
- (3) That the Head of Legal and Democratic Services be authorised to seal the resultant Traffic Regulation Order and no public inquiry be held into the proposals;**
- (4) That respondents to the statutory consultation be informed of the decision of the Sub-Committee accordingly, following publication of the approved meeting minutes.**

27. RESIDENT PERMIT PARKING: PROPOSAL FOR STATUTORY CONSULTATION (THE WILLOWS & ST STEPHENS CLOSE)

Further to Minute 77 of the meeting held on 9 March 2017, the Director of Environment and Neighbourhood Services submitted a report recommending that a statutory consultation be conducted on an element of the Lower Caversham area Resident Permit Parking scheme relating to The Willows and St Stephens Close. A drawing of the proposed restrictions for The Willows and St Stephens Close was attached to the report at Appendix 1.

The report explained that the Sub-Committee had set priorities for scheme development on the list of requests for Resident Permit Parking (RPP) at the March 2017 meeting; the request for St Stephens Close and The Willows had been separate to the Lower Caversham area and had been set at a lower priority than this area scheme. Due to the proximity of St Stephens Close and The Willows to the wider Lower Caversham area, it was recommended that the initial scheme development work (informal consultation and concept design) be conducted as a single scheme to expedite the progression of this relatively small scheme. The dedicated scheme steering group agreed the concept designs for informal consultation and this consultation had been conducted over the summer 2018,

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including a public drop-in. The feedback from this informal consultation had been reviewed and it was clear that the area scheme required areas of further consideration. The steering group had agreed that it was now appropriate to separate St Stephens Close and The Willows from the wider area scheme and progress this section while final decisions were being made for the wider area proposals.

The report recommended that the area be part of the '01R' parking zone and that any objections to the statutory consultation be reported to the January 2019 meeting. It was acknowledged that some informal consultation feedback had requested the placement of additional double-yellow lines within this proposed area restriction. The steering group had agreed with the officer recommendation to consider any changes to parking behaviour following the potential implementation of RPP before adding further restrictions. If issues occurred, despite those parking in the RPP zone having a vested interest in their local area, these could be addressed in the bi-annual Waiting Restriction Review Programme. It was intended that the steering group would be in a position to agree the wider area Lower Caversham RPP statutory consultation proposals for submission to the January 2019 meeting.

Resolved -

- (1) That the report be noted;**
- (2) That the scheme, as set out in Appendix 1 attached to the report, proceed to statutory consultation;**
- (3) That the Head of Legal and Democratic Services be authorised to carry out the statutory consultation and advertise the proposals in accordance with the Local Authorities Traffic Orders (Procedure) (England and Wales) Regulations 1996;**
- (4) That subject to no objections being received, the Head of Legal and Democratic Services be authorised to make the Traffic Regulation Order;**
- (5) That any objections received during the statutory consultation be reported to a future meeting of the Sub-Committee;**
- (6) That the Head of Transportation and Streetcare, in consultation with the Lead Councillor for Strategic Environment, Planning and Transport, be authorised to make minor changes to the proposals;**
- (7) That no public enquiry be held into the proposals.**

28. RESIDENTS PARKING SCHEME - UPDATE REPORT

The Director of Environment and Neighbourhood Services submitted a report providing the Sub-Committee with an update on the online application process that had been available to residents for almost a year. A table that set out the Discretionary Permits that had been issued between 1 November 2017 and 18 October 2018 was attached to the report at Appendix 1.

The report stated that the 19 Residents Parking zones across the Borough encompassed all the areas and residential properties that had been covered by the previous scheme which had had 52 zones, but they now provided more space on street throughout the larger

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zones. These changes were in line with previous committee decisions and reflected the outcome of a survey of all residents within the Residents Parking Scheme. The Council had introduced a new online permit application system from 1 November 2017 and the decision had been made for residents to re-submit their proofs as some residents had not had any checks made since 2011. Between 1 November 2017 and 18 October 2018 the Council had issued 8,402 Resident Permits, 11,641 Visitor Permits and a grand total of 26,244 permits, all of which had been issued through the online system.

The report included a table showing the split between Resident and Visitor permits and explained that residents who were unable to apply online could still apply by post, although only 5% had done so with the rest being applied for online. The online system had also improved the efficiency of the application process, reducing processing time from 28 days to 7 days for resident and visitor applications, although it could take up to 28 days to review discretionary applications.

The report asked the Sub-Committee to consider the use of Temporary Parking Permits being issued as a download option and/or without the need to display a permit. This would reduce the number of residents attending the Council offices whilst also accepting applications outside of Council opening times. Temporary permits were issued for eight weeks to residents who had just moved into a property, changed their vehicle or had a temporary change of vehicle. The current charge was £15 and normally only one temporary permit per resident was issued, as it was felt that eight weeks was sufficient time to acquire the correct proofs for a full residents permit. There were two types of temporary permits available, scratchcards (issued in person) and disc permits (sent from printers). 3,294 temporary permits had been issued, 2,843 in person, 397 online and 54 offline.

Applications made in person at the Civic Offices were issued as a scratchcard temporary permit for the resident to take away and display in their vehicle for eight weeks. This caused a problem when the Civic Offices were closed and where it was more difficult for a resident to get to the offices. Where a successful application was made online a disc temporary permit would be posted to the applicant, this typically took five to seven days to reach the resident. Successful applications made offline, sent via the post, would be posted a scratchcard temporary permit which took up to ten days depending on the processing and post. Temporary permits that were issued as a download and/or without the need to display anything would provide instant permitted parking which would overcome the current limitations and times of real need by the resident thus giving a positive and flexible experience for residents. With this download option there would need to be an allowed period of parking without displaying anything where residents did not have access to a printer, this period would need to be long enough to allow a resident, without a printer of their own, to gain access to such a facility either themselves or from the Council. This would eliminate the uncertainty and delay associated with postal applications and processing, the issues of delay in physical permits being received in the post and problems with permits falling down/details obscured/incorrect and details scratched out. The new permit technology would simplify the monitoring and enforcement of permits and the enforcement contractor would be instantly aware of the temporary permit, avoiding the issue of Penalty Charge Notices where a problem had occurred. Conversely, all permit data was linked with the back office software system to verify compliance and ensure prompt action was taken against vehicles without a valid permit.

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The Sub-Committee discussed the report and agreed that there should be a download option for temporary permits and that the permit would have to be displayed in the resident's vehicles. It was also agreed that a report should be submitted to a future meeting on the extension of online options and use.

Resolved -

- (1) That the update on the online application process be noted;
- (2) That the Traffic Regulation Orders to be updated, as set out in paragraph 7.1 of the report, be authorised; (not referred to above);
- (3) That Temporary parking permits be issued as a download option and the permit had to be displayed in resident's vehicles;
- (4) That a report be submitted to a future meeting on the extension of online options and use.

29. MAJOR TRANSPORT AND HIGHWAY PROJECTS - UPDATE

The Director of Environment and Neighbourhood Services submitted a report providing the Sub-Committee with an update on the current major transport and highways projects in Reading namely:

Cow Lane Bridges

Thames Valley Berkshire Growth Deal Schemes

And the following unfunded schemes:

Reading West Station

Tilehurst Station

Third Thames Bridge

The report stated that work on the final phase of the NCN 422 programme was currently being finalised and was expected to be reported to the Strategic Environment, Planning and Transport Committee on 21 November 2018. The proposed scheme built on works that had been delivered as part of the LSTF programme by extending shared use facilities along Wokingham Road from Cemetery Junction to the Three Tuns. Measure included improved pedestrian and cycle crossing facilities, junction treatments, signing and footway widening, including proposed changes to the existing pedestrian crossing on Wokingham Road to the east of St Bartholomews Road. NCN 422 Phase 3 Drawings were attached to the report at Appendix A.

The report also explained that the Council had nominated Tilehurst Station for consideration for funding from the Access for All programme, with the objective of providing lifts at the station. No local funding had been committed as part of this process.

The Sub-Committee discussed the report and it was suggested that in respect of NCN 422 there would potentially be an issue caused by cars filtering right onto Crescent Road just after Grange Avenue on the Wokingham Road, as there would be no room for vehicles

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heading towards Wokingham to pass those filtering right without entering the cycle route, thus increasing congestion in this area where, at peak times, congestion was already an issue. The Sub-Committee agreed that officers should investigate the potential issue.

Resolved -

- (1) That the progress on delivery of the programme of major transport schemes as set out within the report be noted;
- (2) That the Head of Legal Services be authorised to carry out the Statutory Notice procedures for the intention to make alterations to existing traffic calming features along Wokingham Road as part of the NCN 422 scheme, as set out in Appendix A attached to the report and in accordance with Section 23 of the Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984, subject to the Statutory Notices only being undertaken if scheme and spend approval was granted by the Strategic Environment, Planning and Transport Committee on 21 November 2018;
- (3) That the potential issue of increased congestion between Grange Avenue and Crescent Road, around the right filter onto Crescent Road, as a result of the extension of NCN 422 be investigated by officers;
- (4) That the nomination of Reading West Station and Tilehurst Station for consideration as part of the Department for Transport's Access for All programme, and that no local funding contribution had been committed as part of this process be noted, and if successful, a further report be submitted to a future meeting of the Strategic Environment, Planning and Transport Committee to seek scheme and spend approval.

30. CAR PARKS

The Director of Environment and Neighbourhood Services submitted a report informing the Sub-Committee of the transfer of the management of the Council's public car parks back in house.

The report stated that the management contract in relation to the Council's car parks had been let in June 2007 for a 15 year contracted term, with the contract expected to naturally terminate in June 2022. As a result of a contract review, savings in the region of £1.8M over the remaining term of the contract (4 years) had been identified by ending the contract early. The contract was a management only service with the Council retaining all the responsibility for the assets and capital expenditure. Whilst the commencement of the contract had included initial capital investment there had been no further investment since and it had been recognised that some of the Council's car parks were in need of investment to better compete in a healthy competitive market. With only four years left of the contract there was no desire by either party to make any further investment in the car parks and continuation of the contract would only generate the need for a larger capital investment in four years. Voluntary termination of the contract offered an opportunity to revisit the current service and generate additional income for the Council, for example, investing in automatic number plate recognition provided increased security, pre-booking and account based (cashless) payment systems. By improving the attractiveness of the Council's car parks business would also increase thus increasing car parking revenue.

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The report explained that Transfer of Undertakings (TUPE) would be applicable in respect of staff at the point of termination and seven of the contracted management/operational team had joined the Council. As a consequence the handover on 4 October 2018 had been relatively trouble free with only a few minor issues needing to be resolved. Within two weeks of handback all customer facing services were fully integrated and operating as the Council would want and the in-house team were now focusing their attention on future growth opportunities.

In the short term by bringing the management of the car parks back in house the Council would not want to change the tariff as had been recommended at the 13 June 2018 meeting (Minute 7 refers). Under the management contract tariff increases were put forward by the contractor with very little input or control by the Council. Alternative opportunities were now being sought to offer better customer value within the current tariff band rather than increase car parking prices. One idea, for example, was to explore an off-peak tariff that would encourage visits to the town centre during quieter periods of the day/week. This might be particularly attractive at Christmas when roads could be much busier during peak times with extra shopping traffic. Another tariff opportunity might also include differing payment bands on the environmental impact of the vehicle.

Finally, the report stated that in the longer term, with advancement in solar technology, there was likely to be a number of opportunities in generating solar power for the Council and its customers. With the increasing use of electric vehicles the Council lacked charging points within the Borough's car parks and solar power might offer vehicle charging opportunities alongside reduced energy bills for the car parks themselves. There was also the desire to invest in the Cattle Market car park to offer a higher quality product to meet the demand in commuter travel once the Elizabeth Line opened.

Resolved - That the report be noted.

31. EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC

Resolved -

That, pursuant to Section 100A of the Local Government Act 1972 (as amended) members of the press and public be excluded during consideration of the following item below, as it was likely that there would be disclosure of exempt information as defined in Paragraphs 1 and 2 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of that Act.

32. APPLICATIONS FOR DISCRETIONARY PARKING PERMITS

The Director of Environment and Neighbourhood Services submitted a report giving details of the background to her decisions to refuse applications for Discretionary Parking Permits from a total of fourteen applicants, who had subsequently appealed against these decisions.

Resolved -

- (1) That, with regard to application 7 a first discretionary resident permit be issued, personal to the applicant, subject to no other person in the property having been granted a residents permit;**

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- (2) That with regard to application 8 a first discretionary resident permit be issued, personal to the applicant;
- (3) That with regard to application 12 a first discretionary resident permit be issued, personal to the applicant, subject to confirmation that this was the first permit for the property;
- (4) That with regard to application 14 a first discretionary business permit be issued, personal to the applicant;
- (5) That, with regard to application 4 a third discretionary resident permit be issued, personal to the applicant, subject to the provision of adequate residency and vehicle proofs;
- (6) That with regard to application 13 a teacher's permit be issued charged at £30;
- (7) That the Director of Environment and Neighbourhood Services' decision to refuse applications 1, 2, 3, 5, 6, 9, 10 and 11 be upheld.

(Exempt information as defined in Paragraphs 1 and 2).

(The meeting started at 6.30 pm and finished at 7.53 pm).