

Appeals & Complaints Committee

A meeting of Appeals & Complaints Committee was held on Thursday, 22nd September, 2022.

Present: Cllr Evaline Cunningham (Chair), Cllr Pauline Beall, Cllr Maurice Perry, Cllr Hugo Stratton

Officers: Julie Butcher, Michael Henderson, Jonathan Kibble, Ann McClone

Also in attendance: Cllr Kevin Faulks and Cllr Ross Patterson (Ward Councillors)

Apologies: Cllr Mohammed Javed, Cllr Tina Large, Cllr Julia Whitehill

**ACC
6/22** **Evacuation Procedure**

Members noted the Evacuation Procedure.

**ACC
7/22** **Declarations of Interest**

There were no declarations of interest.

**ACC
8/22** **Minutes from the Appeals and Complaints Committee which was held on 21st July 2022**

The minutes of the meeting held on 21 July 2022 were confirmed as a correct record.

**ACC
9/22** **Committee Procedure**

Members noted and agreed the Committee Procedure.

**ACC
10/22** **STOCKTON-ON-TEES BOROUGH COUNCIL, SOBER HALL AVENUE, INGLEBY BARWICK, TRAFFIC CALMING SCHEME**

Consideration was given to a report that sought Members' views on unresolved objections, received, following the statutory advertising of a proposal, to implement a traffic calming scheme on Sober Hall Avenue, Ingleby Barwick, consisting of 4 sets of speed cushions on the section of road between Blair Avenue and Round Hill Avenue.

The Committee was reminded that this issue had been considered, at its meeting held on 21 July 2022, when Members had debated the arguments for, and against, the introduction of the speed cushions. At that time, the Committee had indicated that it considered that a better understanding, as to why Ingleby Barwick West Ward Councillors had chosen the speed cushion option, would assist it in making any recommendations on the proposal. Therefore, it had been agreed that the item be deferred, to a future date, when the Ingleby Barwick West Ward Councillors could provide more information about their preferred option and potentially attend a meeting of the Committee, to answer questions.

Members considered the information provided, in the report, which included objections and responses, together with a report from Cllr Ken Dixon detailing

Ward Councillors' rationale for proposing the introduction of speed cushions as a Traffic Calming scheme at Soder Hall Avenue, Ingleby Barwick. In addition, Ward Councillors Kevin Faulk and Ross Patterson were present at the meeting to provide further information, in this regard, and answer any questions.

Cllr Faulks' and Cllr Patterson's representations, and responses to questions, could be summarised as follows:

- Officers had tried schemes to reduce speed for some time, including the introduction of hatching, in 2017/18 hatching had been placed on the road to narrow it in an attempt to reduce speeds.
- Ward Councillors had been receiving emails, from residents whose houses faced Soder Hall Avenue, highlighting their concerns, since 2019. These emails became more regular from 2021, indicating that speeding continued on a daily basis.
- Reference was made to a road death, in 2012, on Roundhill Avenue, which led off Soder Hall Avenue. A Ward Member also referred to an incident, where a vehicle had left the road, on Blair Avenue, and gone into a house.
- Members had recognised that the road was straight, and houses were setback. These factors, perhaps, created an environment that led to motorists travelling at higher speeds than the legal limit.
- Officers prepared a report, in 2021, providing options for the road. Ward members had considered that speed cushions were the best option and other measures were unlikely to have the same level of success.
- Speed cushions had been successful in reducing speeds in other parts of Ingleby Barwick, such as Beckfield Road.
- In response to objections about speed cushions damaging vehicles, members suggested that, if this was a significant problem, their use would be questioned at a national level, as they were a feature of many roads throughout the country.
- Ward Members indicated that there were some drivers who used roads, such as Soder Hall Avenue as a 'racetrack' and they felt assured that speed cushions were the most likely measures to prevent this.
- Cleveland Police was unlikely to be able to resource adequate monitoring of the road, so engineering solutions were necessary.
- Signage alone, only produced a 1 mph reduction in speeds.

Officers advised the Committee that a speed survey had been carried out and average speeds were below enforcement levels, however, speeds above the 85th percentile averaged at 36.1 mph, which was enforceable and met the criteria for an engineering measure to be introduced.

At this point officers and Ward Members left the meeting room, apart from the Legal Officer and Governance Officer.

The Committee agreed that the Ward Councillors had clarified their reasons for opting for speed cushions scheme and agreed that, in this case, it appeared to be the most suitable solution. The Committee agreed that its recommendation was that the proposed traffic calming scheme go ahead as advertised.

The Committee indicated that, in circumstance where ward members had decided on a preferred scheme, which was subsequently referred to this Committee, the background and reasons for their decision should be included in the report to Committee. In addition, those members should be invited to attend the Committee meeting that was considering the referral.

RESOLVED that:

1. the Committee's recommendation be that the traffic calming scheme go ahead as advertised.
2. in circumstance where ward members had decided on a preferred scheme, which was subsequently referred to this Committee, the background and reasons for their decision should be included in the report to Committee. In addition, those members should be invited to attend the Committee meeting that was considering the referral.