

Crime and Disorder Select Committee

A meeting of Crime and Disorder Select Committee was held on Thursday, 17th December, 2015.

Present: Cllr Paul Baker(Chairman), Cllr David Wilburn(Vice-Chairman), Cllr Ken Dixon, Cllr Paul Rowling, Cllr Norma Stephenson O.B.E, Cllr Sally Ann Watson (Vice Cllr Matthew Vickers), Cllr Mrs Sylvia Walmsley, Cllr Julia Whitehill, Cllr Lisa Grainge (Vice Cllr Barry Woodhouse)

Officers: Joanne Roberts (Traffic & Network Safety Manager), Jamie Stephenson (Senior Enforcement Officer), Graham Birtle (Scrutiny Officer), Jenna McDonald (Governance Officer)

Also in attendance:

Apologies: Cllr Matthew Vickers, Cllr Barry Woodhouse

1 Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest.

2 Minutes of meeting held on 15th October 2015 - for signature

The minutes of the meeting held on 15 October 2015 were signed by the Chairman as a correct record.

AGREED that the minutes were signed by the Chairman as a correct record.

3 Minutes of meeting held on 15th November 2015 - for approval

Consideration was given to the draft minutes of the meeting held on 15 November 2015.

AGREED that the minutes be approved.

4 Scrutiny Review of School Parking

The Committee was provided with a report on the review of School Parking.

Key points were highlighted as follows:

- The Council's Enforcement Service operated two Enforcement Officer Agencies which included Civil Enforcement Officer's and Neighbourhood Enforcement Officer's

- Civil Enforcement Officer's enforced parking regulations both on street and off street car parks mainly around town centres and schools

- Neighbourhood Enforcement Officer's enforced on street parking regulations and abandoned vehicles. The Neighbourhood Enforcement Team operated in all locations across the Borough, mobile and on foot. The Neighbourhood Enforcement Service operated on a 24/7 basis, 365 days per year.

- It was highlighted that in terms of school parking, the following could be enforced:

School Zig Zags
Single and Double yellow lines
Obstructive, indiscriminate and inconsiderate parking

Members raised the following points/questions:

- Was it possible for an Enforcement Officer to issue fines for vehicle removal? It was noted that while Officers could not issue fines for the removal of a vehicle, vehicle removal companies did in fact charge the owner of the vehicle directly
- Could abandoned vehicles only be removed by officers if found on adopted highway? It was heard that this was the case, however if abandoned on private land, with the land owners permission the vehicle could then be removed
- Members asked whether photographs of illegal parking on zig zag's provided by Councillors could be used as evidence. It was noted that in order to be used as evidence, the photographs must be supplied by those with Enforcement powers only to support the issue of a Penalty Charge Notice (PCN).
- The Committee sought information on the Council's approach on parking on zig zag's. In response, it was noted that parking on zig zag markings was an immediate offence and would be dealt with by the issue of a PCN, in other areas where double or single yellow lines existed an observation period was required, A PCN could not be issued immediately. SBC officers aimed to act as ambassadors for the town by adopting an engaging and educating first line approach in some of these circumstances.
- Members asked whether single white lines in front of houses were enforceable and heard that the lines were enforceable and removal notices could be issued when necessary.
- The Committee was keen to understand whether action could be taken towards vehicle owners damaging grassed areas by parking illegally. It was heard that if the vehicle could be identified, action could be taken.
- Referring to the Parking on Pavements leaflet discussed at a previous meeting, the Committee asked whether a similar leaflet could be provided to Councillors for distribution detailing parking offences. Members agreed that this approach may be effective in order to inform drivers that they have committed an offence.
- Members agreed that a ticketing approach as an alternative to the light touch approach could also educate vehicle owners
- The Committee discussed information about Hartlepool Council's Camera Car which was a £40,000 vehicle equipped with the latest Automatic Number Plate Recognition technology. It was noted that £80,000 of fines were issued as a result of the technology in its first year on the road. Members agreed that consideration should be given to the investment of a camera car in Stockton-On-Tees
- Information was sought on the revenue made from Hartlepool Borough

Council's camera car. Members agreed that should a camera car be purchased by SBC, it was important to create awareness of the vehicle in order to encourage people to consider their actions. It was suggested that schools could potentially contribute to leaflets providing information on the camera car. It was also suggested that should a camera car be purchased, a newspaper article be produced in order to highlight the importance of the vehicle.

- The Committee asked whether it was possible for the money received from fines be used to contribute to the investment of a camera car. In response, it was heard that this depended upon the Service Level Agreement (SLA)

- With regard to the period of time taken before a ticketing a vehicle, it was asked whether the 'Parking Eye' method could be used. It was highlighted that the observation must be made by an officer in order to be used as evidence. It was noted that Local Authorities must abide by primary legislation which was the Road Traffic Regulation Act.

- Members were keen to understand an Enforcement Officers approach to a dangerously parked vehicle. It was noted that if parked dangerously, an immediate removal notice would be issued

- Members of the Committee were informed that the implementation of loading restrictions could be reviewed by officers however, if questioned by blue badge holders, public inquiry would be required

- The Committee suggested that due to primary school children requiring supervision when being taken to school, it may have been beneficial for the school to arrange a dedicated supervision service, morning and afternoon to avoid parking related issues. It was noted that this was to be asked at the meeting with Head Teachers and Governors.

- It was asked why disabled parking areas could not be provided within all school grounds, it was highlighted that the Local Authority did not have control over school car parks however, this was to be discussed at the meeting with Head Teachers and Governors.

- It was highlighted that the officer in attendance of the meeting was keen to have a Junior Road Safety Officer in every school in the Borough

- Members requested information on the amount of time Enforcement Officers spent at schools monitoring school parking or attending to school parking issues.

1. Information on the revenue made from Hartlepool Borough Council's camera car be provided at a future meeting

2. That a selection of excerpts taken from body cameras worn by Enforcement Officers be provided at a future meeting in order to demonstrate behaviour. It was suggested that this could also be used as a short film to provide schools for educating parents at school 'welcome' meetings

3. That information on time Enforcement Officers spent at schools monitoring school parking or attending to school parking issues be provided at a future

meeting.

4. A meeting between the Committee and Head Teachers be arranged in order to discuss school parking

5. The information be noted.

5 Work Programme

Members gave consideration to the work programme 2015-16.

The Committee were asked for any suggested topics for future reviews which would be taken to the Scrutiny Liaison Forum.

AGREED that the work programme be noted.

6 Chair's Update

The Chairman of the Committee informed Members that the work which was carried out by the Committee on the Scrutiny Review of River Tees Crossing Infrastructure was commended by the Councils Cabinet.

The Chair took the opportunity to wish Members a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year.

AGREED that the update be noted.