

## **APPEALS AND COMPLAINTS COMMITTEE**

A meeting of Appeals and Complaints Committee was held on Wednesday 1 March 2023.

**Present:** Cllr Evaline Cunningham (Chair), Cllr Pauline Beall (Vice-Chair), Cllr Mohammed Javed and Cllr Maurice Perry.

**Officers:** Reuben Kench, Jonathan Kibble (DoCS,E&C), Ann McLone (DoCS,E&C), Julie Butcher (DoCS) and Sarah Whaley (DoCS).

**Also in attendance:** Cllr Lisa Evans and Mr K Mason (Local Resident)

**Apologies:** .

### **ACC/11/22 Evacuation Procedure**

The Evacuation Procedure was noted.

### **ACC/12/22 Declarations of Interest**

There were no declarations on interest.

### **ACC/13/22 Minutes**

Consideration was given to the Appeals and Complaints Committee Minutes from the meeting which was held on 22nd September 2022 for approval and signature.

RESOLVED that the minutes be approved and signed as a correct record by the Chairman.

### **ACC/14/22 Committee Procedure**

The Committee considered and agreed a proposed procedure for the meeting, which the Chairman explained ahead of the following item.

RESOLVED that the procedure be agreed.

### **ACC/15/22 STOCKTON-ON-TEES BOROUGH COUNCIL, NORTON TOWN CENTRE IMPROVEMENT SCHEME, THE BOROUGH OF STOCKTON-ON-TEES, NORTON TOWN CENTRE, NORTON TRAFFIC, REGULATION ORDER 2022 & THE BOROUGH OF STOCKTON-ON-TEES, NORTON TOWN CENTRE, NORTON TRAFFIC CALMING SCHEME**

The committee were presented with a report to seek members' views on unresolved objections received following the statutory advertising of a proposal to implement a range of restrictions associated with the Norton Town Centre Improvement scheme.

The scheme involved the reconfiguration of Norton High Street/South Road junction and the removal of the island and vehicular access at Harland Place. A northbound One-Way system of operation on High Street from the Norton Road junction up to its

junction with South Road including prohibiting driving on that length of High Street north of the island at the Norton Road/High Street junction.

A 20mph speed limit on the section of High Street and South Road from its junctions with Norton Road in the south, to the north of the Darlington Lane/High Street roundabout. A reversal of the existing northbound One-Way system of operation to southbound One-Way on the High Street west side service road. The provision of two humped Puffin crossings at the existing Puffin crossings on the High Street and a raised junction at the High Street/ Holly Street junction. Additional parking, loading bays, taxi bays and disabled bays were proposed. Amendments to existing waiting/loading restrictions and new waiting/loading restrictions were proposed. An extension of the bus lane on Norton Road was also proposed as part of the scheme

The Principal Transport Officer presented the main report to members. The officers report also contained the representations received from members of the public in response to the statutory consultation process in full which were summarised to the committee, alongside officers' responses, full details of which were contained within the main report.

The committee were also informed that since the original report an objector had withdrawn their objection relating to concerns of traffic congestion around the junction of High Street, South Road and High Street west side service road and egress from Norton Methodist Church, and therefore required no further consideration, leaving one remaining objection.

It was noted that as well as members of the public, ward members and a officers traffic group were also consulted in terms of the Traffic Regulation Order (TRO) which was made up of emergency services, taxi and bus operators.

The Principal Transport Officer highlighted that Stockton High Street had some similar features to the current proposal in Norton, such as a 20mph one way system and raised features.

An objector attended the committee and was given the opportunity to make representation. His comments could be summarised as follows:

- a question was raised as to whether there was still to be a bus stop outside the White Swan public house
- clarity was sought in relation to the 75mm height of some of the proposed ramps compared to the one which was already in place at Norton Duck Pond which was claimed to be 150mm and was considered to be too high
- 20mph speed limit was unnecessary as there was very little excessive speed on the high street, unlike neighbouring residential estates where drivers were speeding.

Ward Councillor Lisa Evans attended the meeting and was given the opportunity to make representation. Cllr Evans presented the committee with a joint response from Ward Councillor Steve Nelson and herself which could be summarised as follows:

- both councillors fully supported the proposed TRO and informed the committee that the vast majority of residents also supported it

- the proposed 20mph and one way system would mitigate against speeding and ensure public safety was maximised
- the raised platforms had been widely welcomed by residents
- the newly proposed speed limit and raised platforms were reliant on each other to achieve the proposed traffic calming measures
- parking on the high street was at a premium and these proposals would make unacceptable manoeuvres much improved
- the proposed puffin near to the pond had been welcomed by most residents
- the proposal would increase footfall and the local economy.

Members were given the opportunity to ask questions/make comments. These could be summarised as follows: -

- officers were asked how many accidents had been reported where the 20mph speed limit was proposed
- was the number of bus stops to increase or decrease?
- members asked if there would be speed signs to indicate to drivers how fast they were driving
- some members endorsed the scheme and felt the proposal had many features which would be beneficial for the safety of residents
- the one-way system, south bound converging with north bound traffic could cause possible traffic hold ups at particular times.

Officers were given the opportunity to respond to comments/issues raised. Their responses could be summarised as follows: -

- it was confirmed that there would no longer be a bus stop outside the White Swan however the bus stop would move onto Norton Road just past the Red Lion public house
- it was explained that all TRO's for raised features were approximately 75mm, plus or minus 10mm. The one situated at Norton Duck Pond was 100mm due to an error, however all those contained within the plans for the newly proposed TRO would be installed at 75mm and kerbs would be adjusted to accommodate this where necessary
- confirmation was given that there had been only one minor injury / accident at the south end of the high street in the last 3 years and two further accidents on South Road in the last five years
- the number of bus stops would remain the same
- there were no plans for speed indicating signs, the scheme would follow what government stated had to be installed as a conservation area, however there would be 'New Road Layout Ahead' signs in place for six months

- in terms of concerns raised relating to traffic hold ups between south bound traffic converging with north bound traffic, officers explained that there would be clear markings for people to exit and travel north. There had also been traffic modelling undertaken which showed South Road junction was suitable and would not increase congestion.

Highways officers, Councillor Lisa Evans and the objector left the room, discussion then took place amongst the Appeals and Complaints Committee prior to a decision being made.

A vote took place and the officers recommendation was agreed.

RESOLVED that the

(i) Director of Community Services, Environment and Culture consider the committee's recommendation to implement the Borough of Stockton-on-Tees, Norton Town Centre, Norton Traffic Regulation Order 2022 & the Borough of Stockton-on-Tees, North Town Centre, Norton traffic calming scheme

(ii) local Ward Councillors and the objectors be informed of the Committee's recommendation.