



NORWICH HIGHWAYS AGENCY COMMITTEE

10am to 11.55am

29 November 2012

Present: **County Councillors:** **City Councillors:**
Adams (chair) (V) Bremner (vice-chair) (V, except for item
Spratt (substitute for 5 below)
Councillor Plant)(V) (to Harris (V)
end of item 6 below) Carlo
Bearman Grahame
Scutter Stonard (V for item 5 only)
Shaw

*(V) voting member

Apologies: County Councillor Plant

1. PUBLIC QUESTIONS

Councillor Lubbock, Eaton Ward councillor, asked the following question:-

“NICE (National Institute for Clinical Excellence) had issued a statement saying that walking and cycling should be made easier so that the population is more active, making 20 minute journeys on foot or cycle each day.

Break the road safety charity has recently called for more 20 mph limits near schools, shops and homes to ensure better road safety – their campaign is GO 20.

Norwich City Council is a member of Healthy Cities a consortium of cities who commit to putting the health of their citizens at the heart of their policies.

These recent initiatives and the fact that the county council will be responsible for public health leads me to think that the time is right for a concerted effort to introduce to Norwich’s residential areas a 20 mph default speed limit.

It is the one initiative which I believe will result in time in a healthier population with more people walking and cycling. This will result in savings in the health budgets both physical and mental and in a reduction in road traffic accidents and the costs that occur.

Norwich already has a number of 20mph zones and so it is essentially a question of joining up those zones to make a one comprehensive zone covering all the residential areas. The city will become known for its

enlightened views on the importance of walking and cycling and creating healthier communities.

Please will this committee take its new responsibility for public health seriously. I believe that for Norwich that means looking at implementing a blanket 20mph limit in all residential streets. The costs could be offset from the savings from the health and police budgets.

Please do not kick this important issue into the long grass yet again and start to investigate just what savings could be made by speaking to health and police colleagues. We need a collaborative approach to this issue and the best place to start is here, with this committee.”

The transportation and network manager, Norwich City Council, said that the committee had agreed to wait until guidance from the Department for Transport was received on implementing 20mph speed restrictions in residential areas. The problem was cost and the government had not given any indication on whether funding would be available to local authorities for implementation and signage, etc. She referred to the item later on in the agenda where members would be asked to endorse the highway improvement and maintenance programmes for 2013-14.

By way of a supplementary question Councillor Lubbock suggested that some of the priority crossings and refuges might not be required if there was a 20mph speed limit across the residential areas of the city. She suggested collaborative working as part of the Healthy Cities’ initiative.

In response, Councillor Bremner said that the city council had cross party support for the implementation of 20mph across the city but the reality was the cost of implementing the scheme. Councillor Spratt queried the need to reduce traffic speeds in the city and said that the reality was that traffic was moving very slowly already and that it was important that people from the rural areas could drive into the city.

Residents’ and ‘Q’ permits parking review

The chair agreed that the question regarding the permits parking review that had been received could be taken under the agenda item 5 below

2. DECLARATION OF INTERESTS

Councillor Bremner declared a pecuniary interest in item in that he used residential parking permits for his personal use and was eligible for concessions. Councillor Grahame also declared an interest in this item in that she used business car parking permits in the course of her work.

Councillor Bearman declared an other interest in the subject of the 20mph public question in that he was a member of the organisation “20’s plenty for us”.

3. MINUTES

RESOLVED to:

- (1) approve the accuracy of the minutes of the meeting held on 27 September 2012;
- (2) circulate with the minutes of this meeting additional information on the following items as requested by members:
 - (a) Item 7, Proposed car park fees and charges: specific information on the uptake of season tickets;
 - (b) Item 8, Provision of bus layover facilities and coach/demand response transport pick-up and drop-off points in Norwich: further information on whether the proposal regarding limiting the hours of operation of the bus layover in Surrey Street to 9am to 2.45pm was acceptable to bus operators.

4. NORWICH AREA TRANSPORTATION STRATEGY IMPLEMENTATION PLAN – GRAPES HILL SOUTHBOUND (UPHILL) BUS LANE

The city agency/NATS manager, Norfolk County Council, referred to paragraph 22 of the report and advised the committee that 9 trees would need to be felled to ensure sufficient clearance for the carriageway. He also advised members that the Grapes Hill bus lane was a key part of the Norwich area transportation strategy (NATS) in developing sustainable transport and that there had been a high level of support during the consultation on the original plans.

The chair moved and Councillor Spratt seconded the recommendations in the report.

During discussion the assistant director highways, Norfolk County Council, and the city agency/NATS manager, answered members' questions. Improvements to bus usage in NATS included the improved bus station, park and ride and bus lanes, which made journeys more reliable. A member suggested that the references should be made in the report to support individual statements, and another member concurred with this and considered that the criteria for the need for a 24/7 bus lanes, such as Newmarket Road, should be explained. Members were advised that the strategy was supported by data and evidence. One member said she considered that 24/7 bus lanes helped driver awareness and made it safer for cyclists.

In response to a question, the city agency/NATS manager confirmed that southbound buses currently did not turn right out of Grapes Hill, and it was unlikely that there would ever be the need for them to do so. This had been confirmed by the bus operators. Members were also advised that the city council would be monitoring air quality on the Grapes Hill roundabout and that the scheme was part of wider improvements to encourage bus usage, such as smart ticketing in the Norwich area.

RESOLVED, unanimously, to:

- (1) approve for implementation the proposals to:
 - (a) introduce a southbound (uphill) bus lane on Grapes Hill, for use by Buses, Hackney Carriages, Private Hire Vehicles and Pedal Cycles, operating 24 hours a day, 7 days a week;
 - (b) introduce an on-carriageway cycle lane on Wellington Lane including a contra-flow cycle lane on the section between Pottergate and St Benedict's Street;
 - (c) defer any decision on the implementation of a cycle lane on the footway between Upper St Giles St and Grapes Hill roundabout on Grapes Hill, pending the outcome of consultations on the St Stephens and Chapel Field North proposals.
- (2) ask the head of citywide development, Norwich City Council, to initiate the necessary statutory procedures to implement the following Traffic Regulation Order to:
 - (a) create a southbound (uphill) bus lane on Grapes Hill for use by Buses, Hackney Carriages, Private Hire Vehicles and Pedal Cycles, operating 24 hours a day, 7 days a week;
 - (b) provide a contra-flow on-carriageway cycle lane to allow cyclists to use Wellington Lane in a northbound direction between Pottergate and St Benedict's Street.

5. RESIDENTS' AND 'Q' PERMITS PARKING REVIEW

(Councillor Bremner having declared a pecuniary interest left the room for this item. Councillor Stonard was appointed as his substitute and was one of the city council's voting members for this item. Councillor Grahame having declared an interest spoke on the item and then left the room whilst the committee debated the item and came to a decision.)

Ms Emma Corlett, Cambridge Street, Norwich, asked the following question:-

"The permits parking review proposes some quite radical changes to the residents' own vehicle permit scheme. These proposals include limiting each household to a maximum of two permits, making second permits more expensive than the first and withdrawing the free alternative fuel permit.

I understand that these proposed changes have not been preceded by any form of consultation with affected residents and following today's meeting there are plans to consult.

I know from surveying the views of hundreds of people in my local community that parking is an important issue for most of them. They will be disappointed and affronted that these important decisions are going to be taken without asking for their views.

This is a joint city and county council committee and both organisations have public commitments to the environment and, in particular, carbon reduction. One of the city's key environmental priorities is "to continue to support and encourage more sustainable transport solutions". Likewise one of the county's key service objectives is to "mitigate the impacts of climate change".

The withdrawal of the free alternative fuel permit runs counter to these commitments; reduces the chances of achieving them and sends a message that says when the budgetary going gets tough that environmental commitments are easily expendable. The report says that, as it stands, LPG vehicles (irrespective of emissions) qualify but Low CO₂ vehicles don't necessarily qualify – in which case the solution should be to allow free permits to owners of Low CO₂ vehicles.

Question: Will this committee a) pause to consult with residents before making a final decision on these proposals and b) agree to maintain a free permit for the owners of Low CO₂ vehicles?"

The principal planner (transport), Norwich City Council, referred to the report and said that as some of the proposed changes required changes to traffic regulation orders statutory consultation would be required. He explained that there were only a small number of people requiring alternative fuel permits and that it was cumbersome to administer.

Ms Corlett asked as a supplementary question whether the alternative fuel permits could be extended to include other low emission vehicles such as a category A road licence vehicles which would be compatible with the county and city council's environment policies. The principal planner said that the current arrangements were inconsistent and it was the length of vehicles that was the issue. There were other incentives to use a low emission vehicle, such as vehicle excise duty.

Discussion ensued in which members considered whether the free permit for alternative fuel vehicles should be retained and the discount for the second car of a household. A member pointed out that car clubs could resolve some of these issues.

Councillor Grahame then referred to the use of 'Q' permits by NHS practitioners visiting patients in their homes and asked why it should subsidise the city council. She said that it would be impractical for practitioners to use the residents' visitors' pass as this would add time to the visit.

(Councillor Grahame then left the meeting at this point.)

Councillor Stonard then proposed, seconded by Councillor Harris, that (1)(e) the proposal to withdraw the free alternative fuel permit, should be removed from the recommendations.

On receiving advice that there would be consultation on all the elements of the proposal and that the results would be considered by the committee at a future meeting, it was considered that recommendation (5) to agree the terms and conditions for permit use as set out in appendix 1, was inconsistent as members

would be prejudging the results of the consultation. With the consensus of the members the chair agreed to delete it from the recommendations.

Discussion ensued on the fees charged for parking permits in particular for second and third cars. Members were advised that the charges were a matter for the committee and that there would be no consultation on the charges. Members noted the price comparison with other authorities. The committee also considered that using paper permits displayed on vehicles was easier for parking attendants and other residents to ensure that a vehicle was parked in the correct location. It was noted that the committee would review visitor parking permits at a future meeting.

Discussion ensued on the use of 'Q' parking permits. The principal planner (transport) referred to the report and advised members that most of these permits were not being used as intended. Councillors Carlo and Bearman asked that the issue of 'Q' parking permits to the NHS should be considered on a case by case basis and that concessions made where appropriate. The transportation and network manager said that it would not be fair to treat one branch of the NHS differently from other parts and also from other public sector organisations providing care.

Councillor Stonard then moved the amendment to delete (1) (e) to withdraw the free alternative fuel permit should be removed from the recommendations, seconded by Councillor Harris.

RESOLVED with two members voting in favour (Councillors Stonard and Harris) and with two members voting against (Councillors Adams and Spratt), on the chair's casting vote, the amendment to delete (1) (e) was lost.

The chair moved and Councillor Spratt seconded the recommendations (1) to (4); and (6) to (7), as agreed above and set out in the report.

RESOLVED, unanimously, to:

- (1) agree the following changes to the residents' parking permit eligibility that will:
 - (a) cease to issue any household with more than two residents permits after April 2014;
 - (b) introduce a price differential to make second residential permits in a household more expensive than the first;
 - (c) allow buildings in CPZs with an existing entitlement to permits to retain that entitlement should the building be converted back to a single dwelling;
 - (d) withdraw free permits for residents own vehicles (making an allowance for disabled (blue badge) holders);
 - (e) withdraw the free alternative fuel permit ;
 - (f) revise the entitlement to free permits; free visitor permits only offered on the grounds of low income, as demonstrated by the award of appropriate 'gateway' benefits, and not on the basis of age alone.

- (2) withdraw the current stat Q and community Q permits and replace them with a new short stay business permit valid for up to 2 hours as recommended at the last meeting. Registered charities (or those demonstrably acting on their behalf) would receive the permit at a discounted price of £31;
- (3) consider in the future introducing waiting lists for residents permits in the city centre;
- (4) agree the following charges for on street permits:

Proposed charges for residential permits				
Permit Type		6 month	12 month	18 month
Residents	Short	£14.50	£19.00	£23.50
	Medium	£20.50	£31.00	£41.50
	Long	£28.00	£46.00	£64.00
	Multi car	£28.00	£46.00	£64.00
	Blue badge holders	£14.50	£19.00	£23.50
	Second vehicle supplement	£5.00	£10.00	£15.00
Visitor	Residents Visitor	£20.50	£31.00	£41.50

- (5) ask the head of city development services to investigate the use of virtual permits for vehicle specific permits;
- (6) ask the head of city development services, Norwich City Council, to advertise the changes to the permit parking scheme ahead of the proposed implementation date of April 2013.

(Councillors Bremner and Grahame were readmitted to the meeting. Councillor Stonard stood down as one of the city council's voting member.)

6. RE-PROCUREMENT OF ETD HIGHWAY SERVICE

During discussion Councillor Carlo referred to an external audit of a contract and expressed concern about the use of public funding particularly in relation to additional works approved of by officers under delegated powers and the need to ensure that these works were clearly defined in the business case for the scheme.

The assistant director highways (Norfolk County Council) said that members had an opportunity to scrutinise the procurement of contracts at the county council's procurement board and through its overview and scrutiny committees, with an option to report to its cabinet. He assured members that all contracts and decisions relating to contracts complied with the council's governance arrangements and standing orders for contract procurement and legislation relating to contracts. He would ensure that the procurement board was advised of the member's concerns.

RESOLVED, unanimously, having considered the report to Norwich City Council's cabinet meeting held on 12 September 2012, to endorse the recommendations of the report as follows:

- (a) agree to continue to use Norfolk County Council's contracts to deliver highways agency agreement services, excluding tree and verge maintenance, following the county council's re-procurement of such services in April 2014;
- (b) ask officers to bring forward the review of the present highways agency agreement with a view to renewing in April 2014 to align and coincide with the county council's proposed re-procurement of highways services;
- (c) ask officers to develop proposals for a highway's ranger type service for the city as part of any highways agency agreement review and re-procurement of highway services; and
- (d) agree to the option of using Norfolk County Council's contracts to deliver highways type works including winter maintenance on council owned land which is not adopted following the county council's re-procurement of such services in April 2014.

7. HIGHWAYS IMPROVEMENT AND MAINTENANCE PROGRAMMES FOR 2013-14

(Councillor Spratt left the meeting before the end of this item.)

During discussion members welcomed the report and asked questions on individual schemes. Councillor Blunt welcomed the inclusion of Constitution Hill/ Wall Road mini roundabout in the local safety schemes where there had been a tragic accident. The transportation and network manager and the city agency/NATS manager referred to the report and answered members' questions.

The transportation and network manager apologised that there had been a lack of member engagement at an earlier stage due to work on the Better Bus Area and the proposals for Chapelfield North and St Stephens' Street , and pointed out that the £85,000 match funding from the Department for Transport for the local safety schemes still needed to be confirmed. Local councillors were consulted when schemes were being worked up for delivery. Members were also interested in how often the list of pedestrian crossing schemes was reviewed and suggested that some indication of when a scheme could be achieved would be helpful.

In response to members' suggestion that roundels should be used in The Avenues to reinforce the 20mph limit, the transportation and network manager advised members that these were costly to implement and maintain. The committee were told that the scheme in Bluebell Road did not stipulate the precise location of the crossing but that it would be at the safest point and that local members and residents would be given an opportunity to comment on the proposals. The committee was advised that there was a list of where pedestrian crossing facilities were required in the city. In

response to a question from Councillor Grahame, Thorpe Hamlet ward councillor, the transportation and network manager explained that the proposed pedestrian crossing at Carrow Road on the King Street side of Carrow Bridge was not on the list as it would be funded under a S106 agreement with developers of residential units in the area.

RESOLVED:

- (1) that the committee recommends to Norfolk County Council's cabinet that it allocates local transport plan funding to the following improvement schemes:

Type	Location	Estimate
Walking	Bluebell Road Zebra crossing	£60,000
	Hall Road Zebra crossing	£40,000
Cycling	Cycle Signing	£30,000
	Palace Street cycle lane	£10,000
	Thorpe Road contra flow - design	
	Magdalen Street contra flow - design	£35,000
Traffic management	Mile Cross Lane shared use path -design	
	Chapelfield North	£50,000
	NATS design	£50,000
Local safety schemes	Drayton Rd / Whiffler Road	
	Drayton Road / St Martins Road mini rbt	
	Wall Road / Constitution Hill mini rbt	£85,000
	Dereham Rd / Wendene rbt	
	George Borrow / The Avenues	
Minor works	Various	£20,000
Total		£380,000

- (2) note the capital maintenance programme as listed in appendix 4.

8. PERFORMANCE MONITORING OF THE HIGHWAYS AGENCY AGREEMENT

During discussion a member expressed concern that the rising number of “killed or seriously injured casualties” recorded in recent years and as shown on the graph. The assistant director highways, Norfolk County Council, assured members that the overall trend was downward. Changes to junctions had improved road safety and many accidents were down to the need to change drivers’ attitudes and behaviours which could be achieved through education and targeted schemes.

The head of city development services suggested that the overall statistics suggested the downward trend and that the categorisation of the level of seriousness of a casualty could be interpreted slightly differently which might account for a short-

term increase. Members were also advised that the level of casualty reductions across the county were encouraging.

RESOLVED to note the performance results.

9. MAJOR ROAD WORKS – REGULAR MONITORING REPORT

Councillor Bearman referred to road works at the Dereham Road / Old Palace Road junction and pointed out that there had been no street advance warnings. The transportation and network manager said the road works were for a utility company and that she would investigate and report back to Councillor Bearman.

RESOLVED to note the report.

CHAIR

Appendix A

Additional information in relation to the Norwich Highways Agency committee meeting held on 27 September 2012

ITEM 7. PROPOSED CAR PARK FEES AND CHARGES: SPECIFIC INFORMATION ON THE UPTAKE OF SEASON TICKETS

Number of season ticket holders and contract parking permit holders

Numbers fluctuates but there are currently 304 season ticket holders and 25 contract parking permit holders. This is broken down as follows:

Season tickets

Surface car parks	49
St Andrews	210
St Giles	45
<u>Total</u>	<u>304</u>

Contract Parking

Surface car parks	17
St Andrews	8
<u>Total</u>	<u>25</u>

ITEM 8

The bus operators agreed that the operating hours of the Surrey Street bus layover proposal could be amended to 9am to 2:45pm and this was the option that was consulted on.