

EXETER HIGHWAYS AND TRAFFIC ORDERS COMMITTEE

18 May 2018

Present:-

Devon County Council:-

Councillors R Hannaford (Chairman), H Ackland, M Asvachin, Y Atkinson, S Aves, E Brennan, R Hannaford (Chairman), A Leadbetter, P Prowse and C Whitton

Exeter City Council

Councillors R Denham and T Wardle

Apologies: -

Councillor R Newby

* 40

Minutes

RESOLVED that the Minutes of the meeting held on 16 January 2018 be signed as a correct record.

* 41

Items Requiring Urgent Attention

There was no item raised as a matter of urgency.

* 42

Bus Services in Exeter

Mr Williams and Mr Dennison, Commercial Director, and Managing Director of Stagecoach South West respectively, attended and spoke at the invitation of the Committee on developments affecting bus services and the network in and around Exeter since the last meeting, as follows:

- a new fleet was starting to enter service on the orbital routes R/S which were to Euro 6 emissions standards with fewer particulates than a single modern car of the same age;
- plans to serve some of the new housing developments in the East of Exeter were progressing with the creation of a second, larger orbital route to serve Rougemont Park by linking up the two ends of the J service from Whipton Barton through to Digby; this would give a combined 10-minute frequency between IKEA and the City Centre, either via Whipton or Countess Wear and Stagecoach was waiting on a start date from the County Council;
- in the meantime, route J had been extended into IKEA the previous week, following on from the frequency increase to every 20 minutes last September;
- the partial Bus Station closure was anticipated from 17 June 2018;
- despite the media reports about the Company's annual fares review, with rising running costs (the majority of which were labour related) and reducing local authority funding, several key fares had been held at the same price, and even the Exeter Dayrider which represented around 25% of sales, went up by 10p to £4, which was the same price as it had been in 2006 – 12 years ago;
- the Company had added a Park & Rider fare to the range of tickets available on its mobile app, which continued to provide customers on all services real time departure information;

- as another part of Stagecoach's technology developments, the Company was introducing Contactless payments in July, including bank cards, Apple Pay, Google Pay and wearable devices;
- Stagecoach was working with Exeter City Council to provide an evening and Sunday service to the Quay from the July school holidays, subject to completion of the flood alleviation works and confirmation before a start could be made; and
- Stagecoach continued to contribute to the various committees and working groups around the Greater Exeter Strategic Plan and the Exeter Mobility Plan.

In response to Members' questions the representatives reported that:

- noting the concern of some members about the location of the bus stops/shelters at the IKEA Store which entailed a lengthy walk for customers, they had not been informed of any issues and they expected that the shelters would be located at the layby, and that it was primarily a matter for the Store's management;
- noting the concerns of Members about the increase of the child add-on fare from £1 to £3 (when compared against the group fare for 5 adults and free travel for dogs, for example), the probable disproportionate impact on women and lack of consultation, Stagecoach had introduced this as a promotion some 7 years ago and it was now considered no longer sustainable, and their other fares for children represented good value, and the Company believed that, despite the limited number of contracted services with the County Council, the Public Sector Equality Duty did not apply nor as a consequence the requirement for the Company to undertake any equality impact assessment;
- the level of data analysis used in making commercial judgement and decision;
- in view of the concerns expressed, the representatives would review the decision but felt that their fare structure was advantageous for most passengers and the increases were necessary in view of the significant investment made by the Company in their fleet and rising running costs;
- their common objectives with local authorities was to reduce congestion and acknowledged a Member's comments about the good services provided by the Stagecoach in the City; and
- the Company would respond to any written queries relating to the B service frequency and alleged 'idling' at a stop creating noise and air pollution relating to the A service.

The Chair thanked the representatives for their attendance, updates and responses to Members' questions.

Councillor Brennan presented the representatives with a petition of 1818 signatures calling upon Stagecoach South West to '*consider their social and environmental responsibilities, to reverse this decision, and to retain the £1 child add-on tickets in Exeter*'.

The representatives would respond to Councillor Brennan (as the organiser of the petition) directly.

It was **MOVED** by Councillor Atkinson, **SECONDED** by Councillor Brennan and

RESOLVED that the Travel Plan for the IKEA Store in Exeter be reviewed (to include reference to the location of the bus stops/shelters) for report to this Committee.

* 43

Exeter Interim Bus Station Traffic Management

(Councillor Prowse by virtue of his written objections and therefore pre-determination of the proposal spoke and then withdrew from the meeting during the debate and consideration of this matter)

(COUNCILLOR BRENNAN IN THE CHAIR)

The Committee considered the Report of the Chief Officer for Highways, Infrastructure Development and Waste (HIW/18/33) on plans for the temporary transfer of bus services from the existing bus station to on-street locations in the City Centre. This would enable the redevelopment site to be cleared for the construction of a new bus station and leisure centre. The interim bus station arrangements were expected to be in place for approximately 2 years, while the bus station site was redeveloped and the Report sought approval to implement restrictions for the first phase of the works and approval to advertise further restrictions for the next phase.

The Chief Officer undertook to circulate to Members the Safety Audit in relation to these proposals and identify if possible a single point of contact (within the City Council) for on-going queries.

It was **MOVED** by Councillor Aves, **SECONDED** by Councillor Whitton and

RESOLVED

(a) that implementation of the restrictions for Phase 1 as amended in this Report be approved;

(b) that the proposals for Phase 2 as detailed in this report, be approved, subject to variations to facilitate national coach services accessing the Bus Stands in Sidwell Street;

(c) that officers be authorised to vary the temporary traffic restrictions as required in consultation with the Local Member(s) and Chair and in line with the statutory process; and

(d) that a report be brought to this Committee on the restrictions required for future phases of the Bus Station redevelopment.

(N.B. In accordance with Standing Order 32(4) Councillor Leadbetter asked that his vote against the decision taken be recorded)

* 44

Expansion of the Electric Bike Hire Scheme

The Committee considered the Report of the Head of Planning, Transportation and Environment (PTE/18/19) on the expansion of the Electric Bike Hire Scheme from twenty bikes that could be hired and returned to any of the six docks in the city. The Report proposed ten new sites across the city (a combination of electric charging docks and non-charging parking hoops) and included expansion of existing locations to cater for increasing demands. The improvements were funded by a combination of external grant funding and developer contributions.

It was **MOVED** by Councillor Brennan, **SECONDED** by Councillor Atkinson and

RESOLVED

(a) that the sites proposed for electric bike infrastructure be approved, as detailed in this Report and Appendix A, at an estimated cost of £240,000;

(b) that the Head of Planning, Transportation & Environment be given delegated authority to agree the exact location for the installation of the electric bike site in consultation with the Local County Councillor.

* 45 **Review of the cycle path signage around the city and also to add new signage from Newport Park to the junction of Higher Wear Road to prevent potential accidents (Minute *27, 20 November 2017)**

The Neighbourhood Highways Group Manager reported on the Site Visit with Councillors Leadbetter and Newby (as the local Members) held on 5 December 2017 and agreement to the painting of additional Pedestrian markings on the footway.

* 46 **Residents' Parking Permits: Abuse of the Application Process(Minute *15, 4 July 2017)**

The Chief Officer for Highways, Infrastructure Development and Waste reported on the Residents' Parking Permits Working Group's findings (comprising Councillors Aves and Prowse).

Audit checks had allowed an improved understanding of customer interaction with the service and potential abuse. Independent auditors had also found no significant concerns over current processes. Compliance was of at least 84% with confirmed cases of abuse being below 4%. This was a significant improvement over the last review which had been conducted between March and May 2017.

There had been a commitment from the Working Group to undertake further reviews across the City which had resulted in the cancellation of a number of permits.

Audit checks had been carried out in Newton Abbot with a compliance rate of 94%.

Barnstaple and Totnes were the next largest zones in the County and would be audited in due course.

The residents parking permit service had also been subject to a review by Devon Audit Partnership which had found no significant concerns with processes with appropriate checks in place.

The Working Group's recommendations had been (i) Review abuse outside of Exeter; and (ii) Review Terms and Conditions.

As an outcome of the Working Group meetings and review of findings the following actions had been undertaken:

(a) a review of the legal issues around permit abuse has been undertaken, with reference to the Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984 "Mishandling of Parking Documents and Related Offences" added to the application pages; and the web page and the printed terms and conditions supplied to permit holders now stated;

"Any person making a false statement for the purpose of obtaining a residential zone parking permit shall be guilty of an offence (Section 115 (2) Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984)".

(b) As part of a wider review of technology utilised by Civil Parking Enforcement Officers there had been a roll-out of sim-enabled handheld units. The inclusion of a mobile phone sim card to the units meant that live data could be communicated, including information relating to 'live' or 'cancelled' parking permits, meaning that abuse was easier to detect and action could be taken against any person displaying a cancelled permit. For permit holders awaiting permits to arrive by post, the use of 'live' data would avoid the unnecessary issue of a parking ticket for not displaying a valid permit, and subsequent need to challenge that ticket.

(c) The responding to local intelligence from residents on drivers / vehicles they believed were abusing the system was vital to maintaining the integrity of the scheme.

Intelligence from members of the public and enforcement officers about vehicles displaying multiple permits or concerns about allocation abuse were always investigated and acted upon where appropriate.

A single web portal would be set up to report abuse to manage workload for officers and Members and this could be accessed online by residents or completed on their behalf by the customer service centre.

(N.B intelligence was welcomed, but due to data governance issues, the outcome of any report relating to an individual or their vehicle, could not be reported back to the complainant)

(d) A review of parking demand across Exeter would be conducted to understand current capacity.

(e) Patterns of complaint around business permits were discussed. The County had maintained the 'status quo' regarding business eligible addresses. Any property that had been identified by the City Council as eligible for permits, remained eligible on the Council's current database.

With concerns about business permits being used for commuting and not service needs it was appropriate to undertake a health check of the business address database and permit holders by undertaking a full audit of eligibility. At this stage it had been agreed to monitor applications and gather updated information on the nature of each business applying and reliance on support vehicles close by to deliver their service.

It was **MOVED** by Councillor Aves, **SECONDED** by Councillor Brennan

RESOLVED

(a) that the recommendations and actions arising from the Residents' Parking Permits Working Group be endorsed;

(b) that a Residents Parking Policy Working Group be established comprising the Chair, Councillors Asvachin, Aves and Whitton to review current policy and make recommendations to this Committee and subsequently to the Cabinet.

* **47** **Lack of enforcement of residents parking, particularly in Priory Ward in Exeter**

In accordance with Standing Order 23(2) Councillor Wardle had requested that the Committee consider, in accordance with Standing Order 23(2), the levels of enforcement in Priory Ward and in particular the Burnthouse Lane area.

The Traffic Management Team Manager reported that the Civil Enforcement Officers would react to the level of local concerns and intelligence. Currently the Exeter Team was almost at full complement with only one vacancy and that the position would be reviewed with the proposed extension of Residents Parking schemes in the City. Regarding 'displacement' parking the Team would not patrol areas which were not subject to restrictions.

There was data available on the Council's website at

<https://new.devon.gov.uk/roadsandtransport/parking/parking-tickets/>

* **48** **Petitions/Parking Policy Reviews**

No petition for a parking review from a member of the public relating to Exeter had been received.

* **49** **Actions Taken Under Delegated Powers**

The Committee received the Report of the Chief Officer for Highways, Infrastructure and Waste (HIW/18/26) on action taken by her in consultation with the Chair and Local Members.

* **50** **Dates of Meetings**

30 July and 6 November 2018 and 14 January and 9 April 2019

The County Council Calendar of meetings was available on the website:

<http://democracy.devon.gov.uk/mgCalendarMonthView.aspx?GL=1&bcr=1>

***DENOTES DELEGATED MATTER WITH POWER TO ACT**

The Meeting started at 10.00 am and finished at 12.50 pm