

0 WELLINGTON TOWN COUNCIL

Minutes of a meeting of the Community Safety Committee held in the Council Chamber 28, Fore Street, Wellington, on Monday 13 July 2015 at 6.00p.m.

Present: Councillors Critchard, Govier and Stock-Williams

Also present: Councillor Thorne for Item 3.

Greg Dyke, Town Clerk, Scott Weetch, Community and Client Services Manager Taunton Deane Borough Council and West Somerset Council and PCSO Simon Bramley

1. Appointment of Chairman

RESOLVED that Councillor Govier be elected as Chairman of the Committee

2. Apologies

Councillors Copley and James

3. Parking at Longforth Road Car Park (ASDA)

Councillor Thorne had asked if it would be possible to erect bollards in front of the disabled parking bays that adjoin the footpath into the ASDA store. He felt that there was a potential problem as there was nothing to stop vehicles from accidentally driving beyond the marked bay and up on to the footpath (the pavement had a dropped kerb for the benefit of wheelchair users).

Subsequently the Town Clerk had contacted TDBC for its views. The Highway Inspector had inspected the site and responded as follows:

“The pathway from the edge of the disabled bays to the Supermarket wall is 3 metres.

The upstand from the edge of the disabled bay to the edge of the pathway is 45mm. This upstand is quite pronounced (The Highway Inspector drove his van up onto it, and you can certainly feel it)

As could be seen from photographs that were submitted vehicles already protrude onto the pathway. Drivers appear to normally drive “into” the spaces rather than reverse in, and were confronted by a rather large wall.

If we were to go down the route of placing something to delineate the parking bays from the pathway, we would have to install 8 of them (one in front of each parking bay that abuts up to the pathway). I think they would have to be metal posts and they would have to be high enough for a driver to see them from the driver’s seat of their vehicle.

There is also a maintenance issue, in that, undoubtedly the posts would be driven into or reversed into and damaged, there would then be the costs associated with replacing them on, I think a fairly regular basis (having seen what is done in Taunton town centre car parks)

I would recommend not to go down the route of placing posts along the pathway for the following reasons.

- 1) There is already an indication that the parking bay ends and the footpath starts (the 45mm upstand)
- 2) 8 tall posts would cause clutter on the pathway and would undoubtedly be used to padlock bicycles etc. to them.
- 3) There would be an ongoing maintenance issue, in that the posts would be driven into and would need replacing.
- 4) Posts would become an additional piece of street furniture that would need to be avoided by pedestrians”

This report was considered and supported by the Car Parks Manager who had decided not to install metal posts on the footpath for the reason given above.

Councillor Thorne disagreed with the thinking presented by TDBC saying:
“I'm not sure they have properly grasped the nature of the hazard.

The wall facing drivers as they park, and the upstand from the parking surface to the pavement is not the issue. It's the fact that sooner or later, a motorist is going to accidentally put their foot on the accelerator instead of the brake, or engage first gear rather than reverse, just as somebody is walking in front of them - and the consequences of it are potentially serious.

They talk about 'metal posts' and I'm not sure where that idea has come from. I don't believe pedestrians having to avoid 'street furniture' like this will be any more difficult than at present where they have to avoid car bonnets protruding over the pavement.

The solid nature of such bollards should help to minimise maintenance, and if they are worried about padlocking bikes to the bollards, then we can look at providing a bike park - after all, they're providing one for the new Weavers Arms development!”

Councillor Thorne had asked if this matter could be considered by the the Community Safety Committee.

Whilst acknowledging Councillor Thorne's concern it was felt that the existing upstand already provided more of a barrier than the rest of the car park. The point of this design was that drivers stopped as soon as the vehicles touched it. PCSO Bramley indicated that he was not aware of any such accident ever happening in this car park. In the circumstances the Committee did not feel that this was a significant hazard and agreed with the conclusions of the TDBC Car Parks Manager subject to confirming that TDBC fully understood the issue.

RESOLVED that no further action be taken.

4. CONSULTATION ON PUBLIC SPACES PROTECTION ORDER (No Drinking Order)

At the June Council meeting Scott Weetch, the Community and Client Services Manager of TDBC and WSDC consulted the Council on the possibility of amending the existing 'No Drinking Order' for Wellington. The Order currently in place was somewhat anachronistic as the boundary was drawn before some housing developments had been completed. It covered some areas of the town and not others. Council had agreed that the activities and the area covered be extended and amended and include “legal highs and that the Community Safety Committee consider in detail the area to be included in the Order.

Full consultation would first need to take place and it was anticipated that the final decision would be taken by the appropriate TDBC Portfolio Holder. This would

provide greater flexibility in the decision making process and allow any changes to be made if necessary. The Town Council would be consulted on any proposed changes before any decision was implemented.

RESOLVED that the new Order cover the existing urban area of the town and be amended to include any new residential areas. Scott Weetch to provide a plan showing the areas it was proposed to be covered.

5. Gypsies and Travellers

The Town Clerk reported that there had been a recent encampment of travellers on the Beech Grove field (between the Recreation Ground and the Athletic Ground). However, the fact that they ended up in a playing field in the middle of a town was a cause for concern. They had obviously “scouted” the site before arriving. The County Council’s Senior Enforcement Officer (Planning, Rights of Way, Gypsies & Travellers) had been asked if, in his experience, this was a trend that was developing with travellers. If it was, then we were going to have to be more vigilant and more security conscious in respect of our playing fields and sports pitches all of which had fairly unfettered access at the moment.

The officer had said that the location of gypsies and travellers depended on the type of group involved. He felt that in this case, the travellers would have had some idea of a number of locations in the area. He also felt that any open space was always vulnerable to this type of incursion and that owners of any such land should always be aware of the possibility of it being accessed by travellers.

For information, if it involved land owned by the County Council (as this did) then it would be its responsibility to deal with it, if it was TDBC land it would be its responsibility and if the land were privately owned it would be up to the landowner to take any necessary action.

RESOLVED that the situation be noted and the County Council be encouraged to issue guidance on how best to deal with similar situations.

6. Attendance by Police

The Committee were pleased to have the presence of a representative of the local Police at the meeting. In view of the now irregular attendance, for operational reasons, of a police officer at Council meetings it was agreed that a representative be invited to all future meetings of the Committee.

7. Shopwatch

The Committee were pleased to note that PCSO Bramly would be re-introducing the Shopwatch Scheme.

The meeting ended at 6.45p.m.