

## **TRAFFIC, ENVIRONMENT & COMMUNITY SAFETY SCRUTINY PANEL**

Minutes of the meeting of the Traffic, Environment & Community Safety Scrutiny Panel held on Tuesday, 22 January 2019 at 4.30pm at the Civic Offices, Portsmouth

### **Present**

Councillor Simon Boshier (in the Chair)  
Yahiya Chowdhury  
Jo Hooper  
Hugh Mason  
Tom Wood

**5. Apologies for Absence. (AI 1)**

No apologies for absence had been received.

**6. Declarations of Members' Interests (AI 2)**

Councillor Hugh Mason declared a non-prejudicial interest: he lives in a RPZ.

**7. Minutes of the Previous Meeting. (AI 3)**

**RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting held on 22 June 2018 be agreed as a correct record.**

**8. \* A review of general parking issues in Portsmouth with a view to considering alternative strategies. (AI 4)**

Councillor Boshier explained that the panel would receive a clarification on the evidence provided at an earlier scrutiny panel meeting regarding the eligibility of students who live in halls of residence to apply for residents' parking zones (RPZs) permits.

He informed the panel that two written deputations had been submitted: from Ms Philpott and residents of Mulberry Lane and The Close, Cosham. He also reminded those people making a deputation at this meeting that they should not contain any personal details nor car details.

The panel took five minutes to read the written deputations.

Lorraine Philpott (who had also submitted a written deputation) included the following points in her verbal deputation:

- She had been in contact with the council for the last three years about the carpark at the back of her home off Kingston Road which she often uses as there is no parking at the front of her home.
- Following the letter she sent on 18 January, she had been contacted twice by officers to discuss the issues she raised.
- The road markings and double yellow lines are faded in the car park.
- It is dangerous because people are coming in and out. She had seen cyclists almost be knocked down.
- People leave their cars there for up to a week.

- Children climb onto the wall, the electricity box and then onto the scaffolding to spray graffiti on the nearby building.
- The adjacent block of flats is for sale and she was concerned as to where the tenants would park.
- She suggested introducing parking fees for the car park.
- She also expressed concern about air pollution.

In his deputation Jerry Brown included the following points:

- He requested an update on the information that the panel had requested at the previous meeting.
- The displacement of parking problems from RPZs into adjacent areas is causing angst to residents.
- He asked the panel to consider the following possible solutions:
  - Allow residents who live just outside an RPZ to apply for permits in their nearest RPZ. This is simple, low cost and easy to set up.
  - Require vehicles over a certain size to find alternative parking arrangements, such as in a city car park (free from 18:00 to 06:00) or a work's car park. This would be more difficult to administer.
  - Reduce the number of student vehicles in Portsmouth. This could be best achieved by the university itself, but might reduce the popularity of the university amongst its potential undergraduate intake.
  - Provide free parking on the seafront between 18:00 and 08:00.
- He also requested that a record of any actions requested by the panel at this meeting be noted.

Councillor Udy included the following points in her deputation:

- She has seen a marked difference in the MC zone since the introduction of the RPZ with permit only parking for two hours a day.
- Parking problems in that zone are mostly caused by work vans.
- She suggested that the council should move towards introducing a city-wide RPZ. Residents with driveways or garages should also be required to pay for a permit.
- Air quality is at illegal levels in some areas of the city and reducing car use would help with this problem. She suggested subsidising some bus routes, improving bus links and incentivise car sharing.
- The introduction of RPZs had reduced student car ownership.
- It is very difficult to find parking in Brighton.

Councillor Luke Stubbs included the following points in his deputation:

- He questioned the panel's effectiveness in considering this issue as the decisions had already been taken.
- The administration is not interested in residents and was introducing a city-wide RPZ piece-meal. He felt that this approach was dishonest.
- The current parking problems were predicted in 2014 when this process was being considered.
- He suggested that residents in areas adjacent to a RPZ be given permits to minimise the impact of displacement parking.
- At the December Full Council meeting he had proposed a referendum on the introduction of a city-wide RPZ because an honest debate was

required and there were no natural dividing zones in the city. He would like this panel to consider making that recommendation.

- He often parks along the seafront when there are no spaces in the RPZ where he lives.

Pam Turton, Assistant Director for Assistant Director, Transport, Environment and Business Support presented the further information that had been requested at the previous meeting. This had been tabled and made available to the panel and public and would be published on the website shortly after the meeting.

In response to questions she and Kevin McKee, Parking Team Manger explained that:

#### Permits

A very small number of third permits had been issued.

Residents in a RPZ cannot apply for a permit for commercial vehicles that are registered to a company address. Commercial vehicles can park in the RPZs outside of the restricted times.

It would not be possible for the council to require residents with off road parking to buy RPZ permits as their vehicles are not parked on the public highway.

#### Vehicle cross overs.

Applications are administered by Colas on behalf of the council. The process and regulations are currently being reviewed. The revised policy will come to a Cabinet Member for Traffic & Transportation meeting next month.

It was noted that members felt that it is important that the wider impact on the road and neighbourhood be taken into consideration when assessing applications.

The distance between the space boundary and the property is assessed and then a review of services is undertaken.

If there is a parking restriction on the road the council can issue a parking ticket. If there is no parking restriction, it is an obstruction issue and therefore a police matter.

The council has written to local companies regarding commercial vehicles being parked overnight in residential roads. This could be progressed further.

#### Management of car parks.

With regard to the concerns raised by Ms Philpott about the carpark near her home, Jane Di Dino, Local Democracy Officer explained that the council is looking into this and had been in contact with Ms Philpott. Ms Turton added that the carpark is not owned by the transport department.

### Parking on pavements.

The government is looking at possible changes to legislation regarding parking on pavements. One option being considered is delegating power to local authorities to enforce the banning of parking on pavements. It is important to consider whether the roads would be obstructed if vehicles were moved off the pavements.

### Students Halls of Residence.

Historically halls of residences were regarded as individual postal address. A few years ago this was changed and now individual rooms are classed as having individual addresses and therefore the tenants can apply for RPZ permits. This does not fit with the shared agenda of the council and the university to reduce the number of cars in the city. A consultation will shortly be launched on a proposal to amend the wording on a Traffic Regulation Order to change the eligibility criteria to exclude students in halls of residence from being eligible for permits.

In university-operated halls of residence, the students' tenancy agreement includes a clause prohibiting them from bringing cars to the city. This proposed change would reinforce the university's policy and would also support the wider agenda to improve air quality.

The council has worked with the university to ensure that students are aware of their opportunity to respond to this consultation. The 14 students living in halls of residence who already have permits would not be affected by any change.

A new Park & Ride 2 bus service has been introduced to better serve university staff and students. It is also used by other customers including council staff.

The number of halls of residence in RPZs was not available at the meeting.

There has been a reinvigoration of discussion with the university about how the council can better support them. The measures introduced to support the university bring benefits across the board.

If it were to be mandatory for commercial vehicles to use car parks, the council would not be responsible for any damage.

### Actions.

It was agreed that the following information would be provided:

- A breakdown of the number of first, second and third permits that have been issued.
- Confirmation of whether the tenancy agreement clause prohibiting students from bringing their cars applies solely to halls owned by the university and partners.

During the discussion that followed, members noted that:

### Off Road Parking.

In Farlington many vehicles parked on driveways extend over some of the pavement.

RPZs have an impact on adjacent non-RPZs and free carparks.

### Commercial Vehicles.

Some commercial vehicles need to be parked in residential areas overnight to ensure prompt responses to call outs.

It would probably be inconvenient for van drivers to have to go home to drop off their tools, drive to a designated commercial vehicles car park to park and then walk or take a bus home at the end of each shift.

Supermarkets might be reluctant to open up their car parks free overnight for commercial vehicles.

Some schools have concerns about the security of their site if they were to open their carparks overnight.

### Students

Many residents feel that students' cars are a contributing factor in the parking problems in the city.

The students' tenancy agreement with the university prohibiting them from bringing their cars is not enforceable.

Some students living in residential houses have said that they do not want to bring a car into the city as it is too much trouble to re-register it every time they move.

There has been a change in habits over the last 20 years with more students owning cars.

Some students need their cars to commute to work.

Some local authorities permit parking across half the pavement.

Other university cities e.g. Oxford are less car-friendly and they are not struggling.

It would not be useful to know how many students have cars as this would include long-term residents who study part time courses. There is an ongoing increase in more mature and part time students in higher education.

The Chair reminded the panel that when agreed, the scrutiny report would be submitted to the next Cabinet meeting for consideration.

The meeting concluded at 6.30pm.

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Councillor Simon Boshier  
Chair