



Northumberland

County Council

CASTLE MORPETH LOCAL AREA COUNCIL

16 SEPTEMBER 2019

BEDLINGTONSHIRE NEIGHBOURHOOD WATCH PETITION

Report of the Interim Executive of Place, Paul Johnston

Cabinet Member: Councillor Glen Sanderson, Environment & Local Services

Purpose of report

To respond to the petition received by the Castle Morpeth Local Area Council from Bedlingtonshire Neighbourhood Watch regarding concerns raised by residents of School Avenue, Northway, Back Mowbray Terrace, Freehold Avenue and Broadway about school transport to and from Cleaswell Hill School in Guide Post between the hours of 8:20am and 4pm.

Recommendations

It is recommended to note the content of the report and be aware that NCC's Transport Team is working with the transport companies who are contracted to work with the school to emphasise that they need to be at the school at the correct times. It has been agreed that the larger vehicles will attend the school earlier and this will then allow all smaller vehicles immediate access to the school. They will be monitoring their behaviour closely during the new school term to ensure that they adhere to the terms and conditions of contracts.

Link to Corporate Plan

How - "We want to be efficient, open and work for everyone"

Enjoying - "We want you to love where you live"

Connecting - "We want you to have access to the things you need"

Key issues

1. A petition has been received raising concerns about school transport to and from Cleaswell Hill School.
2. Since receipt of the petition, numerous ad-hoc site visits have been undertaken to assess the situation.
3. From September the Transport Team will be closely monitoring transport providers who are contracted to work with the school to ensure that they are adhering to the terms and conditions of their contracts.
4. The number of staff parking on School Avenue should decrease in September when works to install a Hydropool are due to be complete.
5. We have written to transport providers and the school about our “No Idling” policy.

Background

On 17th June 2019 the County Council received a petition from Bedlingtonshire Neighbourhood Watch. The petition stated that it was for residents of School Avenue, Northway, Back Mowbray Terrace, Freehold Avenue and Broadway who are complaining about school transport to and from Cleaswell Hill School in Guide Post between the hours of 8:20am and 4pm.

The petition has been signed by 66 people and claims that the volume of traffic at any one time is a total disgrace and takes up all of the above streets. Buses, mini buses and cars are also parking across residents driveways and mounting pavements causing obstructions for parents with pushchairs and residents with mobility scooters. It is reported that some residents have asked drivers if they would move on and have had to tolerate foul and abusive language which is not acceptable. In addition they claim that school transport along with staff at the school are exceeding the 20mph speed limit.

Residents have mentioned that they are concerned that emergency vehicles may struggle to gain access should this be required, and the fumes from these vehicles.

Since receiving the petition, colleagues in the Council’s Transport Team have conducted several ad hoc site visits to assess the situation. It has been apparent that many school transport providers are arriving outside the agreed times of their contract. Particularly at school finish times, anyone arriving too early can cause obstruction in the area, while those arriving too late can cause a similar inconvenience as transport providers have allocated slots when they enter the school gates to collect children.

From September the Transport Team will be closely monitoring transport providers who are contracted to work with the school to ensure that they are adhering to the terms and conditions of their contracts. This will be in the form of ad hoc visits. Providers have already been written to to remind them what is required of them. It has also been agreed that the larger vehicles will attend the school earlier and this will then allow all smaller vehicles immediate access to the school. In addition they have been advised of our “no idling” policy which should help ease residents concerns about exhaust fumes. We will

also be writing to the school to make them aware of this policy. We will also request that they pass this message on to parents.

At the most recent site visit which the report author also attended (afternoon of 17th July) it was noted that there were numerous staff cars parked on School Avenue and in some of the surrounding streets. The school has advised that this is due to the ongoing works to install a hydro pool at the school. This work is due to be completed in September, which means that fewer staff cars will be parked on the street.

It should be noted that over the years several similar concerns have been raised, many of these have come direct from Councillor Ledger. Any issues have been discussed with transport providers wherever necessary. This has more often than not addressed most matters raised, however unfortunately given human nature people can slip back into bad habits.

All previous issues have been discussed with the school, however due to the construction of the new hydro pool which will be of tremendous benefit to the children attending Cleaswell Hill School this has meant that staff have more recently parked in School Avenue and the surrounding area while works are ongoing. This should improve once the hydro pool is complete.

For information Hydro pools use physical water properties such as pressure and temperature to deliver muscular physiotherapy in a relaxed and safe environment for people with severe physical impairments. Many hydro pools incorporate sensory technologies such as ambient lighting and projections and underwater sound systems to create a stimulating, interactive environment for people to enjoy during sessions

Implications

Policy	The response to the issues raised in this petition is consistent with LTP Policies.
Finance and value for money	N/A
Legal	None
Procurement	None
Human Resources	None
Property	None
Equalities (Impact Assessment attached) Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> N/A <input type="checkbox"/>	None

Risk Assessment	N/A
Crime & Disorder	None
Customer Consideration	The actions undertaken should improve the situation for local residents.
Carbon reduction	None
Health and Wellbeing	None
Wards	Choppington

Background papers

None.

Report sign off

Authors must ensure that officers and members have agreed the content of the report:

	Full Name of Officer
Monitoring Officer/Legal	N/A
Executive Director of Finance & S151 Officer	N/A
Relevant Executive Director	Paul Johnston
Chief Executive	N/A
Portfolio Holder(s)	Glen Sanderson

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