

**NORTHUMBERLAND COUNTY COUNCIL**

**TYNEDALE LOCAL AREA COUNCIL**

At a meeting of the **Tynedale Local Area Council** held at Hexham House, Gilesgate, Hexham, Northumberland, NE46 3NH on Tuesday, 11 July 2023 at 4.00 p.m.

**PRESENT**

Councillor T Cessford  
(Chair, in the Chair)

**MEMBERS**

A Dale  
SH Fairless-Aitken  
I Hutchinson  
D Kennedy  
N Morphet

N Oliver  
JR Riddle  
A Sharp  
G Stewart

**OFFICERS**

C Curtis  
D Hunt  
  
N Snowdon  
  
N Turnbull

Senior Programme Officer  
Neighbourhood Services Area  
Manager  
Principal Programme Officer  
(Highways Improvement)  
Democratic Services Officer

**ALSO PRESENT**

2 members of the public and 1 member of the press.

**10. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Horncastle, Scott and Waddell.

**11. MINUTES**

**RESOLVED** that the minutes of the following meeting of the Tynedale Local Area Council, held on 13 June 2023, as circulated, be confirmed as a true record and signed by the Chair.

Ch.'s Initials.....

## LOCAL AREA COUNCIL BUSINESS

### 12. PUBLIC QUESTION TIME

The Democratic Services Officer reported that legal advice was awaited in respect of a public question which had been submitted in writing earlier that day regarding the ice cream van at Sele Park. A written response would be provided.

### 13. PETITIONS

This item was to:

#### a) Receive any new petitions:

There were none.

#### b) Consider reports on petitions previously received:

##### i) Request for Additional Traffic Calming Measures at Woodlands, Hexham

The Local Area Committee were requested to acknowledge the petition received requesting further traffic calming measures at Woodlands, Hexham. (A copy of the report enclosed with the signed minutes).

Neil Snowdon, Principal Programme Officer (Highways Improvement), made reference to speed surveys undertaken in May 2023 within the 30mph speed limit. He highlighted that for westbound traffic, there had been an average of 3,651 vehicles per day, with an average recorded speed of 24.3mph, with an 85th percentile of 28.5mph. For eastbound traffic, there had been an average 3,796 vehicles per day, with an average recorded speed of 26.2mph, with an 85th percentile of 30.7mph.

Northumbria Police accident data had recorded one slight personal injury collision in the previous 5 years on Woodlands. In conclusion, it was considered that given the speed survey data in May 2023, existing speed restrictions, signage and road markings were appropriate for the location.

Councillor Fairless-Aitken, the local member, expressed concern that the average speed data was high for entering a 20mph area and made reference to the road being included in the Hexham Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure route. She queried whether the speed survey had been carried out in the wrong location and made reference to new highways guidance which suggested that two separate speeds surveys should be undertaken at least a month apart.

The Principal Programme Officer (Highways Improvement) stated that speed surveys were normally carried out at least 150 metres away from a

change in speed. He agreed to check the exact location of the speed survey equipment and also to undertake another survey 150 metres within the 20mph zone.

He informed members that new software would be available soon which would provide data 24 hours per day, 7 days per week where it was compatible with the satellite navigation systems in modern vehicles.

It was suggested that without proof, it could not be assumed that the speeds recorded in excess of the speed limit were necessarily emergency vehicles from nearby stations responding to call outs.

**RESOLVED** that:

1. The contents of the report be noted.
2. A further speed survey be carried out in the 20mph section, west of Woodlands.
3. Speeding concerns continue to be monitored in the area.

**c) To consider updates on petitions previously considered:**

**i) Peth Head, Hexham**

The Principal Programme Officer (Highways Improvement), reported that a new speed survey had been undertaken in January 2023 with the results being very similar to the survey undertaken in December 2019.

He highlighted that for westbound traffic, there had been an average of 1,712 vehicles per day, with an average recorded speed of 23.7mph, with an 85th percentile of 27.5mph. For eastbound traffic, there had been an average 2,122 vehicles per day, with an average recorded speed of 23.5mph, with an 85th percentile of 27.2mph.

Whilst there had been a very slight reduction in speeds, the area still met the necessary criteria for enforcement, and therefore the data had been sent to the police for information. He suggested that enforcement of the speed limit was likely to be the responsibility of the neighborhood police, but the area was unlikely to be seen as a priority for enforcement with the mobile camera van.

The Principal Programme Officer (Highways Improvement) suggested that as average speeds were below 24mph, further traffic calming measures would not be considered at this time other than marking out 20 roundels to complement the existing repeater signs.

Councillor Fairless-Aitken, the local member, queried the calculations. She noted that some of the lowest speeds which would have been disregarded but noted that some of the highest speeds would have lead to driving bans if the drivers were subject to court proceedings.

Other members commented that:

- The road did not lend itself to speeding given the steep incline and that it would be difficult to install additional traffic calming measures given the proximity of junctions.
- Residents had reported that following the introduction of the 20mph speed limit on Corbridge Road, some drivers were cutting through Peth Head as an alternative route to Corbridge Road following the introduction of 20mph speed limit.

The Principal Programme Officer (Highways Improvement) confirmed that he was willing to provide advice on suitable measures as part of the LTP programme. A copy of the full report of the survey undertaken in January 2023 was to be emailed to all members.

**RESOLVED** that:

1. The contents of the report be noted.
2. The 2023 speed survey data be sent to LAC members by email.

#### **14. LOCAL SERVICES UPDATE**

Members received the following updates from the Area Managers from Neighbourhood Services and Technical Services:

##### **Neighbourhood Services:**

- Waste collection services were performing well with improvements in the garden waste collection service following the route review which had enabled the service to be more effective.
- Grass cutting conditions had been much improved recently and the service was up to date following the equipment theft reported at the beginning of the season.
- Weed spraying was behind schedule due to weather conditions as it had been hampered by wet and windy conditions. It was hoped that the programme would be complete within the next few weeks, subject to weather conditions. Any areas of concern were to be reported and would be prioritised when the schedule permitted.
- The public toilets at St Mary's Wynd in Hexham had recently been reopened following refurbishment.

The Chair thanked the Neighbourhood Services Area Manager for his update. He reminded members to contact officers by email if they needed to report any issues of concern.

Members were delighted that the St Mary's Wynd public toilets had been reopened as they provided an essential facility for the town. Those involved in bringing the project to fruition were thanked.

In answer to question, it was confirmed that any issues regarding the Fix My Street app or updates be emailed to the Highways Delivery Area Manager, Neighbourhood Services Area Manager or Councillor Riddle, Portfolio Holder for Improving our Roads and Highways.

### **Technical Services:**

The Chair read out the following update on behalf of the Highways Delivery Area Manager who had been unable to attend the meeting:

- Highways inspections were up to date in the Tynedale area with actionable defects being repaired by maintenance teams.
- A £500,000 pothole pilot of category 2 actionable defects had commenced in the North and Tynedale areas to improve the condition and quality of the road surface with a first time cut out and patch repair. This work was being undertaken by a contractor and would concentrate on repairs categorised as requiring repair with 14 or 28 days, due to time limits. Work in the Tynedale area had commenced on the A68 South and the B6278 towards Snods Edge. The majority of highway work would be carried out by NCC teams to maintain the network.
- Use of a new highway management system, Alloy, had commenced to support agile working, data management and analysis to assist with improvement and investment decisions.
- A new online public realm reporting system, Fix My Street, had gone live in May 2023. It allowed Councillors and members of the public to report maintenance issues such as potholes, grass cutting etc. It was hoped that the new system would improve standards of service through the provision of automated updates on actions through to completion of repair.
- Surface dressing works under the LTP Programme were scheduled to be complete by the end of the month. 11 of these were in the Tynedale area.
- £3.8 million of additional funding had been allocated which had enabled work at 16 sites in Tynedale to be included in the programme. An update would be provided in August to enable feedback to Town and Parish Council meetings.
- An update of safety schemes and drainage works completed and programmed for the month of July was outlined.

In answer to questions from members, it was confirmed that:

- Operational decisions on locations where the pilot would be used would be made by the Highways Delivery Area Manager.
- Current guidelines required that any material cut out of the highway had to be tested which required additional time and expense.

**RESOLVED** that the updates be noted.

## **15. NORTHUMBERLAND LOCAL BUS BOARD**

Chris Curtis, Senior Programme Officer, Strategic Transport and Employability Team, was in attendance to give an overview of the role of the Northumberland Bus Board and to seek a representative from the Local Area Committee to sit on the Board. (A copy of the report was enclosed with the signed minutes).

He explained that on 9 May 2023 Cabinet had authorised the creation of a Northumberland Local Bus Board, as part of the delivery of the Enhanced Bus Partnership, agreed by the North East Combined Authority and the North of Tyne Combined Authority.

Formation of the partnership was required to obtain Bus Service Improvement Plan funding of £163.5 million for the region with £7.8 million expected for Northumberland. The Board would meet quarterly and provide feedback on proposals to the bus network including changes to routes and timetables, punctuality, reliability, highway infrastructure, fares initiatives and public information.

Members agreed that it was important that someone knowledgeable about issues in the west and rural areas be represented on the Local Bus Board.

In answer to a question, it was confirmed that:

- Following the changes to the roles of portfolio holders, the Portfolio Holder for Supporting Business and Opportunities was expected to Chair the Board.
- Details of attendees expected to be invited to meetings were listed in section 2 of the draft terms of reference.
- A list of priority initiatives across the county had been identified. There would be wide consultation on schemes for any remaining funds.
- There had been focus on initiatives which could be sustained beyond the period of funding. They did not wish to see schemes commence and then later withdrawn. There were 2 definitions of sustainability:
  - A scheme that would be commercially viable at the end of the funding period (where revenue from fares exceeds operating costs); or
  - Where any gap between revenue and costs could be funded from the Council's normal secured service budget.
- One of the priority initiatives included the return of bus services to Kielder.

It was hoped that concessionary fares would be continued and that opportunities be explored for a trial with Adapt in a rural area.

Nominations were received for Councillor Riddle and Councillor Morphet.

**RESOLVED** that Councillor Riddle be nominated to act as the Tynedale Local Area Committee's representative on the Northumberland Local Bus Board.

## 16. APPOINTMENTS TO OUTSIDE BODIES

Members considered a list of appointments to outside bodies for 2023/24.

**RESOLVED** that the following list of appointments be confirmed:

Groundwork North East - Land of Oak and Iron Project Board – **G Stewart**  
Haltwhistle Partnership Limited - **A Sharp**  
Haltwhistle Swimming & Leisure Centre Man. Cttee - **A Sharp**  
Hexham TORCH Centre Management Committee - **T Cessford**  
Prudhoe Community Partnership – **A Scott**  
Queens Hall Arts Trust – **SH Fairless-Aitken**  
Sport Tynedale – **N Oliver**  
Tyne Valley Community Rail Partnership Board – **H Waddell**

## **17. LOCAL AREA COUNCIL WORK PROGRAMME**

A list of agreed items for future Local Area Council meetings was circulated.  
(A copy is enclosed with the minutes.)

Members were invited to email any requests to the Chair and / or Democratic Services Officer between meetings.

Suggestions proposed for consideration by the LAC Chairs included:

- Rural bus services
- Borderlands update

**RESOLVED** that the work programme be noted.

## **18. DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

The next meeting (planning only) would be held on Tuesday 15 August 2023.

**CHAIR** \_\_\_\_\_

**DATE** \_\_\_\_\_