

Recommendation from Regulatory Committee – 5 January 2017

Proposed Waiting Restrictions - Various Roads, Worth Matravers

- 5 The Committee considered a report by the Head of Highways which explained that, following the advertising of proposed changes to parking restrictions in various roads in Worth Matravers, objections had been received to the proposals for the D53204 unnamed road on the north side of the Village Pond. Consequently, the Committee was now being asked to give consideration to those objections and decide whether the proposals should be implemented as advertised.

With the aid of a visual presentation, and having regard to the Update Sheet provided for members information prior to the meeting and appended to these minutes, officers explained the reasoning behind the need to impose the waiting restrictions and the basis on which the objections received had been made. The proposals were designed to improve the unimpeded flow of traffic through the village as it was considered that parking in the centre of the village was causing restricted access for some larger vehicles. It was considered that for these to be enforced effectively, the existing restrictions would require amendment to provide sufficient opportunity for this to take place. Such was the reasoning for the changes, that a year round implementation was also warranted.

The County Councillor for Purbeck Hills, Purbeck District Council, Dorset Police and Worth Matravers Parish Council all supported the proposals, with the views of the Parish Council being set out in the Update Sheet. Officers emphasised that it had taken much negotiation over a number of years to reach the point whereby proposals could be advertised.

Objections received considered that the new proposals would be of little benefit to the village and not noticeably improve the traffic situation. Moreover, it was considered that these would adversely affect the trade of local businesses, given the way in which the restrictions were designed. It was also considered that the consultation exercise undertaken, particularly by the Parish Council, was inadequate in being able to satisfactorily gauge the views of those most affected by the measures. Officers considered that the consultation undertaken in advertising the proposals had proven to be satisfactory in providing a sufficient opportunity for any observations to be made.

Officers acknowledged that whilst the changes would not necessarily be universally welcomed, on balance, they were considered to be beneficial and, on that basis, were now being recommended for approval as advertised.

The Committee heard from Tim Arnold, resident of Post Office Cottage, who in the first instance, expressed concern that the consultation exercise undertaken by the Parish Council had been inadequate and had not taken into account the views of those most affected on the difference the proposals would make. From his own observations, the changes proposed would be of little benefit to the majority of those living and working in the village and were unnecessary. He felt that any removal of parking would only serve to potentially increase the speed of traffic travelling through the village. Should changes be progressed, then waiting should be allowed for up to 2 hours to allow sufficient time for visits to the amenities in the village

to be worthwhile. How the nearby car park might be better utilised was also mentioned.

Diane Jones, proprietor of the Tea and Supper Room, was of a similar view that, should there be a need for change, then 2 hour waiting would benefit customers. However, she felt that the proposals were unnecessary as any parking problems were largely seasonal. She suggested that the erection of bollards would adequately regulate traffic at that point in the village.

In response to the points raised, officers were under the impression that the Parish Council's consultation process had been thorough in helping to shape those proposals which they submitted. Notwithstanding the two objections received, the wider community had seemingly accepted the proposals so they were now being recommended to be implemented on that basis.

In hearing what the speakers had to say, in consideration of the representations received and in light of the absence of any evidence from the emergency services that the current waiting restrictions were causing undue concern, the Committee was minded to accept that there was little benefit to be gained from amending the restrictions as proposed. They considered that the impact that parked vehicles had on regulating traffic speeds had to be given consideration and that the new proposal would potentially be detrimental to how village businesses were able to trade. There was a concern that the feel of the village would be more urbanised with the imposition of more prohibitive measures. Members considered that the Parish Council managed car park could be better utilised with improved signage and that the prospect of providing some form of physical imposition at the 'pinch point' in the road should be actively pursued, if considered practicable, appropriate and necessary.

Given this, on being put to the vote, the Committee decided

Recommendation

That the proposed waiting restrictions for Worth Matravers, as advertised, should not be proceeded with.

Reason for Recommendation

In the public interest, in enabling economic growth and in maintaining road safety.