



North Tyneside Council

Briefing note

To: Members of the Overview, Scrutiny and Policy Committee

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Date: 29 July 2020

Engineering and Highways Queries

1. Purpose

The purpose of this briefing note is to provide responses to specific Engineering and Highways queries raised by members of the Committee at its last meeting when considering the Quarter 3 (2019/20) Technical Services Partnership (Capita) report.

2. Queries Raised by Committee

Set out below are the queries raised by the Committee together with officer responses:

2.1 What is the number of electric vehicle charging points in the borough? Can this be broken down between publicly and privately managed charge points?

Response –

Current publicly managed provision is;

- 1no. double unit Fast chargepoint in Bournemouth Gardens Car Park, Whitley Bay
- 1no. double unit Fast chargepoint in Beaconsfield Car Park, Tynemouth
- 1no. double unit Fast chargepoint in Norfolk Street Car Park, North Shields

- In addition, 2no. double unit Rapid chargepoints were installed in one of the Council's managed public car parks - Beaconsfield Car Park, Tynemouth - by a third party. These have been externally funded through monies that the North East Combined Authority secured from The Office for Low Emission Vehicles (OLEV) and the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF). These two new units will be managed by the third party as part of the funding conditions.

There are further plans to install:

- 2no. double unit rapid chargepoints at Bournemouth Gardens Car Park, Whitley Bay, managed by a third party as above. The initial works associated with these have already commenced
- 1no. double unit rapid chargepoint in Wallsend town centre: while this will be for the use of the taxi trade it will also be available for public use for a period to be agreed with the supplier
- 1no. double unit rapid chargepoint in North Shields town centre: while this will be for the use of the taxi trade it will also be available for public use for a period to be agreed with the supplier

There are currently 53 privately managed charging points available as listed on [Zap Map](#).

2.2 The new cycle path at the A189 terminates near the West Moor roundabout without connecting to anything. What is the reason for this?

Response –

Works on West Moor roundabout are to be undertaken by Bellway Homes as part of their Whitehouse Farm development. Once these works are complete the cycle path will connect to the rest of the network. Officers are currently working with Bellway Homes to understand the timescales for delivery. However, due to the ongoing Covid-19 pandemic, it is not possible to provide an exact start date at this time.

2.3 Can officers explain the aims of the Cycling Strategy (including the tube map mentioned at the meeting) and how it aligns with the Transport Strategy.

Response –

The North Tyneside Transport Strategy sets out how we will improve safety, health and well-being outcomes and sustainability; support economic growth; improve connectivity; enable smart choices for all; and manage demand.

A key aim for both our Transport Strategy and the North Tyneside Local Plan is to encourage a better environment for cycling and to continue the excellent progress being made in North Tyneside in terms of increased participation in cycling.

The aim of the cycling strategy is to bring about everyday cycling. To achieve this, we will focus on;

- i. Securing further growth in everyday cycling, working in partnership to deliver projects which get more people cycling of all ages and in all areas.
- ii. Wherever possible, improving the borough's infrastructure and information.
- iii. Providing design guidance to make sure that cycling is considered as part of all highway and regeneration projects and any new infrastructure is in line with best and emerging good practice.

The 'tube map' is a map of our strategic cycle routes which are the most direct and convenient routes for everyday cycling between destinations. These routes are supported by a grid of local branch routes made suitable for cycling, including traffic-calmed streets and traffic-free routes.

2.4 Footpaths around Northumberland Square have recently been refurbished. Why was part of this recently dug up again?

Response –

The footpath was excavated by Northern Power Grid (NPG) who needed to undertake essential works. In most circumstances, as part of the streetworks permit system, the council secures good coordination of works where utility companies undertake their repair works in advance of highways investing in refurbishment works. Due to the nature of the NPG works this unfortunately could not take place here.

NPG followed the correct permitting procedure and, as part of the conditions, were required to make a like-for-like reinstatement. On completion of the works, an inspection was undertaken to ensure reinstatement met quality standards. Defects were identified (e.g. chipped flags and a depression). The utility company are to address these defect in accordance with street works legislation.

2.5 Temporary traffic signals during recent works to widen the road at Linskill Terrace caused disruption to traffic and residents are concerned about the narrowing work. Can officers provide comments on the traffic management and the reasons for / benefits of the scheme.

Response –

We recently undertook works to install a signalised crossing on Linskill Terrace, just west of its junction with Washington Terrace. These works involved removing the existing pedestrian refuge and replacing it with a puffin crossing to improve road safety. Widening of the footway was also undertaken to improve visibility for vehicles exiting Washington Terrace / Preston Avenue and slow vehicles as they negotiate the slight bend on Linskill Terrace. We also installed a bus boarder to provide improved access to public transport services and there was also extensive resurfacing and deep plane surfacing works carried out to repair the damaged carriageway.

To ensure the crossing was installed as quickly and efficiently as possible, it was necessary for 4-way temporary traffic lights to be in place during the construction phase. Inevitably, as with most highway construction projects there were some localised queues and delays during the construction phase however, we tried to keep these to a minimum whenever possible. Unfortunately, there was 1 night during the works when the temporary traffic signals malfunctioned resulting in all 4 legs of the junction being permanently stuck on red. The traffic management provider was contacted and the signals were repaired that night.

2.6 A sign on the A189 mentioning a pilot scheme to switch off streetlights overnight has been in place for a number of years. What has been the outcome of the pilot?

Response –

Following the pilot, Cabinet took the decision in 2014 to introduce part night switch off to circa 3,000 columns in the Borough. This has saved one million kilowatt hours of electricity per year, which is the equivalent of 284 tonnes of CO2 per year and £0.145m in reduced electricity bills per year (at the 19/20 unit rate). The signs have now been removed.

2.7 Compliance with street works permitting is a Technical Partnership KPI. It is disappointing that compliance is not at 100%. Can an explanation be given?

Response –

Since introducing our street works permitting scheme, the Highways team has had to complete street works permit applications in the same way as utility companies. Performance has improved year on year and we now perform better than the utility companies.

In 2018/19, Northumbrian Water achieved 80 per cent compliance for 2,236 permits while the Highways team achieved 92 per cent compliance for 2,547 permits. This represents excellent performance. Whilst the team will always strive to improve on this figure, it is unlikely that the council or any other organisation will manage to achieve 100% compliance over a whole year as there will always be a degree of human error and failures due to matters outside of the team's control.