

BROADLAND ENVIRONMENTAL EXCELLENCE POLICY DEVELOPMENT PANEL

Minutes of a meeting of the Broadland Environmental Excellence Policy Development Panel of Broadland District Council, held on Thursday, 12 October 2023 at 6.00 pm.

Committee Members Present: Councillors: S Catchpole (Chairman), J Royal (Vice-Chair), P Auber, C Eden, S Gurney, K Leggett, P Newstead, G Nurden and E Tovell

Apologies for Absence: Councillor: K Kelly

Substitute: Councillor: S Jones (In place of K Kelly)

Cabinet Member in Attendance: Councillor: J Davis

Officers in Attendance: N Howard (Assistant Director for Regulatory), S Phelan (Assistant Director of Community Services) and J Overy (Democratic Services Officer)

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

An apology for absence was received from Cllr K Kelly.

2. MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting held on 9 February 2023 were confirmed as a correct record.

3. PUBLIC SPACE PROTECTION ORDER - VEHICLE-RELATED ANTI-SOCIAL BEHAVIOUR

The Assistant Director for Regulatory presented the report, which proposed the adoption of a new vehicle-related anti-social behaviour restrictions Public Space Protection Order (PSPO) under the Anti-social Behaviour, Crime & Policing Act 2014.

Members were advised that a PSPO was the mechanism by which the Council could incentivise people to behave responsibly and, if they commit defined types of vehicle-related anti-social behaviour without reasonable excuse, enabled

enforcement for non-compliance.

Members were reminded that a series of informal member briefings on this matter had been undertaken since before the District elections in May 2023.

This had been followed by a formal consultation that had identified that a substantial majority of respondents favoured the Council imposing restrictions on anti-social behaviours associated with vehicles. Members had also expressed support for necessary and proportionate controls to be brought into effect.

A member challenged the principle of an informal meeting making a decision that had a cost implication i.e., going out to consultation.

In response, the Assistant Director for regulatory advised the meeting that based on the work already done with members informally it had been considered appropriate to proceed with a public consultation. He added that there was no legal process that required a decision from members prior to going out for a consultation, but members concerns in respect of this would be noted.

Members were informed that the formal consultation has taken place over an eight-week period which ended on 30 September 2023. Individual responses included the following:

- Norfolk Police fully support the proposed PSPO in terms of coverage, regulatory controls and hours of operation.
- Parish and Town Councils who responded were generally supportive of the PSPO in terms of coverage and regulatory controls, however, some voiced their concern about the hours of operation, stating that it should operate on a 24/7 basis.
- Norfolk County Council and the Police and Crime Commissioner did not respond. This was usual practice as they tended to respond only to oppose or raise objections to proposals.

The public consultation received 268 fully completed responses across both districts. Fifty eight percent of respondents had experienced anti-social vehicle behaviour where they lived, and 86.57 percent were in favour of a PSPO being applied across the District.

The proposed period of operation of the PSPO in the consultation was between 6.00pm on Thursdays to 6.00am on Tuesdays. Sixty seven percent of respondents were in favour of this, but a significant number were opposed to this and favoured all week protection.

The responses reflected hotspot locations for anti-social vehicle behaviour that had been identified in the data collected in the preparation for the consultation.

The Panel was reminded that a PSPO was not:

- A ban on modified vehicles.
- Targeted at any subset or groups of persons.

- About tackling speeding.
- About spoiling genuine socialising or labelling groups of people.
- Did not prevent legitimate vehicle meets.
- Was not about reducing individual freedom or movements.

In summary the Assistant Director for Regulatory advised the meeting that the adoption of the PSPO would deter vehicle-related anti-social behaviour offences and enable enforcement under specific legal requirements. This would protect the environment, safety and wellbeing of residents and the quality and cleanliness of Broadland's open spaces for legitimate use by all.

In response to a query, members were advised that parking on pavements and verges were traffic offences that were dealt with by Norfolk County Highways and the Police and were outside of the scope of PSPOs.

Cllr G Nurden left the meeting at 6.30pm.

A member noted that Norfolk County Council coordinated parking enforcement and said that it fell to Broadland to fund wardens in the District and if more enforcement was needed the Council would need to contribute more to the funding pot.

She added that she would have liked to have seen costings for the proposed signage in the report, as well as examples and map locations. She also questioned if the Police had the resources to deal with responding to PSPOs and how officers would educate drivers to improve behaviours.

In response the Assistant Director for Regulatory informed the Panel that unfortunately it had not been possible to include costing in the report due to staff sickness. However, full costings would be set out in the final report to Cabinet. Similarly, the details around signage and locations would follow in the final Cabinet report. It was also noted that the Overview and Scrutiny Committee would have the opportunity to consider the cabinet report and the final recommendation would be determined by full Council.

In respect of Police capacity, it was confirmed that they were in favour of introducing PSPOs and would ensure that they were adequately resourced to deal with them.

Members were also informed that based, on the response from the consultation, the officer recommendation would be for the all-week protection, rather than Thursday to Tuesday.

The Assistant Director for Regulatory added that the introduction of a PSPO also raised the bar on what was seen as well-ordered civil behaviour and helped to educate drivers as well as their passengers.

In answer to a query about data on the effectiveness on PSPOs, members were advised that feedback from local authorities and police forces across the Country confirmed that PSPOs were an effective means of tackling anti-social vehicle behaviour.

Members were informed that persons identified as involved in anti-social behaviour would initially be sent a warning letter, which would be followed by a Community Protection Warning, if this was not complied with a Community Protection Notice (CPN) could be issued. Failure to comply with a CPN was a criminal offence which could lead to a court summons and, upon conviction, a fine.

In summing up, the Assistant Director advised the meeting that it was proposed that the PSPO would be in effect for three years, with full week operation and that a review would be undertaken after a period of 12 months from its introduction.

Members requested that it be noted that they were disappointed that they did not have information available in respect of costings, signage and its placement and emphasised that they wanted the PSPO to be operation on a 24-hour seven day a week basis.

RECOMMENDED TO CABINET

That Cabinet recommends to Council, the approval of the Public Space Protection Order as proposed in paragraph 4.6 and Appendix 1 over the geographical areas identified in Appendix 2 for a period of three years and operating on a 24-hour seven day a week basis.

(The meeting concluded at 7.02 pm)

Chairman