

# ***Action on Petitions***



## **ACTION TAKEN ON PETITIONS**

**Council Members are asked to note the action taken in relation to the under mentioned petitions which were presented to Council.**

**(i) Farrington Residents Association – Petition to Sunderland City Council to Provide Additional Parking – Presented by Councillor Porthouse on 26 September 2012**

*“This petition to Sunderland City Council is for additional parking capacity in Farrington Estate. The estate was built before the concept of general public car ownership. In some streets the existing road network is inadequate and a danger to the public. On many occasions access for the Emergency Services and refuse vehicles is severely restricted. There are considerable grassed and paved areas where additional parking could be established at minimum cost.”*

The petition was considered by the Head of Streetscene, who following investigations declined the proposal as the relatively high construction cost of the necessary works could not be justified. It is considered that the cost of providing additional parking by the removal of raised bitmac strip, at rear of footway in areas, replacing with flags and lay bitmac footway to front, changing current kerbs for splayed kerbs, is significant and could not be justified. The costs of these potential works, estimated to be in the region of £105,000 to £290,000 depending on option chosen, far outweigh any benefit to the local residents. This is supported by receiving no previous reports from residents, emergency services or other local services regarding the issues within the petition.

Although not providing additional parking, consideration was given to the placing of bollards around the radii on the corners of Amara Square and Alnwick Square to protect visibility splays and reduce obstructive parking. Given the relatively high cost of the scheme, the fact that there have been no reported accidents at this location and the scheme would actually reduce available parking the proposals can not be justified at this time.

At their meeting of 12<sup>th</sup> December 2013 West Area Place Board Members, acknowledged that the costs of the proposals are prohibitive when balanced against any minimal benefits likely to be gained from the proposals. Consequently they considered that the use of monies from the Strategic Initiatives Budget, as an alternative funding source, could not be justified at this time.

Councillor Porthouse and the petitioners have been notified.

**(ii) Petition from the residents of Barmston Close – Presented by Councillor Padgett on 25 September 2013**

*"We the residents of Barmston Close in the Washington East Ward present this petition for the closure of the bridge at the bottom of Station Road in Columbia. If closure is not acceptable then we ask for road restrictions to be introduced. This road is now being used as a short cut by residents of Teal Farm and surrounding areas. The speed and type of traffic using this road is unacceptable and is a danger of residents living on Station Road."*

Each sheet of signatures was headed with the following message: -

*"This is a petition for the closure of the bridge at the bottom of Station Road which is being used as a short cut from Teal Farm and the surrounding area. It is a danger for pedestrians and wild life from the pond which venture on the road, one duck killed and another injured in one week by speeding cars, vans and wagons. Lots of school children use this road and one day there could be a nasty accident if a motorist swerves to avoid hitting one of the swans or ducks."*

The petition was considered by the Head of Streetscene, who following investigations declined the request for the closure of Station Road to through traffic at the railway overbridge. However, the request for the introduction of road restrictions, an "Environmental Weight Limit" at this location as an alternative to the closure, is upheld.

A closure request has been made on three previous occasions and has been turned down each time following objections from two of the Emergency Services. In addition no injury accidents have been recorded by Northumbria Police in the last three years, and this road is considered to be relatively safe for the movement of traffic. However, given the nature and geometry of the road there is benefit in the introduction of an "Environmental Weight Limit" which would prohibit the driving of goods vehicles exceeding a maximum gross weight of 7.5T. Subject to a positive outcome to the required statutory consultations, a scheme is to be considered as part of the mass action element of the 2014/15 local transport programme of works.

Councillor Padgett and the petitioners have been notified.

**(iii) Petition from Mrs D. Taylor and the "Hands off Sunderland Libraries" group stating their opposition to the closure of any Sunderland Library – Presented by Councillor H. Trueman on 25 September 2013**

The petitioners stated their opposition to the closure of any Sunderland Library, their belief that library services are vital for all sectors of the community and that the most vulnerable, including children, are likely to lose out.

The Executive Director of People's Services has considered the petition. The Council notes the petitioners' concerns and is taking all necessary action to ensure that the new library services service model meets the needs of the people of Sunderland including those who will most benefit. During the consultation and planning processes a full Equality Impact Assessment was completed and is publicly available. The Council considered and identified mitigations for any potential negative impacts and sought additional detailed information from service users during the second phase of the consultation process. Reasonable measures have been put in place. For example the Books at Home service is offered to any customer who cannot make the journey to a static library because of disability.

Services are being delivered from 11 static service points, which are used by 88% of library customers and are being taken out into communities by a new Community Engagement Team, focusing on encouraging access by those who can most benefit, including children and their families.

The lead petitioner has been informed of the decision.

