



Vibrant and Sustainable City Scrutiny Panel

28 September 2017

Time 6.00 pm **Public Meeting?** YES **Type of meeting** Scrutiny
Venue Training Room, Ground Floor, Civic Centre, St Peter's Square, Wolverhampton WV1 1SH

Membership

Chair Cllr Ian Angus (Lab)
Vice-chair Cllr Christopher Haynes (Con)

Labour

Cllr Mary Bateman
Cllr Philip Bateman MBE
Cllr Greg Brackenridge
Cllr Val Evans
Cllr Bhupinder Gakhal
Cllr Keith Inston
Cllr John Rowley
Cllr Caroline Siarkiewicz
Cllr Mak Singh

Conservative

Cllr Arun Photay

Quorum for this meeting is three Councillors.

Information for the Public

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Agenda

Part 1 – items open to the press and public

Item No. *Title*

MEETING BUSINESS ITEMS

- 1 **Apologies**
- 2 **Declarations of interest**
- 3 **Minutes of the previous meeting (29 June 2017)** (Pages 3 - 10)
[To approve the minutes of the previous meeting as a correct record]
- 4 **Matters arising**
[To consider any matter arising from the minutes]

DISCUSSION ITEMS

- 5 **Parking near Schools** (Pages 11 - 26)
To consider what can the Council do to alleviate car parking near schools.

Vibrant and Sustainable City Scrutiny Panel

Agenda Item No: 3

Minutes - 29 June 2017

Attendance

Members of the Vibrant and Sustainable City Scrutiny Panel

Cllr Ian Angus (Chair)
Cllr Mary Bateman
Cllr Philip Bateman MBE
Cllr Greg Brackenridge
Cllr Val Evans
Cllr Keith Inston
Cllr John Rowley
Cllr Caroline Siarkiewicz
Cllr Mak Singh

Employees

Christopher Hale
Ravi Phull
Helen Tambini
Anthony Walker
Neil White

Head of Housing
Senior Environmental Health Officer
Democratic Services Officer
Strategy Implementation and Monitoring Officer
Scrutiny Officer

Part 1 – items open to the press and public

Item No. *Title*

- 1 **Apologies**
Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Haynes and Gakhil.
- 2 **Declarations of interest**
Councillors Angus and Mak Singh declared interests in item 5 of the agenda as they were both landlords.

Councillor Phil Bateman declared an interest in item 5 as he was known to one of the witnesses, Mr Richard Hall of L & A Lettings.
- 3 **Minutes of the previous meeting**
Resolved that the minutes of the meeting held on 23 March 2017 be confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chair.
- 4 **Matters arising**
Councillor Brackenridge referred to the recent tragic events at the Grenfell Tower and suggested that the issue should be referred to Scrutiny Board, with a view to a potential Scrutiny Review.

Councillor Phil Bateman agreed and referred to the potential impact on the public's confidence. He suggested that emergency planning procedures should be reviewed, including the provision of temporary accommodation if an incident occurred.

Resolved that the issues of fire protection and emergency planning be referred to Scrutiny Board so that it can determine how to look at these issues.

5 **Private Rented Housing Sector**

The Chair referred to the housing crisis at both national and local levels and the duty of the Council to tackle homelessness under the Homelessness Reduction Act 2017. He referred to the importance of working in partnership and to the witnesses who had been invited to attend the meeting in four sessions.

Session One:

Estate Agents, Richard Hall (L & A Lettings) and Courtney Downing (Proactive Property)

Brief Introductions:

Richard Hall had an established business, set up over nine years ago, with over 300 properties in Wolverhampton, Walsall and surrounding areas.

Courtney Downing had recently set up his business and had five properties.

The witnesses were asked what did a good vetting scheme for both tenants and landlords include?

Richard Hall stated that word of mouth and personal contact was key, prospective tenants should be visited in current properties. Local authorities were also providing support; however, that varied depending on the authority.

Courtney Downing agreed that personal contact was vital and he actively encouraged communication with all his tenants and would continue to do so.

The witnesses were asked what incentives should there be in the Rent with Confidence scheme that would attract more estate agents to use it?

Richard Hall considered that the Rent with Confidence scheme would slowly identify the better landlords and drive up standards. The regeneration in the city centre would also encourage good landlords to the area. He stated that it was easy to identify poor landlords and in terms of references, no one came with a bad reference so personal judgements had to be made. He stated that it would be helpful to have more than one month's rent deposit and it would be helpful if the Council could facilitate such a scheme.

Courtney Downing suggested that additional information about the scheme and how everyone could help each other would be helpful. He stated that he had previously been unaware of what the Council was doing. He confirmed that accreditation and ratings were very important and it would be helpful to have support to find landlords with good properties.

The witnesses were asked if other local authorities that they dealt with had a better communication process with the Department of Work and Pensions (DWP) on Universal Credit and Direct Payment?

Richard Hall referred to the Walsall Steering Group which had a representative from the DWP and the National Landlords Association (NLA). He stated that it would be helpful to have a Steering Group at Wolverhampton again to build relationships.

Officers confirmed that there had previously been a Private Sector Forum and Steering Group; however, due to issues in respect of the direction of the Group it had been disbanded.

The witnesses were thanked for attending the meeting and participating in the session.

Session Two:

Landlords, Richard Hall (L & A Lettings) and Ranjit Uppal (UAS Properties)

Brief Introductions:

Ranjit Singh stated that he had set up his property business in 1993 with over 100 apartments across the city centre with over 280 tenants.

The witnesses were asked what would a good vetting scheme for tenants include?

Ranjit Singh stated that the Council had a good vetting scheme and he worked in close collaboration with the Homelessness Team. Fundamentally the Council was taking the correct approach; however, he felt that it was restricted, as the local housing allowance rates were so low and additional incentives were required to encourage letting agents.

He confirmed that although he dealt with Council officers and agencies on a regular basis, he had no contact with local councillors.

He confirmed that he charged the local housing allowance and therefore most working people could afford the rent and consequently he had very few tenants claiming housing benefits. He expressed concern at the future changes under the Universal Credit scheme.

Richard Hall confirmed that over 75% of his tenants were working.

The witnesses were asked how the Council and its partners could help to get tenants into secure, safe accommodation for stable, long-term tenures?

Richard Hall confirmed that good tenants would never be evicted. If tenants started to get into arrears, then a payment plan would be set up to ensure that reasonable repayments could be made. It was essential to maintain a relationship with the tenant and to offer them support. That would also apply if there were problems with Anti-Social Behaviour (ASB). The ASB team was also aware of contact details and would be in touch if an issue had been raised.

Ranjit Singh referred to the considerable changes over recent years and that tenants were now staying in a property for much longer. He stated that ASB was very rare and applied more to Houses in Multiple Occupation.

The witnesses were asked if there was anything that the Council could do to help landlords?

Ranjit Singh requested that housing benefit payments should be paid directly to landlords and that the administration for Council payments to landlords be simplified.

Richard Hall asked that poor landlords were prosecuted and good landlords praised and promoted.

The witnesses were thanked for attending the meeting and participating in the session.

Session Three:

Citizens Advice (CAB), Helen Child, Chief Executive

The witness was asked what should deposit guarantee and rent guarantee schemes include and were there any examples of good schemes?

Helen Child stated that Shelter had some good guidance and there were examples of good practice in Scotland. Appropriate regulation and lending was required to ensure that reasonable and rational decisions were made. Existing financial service providers could be used.

The witness was asked if she knew of other authorities who had used the powers in the Housing and Planning Act 2016 to fund future enforcement action and how successful had they been?

Helen Child stated that this was new local authority legislation in relation to civil penalties and additional clarification would be required.

Housing Officers referred to the civil penalties under the Housing and Planning Act 2017 and the new statutory guidance for local housing authorities came into force on 6 April 2017. A report would be taken to the Council's Cabinet in September and the legislation would act as a foil to the Rent with Confidence scheme. The Council would continue to be proactive in dealing with landlords who failed to safeguard their tenants and in serious cases, such as health and safety failures a statutory notice could be served. The level of fines would vary, with some being substantial. Those fines would be retained and ring-fenced for the Public Sector Housing team.

The witness was asked how could we use an engagement forum that she had suggested to get landlords to voluntarily agree to better standards?

Helen Child noted that during the previous two sessions none of the witnesses had mentioned CAB. CAB offered debt advice and support and it would be helpful to ensure that landlords and estate and letting agents were aware of this so that they could pass on that information to their tenants. There also needed to be incentives and a willingness to work in partnership, as part of the Wolverhampton's Inclusion Board. She agreed that it would be helpful to have a forum of some kind to talk about key issues and future implications associated with the impact of Universal Credit. Currently some tenants were living in poor conditions, for example, being unable to

put on the heating as they could not afford to and consequently being forced to stay in bed to keep warm and it was a concern that that could get worse.

The witness was asked if there was anything that the Council could do to help the CAB?

Helen Child suggested that supporting landlords to get an Alternative Payment Arrangement (APA) in place would be beneficial.

Helen Child was thanked for attending the meeting and participating in the session.

Session Four:

Client Side Representatives, Fazia Bano (St Georges Housing), Sunny Dhadley (Wolverhampton Voluntary Sector Council) and Satvinder Goraya (Refugee and Migrant Centre)

Brief Introductions:

Fazia Bano stated that St Georges Housing provided a range of services and support for socially excluded men over 18 with the most complex needs who were extremely vulnerable.

Sunny Dhadley stated that he had been working in this sector for over 10 years. In 2015/16 the Wolverhampton Voluntary Sector Council had 1072 clients and made 5238 interventions. The three main issues were: welfare, employability and housing.

Satvinder Goraya stated that they had helped 1402 new clients to date this year. A high percentage of support related to housing. They had assisted over 700 asylum seekers. If any asylum seeker was granted refugee status, then they would only have 28 days to find accommodation and that was a short time bearing in mind immigration letters could take two weeks

The witnesses were asked what would a good quality tenancy agreement look like for landlords and tenants?

Sunny Dhadley referred to the stigma and discrimination endured by many who were unaware of their rights. It was important that people understood the terrible environment that many lived in, often with no security on short tenancies.

Fazia Bano stated that many people were so desperate they would take any housing. Previously there had been more support from efficient joined-up services; however, that was no longer the case. Advice was often ad-hoc and limited for the most vulnerable.

Satvinder Goraya stated that improvements could be made to improve tenancies as currently many would sign an agreement without understanding it. Often tenancy agreements were long and very complex and could be simplified.

The witnesses were asked what should a training package for landlords and one for tenants include?

Satvinder Goraya referred to the very good package run at Leicester, which included catalogues of landlords and training.

Fazia Bano stated that an element of mediation to build strong links between landlords and frontline staff to act as a 'bridge' would be advantageous. If tenants were not supported they would often find themselves living in certain areas because they have no choice and that led to 'ghettos' forming. They then became more isolated and socially excluded.

Sunny Dhadley referred to the importance of understanding the local environment and understanding different cultures and it was dependent on who you engaged with. He asked if there was a database of private landlords?

Officers confirmed that there were various databases; however, only 2-3% of the market was reached.

Satvinder Goraya referred to the introduction of Universal Credits in December and the uncertainty surrounding that for the most vulnerable. Considerable support was required at the start of a new tenancy to ensure that everything was in place and that put a strain on resources.

Sunny Dhadley confirmed that clients were referred to organisations including CAB. He had worked with 426 agencies this year. The third sector provided more holistic support. He referred to service user involvement and how that translated into tenancy involvement and how that feed back into the system.

Officers referred to the difficulty in contacting some landlords and groups of tenants. Under the Rent with Confidence scheme, frontline staff offer support to local tenants. Significant investment from public health was used to promote health and wellbeing in the city.

Sunny Dhadley mentioned that although in most cases individuals made contact because they were in difficulties, sometimes positive feedback was received and that should be publicised. He stated that it was important to recognise good practices and trends and to penalise poor landlords.

The witnesses were asked if they would like to become more involved with the Rent with Confidence Scheme?

All three witnesses agreed that they would like to become more involved.

The witnesses were thanked for attending the meeting and participating in the session.

Members of the Panel considered the comments received and discussed several issues that covered:

- Rebadging of the Rent with Confidence Scheme.
- The use of rent deposit and guarantee schemes.
- Alternative Payment Arrangements and Universal Credit.
- The reestablishment of an engagement forum.
- Building on the rating within the Rent with Confidence Scheme to make it clearer between good and bad landlords.
- Use Champions within excluded communities to help with housing issues.
- Advice package and training for landlords.

Resolved that:

the Cabinet Member for City Assets and Housing be requested to report to the Council's Cabinet within six months (with a briefing note to be made available to the Scrutiny Panel on current progress before its meeting on 28th September 2017) on how the Council could work with landlords, tenants and stakeholders to improve Private Sector Housing in Wolverhampton to include specific proposals on how to improve:

- (A) the Rent with Confidence Scheme through the introduction of an enhanced rent guarantee scheme, including covering rent in advance, and/or off-setting rent loss as well as training, support and vetting processes for landlords and tenants, to be drawn up in conjunction with the Private Sector Housing Forum referred to in (B) below;
- (B) engagement with the sector to include the setting up of a Private Sector Housing Forum, to comprise of councillor representatives, estate agents, landlords, tenants, client side representatives and community/charity groups such as Citizens Advice with the aim of the Forum to improve standards in the private rented housing sector; and
- (C) publicity of the Rent with Confidence Scheme to include a communications and marketing process and plan that enhances the scheme in a way that covers all parts of the city, to be drawn up in conjunction with the Private Sector Housing Forum referred to in (B) above.

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Vibrant and Sustainable City Scrutiny Panel

28 September 2017

Report title	Parking near Schools	
Cabinet member with lead responsibility	Councillor Steve Evans Cabinet Member for City Environment	
Corporate Plan outcome	Delivering effective core services that people want	
Wards affected	(All Wards);	
Accountable Director	Ross Cook, Service Director, City Environment	
Originating service	Place	
Accountable employee	Nick Broomhall, Neil White Tel Email	Service Lead, Traffic and Road Safety, Scrutiny Officer 01902 555723 or 01902 550181 nick.broomhall@wolverhampton.gov.uk, neil.white@wolverhampton.gov.uk

Recommendation(s) for action or decision:

The Vibrant and Sustainable City Scrutiny Panel is asked to consider what can the Council do to alleviate car parking near schools?

1.0 Purpose

The Vibrant and Sustainable City Scrutiny Panel is asked to consider what can the Council do to alleviate car parking near schools?

2.0 Car parking near schools – how big a problem is it?

- 2.1 Car ownership and car usage has significantly increased over the years, and more and more parents are relying on using a car to take their children to school.
- 2.2 The single greatest explanation for recent school traffic congestion is the growth of the school-aged population over a relatively short time, combined with urban sprawl (TilleyDowns (1999)). Both factors have led to an unanticipated volume of students' being taken to school by car, rendering original school drop-off and pick-up schemes, street layouts, and traffic control measures ineffective in controlling congestion. Other key factors are the growth in car ownership and use, which has been associated with a decline in parents' willingness for children to walk or bike to and from school independently (Hillman (1993)).

- 2.3 When asked, parents who choose to take their children by car cite distance, traffic hazards, time constraints, and bad weather as the most common reasons for selecting this transportation mode (Bradshaw (1995)). Other research has asserted that both road safety and “stranger danger” are the key explanations for why parents are increasingly taking their children to school by car (Valentine (1996)).
- 2.4 2014 Research from [AXA Car Insurance](#) found that a third of parents who drive their children to school (35 per cent) say stopping on school zig-zags is acceptable. with a quarter (27 per cent) admitting to doing so.

Furthermore, 88 per cent of school-run parents have witnessed fellow motorists stopping in the restricted zig-zag area at least once a week.

One in five of school-run parents (20 per cent) say that if they were ‘just dropping off’ or ‘just stopping for less than a minute’ (13 per cent) then it is acceptable to stop on zig-zag lines outside the school during the school run time.

In respect of what the ‘Keep Clear’ zone near school entrances actually means fewer than one in five UK adults (17 per cent) correctly responded ‘No stopping or parking during school run times’ when asked to define the meaning of a zig-zag line.

Following a Freedom of Information request, data revealed that the number of fixed penalty charge notices for parking on zig-zag lines had risen significantly. Total national figures rose from 14,564 in 2011 to 28,169 in 2013 – a 93 per cent increase.

Despite the increase, the total figure is significantly lower than the number of offences. When considering there are 30,000 schools in the UK, it equates to less than one ticket per school per year whereas the number of offences is expected to be far higher than a conservative estimate of 1.2 million (No. of schools (30,000) multiplied by one (one ticket per school) multiplied by 40 (number of school weeks)) per year.

- 2.5 [Councils in the driving seat? Local authorities and traffic enforcement](#) LGIU 2014 found that 77.3% of local authorities of those surveyed (71 authorities) identified school zones as a key enforcement problem. Similarly, a high proportion of authorities prioritise safety as key to the success of their enforcement.
- 2.6 An [AXA Roadsafe Schools Report](#), published in June 2013 found that nationally:
- Overall there had been 557,200 vehicle collisions near schools over 6 years
 - There are on average six collisions per school per year
 - There had been a total of 130,659 pedestrian casualties – that’s 21,777 per year
 - 37% of local school areas had at least one child casualty each year
 - 85,814 children had been casualties on local roads around British schools – equating to as many as 1,190 per month
 - Fortunately, 5,831 schools (20%) reported no child casualties in the past 6 years

- 2.7 Manchester City Council found that research shows that each year the problem of vehicle/pupil conflicts outside school grounds spikes when a fresh intake of pupils (and parents) takes place.
- 2.8 It is also worth noting that parental choice where parents can send their children to the school of their choice can mean that they are travelling right across the city to attend that school.
- 2.9 Similarly, the mix of schools today with an increasing mix of academies and independents the Council has far less power and influence over schools than was once the case.
- 2.10 In 2016 there were 65 reported child casualties in Wolverhampton, 27 of which were children under 10 years old. In total 739 children were injured on roads in the West Midlands.
- 2.11 Between 2012 and 2017 there were 198 child pedestrian casualties in Wolverhampton. 11 of these casualties were injured outside schools across the city during the school run period. Resulting in 1 serious injury and 10 slight injuries.

3.0 **Wolverhampton Schemes**

The Council runs a number of campaigns aimed at schools focusing upon School Gate Parking These are:

3.1 **Safety Outside School's Programme**

Safety Outside Schools is a school based resource that focuses upon four key themes: Anti-bullying; Community (including Anti-Social Behaviour and Littering) Fire Safety and Road Safety (with a focus upon parking outside of schools.)

Each Local Authority run and academy primary and junior school across the city has recently received a box containing a range of resources that they can use to carry out work on the above four themes.

The programme is a joint initiative between City of Wolverhampton Council, West Midlands Police, and West Midlands Fire Service, and has the following aims:

- To work in partnership to identify and tackle local issues affecting each school and the wider community.
- To reduce incidences of bullying.
- To reduce levels of litter within the community.
- To promote road safety near to schools.
- To raise awareness of fire safety.
- To encourage community empowerment.

With regards to road safety schools, with the support of Police Community Support Officers and Firefighters they will be encouraged to take part in their own parking patrols outside school to educate parents and carers about appropriate and inappropriate places to park when near to the school gate. This theme also looks at safer places to cross, and car safety.

As part of the programme City of Wolverhampton Council and West Midlands Police have funded the purchase of 80 mini-cade signs which schools can use to highlight areas outside of schools where parents and carers should not park.

3.2 In Wolverhampton, the [Safer Routes to School initiative](#) was introduced in 1996, bringing a whole new approach to road safety and school travel.

Designed to address concerns over rising traffic levels and school gate parking issues, the scheme includes:

- broad community consultation
- training for pedestrians and cyclists
- installation of safety features around participating schools
- introduction of new parking restrictions where considered appropriate

3.3 Park and Stride initiative

The Road Safety Team is currently working with colleagues in Public Health to develop Park and Stride Initiatives within a small number of Wolverhampton's Schools.

Park and Stride is a scheme whereby parents are given a rendezvous point away from the main school entrance and encouraged to complete the journey on foot.

3.4 Walk once a Week initiative in conjunction with Living Streets

Initial discussions have recently taken place with Living Streets, and Transport for West Midlands (TfWM) regarding the introduction of the charities Walk once a Week programme within a number of Wolverhampton's Schools.

Living Streets, supported by TfWM are in a position to fully fund a year's free access to Walk once a Week, along with support to get the initiative up and running in five of Wolverhampton's Schools.

The package on offer includes subscription to the Travel Tracker monitoring software, welcome pack and a year's worth of reward badges, for each school.

3.5 Beat the Street Initiative.

Funded by Public Health this initiative has taken place twice now in Wolverhampton, and encourages children and their parents to walk/cycle to and from school.

The initiative is particularly popular with young people due to its interactive nature. Participants collect points by tapping their beat cards onto beat boxes. Beat boxes are usually placed a short distance away from schools and parents and their children are encouraged to walk between different boxes building up points as they go.

The intervention costs £192,000 to implement, and funding has to be identified on a yearly basis in order for this initiative to run.

3.6 Bikeability Cycle Training.

Funded by the Department for Transport (DfT) the Council delivers a comprehensive cycle training programme which is offered to all Primary, Junior and Secondary Schools across the City.

Training is offered across all levels, levels 1 – 3. With level one off road training being offered at year 4. Level two on road training at years 6 and 7, and level 3 training at years 8 and 9.

The Council is also in receipt of funding to train new child cyclists to ride a bike and for parents to receive Bikeability cycle training as well.

The overriding aim of the initiative is to give trainees the skills and knowledge to be able to cycle safely on the city's roads and to consider using their bikes as an alternative to the car.

3.7 School Crossing Patrol Visits/Loan of Street Feet Resource

In order to encourage children to make journeys as a pedestrian safely the road safety team offers school crossing patrol visits and the loan of its Street Feet resource to all nursery, infant, and primary schools across the city. This resource is targeted at foundation, reception, year 1 and year 2.

School Crossing Patrol Visits involve a real-life School Crossing Patrol visiting participating classes and delivering an interactive role play session that introduces the children to the Green Cross Code and how to cross safely with the patrol.

Schools can also loan Street Feet which is a set of role play equipment which focuses upon how to cross roads safely.

3.8 Development of an inconsiderate/pavement parking publicity campaign has been led by David Ryley, Local Police & Crime Board rep and supported by council and police colleagues. Leaflets, posters and street signs have been developed. This has been funded by the Active Citizens fund and local residents are delivering leaflets in streets they identify as problematic. Feedback from this campaign at PACT meetings has been very positive and the pictorial element of the leaflets has been useful for residents to assist with identification of obstructive parking. (David Ryley's account is at Appendix "A").

3.9 There have been 2 task and finish groups set up, the first of which was led under Neighbourhood Services, the second from the Community Safety team.

The first group identified two schools within each constituency area, from this we looked at working within the schools to bring about behaviour change using the children to encourage responsible parking from the parents, combined enforcement activity with enforcement officers and police officers and schools where highway changes could be implemented such as double yellow lines, loading restrictions and actual highway layout change.

The schools that were included as part of this were: -

1. Elston Hall Primary. Identified for work within the school looking at behaviour change. Staffing reductions have limited the capacity for this to be carried out within the Road Safety Team and loss of the Neighbourhood Wardens
2. Villiers Primary. Highway change, waiting restrictions and provision of disabled parking, this was completed.
3. Springdale Infant/Junior. Review of existing parking restrictions, review section of single yellow lines, potential for 'no loading', enforcement of existing restrictions, enforcement activity around obstructive parking. Enforcement activity was carried out, the revision of existing parking restrictions was approved and at the time was due to go out to consultation
4. Wodensfield Primary. Parking restrictions to be introduced along School Road, enforcement activity around obstructive parking to be carried out. Enforcement activity took place, objections were received from the informal consultation and the issue was to go to Cabinet Member for approval to carry out formal consultation
5. St Andrew's C of E Primary. Behaviour change within school working with children, enforcement of existing restrictions, enforcement activity around obstructive parking. Enforcement activity was carried out but the work within schools is the same as Elston Hall Primary, limited staff resources
6. Goldthorn Park Primary Behaviour change within school working with children, review of existing parking restriction to include no loading, enforcement activity. Enforcement activity was carried out, approval was being sought for the no loading restrictions before going to formal consultation

The second group has included the Safety Outside Schools, inconsiderate/pavement parking campaign and the development of a parking log similar to an ASB diary which residents can use to evidence problematic parking.

3.10 Previous Council initiatives that have been implemented but have ceased due to resource reductions

Prior to 2010 the Road Safety Education and Publicity Team consisted of 7 full time members of staff. During this time the Council could provide a greater number of education initiatives to schools covering both school gate parking and other road safety themes.

The team today now consists of 1.5 full time equivalent posts which has reduced the level of support that can be given to schools with regards to Road Safety/School Gate Parking interventions.

3.11 Previous interventions that have been provided are:

3.12 School Travel Plan Initiative

This involved all schools in Wolverhampton, with support from the Council, producing a School Travel Plan detailing actions that both schools and the Council would undertake to promote sustainable modes of transport to and from School.

Resources were distributed by the Road Safety Team to schools for them to encourage children to walk to school and follow each year's theme.

The programme ceased in 2010 due to the withdrawal of funding from central government and the School Travel Advisor Post was made redundant.

3.13 Walk to School Week and Walk to School Month

Schools across the city were invited to take part in both Walk to School Week that takes place in May each year, and Walk to School Month in October.

These initiatives formed part of the School Travel Advisors post and ceased when the post was made redundant.

3.14 Junior Road Safety Officers

The Junior Road Safety Officer scheme was a school based peer learning programme that ran in primary and junior schools across the city.

The scheme involved schools recruiting pupils, usually year 6 children, to act as Junior Road Safety Officers. The officers main job was to promote road safety across the whole of their school.

To help the appointed officer's resources were provided by the road safety team each term and focused upon a different road safety theme. Themes included Safer Places to Cross the Road, Be Safe Be Seen, and Green Cross Code.

The programme aimed to give children information and knowledge about how they could keep safe on and near to the city's roads, thus encouraging them to walk to and from school.

As resource levels reduced within the Road Safety Team the programme unfortunately ceased to operate.

3.15 Togo and Nogo Pedestrian Training.

Togo and Nogo Pedestrian training was a programme that ran in Year 3 at all Primary and Junior Schools in Wolverhampton.

The scheme involved 5 class based lessons being delivered by the class teacher following an online resource on an interactive whiteboard.

The Road Safety Team then delivered a sixth lesson which involved the whole class going out onto roads near to their school to put into practice what they had learnt in the classroom.

The programme was designed to give children the knowledge and skills to be able to cross roads safely and help encourage them to walk on journeys wherever it was possible.

As resource levels reduced within the Road Safety Team the programme ceased to operate in 2014.

3.16 City of Wolverhampton Parking Enforcement

Parking Services deploy both a CCTV vehicle and Civil Enforcement Officers (CEO), patrolling on foot, to enforcement against inconsiderate parking which occurs immediately outside or on the street near our city school's where valid Traffic Regulation Orders apply. We have the powers to issue a Penalty Charge Notices (PCN) to vehicles who stop on the yellow Zig-Zags between the hours of 8:00 – 9:30 and 2:30 – 4:30 or to any vehicle who stop or park on single or double yellow lines. However, without the presence of a yellow kerb marking, which advises of a loading ban, CEO's are unable to issue an instant PCN. It is for this reason and for the time it takes to issue a PCN that foot patrol officers will very rarely issue a PCN to a vehicle outside of the school gates. The CCTV vehicle is more of a deterrent as vehicle owners caught by the CCTV camera, and have stopped on the Zig-Zag or yellow lines will get issued with a PCN. The cost of the PCN is £70.00 however the charge is discounted to £35.00 if paid within 21 days.

The City Council currently has a programme to strengthen parking restrictions near to schools to include a loading ban on single and double yellow lines where appropriate. Since 2015, 33 schools have seen, or are in the process of having the restrictions near to the school gates strengthened in this way, with more planned in the near future.

In the period 4 April 2017 – 15 July 2017, 63 school term days, the CCTV vehicle has visited a total of 74 schools. 67 Primary schools, 2 Special schools and 5 Secondary schools. A total of 88 PCNs have been issued.

4.0 What is happening in other parts of the country?

- 4.1 Nottingham's [School Parking Enforcement Programme](#) incorporates all Nottingham's Schools who are included into a rolling 8 week programme and receive a week of enforcement action. This includes mobile parking enforcement officers who sporadically visit schools during the day

It also includes a ["School Keep Clear" campaign](#) that is a school parking safety campaign which is an adoption of a video originally produced by Cambridgeshire County Council involving hundreds of school children asking parents to park further away and not on the school zig zags to ensure their safety.

The Council has challenged Nottingham residents, schools, parents, children and local community groups to create their own version of the song and share on social media to support the campaign.

- 4.2 A [Parents' Parking Promise](#) in a number of locations to encourage parents and carers to park responsibly around schools or consider using other modes of transport such as walking, cycling or bus journeys to help children travel to and from school safely.

The promise asks everyone that signs up to:

- not park on zig zag or double yellow lines
- not park on pavements, grass verges, or block residents' drives
- park carefully and considerately

- consider walking or cycling to schools, or take part in a Park and Stride (if the school has this one) and park a short distance away from the school and walking the remaining bit – which are both healthier alternatives.

By signing up to the scheme and completing the Parking Promise form parents/carers will then receive a car badge, which is unique to their children's school, which demonstrates their commitment to parking responsibly and hopes to further strengthen their support to the scheme.

- 4.3 Blackburn with Darwen Borough Council's [Connect Project](#) has worked alongside pupils and school councils to drive home the message to parents that parking recklessly could endanger children's lives. Collectively, they felt the warning would have more impact if it came from young people themselves.

2,000 pupils together with the Council set to work designing and writing courtesy letters including a "very serious" message to leave on car windscreens and give out to parents, asking drivers to take more care.

The Children have also been taking part in a Healthy Travel to School Initiative, led by the Council's Connect project, aimed at promoting sustainable travel in the borough. This has included a Healthy Travel to School Week, when walking, cycling and 'park and stride' are encouraged and rewarded with certificates and prizes. The children have also been involved in assemblies about the traffic initiative with more activities to come.

Further measures the Council are introducing outside problem schools include new signs, extending keep clear lines outside school and new double yellow lines.

The measures build on ones brought in last year, children took part in a Your Call road safety project and were made into You Tube stars.

Schools in the borough took part in the project which saw pupils come up with radio jingles to educate both drivers and children about the importance of road safety.

- 4.4 Broad Oak Primary School in Didsbury has been pro-active in addressing traffic issues and encouraging pupils to walk to school. Some of the measures that they have put in place to reduce the dependency on the car include running a "Park and Stride" scheme. This involves working with the local tennis club to allow parents to park in the tennis club car park at school start and finish times. Leading from this parking facility is a footpath that leads to the school gate.

In addition, they have launched a Living Streets' - Walk Once a Week (WoW) scheme. ('Living Streets' is a UK charity that promotes the benefits of walking). Here pupils are awarded a badge each month if they walk/cycle/scoot/Park & Stride once every week, with children recording their mode of transport on an on-line Travel Tracker. Walking modes have increased from 53% to 80%.

To encourage more families to use the Park and Stride and enable children to gain their WoW badge, the school also runs a walking bus from the car park every Tuesday. They also advertise among families for more volunteer leaders to help run these events on extra days.

- 4.5 Solihull are trialling '[School Streets](#)' (which has already been adopted in Edinburgh) at three primary schools across the borough.

School Streets will limit traffic in a number of streets surrounding schools involved in the pilot at key times, meaning that motorists will not be able to park in these neighbouring roads to drop off or collect their children. This will be for an initial period of 18 months.

Vehicles without a permit will not be able to drive in, out or around the designated area when the scheme is in operation, for an hour in the morning and an hour in the afternoon (depending on school start and finish times) during term time. The aim is to ease inconsiderate parking outside schools and encourage a safer and more active lifestyle for school children.

All residents will be issued with free permits for their cars and only those with permits will be able to use the roads during these times. Motorists who ignore the ban could face fines of £70.

Edinburgh Council found that this scheme resulted in lower vehicle speeds on School Streets and peripheral streets and an overall reduction in net vehicle volumes on the streets surrounding the pilot schools during restriction times.

Overall, the increases in traffic seen on surrounding streets were notably less than the reductions seen on school streets, thus the net effect was fewer vehicles on streets around schools after the initiative, than before. Police Scotland though has noted problems with the knock-on effect of the scheme with new complaints from areas where school parents' car parking has been displaced to.

Parent and resident perceptions towards the scheme improved, according to findings found in the 'before' and 'after' surveys, especially with regards to feelings of safety, motorist compliance, problem displacement (vehicles) and inconvenience and difficulties associated with the restrictions. The [evaluation](#) also indicated that the number of children walking to/from school had increased, whilst those being driven had fallen.

However, the pilot showed that part-time restrictions to motor vehicles are not appropriate for many school locations, due to their inherent road layouts.

- 4.6 Success or not?

A Scottish Government Research Study - [Tackling the school run](#) found that there are varied and key requirements to the success of school travel based initiatives.

Key factors include:

- School level engagement and interest, mirrored by support from the local authority;

- Engaging pupils in the initiatives, both peer to peer and in terms of 'taking messages home' around the opportunity and benefits of active travel within the school setting;
- Infrastructure, training and behaviour change happening in tandem or at least the building blocks being in place to facilitate active and sustainable transport; and
- Capacity and resource, with an emphasis on a dedicated team or officer, to support the school to enable active and sustainable travel and with greater involvement from Education departments.

It was found that targeted initiatives have a positive impact, but sustained intervention is required to engender a step-change that reduces the number of pupils being driven to school. This includes providing the necessary joined up policy drivers at a local and national level across transport, planning, education, health and environment. Further infrastructure/physical interventions will only be effective if the necessary behaviour change initiatives are embedded in the school culture, local community and as part of a wider active travel strategy. This could extend beyond the school gate and into the workplaces of parents and carers responsible for the school run.

Furthermore, it concluded that there is no single answer to increasing active travel for the school journey, but rather, a combination of key elements appears to be important. Key aspects include:

- Provision of infrastructure to facilitate sustainable travel choices;
- Strong and solid delivery of training to allow safe use of the infrastructure;
- Regular and ongoing reinforcement of activities to promote and encourage behaviour change towards an increased number of school journeys being made by active and public transport modes; and
- Integrating active and sustainable travel fully into the school ethos and culture - e.g. by informing prospective parents that they would be encouraged not to take their children to school by car; having a committed Head Teacher etc.

5.0 Approach

The Committee will hear from the following witnesses in evidence sessions to help the Panel answer the question – what can the Council do to alleviate car parking near schools?

The witnesses have been asked to provide answers to the initial questions set out below and the Panel will have the opportunity to ask further questions of the witnesses on their evidence. The witnesses are:

5.1 Living Streets

Living Streets is the UK charity for everyday walking. Their ambition is for every child that can walk to school. Living Streets wants a healthier, cleaner and less congested West Midlands – by making walking safer, more pleasant and the easiest option for short journeys. Living Streets own surveys report that their WOW scheme typically results in a 25% increase in the proportion of children who walk to school.

At **18:05 Living Streets** will attend to answer the following initial questions:

1. How do you persuade parents to stop using their cars to drop kids off at school?

2. Are you aware of any local authority schemes that have achieved this?
3. How successful has been your WOW – The Year Round Walk to School Challenge and are any schools in Wolverhampton using it?
4. What does it need to get a school enthused to do this?

5.2 Schools

At **18:30** representatives from schools across the city will attend to answer the following initial questions:

1. How big a problem is parking outside your school?
2. How many accidents or near misses has there been outside your school in the last year?
3. What advice do you give to parents about where to park?
4. In what ways, have you tried to deal with this issue and how successful have you been?
5. What else could be done that would help?

5.3 Residents

At **18:55** residents from areas around the Oak Meadow Primary School and Woodthorne Primary School will attend to answer the following initial questions:

1. How often do people park outside your driveway?
2. What times of day and for how long does this happen?
3. What have tried to dissuade people from doing this?
4. Has the school or the police helped?
5. What else could be done that would help?

5.4 Police and School Crossing Patrol

At **19:20** representatives from the West Midlands Police and the Council's School Crossing Patrol Service will attend to answer the following initial questions:

1. What powers do you have to stop cars parking near schools?
2. What resources do you have to provide car parking enforcement?
3. How often do you enforce around the schools in Wolverhampton?
4. How often do you sweep along with the Council's enforcement officers around schools?
5. What else could be done to reduce the car parking problems around schools?

5.5 Panel Recommendations

From **19:45** the Panel will consider the evidence heard and decide how it may wish to the answer the question what can the Council do to alleviate car parking near schools?

6.0 Financial implications

6.1 This report has no direct financial implications.

6.2 At this stage Scrutiny Panel is looking at how the Council could develop its policy in this area. Any recommendations from the Panel's consideration of the evidence may have

financial implications but these would be included, if needed, in a future report to the Cabinet in response to those recommendations.
[TT/14092017/E]

7.0 Legal implications

There are none at this stage as the Scrutiny Panel is looking at how the Council could develop its policy in this area. Any recommendations from the Panel's consideration of the evidence may have legal implications but these would be included, if needed, in a report to the Cabinet in response to those recommendations. (RB/1092017/L)

8.0 Equalities implications

There are none at this stage as the Scrutiny Panel is looking at how the Council could develop its policy in this area. Any recommendations from the Panel's consideration of the evidence may have equalities implications but these would be included, if needed, in a report to the Cabinet in response to those recommendations.

9.0 Environmental implications

There are none at this stage as the Scrutiny Panel is looking at how the Council could develop its policy in this area. Any recommendations from the Panel's consideration of the evidence may have environmental implications but these would be included, if needed, in a report to the Cabinet in response to those recommendations.

10.0 Human resources implications

There are none at this stage as the Scrutiny Panel is looking at how the Council could develop its policy in this area. Any recommendations from the Panel's consideration of the evidence may have human resources implications but these would be included, if needed, in a report to the Cabinet in response to those recommendations.

11.0 Risk implications

There are none at this stage as the Scrutiny Panel is looking at how the Council could develop its policy in this area. Any recommendations from the Panel's consideration of the evidence may have risk implications but these would be included, if needed, in a report to the Cabinet in response to those recommendations.

12.0 Corporate landlord implications

There are none at this stage as the Scrutiny Panel is looking at how the Council could develop its policy in this area. Any recommendations from the Panel's consideration of the evidence may have corporate landlord implications but these would be included, if needed, in a report to the Cabinet in response to those recommendations.

13.0 Schedule of background papers

Links have been added within the report where background papers have been used.

APPENDIX "A" – Pavement Parking Scheme

I began my appeal for residents support by attending each of the 15 individual PACT Meeting around the City and presented a briefing on the scheme, including its origins, a basic definition of what could be deemed as acceptable, what was not acceptable in both written and pictorial representations form and which categories of unacceptable actions were reportable to the Police or to the Council together with their individual contact details and perhaps most contentiously as it would appear, I emphasised that Persistent Occurrences should be reported.

At each and every meeting there was general approval for such a scheme, also in a number of instances echoed by the Councillors present who participated in volunteering to utilise the resources at their Surgeries. On average I was approached by 6/8 individuals per meeting who undertook to deliver between 20 to 50 copies of the Letterbox Leaflets, a couple of the Posters and in a few instances 2 or 3 of the lamp post boards. At subsequent meeting a further 12/15 volunteers in total came forward, accepting similar quantities of individual items of scheme literature.

Members of the ASB Team and a couple of the Neighbourhood Police Teams also took a number of the smaller leaflets for use in individual cases where parking issues were being raised.

Via WMNow I also sought support and 35 individuals contacted me for resources which included a significant number of Neighbourhood Watch Co-ordinators. The basically unsolicited respondents were by virtue of the roles, significantly more committed, generally taking between 100 and 150 Letterbox Leaflets although demand for the Posters and Lamp Post Boards remained very much the same as for the PACT Members.

I also sought agreement to visit 3 local Supermarkets for a half day, displaying the schemes notices. I handed out over 150 of the smaller leaflets per visit with perhaps 15 lamp post boards in total.

After 3 months of persistent and repeated appeals to local tv, radio and news media I have recently been given some hope that the Express and Star may now print a feature with an appeal for volunteers to contact me for scheme resources, all in the hope of reaching a wider range of residents.

In general, while enthusiasm from the residents briefed during all three styles of contact mediums used was very high, the stated scepticism of the anticipated Councils and Polices responses was also high. Subsequent contact with residents who still raised parking issues has identified that there is a reluctance to make repeated reports, to urge neighbours to add their weight to such reports or to maintain a log of persistent occurrences. When challenged on this, residents frequently state they do not have or are reluctant to use, internet access and that the cost and time spent waiting in queues to make telephone reports, together with the perception of the dubious likely response is a significant reason for them not fully participating in the scheme. Additionally, the preference not to be seen mounting Lamp Post Boards was supported by a significant number of residents asking me to carry out such operations which accounted for something in the order of an additional 40 such boards. Similarly, the delivery of larger numbers

of Letter Box Leaflets was reported to be a concern where the fear of recognition and potential retaliation to such action contributed to the advised lack of increased numbers or the improved quality of reports being made to both authorities.

On a positive note, some consolation may be had by considering the 150 plus number of residents who obviously felt strongly enough to participate actively by giving the issue something of an airing, and broader publicity may as yet give even more positive results. A very modest 'straw poll' of volunteers contacted for this report has indicated that where a significant amount of publicity was distributed in any one area, there followed a perceptible reduction in the number of vehicles routinely parked on the pavement for no apparent reason other than it having become a routine practice, as such the scheme may have caused some drivers to reconsider the need for Pavement Parking.

Best Regards and best wishes for a productive meeting.

David Ryley

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