

# North Tyneside Council Report to Council Date: 21 July 2016

**ITEM 5**  
Title: Petition – Disc  
parking in Tynemouth

**Portfolio:** Housing and Transport

**Cabinet Member:**

**Cllr J Harrison**

**Report from Service Area:** Environment, Housing and Leisure

**Responsible Officer:** Phil Scott, Head of Environment,  
Housing and Leisure

**Tel:** (0191) 643 7295

**Wards affected:** All

## **PART 1**

### **1.1 Executive Summary:**

On 6 June 2016 the Authority received a petition which seeks changes to parking arrangements in Tynemouth. The petition comprised handwritten and electronic submissions, with a total of 3,384 valid signatures. The petition is required to be considered by Council in accordance with the provisions of the Authority's Petition Scheme contained in the Constitution.

The petition's stated purpose is to request North Tyneside Council to introduce free disc parking in Station Terrace, Tynemouth and in all pay and display areas in Tynemouth (with the exception of Front Street).

The petition is submitted by Tynemouth Parking Group, a collective of businesses based in Tynemouth. The petition is accompanied by an information leaflet that details how the proposed scheme would work. This is attached to the report as Appendix 1.

The purpose of this report is to advise Council that the petition has been received. In addition, the report:

- a. sets out the petition's content; and
- b. addresses the issues raised by the petitioners covering letter.

### **1.2 Recommendation(s):**

It is recommended that Council notes the petition.

### **1.3 Forward Plan:**

In accordance with the Authority's Petition Scheme, where a petition has received 2000 or more signatures Council will endeavour to consider the matter at its next meeting. It has therefore not been practicable to give twenty eight day notice of this report given that

the petition was received within the twenty eight day period. However, it has appeared on the Forward Plan since the edition that was published on 27 June 2016.

## 1.4 Council Plan and Policy Framework

This report is relevant to the following priorities set out in Our North Tyneside, the Council Plan 2014 to 2018:

- Our People will be listened to, and involved by responsive, enabling services;
- Our Places will have an effective transport and physical infrastructure - including our roads, cycle ways, pavements, street lighting, drainage and public transport.

## 1.5 Information

### 1.5.1 The Petition

On 6 June 2016 the Authority received a petition which seeks changes to parking arrangements in Tynemouth. The handwritten petition had 2,895 signatures. A related electronic petition had 489 signatures as at the submission date of 6 June 2016.

The petition's stated purpose is to request North Tyneside Council to introduce free disc parking in Station Terrace, Tynemouth and in all pay and display areas in Tynemouth (with the exception of Front Street).

The covering letter submitted with the petition stated that it is organised by Tynemouth Parking Group, a collective of businesses based in Tynemouth. The covering letter and an information leaflet describing how the scheme would work are included as **Appendix 1** to this report.

It proposes that current pay and display areas would be replaced with timed disc zones, areas close to the village centre would have shorter time stays to those further afield allowing people popping to the shops to park close by for up to 2 hours free of charge and people going to the beach for the day to park less centrally for longer periods.

Free disc zones would be in all pay and display areas in the village except Front Street. The petitioners believe Front Street should remain pay and display to encourage the turnover of these premium spaces and maintain current levels of availability for the residents in Front Street to use. The petitioners also propose that Station Terrace be included in the scheme (weekend only, currently it has no restrictions). They believe that its inclusion would encourage better turnover of spaces for visitors to the Station Market and nearby shops on Saturdays and Sundays.

### 1.5.2 Procedure for dealing with Petition

The petition has been formally acknowledged, in accordance with the requirements of the Authority's Petition Scheme. Given that the petition has received more than 2000 signatures this triggers the need for it to be considered at the next meeting of Full Council.

At the meeting, the petition organiser may address Council for five minutes to present the petition. Members may then debate the petition for a maximum of 15 minutes.

Under the Authority's Petition Scheme the Council may decide how to respond to the petition at this meeting.

To assist Council in its consideration of the petition the following information is provided to provide context to the matters raised. It also explains the wider work that is being undertaken by the Authority to continuously review and implement changes to improve parking management in the Borough.

### 1.5.3 Parking arrangements in Tynemouth

Tynemouth Village is a busy local district centre which attracts significant numbers of visitors, particularly at weekends and Bank Holidays. Council will be aware that it is difficult to manage the competing parking demands of businesses, visitors and residents in the area to ensure the highway is managed effectively.

A number of improvements have been made in Tynemouth over the years to improve traffic and pedestrian flow. For example, the carriageway width along both sides of Front Street was increased in order to aid the movement of buses; the right-turn movement from Hotspur Street into Front Street was removed to improve road safety, a number of permit-only and shared parking schemes were introduced in consultation with Local Councillors, residents and businesses. Some of these schemes apply 7 days per week while others are specific to weekends and Bank Holidays only.

Despite the implementation of these improvements parking management in Tynemouth remains problematic particularly around the commercial centre due to ongoing high demand, mainly at weekends and Bank Holidays.

Permit provision has been established to assist businesses in the area with their day-to-day operations.

The Cabinet Member for Housing and Transport with portfolio responsibility for parking has observed that parking management arrangements in the Borough have evolved since the introduction of Decriminalised Parking Enforcement in 2007 and identified that a review was necessary. This has led to:

- (1) A Sub Group being established in November 2015 by the Overview, Scrutiny and Policy Development Committee, at the request of the Cabinet Member. The Sub-group was asked to review the current permit system and identify ways to improve and simplify the permit system across the Borough. The report is now complete and has been presented to Cabinet for consideration on 11 July 2016. Cabinet will be required to agree a response to these recommendations at its meeting by September 2016.
- (2) A new approach to parking management along the Foreshore is to be implemented in August 2016. This initiative will allow more flexible parking, as parking tickets will be transferrable between the majority of the parking facilities along the Foreshore in Tynemouth and Whitley Bay. This will complement the existing Foreshore permit option. The Authority has also commissioned a new map-based app, AppyParking, which will direct drivers to parking facilities along the Foreshore and provide information on the parking tariffs which apply. A six-month 'cashless parking only' trial is also to commence in five of the off-street car parks along the Foreshore.

- (3) A new parking management scheme has been installed along Bell Street and Union Quay, within North Shields Fish Quay to reduce congestion and improve vehicle/pedestrian movements. The parking charges were removed from the Low Lights Car Park, which was one of the identified Foreshore parking facilities.

#### 1.5.4 Demand and introducing a free disc parking scheme

The demand for parking in Tynemouth is high at weekends and Bank Holidays, owing to high numbers of leisure visits. The demand for parking on Front Street often exceeds capacity resulting in unnecessary traffic movements as drivers circulate looking for a parking place close to the commercial centre. Levels of parking on the periphery of the village centre are also generally higher at weekends and Bank Holidays.

The existing 'pay and display' parking facilities provide the flexibility for short and long stay parking, with a 2-hour length of stay restriction already in place on Front Street. Free off-street parking has been provided at Priors Haven Car Park, with a 2-hour length of stay restriction applying on Monday to Friday. These facilities are well used and enable efficient enforcement, which helps to prevent overstaying and thereby support turnover of spaces.

Tynemouth Village is well served by public transport.

The introduction of a disc parking scheme would not increase the amount of parking available for visitors. Inspections suggest that at busy times, the number of visitors' cars exceeds the available number of parking spaces and consequently not all visitors find a parking space in the village centre. This would continue to be the case if a free disc parking scheme were introduced. Indeed, it has the potential to make the demand for car parking even higher, as there would be less of an incentive for people to leave their cars at home and use public transport.

Any free limited waiting scheme, including a disc parking initiative, would require additional enforcement to ensure driver compliance, which would need to be funded.

#### 1.5.5 Consideration of other views

The Authority has engaged with various organised groups and individuals in the Tynemouth area and across the Borough as part of its review of parking management. It is acknowledged that this is a complicated issue and balancing the demands of all users is difficult. There are lots of conflicting views as to what, if any, changes should be made to the parking management arrangements.

The Authority is also mindful that Tynemouth is a Conservation Area underpinned by an Area Management Strategy (Tynemouth Conservation Area Management Strategy - TCAMS). This Strategy is a Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) that sets out objectives for the area that guide planning, regeneration and other development decisions. Following the launch of the Strategy, the TCAMS Group (comprising a range of stakeholders including residents and businesses) was established to monitor delivery of the objectives. As part of its activity the Group is considering traffic and parking in the area.

The TCAMS Group have indicated that any changes to the parking management arrangements needs to proper regard to the complexity of the Conservation Area.

### 1.5.6 Conclusion

The petitioner's have put forward a proposal to introduce free disc parking in the Tynemouth area. An accompanying information leaflet was submitted describing how this would work. It is acknowledged that parking management for Tynemouth is complex and there are conflicting views on what, if any, changes to the parking management arrangement are appropriate. Tynemouth is a Conservation Area with its own Management Strategy and unique character which the Authority needs to be mindful of.

A number of improvements have been made in Tynemouth over the years to improve traffic and pedestrian flow. Despite these changes demand for parking in the area remains high due to the residential, commercial and leisure mix.

A number of new parking initiatives have been initiated by the Cabinet Member and a wider review is currently under way. Any decisions made to change the current parking management arrangements in the Tynemouth area need to be carefully considered to support the continued vitality of the area.

The proposal suggested by the petitioners should be considered as part of the wider review of parking management arrangements in the Borough.

### 1.6 **Decision options:**

The following decision options are available for consideration by Council:

#### Option 1

Approve the recommendations set out in section 1.2.

#### Option 2

Not approve the recommendations set out in section 1.2.

Option 1 is the recommended option.

### 1.7 **Reasons for recommended option:**

Option 1 is recommended for the following reason:

This will ensure that the matters identified within the petition are appropriately noted and debated by Council under the Authority's Petition Scheme as outlined in paragraph 1.5.2 of the report and the substantive issues are considered appropriately by Cabinet as part of the wider review of parking management in the Borough.

### 1.8 **Appendices:**

None.

### 1.9 **Contact officers:**

Colin MacDonald, Senior Manager, Technical and Regulatory Services, 0191 643 6620  
Andrew Flynn, Integrated Transport Manager, 0191 643 6083  
Kevin Ridpath, Highway Network Manager, Capita, 0773 028 5609  
Garry Hoyle, Parking & Regulation Manager, Capita, 0191 643 6599  
Alison Campbell, Senior Business Partner, 0191 643 7038

## 1.10 Background information:

The following background papers/information have been used in the compilation of this report and are available at the office of the author:

- (1) North Tyneside Council Constitution – Part 5: Petition Scheme  
[http://www.northtyneside.gov.uk/browse.shtml?p\\_subjectCategory=1499](http://www.northtyneside.gov.uk/browse.shtml?p_subjectCategory=1499)
- (2) North Tyneside Network Management Plan 2012-2017  
[http://www.northtyneside.gov.uk/browse-display.shtml?p\\_ID=537632&p\\_subjectCategory=41](http://www.northtyneside.gov.uk/browse-display.shtml?p_ID=537632&p_subjectCategory=41)
- (3) North Tyneside Parking Strategy 2012-2016  
[http://www.northtyneside.gov.uk/browse.shtml?p\\_subjectCategory=360](http://www.northtyneside.gov.uk/browse.shtml?p_subjectCategory=360)
- (4) Tynemouth Conservation Area Management Strategy  
[http://www.northtyneside.gov.uk/browse-display.shtml?p\\_ID=224151&p\\_subjectCategory=811](http://www.northtyneside.gov.uk/browse-display.shtml?p_ID=224151&p_subjectCategory=811)
- (5) Petition received from the Tynemouth Parking Group on 6 June 2016

## PART 2 – COMPLIANCE WITH PRINCIPLES OF DECISION MAKING

### 2.1 Finance and other resources

There are no financial issues directly arising from this report. If any recommendations to the Cabinet were made which involved changes to the extent of charged parking, the revenue implications of these would be reported to Cabinet and considered as part of the Authority's Financial Planning and Budget process.

### 2.2 Legal

In accordance with the requirements of the Petition Scheme, which forms a part of the Authority's Constitution as the number of valid signatures exceeds 2000, the Petition received must be considered at a meeting of the Council. As the issues raised by the petition fall within the responsibilities of the Cabinet, the Council can decide whether to make recommendations to refer the petition to the Cabinet to inform their decision making process.

The Traffic Management Act 2004 imposes a duty on local authorities to manage their highway network efficiently so as to manage congestion and disruption by securing the expeditious movement of traffic, including walking and cycling.

The Road Traffic Act 1991 introduced the concept of local authorities undertaking enforcement of parking management schemes. This system was called Decriminalised Parking Enforcement (subsequently amended to Civil Parking Enforcement). The Authority was designated a Decriminalised Parking Authority by Order made under the Road Traffic Act 1991 and has been undertaking civil enforcement of parking and waiting restrictions since June 2007.

The Authority has a number of plans and strategies that set out how it will achieve its obligation.

## **2.3 Consultation/community engagement**

### **2.3.1 Internal Consultation**

Internal consultation on the Petition has involved the appropriate officers and the Cabinet Member for Housing and Transport.

### **2.3.2 External Consultation/Engagement**

There are no external communications issues directly arising from this report.

## **2.4 Human rights**

There are no human rights issues directly arising from this report.

## **2.5 Equalities and diversity**

There are no equality and diversity issues directly arising from this report.

## **2.6 Risk management**

There are no risk management issues directly arising from this report.

## **2.7 Crime and disorder**

There are no crime and disorder issues directly arising from this report.

## **2.8 Environment and sustainability**

There are no environment and sustainability issues directly arising from this report.

## **PART 3 - SIGN OFF**

- Deputy Chief Executive  X
- Head(s) of Service  X
- Mayor/Cabinet Member(s)  X
- Chief Finance Officer  X
- Monitoring Officer  X
- Head of Corporate Strategy  X