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East Gosforth FOCUS



Edited By Councillor Henry Gallagher

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Gosforth Garden Village - High West Jesmond - South Gosforth - Gosforth Terraces - Central Gosforth

POST OFFICE MOVE 'DEEPLY DISAPPOINTING'

The Post Office has decided to close the St Nicholas' Avenue branch in the Shopping Centre and open a new one in the Loco store in Salters Road. This follows on from a Post Office consultation, which generated over 3,400 objections, including those from Liberal Democrat councillors. The Post Office says that this change will help to safeguard the Post Office and ensure longer opening hours, but objectors cite the impact of loss of trade to the High Street and the unsuitability of the new premises, due to nearby traffic congestion, constraints of parking, and poorer bus access. The Citizen's Advice Bureau has intervened, backing these objections, but also voicing concerns about the space and layout of the Loco store. Overall, the CAB has branded the move 'deeply disappointing'. The Post Office is not supposed to make its decision on the basis of commercial need alone, and there are concerns that other options have not been fully investigated, particularly those aimed at keeping the Post Office in the High Street. Local residents and councillors are reviewing options for further representations against the plan.

On the right is how the Evening Chronicle (22/10/14) featured the dismay of East Gosforth Councillors Henry Gallagher (left) and Peter Leggott (right), together with our colleague Councillor Nick Cott (centre) from West Gosforth.



From left, Coun Henry Gallagher, Coun Nick Cott and Coun Peter Leggott outside the post office in Gosforth

Post office move 'will hit traders'

Michael Marsh
It comes despite strong opposition from traders and customers, as petition attracted 3,000 signatures.
Regional network manager Sheila McCann said: "We recognise the value of having a Post Office in a shopping area which is close to other retailers and during the consultation a key concern was about the new location taking the post office away from the main bus route."

These are two major news stories that will affect the future of the whole area. Developments can happen very quickly. For example the council can issue Traffic Regulation Orders giving residents a limited amount of time in which to object. We have a special eFocus which is issued on a regular basis and this passes on updates as they occur. If you would like to be put on the list see the section overleaf.

'Consultation not a vote', says Council

The City Council is pressing ahead with a traffic scheme for Gosforth High Street, despite 51% of consultation responses being against any change. The Council is amalgamating its two options for implementing change set out in the public consultation document, but Liberal Democrat councillors say that, as the majority were against any change and this is effectively a new scheme, the Council must again consult the public. They have also raised objections to key aspects of the plan, including loss of parking at Salters Road car park (and plans to replace the parking in near-by residential streets), a red route in the High Street (running from 7 AM to 7 PM on weekdays), and an unworkable second cycle route down the High Street. Cllr Henry Gallagher led the Liberal Democrat Councillors attempt to force a review of the decision. Liberal Democrat members of the Scrutiny Committee, including West Gosforth Councillor Nick Cott, supported the objections, and proposed referring the decision back to Cabinet for reconsideration, but this was voted down by Labour members. Local



Gosforth councillors, Henry Gallagher and Nick Cott, discussing the High Street plans

councillors are reviewing their next steps as the Council moves to implement its scheme.

+++++Stop Press+++++ **Consultation Is Appalling Waste Of Money** +++++Stop Press+++++

We can reveal that the cost of the consultation was over £18,000. The result of the consultation was 51% said no to the two options. The council are ignoring that and pressing ahead with the Red Route etc. Proving that you literally cannot put a price on democracy in Newcastle as the Labour Party just ignore it!

Central Gosforth Streets Could See Major Traffic Flow Change

You may remember from previous issues of **FOCUS** that the City Council partnered with Sustrans on a "DIY Streets" project for residents of Moor Road North. One proposal was to physically block Moor Road North to traffic at the St Nicholas Avenue roundabout junction. This proved to be unpopular with residents on other streets so it was scrapped. However there is now a new proposal revealed to residents recently.

The plan is to ban entry to all vehicles except cycles from Church Road into three streets; Moor Road North, Belle Vue Avenue and Rectory Grove.

Residents would use **St Nicholas Ave** to get to their streets whereas through traffic would be expected to drive along **Church Rd/Church Ave** to the traffic lights at **The Grove**. Then along there to meet up with **Moor Road South**. **Councillor Peter Leggott** said, "The views of residents on the three streets is mixed but there is probably a small majority in favour of the change. However there are concerns on St Nicholas Ave as that will see an increase in traffic. The residents of **The Grove, Rectory Road and Rectory Terrace** are currently unaware of the proposals so I think they might look cautiously at the plans when the Traffic Regulation Orders are produced." Peter continued, "Sadly I think this just proves once again that changes to one street have a knock-on effect elsewhere. Can I urge everyone to let us know your views?"



Gosforth Terraces Residents Parking Scheme

When the Northern Rock building was built money from the developer was set aside for residents parking once a target of car density was reached. That has happened so the area is being asked if they want a permit scheme. It requires two thirds support to come into effect.

Councillor Henry Gallagher said,

"This is an automatic process and we as councillors have no vote on the outcome, nor should we. It is for the residents to decide."

If residents vote for a scheme the planners will work out the best times for parking restrictions to be in effect.

However Henry has discovered an issue,

"I have been told by officers that anyone who has a disabled bay outside their home will lose it under the proposals. I have protested this. If the scheme gets the go ahead I will certainly argue that the bays should stay if entitled residents still require them."

Garden Village Trees Being Felled

We were alarmed to see a number of trees on Hollywood Ave being felled. We held a meeting with the head of the council's arboreal services. He said that the Whitebeam trees that make up around 20% of the stock are reaching the end of their lifespan. As problems develop they will be cut down. When the Lib Dems ran the council our policy was that any tree felled had to be replaced. The Labour administration at the council has reversed that policy. **Councillor David Slesenger** said, "We asked if we could buy replacements with our ward funds but were told that we would be charged £1,300 for each tree! We asked the officer to look at other ways of replacing the trees."

How To Contact Us

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CLlr Peter Leggott 285 8255
CLlr David Slesenger 285 3337



My colleagues and I hold two surgeries a month: On the first Saturday of each month we are on the High St near to Boots between 10am-Midday. Gosforth Garden Village Hall on the third Monday of each month between 6pm-7pm. *Henry*

Do you want extra news from us?

We have started a Gosforth-wide eFocus with up to the minute news and views from your 9 Gosforth Lib Dem Cllrs. To subscribe send your email address to: egosforth@newcastle-libdems.org.uk

eFocus



WORKING TOGETHER FOR GOSFORTH