



**Broadway  
Shops Councillor Call  
for Action**



**January 2011**

## **FACILITATOR**

The Economic & City Development Overview & Scrutiny Committee nominated Councillor Kirk to facilitate a series of informal round-table discussions to address the concerns detailed in this Councillor Call for Action.

## **ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS**

The Economic & City Development Overview & Scrutiny Committee would like to thank all those that took part in the round-table discussions. In particular the local retailers and Residents' Association for their time and input, without which it would have been much harder to address the concerns raised in the Councillor Call for Action.

The Committee are also grateful for to those organisations that provided venues for the round table discussions enabling scrutiny to be taken out into the community.

## **FOR FURTHER INFORMATION**

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## **FACILITATOR'S FOREWORD**

It will be of no surprise to many that Broadway Shops, off Fulford Road has had parking and pedestrian safety access issues for many years. The small cluster of shops, including a Co-op and Post Office serve the residents of the area well but the increase in car use to get to the shops, together with the lack of definition of how the road and pedestrian access were identified were seen to be an unacceptable risk.

This cluster of shops is a local asset and it was recognised that something had to be done to ensure that it remained that way. It is hoped that this report provides an understanding of why the previous layout was no longer viable and how the recommendations to improve this were arrived at. I welcome its conclusions and thank all those who took part and their contributions.



**Cllr M Kirk  
Facilitator**

### **AERIAL PHOTOGRAPH OF BROADWAY SHOPS**



### **THE AREA BEFORE ANY CHANGES WERE MADE**



### **WHAT IS A COUNCILLOR CALL FOR ACTION?**

Ward Councillors play a central role in the life of a local authority, acting as a conduit for discussion between the Council and its residents and as a champion for local concerns. To strengthen Councillors' ability to carry out the second role the Government enacted in the Local Government & Public Health Act 2007 provisions for a 'Councillor Call for Action' (CCfA). This provides Councillors with the opportunity to ask for discussions at scrutiny committees on issues where local problems have arisen and where other methods of resolution have been exhausted.

CCfA is a tool that can be used by Councillors to tackle problems on a neighbourhood or ward specific basis that it has not been possible to resolve through the normal channels. CCfA is a means of last resort when all other avenues have been exhausted and the Council has been unable

### **BACKGROUND TO THIS CALL FOR ACTION**

This Call for Action was registered in the summer of 2009 by the Ward Councillors for Fishergate. There had been ongoing concerns regarding parking, pedestrian safety and maintenance at the Broadway parade of shops since at least 2003. The Ward Councillors had tried to address the concerns in several different ways since then but little improvement was made to the situation. They, therefore, decided to register a Councillor Call for Action in the hope that scrutiny could help.

## WHAT DID SCRUTINY DO?

Initially the Economic & City Development Overview & Scrutiny Committee recognised that general maintenance and improvements to public safety and parking facilities in the area would be difficult. This was due to the service road and forecourt between the shops and the traffic island being an area of land with undetermined ownership. It was therefore established that the Council had no responsibility as the local highway authority, to maintain or improve the forecourt and service road at Broadway Shops. Crucially the Council were unable to legally promote or undertake works in these areas.

However the Committee recognised the concerns raised in the Councillor Call for Action and realised that there may be alternative solutions to these that did not involve the Council funding or undertaking any works in the area.



The Committee therefore agreed to facilitate a number of round table discussions between the Ward Councillors, Residents' Association and retailers in the

hope that some viable solutions could be found. Support was also given by technical officers at the City of York Council.

## THE ROUND TABLE DISCUSSIONS

In total 3 round table discussions took place. They were all well attended with representatives from the Broadway Area Good Neighbour & Residents' Association (BAGNARA), local retailers, the Regional Property Manager for the Co-operative Group, Ward Councillors, City of York Council Officers and the facilitator who all positively contributed to the discussion and brought their own perspective on matters to the table. The following paragraphs detail the ongoing problems and the solutions found.

### Pedestrian Access & Safety

For quite a few years pedestrians had been experiencing problems with safety in the area. There was no clearly defined pedestrian pathway, no parking bays on the service road leading to haphazard parking and vehicles parking too close to the shop fronts. There were also a number of potholes, loose kerb stones and trip hazards which made walking in the area hazardous and generally unsafe.

Various options to improve the situation were discussed and it was ultimately agreed that a safe pedestrian area be designated in front of the parade of shops and an advisory directional flow of traffic scheme be introduced.

### Pedestrian Access & Safety continued



In late September 2010 a solid white line was painted approximately 2 metres out from the shop fronts to stop vehicles parking too close to the buildings and thus affording a safe

passageway for pedestrians. In addition to this several 'walking man' decals were painted on the pathway to indicate that this was a designated pedestrian route. White 'in and out' signs were also painted on the tarmac indicating a preferred direction for traffic flow along the service road.

These improvements were funded by BAGNARA, the local Residents' Association.

### Delivery Vehicles and the Traffic Island

Difficulties had been experienced with delivery vehicles accessing the shops. All parties involved believed that some of the larger delivery vehicles had damaged the service road, kerb stones, bollards and the traffic island as they did not have enough space to manoeuvre.

### Delivery Vehicles and the Traffic Island cont ...

A brief feasibility study was commissioned and paid for by the Ward Committee. This looked at possible ways of improving the entrance layout to the service road, which was used both by delivery vehicles and the public for accessing the shops. The main change suggested was to move the existing kerb line of the traffic island 4 metres back from its present location. It was estimated that the changes set out in the feasibility study would cost in the region of £8,000.



An alternative proposal to this was also put forward. This would use some of the land in front of the Hairdressers premises (rather than altering the traffic island) to

enhance the turning circle for larger vehicles. The estimated cost for this was approximately £4,500.

The Regional Property Manager for the Cooperative Group agreed to look at the possibility of funding any improvements to this area and would report back to the Ward Councillors in due course.

### Other Issues

During the course of the discussions it was also agreed that consideration would be given to:



Moving the post box from outside the Co-op to a place nearer the Post Office

Moving the trolley bay at the front of the Co-op store to the side of the Co-op store to allow for clearer pedestrian access.

### Next Steps

At the final facilitated discussion it was agreed that there was no further part that scrutiny need play in this matter. The Economic & City Development Overview & Scrutiny Committee concurred with this at its January 2011 meeting. However, now that positive relationships had been built the Ward Councillors intended to keep the discussions ongoing to address the outstanding issues of moving the post box and trolley bay and looking at possible funding streams for alterations to the traffic island and service road to allow for larger vehicles to manoeuvre without damaging the land.

### WARD COUNCILLOR'S COMMENTS

The Councillor Call for Action (CCfA) procedure allows a local Councillor to request a fresh look at an intractable local issue where the normal channels have failed. This certainly applied in the case of the Broadway shops CCfA where direct approach from Ward Councillors to shopkeepers and council officers over several years had failed to secure any change in the situation. Up to this point officers stated that being private land it was outside their remit while shopkeepers insisted that the council needed to respond to their proposed solution. It was only the persistence of the local residents group, Ward Councillors and the scrutiny officer using the CCfA process that succeeded in getting all the expertise and interested parties together to consider possible solutions. The fact



that the meeting was facilitated by a neutral chair helped to allow all parties to explain their perceptions of the situation and more objectively contribute to identifying a solution. In a small way I believe it has helped to build confidence in the council as an agent that does care about small local businesses and the promotion of local shops and services, not just big inward investors to the city.

### **RESIDENTS' ASSOCIATION COMMENTS**

Broadway Shops had often been difficult to access for many local residents but even more so for those residents using walking frames or wheelchairs. Cars frequently parked right up to the shop fronts which did not allow a way through to the shops themselves. In addition the area was dangerous to those walking on the access road because cars were reversing off the pavement where they had parked; several near misses were reported over a number of years.

Appeals to the local retailers had come to nothing. This all changed with the Councillor Call for Action and we cannot speak too highly of Councillor D'Agorne and the Scrutiny Committee as they opened up the democratic process to the Residents' Association and enabled a solution to be achieved through their facilitated discussion meetings, ably chaired by Councillor Kirk.

Through these meetings the Residents' Association were able to pay for the white lining that now separates cars from pedestrians and allows access across the front of the shops at all times. Fishergate Ward Committee paid for 'In' and 'Out' signs to be painted on the access road to facilitate the traffic flow. Without discussion and agreement at the round table discussions we would have been unable to achieve such a satisfactory solution.

### **RETAILERS COMMENTS**

On the whole the various retailers in the parade of shops felt that the area had been made safer for pedestrians and had been improved by the recent works carried out.

The Council's negotiations and involvement was well organised and worked well.

### **WHY DID SCRUTINY GET INVOLVED?**



Scrutiny Committees are not limited to examining the Council's own functions, but can consider anything which they feel may affect the local area or its residents.

The Economic & City Development Overview & Scrutiny Committee in York wanted to try and help the community near Broadway Shops to improve their surroundings and personal safety.

They recognised that there was a greater risk of escalating problems at the Broadway parade of shops if they did not act upon the Councillor Call for Action.

**WHY DID SCRUTINY GET INVOLVED? Cont...**

However, they did not think that there would be any benefit to the community by undertaking a full scale scrutiny review on this matter. This is why they ultimately decided that a series of facilitated round table discussions may be a better way forward and could also assist with building relationships in the community itself.

**WHAT DID SCRUTINY ACHIEVE?**

- ⇒ It enabled all the relevant parties to get together in one room and discuss the concerns that had been raised
- ⇒ It helped to build positive relationships in the community
- ⇒ It had a positive impact on the community and quickly and simply helped provide a solution to improve public safety in the area
- ⇒ It enabled action to take place at a time when things had reached a stalemate
- ⇒ It provided a platform for all parties to build on in the future
- ⇒ It provided a new approach for future use in scrutiny

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