

NORTH ESSEX PARKING PARTNERSHIP JOINT COMMITTEE FOR ON-STREET PARKING

**14 December 2017 at 1.00pm
Council Chamber, Uttlesford District Council**

Members Present: Councillor Richard Van Dulken (Braintree District Council)
Councillor Sam Kane (Epping Forest District Council)
Councillor Mike Lilley (Colchester Borough Council)
Councillor Robert Mitchell (Essex County Council)
Councillor Fred Nicholls (Tendring District Council)
Councillor Danny Purton (Harlow District Council)

Substitutes:- Councillor Vic Ranger for Councillor Howard Ryles (Uttlesford District Council)

Also Present: - Jonathan Baker (Colchester Borough Council)
Liz Burr (Essex County Council)
Trevor Degville (Parking Partnership)
Qasim Durrani (Epping Forest District Council)
Simon Jackson (Uttlesford District Council)
Samir Pandya (Braintree District Council)
Miroslav Sihelsky (Harlow District Council)
Ian Taylor (Tendring District Council)
Shane Taylor (Parking Partnership)
Richard Walker (Parking Partnership)

24. Declarations of Interest

Councillor Robert Mitchell declared a non-pecuniary interest, in respect of being a member of Braintree District Council.

25. Minutes

RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting held on the 19 October were confirmed as a correct record.

26. Footway and Obstruction and Enforcement Powers

Richard Walker, Parking Partnership, introduced the report on footway and obstruction enforcement powers. The report requests that the Joint Committee decide that the Chair of the NEPP approach the Essex Police and Fire Commissioner to take over powers to enforce footway parking and to outline a policy to accompany any future transfer of powers.

Councillor Mitchell, Essex County Council, outlined that he was keen to push for the NEPP to have powers to enforce footway and obstructive parking, as the Police do not have the resources to provide this service.

Councillor Mitchell informed Committee members that the Essex Police and Fire Commissioner explicitly requested that the NEPP Joint Committee request the powers before further discussions on how this can be implemented take place. The South Essex Parking Partnership have already agreed to request the powers and Essex would be the first area to undertake this measure.

Members of the Committee expressed their support for the idea and believed that members of the public would also support the idea. Committee members stressed that the expectations of members of the public would have to be managed given the possible wide scope to the powers. Councillor Mitchell informed the Committee that it is expected that communications would be provided from all organisations included in the trial, which would include NEPP, SEPP, Essex County Council and Essex Police.

Concerns were raised regarding the specific powers transferred to CEO's and the requirements placed on CEO's to judge each parking and obstruction issue. Committee members requested that further detailed work, including specific guidelines, would be required to establish how this would work in practice and that the Committee be kept informed as proposals develop. Councillor Mitchell envisaged that a trial would take place across Essex and suggested that a CEO could take a photograph of obstructive parking prior to it being sent to a manager for processing.

The Committee also discussed issues around parking obstruction, footway obstruction and anti-social parking. In addition, issues around areas where pavement parking provides benefits in slowing down traffic were also raised. Councillor Mitchell highlighted that disability access groups and organisations were supportive of the scheme.

Richard Walker highlighted that authorities in Scotland are currently reviewing this and that a report is due shortly on this matter. In addition a private members bill had been created on this matter, although as this had been stalled.

Following a question around the evidence that footway and obstructive parking is an issue, Shane Taylor highlighted that at least ten of the schemes that had been introduced at the last two Traffic Regulation Order (TRO) approval meetings had been related to junction protection. Having the power to enforce in these areas may reduce the requirement to install junction protection TRO's.

Committee members felt that the wording of the recommended decision as stated in the report should be slightly amended to reflect the sharing of the powers, rather than a transfer, and the need to develop an appropriate policy to accompany any future sharing of powers.

RESOLVED;

- a) To discuss the issues of obstructive parking with the Essex Police and Fire Commissioner, in line with the recent proposals made by the Scottish government, with a view to share to enforcement powers.
- b) to develop an appropriate policy to accompany any future sharing of powers.

27. Traffic Regulation Order Authorisation (change to annual approval)

Shane Taylor, Parking Partnership, introduced the Traffic Regulation Order Authorisation report. The report requests that the Committee support the change from approving Traffic Order Regulations (TRO) biannually to approving them at the October Joint Committee meeting each year.

Shane Taylor informed the Committee that schemes that are approved at the March Joint Committee meeting are not advertised until the following year due to the timescales involved. Approving TRO's at the October meeting would ensure that the winter months could be spent designing and advertising the scheme which can then be installed during the

summer. If this report is agreed, it was confirmed that the next meeting for approving TRO's would be during October 2018.

Committee members expressed their support for the idea, but also stressed the need to retain an element of flexibility if there were urgent TRO's that needed to be approved at other times of the year. Shane Taylor confirmed that there is some flexibility within the system and that the NEPP will still be able to implement temporary restrictions at other times during the year.

The Committee also acknowledged the need to work out a timescale for bringing TRO's to the meeting in March to ensure that each partner authority is aware of the deadlines and acknowledged that this would make the process simpler for member of the public.

Richard Walker, Parking Partnership, highlighted to the Committee that there are delegations to the Chairman for TRO's which were set at the beginning of the partnership. Richard Walker suggested to the Committee that a report be brought to a future meeting outlining the delegations in place.

The Committee requested that a letter be sent to the Chief Executives of each partner authority outlining the new process and required timelines to provide formal notification of the change.

RESOLVED that;

- a) the Committee support the change to approving Traffic Regulation Orders annually at the October meeting.
- b) the North Essex Parking Partnership write to the Chief Executives of each partner authority notifying them of the change and the timescales required for approval of Traffic Regulation Orders.
- c) a report to be brought to the next meeting regarding the existing delegations from the Joint Committee to the Chairman and to Officers.

28. On-Street Financial Report

Richard Walker, Parking Partnership, introduced the On-Street Financial Report. The report requests that the Committee note the mid-year financial position.

Richard Walker informed the Committee that the budget is currently on track, however this may change depending on the extent of the wintery weather. Richard Walker also explained that the reason behind the high forecast for supplies and services was due to the inclusion of the TRO expenditure in that budget. The expenditure for this is also included separately on the table. Richard Walker explained to the Committee that the NEPP is currently in surplus for TRO related work.

In response to a query about residents parking coming in over budget, Richard Walker stated that this was due to a delay in the accountancy figures with a lag between the budget to implement the scheme and the collection of fees. Richard Walker also confirmed that a report on permit prices will be brought to a future meeting.

A member of the Committee also requested an update on the position of CEO vacancies. Richard Walker stated that there is a constant recruitment process, the current number of CEO's will deliver the level of income outlined in the report.

A further question was posed regarding whether contracting of front line services had been explored. Richard Walker confirmed that this can be looked at and there is a gap in the

provision of service that could be addressed by this. Geographical concerns would need to be taken into account due to the size of the Partnership area. A dialogue has been opened between the NEPP and Epping Forest District Council's Off-Street CEO supplier, which will look at both costs and legal issues.

In response to a question regarding audits, Richard Walker confirmed that the NEPP has both internal and external audits. Reports on this come to the Annual General Meeting in June with the results being shared with Partner Authorities audit teams. Richard Walker also provided confirmation that direct costs are those which can be controlled, and non-direct costs are those which cannot, such as the services supplied by Colchester Borough Council which included risk management, Legal Services and ICT.

RESOLVED that the On-Street Financial Report be noted.

29. On-Street Operational Report

Richard Walker, Parking Partnership, introduced the On-Street Operational Report. The report requests that the contents be noted.

Richard Walker confirmed that there are fewer Civil Enforcement Officers (CEO) in the Harlow District Council area and this is reflected in the lower number of Penalty Charge Notices (PCN) issued. Further information can be provided after the meeting on this issue.

Richard Walker, also informed members that the South Essex Parking Partnership had recently agreed to trial their Parksafes car in residents permit zones, scanning for cars that are not permitted to park in the zone. The Parksafes car would operate with a CEO who would produce the PCN's, as without a CEO Parksafes cars can only be used outside schools or at bus stops. In terms of the NEPP operating the Parksafes car in a similar way, Richard Walker stated they are waiting for a software update before a trial period can commence. Richard Walker confirmed that the NEPP had been trialling the Traffic Regulation Order database, which is scheduled to be completed by February. In addition to this a self-serve function is also being worked on.

RESOLVED that the On-Street Operational Report be noted.

30. Forward Plan 2017/18

Jonathan Baker, Colchester Borough Council, introduced the Forward Plan 2017/18. The report requests that the North Essex Parking Partnership Forward Plan for 2017/18 be noted and to approve the dates for Joint Committee meetings taking place during the 2018-19 municipal year.

Jonathan Baker informed the Committee that the next Joint Committee meeting would take place at Epping Forest District Council on 22 March 2018. An additional item on delegations to Officers and the Chairman of the Committee would be brought to the March and following approval of the Traffic Regulation Order Authorisation report these items would be removed from the forward plan. Members were also informed that an item on Schools Parking report (3PR) had been confirmed for the March meeting.

RESOLVED that;

- a) The Forward Plan 2017/18 be noted
- b) That the dates for the North Essex Parking Partnership Joint Committee meetings for the 2018/19 municipal year be approved.

