

**DECRIMINALISATION OF PARKING ENFORCEMENT TASK GROUP held at COUNCIL OFFICES LONDON ROAD SAFFRON WALDEN at 4.00 pm on 12 MAY 2004**

Present:- Councillors M A Hibbs – Chairman  
Councillors J F Cheetham, R M Lemon, J P Murphy and  
A M Wattebot.

Officers in attendance:- T Halford, S McLagan, M T Purkiss, L Scott and  
A Stewart.

**DPE1 PARKING ENFORCEMENT MANAGER**

The Chairman welcomed to the meeting Les Scott, the new Parking Enforcement Manager.

**DPE2 APOLOGIES**

An apology for absence was received from Councillor C M Dean.

**DPE3 MINUTES**

The Minutes of the meeting held on 26 November 2003 were approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

**DPE4 BUSINESS ARISING**

**(i) DPE3(ii) - Management of Decriminalisation**

The Chairman asked that the question of responsibility for policing temporary road closures for special events be clarified at the next meeting.

**(ii) DPE6 – Consultation Feedback**

Councillor Cheetham said that it was important to keep all town and parish councils advised of progress and to consult with them. In particular, she referred to any changes that might be needed to the consolidation order and stressed the importance of ensuring that any changes were kept to a minimum and dealt with at one time. The Community and Development Manager said that he was happy to attend meetings of parish councils to undertake consultation on decriminalisation and the Chairman said that he would also attend where possible. Officers confirmed that changes to the consolidation order could be looked at from 1 October 2004 and if changes were necessary there would need to be further consultation with residents, town and parish councils and other agencies. The Chairman asked that officers should review the amendment process and see whether there was any scope for streamlining this.

**DPE5 UPDATE ON PROGRAMME OF WORKS**

The Community and Development Manager circulated a chart showing progress with the introduction of decriminalisation. He said that everything was now on schedule and matters were going through the Parliamentary process at present. An advert would be placed shortly for 4 parking attendants bringing the total number of attendants to 7 by October. Staff training had been arranged for August and September with software training following on from this. He said that public meetings would be arranged as part of the process and a leaflet was being prepared. Councillor Lemon asked that an article be prepared which could be included within town and parish council magazines.

**DPE6 CHIPSIDE PARKING SOFTWARE SUITE**

The Task Group considered a report which recommended that the Council entered into a contract with a company called Chipside to purchase computerised software in order to facilitate the smooth operation of on and off-street parking in the District. It was reported that the Chipside system was the standard system used with most districts in Essex and the system was considered to be ideal for this Council's use. It was also compatible with the Council's existing systems.

Whilst there was one other company that could offer the Council a similar facility, it was considered that the alternative did not provide the flexibility required nor the training and after sale service guarantee that was being offered. In addition, by co-operating with the remaining districts/borough, the Council would be making a substantial saving in the region of £10,000 and would be able to participate in joint training with neighbouring authorities. It was therefore

RESOLVED that the Transport and Highways Committee be asked to suspend Council standing order KK4 1(b) to enable a contract to be entered into with Chipside to provide the software system in order to implement decriminalised parking enforcement.

**DPE7 NATIONAL ADJUDICATION PARKING SERVICE**

In answer to a question it was clarified that Councillors could not get involved in individual complaints about parking enforcement within their own district.

The National Parking and Adjudication Service was an independent body and was the appeal system for vehicle keepers based purely on the validity of the ticket. The Council was required to formally nominate a representative to serve on the joint committee. The Task Group considered that the appointment should be made by the Transport and Highways Committee and Councillor Cheetham suggested that Councillor Hibbs should be appointed in view of his expertise on parking enforcement matters.

It was therefore

RESOLVED that the Transport and Highways Committee be asked to enter into an agreement with the National Parking and Adjudication Service and that a representative and substitute be appointed to serve on the joint committee.

**DPE8 PAY ON FOOT AND PAY AND DISPLAY COMPARISONS**

Officers submitted a report illustrating the advantages and disadvantages of pay on foot and pay and display methods of operation. It was noted that revenue from excess charges, staffing and low maintenance costs were the main advantages of pay and display over pay on foot. Members asked that officers report back with further information including looking at other options such as the introduction of credit cards in the longer term and making available books of parking tickets. Members also considered that these options should be discussed with other Councillors and an article should be prepared for Uttlesford Life.

**DPE9 OVERVIEW OF DRAFT DISTRICT PARKING STRATEGY**

It was reported that a draft Decriminalisation of Parking Enforcement Policy was being compiled and would be based on tried and tested policies currently in operation elsewhere in Essex. An index covering the main headings was circulated and officers undertook to provide Members with a copy of the policy currently in use at Brentwood so that Members could submit comments prior to this Council's enforcement policy being prepared. Officers also said that they would let Members have chapters of this Council's policy as it progressed rather than circulate the whole document later in the year.

**DPE10 NEXT MEETING**

It was agreed that the next meeting would be held at 4.00 pm on Wednesday 23 June 2004 at the Dunmow Offices.

The meeting ended at 5.15pm.