

DECRIMINALISATION OF PARKING ENFORCEMENT TASK GROUP held at COUNCIL OFFICES HIGH STREET GREAT DUNMOW at 4.00 pm on 23 JUNE 2004

Present:- Councillor M A Hibbs – Chairman
Councillors C M Dean, J P Murphy and
A M Wattebot

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

DPE11 APOLOGIES

An apology for absence was received from Councillor J F Cheetham.

DPE12 MINUTES

The Minutes of the meeting held on 12 May 2004 were approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

DPE13 BUSINESS ARISING

(i) Minute DPE4(i) Management of Decriminalisation

The question of responsibility for policing temporary road closures for special events had yet to be finally clarified with the Police. However, it has been confirmed that the Police would be responsible for the Remembrance Day parade in Saffron Walden. The Group asked that an appropriate representative of the Police be invited to a future meeting in order to clarify its role in relation to decriminalisation.

(ii) DPE6 Chipside Parking Software Suite

The Transport and Highways Committee had resolved at their meeting on 21 June to suspend standard orders to enable the contract to be entered into with Chipside to provide the software system. Chipside had been advised of this decision and work had now commenced.

(iii) DPE7 National Adjudication Parking Service

The Transport and Highways Committee had agreed to the nomination of Councillor Hibbs as the Council's representative on the Joint Committee.

The Chairman said that it was very important that District Councillors were aware that under the new system they would not be able to take up individual complaints about parking enforcement. Members needed to be aware of the procedures for referring complaints so that they could give this information to any residents that might contact them.

(iv) DPE8 Pay on Foot and Pay and Display Comparisons

Officers asked that this work be put on hold until after decriminalisation was introduced. There were many details to be sorted before 1 October and there were insufficient resources to commit to this additional study. Members agreed to this request.

(v) DPE9 Overview of Draft District Parking Strategy

The briefing notes, manual and CD Rom had been circulated to Members.

DPE14 DECRIMINALISATION PUBLICITY - TIMESCALE

An explanatory leaflet had been produced and would be circulated to all households and many businesses in the District. They would also be placed on cars that were currently infringing parking regulations. The leaflet referred the public to the Council's website for information, so it was essential that there was an obvious link to decriminalisation/parking on the home page of the website. Posters had also been produced and would be placed throughout the District. 48 locations had been identified for the warning signs about the new regulations. They would be placed at the boundaries of the District and also at the entrance to the main urban areas.

A number of press releases were also planned. Sarah McLagan stressed the importance of carefully managing the publicity.

DPE15 LIAISON WITH TOWN AND PARISH COUNCILS

Officers were planning evening meetings for Town and Parish Councils in September. Four to six meetings would be held in various locations throughout the District. It might be necessary to hold further meetings to gain feedback once decriminalisation had been introduced. Officers would be offering to attend Council meetings at the of Saffron Walden, Great Dunmow, Thaxted and Stansted.

DPE16 DECRIMINALISATION MANUAL – FEEDBACK

The manual had been circulated to the members of the group. Attention was particularly drawn to the contravention codes listed in the appendix.

DPE17 STAFFING POSITION – UPDATE

Eight applicants had been interviewed for the four additional parking attendant positions, these had now been filled. The posts had been offered on the current pay scale although the level of salary was currently being assessed through the job evaluation process. The applicants had been advised of the possible change to their salary.

The next stage was to recruit the administrative staff. This would take place in the next few weeks. It was expected that the service would be fully staffed by 1 October.

The parking attendants would be attending an intensive five day training course run by the County Council. A three day course had been arranged for the admin staff. After the training, all the car park attendants would have mentoring sessions with parking enforcement staff at Malden District Council, which had already implemented decriminalisation.

The Chairman said that a number of front line staff, not just those directly involved in parking enforcement, were likely to have to deal with irate customers. The Parking Enforcement Manager confirmed that a two day confrontation course was being organised. Also front line staff at Saffron Walden, Thaxted and Great Dunmow would be advised of new procedures for complaints.

DPE18 THE NEXT STEPS

Office accommodation needed to be sorted out so that all staff within the section could work together.

DPE19 NEXT MEETING

The next meeting would be held on Wednesday 22 September at 4.00 pm at the Saffron Walden offices.

The meeting ended at 5.40 pm.