

**DECRIMINALISATION OF PARKING ENFORCEMENT WORKING GROUP  
held at 4.00PM at COUNCIL OFFICES SAFFON WALDEN on 13  
NOVEMBER 2006**

Present: - Councillor R F Freeman – Chairman  
Councillors:- J F Cheetham, M A Hibbs and R M Lemon.

Officers in attendance: - M Cox, S McLagan and L Scott

Also Present:- Davina Millership and Chris Stoneham – Essex County Council.

**DPE9 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE AND DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors C M Dean and A M Wattebot.

**DPE10 MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING**

The Minutes of the meeting held on 7 August 2006 were received and signed by the Chairman as a correct record.

**DPE11 MATTERS ARISING**

**(i) Minute DPE3 (i) – Fly Parking in Takeley and surrounding areas**

Chris Stoneham said that the amended scheme for the traffic restrictions to address the problems of fly parking were now with the County's legal Section and would be advertised shortly.

Councillor Cheetham said that at its last meeting, Takeley Parish Council had asked when the traffic Islands and pinch points would be provided on the old A120. Chris Stoneham agreed to look into this.

**(ii) Minute DPE5 – Option for car park payment methods**

The Committee commented on the different options for payment methods at the Council's car parks. Councillor Hibbs asked if there had been investigation into machines which issue tickets that corresponded with the amount of money entered. It was confirmed that enquiries would be made on this query and, in response to a further question, officers advised that pay on exit was only cost effective for very large and well used car parks. Members hoped that they would be provided with the relevant information and cost comparisons in order to select appropriate replacement machines.

Les Scott confirmed that he was in talks with a company with regard to payment by mobile phone.

(ii) **Minute DPE6 – Parking review**

Councillor Hibbs referred to recommendation 8.4, to *consider whether there is adequate parking provision when plans for major developments were being looked* and suggested that the Council should be encouraging a more sustainable approach.

DPE12 **OUTCOME OF ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE MEETING**

Members were advised of the decisions made by the Environment Committee at its meeting on 7 November in respect of car parking charges and review. The Committee had made a number of recommendations for further action by the working group.

In relation to Parking Charges, this group had been asked to come up with more suggestions for machines and provide proper costing before tariffs were looked at. It had also been asked to look at a 2 hours tariff for Great Dunmow and the wider issue of parking, bus transportation and co-ordination. Under options for car park payment methods the committee had asked the Operations Committee to make provision in the capital programme to cover the cost of the pay and display machine replacement programme and Smart Card scheme. The Environment Committee had also agreed the policies in the parking review.

Councillor Hibbs said that, rather than increasing tariffs, revenue could be increased by changing charging periods and rates. It was hoped that the new machines would provide data that would allow this to be explored. He said that when a decision was made on the charging structure, Members should be given a comprehensive financial breakdown of total car parking costs and income.

Members agreed that a decision on the type of replacement machines should be made as soon as possible.

**ACTION** Officers to circulate a summary of the options for the replacement machines (pros and cons and costing.) prior to a meeting to be held on 4 December 2006.

DPE13 **PARKING ON PAVEMENTS**

The Saffron Walden Town Centre Working Group had referred this matter to this group following incidents of inappropriate parking in Saffron Walden. It had been suggested that there should be a central number for the public to phone to report problems. The group had been advised that action could only be taken by parking attendants if there was a current Traffic Regulation Order in that area. Outside restricted areas action could only be taken by the police if the vehicle was causing an obstruction.

The parking section had limited resources to deal with calls but with the opening of the new Customer Services Centre there was the opportunity for calls to be logged by the front office. This service would be advertised on the website. Members stressed that it was important that the public were not given false hope and the customer advisors would need to provide clear information on whether the Council could take action in that case.

The information would be useful for identifying parking problems in this area. The number of calls would be monitored to see if it would be appropriate to extend the service to evenings or weekends.

#### DPE14 **RESIDENTS PARKING SCHEMES – SIGNAGE**

Councillor Freeman showed photographs of the current signage for the residents parking scheme on Museum Street in Saffron Walden. He thought that they were confusing, especially for visitors. Davina Millership said the signs were not now appropriate and the signage and lining for the whole area would need to be reviewed by the Essex County Council and get DfT approval. As Saffron Walden was a conservation area there was pressure to keep any signs low key and in keeping with the surrounding buildings. The DfT had strict guidelines for the form of signs but did make concession to conservation areas in terms of narrower lines, different coloured background and smaller letters.

Members felt that the provision of residents parking schemes for the whole of Saffron Walden should be reviewed to see if there was a need for expansion or amendment. Essex County Council officers said that due to lack of resources they were not able to conduct a review unless it was funded by the District Council concerned, either directly or through the Locally Determined Budget. Members appreciated that this would be a lengthy process but thought it was important for a review to be started. The County would provide an estimate of the costs involved.

RECOMMENDED to the Environment Committee that

- 1 the County Council be asked to carry out a review of the signage and lining for the Saffron Walden residents parking schemes and take into account appropriate measures for a conservation area.
- 2 It be agreed that a review of the Residents Parking Scheme in Saffron Walden be undertaken by Essex County Council subject to available funding.

#### DPE15 **REPAIR TO CULVERT SAFFRON WALDEN**

Chris Stoneham reported that work to repair the culvert at Cross Street, Saffron Walden was planned to be finished ahead of schedule by mid December.

DPE16

**DATE OF NEXT MEETINGS**

Monday 4 December – Saffron Walden

Monday 8 January – Great Dunmow.

The meeting ended at 5.55pm.

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