

**DECRIMINALISATION OF PARKING ENFORCEMENT WORKING GROUP
held at 4.00PM at COUNCIL OFFICES SAFFON WALDEN on 7 AUGUST
2006**

Present: - Councillor R F Freeman – Chairman
Councillors R M Lemon and A M Wattebot

Officers in attendance: - V Harvey and L Scott

DPE1 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE AND DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors J F Cheetham, C M Dean and M A Hibbs.

DPE2 MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

The minutes of the meeting held on 6 March 2006 were received and signed by the Chairman as a correct record.

DPE3 MATTERS ARISING

(i) Minute DPE58 (i) – Minute DPE53 (i) – Fly Parking in Takeley and surrounding areas

Chris Stoneham from Essex County Council was working with the Senior Planning Manager on the suggested ideas. The Parking Enforcement Manager would be kept updated.

(ii) Minute DPE58 (ii) – Minute DPE48 – Review of Decriminalisation

The Traffic Management Act 2004 was ongoing.

(iii) Minute DPE59 – Parking Strategic Policy Review

The issue had been discussed at the Environment Committee held on 14 March 2006 and resolutions made. 2.1 of the same minute would produce a final draft. 8.3, Airport Expansion was amended after the Environment Committee meeting to amend text to ensure that “is met” was deleted and “complies with the approved surface access strategy” was inserted.

DPE4 PARKING CHARGES REVIEW

A report had been prepared by the Parking Enforcement Manager on the details of parking charges and associated income available to enable it to decide whether to amend parking tariffs with effect from 1 April 2007.

He pointed out that there had been an error in paragraphs one and two, the report referred to the RPS of April 2004, when in fact it was April 2005.

Based on the latest available information, the options were identified with potential additional income and implications. The Parking Enforcement Manager had outlined six options, of which three were suggested as the preferred options. These three options would potentially realise the following income/deficit –

- an increase on all On and Off Street tariffs by 10p (50p for Coaches) would have a potential additional income of approximately £80,000 per annum.
- an increase in Season Ticket and Resident Parking Permit (RPP) charges by inflation at 2.5%; based on the current take up season tickets would expect to have a £940 potential additional income and RPP's would expect £290.
- the introduction of a half hour 30p tariff to Stansted Mountfitchet car parks only; the income for this would be difficult to predict, however, based on the latest available data on tickets issued at Stansted's car parks, if 25% of the hourly take-up opted for a half hour ticket, there would be a reduction in income of approximately £500.

The Parking Enforcement Manager explained that a parking ticket machine that issued change would pose a higher risk to theft. With regard to the London Road car park, a report on this would follow at a later date.

Councillor Dean, who had given her apologies for the meeting had emailed the Working Group her comments, which were discussed in detail during the meeting.

Despite the proposed raising of charges by 10p per tariff representing a 20% increase, Members viewed an increase necessary. The Parking Enforcement Manager advised that any alterations to charges should be implemented at the same time over the District.

RESOLVED that Members recommend to the Environment Committee that Options 3, 5 and 6 in the table in paragraph 16 of the report be implemented.

DPE5

OPTION FOR CAR PARK PAYMENT METHODS

A report had been prepared by the Parking Enforcement Manager on the alternative payment methods at the Council's car parks. He sought Member approval that the status quo be maintained and the implementation of a rolling replacement programme for the existing Pay & Display ticket machines.

The methods of car park payments equated to three options, pay on foot, pay at kiosk/exit and pay and display.

Members discussed these three options in detail and concluded that the existing regime of pay and display ticket machines would be the most appropriate and practical option for our rural district. However, as the current pay and display machines were over 25 years old they needed replacing. New machines would provide a more sophisticated facility and could be purchased at £2,400 each. The total cost of replacing all 31 machines would be £75,000. An advantage of maintaining the existing Pay & Display regime would be its allegiance with the current patrolling regime for On-Street parking enforcement.

Another option brought to the table was payment by mobile phone. Motorists would hold an account with a company who offered the scheme and the company would then make payment to the authority for the use of the car park by that individual. The overall cost to the individual would be greater, but it would be more time effective and the individual would not have to worry about carrying change for a machine. The Parking Enforcement Manager said he had already consulted with two companies but further research was necessary. Colchester Borough Council was adopting a scheme and it was suggested UDC should monitor its implementation and take up and report back at a later date.

RESOLVED that the Decriminalisation of Parking Working Group recommend to the Environment Committee that:

- 1 No changes are made to the payment methods in any of the Council's car parks.
- 2 A three year rolling replacement programme of new Pay and Display machines with solar power be implemented
- 3 Operations Committee be asked to make provision in the Capital Programme 2007/08 and 2008/09 for £30,000 per annum to cover the cost of the Pay and Display machine replacement programme.
- 4 Officers further investigate the provision of mobile phone parking and other payment methods and report back to this committee on the practical and financial implications.

DPE6

PARKING REVIEW

The Parking Enforcement Manager had prepared a three part report. The first part set out the Policy decisions that had been made to date with regard to Parking Services for Uttlesford. The second set out the areas originally within the scope of the Review which would not be resolved at this time and may require reports in the future. The third provided the Working Group with a set of recommendations for consideration as a result of the Review.

Members discussed the recommendations and made the following points:

- Point 7 of Appendix 2 (TMA 2004) would hopefully be implemented next year. Moving traffic offences would be covered by CCTV. Zig Zag

lines occurred mainly around school areas but would be part of the new TMA. Coning was still an issue, as it was expensive and, to allow enforcement, a temporary restriction would have to be introduced. For events such as carnivals signs on lampposts provided by the organiser was an option.

- 7.4 Footway Parking – Parking On Pavements etc. is “Obstruction” and is currently enforced by the Police. Locally the police seemed to be of the view that if a double buggy could fit through the space it was considered reasonable; however this would only be acceptable to cars, not HGVs.
- 2.9 Station Car Parks in Appendix 3 – the price of Season Tickets was more than that charged in UDC’s car parks. Local staff at Stations were not keen on partaking in local level discussions; if commuters could avoid paying for their car parking they would. These problems occurred at Elsenham, Newport and Audley End Stations.
- 2.10 Agreements were in place with Waitrose, Boots, the Co-op and Stansted Parish Council for car park services.
- 3.2 Fly Parking in the District – there was a suggested pilot project in Takeley, as this was the most problematic area. This would be discussed with the Working Group that ECC had formed.
- 6.3 Staffing Levels - At present the parking team had a shortage with two officers on long term sick leave. The Parking Attendant title was to change to Civil Enforcement Officer under the TMA. An agency worker was covering one of the two officers on sick leave.
- 8.1 Land Purchasing for future off-street car park provision – no car park in the District seemed to be over full.
- 8.5 Introduction of Park and Ride – this would be discussed at the North Area Panel meeting. However UDC would need to find a contractor willing to take on the scheme and able to make a profit. The option would involve Swan Meadow car park acting as a satellite for Audley End Station; however there would be little use for the scheme during off peak travel.

RESOLVED that the Environment Committee

- 1 Noted the Policy decisions that had been made to date with regard to Parking Services for Uttlesford.
- 2 Confirmed the amendment to Policy 3.1 -“Criteria for considering Introduction of a Resident Parking Scheme (RPS)” whereby references to the Environment Committee are replaced with “the appropriate Area Panel”, and insertion of the caveat “subject to any decision that would have financial implications beyond the prescribed budget being referred to the Environment Committee.”

- 3 Noted the areas within the original scope of the review that would be reported on separately / as necessary.
- 4 Confirm the following policies, as detailed in Appendix 3 –
 - 2.6 Continuation of Pay & Display
 - *No changes were made to the payment methods in any of the Council's car parks.*
 - *A 3-year rolling replacement programme of new Pay and Display machines with solar power be implemented.*
 - *Operations Committee be asked to make provision in the Capital Programme 2007/08 and 2008/09 for £30,000 p.a. to cover the cost of the Pay & Display machine replacement programme.*
 - *Officers further investigate the provision of mobile phone parking and other payment methods and report back to this committee on the practical and financial implications.*
 - 2.9 Station Car Parks
 - *Officers to liaise with relevant contacts as appropriate and necessary*
 - 2.10 Agreements with Waitrose, Boots, the Coop and Stansted Parish Council for Car Parking services
 - *Officers to ensure that UDC met its obligations as set out in the Agreements with relevant parties.*
 - *Officers to ensure relevant parties are consulted as set out in Parking Policy 4 –Consultation*
 - 3.2 Fly Parking in the District
 - *Officers to work in conjunction with ECC and the relevant Parish Council to consider what schemes could be introduced to address the fly-parking problem. If appropriate, consultation to be carried out and, if required, the preferred scheme to be introduced for an 18 month trial period*
 - 3.6 Fees and Charges for On-Street Parking
 - *Every other year On-Street Parking Charges to be reviewed and consideration given to appropriate changes*
 - 6.3 Staffing Levels
 - *To ensure staffing levels were maintained at an optimum level, Officers to recruit in a timely and efficient manner*
 - 8.1 Land Purchase for Future Off-Street Car Park Provision

- *Parking and Development Services officers to consider opportunities for land purchase /Section 106 agreements for the provision of Off-Street Car Parks as opportunities arise*
- 8.4 M11 Expansion
- *Officers of Development Services to consider whether there is adequate parking provision when plans for major developments were being looked at*
- 8.5 Introduction of Park and Ride
- *Where an opportunity is identified to introduce a Park & Ride Scheme(s) officers present details to the relevant Area Panel and the Environment Committee for consideration*
- 8.6 Environmental Implications
- *Any new provision of parking facilities to undergo an Environmental Impact Assessment*

DPE7 TRAFFIC MANAGEMENT ACT 2004 RESPONSES TO CONSULTATION

The Traffic Management Act 2004 was discussed. Due to the time restraints it was unable to go to the Environment Committee, therefore a retrospective recommendation was needed.

DPE8 ANY OTHER BUSINESS THAT THE CHAIRMAN CONSIDERS URGENT

Councillor Wattebot brought to light the parking situation in Thaxted on Market Day. The Parking Enforcement Manager said that motorists were being warned and if it persisted penalty charges would be issued.

Councillor Freeman drew attention to the Residents Parking and signage along Museum Street in Saffron Walden, stating it was not clear. He asked if it could be set in motion to turn the Residents Parking scheme to 6 days a week and make the Pay & Display unavailable on Sundays.

The meeting ended at 5.40pm.