

NORTH ESSEX PARKING PARTNERSHIP JOINT COMMITTEE FOR ON-STREET PARKING

8 August 2013 at 1.00pm

Causeway House, Bocking End Braintree

Executive Members Present:-

Councillor Susan Barker (Uttlesford District Council)
Councillor Martin Hunt (Colchester Borough Council)
Councillor Robert Mitchell (Braintree District Council)
Councillor Nick Turner (Tendring District Council)
Councillor Gary Waller (Epping Forest District Council)

Apologies: -

Councillor Rodney Bass (Essex County Council)
Councillor Phil Waite (Harlow District Council)
Councillor Eddie Johnson (Essex County Council)

Also Present: -

Ms. Lou Belgrove (Parking Partnership)
Mrs. Amanda Chidgey (Colchester Borough Council)
Ms. Vicky Duff (Essex County Council)
Mr. Robert Judd (Colchester Borough Council)
Ms. Nikki Nepean (Tendring District Council)
Mr. Paul Partridge (Braintree District Council)
Mr. Jeremy Pine (Uttlesford District Council)
Mr. Miroslav Sihelsky (Harlow District Council)
Mr. Shane Taylor (Parking Partnership)
Mr. Richard Walker (Parking Partnership)
Ms. Sarah Ward (Colchester Borough Council)
Ms. Leah Whitwell (Braintree / Colchester)
Mr. Matthew Young (Colchester Borough Council)

Apologies:-

Mr. Trevor Degville (Parking Partnership)
Mr. Qasim Durrani (Epping Forest District Council)
Mr. Joe McGill (Harlow District Council)
Ms. Liz Saville (Essex County Council)
Mr. Andrew Taylor (Uttlesford District Council)
Mr. Ian Taylor (Tendring District Council)

13. Declarations of Interest

Councillor Barker, in respect of being a Member of Essex County Council, declared a non-pecuniary interest in the following items.

14. Minutes

RESOLVED that the Joint Committee confirmed the minutes of the meeting held on 20 June 2013 as a correct record, subject to the following amendments;

In attendance;

Councillor Robert Mitchell (Braintree District Officer) to read (Braintree District Council)
Councillor Derrick Louis to read Councillor Rodney Bass

15. Operational Report

Ms. Lou Belgrove (Parking Partnership) presented the Operational Report for On-Street Parking. The report provided an update on the operational issues since the last meeting and some further information requested at the June meeting. This included a graphical update on Bank Holiday enforcement in terms of the number of Penalty Charge Notices (PCN) issue rate of similar days of the week either side of the bank holidays.

Regarding challenges noted in paragraph 6 of the report, Mr. Walker (Parking Partnership) confirmed to Councillor Mitchell that the Partnership responds by post to web-based challenges. Approximately 68% of challenges are done online. Mr. Walker said that if the challenger elects to receive information by email, this can be the preferred method of communication through the process, for example attaching letters to emails. This method is suitable up to the point of the commencement of legal proceedings. It was agreed that those challenging by email should be instructed that future contact will be made by this method of communication. Mr. Walker confirmed to Councillor Turner that approximately 30% of challenges are upheld in favour of the challenger.

Mr. Walker said the new CCTV vehicle proposed start in September 2013 will be delayed due to a software issue and the need to operate the software on a separate server. Once this is resolved and a new start date is known, Mr. Walker agreed to provide all partners advance notice of the media coverage.

Ms. Belgrove said the letter backlog currently stood at 2,500. Ms. Belgrove said an agreed solution to reduce the backlog will commence on 20 August 2013 for one month, and will see ten CEOs working in the back office specifically on the backlog of letters. Mr. Walker said this will be a one-off opportunity to reduce the backlog, and he did not envisage that this work will have an impact on income levels. Ms. Belgrove said the caseload of officers generally averages between 20-30 letters per day, but can individually be as high as 40 letters per day. Mr. Walker said there had been performance issues which had now been resolved and performance management is shortly to be rolled out for CEOs.

RESOLVED that the Committee noted the Operational Report for On-Street Parking.

16. Traffic Regulation Orders (TRO) for Approval

Councillor Turner said Tendring was very appreciative of the work the Parking Partnership had put into TRO implementation. Regarding parking enforcement, Councillor Turner said people in Frinton-on-Sea had become concerned with the methods of parking enforcement in respect of goods vehicles in and around Connaught Avenue, and that a more gentle approach was needed. Mr. Richard Walker agreed this could be reviewed and the Parking Partnership will discuss with the Client Officers at Tendring a positive way forward.

Mr. Shane Taylor, Parking Partnership, introduced the schedule of TRO schemes to be considered and as listed in the appendix of the report.

Councillor Mitchell said an awful lot of work had gone into the implementation of the TRO scheme for the Clacton-on Sea town centre. This had taken some time to complete but lessons had been learnt that would help to ensure similar future schemes will be dealt with more efficiently.

In response to Councillor Mitchell, Mr. S. Taylor said the backlog had to some extent built-up

due to the time given to the town centre scheme at Clacton-on-Sea, but now this was complete it will only take a few months to catch up with the back-log, before the Technical Team start to work on new schemes.

Councillor Turner thanked the Parking Partnership for the time and effort given to implementing the Clacton-on-Sea town centre scheme. Councillor Turner said Tendring would not be submitting any further schemes for approval at this meeting.

Councillor Mitchell said the NEPP needed to consider putting the TRO Schedule into a database, rather than run it in spreadsheet form. This would improve the layout and clunky format, would be easier to update and have records easily archived and searched. Mr. Walker said this was the intention and did form part of the Parking Partnership's forward plan. Chipside will be working on this development that is likely to take 6-8 months to complete.

Mr. Shane Taylor (Parking Partnership), in response to Councillor Barker, said the scoring matrix had been removed from the schedule to avoid comparison of the schemes scored against the old and new matrices.

Mr. Walker said the progress of the number of schemes implemented was determined by the budget for this work. The list could be reduced significantly if separate funding could be provided and the work outsourced to consultants. Councillor Turner said he was happy to discuss with his own client officer's opportunities to authorise some TRO schemes outside of the Parking Partnership. Ms. Nikki Nepean (Tendring) said she was happy to liaise with the Parking Partnership with a view to helping with the delivery of consultation letters.

RESOLVED that the Joint Committee approved the following schemes to proceed to the next stage of implementation.

<u>District</u>	<u>Ref: Number</u>	<u>Name of Scheme</u>
Uttlesford	10029	High Street
Uttlesford	10030	Pleasland Road / Debden Road
Uttlesford	10031	Ashden Road
Braintree	20007	The Grove
Braintree	20016	Century Drive
Harlow	30010	Hart Road
Harlow	30015	Horn Beams
Harlow	30020	Wedhey Garage Area
Harlow	30025	Old Road
Colchester	40045	Boxted Road
Colchester	40058	New Farm Road, Stanway
Epping	60002	Willingale Road
Epping	60004	Honey Lane
Epping	60013	Bower Vale
Epping	60042	Harwater Drive / Sedley Rise, Loughton

17. Traffic Regulation Orders (TRO) Policy

Mr. Shane Taylor (Parking Partnership) introduced the report that requested the Committee to adopt a revised policy in respect of TROs.

In response to Mr. Paul Partridge (Braintree), Mr. S. Taylor said that a TRO request that has

been originally administered by Essex County Council (ECC) needs to be forwarded to the Parking Partnership for information, but will not be considered as a formal request for a further assessment. It is considered that if a request has been subject to the County Council TRO procedure then sufficient investigation into a matter has been undertaken.

Ms. Vicky Duff (Essex County Council) said the outcome of TRO requests at County Hall are determined by two factors, congestion and safety, so whilst a scheme may be rejected by County there was no reason why it could not be reconsidered by NEPP. It was confirmed that the Local Highway Panel may not approve TRO schemes, but if it felt an area would benefit from the introduction of a scheme it could make representation to the relevant Portfolio Holder.

Ms. Duff confirmed that Pedestrian and Zebra crossings are dealt with by the Local Highway Panels, whereas zig-zag lines outside schools and clearways are the responsibility of the Parking Partnership.

Ms. Duff also confirmed that TRO requests are dealt with differently by NEPP and the South Essex Parking Partnership (SEPP). The SEPP forward all TRO requests to ECC for each request to be judged initially on congestion and safety criteria, to be dealt with by ECC, with the remainder returned to SEPP for consideration. All requests in North Essex go directly to NEPP and any schemes where it is considered they may fall into the congestion and safety criteria are forwarded to ECC for consideration. Ms. Duff said in reality there was no difference economically or in the number of schemes dealt with by County, though the SEPP method of dealing with requests did prolong the process. Members felt the two ways of working did suggest double standards and that the NEPP are doing some initial ground work on schemes that would be done by ECC on behalf of SEPP. Members agreed that the Joint Committee should write to Councillor Rodney Bass, Portfolio Holder for Highways and Transportation to request that all requests for TROs, received by Essex County Council should be sent directly to NEPP for assessment as this has the potential to avoid duplication of work. That Joint Committee advises Cllr Bass that in the SEPP area all requests are assessed by ECC before being sent to SEPP. This form of dealing with TRO requests could be seen by an applicant to be giving them two different chances of having their TRO request granted and raising their expectations and that the Cabinet member should have regard to streamlining the process across the County.

Mr. S. Taylor (NEPP) explained that he does liaise with Planning Officers (ECC/District) to provide joined-up thinking regarding the work of NEPP and ECC in respect of planning applications.

RESOLVED that the Joint Committee;

- i) Approved the revised scoring matrix.
- ii) Approved for adoption the formal time period of five years for reconsideration of TRO requests following official rejection.
- iii) Approved the official time period to be instigated and agreed in relation to newly adopted roads and estates relating to TRO requests.
- iv) Approved the policy that all Essex County Council TRO rejected schemes will not be considered by NEPP.
- v) Agreed that the Joint Committee should write to Councillor Rodney Bass, Portfolio Holder for Highways and Transportation to request that all requests for TROs, received

by Essex County Council should be sent directly to NEPP for assessment as this has the potential to avoid duplication of work.

That Joint Committee advises Councillor Bass that in the SEPP area all requests are assessed by ECC before being sent to SEPP. This form of dealing with TRO requests could be seen by an applicant to be giving them two different chances of having their TRO request granted and raising their expectations and that the Cabinet member should have regard to streamlining the process across the County.

18. Technical Team Update

Mr. Richard Walker and Mr. Shane Taylor (Parking Partnership) presented the update from the Parking Partnership's Technical Team, providing an insight into the team's remit and current work in progress.

RESOLVED that the Joint Committee considered and noted the work that has been undertaken by the Technical Team during 2013.

19. Forward Plan

Mr. Matthew Young confirmed that a half yearly review of the Budget will be presented to the Joint Committee at the October meeting.

RESOLVED that the Joint Committee noted the current Forward Plan.

20. Any Other Business

Ms. Sarah Ward (Colchester) spoke to the Joint Committee regarding the current media policy and how these enquiries are dealt with, including the high level of media enquiries received, and following this, the need for the Joint Committee to agree a suitable media protocol.

Regarding protocol, Councillor Hunt (Colchester) said he did not expect to be put under pressure by officer's allegations that their authority was being forced by NEPP to have parking meters.

RESOLVED that the Joint Committee agreed to consider a report at the next meeting in respect of NEPP Media Protocol.