

Report to the Cabinet

Report reference: C-075-2015/16

Date of meeting: 3 March 2016



**Epping Forest
District Council**

Portfolio: Safer Greener and Transport

Subject: Loughton Broadway Parking Review

Responsible Officer: Qasim (Kim) Durrani (01992 564055).

Democratic Services: Gary Woodhall (01992 564470).

Recommendations/Decisions Required:

- (1) In accordance with the Cabinet Decision of October 2010 to proceed with the Loughton Broadway Parking Review, acknowledging that this will require a comprehensive assessment of existing and projected parking provision, including the Epping Forest Shopping Park;**
- (2) To agree to appoint the North Essex Parking Partnership to carry out a scoping exercise for the Loughton Broadway Parking Review, including implementing some small scale traffic regulations;**
- (3) That a further report be brought to Cabinet setting out the full scope of scheme and financial implications; and**
- (4) To set aside Contract Standing Order C5 (contracts exceeding £25,000 but not exceeding £50,000) to enable appointment of the North Essex Parking Partnership.**

Executive Summary:

The Council committed to implement area wide parking reviews across the district when it held the agency agreement with the County Council. At the end of the agency agreement in 2005 a decision was taken to continue implementation of the ongoing schemes.

Cabinet has previously resolved not to consider any further area wide parking reviews until the reviews at Epping, Buckhurst Hill and Loughton Broadway are completed. The Epping and Buckhurst Hill reviews have been completed and work can now commence on the Loughton Broadway Parking Review (LBPR).

Important lessons have been learnt from the Epping and Buckhurst Hill reviews; for example carrying out an area wide review has proven to be very divisive and it has not always been possible to address the often conflicting requirements of residents, commuters, businesses and other road users. It is easier to obtain consensus around local specific issues, for example the creation of small scale resident parking zones or address junctions with perceived safety issues.

Recent and proposed developments in the Loughton Broadway area involving projects like the Epping Forest Shopping Park, the former Sir Winston Churchill Public House, other housing developments along Burton Road and the decision of Epping Forest College to

introduce parking charges in their car park will create new pressure on the on street parking in the area. It is necessary to take a holistic view of the parking provisions and assess the impact of the aforementioned developments.

The Council has two options for delivery of LBPR, it can avail the service of Essex Highways or the North Essex Parking Partnership (NEPP). For the reasons set out later in the report it is recommended that the contract for the delivery of this scheme be awarded to NEPP.

Reasons for Proposed Decision:

To implement the last of the three parking review schemes as approved by Cabinet.

To address some urgent local parking issues. Carry out a full scoping exercise to determine the requirements of an area wide parking review.

Other Options for Action:

To not proceed with the scheme will be contrary to the previous Cabinet decision of a parking review in the Loughton Broadway area.

It is possible to carry out a small, targeted parking review and only address local parking issues; however this is not recommended because the impact of a number of large ongoing infrastructure development schemes on the on street parking provisions need to be considered.

Report:

1. The area wide parking reviews were started when an agency agreement was in place that enabled the Council to manage the highway network within the District. At the end of the agreement in 2005 a decision was made to honour the ongoing schemes (Epping and Buckhurst Hill) and revisit these soon after implementation to address any issues. In addition it was agreed that, following the completion of the Broadway Town centre Enhancement, a parking review should be carried out in the Loughton Broadway area to address outstanding parking problems.
2. The first parking reviews for Epping and Buckhurst Hill were completed in 2007. As agreed, these two areas were revisited and residents consulted again to check for any errors or if areas had been missed out. It transpired that a lot of the residents did not take part in the first public consultation and wanted to change the newly introduced parking restrictions. This resulted in a much larger scope of work than had been previously envisaged.
3. There were other complications, for example the costs of advertising increased and there were additional resource requirements for revisiting the entire area of the review. Although additional budget allocation was made available to deliver the schemes, the financial risks to the Council were considerable and therefore it was also agreed that the schemes would be implemented one after the other and in the order that reflected the most amount of work already undertaken. The order of implementation was agreed as Epping, Buckhurst Hill and then Loughton Broadway.
4. The Epping Parking Review was substantially completed in 2014. The lessons learnt from the Epping Review were used to inform the decision making on the implementation of future reviews, and in particular the need to balance the competing needs of commuters, residents, businesses, visitors, tourists and the vitality of the town centres.
5. Attempting to address the needs of all the users while undertaking a wide area

parking review is unrealistic and is likely to result in a number of users being dissatisfied. This is partly due to the absence of a universally acceptable technical solution and the lack of engagement by the majority of the users. Experience has shown that it is far easier to obtain consensus around local targeted schemes.

6. It was for this reason that a more acceptable approach, to address specific problematic areas rather than wider geographical areas, enabling any displaced parking to be better accommodated within the vicinity and limiting the wider knock on effect of any new parking restrictions, was adopted for Buckhurst Hill. This proved very successful and resulted in the introduction of: double yellow lines at junctions where inconsiderate parking was taking place or where there were perceived safety issues, resident parking zones in selected streets and that also only when the majority of the residents were in support.

7. The situation for the Loughton Broadway is different to Epping and Buckhurst Hill. The latter two areas have benefited from a town wide review in the past which included a holistic view of the on street parking provisions. LBPR has not had a town wide review; if a targeted local approach is used there is a risk that the parking problem will be shifted elsewhere within the close proximity. This could then result in a demand for a further review.

8. It is also recognised that there are some large infrastructure developments in the Loughton Broadway area; these include: the redevelopment of the Langston Road Depot to the Epping Forest Shopping Park, redevelopment of the former Sir Winston Churchill Public House and other housing developments along Burton Road. Although these developments will include parking provisions it is advisable to consider any knock on effect of these developments and the decision by the Epping Forest College to introduce parking charges in its car parks on the availability of parking in the wider review area.

9. The Council does not have the technical expertise to deliver the area wide parking review. The previous Buckhurst Hill and Epping parking reviews were delivered by procuring the services of Essex Highways. The Council now has two options: it can engage Essex Highways or the North Essex Parking Partnership (NEPP) for the delivery of the scheme. This is because both have the necessary authority, delegated to it in the case of NEPP, to make the necessary traffic orders

10. There are advantages in delivering the LBPR through NEPP. These include: lower officer charge rates than Essex Highways, greater control as the Council is a member of the Joint Committee of NEPP, ease of access to NEPP officers, informed decisions making as NEPP will be responsible for enforcing any new parking restrictions and the expertise gained by NEPP while carrying out similar wide area parking reviews elsewhere in the Partnership.

11. The Council has a legal agreement with NEPP for the provision of enforcement operations in the District and introduction of small traffic regulation scheme. The agreement does not cover large area wide schemes. The actual value of the scheme will be dependent on the nature, size and complexity of the parking restrictions, level of public consultation and associated costs. At this stage NEPP will be instructed to carry out a scoping exercise and determine the full extent of parking review scheme required. It is recognised that there are some local parking and road safety issues that could be resolved by implementing parking restrictions, NEPP will be able to address these straight away.

12. Once NEPP have completed the scoping exercise a further report will be presented to Cabinet. This will set out the estimated costs of the scheme, time line of delivery and an implementation strategy.

13. At this stage and to enable appointment of NEPP it is necessary to waive Contract Standing Order C5 (contracts exceeding £25,000 but not exceeding £50,000) to enable

appointment of the NEPP to carry out the scoping exercise and address a few targeted local parking issues.

Resource Implications:

There is a budget allocation of £190,000 in 2016/17 within the current capital programme for the delivery of the Loughton Broadway Parking Review. There is a further sum of £40,000 expected to become available as a result of Section 106 commitment of the Epping Forest Shopping Park.

NEPP have provided a schedule for the officer charge rates. The total cost of the scoping exercise will depend on the amount of work instructed by the Council. Alongside this scoping exercise NEPP will be able to introduce a few small traffic restrictions, subject to consultation with Members and residents. It is estimated that the cost of scoping exercise and any small schemes would be more than £25,000 but under £50,000.

Legal and Governance Implications:

The North Essex Parking Partnership will enforce any new parking restrictions brought about as a result of these parking reviews, as agents to the County Council.

Safer, Cleaner and Greener Implications:

Ensuring optimum utilisation of available car parking spaces on the public highway. Addressing the safety of all road users and tackling issues of inconsiderate parking on the public highway. Preventing congestion and its effects upon local air quality etc.

By considering the future impact of the proposed large infrastructural schemes the Council can better prepare for any adverse impact.

Consultation Undertaken:

Separate informal consultations were carried out in 2009. Residents of the affected area received a letter and plan showing the impact of the proposed changes in the vicinity. Larger plans were on display in the offices and local libraries. Given the length of time since the last consultation it will be necessary to consider public engagement; NEPP's advice will be sought on best practice in carrying out such like consultations.

Formal statutory consultations will be carried out once the scheme progresses to the relevant stage.

Local Ward and County Members have been consulted on the proposed approach.

NEPP have been consulted and have provided a cost estimate based on a schedule of rate.

Essex Highways have been consulted for the delivery of the parking review scheme.

Background Papers:

Previous Cabinet reports.

Risk Management:

If it was decided to not carry out a town wide review but implement targeted small scale schemes then an opportunity to address the wider displacement issues would be lost and it likely that further work would be required.

Due Regard Record

This page shows **which groups of people are affected** by the subject of this report. It sets out **how they are affected** and how any **unlawful discrimination** they experience can be eliminated. It also includes information about how **access to the service(s)** subject to this report can be improved for the different groups of people; and how they can be assisted to **understand each other better** as a result of the subject of this report.

S149 Equality Act 2010 requires that due regard must be paid to this information when considering the subject of this report.

Out of the specific group or characteristics that the Council has a legal duty to have due regard for the following are affected:

- (a) Age
- (b) Disability

The age related group could be affected if the advertisement and communication of any proposals is not affectively communicated. This will be minimised by ensuring that NEPP consider best practice.

The disability related could be affected if the new parking restrictions result in a lack of adequate provision for disabled badge holders.