

**EPPING FOREST DISTRICT COUNCIL
NOTES OF A MEETING OF SAFER, CLEANER, GREENER SCRUTINY STANDING
PANEL
HELD ON TUESDAY, 7 JANUARY 2014
IN COMMITTEE ROOM 1, CIVIC OFFICES, HIGH STREET, EPPING
AT 7.30 - 8.37 PM**

Members Present: Mrs J Lea (Chairman), Mrs H Brady (Vice-Chairman), Mrs T Cochrane, G Chambers, L Girling, Ms Y Knight, S Murray, Mrs M Sartin (Chairman of the Council), Mrs P Smith and P Spencer

Other members present: W Breare-Hall, G Waller and J M Whitehouse

Apologies for Absence: R Butler

Officers Present K Durrani (Assistant Director (Technical)), J Nolan (Assistant Director (Environment & Neighbourhoods)) and A Hendry (Democratic Services Officer)

15. SUBSTITUTE MEMBERS (COUNCIL MINUTE 39 - 23.7.02)

The Panel noted there were no substitute members.

16. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

No declarations of interest were made.

17. NOTES OF THE LAST MEETING

The notes of the 28 October 2013 meeting were agreed as a correct record.

18. TERMS OF REFERENCE AND WORK PROGRAMME

The Panel noted their terms of reference and work programme.

19. NORTH ESSEX PARKING PARTNERSHIP - UPDATE

The Assistant Director, Environmental Services, Qasim Durrani, gave a short presentation (*slides attached*) on the background to the North Essex Parking Partnership. It was noted that the County Council had overall responsibility for parking and related matters before April 2012; this responsibility was delegated to the district councils under twelve separate agency agreements. At that time the overall deficit across the County was circa £1million. Essex County then cancelled the agency agreements in 2010. They set up a Review Group to look at their options for retrieving the deficit. They settled for a simpler two partnership option, splitting the partnership into North and South. Colchester Borough Council became the lead authority for the North Essex Parking Partnership (NEPP); Chelmsford being the lead authority for the South Partnership. This resulted in significant savings due to economies of scale of the operations as well as consolidation of a central support structure. It is estimated that the deficit will be overcome by the end of year three. To handle the governance they have set up a joint committee, with one representative from each district/borough along with the County Portfolio Holder (Councillor Waller

was our representative). They have a single website where people can report problems. This website would channel them into the north or south partnership depending on where the problem was.

Councillor Lea asked if we were saving any money with this new set up with NEPP. Mr Durrani said that that with NEPP we were indeed saving money compared to the previous contract we had with Vinci Parks Limited.

Councillor Lea then asked the members present what they thought about the parking situation outside schools and did they have any suggestions to alleviate this.

Councillor Spencer asked what we would have to pay if there was still a deficit at the end of the year. Mr Durrani said that he did not know yet; we would have to argue that out with the partnership. It should be spread out equally among the partner authorities.

Councillor Murray asked if our enforcement officers had a role in enforcing the removal or penalising of dangerously parked cars outside schools or was this the preserve of the Police. Mr Durrani replied that if they were parked on Zig-Zag or double yellow lines etc. then, yes, they can enforce the restrictions. The Police would have to take a view of other types of parking violations, for example obstruction of a footpath. It was noted that NEPP was purchasing a CCTV camera car to capture data and issue notices.

Councillor Murray then asked how a school could ask for enforcement action outside their premises. Councillor Waller said that the CCTV vehicle would start up this month, in response to the many complaints received from outside schools. If a councillor could let him know of any problems outside schools then he could pass them on to NEPP to get enforcement action.

Councillor Sartin noted that the caretaker at Roydon School now puts out cones outside the school, but this had a knock on effect by pushing the cars further up the road. She then asked if the County Portfolio Holder attended the NEPP meetings. Mr Durrani said that the Deputy Portfolio Holder tended to attend the meetings.

Councillor Brady commented that it had been reported in the press that other councils were making a lot of money from parking fines. Why were we running at a loss? Mr Durrani said that it was hard to identify the reasons, especially as we were running at a £1million deficit; we could argue that once we break even, that we have made £1million. Also, he noted that NEPP had a slightly more relaxed attitude to issuing parking fines and the government seemed to want an even more relaxed attitude. Councillor Waller noted that most stories of large amounts of money being made by local authorities referred to the Inner London Boroughs where they had parking meters and fixed cameras. We do not have these.

Councillor Girling asked if we owned any of the station car parks and if so did we get any money from them. Mr Durrani said that the Sainsbury's car park at Loughton belonged to Sainsbury's but we managed it and got a management fee from it. London Underground controlled the station car parks. Councillor Girling then asked if we retained any of the monies collected or was it shared with Harlow. He was told that it went to NEPP and then distributed centrally. This income was not ring-fenced.

Councillor Smith asked what resources do we have to monitor the NEPP contract. Mr Durrani said we had two officers to monitor the off street car parks, street furniture and performance of NEPP. We make about one million from our car parks; NEPP

collects the cash and this was monitored by us so as not to lose income. We also keep the machines under surveillance in case they needed servicing. We also monitor the pattern of fines issued so that we know where NEPP have been patrolling etc.

Councillor Jon Whitehouse commented that the public was confused as to who was responsible for parking enforcement. Also, there seems to be missing bits from some schemes such as junction protection and yellow lines and wondered why, especially as these could be cheap to implement. Mr Durrani noted that we had joined NEPP in October 2012 and in that time 14 schemes such as those he had referred to had been put into practice. When eventually NEPP makes a surplus, the money will then go back into these types of schemes.

Councillor Murray noted that we were one of the authorities to issue a large amount of on street penalty charge notices. Were we getting our fair share from these charges, as we seem to generate a lot of the income? Mr Durrani replied that was a valid point. He reminded Members that this was a County function and that they have to balance their books across the county and use their resources and income as they saw fit. Councillor Waller said that he pressed for more schemes in our area partly because we had a lot of Underground and Overground stations and related problems.

Councillor Sartin asked if this Council had any say on what alternative enforcement schemes could be put in place. Mr Durrani confirmed that we did have a say and we had objected to Pay and Display schemes in the past. As for Councillor's Murrays point; we could always have more enforcement, but it should be noted that the purpose of enforcement was for Highways Safety. There was also a cost to enforcement that would come back to us.

Councillor Girling asked if a cost benefit analysis had been carried out for the proposed CCTV camera car. Was it more efficient to have more cars rather than officers. Mr Durrani said this was a trial of the CCTV car. We will find out how cost effective this was at the end of the year and will report back on this.

Councillor Smith commented that she had found this discussion very interesting and hoped we had the opportunity to repeat this again. She would like to know how NEPP talked to its partners. Councillor Girling said he would like a short briefing paper on NEPP.

20. NOTES OF THE NEPP JOINT WORKING COMMITTEE

Councillor Waller, noted that these minutes were out of date and that there had been another meeting in October. As a member of the joint committee he noted that coming up would be discussions on surpluses and deficits and also on schemes to be put forward for consideration. They would also be asking for more liaisons at lower levels between NEPP and District officers. They would also be looking at the risk register and would review the recent call-in on the increasing costs in visitor parking permits. Councillor Smith noted that the County were trying to 'harmonise' the costs, this being the jargon word used at present. It was also noted that NEPP was to consider a media protocol to help with the coverage of any sensitive issues.

21. NOTES OF THE IAA MEMBER WORKING GROUP MEETING

Councillor Breare-Hall noted that these minutes had been reported on before.

22. LOCAL HIGHWAYS PANEL NOTES OF MEETING

It was noted that Councillors Jon Whitehouse and J Lea were both members of this Panel.

Councillor Murray said that they had heard that money had been taken away from this district and spent in another area. Was this true? Councillor Lea said that they were told that this was not the case. Councillor Whitehouse noted that some money had been moved to another area as it was going to be lost as it could not be used in time. Councillor Murray would like to know exactly what had been lost from our district, why and where it had gone to. Or if in fact, we had lost any money at all.

The Panel wanted to know about Section 106 money and how it could be used. Officers noted that this fell out of the purview of this Panel and recommended that the Chairman ask the Overview and Scrutiny Committee if they would consider what use could be made of Section 106 money, perhaps by receiving a report or presentation.

23. DRAFT MINUTES - LEISURE MANAGEMENT CONTRACT MONITORING BOARD

The Panel noted the minutes of the Leisure Management Contract Monitoring Board of 11 November 2013.

Councillor Chambers noted that a Portfolio Holder Advisory group had been set up on Leisure and would be having their first meeting on 13 January 2014.

The Panel also noted that Loughton seemed to be the only centre where the liaison group was thriving; but it was also the centre with the lowest energy efficiency rating.

24. REPORTS TO BE MADE TO THE NEXT MEETING OF THE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

The Panel wanted to ask the Overview and Scrutiny Committee to consider having a presentation or report on the uses of Section 106 money.

North Essex Parking Partnership

Background information

by Qasim (Kim) Durrani
Assistant Director



Before April 2012

- Parking enforcement (highways function) delivered across Essex by twelve separate enforcement agency agreements
- Policy responsibility with Essex County Council
- TROs, signs and lines maintenance in 4 area offices
- Growing deficit (circa £ 1 Million!)
- Essex County cancelled Agency agreements in 2010

Review Group Formed



Met over ten weeks in Summer 2010

Main changes

- New Agreement
 - Simpler commissioning agreement
 - Legal agreement with just two partnerships



North



& South



North Essex Parking Partnership



South Essex Parking Partnership

Changes

- NEPP new lead authority
 - All parking matters brought into one place
 - Maintenance of signs and lines passed to Partnerships
 - 5 out of 6 have joined Off-street enforcement



Business Case

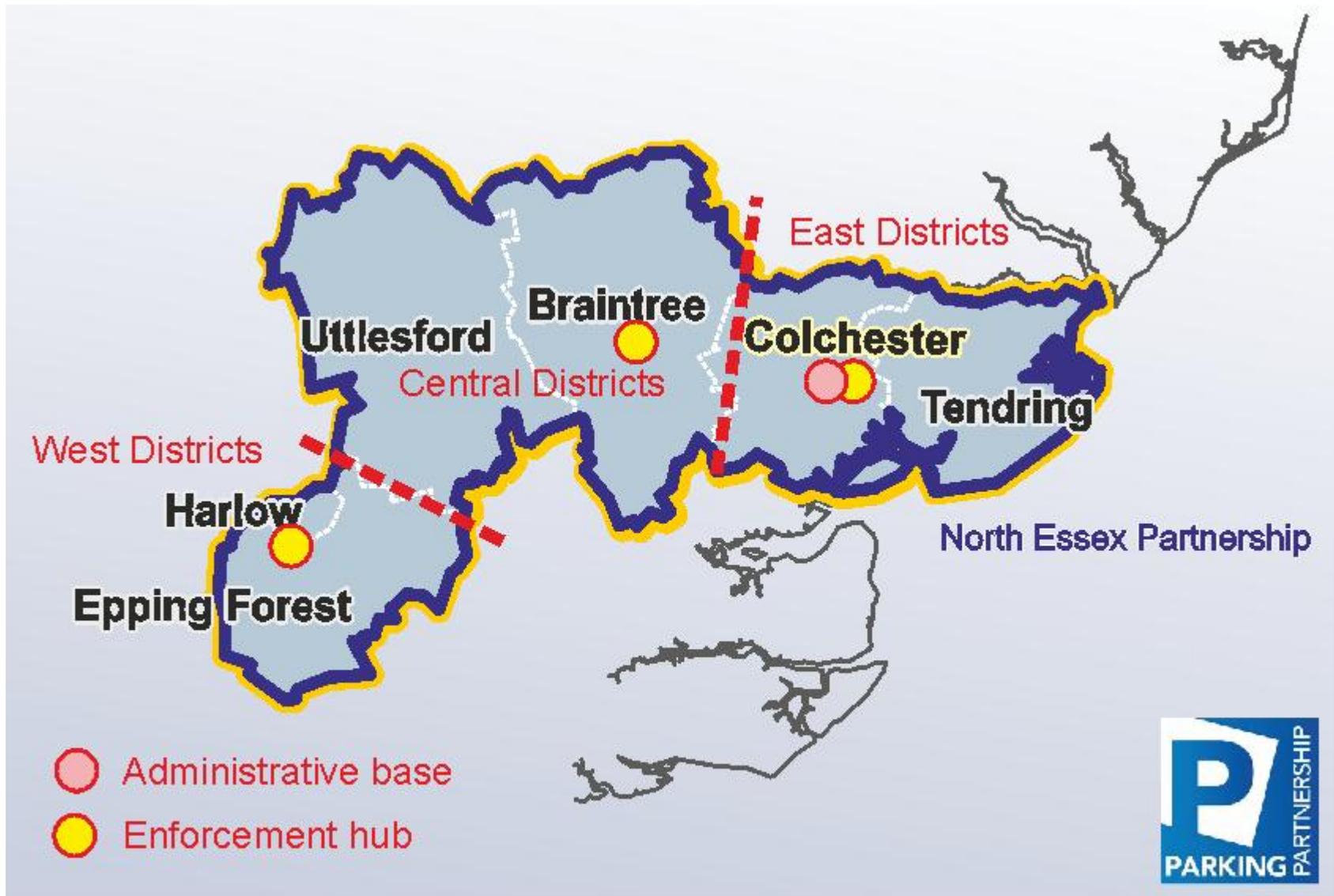
- Savings in non-salary costs
 - reduction in management, corporate overheads and central support costs – economies of scale
 - reduction in accommodation costs
 - reduction in ICT costs from rationalisation
- **Two transition years**
- **Deficit reduced in North to £200k in Year 1**
- **Deficit reduced to £64k in year 2;**
- **Break-even by year 3**

Governance

JOINT COMMITTEE

- Membership:
 - One member from each district/borough
 - County member representation
- Officers:
 - Managers report to Joint Committee
 - Lead authority employer





The Parking Partnership is a new organisation which, from 1 April 2011, brings together all street-based parking services in Essex.

The new service is council-run and is a partnership between Essex County Council and two lead councils: it is in two areas; the North Partnership is led by Colchester Council and the South Partnership by Chelmsford Council. The aim is to run parking enforcement to a fair and consistent standard in order to provide the same level of service but in a more efficient way.

The two Partnerships are responsible in each area for the on-street Civil Enforcement Officers (‘traffic wardens’); the parking enforcement process together with challenges to, and payments of, parking penalties (‘parking fines’) plus administration of the parking restrictions (‘yellow lines’) and the management of the scheme.



North Essex Parking Partnership

The North Essex Parking Partnership deals with all correspondence and payments for **Braintree, Colchester, Epping Forest, Harlow, Tendring** and **Uttlesford** with the prefixes:

**BX, CH, EG, EK, EO, ER, EZ
HL, ID, IE, IF, IG, IH & UF**



PAY

North Essex
Penalty Charge Notice

CHALLENGE

Click here to challenge a
Penalty Charge Notice

PERMITS

Click here to obtain
Parking Permits

POLICIES & PROCEDURES

Click here to view the councils policies & procedures



South Essex Parking Partnership

The South Essex Parking Partnership deals with all correspondence and payments for **Basildon, Brentwood, Castlepoint, Chelmsford, Maldon** and **Rochford** with the prefixes:

CF, CP, EB, EC, EI, EJ, RQ & XP



PAY

South Essex
Penalty Charge Notice

CHALLENGE

Click here to challenge a
Penalty Charge Notice

PERMITS

Click here to obtain
Parking Permits

North Essex Links

<p>➔ Braintree Portal (External Site) Click here to visit the Braintree portal</p>
<p>➔ Colchester Portal (External Site) Click here to visit the Colchester portal</p>
<p>➔ Epping Forest Portal (External Site) Click here to visit the Epping Forest portal</p>
<p>➔ Harlow Portal (External Site) Click here to visit the Harlow portal</p>
<p>➔ Tendring Portal (External Site) Click here to visit the Tendring portal</p>
<p>➔ Uttlesford Portal (External Site) Click here to visit the Uttlesford portal</p>

Contacting North Essex

The new North Essex Parking Partnership can be contacted at:

North Essex Parking Partnership
PO Box 5575, Town Hall
Colchester, CO1 1XQ

Email:

parking@colchester.gov.uk

Telephone:

Enquiries: 0845 045 1599 (01206 282316)
Automated Payments: 01206 507275

South Essex Links

<p>➔ Basildon Portal (External Site) Click here to visit the Basildon portal</p>
<p>➔ Brentwood Portal (External Site) Click here to visit the Brentwood portal</p>
<p>➔ Castlepoint Portal (External Site) Click here to visit the Castlepoint portal</p>
<p>➔ Chelmsford Portal (External Site) Click here to visit the Chelmsford portal</p>
<p>➔ Maldon Portal (External Site) Click here to visit the Maldon portal</p>
<p>➔ Rochford Portal (External Site) Click here to visit the Rochford portal</p>

Contacting South Essex

The new South Essex Parking Partnership can be contacted at:

South Essex Parking Partnership
Parking Services, Chelmsford Borough Council
Chelmsford, CM1 1JE

Email:

parking@chelmsford.gov.uk

Telephone:

Enquiries: 01245 606710
Automated Payments: 0845 002 0686

Conclusions

- The Joint Committee is operating effectively. The Partnership is on track to break even on the On Street account at the end of the current financial year.
- Historical backlog of signing and lining work has been completed.
- A number of TROs have been approved or implemented. In Epping Forest District 14 schemes have been approved. Out of which 4 have been completed and the remaining are being implemented. A further 6 schemes will be nominated at the next Committee meeting this week.

Questions ?



Membership number 4861



Holder of
52 Park Mark Awards
for Secured Parking



Shortlisted in the
Annual Report Awards
2009/10



Shortlisted in the
Living Streets
Award Category



Winner in the
Parking
Partnership
Awards Category

This page is intentionally left blank