

# ***Report to the Council***

**Committee:** Cabinet

**Date:** 1 November 2011

**Subject:** Safer, Greener and Highways Portfolio

**Portfolio Holder:** Councillor Penny Smith

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## **Recommending:**

**That the report of the Safer, Greener and Highways Portfolio Holder be noted.**

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## **Community Safety**

The Police Reform and Social Responsibility Act 2011 had now completed its passage through Parliament and is on the statute book. It is this Act which creates the new post of elected Police and Crime Commissioner (PCC) which will replace the current unelected Police Authorities. It had been originally intended for PCCs to be elected in May 2012 but the Act has delayed the elections until November 2012. Whilst this provides more time for the new arrangements to be developed, it will add to costs in 2012 through not being able to combine the PCC election with the normal local elections in May 2012 (see Cabinet report – 24 Oct 2011). As part of the local overview of the PCC there will be new Police and Crime Panels established, which will have elected Members from each of the councils in a force area. It will be the duty of that Panel to hold the PCC to account. There may also be longer term implications for Community Safety Partnerships which I will report back on as matters become clearer.

## **Parking**

On 20 October I attended a meeting of the North Essex Parking Partnership when the budget projections and performance were two of the issues discussed. It was pleasing to note that budget projections remain positive and that there is close working between the Partnership and this Council to ensure a smooth transition in September next year when our enforcement will transfer to the Partnership.

## **Parking Reviews**

There has been some local concerns expressed regarding ongoing delays to the parking review process. As matters currently stand I expect the parking review for Epping to have been completed and fully implemented by the end of this financial year (March 2012). This later than I would of hoped and will result in the completion of the Buckhurst Hill and Loughton/Broadway reviews being delayed further, since the Council has taken the decision to undertake these reviews sequentially.

I understand the frustration which these delays cause to local residents and ward Members. However, these reviews are very expensive and it is therefore only

possible to commence a review once the previous review has been completed and the costs fully identified. I think it is also important for Members to remember that this Council is not the Highways Authority and therefore has no statutory duty to undertake parking reviews or to fund them. This Council is continuing with them because it recognises the difficulties many local residents face when living near to commuter railheads, but it can only do so within the limited resources available to it.