

# **NORTH ESSEX PARKING PARTNERSHIP JOINT COMMITTEE FOR ON-STREET PARKING**

**21 June 2012 at 1.30pm  
Town Hall, Colchester**

Present: - Councillor Susan Barker (Uttlesford District Council)  
Councillor Penny Channer (Essex County Council)  
Councillor Jon Clempner (Harlow District Council)  
Councillor Martin Hunt (Colchester Borough Council)  
Councillor Derrick Louis (Essex County Council)  
Councillor Robert Mitchell (Braintree District Council)  
Councillor Gary Waller (Epping Forest District Council)

Apologies: - Councillor Pam Sambridge (Tendring District Council)  
Councillor Wendy Schmitt (Braintree District Council)

Also Present: - Ms. Lou Belgrove (Parking Partnership)  
Mr. Vicky Duff (Essex County Council)  
Mr. Qasim Durrani (Epping Forest District Council)  
Mr. Robert Judd (Colchester Borough Council)  
Mr. Joe McGill (Harlow District Council)  
Mr. Paul Partridge (Braintree District Council)  
Ms. Emma Powell (Parking Partnership)  
Mr. Andrew Taylor (Uttlesford District Council)  
Mr. Ian Taylor (Tendring District Council)  
Mr. Shane Taylor (Parking Partnership)  
Mr. Richard Walker (Parking Partnership)  
Mr. Matthew Young (Colchester Borough Council)

Mr. Steve Brown (Equita)  
Mr. Paul Sharp (Capita)  
Mr. Chris Willis (SEA)

Apologies: - Mr. Trevor Degville (Parking Partnership)  
Ms. Liz Saville (Essex County Council)

## **1. Chairman**

Councillor Susan Barker was appointed Chairman for the ensuing Municipal Year.

## **2. Deputy Chairman**

The appointment of Deputy Chairman was deferred until the next meeting pending advice from Essex County Council in regards to appointing Members who did not have full executive powers.

## **3. Urgent item**

Councillor Barker raised the issue of appointing Members with non-executive powers. It was

understood that non-executive members attending meetings could contribute to the discussions, but did not have any voting rights.

Councillor Mitchell said that Braintree's Leader, Councillor Graham Butland had given written consent to delegate full executive powers to Councillor Mitchell for the joint committee on parking.

Councillor Mitchell said that due to the large portfolio of Councillor Wendy Schmitt, it would not be possible for her to attend all the Joint Committee meetings, an issue that had been raised a year ago, but not addressed. To enable Braintree to fully participate in the decision making process it was important to have this issue resolved.

Members agreed that the issue would need to be resolved as soon as possible, to avoid any breach of the Local Government Act regulations 2000.

Councillor Louis said it was his understanding that it was not possible to delegate executive powers to non-executive members, but proposed that the North Essex Parking Partnership was amended to allow nominated members to be full members of the Joint Committee.

*RESOLVED* that officers would seek clarification from legal services at Essex County Council and notify Members of the outcome prior to the next meeting on 12 July 2012.

#### **Declarations of Interest**

Councillor Barker in respect of being a Member of Essex County Council declared a personal interest in the following items.

#### **4. Minutes**

*RESOLVED* that the minutes of the meeting held on 22 March 2012 was confirmed as a correct record, subject to the following amendment;

Essex County Council to be added to the list of partner authorities listed in paragraph 2 of minute 27.

With reference to outstanding Traffic Regulation Orders (TROs) as minuted in the final paragraph of minute 27, officers agreed to Councillor Barker's request to provide an update on outstanding TROs to the July meeting.

#### **5. Draft Accounts 2011/12**

Mr. Steve Heath (Colchester) presented the Draft (pre-audited) Accounts for 2011/12, to be approved by the Committee so that the Annual Return could be submitted for audit by the statutory deadline of 30 June 2012.

Mr. Heath confirmed to Mr. Durrani (Epping Forest) that the 2011/12 accounts did include a small surplus from Epping Forest, as held in the General Ledger.

Responding to Councillor Barker, Mr. Heath confirmed that in line with auditors requirements the publication of the accounts was on the Colchester Borough Council Website, and a copy of the accounts was sent to each partner authority.

In response to Councillor Clempner, Mr. Heath confirmed that a more detailed set of accounts

sat within the General Ledger. Mr. Walker said the accounts are a single fund and a breakdown of the fund could be provided to Councillor Clempner.

*RESOLVED* that the Committee;

- i) Considered and approved the pre-audit accounts for 2011/12.
- ii) Requested that the Draft Accounts 2011/12 are published on the Parking Partnership website.

## **6. The Annual Governance Statement**

Ms. Hayley McGrath (Colchester) presented the Annual Governance Statement 2012, to be approved by the Committee.

Ms. McGrath said the report informed the Committee on corporate governance issues and gave reassurance to the Committee that the Parking Partnership complies with the principles of the Governance Framework.

Ms. McGrath informed the Committee of the three areas of work where actions are required to ensure appropriate and cost effective services are delivered, and the actions taken.

Ms. McGrath said the Audit Report 2011/12 and the Risk Register would be reported to the Committee at the next meeting.

*RESOLVED* that the Committee;

- i) Approved the 2011/12 Annual Governance Statement for the North Essex Parking Partnership.
- ii) Agreed to the positive completion of Section 2 of the Annual Return for 2011/12.
- iii) Agreed to the actions highlighted in the statement.

## **7. CCTV Car – Options report**

Ms. Emma Powell (Parking Partnership) introduced the report on CCTV Car options, setting out the reasons for considering this as a solution to the difficulty of foot patrolling 'hotspot' areas e.g. outside schools, a timely and costly approach.

Mr. Steve Brown (Equita), assisted by Mr. Paul Sharp (Equita) and Mr. Chris Willis (SEA) – The vehicle supplier and operator - gave a presentation on CCTV Cars as a means of enforcing Traffic Regulation Orders (TROs) using the latest mobile enforcement technology, and in line with the process set-out in the report.

CCTV Cars are used to enforce TROs at Basildon, Plymouth and Bristol. A benchmarking exercise determined that the largest proportion of Parking Control Notices (PCN) issues is paid at the discounted rate, and on this basis, Equita was offering to provide the facility, receiving in income, £17.50 (half the discounted rate of £35 per PCN) for each PCN issued.

A demonstration vehicle was available for Members and officers to view at the close of the meeting.

Mr. Walker circulated to Members a copy of a recent positive newspaper article on this subject, published in response to the item published on the agenda and to be discussed at the meeting.

In response to Councillor Mitchell, Mr. Brown said CCTV Cars were more effective in areas where there was 'no parking' e.g. outside schools, designated as such due to the health and safety reasons. Trying to enforce on double yellow lines was more difficult, because of the law enabling drivers to stop to load/unload, to stop to allow passengers to disembark and for disabled drivers to park. Mr. Shane Taylor (Parking Partnership) said this would be beneficial in areas where there is a safety issue in a dangerous location.

Mr. I. Taylor (Tendring) expressed caution with CCTV Cars for parking enforcement, saying it can bring negative publicity, and in some districts may wish to pre-publicize patrols outside schools to get a balance and not be seen as too heavy handed.

Councillor Barker said the policy needed to be drafted setting-out where and when, e.g. parking outside schools outside of school time. Mr. McGill (Harlow) said the policy would need to clarify the position for unmarked Police Cars, Doctors and Health Visitors, and in response to Councillor Waller, Councillor Barker said the policy would need to stipulate the control routes and frequency of visits.

Councillor Barker said a communication package including a positive press release on the introduction of this scheme would be essential. Ms. Vicky Duff (Essex County Council) informed Members that there would be a reluctance to increase road signage to inform drivers that CCTV parking enforcement is in operation.

Mr. Sharp (Equita) explained to Members that the business case for the implementation of a CCTV Car was based on the vehicle covering the whole of the North Essex area, and if reduced, may not be financially viable. Mr. Walker (Parking Partnership) believed this scheme would need to cover the whole of North Essex, it needed to be all or nothing.

Councillor Hunt said he was in favour of moving forward with the scheme.

Councillor Clempner was broadly in favour of the scheme, but wanted more financial information to be able to make an informed judgement.

Councillor Waller said he would like to see more information about the procurement process.

*RESOLVED* that the Committee;

- i) Whilst happy in principle with the use of CCTV cars to enforce TROs, felt further information was needed to make a more informed decision.
- ii) Requested a cost benefit analysis of the presented solution against a self-funded solution, and more detail on the procurement process and other companies providing this service.

## **8. Harwich Quay - Concession to Parking Tariff**

Mr. Walker (Parking Partnership) introduced the report asking the Committee to consider the financial and parking aspects of the parking facility at Harwich Quay, and whether to offer a concession at the two Pay and Display machines in the lay-by. The concession brings the tariff in line with pay and display machines owned by Tendring District Council on a nearby adjacent site.

Mr. I. Taylor (Tendring) said the request was from Harwich Town Council. The situation was unique and very confusing to drivers parking their vehicle. The concession aligns the tariffs in both parking areas and removes any uncertainty.

Mr. Walker (Parking Partnership) said the concession could cost the Parking Partnership up to £10,000 per annum.

Councillor Mitchell said if Harwich Town Council want a tariff concession, they should pay for it, otherwise withdraw the concession. Councillors Clempner and Waller concurred with Councillor Mitchell. Whilst Councillor Hunt also concurred with Councillor Mitchell he did not wish this to be perceived as a negative reaction towards Tendring District.

*RESOLVED* that the Joint Committee;

i) Considered the parking and financial aspects of the parking facility at The Quay, Harwich, and decided not to offer a concession to the two Pay and Display machines at Harwich Quay (TWO voted FOR, and TWO voted AGAINST) The Chairman having the casting vote voted AGAINST.

## **9. Operations Report for On-Street Parking**

Ms. Lou Belgrove and Ms. Emma Powell (Parking Partnership) presented the Operations Report, an update on the Parking Partnership on-street operational issues since the last meeting, including updates on recruitment, accommodation, performance, backroom operations and the future.

The recruitment process has proved difficult given that Enforcement Officers require a wide range of skills, but progress was now being made, with 47 of the 63 posts now filled. The posts would be sited at Harlow (18), Braintree (18) and Colchester (27).

In order that the Parking Partnership are fully aware of the public's comments on various schemes e.g. MiPermit, Mr. M. Young asked all officers to ensure all feedback, negative and positive, is relayed back to the Partnership.

Ms. Belgrove confirmed that Ms. Emma Day would be covering her maternity leave from the end of July 2012.

*RESOLVED* that the Committee noted the update and progress on the Parking Partnership operations for On-Street Parking, since the last Committee meeting.

## **10. Parking Partnership – Annual Report**

Mr. Richard Walker (Parking Partnership) presented the draft Annual Report that provided a review of the Parking Partnership operational service for 2011/12, to be published within three months of the close of the 2011/12 accounts.

The report covers the whole operation and sets the scene in a local context, but using best practice guidelines.

Councillor Barker thanked Mr. Walker for the hard work that had gone into producing the Annual Report, but felt the name of the Group Manager and other officers should be included within the text.

Mr. Walker confirmed to Councillor Barker that a glossary of acronyms could be found on the final page of the report.

Councillor Barker asked for a 'key' to be added to the graph on page 19 of the report, 'PCNs issued by type', and the graph showing the number of payments made by type on page 20 of the report needed to tally with the total number of issued PCNs shown on table one of page 21 of the report.

Mr. Walker confirmed to Councillor Barker that a copy of the Annual Report would be forwarded to all partner authorities.

*RESOLVED* that the Committee considered and approved the draft Annual Report for publication pending the agreed changes.