

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

20 June 2013 at 12.00pm

Rowan House, Sheepen Road, Colchester

Executive Members Present:-

Councillor Susan Barker (Uttlesford District Council)
Councillor Phil Waite (Harlow District Council)
Councillor Martin Hunt (Colchester Borough Council)
Councillor Robert Mitchell (Braintree District Officer)
Councillor Gary Waller (Epping Forest District Council)

Non-Executive Members Present:-

Councillor Eddie Johnson (Essex County Council)

Apologies: -

Councillor Derrick Louis (Essex County Council)
Councillor Nick Turner (Tendring District Council)

Also Present: -

Ms. Lou Belgrove (Parking Partnership)
Mr. Trevor Degville (Parking Partnership)
Mr. Qasim Durrani (Epping Forest District Council)
Mr. Steve Heath (Colchester Borough Council)
Mr. Robert Judd (Colchester Borough Council)
Mr. Joe McGill (Harlow District Council)
Ms. Hayley McGrath (Colchester Borough Council)
Mr. Paul Partridge (Braintree District Council)
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)

Apologies:-

Ms. Liz Saville (Essex County Council)

1. Chairman

Councillor Mitchell (Braintree District Council) was appointed Chairman for the ensuing Municipal Year.

Councillor Mitchell thanked Councillor Barker for her Chairmanship of the Joint Committee for the past two years.

2. Deputy Chairman

Councillor Hunt (Colchester Borough Council) was appointed Deputy Chairman for the ensuing Municipal Year.

3. Declarations of Interest

Councillor Barker, in respect of being a Member of Essex County Council, declared a non-

pecuniary interest in all following items.

4. Minutes

RESOLVED that the Joint Committee confirmed the minutes of the meeting held on 14 March 2013 as a correct record.

In response to Mr. I. Taylor (Tendring), Mr. Walker (Parking Partnership) said in respect of minute 38 and the report on Harwich Quay, this work is in hand, will be completed shortly and presented to the Joint Committee for approval.

Regarding Minute 35 (resolution iii) and 'Forecasted Financial Position for 2012-13', Mr. Walker (Parking Partnership) agreed to draft a letter (for the Chairman's signature) to the Secretary of State for Transport in respect of the high postal costs involved in complying with statutory guidance.

RESOLVED that the Joint Committee confirmed the minutes of the meeting of the Traffic Regulations Sub-Committee held on 10 April 2013 as a correct record, subject to the following amendment, minute 22, resolution iii) 'Uttlesford – Station Road, Great Dunmow (10015) – Agreed to proceed' to read 'Uttlesford – Chelmsford Road, Great Dunmow (10015) – Agreed to proceed'.

In respect of minute 25 and the opportunity to reduce advertising costs, Mr. Walker (Parking Partnership) confirmed to the Joint Committee that the Parking Partnership had partially integrated Essex County Council procurement into their own process and created the desired savings. Full implementation was expected in two years time.

5. Operational Report

Ms. Lou Belgrove (Parking Partnership) presented the Operational Report for On-Street Parking, an update on the operational issues since the last meeting, including updates on recruitment, accommodation, performance and the Business Unit (Back-office).

Ms. Belgrove said the consultation process noted in paragraph 2.1.3 of the report was now complete with a new structure in place from 1 July 2013. The restructure has resulted in two voluntary redundancies and four compulsory redundancies. In cost terms the restructure will see a substantial reduction in staff salary costs.

Councillor Mitchell thanked officers for completing this substantial piece of work and hoped that the changes will be reflected by improved future performance results.

Mr. Walker agreed to liaise with Client Officers to provide data within performance graphs in a clearer more understandable format. Councillor Barker said the current information would have more meaning if cumulative trend lines were added.

Members requested further information to be provided on Bank Holiday enforcement so a more informed judgement could be made.

Ms. Belgrove and Mr. Walker said the CCTV Car Procurement process was now complete. Mr. Walker explained that during the 2012 CCTV demonstration Equita had offered to provide the facility and receive in income £17.50 per Penalty Charge Notice (PCN), half the discounted rate of £35 per PCN. He added that as part of the tender process this figure had now reduced and was set at £14 per PCN. It was confirmed that the CCTV Car was due to commence in

September 2013 (the Joint Lease will be for a period of one year, with a detailed options appraisal carried out during the year of operation) and would primarily be used in the 'KEEP CLEAR' areas outside schools, but will also be used in areas where there are Loading Restrictions, Clearways (rural), Bus Stops and Taxi Ranks. Mr. Walker confirmed that there will be an extensive media programme to sit alongside the introduction and commencement of the CCTV Car.

The high volume of incoming and outgoing letters continued to be a concern. A web-based automatic letter response facility was to be used on a nine month trial basis (at a cost equivalent to a 6 month trial period), and although it requires personalisation of text, is anticipated to increase output by 50% and therefore reduce the backlog, a major concern given it is currently running at 9 weeks. Individual staff caseloads are being monitored.

It was commented that the trend in the number of PCNs challenged is increasing, often a delay in paying tactic by the challenger. The discount rate for early payment holds if the PCN issued is challenged. A benchmarking exercise is currently being undertaken to determine if this is a national or regional trend. It was also confirmed that the trend in incoming telephone calls is increasing as a consequence of increased challenges, averaging 150 calls per day, though the figure is much higher on the days immediately following a bank holiday. Ms. Belgrove said the number of PCNs issued is split approximately 60%-40% for On and Off Street parking respectively.

In respect of MiPermit Members requested a detailed briefing note to provide to their local members details of the ticketless option with a cost benefit analysis. Mr. I. Taylor (Tendring) informed the Joint Committee that since the introduction of MiPermit to car parks in the Tendring District there has been a remarkable year on year growth in take-up.

RESOLVED that the Committee

- i) Noted the Operational Report for On-Street Parking.
- ii) Requested that performance graphs contained within the report(s) more clearly illustrate the data being reported.
- iii) Requested a further update at the next meeting on Bank Holiday enforcement, including the number of tickets issued by district (in comparison with non Bank Holiday days), and the number of challenges relating to notices issued on Bank Holidays (in comparison with non Bank Holiday days).
- iv) Requested periodic feedback from the Operations Manager on CCTV Car 'hotspots'.
- v) Requested a briefing note on details of MiPermit, plus a cost benefit analysis to circulate to local members.

6. The Parking Partnership Risk Management Strategy and Risk Register

Ms. Hayley McGrath, Risk and Resilience Manager at Colchester Borough Council presented the Risk Management Strategy and Risk Register.

Councillor Mitchell said it would be helpful if in future, that the year end results in terms of risk occurrence and severity of impact were illustrated as a risk matrix.

In response to Mr. I. Taylor (Tendring), Ms. McGrath said the risk (1.3) 'There's a change in political will of a partner that leads to the partner withdrawing from the partnership' recognises that the partnership has a political make-up and as such a partner withdrawing could affect the NEPP going forward. Mr. A Taylor (Uttlesford) said a consequence of this happening will be an increase in cost to the remaining partners.

Councillor Hunt said a reason for a partner withdrawing from the partnership may not necessarily be for political reasons and suggested the word political was removed from the risk description.

RESOLVED that the Joint Committee;

- i) Endorsed the Risk Management Strategy for 2013-14 and noted the risk register for the Parking Partnership.
- ii) Requested future risk results are illustrated in the form of a risk matrix.
- iii) Agreed that the word 'political' was removed from the description of the risk 1.3.

7. Annual Governance Statement

Ms. Hayley McGrath, Risk and Resilience Manager at Colchester Borough Council presented the Annual Governance Statement.

Ms. McGrath explained that the Annual Governance Statement Annual Return forms part of the Draft Accounts 2012-13 to be signed off by the Chairman of the Joint Committee, and to then be submitted for audit by the Statutory Deadline of 30 June 2013, and Members were asked to approve the 2012-13 Annual Governance Statement before being signed-off by the Chairman.

Councillor Mitchell asked that in future under section 2 of the Annual Governance Statement, the wording for item 3 was amended to read "We have taken all reasonable steps".

It was acknowledged that members of the Joint Committee no longer needed to provide signed declarations due to a change to the different accounts preparation requirements for these bodies. The Parking Partnership Joint Committee was now classed as smaller relevant bodies and as such Members are not required to register interests, whereas Councils (districts) such as those of the partnership have more detailed disclosure requirements and as such require such signed disclosures to be made. Whilst Members felt that as part of good governance signed declarations should still be provided, Councillor Mitchell said it will be for members to declare interests under item 'Declarations of Interest' at the commencement of each meeting.

RESOLVED that the Joint Committee;

- i) Noted and approved the 2012-13 Annual Governance Statement for the North Essex Parking Partnership.
- ii) Agreed the completion of Section 2 of the Annual Return for 2012-13.
- iii) Agreed the actions highlighted in the statement.

8. Draft Accounts 2012-13

Mr. Steve Heath, Finance Manager at Colchester Borough Council presented the Draft Account 2012-13.

Members requested that a link is provided from the Colchester Webpage highlighting the draft accounts, to the appropriate Parking Partnership website page.

Mr. Heath confirmed that the assets of the Parking Partnership in districts other than Colchester, do not appear on the Colchester District Asset Register, and are held within the asset register of the appropriate district.

RESOLVED that the Joint Committee;

- i) Considered and approved the Draft Accounts 2012-13 report and supporting information, and approved the pre-audited accounts for 2012-13 so that the Annual Return can be submitted for audit by the statutory deadline of 30 June 2013.
- ii) Requested that a link is provided from the Colchester Webpage highlighting the draft accounts, to the Parking Partnership website.

9. Potential On-Street Pay and Display Sites

Mr. Trevor Degville, Parking Partnership introduced the report on the Potential On-Street Pay and Display sites, saying the purpose of the report was to gauge from Members whether to progress with Pay and Display at the sites noted in report.

Members were unhappy with making a decision on whether to proceed with Pay and Display at the suggested sites without undertaking local consultation, that local members needed to consider the proposals and subsequent impact of implementation, before the Joint Committee member(s) made an informed judgement.

Whilst Members felt it was appropriate to take forward the principal of further Pay and Display Sites, that officers should explore further these types of schemes, they would not agree arbitrarily to approve any site implementations without local consultation and feedback.

Mr. A. Taylor (Uttlesford) said that this form of increasing income was in the Parking Partnership Business Plan, therefore if it was not agreed to go forward with the proposals the Joint Committee will need to make other choices to avoid a budget deficit.

Mr. I. Taylor (Tendring) said Members at Tendring did not feel it is fair for the Joint Committee to agree to implement any Pay and Display schemes without appropriate local consultation, and what may look like leapfrogging the Traffic Regulation Order process to raise revenue was a potential minefield.

Councillor Waller (Epping Forest) said that if residents considered that the introduction of a Pay and Display Site would help to resolve a local parking issue, then there would be no difficulty. However, if the perception was that a Site had been put forward primarily as a means of increasing income for the Partnership, such a proposal would be most unlikely to gain acceptance.

Mr. Walker (Parking Partnership) said that a breakdown of Pay and Display income and expenditure by district was not available, that the information was held within one budget for the whole of North Essex.

RESOLVED that the Joint Committee;

- i) Deferred the report and subsequent decisions to be taken on the proposals for potential On-Street Pay and Display sites.
- ii) Requested the Client Officers to explore these schemes through local consultation and to feed back this information to the Client Officers meeting by 3 October 2013.
- iii) Requested a report to the meeting on 31 October 2013 outlining the benefits of introducing Pay and Display to On-Street sites, with a cost benefit analysis and financial modelling of the schemes.

10. Traffic Regulation Orders

Mr. Walker (Parking Partnership) informed the Joint Committee of the details of the two Traffic Regulation Order (TRO) decisions made under delegated powers.

RESOLVED that the Joint Committee noted the two TRO decisions made under delegated powers.

11. Finance Report

Mr. Walker (Parking Partnership) presented the financial monitor providing the Joint Committee with an overview of the Partnership's finances in the first months of the 2013-14 financial year.

Mr. J. Taylor asked if the Parking Partnership could provide a comparison report of the 2012-13 Outturn position for the North Essex Parking Partnership and South Essex Parking Partnership to the next Joint Committee meeting.

RESOLVED that the Joint Committee;

- i) Noted the current financial position of the Parking Partnership.
- ii) Requested a financial report to the next Joint Committee meeting illustrating a comparison between the 2012-13 Outturn position for the North and South Parking Partnerships.

12. Forward Plan

RESOLVED that the Joint Committee noted the current Forward Plan.