

CIVIL PARKING ENFORCEMENT TASK AND FINISH GROUP

29 November 2017

Minutes of the Civil Parking Enforcement Task and Finish Group held in the Council Chamber, Town Hall, Bexhill-on-Sea on Wednesday 29 November 2017 at 10:00am.

Members of the Task and Finish Group Present:

Councillor A.K. Azad (in part)
Councillor R.C. Carroll (in part)
Councillor S.H. Earl
Councillor S.D. Elford
Councillor K.M. Field
Councillor J. Potts
Councillor C.J. Saint
Councillor G.F. Stevens

Other Councillors Present:

Councillors Lord Ampthill (in part) and I.R. Hollidge

Invited:

James Harris	–	East Sussex County Council (in part)
Michael Horton	–	East Sussex County Council
Andrew Keer	–	East Sussex County Council (in part)
Carl Valentine	–	East Sussex County Council
David Weeks	–	East Sussex County Council

Officers Present:

Dr Anthony Leonard	–	Executive Director of Business Operations
Lisa Hayward-Bartlett	–	Operations Team Leader
Julie Hollands	–	Democratic Services Officer

CPE17/23. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

(1)

An apology for absence was received from Councillor B. Kentfield.

CPE17/24. MINUTES OF LAST THE MEETING

(2)

The Minutes of the last meeting held on 1 November 2017 were agreed.

CPE17/25. PRESENTATION ON EAST SUSSEX COUNTY COUNCIL'S PLANS FOR HIGHWAY IMPROVEMENTS/CHANGES PARTICULARLY IN BEXHILL AND AROUND THE WHOLE OF THE DISTRICT

(4)

The Chairman welcomed James Harris – Assistant Director, Economy and Andrew Keer – Transport Planning Manager from East Sussex County Council (ESCC) to the meeting. James Harris proceeded to

outline ESCC's infrastructure plans for highway improvements, as well as completed and future transport projects particularly in Bexhill and around the whole of the district.

The following key points were noted:

- **Policy Context:** Delivering Rother's transport infrastructure to support economic growth was underpinned by Local Transport Plan / Implementation Plans, Rother's Local Plan and Infrastructure Delivery, South East Local Enterprise Partnership which secured funding for projects across the south east, and East Sussex Growth Strategy which considered all local authority / partner plans across the county.
- **Funding and Principal Investment Sources:** The following funding opportunities were available to deliver strategic and local transport improvements, these included: ESCC capital funding allocations, development contributions and Community Infrastructure Levy (important to work with developers), Local Enterprise Partnerships local fund growth available until 2019 (old European Union funding) and government funding bids and external funding providers.
- **Strategic Projects Delivered:** Bexhill and Hastings Link Road and North East Bexhill Gateway Road.
- **Local Transport Projects Delivered:** Pedestrian improvements in Devonshire Road, Marina and Sackville roundabout in Bexhill; coastal cycleway "Connect 2" and Bexhill promenade; Rye Harbour Road cycle route; and the roll-out of real time passenger information boards at various locations across the district.
- **Planned Strategic and Local Transport Projects:** The North Bexhill Access Road and starting in 2018-2021, the Bexhill and Hastings Movement and Access Package which incorporated cycling / walking, public transport, traffic management and public realm improvements and infrastructure projects. During 2018/19 traffic management improvements were planned for London Road in Bexhill and bus priority measures on the A259 between Ravenside and St. Leonards.
- **CPE and future transport infrastructure delivery in Rother:** ESCC were experienced in delivering transport schemes where CPE was adopted. CPE would benefit all infrastructure improvement schemes in Rother. Successful schemes had been delivered in Lewes and Eastbourne (both authorities had adopted CPE). Amendments to current Traffic Regulation Orders and parking schemes would be considered for future projects.

Following the presentation, Members had an opportunity to put forward questions and the following comments were raised / discussed:

- Important to improve access to commercial / retail parks along the A259 to encourage economic growth.
- Complaints had been received regarding narrow access from the west (Battle) at The Ridge / Queensway roundabout. Backlogged traffic accumulated due to cars not being able to turn right down Queensway. ESCC advised that the Queensway/A21 link road was currently under construction and it was anticipated that once

completed traffic congestion would be alleviated at the junction. Reassurance was given that traffic movement along this route and the surrounding area including rat-run routes to local villages would be kept under review.

- Concern was raised regarding congestion at the London Road / Beeching Road traffic light junction. ESCC agreed that the current layout was challenging however this junction would be closely monitored.
- All future Bexhill traffic management / parking design schemes would be presented to the Bexhill Town Centre Steering Group.

The Chairman thanked James Harris for his presentation and Andrew Keer for attending the meeting.

RESOLVED: That the presentation be noted.

(Councillors S.H. Earl, S.D. Elford and K.M. Field each declared a personal interest in this matter in so far as they are elected Members of East Sussex County Council and in accordance with the Members' Code of Conduct remained in the room during consideration thereof).

CPE17/26. **EAST SUSSEX COUNTY COUNCIL'S RESPONSE TO ISSUES**
(5) **RAISED AT THE PREVIOUS MEETING**

The Chairman welcomed Michael Horton – Project Manager, Parking, Carl Valentine – Head of Transport and Operational Services and David Weeks – Team Manager, Parking from East Sussex County Council (ESCC) to the meeting.

As agreed at the last meeting, ESCC had investigated the issues raised by the Task and Finish Group. The following was confirmed and noted:

- **Etchingham:** to remove the pay and display zone (P&D) in the High Street outside the local shop (Etchingham Stores) and retain as time limited parking (TLP) only, and extend the (P&D) zone to the yellow lines at the war memorial location. ESCC had investigated and advised that the (TLP) outside the shop stretched across two separate private entrances. Therefore it was concluded that siting a P&D machine in this location would be unnecessary. Motorists were choosing to park in the adjacent unrestricted section by the war memorial location rather than the TLP bays which were predominantly left empty. ESCC recommended either extending the TLP bays as part of the move to P&D or leave the restriction unaltered (retain TLP without P&D).
- **Rye:** to relocate the loading bay in Ferry Road nearer to the commercial premises (other side of the railway line). ESCC had investigated and advised that double yellow lines were currently on the approach to the level crossing from the town centre side, supporting the one-way system and agreed it would be difficult to locate a loading bay in that vicinity. Alternatively it was suggested that a loading bay be located in Cinque Ports Street (outside the Antiques shop). Councillor Stevens supported this alternative.

- **Battle Hill:** concern that permit holder or TLP bays could lead to additional displacement along Marley Lane and Norman Close. ESCC had investigated both locations and felt that a permit holder scheme in Marley Lane would not be necessary as the road was already protected by double yellow lines and many of the properties had off-street parking facilities. Norman Close also benefited from an 'anti-commuter' restriction (a single yellow line operating between 9:00am to 10:00am Monday to Friday). It was therefore suggested not to extend the permit scheme further at this stage. Councillor Field agreed that any displacement issues identified should be considered during the first annual review.
- **Conservation Areas:** appropriate locations for P&D machines in conservation areas. Options for locating P&D machines would be considered throughout CPE project phase.

Members were reminded that once CPE was introduced, annual reviews would be held to consider restrictions, amendments and adjustments could then be made.

The Chairman advised that he was aware there were still concerns regarding the proposed scheme in Burwash. He would be attending the next Rother Association of Local Councils meeting in January to discuss CPE. Any issues raised would be reported back to the Task and Finish Group and ESCC.

The Chairman thanked ESCC officers for the update.

RESOLVED: That East Sussex County Council's update information be noted.

CPE17/27. **STAKEHOLDER EVIDENCE GATHERING**
(6)

The Chairman welcomed everyone to the meeting and introductions were made. Representatives from the following organisations were in attendance: Battle & District Chamber of Commerce, Battle Town Council, Bexhill Chamber of Commerce, Bexhill Forward, Bexhill Old Town Preservation Society, Bexhill Wheelers, Federation of Small Businesses, Hastings and Rother Disability Forum, Rother Neighbourhood Watch, Rye Conservation Society and Rye Town Council.

At a previous meeting, the Civil Parking Enforcement Task and Finish Group (CPET&FG) agreed that an appropriate method of engagement on Civil Parking Enforcement (CPE) was to invite a select group of relevant stakeholders from across the district to an evidence gathering event. It was also agreed that all key stakeholders be sent a CPE briefing paper, along with three questions to consider prior to attending the engagement event. Larger organisations had been asked to comment on the three questions only and respond in writing; responses were appended to the report at Appendix 2.

The three questions were:

- 1) Should we ask East Sussex County Council to apply to the Department for Transport to adopt Civil Parking Enforcement?
- 2) Would you rather have Civil Parking Enforcement introduced as early as possible to deal with infringements on the current parking restrictions and thereafter make changes where necessary around the District? Or would you rather identify all of the areas of concern along with the best solutions, consult on these and then present an application following the amendments? This will be a much longer process, in the order of years, as there would be far more amendments to consult on prior to the submission of a Civil Parking Enforcement application.
- 3) Is there a preference for businesses and residents to subsidise free parking through local taxation or to promote 'the user pays' and introduce parking charges to cover the cost of the scheme?

East Sussex County Council (ESCC) provided a brief background and introduction on CPE, the main parking concerns in Rother, as well as the changes that would happen once CPE was introduced.

The Chairman referred to the questions and during the discussion the following salient points were noted:

- it could take approximately 18 to 24 months to apply for and implement a CPE scheme;
- once CPE was implemented enforcement proceedings would start;
- the CPE application process involved ESCC completing detailed studies across the district, as well as consultation exercises with the public / relevant organisations where all forms of parking opportunities would be considered e.g. road markings, payment machines, permits schemes etc. It would be important to design a fair scheme that was self-financing;
- each parking restriction including the supporting / existing Traffic Regulation Orders (TROs) would need to be confirmed and incorporated into the CPE scheme including motorcycle parking facilities;
- enforcement would discourage inappropriate parking in designated spaces e.g. cars in motorcycle bays etc.;
- business / traders, residents and visitor parking permits would be allocated. Permit tariffs would be reviewed to ensure they were cost effective, viable and supported self-financing. Stringent guidelines would be followed and usage parking history sought prior to allocation;
- it was suggested that reduced rate business permits be allocated for Council car parks;
- it was anticipated that an enforcement presence would assist traffic flow in approach roads / high streets and alleviate gridlock issues along heavy trafficked areas;
- additional parking for rail users might be required if the HSR service was implemented at Rye and Bexhill;

- it was understood Sussex Police would continue to enforce dangerous parking infringements, subject to available resources in the run-up to CPE;
- if charging was introduced incremental / linear charging would be applied to all pay and display machines across the district (e.g. 20p for 30 minutes, therefore 10p would allow 15 minutes of parking). All machines would be set at the minimum charge and would facilitate cashless, contactless or smartphone / app payments. Machines would not provide change;
- all yellow lines on the highway within the district would be enforced under CPE. Some yellow / white lines required repainting; refreshing faded lines was a fundamental part of CPE application to Department for Transport. Similarly with any parking restriction signs;
- CPE would enforce traffic contraventions on zebra crossings, bus lanes, junction boxes and loading bays etc.;
- request that all car park signage be reviewed and updated, where necessary particularly long-stay car parks e.g. Wainwright Road, Bexhill and Gibbets Marsh, Rye;
- pedestrian access / footpath to Wainwright Road car park required significant maintenance especially to surface condition, vegetation growth and lighting. Rother did not own this land and to date had been unsuccessful obtaining permission to upgrade;
- inconsiderate parking against the flow of traffic created visibility issues. Request that safety advice / education programmes be created to promote local and safe parking schemes;
- important to discourage parking permit abuse e.g. all-day parking. ESCC confirmed that time restrictions could be introduced and adaptations / adjustments made to suit specific locations;
- charging would be implemented to town centre echelon parking spaces along East Parade;
- occupied overnight parked vehicles would be investigated by ESCC's Traveller Liaison Officer. CPE enforcement would only apply if vehicles were parked illegally. The TROs would need to be changed to prevent overnight sleeping in vehicles, as the current restriction was only under a byelaw;
- important not to constrict the economic well-being of the district;
- charging might not be well-received by the public; people do not want to pay for car parking;
- businesses in Battle High Street were supportive of parking restrictions, as turnover was guaranteed;
- metered tickets were a visual incentive that aided enforcement and encouraged higher turnover;
- important that parking tariffs were affordable (related to local wages);
- businesses would benefit from competitive charges;
- the Council's disabled parking permit (orange badge) system would operate alongside the CPE scheme;
- strict enforcement (removal of badge) would apply to misused disabled badges;
- specific controls could be allocated to offer free parking overnight in taxi ranks or loading bays;
- park and ride schemes were costly, generally not economically viable and predominately only effective in larger towns/cities;

- it was suggested that more off-street parking be provided;
- all fees and charges would be annually reviewed; and
- parking displacement would be monitored and annually reviewed.

The Executive Director of Business Operations advised that the CPET&FG would be presenting their findings and recommendations to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee on 19 March 2018, for referral to Cabinet on 9 April 2018 and then full Council on 21 May 2018. He also advised that Wealden District Council were considering adopting CPE. Economies of scale would be realised should both authorities request ESCC to implement CPE simultaneously. Therefore timescales might need to be adjusted.

The Chairman thanked all stakeholders for their contributions and attending the meeting.

It was agreed that all written responses received after today's meeting be collated and emailed to Members before the next meeting.

RESOLVED: That all written responses be collated and emailed to Members before the next meeting.

(Councillor S.D. Elford declared a personal interest in this matter in so far as he is Vice-President of Bexhill Chamber Commerce and in accordance with the Members' Code of Conduct remained in the room during consideration thereof).

CPE17/28.
(7)

SUMMARY OF DISCUSSION/ACTIONS ARISING FROM STAKEHOLDER EVIDENCE GATHERING

The Civil Parking Enforcement Task and Finish Group discussed the main issues identified from the interviews and agreed the following were key points to be considered and included within the recommendations / report presented to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee in March 2018:

- free parking periods be offered in council car parks (e.g. Little Common) during peak times e.g. school drop-off and pick-up times;
- enforcement generated turnover which was economical to businesses / traders;
- to offer special permits for residential use particularly in town centre locations as daytime and evening usage varied.

Members agreed that overall, the majority of stakeholders were in favour of adopting Civil Parking Enforcement and supported on-street charging, however it would be important to set a realistic and fair tariff scheme.

RESOLVED: That the key points identified from stakeholders be considered and included within the recommendations / report presented to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee in March 2018.

CPE17/29. WORK PROGRAMME
(8)

Members were reminded that the final meeting to consider all evidence gathered and to make final recommendations to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee was scheduled to be held on Wednesday 21 February 2017 at 10:00am in the Council Chamber.

RESOLVED: That the Work Programme, as attached at Appendix A, be agreed.

CPE17/30. ANY OTHER BUSINESS
(7)

The Chairman advised that he had attended a Bexhill Town Forum meeting on Thursday 16 November 2017 to discuss Civil Parking Enforcement. Predominately off-street parking concerns were identified. He agreed to attend a future meeting to provide an update on the scheme.

CPE17/31. DATE OF NEXT MEETING
(8)

The date of the next meeting was arranged for Wednesday 21 February 2018 at 10:00am to be held in the Council Chamber.

CHAIRMAN

The meeting closed at 12:30pm.

CPE171129jh

Appendix A

CIVIL PARKING ENFORCEMENT TASK AND FINISH GROUP

WORK PROGRAMME	
DATE OF MEETING	SUBJECT
Wednesday 21 February 2018	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• CPE recommendations and agree draft report to Overview and Scrutiny Committee.