

LETCHWORTH AREA COMMITTEE
15 JULY 2013

***PART 1 – PUBLIC DOCUMENT**

AGENDA ITEM No.

6

TITLE OF REPORT: LETCHWORTH PARKING REVIEW

REPORT OF STRATEGIC DIRECTOR OF PLANNING, HOUSING AND ENTERPRISE

1. SUMMARY

- 1.1 This report presents the initial investigation and proposed way forward for the Letchworth Town Wide Parking Review. It summarises correspondence from members of the public, input from Hertfordshire County Council and feedback from members on the key issues. This report seeks to confirm issues to be considered and agree the upcoming programme of areas for officers to investigate .

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 2.1 That members consider the issues raised in summary table at Paragraph 8.1 of the report and inform officers of any further areas for consideration.
- 2.2 That members note the additional areas of work to be investigated at paragraph 8.3.
- 2.3 That officers carry out investigations and report back to the Committee in November with investigation findings and a programme setting out the review process for Members to prioritise and agree.

3 REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

- 3.1 In order to progress the Letchworth Area Parking Review project towards implementation.

4 ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED

- 4.1 See Section 8 of report which lists possible issues to be considered and provides members a further opportunity to report issues for officer investigation.

5. CONSULTATION WITH EXTERNAL ORGANISATIONS AND MEMBERS

- 5.1 The Portfolio Holder for Strategic Planning and Enterprise has been consulted throughout the process to date. Ward Members and the Committee will be briefed in detail on the proposals as they progress.

6 FORWARD PLAN

- 6.1 This report does not contain a recommendation on a key decision and has not been referred to in the forward plan.

7. BACKGROUND

- 7.1 The Council's Parking Strategy Action Plan identifies Letchworth as the next town to be considered as part of the Area Wide Review process (2013/14) following Baldock and Hitchin. Royston is scheduled to start in 2014/15.

- 7.2 The approach of the NHDC Car Parking Strategy is to consider an area wide approach rather than street by street to parking. It is recognised that it is difficult to convince residents of currently unaffected areas to consider parking controls however the area wide approach pre-empts the effects of displacement parking whilst allowing the Council to operate in a more efficient manner. Provision of measures to provide for parking on-street may involve a combination of Controlled Parking Zones (CPZs) and other Traffic Regulation Orders (TROs) by the District Council.

- 7.3 As well as the area wide approach a number of individual issues have been raised. These are detailed and following investigation are likely to be addressed as a discrete package of measures as part of the review.

- 7.4 The following objectives summarise the Council's priorities in dealing with on-street parking problems:

- where residents compete for road parking space in their own streets with other groups (local workers, commuters etc) new schemes will give greater priority to residents;
- where local businesses compete for road parking space in their local industrial areas with other groups, (commuters etc) new schemes will give greater priority to local businesses;
- commuters may use any of uncontrolled roads, private and Council car parks or purchase commuter permits within existing CPZs where this option has been made available.

- 7.5 The provision of Controlled Parking Zones (CPZs) has been focussed on removing non-residential car parking in residential areas, normally long stay and mainly associated with commuters, employees and town centre users. The CPZs implemented to date have been successful in achieving the removal of non-residential parking but experience over the last few years has shown that:

- Non-residential parking problems migrate, not always to the most likely areas.
- Controlled Parking Zones are expensive and income from permits do not always cover the cost of implementing and managing the zones.
- There are other ways of dealing with non-residential parking that may be as effective in terms of removing non-residential parking but not being as costly to implement and manage as CPZs.

7.6 A two stage process is required to assess the need for new restrictions as part of the town wide review and, if it is agreed that action is needed, what needs to be considered to identify the best solution. Stage 1 of the process is largely concerned with identifying problem areas that need further detailed investigation to determine the extent of any problems and possible solutions. This is presented in Section 8 of this report under 'Issues'. Once an initial review has identified the need for action the Council will move to the second stage of appraisal this is required before detailed implementation work commences. The second stage appraisal seeks to consider the specific characteristics of the area based on observations by or information supplied to the Council and also gained through any pre-consultation work with local residents, businesses etc.

7.7 Issues considered as part of Stage 2 are as follows:

- The possible amount of non-residential parking and the amount of residential or operational business parking competing for road space;
- The likely availability of off-street parking;
- Locations where long-stay parking is impeding private accesses and junctions;
- Locations where non-residents' parking is causing other concerns, such as verge parking, blocking pedestrian routes, causing highway safety concerns or preventing safe and convenient access especially for cyclists, buses, servicing and/or emergency vehicles;
- The extent to which other parking generators influence demand (e.g. local businesses, schools and other organisations);
- The potential for other issues such as speeding to become more prominent should parking is restricted or removed;
- Whether removing non-residential parking will lead to a clear and unacceptable worsening of parking conditions elsewhere;
- If a CPZ is implemented what are the resource implications for the Council, including an estimate of permit take up by local residents/businesses;
- The views of Local Councillors, Hertfordshire County Council and Hertfordshire Constabulary on the above as well as initial views on the best method to addressing problems including whether a CPZ or amending an existing CPZ is appropriate.

7.8 Stage 2 will be carried out by officers over the summer months and form the basis of the report to November committee.

8. ISSUES

8.1 A summary of issues officers are currently aware of is provided in the table below. These have been collated from individual correspondence with members of the public as well as feedback from Hertfordshire County Council and individual members.

Road	Issue	How NHDC advised
Rushby Mead	Non resident parking issue	Various residents
Rushby Mead Zone D	Review of Permit Parking and take up of permits	Officer observation on site visits – permit bays not fully utilised
Cross St /The Quadrant area Zone D	Review of permit parking and take up of permits	Officer observation on site visits – permit bays not fully utilised Birchwood Surgery and LGC Settlement
Birds Hill area Zone D	Review of permit parking and take up at permits	Officer observation on site visits – permit bays not fully utilised. Local resident
Bedford Road Corner Close	Non resident parking issue	Various residents
Rowan Crescent	Non resident parking issue	Various residents
Cowslip Hill (Zone B)	Review of permit scheme and Single Yellow Line waiting restrictions times	Local resident
Redhoods Way East	Non resident parking issue/ blocked driveways	Various residents
Bay Corner of Howard Park/Station Rd on Norton Way South	Request to designate as 30 mins max stay	Traders at end of Station Road/ Local Councillor
Norton Way South/Pixmore Way	Non resident parking on both sides of road	Local Councillor Local residents
Sollershott East – Drs Surgery	Lines on corner with Ralph Swingler Court as bottleneck parking	Local councillor
Lytton Avenue area	Review of permit parking scheme and times	Various residents
Marmet Avenue	Parking obstructions preventing bin lorry getting through. Some lines required	Resident
The Ridge	Request for H bar mark to be repainted across driveway or to be included in permit scheme	Residents
Icknield Way/ Norton Way North	Review of single yellow line times	Local Church
Bowershott	Restrict parking as parked cars causing issues with other vehicles trying to manoeuvre around them	Resident

Road	Issue	How NHDC advised
West View	Request to review permit parking scheme	Resident
Radburn Way/Quinn Way	DYL at junction near BP garage	Councillor
Bedford Road/Bursland junction	Dangerous to all road users	Local Councillor

8.2 Officers are happy to receive any additional comments from members on issues up until Friday 26th July 2013.

8.3 As well as those issues detailed above for further investigation there are three other elements of work that need to be considered as part of the review:

- Undertake a full review of existing CPZ's to consider the sale of permits to non-residents;
- Consideration the introduction of an On Street Charging Trial;
- Consider Verge Parking controls.

8.4 Review of existing CPZ's

8.4.1 Letchworth currently has 3 Controlled Parking Zones, A, B and D.

- **Zone A**
Broadwater Ave, Broadway, Gernon Road, Gernon Walk, Gorst Close, Lytton Ave, Meadow Way, Pixmore Way, Souberie Ave, Station Way, The Dale, The Meads, West View.
- **Zone B**
Cowslip Hill, Icknield Way, Nevells Road, The Quadrant, Cross Street
- **Zone D**
Birds Hill, Hillshott, Ridge Road, Rushby Mead, Rushby Walk
Note: that not all the length of above roads are included.

8.4.2 Part of the Letchworth town wide review will be not only to pick up the issues raised by individual residents, businesses and organisations as well as members within these zones but will also seek to ascertain if they remain 'fit for purpose' in terms of their operation. Consideration could be given to the sale of a limited number of permits to non-residents where the take up of permits is low and there is spare on-street capacity. The intention would not be to undermine the principle of supporting residents and/or local businesses in preference to longer stay non-residential or local business parking. Such investigation would include pre-consultation with local residents and businesses in the areas under consideration. The sale of non-resident permits could help subsidise the cost of resident permits.

8.5 Consideration for On Street Charging Trial

8.5.1 The Car Parking Strategy High Level Action Plan (Action ref DW8) refers to a trial implementation of on-street charging in Hitchin and Letchworth Town centres. Officers would like to investigate this in possible locations closest to Letchworth town centre through either the installation of Pay and Display ticket machines or the sale of non-resident permits, for example :

- Along part of Broadway, nearest the town centre
- Arena Parade – extension of existing car park
- Investigate residential areas close to town centre with capacity – e.g. Norton Way South.

8.6 Verge Parking

8.6.1 Verge parking is an issue raised throughout the District. Previously Local Authorities required special dispensation to introduce grass verge parking controls however this requirement has now been removed. As part of the review, officers will ascertain where grass verge parking is an issue and following consultation seek to introduce appropriate controls with the full support of local members.

8.7 The above work would need to be considered in accordance with any new and existing parking restrictions and will be subject to available funding and staff resources. Town wide reviews take a minimum of 2 years to progress and implement. It is suggested that Officers report back to Letchworth Committee in November with a full detailed list of the issues together with suggested timescales and costings for Members to prioritise the key issues.

9.0 LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

9.1 There are no legal implications arising from this report.

9.2 NHDC's agency agreement with HCC permits the management of on-street parking and creation of Traffic Regulation Orders (TROs) to manage parking as the Council considers appropriate. The Committee will be advised of any TROs required to deliver the Area Review at the appropriate time.

10 FINANCIAL AND RISK IMPLICATIONS

10.1 The cost of undertaking the Letchworth town wide review is to be funded from existing budgets. There is £178k in an earmarked reserve that has been set up specifically for TRO work. A budget of £65k has been agreed each year going forward. However for 2013/14 the budget has been reduced to £35k as £30k was put up as an efficiency during the 2013/14 budget setting process. A budget of £50k has been set aside under GAF for the on-street charging trail. Efforts will be made to streamline processes and link in with other forms of funding such as Herts Locality Budget where appropriate to deliver schemes.

10.2 There is a requirement to progress the Letchworth town wide parking review to meet resident and Member expectations in delivering parking schemes and introducing new initiatives to fulfil the requirements of the NHDC adopted Parking Strategy.

11. EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS

11.1 The Equality Act 2010 came into force on the 1st October 2010, a major piece of legislation. The Act also created a new Public Sector Equality Duty, which came into force on the 5th April 2011. There is a General duty, described in the next paragraph, that public bodies must meet, underpinned by more specific duties which are designed to help meet them.

- 11.2 In line with the Public Sector Equality Duty, public bodies must, in the exercise of its functions, give due regard to the need to eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation, to advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations between those who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.
- 11.3 Depending on what option may be considered, any future development proposals for the site, detailed proposals surrounding thoroughfares, access, surface treatments etc and needs of any users for any resulting development will be considered under separate equality analysis at the time of consideration.

12. SOCIAL VALUE IMPLICATIONS

- 12.1 As the recommendations made in this report do not constitute a public service contract, the measurement of 'social value' as required by the Public Services (Social Value) Act 2012 need not be applied, although equalities implications and opportunities are identified in the relevant section at paragraph 11.

13 HUMAN RESOURCE

- 13.1 The ongoing work on this project will be undertaken from existing staff resources. There is potential to use private survey companies where budget allows. In addition there is potential to use HCC's consultant to draft TROs where budget allows.
- 13.2 The Council will need to consider the resource implications of administration and enforcement as schemes progress and consult staff on any proposed changes to working patterns.

14. CONTACT OFFICERS

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15 Background Papers

15.1 Appendix A
NHDC Adopted Parking Strategy updated 2012
www.north-herts.gov.uk/index/transport_and_streets/car_parking/car_parking_strategy.htm