

LETCHWORTH COMMITTEE
10 JUNE 2015

***PART 1 – PUBLIC DOCUMENT**

AGENDA ITEM No.

9

TITLE OF REPORT: LETCHWORTH AREA PARKING REVIEW UPDATE

REPORT OF STRATEGIC DIRECTOR OF PLANNING, HOUSING AND ENTERPRISE

1. SUMMARY

- 1.1 This report provides an update on progress regarding the Letchworth Area Parking Review.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 2.1 The Area Committee notes the report and the update provided at Appendix 1.
- 2.2 That the relevant County Councillors give consideration and agree to joint fund the road safety schemes as listed in Appendix A from their Herts Locality Budgets for 2014/15 to an estimated value of £12k.
- 2.3 That members note the additional areas of work at paragraph 8.9 and the Area Committee receives regular updates on progress with the Letchworth Area Parking Review from officers.

3 REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

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

4 ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED

- 4.1 A number of possible parking issues and schemes are considered as part of the pre-consultation exercises on the various schemes identified as part of the review.

5. CONSULTATION WITH EXTERNAL ORGANISATIONS AND MEMBERS

- 5.1 The Portfolio Holder for Policy, Transport and Green Issues has been consulted throughout the process to date. There has been ongoing correspondence with local members over various parking issues and schemes relevant to their ward as the proposals have progressed.

- 5.2 The Letchworth Garden City Heritage Foundation where considered necessary and other external stakeholders such as Herts County Council and the Police will be formally consulted when progressing the schemes.

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 proposes reviews of parking management in each town on an area wide basis. The Letchworth town wide review commenced in July 2013 with a report to Letchworth Committee identifying the key parking issues and was then subsequently followed by a report on 12 March 2014 prioritising and agreeing the schemes to be taken forward as part of the review. Members have since received various progress updates via the Community Development Officer - *Community Update and Grant Applications Report*. Members requested a full update at their meeting on 11 March 2015.
- 7.2 There has been at least a 9 month delay in the progression of the review due to the Principal Transport Policy Officer resigning in October 2013 and not filling the post until May 2014. Since the appointment of the Principal Transport Policy Officer, consultants have been appointed to assist with the technical aspects of drafting and preparing the Traffic Regulation Orders, while officers have progressed with the necessary site investigation and pre-consultation work. It is to be noted that during this time schemes in Knebworth and Hitchin have also needed to be progressed. There may be a further delay as the Technical Transport Officer has recently resigned and the post is being recruited to. All efforts will be made to ensure that the schemes are progressed during this period.
- 7.3 The section below provides a progress update along with Appendix A.

8. PROGRESS UPDATE

- 8.1 The schemes agreed by Letchworth Committee at this meeting on 12 March 2014 were initially prioritised ranging from immediate i.e. priority 1 up to slightly longer term being priority 4.
- 8.2 The following schemes discussed under this paragraph were all agreed as Priority 1 to 3 Schemes.
- 8.2.1 An initial pre-consultation phase has been undertaken on the following schemes. Officers have or will be reporting on the outcome of these with the relevant ward councillors and the Portfolio Holder to agree on the next steps. Appendix A provides indicative time scales for progression.
- a) Rushby Mead area between Hillshott and Pixmore Way - to consider extending the current controlled parking zone;
 - b) Nevells Road/Cross Street and the Quadrant Area regarding parking issues around the doctors surgeries, where consideration could be given to the possibility of releasing some additional parking for visitors to the surgeries.
 - c) Parking and safety issues along Norton Way South and Pixmore Way
 - d) Removal of Saturday parking restriction along Icknield Way East

- e) Extending the double yellow lines along Radburn Way from its junction with Quinn Way
 - The Wilbury Ward area - being the Bedford Road, Rowan Crescent, Redhoods Way East and Cowslip Hill Area - for consideration of some form of parking restrictions;
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 - Introducing limited waiting in the lay-by at Norton Way South towards the junction with Station Road; and

8.2.2 Detailed site visits and discussions have taken place with HCC and the police regarding various parking, junction protection waiting restrictions and other road safety issues previously raised by Members. It was agreed that these will be funded by from County Councillors Herts Locality Budgets (HLB):

- a) Bowershott j/w A505 Baldock Road. Councillor Hone did fund an initial investigation and informal consultation from his 2014/2015 HLB on waiting restrictions. Following initial investigation, it was recommended that this scheme is not progressed
- b) Sollershott East j/w Ralph Swingler Place outside doctors' surgery. Councillor Hone did fund an initial investigation and informal consultation from his 2014/2015 HLB on waiting restrictions. Following initial investigation, it was recommended that this scheme is progressed. HCC are in the process of discussing whether or not to go to the next stage of formal consultation
- c) A505 Hitchin Road j/w Letchworth lane. Councillor Hone did fund an initial investigation and informal consultation from his 2014/2015 HLB on waiting restrictions. Following initial investigation, it was recommended that this scheme is not progressed.
- d) Bedford Road j/w Rowan Crescent, Icknield Green, Redhoods Way East, Redhoods Way West, Runnalow and the eastern side of Bedford Road at junction to Icknield Way – it is to be noted that this scheme was implemented and came into effect from 26 January 2015.

8.2.3 The remaining junction protection schemes were not considered to be an immediate issue and will be investigated and progressed as part of the wider Wilbury ward residential scheme:

- a) Bedford Road j/w Bursland
- b) Extending the double yellow line along Marmet Ave from its j/w Icknield Way.

8.2.4 Site visits have been undertaken in the The Wilbury Ward area - being the Bedford Road, Rowan Crescent, Redhoods Way East and Cowslip Hill Area - for consideration of some form of parking restrictions. Officers are working with consultants in organising a pre-consultation event. This will take place on 25th June in the evening from 5:00pm to 9:00pm at the Ballroom in the Spirella building. The purpose of the evening will be an opportunity for residents to discuss and provide their views on parking issues in the area and to discuss possible types of restriction that they may wish to see implemented. It has been agreed to cover a wide area as a means of dealing with any displacement effects. Some 850 letters, flyers and comments form will be hand delivered to all households in the following streets:

- Bedford Road
- Rowan Crescent
- Redhoods Way East and West
- Runnalow
- Icknield Way
- Icknield Green
- Cowslip hill
- Longmead
- Haselfoot
- Saffron Hill
- Marmet Avenue
- Hawthorn Hill
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Appendix A provides an indicative timescale for progressing the scheme.

- 8.2.5 Pre-consultation letters will be going out to local shop keepers and residents for introducing limited waiting in the lay-by at Norton Way South towards the junction with Station Road.
- 8.3 In terms of reviewing existing permit zones under Priority 4, detailed on-site surveys were undertaken in 2013/14 and again more recently of all the current CPZ schemes to establish current usage and take up of permits. The purpose of this is to establish the possibility of altering the restrictions and/or giving consideration to the possible sale of non-resident permits on a strictly controlled and limited capacity basis. Such alterations would be subject to consultation with local residents and ward councillors before progressing with any necessary amendments to the existing Traffic Regulation Orders (TROs).
- 8.4 As part of the pre-consultation exercise for extending the resident permit scheme in Rushby Mead between Hillshott and Pixmore Way, the residents in Rushby Mead between Pixmore Way and Baldock Road were also consulted - This latter part being agreed as Priority 5 in the March 2014 meeting. As part of this pre-consultation it is clear that there was no support for a resident permit scheme between Pixmore Way and Baldock Road. The main issue is around managing school traffic, which is beyond the remit of the council and should be referred back to HCC as a safety issue. It has therefore been suggested that no further action is taken in this part of Rushby Mead as part of this review. Further pre-consultation will be carried out on the part of Rushby Mead between Hillshott and Pixmore way to establish residents views on options for either extending the existing resident permit scheme or doing nothing.
- 8.5 The schemes listed under priorities 1 to 4 can all be progressed as part of the Letchworth review subject to available funding. The timescales for these will vary as previously advised these reviews can take 2 to 3 years to complete. Site investigation and pre-consultation work with residents, members and other stakeholders are important aspects which take the most time. Lessons learnt from the town wide parking reviews undertaken in Baldock and Hitchin have demonstrated that this initial work is necessary to ensure that officers are proceeding with the most appropriate restrictions when they come to start the formal Traffic Regulation Order process that meet member and public expectations and can be delivered in the most cost efficient manner. At this stage Appendix A provides an anticipated programme and may be subject to review.

- 8.6 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. In order to progress the schemes identified under priorities 1 to 4 in Appendix A, officers will work with the relevant local ward Councillors, County Councillors, the Portfolio Holder Policy, Transport & Green Issues, Herts Highways, the police, local residents and other stakeholders.

9. 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 £169k in an earmarked reserve that has been set up specifically for TRO work. For 2014/15 the TRO revenue budget of £65k was put up as efficiency but is back in the base budget in 2015/16. A budget of £50k has been set aside under GAF for the on-street charging trial in the capital programme. Efforts will be made to streamline processes and link in with other forms of funding such as HLB 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.
- 10.3 A key risk is that the priorities are not set and the process is delayed. The programme for delivering all schemes listed in Appendix A is planned to be a minimum of 2 to 3 years.

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. Depending on the outcome of consultation in regard to the implementation or extension of existing permit schemes, it will be necessary to consider potential implications in regard to access not only for people with disabilities, but for those residents requiring regular domiciliary services, including health and social care provision.

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 AND EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS

- 13.1 The ongoing work on this project will be subject to having a full staff compliment in place. Efforts are being made to recruit again to the Technical Transport Officer post. There is potential to use private companies and to use HCC's consultancy service 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.
- 13.3 Inconsiderate parking is causing difficulties for people with disabilities and for young children. A resolution of some of the issues covered in this report will help those groups.

14. CONTACT OFFICERS

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15. Background Papers

- 15.1 NHDC Adopted Parking Strategy updated 2012
www.north-herts.gov.uk/index/transport_and_streets/car_parking/car_parking_strategy.htm
- 15.2 Letchworth Parking Review Report – Presented to Letchworth Area Committee on 17 July 2013
- 15.3 Letchworth Parking Review Update – Presented to Letchworth Area Committee on 12 March 2014

16. Appendices

- 16.1 Appendix A – Letchworth Area Parking Review Scheme Update