

ROYSTON AND DISTRICT COMMITTEE 13 SEPTEMBER 2017

*PART 1 – PUBLIC DOCUMENT	AGENDA ITEM No. 7
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TITLE OF REPORT: ROYSTON TOWN WIDE PARKING REVIEW

REPORT OF THE STRATEGIC PLANNING AND PROJECTS MANAGER

EXECUTIVE MEMBER: CLLR RAY SHAKESPEARE-SMITH POLICY, TRANSPORT AND GREEN ISSUES

COUNCIL PRIORITY: RESPONSIVE AND EFFICIENT

1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This report seeks Members' agreement on the way forward for the Royston town wide parking review. It summarises the findings from the initial investigations carried out on issues previously raised by members and seeks the Committee's views on schemes listed at Appendix A.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 2.1 The Area Committee agrees the schemes listed in Table 1 at Appendix A for progressing the Royston town wide parking review.
- 2.2 The Area Committee agrees the schemes prioritised in Table 2 at paragraph 8.9
- 2.3 That officers contact the relevant Hertfordshire County Council Highway Liaison Officer to discuss with the County Councillors for Royston to give consideration to joint funding any road safety schemes from their Herts Locality Budgets that may form part of the schemes listed in Table 1 at Appendix A.
- 2.4 That Members support the use of the existing funding to provide the necessary expertise until appropriate staff resources are put in place.
- 2.5 That the Area Committee receives regular updates on progress with the Royston town wide parking review from officers.

3. REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

- 3.1 In order to progress the Royston town wide parking review project towards implementation as detailed in Section 8.

4. ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED

- 4.1 Section 8 of the report lists possible options to be considered as part of the town wide parking review and provides members with the opportunity to discuss and prioritise parking schemes to be taken forward.

5. CONSULTATION WITH RELEVANT MEMBERS AND EXTERNAL ORGANISATIONS

- 5.1 The Executive Member for Policy, Transport & Green Issues has been consulted throughout the process to date. There has been ongoing correspondence with local members over various parking issues. Two workshops have been held with local members, County Councillors, members of the Royston Town Council, the Town Centre Manager representing Royston First, and representatives from Hertfordshire Highways and the local Police. These workshops considered various parking issues that had been raised by members of the public, local councillors, the Town Council and Royston First.
- 5.2 Ward members, the Area Committee and the Town Council will be kept informed on the proposals as they progress.
- 5.3 As part of the process there will be liaison and consultation with local residents, Hertfordshire County Council (HCC) as the Highway Authority, the local Police and other stakeholders as required.

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 adopted Parking Strategy (updated 2012) proposes reviews of parking management in each of the towns on an area wide basis. The approach taken to date is to consider area wide parking reviews across the towns where possible rather than street by street.
- 7.2 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 in Royston 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 does 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.
 - A careful balance needs to be struck between providing and restricting parking, and that it is not always possible to satisfy all users of the public highway. The intention of implementing parking controls is not to create clear streets but to prevent anti-social parking and ensure residents and

local businesses have the ability to park close to where they live and work as far as is possible.

- Consideration could be given to the sale of a limited number of permits to non-residents where the take up of permits in certain CPZs 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. The sale of non-resident permits could help subsidise the cost of resident permits. Such investigation would include pre-consultation with local residents and businesses in the areas under consideration.

7.3 It is recognised that it is difficult in some cases to convince residents of currently unaffected areas to consider parking controls, however the area wide approach seeks to pre-empt 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) such as permit parking areas and other type of parking restrictions, such as one hour restrictions (e.g. single yellow lines/and or parking bays) and/or no waiting at any time (e.g. double yellow lines at junctions).

7.4 NHDC's agency agreement with HCC permits the management of on-street parking and the creation of Traffic Regulation Orders (TROs) to manage parking as the Council considers appropriate. It is important to note that HCC are responsible for highway safety issues.

7.5 There has been a delay in the progression of the review due to transport officers being off on long-term sick, the resignation of the Principal Transport Policy Officer in March and remaining resources associated with parking matters, that of the Strategic Planning & Projects Manager, being involved with the preparation and submission of the Local Plan, which is a key strategic priority. Efforts have been made to recruit to the transport post, which have been unsuccessful. This is not unusual as in the past recruitment to this post has been challenging. Measures are being put in place to seek agency staff and/or consultants to assist with the backlog of outstanding parking schemes across the District and to progress with the Royston parking review, whilst appropriate in house resources are being sought.

8. RELEVANT CONSIDERATIONS

8.1 At the workshops, mentioned in paragraph 5.1 above it was agreed to focus initial investigations on the following areas:

- The York Way Industrial Area and Rock Road/North Close Residential Area
- The Gower Road, Serby Avenue, Queens Road and Mill Road CPZ (known as Zone B)
- The Princes Mews and Briary Lane Residential Area
- Eastfield Road off Newmarket Road, and other various highway safety matters
- The Town Centre

8.2 Detailed on-site surveys and resident surveys have been undertaken of the above areas with the exception of the town centre in order to understand the current parking issues and are summarised in Table 1 at Appendix A.

8.3 It is suggested that the Royston review be progressed in two phases. Phase 1 will include progression with those schemes identified in Table 1 at Appendix A, subject to

available funding (see paragraphs 8.6 to 8.9 below) and Phase 2 will concentrate on the parking and traffic management issues identified within the Royston town centre.

- 8.4 It is suggested that the town centre parking issues be considered separately following the outcomes from the Parking Strategy Review to be completed later this financial year. Part of the Parking Strategy review will be giving consideration to the management of on and off street parking within each of the four town centres, taking into consideration their economic vitality.
- 8.5 The progression of Phase 2 will also require discussion with Local and County Councillors, the Town Centre Manager, the Town Council, the Police, HCC, local businesses and other key stakeholders. As discussed above it is suggested that this forms a separate project to be agreed with the Executive Member and reported to the Committee next financial year following completion of the Parking Strategy Review. Funding would need to be considered accordingly as part of the agreed outcomes of the Parking Strategy Review and would be taken forward as part of the Council's budget setting process.
- 8.6 With regard to funding, the Council allocates £65k annually for the implementation of Area Wide Parking Reviews. The Council also has part of the existing funding within an earmarked reserve (circa £222k). It has been agreed with the Executive Member that part of this fund is used to provide the required expertise in progressing the Royston parking review and other outstanding work until such time as appropriate resources can be put in place, given that the Strategic Planning & Projects Manager will be actively involved in progressing the Local Plan through examination over the next 6 months. This budget is not only to be used to fund external resources but also to fund the costs associated with the preparation and implementation of the various parking schemes. Hence the budget needs to be carefully managed.
- 8.7 Some of the schemes as listed in Appendix A may include safety issues which as stated above are the responsibility of HCC. However HCC officers are aware of the review being undertaken and are of the view that such issues could be included as part of the schemes in the review and may be advanced sooner than having to go through the process required to progress schemes through their Integrated Works Programme. It would also mean that a parking scheme would be implemented as a complete package. Such schemes could be jointly funded from the relevant County Councillors Herts Locality Budgets (HLBs). It is therefore being requested that funding is sought through the relevant Royston County Councillors Herts Locality budgets to be put towards some of the schemes identified in Appendix A.
- 8.8 At the time of writing this report, officers are in the process of seeking an estimate for undertaking the Royston Review, and dependent on the cost, may result in some of the schemes as listed and to be agreed by the Committee not being able to proceed due to funds having to be carefully managed across all Council-wide identified outstanding parking projects. It is therefore requested that in such an event the schemes, listed in Table 1 at Appendix A are prioritised by Members in terms of delivery. If this were to be the case, and in order to ensure timely progression of the Review, a decision to proceed would be taken by the Executive Member in consultation with the Chair of Royston committee and relevant County Councillors (who may wish to progress some of the schemes independently on safety grounds). Local members would be advised accordingly.
- 8.9 Listed in Table 2 below are officer recommendations as to a suggested priority list of the schemes to be taken forward from Table 1 at Appendix A, subject to available funding.

Table 2: Suggested Priority of Schemes subject to available funding

Priority	Proposed Schemes
Priority 1	<p>Scheme Ref 1 - York Way Industrial & Rock Road Residential Area</p> <p>Scheme Ref 2 - Review of certain restrictions in CPZ Zone B (Gower Road, Queens Road & Mill Road Area)</p> <p>Scheme Ref 3a - Princes Mews</p>
Priority 2	Scheme Ref 3b - Briary Lane Area
Priority 3	<p>Scheme Ref 4 - Parking Restrictions to be considered in Eastfield Road off Newmarket Road.</p> <p>Scheme Ref 5 - Highway Safety Schemes to be considered at Icknield Walk and Layston Park</p>

- 8.10 Members need to be made aware that previous experience has shown that not all the schemes may gain full support and could result in the schemes not proceeding, proceeding in part or in full. It is also to be noted that once initial pre-consultation has been undertaken officers will be able to identify a clearer picture of the full scope of schemes to be taken forward. The timescales for these will vary and could take up to 2 years to complete. Pre-consultation work with residents and other stakeholders are important aspects which take the most time. Lessons learnt from the other town wide parking reviews have demonstrated that this initial work is necessary. This is to ensure that officers/consultants 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.

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 IMPLICATIONS

- 10.1 The cost of undertaking the Royston town wide review is to be funded from existing budgets. Some £55k remains within the 2017/18 budget, and there is circa £222k in an earmarked reserve that has been set up specifically for TRO work. Efforts will be made to streamline processes and link in with other forms of funding such as County Councillor HLBs where appropriate to deliver schemes.
- 10.2 There is also salary saving available from the Transport Officer Post that could be used towards funding agency/consultants to assist with progressing the backlog of work.

11. RISK IMPLICATIONS

- 11.1 There is a requirement to progress the Royston 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.

- 11.2 A key risk is that the priorities are not set and the process is delayed, given the Strategic Planning & Projects Manager commitment to progressing the Local Plan through examination. The programme for delivering all schemes listed in Table 1 at Appendix A is planned to be a minimum of 2 years.

12. EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS

- 12.1 In line with the Public Sector Equality Duty, public bodies must, in the exercise of their 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.
- 12.2 There are not considered to be any direct equality issues arising from this report. The parking review seeks to address the requirements of the community. The consultations will highlight any adverse impacts of those who exhibit a protected characteristic and addressed where appropriate. Any risks and opportunities identified will also be subject to assessment for impact on those that share a protected characteristic.

13. SOCIAL VALUE IMPLICATIONS

- 13.1 It is not yet clear what the value of any consultancy works are likely to be. They could be below £50,000 and if that was the case then the “go local” policy would be applied. It is likely that local knowledge would be advantage in carrying out the work involved.

14. HUMAN RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

- 14.1 The ongoing work on this project will be subject to having a full staff compliment in place. In the short term until an appropriate officer is recruited to the post and in order to ensure that the Royston Review is progressed, the use of consultants and /or HCC’s consultancy service will be contracted where budget allows.
- 14.2 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.

15. APPENDICES

- 15.1 Appendix A – Table 1: Royston Area Parking Review List of Potential Schemes.

16. CONTACT OFFICERS

- 16.1 Louise Symes, Strategic Planning & Projects Manager
01462 474359 louise.symes@north-herts.gov.uk

Contributors

- 16.2 Ian Fullstone, Head of Development and Building Control
01462 474480 ian.fullstone@north-herts.gov.uk
- 16.3 Parmjit Sidhu , Assistant Accountant
01462 474451 parmjit.sidhu@north-herts.gov.uk
- 16.4 Nurainatta Katevu, Property & Planning Lawyer
01462 474364 nurainatta.katevu@north-herts.gov.uk

- 16.5 Ian Couper, Head of Financial Services and Risk Management
01462 474243 ian.couper@north-herts.gov.uk
- 16.6 Kerry Shorrocks, Corporate Human Resources Manager
01462 474224 kerry.shorrocks@north-herts.gov.uk
- 16.7 Reuben Ayavoo, Policy Officer
01462 474212 reuben.ayavoo@north-herts.gov.uk

17. BACKGROUND PAPERS

- 17.1 NHDC Adopted Parking Strategy updated 2012
<https://www.north-herts.gov.uk/home/parking/parking-strategy>