

Cabinet Planning and Parking Panel  
4 June 2020

WELWYN HATFIELD COUNCIL

\* Reporting to Cabinet

Minutes of a meeting of the WELWYN HATFIELD COUNCIL CABINET PLANNING AND PARKING PANEL held on Thursday 4 June 2020 at 7.30 pm via Zoom meeting.

PRESENT: Councillors S.Boulton (Chairman)  
S.Kasumu (Vice-Chairman)

A.Chesterman, B.Fitzsimon, G.Hayes, T.Kingsbury,  
J.Quinton, D.Richardson, A Rohale, P.Shah and  
P.Zukowskyj

OFFICIALS Head of Planning (C. Haigh)  
PRESENT: Parking and Cemetery Services Manager (V. Hatfield)  
Governance Services Officer (G. Paddan)

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63. MINUTES

The Minutes of the meeting held on 29 January 2020 were approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

64. NOTIFICATION OR URGENT BUSINESS TO BE CONSIDERED UNDER ITEM 10

The Chairman agreed to an update on the Local Plan from the Head of Planning, as an urgent business. It was agreed that this item (item 10 on the agenda) be brought forward.

65. SUCH OTHER BUSINESS AS, IN THE OPINION OF THE CHAIRMAN, IS OF SUFFICIENT URGENCY TO WARRANT IMMEDIATE CONSIDERATION

The Head of Planning provided a brief update on the Local Plan. This Panel and subsequently the Cabinet debated the reports on the Local Plan together with additional sites and options in January 2020. The update included the following:

- Consultation on new options took place in Jan 2020, which totalled just over 14,000 houses. This included some new sites around some villages. It included site known as PB1, east of Potters Bar. Officers are engaging with Herts CC on its promotion.
- Consultation period was extended by one month to May 2020 due to the Coronavirus pandemic.

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- Following the consultation, 780 representations had been made and these were now being analysed by Officers and a report will be presented in due course.
- Consultation document sought views on removal of Symondshyde village together with the assumption of 949 extra brownfield units; and in this regard Wheat Quarter site may have capacity for additional homes.
- Following hearing sessions in March 2020 the Inspector has raised concerns about noise and visual impact in respect of Birchall Garden Suburb southern site and transport sustainability in respect of Symondshyde.
- Talks are being held with the Inspector in respect of the scheduled July hearings due to the social distancing Government advice; whether it would be possible for virtual hearings, use of Council Chamber or alternative venue where social distancing recommendations could be implemented or defer the hearings. If a meeting does take place the Inspector in essence would have the information and would write an interim report. An interim report will show whether the sites highlighted would be sufficient or would there be a need for additional sites for deliberation.
- There had been some concern raised about housing needs, this being associated with population projection figures being lower than the previous years – for nearer the end of the Plan in the 2030s. The Officer explained the situation and that Turley Consultants would be asked to look into these figures and produce an update study for the Inspector to take into account. The information would be presented to a future meeting of this Panel.
- New household projections will be published on 29 June 2020. Council will wait until 29 June and then consult with Turley Consultants to judge whether an update of the OAN objective assessment of housing need would be appropriate and whether they can take account of the implications of Brexit and the Coronavirus pandemic in terms of likely population growth and housing need.
- The Panel will be updated on the housing need. If the July hearing sessions are held then the Inspector's interim report will also be presented to enable the Panel to have a final conversation on whether to accept the Plan as it stands or whether to select additional sites.
- A question was raised in respect of the timescales for Turley to be engaged before 29 June 2020. Members felt it would be ideal if the

inspector could have this information for the July hearing sessions. The Officer advised that officers would speak to Turleys to get this update done as quickly as possible, assuming the household projections are published in 29 June as anticipated.

- The impact on education and healthcare services due to increase of houses was discussed.

66. DECLARATION OF INTERESTS BY MEMBERS

Councillors S. Boulton and P. Zukowskyj declared a non-pecuniary interest in items on the agenda as appropriate by virtue of being Members of Hertfordshire County Council.

67. PUBLIC QUESTION TIME AND PETITIONS

The following question was received and the Chairman responded:

Question from Mr P. Wrenn

Due to the present Coronavirus pandemic and the dramatic effect it is having on retail sales throughout the country would it not seem sensible for the CPPP Panel to seriously consider delaying the proposed Parking Zones Order until a later date when hopefully the country has returned to a more stable environmental and financial state?

Response

The Council carried out a comprehensive consultation with almost 2000 residents for over 18 months, which has produced the recommendations included in the Handside report.

Whilst we recognise we are living in extraordinary times, the recommended restrictions would not be in place until September at the earliest. This is when we expect most businesses and schools to reopen as normal, putting it in the best interest of local residents to move forward with our proposals.

68. PARKING SERVICES UPDATE ON IMPROVEMENT PROGRAMME 2019-2020

Members considered the report of the Corporate Director (Resources, Environment and Cultural Services) on Parking Services, which provided an update on the improvement programme for 2019-20.

The report noted that throughout the year, the Council received many requests for parking restrictions and parking improvements via several channels. The Council has to manage the public's request and expectations. Producing a yearly work programme, which covers both parking restrictions and parking improvements, helps the Council to achieve this. It is important for the Council to ensure a consistent programmed approach, as it assists in the efficient

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management of Traffic Regulation Order (TROs) work and providing transparency to the public.

Any objections received by the Council in response to the statutory consultation are considered by this Panel. However, occasionally there are no objections received, when this happens the Traffic Regulation Order can be approved using Officer's delegated powers.

The Officer advised that 98 additional parking spaces had been created. The cost per parking was around £2609. The Parking Team work on a number of requests within the work programme and sometimes outside of the work programme. The Team have highlighted a scheme which the Team had managed to obtain a design and technical approval for; Great Break, Welwyn Garden City (Appendix B). The project will cost £57,000 and there is £50,000 allocated for a parking scheme as a one-off sum for this financial year.

A discussion took place regarding an incident in which emergency vehicles were unable to access Great Break earlier this year, due to the width of the road and vehicles parked on either side.

Some concern was expressed in terms of not considering other schemes/areas that need updating, providing parking, footways and improvement. A question was raised as where the additional £7,000 would be made available from, and would this endanger any other schemes within the current work programme? Following a discussion, it was noted that £7,000 would be utilised from the work programme budget.

As there was not an equivalent scheme available at present it was felt that Great Break should proceed.

A vote was taken whether to spend the money on Great Break or to wait and consider all other scheme. Vote: (7 for Great Break, 4 for consideration of all schemes), Great Break carried.

RESOLVED:

1. The Panel notes the update on the current Parking Services Improvement Programme 2019-2020 (**Appendix A**).
2. The Panel recommends to Cabinet that £57,000 of the Parking Improvement budget is spent on a location outside of the Parking Services Work Programme and it will be spent on Great Break in Panshanger.

69. PARKING SERVICES ANNUAL REPORT 2018-19

Members considered the report of the Corporate Director (Resources, Environment and Cultural Services) on Parking Services Annual Report 2018-19.

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The report noted that in 2009, the Parking and Traffic Regulation Outside London (PATROL) Annual Report Award was launched to promote and share best practice amongst councils in the production of parking annual reports. The Traffic Management Act 2004 came into force on 31 March 2008. With this came the expectation that local authorities would produce an annual report about their civil enforcement activities. The PATROL Joint Committee recognises the importance of public information and commissioned the PATROL website to provide information on the civil enforcement process. This will be the first time the Council has entered its Parking Services Annual Report for the PATROL Annual Report Award.

A question was raised in respect of the penalty charge notices (PCN) issued as shown in the report's table. The Officer explained the number of PCNs issued in Hatfield was higher, as the area in question, was in close proximity to the train station and Hatfield town centre, and so these areas see more PCNs being issued compared to areas such as Lemsford, Northaw and The Ayots which have very few restrictions in place, mainly double yellow lines at junctions.

It was noted that Salisbury Village parking scheme was halfway through the consultation process. Peartree will follow once Old Hatfield and the rest of Handside has been completed.

A question was asked about the small number of doctors/Health Visitor permits which are issued each year. These permits cover 'all zones' and are used by doctors and health visitors when visiting clients who reside in residential area which are covered by a resident permit scheme. Officers advised the low numbers of issued permits could be due to this not impacting on many services, although this is likely to increase with the addition of new permit schemes which are still to be introduced. It was clarified that the report was available to the public on the website.

RESOLVED:  
(Unanimous)

That the Panel notes the content of the Parking Services Annual Report 2018-2019.

70. INTRODUCTION OF RESIDENT PERMIT PARKING SCHEMES, PARKING PLACES AND OTHER WAITING RESTRICTIONS, TOGETHER WITH A VERGE PROTECTION ORDER IN VARIOUS ROADS, HANDSIDE WARD, WELWYN GARDEN CITY

Report of the Corporate Director (Resources, Environment and Cultural Services) on the introduction of resident permit parking schemes, parking places and other waiting restrictions, together with a verge protection order (VPO) in various roads, Handside Ward, Welwyn Garden City.

The report noted that In April 2018, the Council undertook a parking survey with residents and businesses in Handside, Welwyn Garden City. This followed on from work

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already completed in the Longcroft Lane and Parkway areas of the Ward. The scope of the survey took in all roads to the west of Parkway and extended south from Brockswold Lane to its boundary with Lemsford Lane. The purpose of the survey was to engage with residents and businesses in seeking their views on parking options for the area.

Responses were received and a number cited non-residential long stay parking e.g. commuters and local workers etc., as responsible for creating parking pressure in their roads. The parking survey form offered residents several options to choose from; including yellow line waiting restrictions and resident permit parking schemes. Also included was the option 'Do Nothing' – leave things as they are. Residents were also given the opportunity to determine on which days and times they would like their restrictions to operate. The survey returns indicated a particularly high demand for resident permit parking (RPPS) schemes in the Guessens and Stanborough areas. A number of other responses also specifically related to safety concerns around schools. As part of this survey, residents were also asked to provide details of where they thought additional parking provision might be provided.

Three schemes from the survey were progressed to the formal state. A further two schemes have been added from other locations, to address issues, which became apparent during the monitoring period of previous schemes. The relocation and expansion of a general practice surgery to Birdcroft Road, and a request for additional junction protection in the Longcroft Green area have also been included in this Order.

Following discussions with Hertfordshire County Council, roads in which one or more sides do not have a footpath, parking will be permitted on the extended dropped kerb on the side in which there is no footpath. There are some in Handside, an example of this is Elmwood. Pedestrians can use dropped kerbs as another way of crossing from one side of the road to another. If there is no footpath, parking on the extended dropped kerbs would not deem to be obstructive to pedestrians. This is one of the main reasons for introducing a Verge Protection Order.

Members considered the problems highlighted within the six areas listed in the report and appendices attached; together with the objections received.

Members expressed concern in relation to the Birdcroft Road parking. The Officer explained that there is an existing parking scheme in operation and that in October 2019 a letter was sent out to residents in Birdcroft Road, including St Bonaventure's Church and Garden City GP practice proposing to insert two shared use parking bays in Birdcroft Rad to help increase parking provision for patients visiting the Surgery. The current restrictions allow people to park for two hours. Due to comments received from residents relating specifically to the two hours, Parking Services issued a notice in January 2020 proposing to modify the Order. The proposal would reduce the waiting limit from two hours to one hour to maximise the availability of parking for the surgery but would not encourage people to use these parking spaces to visit the town centre. It was noted that no objections had been received.

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The report noted that Guessens area attracted a high level of non-residential parking, attributed to commuter, local workers and shoppers. The design stage of the consultation was completed in February 2019, residents were notified by letter that majority response from residents in the area opted for a resident parking permit scheme to operate Monday-Saturday, 8am-6pm. This was the scheme which would be progressed to the formal stage of the consultation. There was a delay to progressing the scheme due to a member of the Parking Services leaving. Therefore, the formal stage of the consultation did not commence until December 2019. It was noted that during this formal stage of the consultation, a petition was received from eleven residents in Farm Close and ten residents in Guessens Road who park in Farm Close. The main objection was the proposed resident parking permit scheme operating on a Saturday. As the Order had already been advertised the only two options were to either remove the road from the proposals completely, or to progress the scheme to implementation and monitor the impact during the 6 months after completion.

The Council Officer has spoken to the petition organiser and both options discussed. The petition organiser agreed with the recommendation to progress the scheme to implementation due to concerns of displacement, which would be likely to occur if they were not included in the scheme at all. Parking Services have agreed to send out a survey form after 4 months of the scheme been operational, to see if residents included in the petition would like for any changes to be considered.

Discussion was held on the Stanborough Green area and the response from the survey. A petition was received during the formal stage of the consultation relating to the resident parking permit scheme. Ward Member were involved with residents and the consensus was to remove Marsden Close and Marsden Green from the proposals, but if they do go ahead in the surrounding roads to monitor as is the standard practice. Resident would need to contact Parking Services if they would like to be included in the scheme during the 6-month monitoring period.

A discussion was held on Applecroft Road – school drop off and pick up traffic/parking issues; the differing number of parking restrictions currently in place, it was decided that it would be helpful to review the proposals and simplify the restriction around the school. The new parking proposals would retain parking opposite the school on the north-east kerb-line. To prevent the possibility of double parking an additional double yellow line had been proposed directly outside the school to compliment the zig-zag markings already in place. The majority response from resident in this area was for single yellow lines and not a resident parking permit scheme. The split am/pm restricts have been removed to be replaced by no waiting Mon-Fri 9am-11am. A low level of concern was expressed in that the restrictions did not extend to Saturdays.

During the formal stage of the consultation the NHS submitted an objection which covered a few of the proposals. This is included in the report. After contacting the NHS they advised that there is a family clinic which operates out of Applecroft School between 9am-12pm which would be affected by the

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proposed restrictions. Contact was made with the District Manager of the clinic and they were made aware of the proposals. They advised that they ran several clinics in other locations, some of which have no parking provision close by. The clinic at Applecroft School was one of the lucky ones, which did have some parking provision relatively close by. They were advised of the roads which could still be used for parking, as the restrictions did not extend that far, and they are a short walk from the clinic. Parking Services agreed to monitor the restrictions during the 6-month monitoring period, if any issues came to light these would be considered as part of this project.

A discussion was held on Verge Protection Order (VPO) and narrow roads. A number of objections from such roads were concerned this would significantly reduce the amount of parking in the road and this would leave displacement to adjoining roads. Stevenage Borough Council have been introducing VPOs for several years and did lead the way in Hertfordshire. Their best practice is if they receive objections from residents in roads which are 4.5m or less these are automatically removed from the proposals. Five roads had been identified within this parameter: Downfields, Guessens Walk, Handside Close, Handside Green and Melbourne Court. These will be removed from the VPO proposals.

The following points were raised:

- Trades people visiting residents – it was confirmed that the homeowner needs to provide a permit for any visitor to their property.
- Stanborough Green – the area around the flats was considered.
- Sunday enforcement was minimal and sometimes difficult.
- Restrictions in Springfields to remain as requested by residents within the area.

RESOLVED:

(7 for and 4 abstained)

1. The Borough of Welwyn Hatfield (Various Roads, Handside, Welwyn Garden City) (Restriction of Waiting, Parking Places and Permit Parking Zones) Order 2019.

That the Panel considers the objections received in Para 4 and in addition the issues raised in Section 15 around equalities and diversity. Having considered all the detailed issues in this report including any proposed mitigating actions; recommends to Cabinet to proceed with the creation of the amended traffic regulation order (**Appendix H**) excluding Marsden Green and Marsden Close, from the proposed Permit Zone A13, for the reasons set out in this report.

2. The Borough of Welwyn Hatfield (Various Roads, Handside, Welwyn Garden City) (Prohibition of Stopping and Waiting on Verge or Footway) Order 2020.

That the Panel considers the objections received in Para 4 and in addition the issues raised in Section 15 around equalities and diversity. Having considered all the detailed issues in this report including any proposed mitigating actions; recommends to Cabinet to proceed with the creation of

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this traffic regulation order as amended (**Appendix H**) for the reasons set out in this report.

Meeting ended at 8.35 pm  
GP