

Cabinet Housing and Planning Panel
14 July 2016

WELWYN HATFIELD COUNCIL

Minutes of a meeting of the CABINET HOUSING AND PLANNING PANEL held on Thursday 14 July 2016 at 7.30 pm in the Council Offices, The Campus, Welwyn Garden City, Herts, AL8 6AE

PRESENT: Councillors S Boulton (Chairman)
M Perkins (Vice-Chairman)

D Bell, D Bennett, H Bromley, G Hayes, M Holloway,
P Shah, M Spinks, P Zukowskyj (substituting for
M Cowan)

OFFICIALS Parking and Cemetery Services Manager (V Hatfield)
PRESENT: Governance Services Officer (M Lowe)

16. SUBSTITUTIONS:

The following substitutions of Committee Members had been made in accordance with Council Procedure Rules 19-22:

Councillor P Zukowskyj for M Cowan.

17. APOLOGIES:

An apology for absence was received from Councillor M Cowan.

18. MINUTES:

The Minutes of the meeting held on 30 June 2016 were confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

19. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST BY MEMBERS:

Councillor P Zukowskyj declared an interest in items on the agenda as appropriate by virtue of being a member of Hertfordshire County Council and a non-pecuniary interest in Item 8 – The Ryde Area – Proposed Resident Parking Permit Scheme and Restriction of Waiting in that as a parent of a child attending the Ryde School he parked in the area around the school which would be affected by the proposed scheme.

20. ROWANS, SLOANSWAY AND SURROUNDING ROADS - RESTRICTION OF WAITING PROPOSALS:

The report of the Director (Finance and Operations) set out the results of the informal consultation, the formal consultation and the recommended course of

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action in relation to the restriction of waiting proposals for Rowans, Sloansway and surrounding roads. The residents at 694 addresses were consulted and three formal objections had been received.

Residents from two areas in Welwyn Garden City were consulted about proposals to prevent drivers from parking too close to junctions, traffic congestion near schools and possible locations for constructing new parking spaces in the verge and nearby green areas.

The Parking and Cemetery Services Manager informed Members that although she was hoping to move shortly she currently lived in a road in the area which would be affected by the decision made on this scheme.

The Parking and Cemetery Services Manager went on to explain that at the Members' request there would not be a separate detailed Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) but that any significant differential impacts found would be highlighted in the report presented at the meetings of the Panel.

Members considered the following amendment to section 11 of the report – Equality and Diversity.

- that an Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) had been carried out. No significant differential impacts were found. However the following could be impacted by the proposed restrictions.
- a number of elderly and disabled residents lived in this area. From the results of the consultation it appeared that none would be adversely affected by the new restrictions. If needed disabled drivers with a valid blue badge could park on yellow lines for up to three hours.
- however during the monitoring period should any unintended impacts come to light, Parking Services would investigate and carry out the appropriate remedial actions.

Following clarification provided by the Parking and Cemetery Services Manager regarding the following issues:-

- the nature of the parking problems and layout of the road, particularly around the junction at Maple Grove and Runsley which was difficult to ascertain from the interpretation of the map alone;
- parked vehicles obscured sight lines;
- due to the narrowness of the road, vehicles were parked on the grass verges;
- dangerous parking on the junctions and corners;

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- confirmation that full consultation took place with the residents of the area.

RESOLVED:

That having considered the objections received, in particular the issues raised around equalities and diversity and all of the detailed issues in the report, including any proposed mitigating actions, the Cabinet be recommended to proceed with the creation of the Traffic Regulation Order for all the reasons set out in the report.

21. THE RYDE AREA - PROPOSED RESIDENT PARKING PERMIT SCHEME AND RESTRICTION OF WAITING:

The report of the Director (Finance and Operations) set out the results of the informal consultation, the formal consultation and the recommended course of action. A total of 402 properties were included in the consultation and the Council had received six letters of objection to the formal proposals.

A parking study was carried out in Hatfield in March 2012 to identify the key parking problems and possible solutions. Subsequent to this, in 2014 over 5,000 residents and businesses in the Hatfield Central and East Wards received parking questionnaires. Over 1000 completed questionnaires were returned and this information has been collated and analysed.

In April 2015, the Council decided to split both wards into five separate areas and prioritise these. Residents and businesses in The Ryde and surrounding roads were the first to be consulted.

Members considered the following amendment to section 11 of the report – Equality and Diversity.

- that an Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) had been carried out.
- no significant differential impacts were found.
- age – elderly residents might benefit from a less congested environment, with improved access to and egress from their properties. Residents in receipt of a state pension were eligible for 50% discount when purchasing visitor vouchers.
- carers for the elderly - if elderly residents need a carer there are a number of options:
 - the restriction was only for one hour Monday-Friday and carers could visit outside of the one hour restriction
 - if they were family members they could apply for a free 'carers' permit
 - practices already purchased Doctor/Health Visitor permits for their staff and these could be used in all of the Council's permit areas.

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- disability – disabled residents might feel encouraged to use their vehicle in a less congested environment and residents with a valid blue badge received their first permit free of charge.

The Parking and Cemetery Services Manager confirmed that:-

- a full and open dialogue had been held with the Headteacher of the Ryde School during which various times regarding the hour's restriction outside the school had been discussed and agreed.
- many of the residents who had responded to the consultation exercise had requested a restriction of some sort. Although the majority of the responses (41%) opted for a single yellow line during the consultation, a significant number (34%) opted for a resident permit scheme, as either themselves or their visitors would need to park during the proposed hours of operation. With this information in mind, the Council progressed the resident parking permit scheme to the formal stage.
- following the election, all three new Ward Members had received a full briefing on the proposed scheme and had been fully engaged and involved.

Members expressed mixed views regarding the effect of the reopening of the refurbished station car park. It was difficult to ascertain exactly the impact on the migration of cars with regards to the station car park or whether parking was moving further up The Ryde. Many of the properties in the area had driveway access, often large and spacious driveways. Concerns were expressed regarding the displacement of vehicles into other already congested areas.

RESOLVED:
(9 voting for and 1 against)

That having considered the objections received, in particular the issues raised around equalities and diversity and having all of the detailed issues in the report including any proposed mitigating actions, the Cabinet be recommended to proceed with the creation of the Traffic Regulation Order for all the reasons set out in this report.

(Note: Councillor P Zukowskyj declared an interest in this item. Minute 19 refers).

Meeting ended at 8.05 pm
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