

WELWYN HATFIELD BOROUGH COUNCIL
CABINET HOUSING AND PLANNING PANEL COMMITTEE – 17 MARCH 2016
REPORT OF THE DIRECTOR (FINANCE AND OPERATIONS)

PARKING IMPROVEMENT POLICY

1 Executive Summary

- 1.1 Parking Services carry out parking improvements throughout the borough. These can be by removing verge and/or grassed areas to create more communal parking, or by constructing a hard standing within the curtilage of the property and applying to Hertfordshire County Council to lower the kerb.
- 1.2 This report outlines the process which Parking Services will follow when seeking approval to carry out such improvements.

2 Recommendation(s)

- 2.1 That the Panel recommends to Cabinet the formal changes to the Parking Improvement Policy as outlined in 3.6 – 3.9.

3 Explanation

Current Parking Improvement process/policy

- 3.1 All Parking improvements can be on either public highway, Council or Housing land, dependent on which improvement is required, will determine the approval process. All residents in the affected locations will be consulted on the proposals.
- 3.2 Improvements proposed on the public highway or which have an impact on the public highway need to be approved by Hertfordshire County Council (HCC) as the highway authority. If HCC object to an improvement scheme, then this scheme can not progress any further as they are objecting on safety grounds.
- 3.3 Some improvements on Housing/Estate land need to be approved by our own Planning Department, where the proposal does not constitute permitted development under the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (England) Order 2015. Improvements that require planning permission will require the successful submission of a planning application before a contractor can begin construction. This process can take up to 8 weeks for a decision and before work can be passed forward for construction if approved. If the Planning Section refuse to the improvement proposals, then again the scheme would not progress. Refusals from Planning are usually based on concerns of improvement scheme/s altering the character of the area.
- 3.4 If trees are present in the proposals, Landscape and Ecology in most cases would object to a parking improvement scheme. This is due to Landscape and Ecology's current policy which states that trees will not be removed to accommodate additional parking.

- 3.5 In the past if objections have been received from one or more residents, the decision whether to construct the scheme or not, comes from the Parking Services Section officers based on their technical experience and local knowledge.

Proposed New Parking Improvement Process

- 3.6 Parking Services seek to retain the current process for parking improvements for HCC and will remain the same as outlined in 3.2
- 3.7 Parking Services seek to retain the current process for Landscape & Ecology, which is as outlined in section 3.4
- 3.8 Parking Services are not intending to change the process for when Parking Services receive objections from residents and the process will remain the same as outlined in section 3.5
- 3.9 Parking Services are proposing to change the process for requesting feedback from the Council's Planning Section for Housing/Estate land. Informal advice will be sought in the first instance, as some parking improvements may be allowed under permitted development rights. A formal application will be submitted for them to comment, approve and/or object to the proposals. This application will be available on the Council's website and notices will be erected in the proposed location by the relevant Planning Officer.

This formal process ensures there is transparency with members of the public. The information surrounding the decision would also be available for members of the public to view.

Implications

4 Legal Implication(s)

- 4.1 There are no legal implications inherent in relation to the proposals in this report.

5 Financial Implication(s)

- 5.1 The cost of Parking Improvement works will be dependent on funding made available each year through the Council's Capital Budget programme.
- 5.2 The submission of a formal planning application will incur an additional charge, for each application, this will be funded out of the appropriate capital budget.

6 Risk Management Implications

The risk related to this proposal is:

- 6.1 There is a potential for adverse or positive risk for the Council with regards public opinion for the removal of verge and/or grassed areas to create more parking provision.
- 6.2 Due to this proposed change to the process we are governed by the Councils Planning timescales for processing applications. This may delay schemes from been constructed.

7 Security & Terrorism Implication(s)

7.1 There are no security & terrorism implications inherent in relation to the proposals in this report.

8 Procurement Implication(s)

8.1 There are no procurement implications inherent in relation to the proposals in this report.

9 Climate Change Implication(s)

9.1 There are no climate change implications inherent in relation to the proposals in this report

10 Link to Corporate Priorities

10.1 The subject of this report is linked to the Council's Corporate Priority Protect and Enhance the Environment, and specifically to the achievement to Deliver Effective Parking Services

- Protect and enhance the environment – Deliver effective parking services;
- Engage with our communities and provide value for money;

11 Equality and Diversity

11.1 I confirm that an Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) has not been carried out. The creation of a TRO requires further statutory consultation. An EIA will be finalised during each stage of the TRO process.

Name of author (*Vikki Hatfield*)
Title (*Parking and Cemetery Services Manager*)
Date (*3rd March 2016*)

Background papers to be listed (if applicable)