

**NOTE OF THE PARKING PROVISION AND MANAGEMENT: DISCUSSION FORUM
HELD ON WEDNESDAY 24 OCTOBER 2011 IN THE COUNCIL CHAMBER, CIVIC CENTRE**

Attendees

1. Those attending the meeting were:

Councillor Ian Reay, Chair
Councillor Julie Laws
Councillor David Collins
Ivor Eisenstadt, MGP
Rosie Eisenstadt, MGP (for Jerry Wright, ABC)
Clive Birch (Resident representative)
Ian Stephenson (Resident representative)
David Carter (Resident representative)
Kerry Bangle (Resident representative)
Julian Dent (Sports Club)

Apologies

2. Apologies were received from:

Peter Nicholls (Berkhamsted School)
Jerry Wright (ABC)
David Steadman (TravelTime World)
Councillor Tom Ritchie
Councillor Macdonald

3. Transition Town Berkhamsted also offered apologies in not being able to present the agenda item on sustainable transport. **It was agreed that this item be carried over to a future meeting.**

Minutes of last meeting

4. The following additions were agreed to the minutes of the meeting on 5 September 2012.
- i It was agreed that the shared parking spaces would not meet the needs of business parkers, as they would be for short-term use only. There is currently no intention to have any long-term on-street parking for businesses in the zones.
 - ii Cllr Collins stated that it would be inefficient to have empty parking spaces during the day, when businesses need them and that we need a solution that will maximise the use of the spaces for the good of commerce and the town.
 - iii Concern was expressed that the parking zones scheme was running ahead of the Urban Transport Plan for the town.
 - iv Cllr Laws advised that the feedback would take the form of a yes/no consultation, but would not be a vote. Households and businesses would each have one response.
 - v The feedback from the Discussion forum, including whether it is able to develop a better scheme, will not be part of the consultation but will inform the final recommendation.

Controlled Parking Zone - Consultation update

5. Cllr Laws provided an update on the consultation, which would close on 26 October.
6. The scheme is being promoted by the Town Council, but any traffic order will be made by Dacorum Borough Council, as the parking authority. It will therefore be a decision of the Borough Council as to whether or not any scheme should be introduced.

7. Decisions on the making of Traffic orders are normally made by the Borough Council's Cabinet Portfolio Holder for Environment and Sustainability. However, this position is currently held by Cllr Laws. Given that role as Town Councillor, the decision is likely to be made by the Leader of Dacorum Borough Council, Cllr Andrew Williams.
8. With regards to the formal consultation process, the Town Council is being supported by the Borough Council's Lead Officer on Parking Policy, Steven Barnes. Mr Barnes has helped develop the current proposals based on the conditions applying to the controlled parking zones currently in operation across the Borough. The draft Traffic order and Schedules, which are the subject of the consultation, were drawn up by the Borough Council's consultants.
9. When the consultation finishes, it will be the Town Council who decides to submit a recommendation to the Borough Council for decision on the Order. One of four things will result:
 - The Traffic Order is made, advertised and the scheme introduced, or
 - Small modifications are made to the draft Order, any modifications being agreed by Herts County Council, the Traffic order is made, advertised and the scheme introduced, or
 - Significant modification are made to the draft Order and a further formal consultation is undertaken on the revised draft Order, or
 - The scheme is scrapped, wholly or partially.
10. It was recognised that Transport and Environment Committee would consider arrangements for analysis of consultation feedback and the decision-making process going forward. It was clarified that Full Council would consider a report on the consultation and make a recommendation on the scheme. That recommendation would go forward for Borough Council consideration and decision. In further discussion it was recognised that analysis of consultation feedback should be undertaken by an independent assessor, rather than Councillors or a Borough Council employee.
11. The Town Council will ensure that reasons and how they are arrived at are made clear in a formal report on the consultation. It was agreed that the Discussion Forum would consider a report on the results of the feedback.
12. There was discussion, on how quickly changes could be made to any Traffic Order made and whether it was possible to, or if other towns had, piloted changes to test their suitability and effectiveness. **DBC would be asked for advice on timescales for changing Traffic Orders and whether there was scope to pilot and test arrangements before they were permanently introduced.**
13. There was further discussion on the discrepancy between Town Council and Resident assessments of available parking spaces from the proposed schemes and the scale of displacement to other streets outside the zones. It was important to agree the displacement as part of an assessment of the impact of introducing any schemes, including in the proposed 'commuter ban' zone, and to determine the resultant impact on each affected zone and group - whether residents, businesses, employees, students, commuters and shoppers – and to identify possible mitigating actions for each group that will arise from any recommendation to proceed with controlled parking zones.
14. **It was agreed that Councillors and Forum representatives would meet to agree displacement figures and that the next meeting include an item for discussion on the impact and possible mitigations in light of any recommendation(s). Mr Birch agreed to provide a process map for impact and mitigation assessments to help facilitate that discussion.**

15. It was also agreed that **DBC should be asked to clarify when and how the feedback from the Emergency Services and other statutory consultees would be available and whether that would be included as part of the Town Council's assessment.**
16. On a detailed question as to why Manor Croft has been excluded from the maps and scheme, Councillor explained that the most up-to-date 2011 maps from Ordnance Survey have been used to produce indicative parking schematics and where road lining is proposed. Any development after the production of those maps by Ordnance Survey are not shown on these maps.
17. However, the absence of the most recent developments from the maps does not indicate that councillors are not aware of the existence of such developments. The proposed schemes do not include any flats or small clusters of housing with parking on site. Manor Croft falls into this category.
18. There were concerns on how arrangements for 'essential users' would operate, particularly when they worked outside a zone, such as for the Boxwell Road Clinic, or for carers visiting blocks of flats where residents might need lengthy or 24 hour care. **DBC were to be asked to provide more details on arrangements for essential users would be provided for the next meeting.**

Multi-Storey Car Park Update

19. The drawings on the proposed multi-storey car park provided for the parking scheme exhibition were schematic and taken from the initial feasibility study. DBC Cabinet discussed the feasibility study at their meeting yesterday evening and minutes are posted on the Borough Council website.
20. At the meeting, it was agreed that the multi-storey car park project should move to Phase 1 – due diligence, which is to establish demand for parking. This will be completed by January 2013.
21. Other phases for the project over time are:
 - Phase 2 - design, planning approval and tender for a multi-storey car park
 - Phase 3 - tender and construction
 - Phase 4 – operation of the asset by DBC Parking and Building Services Teams.
22. In discussion, it was recognised that any proposed car park must make a substantial contribution to current parking problems and to future problems that will arise from, for example the increased demand for parking arising from any large scale residential developments.
23. **It was agreed that DBC be invited to a future meeting to discuss progress and plans for the multi-storey car park.**

Review of potential solutions to parking provision and management

24. Mr Dent outlined the potential to develop Sports Club Land, currently used for car parking by members at weekends and evenings, into a weekday car park for local employees and businesses. The initial steps in this would be to hold pre-application discussions with the planning department at DBC. **The Clerk would provide contact details to Mr Dent.**
25. The Sacred Heart Catholic Church had expressed an interest in making car park spaces available for use by employees at businesses in the town. It was agreed that it would be useful for the Sports Club and Church to compare notes on arrangements and process for establishing such car parks. The Clerk would provide Church contact details to Mr Dent.
26. Another suggestion was to identify potential spaces across the Town as the start to exploring whether it could be used for car parking. **Attendees were invited to email the Clerk, as the start to compiling a register of any such potential spaces for further investigation.**

27. It was agreed that more work was needed to identify opportunities to improve traffic flow through a one-way system. This work could help inform the next stage of consultation on the Urban Transport Plan.
28. The meeting also noted that Berkhamsted School had written with proposals to improve traffic congestion, particularly around Castle Street. These proposals were to be considered at the Town Council's Transport and Environment Committee meeting in November.

Date of next meeting

29. The date of the next meeting was to be arranged for Wednesday 28 November 2012 at 7.00pm.