

TRANSPORTATION SUB-COMMITTEE

- 9 January 2002

Minutes of the meeting of the **Transportation Sub-Committee** held on **9 January 2002** when there were present:

Cllr R S Allen (Chairman)
Cllr Mrs J M Giles
Cllr J E Grey
Cllr Mrs J Helson

Cllr R A Pearson
Cllr S P Smith
Cllr Mrs M Vince
Cllr Mrs M J Webster

OFFICERS PRESENT

S J Clarkson - Head of Revenue & Housing Management
Ms S Worthington – Committee Administrator

183 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Cllrs G Fox, C C Langlands, C R Morgan and M G B Starke.

184 SUBSTITUTES

Cllrs R Adams and P D Stebbing.

185 NON-MEMBERS ATTENDING

Cllr Mrs H L A Glynn.

186 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Cllr Mrs H L A Glynn declared a non pecuniary interest in the item on disabled parking in off-street car parks by virtue of regularly taking out various disabled people in her own car.

187 MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 6 SEPTEMBER 2001

The minutes of the meeting held on 6 September 2001 were agreed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

188 DISABLED PARKING IN OFF-STREET CAR PARKS

The Sub-Committee considered the report of the Head of Revenue & Housing Management asking Members to consider the redesignation of the type of persons who are eligible to park free in off-street disabled parking bays in view of the representation made by the Rochford District Access Committee for the Disabled.

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The Council provides specially marked bays, with enhanced access, free of charge to disabled motorists. The charge concession was offered to avoid the need for the severely disabled to have to access a ticket machine rather than the implication that they could not afford to pay.

It was noted that additional information relating to the Access Committee for the Disabled was circulated to Members.

Responding to Member questions, the Head of Revenue & Housing Management confirmed that a survey of the other thirteen Authorities in Essex revealed that seven do not charge for disabled parking in pay and display car parks. Tendring and Colchester charge after 3 hours, Castle Point and Chelmsford have a variety of different tariffs, plus a few free car parks, Thurrock only charges in one of its car parks and Brentwood is debating the issue next week. In all cases this information related to pay and display operated car parks. Where barrier management systems existed, all motorists were liable to pay the standard fees as no distinction could be made between a disabled or ambulant motorist.

During debate, the following issues were noted:-

- In instances when a disabled person is driven by a carer or family member, the driver is able to get to a ticket machine.
- There might be cases where family members borrow a disabled person's blue badge for their own use.
- Blue badge holders who park in parking bays other than designated disabled parking bays prevent this Council from receiving income from the spaces they occupy.
- The disabled parking bays at Boots Lagoon are often occupied by drivers who are able to walk, thus depriving those in wheelchairs from utilising the bays.

On a motion moved by Cllr Mrs J Helson and seconded by Cllr Mrs J M Giles it was:-

RECOMMENDED

That there be new signage for the disabled parking bays in Boots Lagoon designating the bays for wheelchair users only. (HRHM)

Responding to Member questions, the Head of Revenue & Housing Management advised that this Council is not obliged to provide disabled car parking bays. However, local authorities are sympathetic to the needs of the disabled. The national standard is that 3% of car

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parking spaces are designated for disabled parking. This Council meets the standard, and in some areas exceeds it.

The following issues were noted during debate:-

- There is no direct relationship between the number of blue badges issued and the actual number of severely disabled people in the country; 1 car in 14 carries a blue badge, but only 1 in 70 people are severely disabled.
- People who become severely disabled after their 65th birthday are disadvantaged in that they are not eligible for the Higher Rate Mobility component of Disability Living Allowance. Only those in receipt of this are entitled to vehicle excise duty exemption discs.

On a motion moved by Cllr Mrs M J Webster and seconded by Cllr P D Stebbing it was:-

RECOMMENDED

That a letter be sent to the Disabled Person's Transport Advisory Committee (DPTAC) in support of extending the vehicle excise duty exemption disc to the over 65s, and copied to the Members of Parliament for Rayleigh and Rochford & Southend East constituencies. (HRHM)

It was further noted that:-

- The Rochford District Access Committee for the Disabled is a democratic, open group, which represents the views of the disabled within the District. An Officer represents the Council on this Committee.
- Any changes in free car parking for the disabled will need to be well communicated to residents in the District.

RECOMMENDED

- (1) That free parking in pay and display car parks be restricted to severely disabled persons displaying vehicle excise duty exemption discs only.
- (2) That the changes be advertised in the car parks and an initial period of grace is exercised by the issuing of warning notices to drivers. (HRHM)

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189 'BAR-N-BUS' VEHICLE AT WEBSTERS WAY CAR PARK, RAYLEIGH

The Sub-Committee considered the report of the Head of Revenue & Housing Management, advising on the ongoing use of Websters Way Car Park on Thursday evenings by the 'Bar-N-Bus' vehicle.

It was the general consensus of the Sub-Committee that the initiative was a successful one, providing a valuable service to young people in the area. It might be worthwhile exploring whether the initiative could be extended to another evening and to other parts of the District.

RECOMMENDED

- (1) That the contents of this report be noted.
- (2) That Officers continue to consult with John Ward and the Police to monitor the effectiveness of this initiative and report back to this Sub-Committee in 6 months' time.
- (3) That a letter be sent to the 'Bar-N-Bus' Trust suggesting that the success in Websters Way might be built on by extending the initiative to another evening and to other parts of the District.
(HRHM)

The meeting closed at 8.25 pm.

Chairman . _____