

DECRIMINALISED PARKING ENFORCEMENT – QUARTERLY PROGRESS REPORT

1 SUMMARY

- 1.1 This report updates Members on progress towards implementing Decriminalised Parking Enforcement (DPE) in the Rochford District.

2 BACKGROUND

- 2.1 The Road Traffic Act 1991 provides for the decriminalisation of certain non-endorsable parking offences in London and allows Local Authorities, outside London, to apply to the Secretary of State for similar powers. These mainly include parking offences on yellow lines and on-street parking spaces. It does not include endorsable parking offences and offences related to obstruction, for which Essex Police continue to be responsible.
- 2.2 DPE powers allow Local Authorities to take over responsibility for enforcing parking contraventions from the Police and to retain revenue received from penalty notices to fund enforcement activities.
- 2.3 The Council has an agreement with Essex County Council to adopt powers to enforce on-street parking regulations with effect from 1 October 2004.
- 2.4 At a meeting of this Committee held on 5 June 2003, an action plan was produced that would see the introduction of DPE to an agreed timetable. In October the Head of Service and Transportation Manager met with Essex County Council (ECC) representatives and the consultant acting on behalf of the County Council to make final adjustments to the financial model for Rochford District Council. The model makes projections about the cost of service delivery and income generation.
- 2.5 The full financial model (and previous versions) runs to around 30 pages and is available in the Members' Library.

3 CURRENT POSITION

- 3.1 Progress towards implementing DPE is proceeding smoothly and in accordance with the action plan. As reported previously, extracts from the financial model have been included in the 2004/5 budget and Essex County Council Highways advise that the review is complete and the remedial work will commence at the end of June.
- 3.2 The job description has been prepared for the additional Administration Officer and will be advertised in July. The latest talks with the Police and Essex County Council suggest that two Traffic Wardens are likely to be transferred on 1 October 2004, which will effectively negate the need to

advertise for additional Parking Attendants. Routes and rotas for the Parking Attendants have also been finalised.

- 3.3 The Council's chosen software suppliers are currently working on the configuration of the enforcement system. Senior officers visited their Head Office in April to discuss specific tailoring of the software and to agree targets and deadlines.

4 NATIONAL PARKING ADJUDICATION SERVICE

- 4.1 Members will recall at the last meeting, it was resolved that the Council formally sought membership of the National Parking Adjudication Service (NPAS) and that a Member be nominated to serve on the NPAS joint Committee. This meets once a year and the Head of Service advises that the agreement has been received and is with the Council's Solicitor for approval. The Council has also received details from NPAS on where the Essex Adjudication Centres are located. This is where appellants will need to go to have their appeals heard.

The NPAS Centres are: -

Chelmsford

Essex Record Office
Wharf Road
Chelmsford

Southend on Sea

Central Library
Victoria Avenue
Southend on Sea

5 PUBLICITY

- 5.1 The publicity programme is gaining pace with designs for leaflets, adverts and posters having been determined. At a meeting with Essex County Council, it was agreed that, if printed promptly, leaflets could be included in the July edition of *Rochford District Matters*.
- 5.2 The positioning of road signs at the boundaries of the District, which will advertise the change of administration from 1 October 2004, have been agreed and orders have been placed with Essex County Council. The signs should be in place by August 2004.

6 TRAINING

- 6.1 DPE training has been arranged for September, both for the Council's existing Patrol Officers and any Traffic Wardens transferring from the Police. The

training is intense with the course lasting 5 full days at venues in Chelmsford. The Transportation Office staff will also receive training on the administration duties required by DPE. The courses have been arranged over a two week period to ensure minimal disruption to the current service.

7 TRANSPORT

- 7.1 An additional patrol vehicle will be ordered shortly in the Council's corporate colours.

8 PARKING PERMITS

- 8.1 At a previous meeting, Members asked whether parking permits could be issued to carers. This has been investigated and it was found that permits were issued to carers in other Authorities for parking in residents' parking bays only and not for on street parking restrictions. As this Authority has no residents' parking bays, permits will therefore not be required.

9 FINANCE AND RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

- 9.1 The County Council is providing start-up capital and start-up expenses on an interest-free loan basis, which will be repaid through a £2.00 'bounty' for each PCN issued. The Head of Service and County Council consultant estimate that PCN issues should plateau at around 5,900 each year, resulting in an annual repayment figure to the County Council of £11,800. The County Council is also prepared to meet the cost of any 'unavoidable losses' in the management of on-street parking enforcement, but the Head of Service does not envisage this will be required.

10 RISK ASSESSMENT

10.1 Strategic Risk

The Council is required to be a major force of influence in car park administration and should demonstrate its commitment to delivering the aims and objectives of its agreement with the County Council.

10.2 Resources Risk

The Council is a major landowner in the District with its car parks producing a major source of income. The introduction of DPE across the District should encourage greater use of car parks. This has been factored into the financial model. Failure to provide adequate resources to successfully run DPE would jeopardise the programme.

10.3 Reputation Risk

DPE has now been successfully implemented in around 65% of Local Authorities. Rochford District Council would not wish to be seen as the 'first to

fail'.

11 RECOMMENDATION

11.1 It is proposed that the Committee **RESOLVES:-**

That the progress report be noted. (HRHM)

Steve Clarkson
Head of Revenue and Housing Management

Background Papers:

None

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