

**Minutes of the Meeting of the ENVIRONMENT AND SAFE COMMUNITIES
COMMITTEE held on 24 November 2021**

PRESENT -

Councillor Neil Dallen (Chair); Councillor John Beckett (Vice-Chair); Councillors Steve Bridger, Chris Frost, Rob Geleit, Steven McCormick (as nominated substitute for Councillor Barry Nash), Julie Morris and Humphrey Reynolds

Absent: Councillor Christine Howells, Councillor Lucie McIntyre and Councillor Barry Nash

Officers present: Clare Lawrence (Director of Environment, Housing & Regeneration), Rod Brown (Head of Housing and Community), Sue Emmons (Senior Accountant), Richard Chevalier (Parking Manager) and Stephanie Gray (Democratic Services Officer)

17 QUESTION TIME

There were no questions received from members of the public.

It was noted that the Update on the Climate Change Action Plan had not been brought to this meeting of the Committee, as this was a Special Meeting, only considering the business that had been referred to it. The Update remains on the Forward Plan of the Environment and Safe Communities Committee.

In addition, newly emerging issues such as the ratified Environment Bill, as well as new climate change issues, would be considered alongside the issues in the Climate Change Action Plan, and priorities would be identified.

18 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

The following declaration of interest was made in respect of an item on the Agenda:

Kingston Road Car Park (Stoneleigh)

Councillor John Beckett, Other Interest: In the interests of openness and transparency, Councillor John Beckett declared a personal and prejudicial interest in that his property borders the car park and he is the Ward Councillor.

Councillor John Beckett left the room when this item was discussed and did not participate in any debate or vote.

19 KINGSTON ROAD CAR PARK (STONELEIGH)

The Committee received a report proposing changes to the Kingston Road Car Park in Stoneleigh Parade to include annual permit parking options for residents, non-residents and businesses as well as the availability of daily parking using cashless alternatives.

The Committee received a verbal introduction from the Parking Manager.

The following matters were raised by the Committee:

- a) **The increase in prevalence of longer-wheel-base delivery vehicles, as a result of the pandemic and the growth of the gig economy.** It was noted that at present, there are two designated bays in the Car Park (which cater for longer vehicles), but that further specific bays will not be designated at present. It was also confirmed that it is not planned to levy an additional charge for a longer vehicle and also that when applying for a permit, an applicant would not have to specify what length of vehicle the permit is being applied for.
- b) **Enforcement issues:** it was confirmed that compliance with parking arrangements (length of vehicle, payment options) would be monitored and enforced by EEBC's Enforcement Officers.
- c) **Availability of parking bays for residents:** a query was raised regarding the availability of parking bays for residents, the concern being that residents would purchase a permit and then possibly not find an open bay to park in. It was confirmed that it is unlikely that the Car Park would ever reach capacity (based on current usage). Once the consultation period is over (in the event that the recommendations are approved), there will be a clearer indication of the number of permits/bays that would be taken up by residents.
- d) **Financial implications:** a query was raised regarding the financial implications of the proposal. It was confirmed that there is sufficient budgetary provision to cover the costs of signage and related expenses. It is anticipated that the Car Park will become a source of revenue for EEBC. The Car Park currently does not generate any income, however the proposals would allow for some revenue to be generated which will contribute to the costs of its upkeep.

Following consideration, the Committee resolved by majority vote to:

- (1) **Authorise the Director of Environment, Housing and Regeneration to publish such notice and/or make such order as is considered necessary to propose the amendment of the Off Street Parking**

Places Traffic Order in respect of the car park in Kingston Road (Stoneleigh Parade) to include the following:

- **Annual parking permits for residents and non-residents/businesses;**
and
- **Daily, evening and Sunday parking fees for visitors parking for over 3 hours, payable via cashless parking methods.**

20 CASHLESS PARKING

The Committee received a report seeking approval from the Committee for officers to procure a service provider to continue to offer cashless parking options within the Epsom & Ewell Borough Council's pay and display car parks.

The Committee received a verbal introduction from the Parking Manager. It was noted that since September 2019, a cashless parking system was introduced in the Borough Council's pay and display car parks in addition to Council's own offering of payment by cash or card. It was also noted that in the financial year 2021/21, 27,6% of visitors to the car parks opted to pay using the cashless provider and that this figure had increased in the 2021/22 year (to date), to over 33,8% of car park users.

Noting further that the initial trial period of 2 years from September 2019 has come to an end, it has been proposed to secure a longer term offering to provide cashless parking and to secure a better financial return on the use of this service.

The following matters were raised by the Committee:

- a) **Possible legal implications:** it was confirmed that there are no legal implications that are anticipated will arise if the proposal is adopted.
- b) **Duration of arrangement:** it was confirmed that the "longer term offering" referred to in the report is intended to endure for a period of 3 years, whilst this period could be longer or shorter depending on procurement considerations.
- c) **Financial implications for the EEBC:** it was confirmed that the utilisation of a cashless service provider has no cost implications for the EEBC. The current service provider takes a convenience fee, which is passed on to the user. There are optional additional charges (for receiving a text message), which are also passed on to the user. It was confirmed that these charges are clearly stated on the website and in the car parks.
- d) **Current service provider:** it was confirmed that the EEBC will not necessarily continue the arrangement with the current service provider, depending on the outcome of the procurement process.

Following consideration, the Committee unanimously resolved to:

- (1) **Agree to the procurement of a long term service provider to offer cashless parking within Borough Council car parks.**
- (2) **Authorise the Head of Housing and Community and the Head of Corporate Assurance, in conjunction with the Chair of the Environment & Safe Communities Committee, to procure a cashless parking service provider.**

21 TOWN HALL / HOPE LODGE CAR PARKS

The Committee received a report requesting the authorisation of the Committee to propose a change to the Off Street Parking Traffic Order in relation to the removal of car park barriers in the rear of Town Hall and Hope Lodge car parks.

The Committee considered the following matters:

- a) **The cost of maintenance of the barrier controlled system:** this system is expensive to maintain, with the parts and maintenance contracts, and the CCTV on the barriers costing over £28 000 annually. The CCTV is a live feed, and is not used for surveillance purposes.
- b) **Cost saving measures:** a paper had been brought to the Committee in January 2021, recommending the removal of the barrier control system as part of potential cost saving measures.

Following consideration, the Committee unanimously resolved to:

- (1) **Authorise the Director of Environment, Housing and Regeneration to publish such notice and/or make such order as is considered necessary to propose the amendment of the Off Street Parking Places Traffic Order in respect of the car parks at the rear of Town Hall and Hope Lodge to include the following:**
 - **The removal of the barrier controlled car parking system.**
 - **The re-introduction of pay and display parking in conjunction with cashless parking options.**

The meeting began at 7.30 pm and ended at 8.15 pm

COUNCILLOR NEIL DALLEN (CHAIR)