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## **General Public Services, Community Safety & Infrastructure**

### **MINUTES**

**Of a meeting held in the Penn Chamber, Three Rivers House, Rickmansworth, on Tuesday, 14 January 2025 from 7.30 pm – 9.16 pm.**

**Present:** Councillors

Louise Price, in the Chair  
Stephen Giles-Medhurst  
Elinor Gazzard  
Andrew Scarth  
Oliver Cooper  
Lisa Hudson  
Christopher Alley  
Narinder Sian  
Stephen Cox

**Also in Attendance:**

Councillors Vicky Edwards and Chris Whately-Smith

**Officers in attendance:**

Emma Sheridan, Associate Director – Environment  
Kimberley Rowley, Head of Regulatory Services  
Tom Rankin, Sustainable Transport Officer  
Sally Riley, Finance Business Partner  
Anita Hibbs, Committee Officer

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#### **22 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Sarah Nelmes, Kevin Raeburn and Joan King, substitutes being Councillors Stephen Giles-Medhurst, Elinor Gazzard and Stephen Cox.

#### **23 MINUTES**

RESOLVED: The minutes of the General Public Services, Community Safety & Infrastructure committee held on 15 October 2024 were confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chair of the meeting.

The amended minutes of the General Public Services, Community Safety & Infrastructure committee held on 23 July 2024 were also confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chair of the meeting.

#### **24 NOTICE OF OTHER BUSINESS**

There were no items of other business.

## **25 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

Councillor Narinder Sian declared a non-pecuniary interest in agenda item 5 by virtue of being a Governor of Breakspear school on Gallows Hill Lane.

Councillors Stephen Giles-Medhurst, Andrew Scarth and Louise Price declared a non-pecuniary interest in agenda item 7 by virtue of owning, or having the use of, an electric vehicle.

## **26 TO RECEIVE A PETITION UNDER COUNCIL PROCEDURE RULE 18**

Mr. Cowderoy, the Lead petitioner presented the petition which requests a review of the issue of parked cars at the top of Kindersley Way and the top northern side of Gallows Hill Lane to manage parking demands in the area.

As the Lead Member, Councillor Sarah Nelmes was not present at the meeting, Councillor Stephen Giles-Medhurst responded to the petitioner, assuring him that officers will investigate the matter and will discuss with all Ward Members what scheme may come forward as a result of the petition.

RESOLVED:

The committee noted the petition.

## **27 PARKING MANAGEMENT PROGRAMME**

The Sustainable Transport Officer introduced the report and listed the 11 additions that officers were proposing to the parking management programme.

Members raised concerns regarding the governance and management of the new parking schemes being introduced. While in support of the 11 schemes, they highlighted a misidentification of issues at the Ferry car park, clarifying that commuter traffic is not the problem, as commuters are currently prohibited from using it. Instead, the pressure is on nearby residential roads. They emphasised the need for more frequent reviews of the schemes, suggesting that an interim report should be mandated within a year, instead of two years. This would ensure better oversight and responsiveness to community needs, particularly for schemes like the Rickmansworth West scheme, that have drawn significant public feedback. They advocated for quicker progression of certain schemes, urging amendments to the recommendations for timely evaluations. Officers acknowledged the concerns raised by Members and emphasised their awareness of the challenges and the community's concerns. Following the discussion, Councillor Oliver Cooper proposed an amendment to paragraph ii. of the recommendation to state that an interim progress report will be put forward to the committee to note in 2026.

Members also raised concerns about digital exclusions among seniors and questions whether the Council is addressing these issues. Additionally, they enquired about any carbon impact assessment related to the parking schemes. Officers clarified that the app-based parking solution will be an additional option rather than a replacement for existing payment methods

The functionality of the parking meters at the Ferry car park were raised, particularly, in light of the nearby library's impact on parking demand. Members highlighted that the parking meter was out of use recently and questioned how such issues are reported to the Council, emphasising the potential loss of revenue. Officers responded by explaining that there is a form available online for reporting broken meters, and acknowledged recent widespread issues with meters. They clarified that there are currently no parking restrictions in the Ferry

car park, which is why the meter was covered and appeared out of use. Officers also indicated that a traffic regulation order (TRO) would be necessary for a meter to be installed if parking restrictions were implemented.

Members revisited the points made earlier of the importance of clarifying the wording in paragraph 4.5 of the report regarding the timeline for reports. They emphasised again the need for an interim report in 2026, prior to the scheduled report in 2027, suggesting that this would provide insight into progress over the 24 month programme.

Members also expressed concerns regarding the rapid developments and resident feedback, seeking clarity on how quickly adjustments can be made, specifically in relation to the Rickmansworth West scheme. Officers responded by highlighting the complexities involved, noting that the timeline for changes will depend on the scale of issues identified during the review. They emphasised that if significant changes are necessary, it could involve a lengthy statutory consultation process.

The committee briefly touched on the scheme listed under 3.1.7 in the report, seeking confirmation on its priority status. Officers indicated in response that they are working to progress various schemes quickly, including the scheme listed under 3.1.7, and mentioned upcoming consultations with Ward Councillors to ensure the progress is communicated effectively.

Members also emphasised the need to prioritise the Ferry parking scheme, arguing that it does not incur significant downsides except for officer time. They highlighted that local residents currently face high parking costs for commuting, suggesting that implementing the scheme could save money for residents and generate revenue for the Council. Officers acknowledged again the competing priorities, noting that while several schemes are in progress, the Ferry parking scheme will be included in the next programme.

The importance of transparency regarding the priority order of the schemes was highlighted by Members. Officers further stressed that the various schemes are progressing at different stages. They acknowledged past issues, where projects have taken excessively long to complete due to overpromising and lack of staff resources. The new programme aims to prioritise TRO's and ensure ongoing work is effectively managed, including the involvement of consultants where necessary to enhance expertise and capacity.

Members requested the Kindersley Way scheme to be added to the parking management programme, for investigation. They also referred to the slow progression of previous changes and stated that they would prefer the language used in the recommendation of the previous parking management programme from 2023, which allowed broader input from Ward Councillors. Officers explained the rationale behind the current governance structure, emphasising the importance of reviewing schemes against scoring criteria before inclusion. They clarified that while new additions will be discussed with the Lead Member and relevant Councillors, the process aims to maintain prioritisation based on established criteria.

Members argued that the recommendation approved two years ago allowed for more autonomy for the officer team in consultation with the Lead Member and Ward Councillors, aiming to reflect community needs. However, the new proposal limits this authority, giving the Lead Member veto power over scheme additions, would mean a more centralised power that would undermine professional judgement. Officers responded by clarifying historical practices regarding Lead Member involvement, indicating that exceptions have traditionally required Lead Member approval. Officers expressed agreement, after further discussion, with the notion that exceptions should be considered, but emphasised the importance of maintaining a structured approach where decisions are made by officers in consultation with the Lead Member and Ward Councillors.

Councillor Oliver Cooper proposed the following amendments to paragraphs ii. and iii. of the recommendation in the report:

- i) Members note the report and approve the proposed additions, as detailed in 4.7 of this report, to the Parking Management Programme;
- ii) Officers continue to develop the Parking Management Programme as outlined in this report for 24 months, bringing an interim report in 2026 and a further programme setting report in 2027;
- iii) *That once the programme has been set it shall be adhered to as the current Parking Management Programme, with any additions to this work programme to be considered by Officers in consultation with the Lead Member and relevant Ward Councillors, whose Wards are directly affected by proposals, and any final decision delegated to the Director of Finance.*
- iv) The programme will be progressed in line with all relevant current practice, policy and standards; and that decisions on scheme details and programme, including the consideration of objections to Traffic Regulation Orders developed through this programme of works and to any items remaining from earlier programmes of works, be delegated to the Director of Finance in consultation with the Lead Member and relevant Ward Councillors.

Councillor Vicky Edwards addressed the committee regarding the ongoing parking challenges in the Victorian streets of Breakspear Road and Garden Road, and a petition in connection, which was submitted 5 years ago. Officers advised that there are plans to commission an independent review by a consultant to ensure objectivity in the assessment of the yellow lines and related parking schemes, and expressed a commitment to expedite future projects, aiming to minimise the turnaround time between requests and project completion.

Councillor Chris Whately-Smith addressed the committee regarding a potential petition coming forward to the committee. Officers confirmed that they had received the petition, and advised that the procedure for prioritising parking projects can be reviewed in relation to how petitions are received.

Councillor Louise Price moved the recommendation, with the proposed amendments to paragraphs ii. and iii. of the recommendation.

On being put to the committee the motion was declared CARRIED by the Chair, the voting being by general assent.

RESOLVED:

That:

- i) Members note the report and approve the proposed additions, as detailed in 4.7 of this report, to the Parking Management Programme;
- ii) Officers continue to develop the Parking Management Programme as outlined in this report for 24 months, bringing an interim report in 2026 and a further programme setting report in 2027;
- iii) *That once the programme has been set it shall be adhered to as the current Parking Management Programme, with any additions to this work programme to be considered by Officers in consultation with the Lead Member and relevant Ward Councillors, whose Wards are directly affected by proposals, and any final decision delegated to the Director of Finance.*
- iv) The programme will be progressed in line with all relevant current practice, policy and standards; and that decisions on scheme details and programme, including the

consideration of objections to Traffic Regulation Orders developed through this programme of works and to any items remaining from earlier programmes of works, be delegated to the Director of Finance in consultation with the Lead Member and relevant Ward Councillors.

## **28 ELECTRIC VEHICLE CHARGING STRATEGY - PUBLIC CONSULTATION FEEDBACK**

The Sustainable Transport Officer introduced the report.

Members raised concerns regarding the On-street Residential Charge point Scheme (ORCS), emphasising the importance of meeting the 1 March deadline for project completion to secure the funding from Office for Zero Emission Vehicles (OZEV). Officers reassured the committee that they are working diligently with the operator to meet the deadline, and had received positive feedback from officers at the Energy Saving Trust representing the Office for Zero Emission Vehicles regarding project timelines. Officers also advised that certain sites funded through different allocations will be deprioritised to ensure ORCS funded sites are completed on time.

In response to questions raised regarding on-street charging solutions related to the Local Electric Vehicle Infrastructure (LEVI) project, officers highlighted various options for charging operators and enforcement mechanisms, such as the use of sensors to monitor vehicle occupancy at charging stations. Officers acknowledged the challenges of ensuring that electric vehicle charging spaces are respected by users and highlighted recent regulations that mandate charging operators to provide helplines for technical support and ensure a certain uptime for the chargers. They also noted the collaborative efforts with charging operators to maintain the functionality of the charging points and the financial incentives for operators to maximise usage. In addition, officers expressed confidence in the reliability of the current charging infrastructure, particularly, with the involvement of Hertfordshire County Council (HCC) in establishing Service Level Agreements (SLAs) for future developments. Furthermore, officers explained the terminology and concepts related to risk assessment; focusing on the terms 'tolerate', 'treat', 'terminate' and 'transfer'. They emphasised that the current risk rating is very low, which allows for a tolerance of that risk level, due to existing control measures.

Members raised concerns about the costs associated with charging and the quality of service, emphasising the need for a balance approach that accommodates both EV users and non-EV users. Officers in response advised of the potential for dual-use charging bays, particularly for slower charging options, and highlighted the importance of managing parking pressure in high demand areas.

In discussion Members also raised concerns regarding the disparities in funding received by different local authorities for EV infrastructure, specifically noting that the Council received significantly less funding compared to other local authorities' funding. Furthermore, Members expressed concern about the late and minimal bid submitted by the Council, which resulted in the reduced funding received and the greater financial burden on the Council. However, some Members argued that while other local authorities received funding for on-street charging points, the Council was unable to secure similar dispensation. In addition, the government's changing guidelines on funding bids have complicated the process. They highlighted reliance on expert advice for navigating these challenges, and noted that despite difficulties, the Council had allocated CIL funds to enhance the charging infrastructure.

Councillor Louise Price moved the recommendation that:

- i) Members agree the Electric Vehicle Charging Strategy for adoption; and
- ii) Members agree that the Strategy is progressed to Policy and Resources Committee and Full Council for final adoption.

On being put to the committee the motion was declared CARRIED by the Chair, the voting being by general assent.

RESOLVED:

That:

- i. Members agree the Electric Vehicle Charging Strategy for adoption; and
- ii. Members agree that the Strategy is progressed to Policy and Resources Committee and Full Council for final adoption.

## **29 ANIMAL WELFARE – FIXED PENALTY NOTICES**

The Associate Director for Environment introduced the report.

In response to a question raised regarding the issuance of fixed penalty notices related to dog walkers and other regulations, officers clarified that the Public Spaces Protection Order (PSPO) concerning dog regulation is a separate legislative matter that is currently undergoing public consultation. Officers mentioned that feedback from stakeholders, including the police and kennel clubs, is being evaluated, and a report including the number of fixed penalty notices issued, is being prepared for the next committee meeting.

Councillor Louise Price moved the recommendation that:

- i. The Committee agrees delegation to officers to consider and, as appropriate, make use of, fixed penalty notices when determining the appropriate level of enforcement action to be taken against any person/body corporate whom they are satisfied has committed a relevant offence as listed in the schedules of the Animals (Penalty Notices) Act 2022.

On being put to the committee the motion was declared CARRIED by the Chair, the voting being by general assent.

RESOLVED:

That:

- i. The Committee agrees delegation to officers to consider and, as appropriate, make use of, fixed penalty notices when determining the appropriate level of enforcement action to be taken against any person/body corporate whom they are satisfied has committed a relevant offence as listed in the schedules of the Animals (Penalty Notices) Act 2022.

## **30 BUDGET MANAGEMENT REPORT P6**

The Finance Business Partner presented the report which had already been to Policy & Resources Committee and Full Council in December.

There were some concerns raised regarding the recent variance of £35,000 in Penalty Charge Notices (PCNs) attributed to changes in the parking enforcement plan. While acknowledging the positive financial outcome, Members expressed the need for clarity on the specifics of the deployment plan changes, how to amend it in the future, and the process for reporting on the success of these changes. Officers responded by explaining that the deployment planning is an internal mechanism that is regularly reviewed and highlighted the challenges faced in recruitment that have affected enforcement. Officers also mentioned that limited responses were received regarding enforcement concerns, particularly about out of

hours enforcement, but noted that discussions with Hertsmere are ongoing to address these issues and potential funding for additional enforcement hours.

Members pointed out that despite stable revenue, the projected shortfall against the budget is around £50,000. They emphasised the need for a review of the trade waste offering due to the implications of business choosing alternative providers, which could lead to increased traffic and waste management issues. Officers acknowledged the fluctuating nature of the trade waste market, driven by new recycling regulations, and suggested that a detailed report on the service should be prepared after the upcoming changes are implemented.

Members expressed frustration regarding the timing of receiving the budget monitoring period 6 report in January for the period ending in September. They emphasised that receiving a report after it has been to Policy & Resources Committee and Full Council, hampers proper scrutiny. Officers pointed out that similar concerns were raised the previous year, highlighting that the issue is still ongoing. It was suggested that organising additional committee meetings will address this issue more promptly.

In response to a request on tracking and reporting of food waste management, officers offered to circulate an annual report which details the collection, processing and transformation of food waste.

RESOLVED:

That:

- i) Members note and comment on the contents of the report.

### **31 WORK PROGRAMME**

A report on trade waste is to be added to the work programme.

RESOLVED:

To comment on the committee's work programme.

### **32 OTHER BUSINESS - IF APPROVED UNDER ITEM 3 ABOVE**

There was no other business.

**CHAIR**