

## Part A

**Report to:** Highways Forum  
**Date of meeting:** 23<sup>rd</sup> October 2013  
**Report of:** Transport and Infrastructure Section Head  
**Title:** Watford Borough Council Parking and Highway Works

### 1.0 SUMMARY

1.1 This report provides current information on the Borough Council's Traffic Orders, Projects relating to highways works within its responsibility and the Parking Service.

### 2.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

2.1 To note the report.

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**Report approved by:** Jane Custance, Head of Regeneration and Planning

### 3.0 TRAFFIC ORDERS

#### 3.1 Woodland Drive and Orchard Drive

Following representations from residents of these two roads following re-surfacing work last year, the Council has formalised a layout in Orchard Drive which negates the need for bays to be marked on the road and this went live in May 2013. A similar 'no bays' scheme is being proposed in Woodland Drive and is currently out to Statutory Consultation until 7 October 2013.

#### 3.2 Woodside Leisure Centre

The original Traffic Regulation Order controlling the use of the car parks at the Woodside site was introduced in 2009 to tackle problems of inappropriate parking behaviour. This Order did not cover the upper car park of approximately 160 spaces as at the time it required refurbishment to bring it up to a suitable standard such that an enforcement regime could be introduced. Following completion of refurbishment work on the site a revised traffic order covering the complete site has been developed.

The revised Traffic Order covering the site has now been completed and became operational in June 2013.

### 3.3 **TROs Various Sites**

**Appendix A** details the locations across the Borough which form the next TRO various sites Traffic Order.

The majority of the sited are currently out to Statutory Consultation which ends on 21 October 2013. Proposals for the remaining sites are currently being worked up and will progress to Statutory Consultation over the next few weeks.

Depending on the level of objections received it is envisaged that the majority of the proposals will be implemented on site by the end of the year.

### 3.4 **Nascot Ward - Grandfield Avenue / Bellamy Close / Priory Fields**

Proposals to address obstructive parking by non-residents in this area has been the subject of two consultations over the last 18 months. Although there is general agreement regarding the need to address the problem, there is currently no community consensus on the type of scheme to be introduced.

A revised scheme incorporating a mix of yellow lines and a CPZ is currently being developed which will be taken to statutory Consultation before the end of the year.

### 3.5 **TROs Un-Actioned Sites**

**Appendix B** details the list of locations which will be considered for the next Various Roads Traffic Order. Discussions with the Portfolio Holder are due to take place in the next two weeks to agree on the locations which will form the next TRO's Various Sites Traffic Order.

### 3.6 **Off Street Parking Places Order Amendment**

An Off Street Parking Places Order Amendment is currently being processed for Pinner Road car park at Bushey Arches, Timberlake car park, off Radlett Road and the Watford Business Park car park.

Provision within the amendment order will also cover the use of the electric vehicle charging bays in all of three car parks above plus our existing car parks (Town Hall, The Avenue and Longspring). This is being introduced to deter misuse of the bays by non electric vehicles.

### 3.7 **Callowland Parking Study**

The stage 1 consultation seeking views on current parking issues and on options for area wide parking management was completed in August 2013. The responses support the introduction of a CPZ and a detailed design for further consultation is currently being prepared. This is programmed for consultation in November with decisions on progressing to more formal consultation and implementation being

sought in January 2014. Progress to these latter stages will be dependent on continued community support. If support continues and formal objections can be resolved it is anticipated that a scheme could be introduced during the summer 2014.

### **3.8 CPZ Investigation Zone E**

Controlled Parking Zone E covers the area within the Ring Road which includes Smith Street/Granville Road and The Crescent.

The area is currently a fully controlled zone including match day restrictions. Since the opening of the Met Quarter development residents have raised concerns with Ward Councillors over indiscriminate, inappropriate parking and at times obstructive parking. These incidents mainly occur outside the enforcement hours that the CPZ currently operates.

Following consultation with residents and consideration of the outcome by Borough Councillors, amendments to the operating hours of zone E such that it runs from 8 a.m. to 10 p.m. every day are currently being progressed. Subject to the satisfactory resolution of objections, the target date for implementation is the end of November 2013.

### **3.9 Controlled Parking Zones - Area Wide Review**

The views of residents and businesses within the existing CPZs in Watford were sought via questionnaires distributed over the summer. The consultation period ended on 18 September and initial analysis of results are expected towards the middle of October 2013. The results will be used to inform possible changes to the operational framework of the zones in the town. A full report to Members is expected in December 2013 or January 2014 together with estimated costs for implementing possible changes.

#### **3.9.1 Radlett Road Estate (including Link Road)**

Initial survey work to assess the views of residents in relation to parking issues on the Estate was completed in the summer. Although this showed general agreement regarding the problem of commuter parking on the Estate, there was no consensus regarding a preferred option to address the identified issues. A second round consultation, including holding an exhibition in the autumn is planned at which views will be sought on detailed designs for a range of options..

#### **3.9.2 Oxhey (Cedar Road and Kingsfield Road /Court)**

Consultation with residents of the above roads regarding the possibility of a CPZ was carried out at the beginning of 2013. The results did not support the proposal. Consequently the project was closed in April 2013 and residents informed of the outcome by letter.

#### **3.9.3 High Road Leavesden Parking Consultation**

A request was received in 2012 to investigate obstructive parking around Leavesden

Green JMI School, High Road, Leavesden.

Initial consultation supported a draft proposal for parking controls with some minor amendments and the revised scheme went to Statutory Consultation in September 2013. Formal representations are currently being considered. If these can be satisfactorily addressed a scheme will be introduced during the Autumn.

#### 4.0 **PROJECTS**

##### 4.1 **Under s115 of the Highways Act**

The Borough Council can undertake works on the highway where they are providing an amenity.

##### 4.2 **Car Park Refurbishment Projects – Timberlake car park Radlett Road and Watford Business Park car park**

Both Timberlake car park at Radlett Road and Watford Business Park car park are sites which has been identified within the Resources and Corporate Plan projects 2011-15 as sites which could potentially have charges introduced to regulate use and generate income.

Refurbishment works commenced in May to upgrade Timberlake car park to Pay and Display. To-date surfacing and drainage improvements have been carried out together with lighting improvements. The car park is being promoted as a strategic place to park for visitors to the Colne Valley Linear Park it is for this reason that as part of the improvement works designated short stay parking area to facilitate leisure activities. are to be introduced.

The project is being coordinated to coincide with the outcome and potential changes as a result of the Radlett Road Parking Study project. Initial consultation on this project has been completed with the outcomes reported back to Residents and Councillors. Stage 2 options were presented to the Residents Group in September 2013 with a further consultation planned in the autumn. The Programmed implementation for the on road works and the Timberlake car park upgrade is now likely to commence in the Spring of 2014.

Following concerns raised regarding access in and to the Watford Business Park, Hertfordshire County Council's (HCC) highways team has been working with Watford Borough Council to look to improved access and develop an effective parking management scheme to prevent obstructive parking within the business park.

Proposals have been agreed which include improved pedestrian, cycle and bus access on Caxton Way and Greenhill Crescent.

It is anticipated that the changes will bring benefits to the businesses now and into the future. These proposals have been designed with the knowledge of the proposed new station at Ascot Road as part of the Croxley Rail Link scheme and other nearby developments.

Positive management of the Watford Business Park car park is consistent with the broader objectives of the Watford Business Park which are being promoted and developed by HCC/ WBC Property Team.

A scheme to refurbish the WBP car park has been designed and approved by the Portfolio Holder. The refurbishment works will involve remarking the bays, introducing dedicated disabled bays, providing a pay and display parking, dedicated spaces for Disabled driver parking and to provide infrastructure to enable electric vehicles to charge.

From the 4<sup>th</sup> November HCC are commencing on road improvement measures. The first phase of works will consist of carriageway resurfacing and footpath improvements. The refurbishment works for the car park are planned to be undertaken towards the end of 2013 into early 2014 and will coincide with HCC's second phase of works which include introducing a new cycle lane, bus stop improvements throughout the business park and a new one-way road layout.

#### **4.3 Watford Parade public realm works**

Following the outcome of a 'physical master plan for the top of the town' (Watford Town centre Cultural study 2009.AECOM). The plan proposals are aimed at 'knitting together' public spaces and venues to create a new cultural heart to the town.

The aim of the project is to physically transform the parade / pond area from being a place with negative association with evening drinking culture into a new civic space for the town centre.

Watford Borough Council's approved a budget of up to £4.3 m to cover works, fees and associated costs for the improvement to the upper section of the Parade, with the aim of transforming it into key civic space with the flexibility and capacity to accommodate a variety of outdoor events.

Implementation is currently underway and due to be completed in April 2014.

#### **4.4 Grand Union Canal Towpath Enhancement Partnership Project (Phase 1 and Phase 2)**

In April 2013 Watford Borough Council, Hertfordshire County Council, Three Rivers Council and the Canal and Rivers Trust (formally British Waterways) formed an partnership to encourage further pedestrian usage along the Grand Union Canal Towpath and to provide an improved link for cyclists.

Through a combination of partnership funding and with the Borough Council client managing the project, phase 1 saw a 1.6 km stretch of the Grand Union Canal Towpath restored and upgraded from Iron Bridge Lock 77 at Cassiobury Park, northwards through to Grove Mill Lane.

Such was the success of Phase 1 that in June the partners then agreed to jointly fund a second phase. The project extended northwards from the Borough boundary at Grove Mill Lane to Bridge Road in Langleybury, a further 2.6 km. The works on phase

2 were completed at the end of September 2013.

Discussions are currently take place between the project partners with a view to further extending the scheme. Proposals and partnership funding is being sort to extend the enhanced surfacing from Langlebury northwards to Home Park Industrial Estate in Kings Langley, a further 1.6 km. A further phase southwards from Cassiobury Park to Moor Lock Croxley Green, a further 2.7 km is also being investigated. Should funding be secured then the projects will commence in April 2014.

The long term aim is to eventually link up the improved Canal Towpath project with the recently improved Ebury Way / National Cycle Route (6) (61).

#### 4.5 **Heritage Projects and Renovation schemes**

##### **Listed Tombs Restoration St Mary's Churchyard**

After the Council were awarded £80k funding by the Heritage Lottery Fund, conservation specialists from Sally Strachey Conservation have spent the summer restoring memorial structures in St Mary's Churchyard. Twelve chest tombs and one headstone have been comprehensively cleaned and repaired to both make them safe and enhance their appearance. New signage has recently been installed and leaflets will soon be available to complement a dedicated new website. A series of free educational talks and workshops have also taken place in the last few months with the support of Watford Museum

##### **The Peace Memorial**

The assessment panel of the War Memorials Trust have approved a funding request from Watford Borough Council for renovating the Peace Memorial.

The Grade II Listed Memorial was designed during World War 1 by the local artist Mary Pownall Bromet and has been a community focal point since it was unveiled in 1928. Over the years the Memorial has deteriorated and both the bronze statues and stone base are in need of specialist cleaning and repair work. The restoration project will involve improvement works to the Memorial and surrounding paving before Remembrance Sunday.

##### **Coal Duty Markers.**

The Council has successfully lobbied the City of London Corporation to restore three Coal Duty Markers in the Borough, while the Council is restoring a fourth one in Waterfields Recreation Ground this month.

##### **Re-engraving of the Christ Church War Memorial.**

Discussions are taking place with the County and Ward Councillors with regards to the re-engraving of the Christ Church War Memorial . We have now set up a tender on the Councils procurement portal for re-engraving the Christ Church War Memorial. Quotations for undertaking the works are due back in the next few weeks from companies for doing the re-engraving work. Once we have those figures, an application to the War Memorials Trust for up to 75% of grant funding will be made..

The Church are currently arranging for conservation repairs and cleaning to take place

following a vehicular crash into the memorial, so the re-engraving project would be in addition to those works (the aforementioned repair/clean will be paid for by the Church insurance).

#### **Leavesden Road Horse Trough**

This is another project involving Councillors, the renovation of the Leavesden Road Horse Trough. An applications is being made for external funding to undertake much need repairs and to enhance the setting around the Trough.

#### **4.6 De-cluttering your streets**

As a linked project to the development of the new Conservation Areas Management Plan, Watford Borough Council have identified street clutter in conservation areas.

The Council has worked with Hertfordshire County Council to get outdated signs and unnecessary street furniture removed in the last few months. So far 280 pieces of clutter have been removed in the Central, Oxhey, Holywell and Vicarage Wards. The de-cluttering projects have been funded by the respective County Councillors for the Divisions.

Discussions are now taking place with a view to extending the project of de-cluttering in Park and Nascot Wards.

#### **4.7 New Bus Shelter Installations**

Through a funding opportunity presented to the Borough by Hertfordshire County Council new bus shelters are set to be installed at two further locations within the town.

Following alterations to the palisade fencing along Haines Way a new non-advertising shelter is planned to be installed within the next 4 weeks.

In late October a new bus shelter In Vicarage Road is planned to be installed, Situated opposite Watford Hospital entrance the new shelter will be fitted with a real time information screen providing up to date information on bus arrival times.

#### **4.8 Ebury Way signage Improvements**

A joint project of implementing new branding and signage for the Ebury Way cycle route between Rickmansworth and Watford has just been completed. The signing has been designed in consultation with officers at Hertfordshire County Council, Watford Borough Council, Three Rivers District Council and Sustrans.

The new signage will also cover the many link footpaths that lead on to the Ebury Way. Installation is due to be complete by the end of October 2013.

#### **4.9 Subways Enhancement Project**

The Council is anxious to encourage walking as a viable alternative to the use of the private car and it has recognised that the quality of the subways across the Borough vary considerably.

In June a project was commissioned to survey all the subways in the Borough to identify current level of usage and to make an assessment of the environmental quality of the subways so that decisions can be made regarding the targeting of funding for environmental improvements.

The survey results have provided a list of subways where environmental improvements within the financial year can be introduced to make the subways more inviting with a view to encouraging greater use.

Through a funding opportunity and partnership working with Herts County the Council has funding available to carry out works during 2013/ 14 at the following subways.

- Church Road to Watford Junction Station
- The Crescent leading to Watford Field Road
- George Street to Vicarage Road (under Exchange Road)
- Clarendon Road by Jury's Inn (under Beechen Grove)
- Coates Way to Horseshoe Lane (under the A405)

Some preliminary works have already been undertaken in terms of vegetation removal and introducing new signage to two of the Subways under the A405 North Orbital Road.. Discussions are taking place with HCC with a view to resurfacing the approach paths leading to the subways by introducing a buff coloured surfacing, improved signing and where appropriate introduce convex mirrors.

## **5.0 PARKING SERVICE UPDATE**

### **5.1 Parking Shop Annual Report**

The end of this month will see the publication of the Parking Shop annual report and its content. This will show that 20,301 Penalty Charge Notices were issued during 2012/13, which is a slight increase on the 19,806 issued the previous year. This increase is probably down to the introduction of new schemes and restrictions, which will bring about a spike in contraventions until motorists become more familiar with the new regime.

The report will also show that Watford has maintained its consistency at the appeal stage of the process and won 61% of the 100 appeals that were submitted, which was only topped by Three Rivers, whose service we also manage, who won all 5 of the 5 appeals taken to the Traffic Penalty Tribunal. The annual Parking Report is almost ready for publication and will be placed on the internet by the end of October 2013.

#### **New Technology progress up-date**

Implementation of the online permit module is underway and background configuration of the system has now taken place. Customer user testing is due to commence in the week beginning 16<sup>th</sup> October 2013 with a view to the system going live on 28<sup>th</sup> October. This module will be accessed by residents via the Parking pages on the Council website and allow for the purchase and renewal of resident permits for those living within the Controlled Parking Zones.

Applicants will still be required to submit the required proof of residency and vehicle



ownership in the same way as they did when making paper applications but this will remove the need to submit applications by post or visit the Parking Shop in person. Upon issue of the initial permit the applicant will be issued with a unique pin number, which will streamline the renewal process the following year. The system will also send a text and/or email reminder to the applicant prior to the expiry of the permit to the mobile number or email address provided.

These systems are similarly being installed in Dacorum and Three Rivers Parking Services, which will take place throughout November and December 2013 respectively. Once complete, work will then commence on the implementation of the online case management modules, which will allow members of the public to challenge the issue of Penalty Charge Notices online. This module will enable users to view the evidence gathered in the case, such as the photographs taken by the Civil Enforcement Officer and statutory correspondence, before allowing them to elect to proceed to submit an online challenge within the same module or to make payment. This will also streamline the management of this workload within the office by removing all forms of paperwork so that the entire process is electronic, including the distribution of the workload to Representation Officer's. It is anticipated that this system will be in place late January to early February 2014.

## **6.0 Quality Network Partnership (QNP)**

### **6.1 The Partnership**

Watford have entered in to a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with Hertfordshire County Council, Dacorum Borough Council and the Bus Operators in relation to the establishment of a voluntary Quality Bus Network Partnership for the Watford and Dacorum areas.

The key outcome from the MoU is the co-operative working of the public and private sector to develop the bus network as a means of encouraging modal shift away from the private car.

The MoU aims to:

- Introduction of a wider Travel Plan Strategy.
- Routes and corridors designated with a minimum service level based on demand, with integration between rail and bus (where feasible)
- Real Time/Automatic Vehicle Location (AVL) information on all routes serving the QNP area, with public display using screens, mobile and internet technology (where suitable)
- Offer a common and interchangeable ticketing scheme, capable of incorporating smartcard technology, for integrated ticketing between services and operators
- Traffic management schemes, parking controls, street works orders and bus priority schemes, supported by strong enforcement measures that allow buses to offer quick and punctual services at all times
- Route specific marketing

Officers from each of the Authorities are jointly working to develop short, medium and long term infrastructure projects to help improve the passenger transport network provision within the QNP areas of Watford and Hemel Hempstead.

**The Infrastructure and Network Planning working group:**

The main bus operators have currently identified 46 traffic problem points within the Watford and Hemel Hempstead area. The Infrastructure and Network Planning working group are currently looking at possible solution (if one exists), who is to action the point, the priority of the problem and an expected completion date. So far 13 of the locations have been identified as quick wins. 14 have been identified as medium term projects. 16 have been identified as long term projects and the remainder have been identified as not achievable. Funding for the improvements is to be provided as part of the LSTF.

The other groups set up to support the QNP are Ticketing and Fares, Marketing/ Communications and Travel Planning.

Appendices

Appendix A TRO Various Sites  
Appendix B TRO Un-Actioned Sites

Background Papers

No papers were used in the preparation of this report.

File Reference

none