

PART A

Report to: Highways Forum
Date of meeting: 9th December 2014
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.
Contact Officer: For further information on this report please contact: Andy Smith, Transport and Infrastructure Section Head telephone extension:8115 email: andy.smith@watford.gov.uk Report approved by: Jane Custance, Head of Regeneration and Planning	
3.0	TRAFFIC ORDERS
3.1	<p>Appendix A details the minor locations across the Borough which formed the 2013/14 various sites Traffic Order. Also included is the list approved for investigation by the Portfolio Holder, Councillor Sharpe for 2014/15.</p> <p>A number of additional sites requiring Traffic Orders were introduced in to the work programme with the consent/ approval of the Portfolio Holder and these are also listed.</p>
3.2	In addition to the committed/ completed schemes listed, a number of sites still remain on the reserve list awaiting consent from the Portfolio Holder for them to be moved on to the action list. These are also listed in Appendix A . Included as an add-on to the reserve list are a number of sites which Members have approached Officers on. These sites are regarded by the Members concerned as being high priority and consequently they have been referred to the Portfolio Holder for decision regarding property and programming.
3.3	MAJOR TRO SCHEMES
3.4	<p>Nascot Ward - Grandfield Avenue / Bellamy Close / Priory Fields</p> <p>Proposals to address obstructive parking by non-residents in this area have been the subject of two consultations over the last 2 years. Although there is general agreement regarding the need to address the problem, it had proved difficult to identify a community consensus on the type of scheme to be introduced.</p> <p>A revised scheme incorporating a mix of yellow lines and a CPZ was the subject of a statutory consultation earlier this year. The scheme was subsequently</p>

	implemented on Monday 15 September 2014.
3.5	<p>St Albans Road Parking Study</p> <p>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 supported the introduction of a CPZ and a detailed design for further consultation was prepared and consulted on early in 2014. The responses received from the stage 2 consultation were very mixed with few roads supporting the introduction of a CPZ. A report on the consultation was taken to Cabinet at it's meeting in July 2014.</p> <p>A range of actions were agreed which will be investigated/ implemented during the remainder of 2014/15 and early 2015/16. An initial briefing for the P/F Holder and Ward Members took place in September to discuss/ agree action plan and programme. Initial workshops with traders in St Albans Road to identify concerns are currently being arranged.</p>
3.6	<p>Controlled Parking Zones - Area Wide Review</p> <p>The views of residents and businesses within the existing CPZs in Watford were sought via questionnaires distributed over the summer 2013. The outcome of the consultation was included in a full report to Cabinet in December 2013. The majority of respondents supported the current CPZ regime. The two most significant changes identified relate to the introduction of full zone controls in zone M/N (currently only match day) and the introduction of a residents parking scheme in The Larches in Oxhey. Budget to move in to the implementation stage was identified for 14/15.</p> <p>Initial consultation with businesses potentially affected by the M/N proposals took place in September. Results are being summarised and proposals to address concerns raised developed for inclusion in the scheme. Statutory consultation was provisionally aimed for late 2014 however a meeting with Ward Members & the Portfolio Holder to discuss and agree the way forward in light of the business consultation may affect this.</p> <p>Consultation material for The Larches has been circulated to residents and landlords of properties in the road and adjacent areas seeking comments on a draft scheme. The closing date for receipt of returns is 26 November 2014. Subject to any comments received, the project will move to the Statutory Consultation stage in late 2014/ early 2015.</p>
3.7	<p>Radlett Road Estate</p> <p>Initial survey work to assess the views of residents in relation to parking issues on the Estate was completed in 2013. 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 further consultation round presenting options for parking management controls in partnership with WCHT and Places for People (the two social landlords on the</p>

	<p>Estate) ran during September 2014. This included an exhibition at the local Community Centre on 8 September 2014. A 'do minimum' scheme' to secure access for the bus route serving the Estate was included in the consultation material. The analysis of the results indicates no clear consensus from residents regarding a preferred scheme. The results are currently with Ward Councillors for comment prior to decision on next steps.</p>
3.8	<p>Cassiobury Estate</p> <p>A number of small scale amendments to the parking controls on the Cassiobury Estate in Controlled Parking Zone V have been identified through an informal consultation process earlier in the year. In addition, at the request of residents, Trefusis Walk, Langley Way (Cassiobury Drive to Parkside Drive) and Conningesby Drive have been identified for potential inclusion in to zone V subject to the Statutory Consultation process which is due to take place before the end of the financial year.</p>
4.0	<p>PROJECTS</p>
4.1	<p>Under s115 of the Highways Act/ Highway Agreement</p> <p>The Borough Council can undertake works on the highway where they are providing an amenity.</p> <p>In February 2014 Watford Council Approached Hertfordshire County Council with a view to entering into an Agency Agreement for undertaking works on the Highway.</p> <p>In April 2014 a new Agreement was entered in to between the two Councils. Subject to the appropriate Noticing of works and prior agreement for the delivery of major projects Watford can now carryout highway works using our term contractors.</p>
4.2	<p>Car Park refurbishment projects – Timberlake car park Radlett Road and Watford Business Park car park</p> <p>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.</p> <p>Timberlake 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 improvements the works include a designated short stay pay and display parking area to facilitate leisure activities.</p> <p>Within the last month an electric charging unit has been installed in this car park and two spaces have been set aside for electric vehicle charging. Works have now commenced on promoting an Off Street Parking Places Traffic Order to regulate commuter parking and protect a number of the existing car park spaces for allotment holders and short stay visitors.</p>

	<p>Earlier in the year minor resurfacing and relining of the Watford Business Park car park was undertaken. The car park now has dedicated disabled bays marked and soon the car park will benefit from having an electric charging unit installed. An Off Street Parking Places Traffic Order is now being promoted to help regulate the length of time vehicles can stay in this car park.</p> <p>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.</p> <p>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 WBC Property Team and its partners.</p>
4.3	<p>The Parade public realm works</p> <p>The Parade public realm enhancement project was completed in May 2014. The aim of the project was 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.</p> <p>Watford Borough Council approved a budget of up to £4.3m 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.</p> <p>The area of The Parade from Clarendon Road to Rickmansworth Road is now open with new paving, new lighting and street furniture installed and the planting of 38 the new street trees. The new bridge structure across the pond is now in place as is the filtration system for the pond and fountains.</p>
4.4	<p>The proposed Parade Extension project</p> <p>The Council has now secured Partnership funding from Hertfordshire County Council to allow the section of The Parade fronting Nos 163 to 185 to be enhanced in line with the main scheme. The proposals are currently at the consultation stage with residents and businesses who live/ trade within in the area of the project.</p> <p>In summary the council are consulting on the following:-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Removal of the existing brick screen walls and re-grading of the existing verge to open up the area • Re-paving of the existing footway in materials similar in appearance to those used in the main Enhancement scheme • Re-shaping of the existing seating areas including replacement of existing street furniture • Re-planting of the verge to include areas of wild flower mix, amenity grass

	<p>and hedges</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • New drop down bollards at either end of the area <p>Depending on the outcome of the consultation the work is scheduled to commence on site during 2014/ 15 financial year. Residents and Businesses have been requested to provide their comments by Monday 8th December 2014 so that their views can be taken in to account in finalising the design. Appendix B provides a plan showing the scheme proposals.</p>
4.5	<p>New Market Project</p> <p>The New Watford Market opened in October 2014 together with the appointment of a new market operator, Town and Country Markets.</p> <p>The £2.3m project provides a two tier market structure and comprises of 44 container units for trading and an iconic roof design. Works also included a new footpath link from Clarendon Road, lighting upgrades, signage, new pedestrian drop kerb facilities and improvements to the Beechen Grove subway.</p> <p>In late November additional gateway signage will be introduced at both market entrances. In addition the Exchange Road Flyover will have a new lighting scheme installed together with backlit directional signs to the market on the flyover facers.</p>
4.6	<p>Land Drainage</p> <p>Commencing on the 3rd November 2014 the Council is undertaking watercourse clearance works on the Lairage Land local nature reserve. This is a tract of land between The Ebury Way and Stripling Way. A number of properties which back onto this area are at an increased risk of flooding from the watercourse on its eastern boundary.</p> <p>These works are part of a package of maintenance works along the Middle Colne being undertaken by the Council in partnership with The Environment Agency. Other works in the catchment include the servicing and repair of the Riverside Road sluice, the trimming of overhanging branches, channel improvements and the control of reeds.</p>
5.0	HERITAGE PROJECTS AND RENOVATION SCHEMES 2014
5.1	<p>In advance of the Remembrance Day commemorations the following projects were completed.</p>
5.2	<p>Listed Tombs Restoration St Mary's Churchyard</p> <p>The project to restore various heritage assets in St Mary's Churchyard, which was largely funded by the Heritage Lottery Fund, is now complete.</p> <p>Twelve chest tombs and one headstone have been comprehensively cleaned and repaired, signage has been installed and leaflets have been published,</p>

	<p>along with a new website. A list of works to further improve the area, such as repairing footpaths and improving landscaping has been sent to the Council's Parks Department, who will look to fund works in 2014 with the aim of gaining Green Flag status for the open space.</p>
5.3	<p>The Peace Memorial</p> <p>The project to restore the Peace Memorial, which was part funded by the War Memorials Trust, is now complete. The works included specialist cleaning and repair work of the bronze statues and stone plinth, as well as replacement paving around the base.</p>
5.4	<p>The Square Conservation Area</p> <p>An enhancement project, which was part funded by the local County Councillor, is complete for the terraced streets in The Square Conservation Area.</p> <p>Works in Aynho Street, Banbury Street, Oxford Street, Souldern Street and Vicarage Road have included putting in replacement paving slabs, replacing concrete bollards with conservation grade metal equivalents, removing broken concrete tree grills, replacing faded signs, improving street name plates and other footway repairs. This project compliments the enhancement works that took place in the adjacent Cemetery last year, which included improved paving and boundary treatments.</p>
5.5	<p>Coal Duty Markers.</p> <p>City of London Corporation have restored two Coal Duty Markers in the Borough. The Council restored a third marker in Waterfields Recreation Ground.</p> <p>A small restoration project has been programmed for early December for a fourth Coal Duty Marker site in Water Lane. The County Councillor for the Central Division has provided match funding to enable the cleaning of the coal duty marker and for it's re-alignment to a more prominent and historically authentic location within Water Lane.</p>
5.6	<p>Re-engraving of the Christ Church War Memorial.</p> <p>A grant was received from the War Memorials Trust for re-engraving the Christ Church War Memorial. The remainder of the funding was provided by Watford Council and the local County Councillor. The Church had previously arranged for conservation repairs and cleaning to take place following a vehicular crash into the memorial. Work have now been fully completed.</p>
5.7	<p>Leavesden Road Horse Trough</p> <p>Match funding was received from Hertfordshire County Council for a project to undertake repairs to the Horse Trough on Leavesden Road and to further enhance its setting. The remaining scheme costs were covered by the local County Councillor and the Borough Council. The scheme was completed by the</p>

	end of July 2014.
5.8	<p>Bandstand</p> <p>A Listed Building Application has been approved for relocating the Bandstand back to its original location in Cassiobury Park.</p> <p>The project, which is largely funded by the Heritage Lottery Fund, will include conservation repairs and cleaning of the structure. Options for enhancing the space next to the Watford Central Library, where the Bandstand is currently located, are being explored by the Council and Hertfordshire County Council. The relocation works are expected to commence in late July 2015.</p>
5.9	<p>Macdonnell Gardens Plaques Restoration</p> <p>Working in partnership with Haig Homes, Watford Borough Council have facilitated various works to enhance the Macdonnell Gardens Conservation Area.</p> <p>Memorial plaques on various houses and at the southern entrance have been cleaned, repaired and re-engraved, while the other site signage has been renovated.</p> <p>New 'conservation area' signage was installed and the residents have paid for a memorial tree to be planted. Murrill Construction, who are the Council's term contractor, did their element of the work pro bono in recognition of the status of the site as housing for disabled ex-servicemen.</p>
5.10	<p>War Memorial on High Road, Leavesden</p> <p>The local residents association has replaced the War Memorial on High Road after the existing structure was shown to be in terminal decline by the Council's Conservation Officer.</p> <p>The Council offered advice on the project but the replacement memorial structure, plinth, paving and planting were all delivered at no cost to the public purse following a fundraising campaign by the residents association, with Murrill Construction, who are the Council's term contractor, providing their element of the building work at no cost.</p>
6.0	DE-CLUTTERING YOUR STREETS PROGRAMME
6.1	<p>As a linked project to the development of the Conservation Areas Management Plan, Watford Borough Council have identified street clutter in conservation areas and the wider Borough.</p> <p>The Council has worked with Hertfordshire County Council to get outdated signs and unnecessary street furniture removed in the last few months. By the end of the Autumn 2014 approximately 600 pieces of street clutter have been removed</p>

	<p>in the Central, Oxhey, Park, Nascot, Holywell, Vicarage, Stanborough and Woodside Wards. The de-cluttering projects have been funded by the respective County Councillors for the Divisions.</p> <p>Details have now been drawn up with a view to extending the project of de-cluttering to Callowland, Leggatts, Meriden and Tudor Wards. A further programme of de-cluttering has also been planned for a number of the above wards.</p>
7.0	BUS SHELTER INFRASTRUCTURE PROJECTS
7.1	<p>New state of the art digital display screens have been installed at eight bus shelters in the town centre. The screens were provided using funds from the Local Sustainable Transport Fund and show departure times and arrivals.</p> <p>A project is currently underway to install No Smoking signs in all our 112 bus shelters across the Borough.</p>
8.0	SUBWAYS ENHANCEMENT PROJECT
8.1	<p>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.</p> <p>In June 2013 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.</p> <p>The survey results have provided a list of subways where environmental improvements can be introduced to make the subways more inviting with a view to encouraging greater use.</p> <p>Through a funding opportunity and partnership working with Herts County the Council this has been able us to programme and carry out works during 2014/15 at the following subway sites.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Church Road to Watford Junction Station. Works completed October 2014 • The Crescent leading to Watford Field Road. Works planned December 2014 • George Street to Vicarage Road (under Exchange Road). Works planned December 2014 • Clarendon Road by Jury's Inn (under Beechen Grove). Works completed October 2014 • Coates Way to Horseshoe Lane (under the A405). Works planned January 2014 <p>Some preliminary works have already been undertaken in terms of vegetation removal and introducing new signage on two further subways under the A405</p>

	<p>North Orbital Road.</p> <p>The subway from Church Road leading to Watford Junction Station has also seen vegetation clearance and a new footpath laid. The plans is now for both Church Road and the George Street to Vicarage Road subways to be enhanced further. Draft designs are being drawn up for art work to be applied to the newly cleaned subway wall surfaces. Works on these subways are expected to commence in March 2015.</p>
9.0	PROMOTING ELECTRIC VEHICLE CHARGING
9.1	<p>In partnership with HCC new signage is planned to be installed on all the WBC car park information boards to highlight the electric charging infrastructure that has been installed. In October 2014 two new replacement signs have been installed at the Town Hall and The Avenue car parks.</p>
9.2	<p>Introduction of an Electric Car Club for Watford</p> <p>In October 2014 the Council entered in to a pilot scheme with E-Car to introduce an Electric Car Club in the Town.</p> <p>The UK's first entirely electric pay-per-use car club, E-Car Club, have launched a car club service in Watford in partnership with the Council.</p> <p>The project is one of the first schemes of its kind and aims to increase people's transport options in and around the town, giving them an alternative, more sustainable way to travel that will help save money and reduce emissions.</p> <p>E-Car Club cars will complement Watford Borough Council's vehicle fleet with 2 brand new zero-emission Renault Zoe electric cars which will be stationed at the Town Hall and The Avenue car park, opposite the leisure centre.</p> <p>The cars will be available to local businesses and residents who can drive them across the county, neighbouring counties and within easy reach of a return journey to London.</p> <p>Anyone who is 19 or over and has been driving for a year or more, can become an E-Car Club member. The scheme will provide access to a low cost, low carbon car, without the hassle of owning one.</p>
10.0	PARKING SERVICE UPDATE
10.1	Projects/Technology
10.2	<p>Easi-Permits is the online module which allows residents to apply for and renew their controlled parking zone permit. This module is now in place and has been operational since 4th August 2014.</p>

	<p>The implementation of this project has been significantly delayed by a number of issues relating to the software provider, who have been required to make a variety of bespoke changes to the module in order to ensure that it meets the requirements of our controlled parking zone scheme rules. Upon launching the module it became apparent that problems with the functionality remained and therefore, publication of the service was initially limited. Those issues have now been resolved and all residents are currently notified in all permit renewal reminder letters, sent out approximately 3-weeks prior to permit expiry, that the service is available for use, further to inclusion of this information in our controlled parking zone information leaflet and on the Parking pages of the Council website, where the module can be found.</p> <p>All users are issued with a unique pin number when accessing the service, which allows them to streamline their application on future occasions, in the event that they remain in possession of the same vehicle as the previous year. An up to date valid proof of residency must be supplied on all occasions, save for those residents who appear on the electoral roll, which is checked manually by back-office staff. Parking Shop staff are notified once an application is received, which is checked, processed and posted to the applicant. The applicant is contacted by telephone if there application cannot be processed for any reason.</p> <p>Unfortunately residents are not able to purchase visitor vouchers using this module, despite the software provider's assurances that the system would be capable of doing so. This can be achieved by the use of a second software provider, however, this will result in residents being required to use two separate pin numbers and this is not considered to be an ideal approach. Therefore, this element of the service will be revisited in order to attempt to identify a more user friendly alternative.</p> <p>Since 4th August 2014, there have been 179 permit applications and 56 renewed applications using the online service.</p>
10.3	<p>Online Case Management</p> <p>This is an online module that allows users to challenge their Penalty Charge Notice electronically. The motorist can view the photographic evidence taken by the Civil Enforcement Officer at the time of the contravention and correspondence and notices relating to their case. Once viewing the information, the user can elect to proceed to submit a challenge by completing a template, which is automatically allocated to Representation Officers for consideration, or proceed to make payment. The user can also upload any photographs or other documents that they may wish in support of their case.</p> <p>The first meeting with the software provider is due to take place next week and it is expected that the module will be installed and fully functional in approximately 3-months (February/March 2015). The system does not require any bespoke changes and no significant issues are anticipated.</p>

10.4	<p>New Technology/Additional Services</p> <p>There is a host of new technology emerging daily within the Parking sector and this is an ever expanding market. The vast majority of this technology relates to various payment systems either within car parks or at the point of payment on-street and the deployment of ANPR (Automatic Number Plate Recognition) services. The cost of these services can range from minimal yearly fees to huge start-up costs and ongoing charges, such as schemes commonly introduced in large London authorities, which includes real-time on-street monitoring of parking bay availability or dot matrix remotely updated parking information, such as match day parking dates. However, it is likely that much of the technology will bring little benefit to the end user in Watford, if it can be implemented at all. ANPR cannot presently be used in Council off-street car parks operating under the Traffic Management Act 2004.</p> <p>However, there are a number of technology and additional service developments that the we are considering for the future, which may be beneficial for the service. These will be discussed in more detail with the Portfolio Holder.</p>
10.5	<p>Parkmap</p> <p>This is a service that will be an asset to the Parking Service, Traffic Engineers and possibly a number of other service areas where the use of up to date mapping information is required. This service is commonly used in many local authorities and enables office based staff to view the placement of lines and signs on-street, which can be directly cross-referenced with the relevant Traffic Regulation Order. A number of versions of Parkmap are available, which will dictate the final cost. The service will be subject to start-up costs and annual licence fees. Buchanan Computing are the software providers of this package and have previously met with the Council to demonstrate their product. As a result, a general guide of the costs can be obtained and confirmed.</p>
10.6	<p>Ringo (Cashless Parking):</p> <p>Ringo is a subsidiary of Cobalt, who currently operate the Council's online and telephone automated payment systems. We have also implemented this service for Dacorum in December 2013. Implementation was seamless and uptake of the service has continued to rise across their off-street car parks. The service is supplemental to the coin operated pay and display machines, which have been retained.</p> <p>Suppliers will often sell this service as being free but this is not strictly correct. Whilst many will waive implementation fees, apart from the cost of required notices and stickers advertising the service, there will be annual software licence fees, ongoing operational charges and the monthly cost of credit card</p>

	<p>transaction fees.</p> <p>The Council has the option to pass those charges onto the customer. The Council will receive all of its income in relation to the parking charge tariff fee of the car park, as advertised on our tariff boards, whereas Ringo will take the 10p/20p transaction applied to the service and the subsequent text reminder fee, 10/20p, where customers select such an option. Due to the operational charges, which increase with increased usage of the service, further to the increased tariff charge to customers, this option is best suited to larger car parks offering longer stays with a number of higher tariffs, such as those presently operated by Intu, although there may be some benefit to daily long stay users parking within The Avenue Car Park. However, all car parks can be considered for inclusion as part of a larger roll out.</p> <p>Initial start-up costs in Dacorum were in the region of £4,000, which covered the required signs and stickers in approximately 16 car parks. All monies received is paid directly into a Dacorum account and Ringo subsequently invoice them each month for the credit card transaction service charge fees, which were 5.8% in September, and for the fees that they are entitled to in relation to the convenience and reminder fees. These charges amount to around £1,500 per month.</p> <p>When the Parking enforcement break clause came up for consideration in April 2012, we required Vinci to upgrade all hand-held computers across the contract, at no additional charge, which included a GPRS facility. This allows Ringo to be used by the patrolling Civil Enforcement Officers without the need for separate mobile telephones. These hand-helds are now in place, meaning that implementation of this service would be relatively straight-forward and timely.</p>
10.7	<p>Car Park Pay and Display Machine Upgrade:</p> <p>Consideration may be given to upgrading the present coin operated pay and display machine within The Avenue Car Park to a dual use machine capable of accepting credit card payments. This is a particularly well used car park with high occupancy rates, which include many vehicles parking for long stay periods on a daily basis.</p> <p>For those motorists, there is a requirement for them to be in possession of £5 in coinage every day. A chip/pin machine will cost approximately £1,500 more than a standard coin operated machine, depending upon the model, and there will also be additional transaction and installation charges to bear. The total purchase cost including software and commissioning is likely to be approximately £6,000, excluding the monthly transaction charges.</p> <p>Further implementation of these machines may be considered for use within The Town Hall Car Park but long stay parking generally only applies at weekends and this may provide little additional benefit to users.</p>

10.8	<p>Blue Badge Officer</p> <p>Blue badge fraud is a huge issue across the Country and is costing Council's hundreds of thousands pounds per year in lost revenue. Watford clearly has a significant number of blue badge users parking in and around the town on a daily basis.</p> <p>The Parking Service did establish Operation Clamp in partnership with the Police running joint patrols to challenge blue badge users in well used areas. This has led to a number of successful prosecutions but the patrols are very sporadic due to the availability and commitment of the Police. This operation is now run by the Council's Fraud Officers, who patrol with plain clothed Special Police Officers</p> <p>Due to limited resources the frequency and public knowledge of the patrols remains minimal, meaning they are not serving as a deterrent to motorists or tackling the issue to any significant degree.</p> <p>Local Authorities have begun to invest more resources into addressing this type of fraud and ensuring that disabled facilities remain available for disabled people. A number of authorities run very high profile blue badge fraud detection operations and have dedicated blue badge fraud officers as part of their parking teams. Wandsworth and Lambeth are very high profile and report the seizure of up to 30 misused blue badges per day.</p> <p>For Watford some further research on this will be undertaken in relation to some of the known areas in the Borough where blue badge fraud has been a problem, particularly around the regional shopping centre, football ground, cassiobury park and work opportunities attract a large volume of motorists vying for limited space on a regular basis.</p>
10.9	<p>Audits</p> <p>There are two audits of the Parking Service, which are due to commence shortly. They will be covering the monitoring/management of the Parking enforcement contract with Vinci Park UK and the financial elements of the service and associated payment streams, including those paid to consultants. The audit is being carried out by Hertfordshire County Council's shared internal audit service and will commence in mid-November 2014.</p>
10.10	<p>Annual Reports</p> <p>The Traffic Management Act 2004 recommends that all Local Authorities operating Civil Parking Enforcement regimes should produce an annual report within 6-months of the end of the financial year. Watford has produced a report</p>

	<p>every year since the introduction of the legislation in April 2008.</p> <p>Our figures include comparison appeal statistics with Hertfordshire and other comparable Local Authorities, which are produced annually by the Traffic Penalty Tribunal. This information is an important guide to the management of the service and effectiveness of our enforcement approach as a high level of successful appeals is viewed an indication that staff are making the correct decisions at the correct stages.</p> <p>The Traffic Penalty Tribunal has indicated that they are delayed in providing their statistics this year but that they will be available in mid-November. I expect that the annual report will be available for publication by early-mid December 2014.</p> <p>It should also be noted that members requested the inclusion of bailiff write-off information from a number of comparable authorities to Watford, which was sourced and included in the 2012/13 report. However, the reported authorities do not produce annual reports and they have not been forthcoming with the information requested. As a result, this year and will only show statistics relating to our partner authorities within the annual report.</p>
10.11	<p>Bailiff Contract</p> <p>The Parking Service currently has two bailiff companies working on our behalf, which are Equita and Marston. Our service level agreement with them expires on 31st December 2014. The Council now wish to procure bailiff companies using a limited number of the six available under the Rotherham framework agreement for both Parking and Council Tax/Revenue and benefits.</p> <p>Bidders must submit their responses to our joint questionnaire by Monday 10th November and interviews of the short-listed bidders will take place on Monday 24th/Tuesday 25th November 2014.</p>
11.0	QUALITY NETWORK PARTNERSHIP (QNP)
11.1	<p>The Partnership</p> <p>Watford has 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.</p> <p>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.</p> <p>The MoU aims to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Introduction of a wider Travel Plan Strategy. • Routes and corridors designated with a minimum service level based on

	<p>demand, with integration between rail and bus (where feasible)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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 <p>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.</p>
11.2	<p>The last meeting of the QNP Partners took place in late October. The partners are now progressing the following actions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • When the HCC Bus Consultation is concluded, forward released information on to all QNP partners • Progress the bus pinch points works with a view to introducing Traffic Regulation Orders. • Add traffic light issues at Lower High Street on to pinch points document • Reconvene ticketing working group to discuss monthly/4 weekly ticket and including Abbots Langley. • Produce a report to mark the works undertaken of the QNPs.
12.0	CCTV, WI-FI AND FOOTFALL UPDATES
12.1	<p>CCTV control room move to Shady Lane</p> <p>The new Council run cctv control room, situated at Watford Police Station in Shady Lane, went live on the 2nd April. The previous control room within the Management suite in Charter Place has been de-commissioned and returned to INTU as part of the redevelopment plan.</p> <p>The new room is staffed by at least one cctv operator 24/7/365. The facility has spare capacity to accommodate further expansion of cameras and operators. There is also a dedicated Police workstation where an officer can attend to monitor cameras and connect to the Police computer network to continue with their duties.</p> <p>As part of the integration a number of stand alone camera systems have been connected to Shady Lane. These include a local shops systems at Tolpits Lane and Goodwood Parade, Watford General Hospital and in the near future the Cha Cha Cha tea rooms.</p>

	<p>The control room also monitors the cctv systems for the Town Hall and the New Watford Market. In addition to cctv at the Market the service also provides an intruder alarm monitoring service. Future projects for 14/15 include the installation of a new alarm and camera system at Watford Museum and a camera renewal scheme.</p> <p>The Council is also discussing the technological options for the sharing of images with the Herts County traffic control. The aim is to assist HCC with the validation of traffic signal data and congestion monitoring.</p>
12.2	<p>Town Centre Footfall Counter Project</p> <p>Contracts have been signed with Springboard to implement a footfall counting solution across Watford town centre. This will enable town to accurately asses trends in the numbers of visitors to the town centre, the impact of events and interventions, and create an evidence base upon which to plan for future investments.</p> <p>The project is in implementation phase, involving structural testing of lamp columns, gaining permissions to locate cameras, and installation. The cameras will all be in place by the New Year, although activities are being accelerated to attempt a pre Christmas completion. Springboard will deliver user training in January, and all stakeholders and interested parties will be consulted to understand the data and reports needed to monitor pedestrian flows around the town.</p> <p>Contracts have been signed for 3 years, enabling Watford to build up a robust evidence base of pedestrian data and trends.</p>
12.3	<p>Town Centre Access Wi-Fi</p> <p>The soft market testing undertaken in the summer suggested the market is likely to be interested in investing in Watford to create a wireless broadband network. This would deliver free WiFi across the town centre and other key points of economic and community activity within the Borough. The model underpinning this is a 'Service Concession Contract', which enables WBC to offer physical assets to the market on a rental basis, allowing the provider to create the network at street level.</p> <p>WBC is working with HCC to incorporate County owned assets (lamp columns) in the project. There is also a second opportunity for WBC to offer rooftop assets to the market, again under a concession contract, with the potential to generate an income stream whilst the provider creates wireless network with greater capacity, capable of providing much needed business quality broadband to business areas across the town.</p> <p>Currently asset registers are being compiled for both projects and contracts / licenses drafted in order to go to procurement in January 2015. If Watford is</p>

	successful in securing a concession contract, indicative timeframes are for licenses to be signed in the Spring, implementation to commence during the summer, and the WiFi network to be fully operational by the end of 2015.
13.0	Monitoring Officer Comments
13.1	No Comments
14.0	s151 Officer Comments
14.1	No Comments

Appendices

Appendix A: TRO Various Sites

Appendix B: The Parade Extension Plan

Background Papers

No papers were used in the preparation of this report.

File Reference

None