

CABINET

7 October 2013

Present:

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| Mayor Dorothy Thornhill | (Strategic partnerships/external relationships and community safety) |
| Cllr D Scudder | (Deputy Mayor and Portfolio Holder for Strategy & Client Services. |
| Cllr Crout | (Community & Customer Services Portfolio Holder) |
| Cllr Sharpe | (Regeneration & Development Portfolio Holder) |
| Cllr Watkin | (Democracy & Governance Portfolio Holder) |

Councillors Councillors Martins (Lib Dem Chair of the Disabled Parking Task Group),
Bell (Labour) Connal (Labour) Khan (Labour) and Meerabux (Independent)

Officers: Managing Director
Shared Director of Finance
Legal & Democratic Section Head
Head of Strategy & Client Function (for minute nos 17,18,19 and 26)
Head of Community & Customer Service
Housing Section Head
Client Manager – waste & re-cycling (for minute nos 17,18,19 and 26)
Housing Strategy Officer
Democratic Services Manager

24 MANAGEMENT OF DISABLED PARKING BAYS

At its meeting on 21 November 2012, Overview and Scrutiny Committee agreed to establish a Task Group to investigate Councillor Martins' scrutiny proposal regarding 'Disabled' marked parking bays.

The final report, incorporating the Task Group's recommendations, was presented to Overview and Scrutiny Committee on 27 June 2013. Cabinet received a copy of the report and was asked to review and comment on each of the recommendations for referral back to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

Councillor Martins introduced the report and outlined the background to the review. He commented that the level of responses to the survey indicated that there was an issue. The reason the level of complaints had been low was that these were mainly referred to the Parking Shop and not passed on. There were two problem areas; disabled parking in CPZ

schemes and areas where there was no CPZ, with the main problems occurring in CPZ areas. The Panel had agreed to keep a watching brief on the situation and carry out another survey in one year's time.

In response to a question from the Mayor about re-claiming disabled bays, for example when someone died, Councillor Martins advised that whilst there was no specific brief, the situation was kept under review by officers.

Councillor Sharpe commented that one option would be to go for a more formal system of designated bays regulated by traffic orders but agreed that on balance it was probably best to keep the situation under review. He endorsed the work done by the Task Group which he described as a useful piece of work that had also dispelled a number of misunderstandings about the system.

Councillor Martins said there was also a need to look at the criteria for issuing badges. People with severe mobility problems required parking very close to their homes whereas others were able to walk further.

Councillor Sharpe added that there were a number of ways of addressing these problems but it was necessary to ensure that whatever solution was put in place did not have a negative impact elsewhere.

Councillor Bell commented on the difficulties of assessing individual needs and enforcement. He agreed that it was important to keep a watch on situations where bays may no longer be required.

The Mayor concluded the discussion by stressing the need for complaints received by the Parking Shop to be passed on. She also endorsed the view that those with a genuine need must be protected and that there may be a need for greater enforcement further down the line.

RESOLVED

that Cabinet agrees the following recommendations as proposed by the Task Group:

Recommendation 1

That information be sent to those residents who have a Disabled Parking Bay explaining the rules which allowed for these bays to be established outside residents' homes.

Recommendation 2

That information be sent to residents with a Disabled Parking Bay explaining who could and who could not use the bays.

Recommendation 3

That information be sent to all ward councillors detailing where Disabled Parking Bays have been established within their wards.

Recommendation 4

That an article be written in 'About Watford' informing residents that the survey has been conducted and advising on actions residents could take in the event of encountering problems.

Recommendation 5

That all Councillors keep a data log of information on all parking problems received from residents regarding their 'Disabled' marked parking bays. Councillors will then pass this information on a quarterly basis to the Senior Admin Officer in the Planning section.

Recommendation 6

That information arising from the survey be forwarded to Disability Watford.

ACTION: Committee & Scrutiny Officer