

## Part A

**Report to:** Highways Forum  
**Date of meeting:** 2<sup>nd</sup> April 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.

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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 in 2012, the Council formalised a layout in Orchard Drive which negated the need for bays to be marked on the road and this went live in May 2013. A similar 'no bays' scheme was proposed in Woodland Drive and was implemented in late 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 formed the 2013 various sites Traffic Order.

The Statutory Consultation on the proposals took place in October 2013. And agreed measures were implemented towards the end of 2013.

A new list of sites to be progressed from the reserve list to the action list for consideration in 2014/15 has been agreed by the Portfolio Holder Councillor Sharpe and will be taken forward after the elections in May 2014.

3.4 Initial informal consultations on possible parking controls on the Leavesden Green Estate and on parking bays in Lower High Street (close to the access to B&Q) took place in early 2014. The member of staff leading on these projects has recently gone on maternity leave which has led to some delay however the work will be picked up by existing staff over the next few weeks.

### 3.5 **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 was the subject of a statutory consultation in February 2014 and representations are currently being considered

### 3.6 **TROs Un-Actioned Sites**

**Appendix B** details the list of locations remaining on the reserve list for future consideration.

### 3.7 **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. The purpose of the Order is to control the use of the car park to manage length of stay and prohibit inappropriate use (parking out of bay for example).

Provision within the amendment order will also cover the use of the electric vehicle at Pinner Road car park 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. It is hoped to advertise the Order inviting representations in April 2014.

### **3.8 St Albans Road 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 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 is to be taken to Cabinet at its meeting in July 2014.

### **3.9 CPZ Investigation Zone E**

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

Following requests from residents supported by Ward and Divisional Members proposals to extend the zone operating hours to 8 am to 10 pm every day to address evening/ weekend parking from the adjacent Met Quarter restaurant development were taken forward in the latter part of 2013. The proposal was implemented at the beginning of December 2013.

### **3.10 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 a full report on the outcome was presented 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. Proposals for these changes will be developed and taken through the consultation processes during 2014/15.

### **3.11 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 further round of consultation, including holding an exhibition in the autumn is planned at which views will be sought on detailed designs for a range of options.

### **3.12 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. The scheme was implemented on site in late 2013.

## 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.

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.

To-date car park surfacing and drainage improvements have been carried out together with lighting improvements. Over the next month the scheme will see the introduction of dedicated Disabled Bays and an Electric Vehicle Charging Unit.

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. Refurbishment works within the car park have commenced with the remarking of the bays, introducing dedicated disabled bays and infrastructure to enable electric vehicles to charge.

The First Phase of the HCC on-road improvement measures were completed before Christmas 2013. The works included carriageway resurfacing and footpath improvements. The second phase of works commenced on the 17<sup>th</sup> March 2014 and these include introducing a new cycle lane, bus stop improvements throughout the business park and a new one-way road layout. The works are expected to be

completed in full by the 11<sup>th</sup> April.

#### **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 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

The area of The Parade from Clarendon Road to the pond is now open and new lighting and street furniture installed, the new trees are currently being planted. The bridge structure is now in place as is the filtration system for the pond. Work is on target to complete by the end of April and events have now been scheduled.

#### **4.4 New Market Project**

We have now appointed our principal contractor and unit supplier for delivering the new Market project. Works start on the new Market site on the 31st March and are set to be completed by mid September 2014.

On the 17<sup>th</sup> March works commenced on the construction of a new footpath link from Clarendon Road to the new Market. The works include, lighting upgrades, signage, new pedestrian drop kerb facilities and improvements to the Beechen Grove subway.

#### **5.0 Heritage Projects and Renovation schemes**

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

The project to restore various heritage assets in St Mary's Churchyard, which was largely funded by the Heritage Lottery Fund, is now complete. Twelve chest tombs and one headstone have been comprehensively cleaned and repaired, signage has been installed and leaflets have been published, 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.

## **5.2 The Peace Memorial**

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.

## **5.3 The Square Conservation Area**

An enhancement project, which was part funded by the local County Councillor, is complete for the terraced streets in The Square Conservation Area. 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.

## **5.4 Coal Duty Markers.**

City of London Corporation have restored two Coal Duty Markers in the Borough, while a third one is due to be restored soon. The Council is restoring a fourth one in Waterfields Recreation Ground, with works complete by April.

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

A grant has been received from the War Memorials Trust for re-engraving the Christ Church War Memorial, with the local County Councillor providing the remainder of the funding. Work is likely to take place in the next two months. The Church have already arranged for conservation repairs and cleaning to take place following a vehicular crash into the memorial.

## **5.6 Leavesden Road Horse Trough**

Match funding has been received from Hertfordshire County Council for a project to undertake repairs to the Horse Trough on Leavesden Road and to further enhance its setting. Part of the funding has been provided by the local County Councillor. The scheme will commence in mid April and be completed by the end of May.

## **5.7 Bandstand**

A Listed Building Application has been made for relocating the Bandstand back to its original location in Cassiobury Park. 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.

## 5.8 **De-cluttering your streets**

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.

The Council has worked with Hertfordshire County Council to get outdated signs and unnecessary street furniture removed in the last few months. So far approximately 500 pieces of clutter have been removed 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.

Discussions are now taking place with a view to extending the project of de-cluttering to Callowland, Leggatts, Meriden and Tudor Wards.

## 6.0 **New Bus Shelter Installations**

In January a new non advertising bus shelter was installed in Haines Way.

The planned installation of a new bus shelter in Vicarage Road has been delayed due to the shallow depth of underground apparatus. A steel plate has been designed to enable the shelter to be securely installed and the project is expected to be completed by the end of March.

The new shelter, situated opposite Watford Hospital entrance, will be fitted with a real time information screen providing up to date information on bus arrival times.

Over the next three weeks all 112 bus shelters across the Borough will have up-to-date time-tables installed.

## 6.1 **New Cycling Infrastructure**

As part of the Watford Business Park sustainable transport improvement project HCC and WBC have offered businesses an innovative scheme for installing cycle stands within the businesses premises. Each business has been offered up to 4 cycle stands for free which will then provide cycle parking for up to 8 bicycles. The joint funding project is aimed at promoting cycling as an alternative to other modes of transport.

The divisional County Councillor for Oxhey and Central has funded the installation of cycle stands at the following locations.

108 Villiers Road - pavement in front of public house on Upper Paddock Road side;  
83 Chalk Hill - pavement in front of shop;  
Bushey & Oxhey Methodist Church - to west of Church off King Edward Road; St Mathew's Church, Eastbury Road - to east of Church Hall ;  
Oxhey Bowls Club - south of Watford Heath;  
2 Woodford Road - pavement in front of public house on Woodford Road side;  
207 Queens Road - pavement in front of shop;  
11 King Street- pavement in front of shop;  
WCHT at 59 Clarendon Road - space to east of the building.

The new stands are set to be installed during early April.

## 6.2 **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 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.

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.

Through a funding opportunity and partnership working with Herts County the Council has funding available to carry out works during 2014/15 at the following subway sites.

- 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. The subway from Church Road leading to Watford Junction Station has also seen vegetation clearance and a new footpath laid. The plans from April is to undertake similar improvement works to the other subways identified above.

## 6.3 **Promoting Electric Vehicle Charging Units**

In partnership with HCC new signage is to be erected on the WBC car park information boards to highlight the electric charging infrastructure that has been installed.

In April new /replacement signage will be erected at the following car parks:

- Longspring
- Town Hall
- The Avenue
- Pinner Road
- Watford Business Park
- Timberlake, Radlett Road



## **7.0 PARKING SERVICE UPDATE**

### **7.1 Representations Officer Vacancy**

The closing date for the vacant post of Representations Officer based at the parking Shop in Market Street has just passed and we have received 25 applications. Short-listing is underway and we hope to arrange the first interviews during the course of March with an appointment made in April.

### **7.2 Bailiff Contract**

Our current bailiff contracts end on 31<sup>st</sup> March 2014 and it has been agreed that our present arrangements will be extended until 31<sup>st</sup> December 2014 by way of service level agreements. This coincides with the expiry of the Council Tax bailiff contracts, which may allow for a joint retendering process at that time.

### **7.3 Controlled Parking Zone E**

Controlled Parking Zone E, which covers the met quarter of King Street and the surrounding area, introduced an extension of the controlled hours until 10pm, 7 days a week, on 2<sup>nd</sup> December 2013, in response to resident's concerns regarding additional traffic caused by visitors to the new restaurants. Physical enforcement of the new evening restriction commenced on 9<sup>th</sup> December 2013.

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

The new web based permit module, which allows residents of the controlled parking zone to purchase their annual permit online, went into operation on 2nd December 2013. Work continues to improve renewal functions of the system and the possible implementation of additional functionality to accommodate the purchase of visitor vouchers.

### **7.5 Introduction of CCTV Body Cameras**

Sadly, there have been a number of incidents over a significant period of time where Civil Enforcement Officer's on routine patrols have been the subject of an unacceptable level of verbal and physical abuse. As a result, in partnership with its enforcement contractor, Vinci Park UK, the Council have agreed to the purchase of 20 CCTV body cameras. Evidence provided by other authorities using these cameras has shown a notable reduction in abusive encounters and it is hoped that a similar result will be seen within Watford. It is anticipated that these cameras will be in operation by May 2014.

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

### 8.1 **The Partnership**

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.

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.

### 8.2 **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 solutions (if ones exist), who is to action the points, the priority of the problems and expected completion dates. 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.

## 9.0 **CCTV, WI-FI and Footfall up-dates**

### 9.1 **CCTV control room move to Shady Lane**

The Council's principal contractor, Videcom Ltd, continues to make good progress on the installation configuration and cabling of the camera control, recording and video switching systems. The construction of the control room at Watford Police Station is now complete. Field testing and commissioning will commence on the 21<sup>st</sup> March. CCTV images will be received and cameras controlled at Shady Lane by the 31<sup>st</sup> March.

The transfer of the camera communications system is also making good progress and is on target for the 31<sup>st</sup> March. Wireless transmission equipment and associated cabling is being installed on the roofs of the Town Hall, Charter, Church, Gade, INTU and Vicarage Road Stadium.

Mayor Dorothy Thornhill is attending on the 2<sup>nd</sup> April to formally open the control room.

### 9.2 **Town Centre Footfall Counter Project**

The proposal is to install a network of pedestrian counters at strategic gateways and routes throughout the town centre. The system will provide structured reports of pedestrian numbers on an hourly basis indicating trends and hotspots. The objective is to provide baseline data to enable the monitoring of the effectiveness of policies and strategies for town centre redevelopment, cultural events and major transport infrastructure projects.

The project is at the scoping and initiation stage. A number of key providers have been consulted on technical options and pricing models to enable the development of a business case and project plan.

If funding bids are successful it is anticipated that works could commence in Autumn 2014 following the procurement process.

### 9.3 **Town Centre Access WI-FI**

The proposal is to create a public area wi-fi network across the town centre within the area bounded by Watford Junction, West Herts College, Vicarage Road Stadium and High Street Station. This would enable visitors to the town with wireless enabled portable devices such as smart phones, tablets and laptops to access high speed internet on the move.

The Council is currently scoping the proposals and commencing discussions with potential consultants for the drafting of specifications prior to a procurement process using the Government Framework.

Subject to funding being available it is anticipated that works could commence in Spring 2015.

## 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