

Communities, Highways and Environment Scrutiny Committee

19 January 2022

On-Street Parking Management Strategy Task and Finish Group

Report by the Chairman of the Task and Finish Group

Summary

The strategic management of on-street parking remains important for the County Council as the level of development and number of vehicles in West Sussex continues to increase.

The Cabinet Member for Highways and Transport has taken a decision to introduce a revised policy framework and parking management programme to replace the County Council's Road Space Audit Programme and associated decision-making process.

The Communities, Highways and Environment Scrutiny Committee's Business Planning Group set up a Task and Finish Group (TFG) to consider the proposals and make recommendations to the Cabinet Member ahead of the decision.

This report outlines the discussion that took place during the TFG meeting and the recommendations that were submitted to the Cabinet Member for consideration.

Focus for Scrutiny

The Committee is asked to consider the recommendations of the Task and Finish Group, which informed the Cabinet Member's On-Street Parking Management decision, published on 22 December 2021.

The Committee is further asked to consider the Cabinet Member for Highways and Transport's response.

Proposal

1 Background and context

- 1.1 In December 2018, the then Cabinet Member for Highways and Infrastructure considered revised principles for managing on-street parking in West Sussex and agreed a revision to the decision making process for Road Space Audits (RSA) as well as a strategic parking management plan programme to implement on-street parking controls in various locations across the county.
- 1.2 In March 2020, members of the Environment and Communities Scrutiny Committee (ECSC) were updated on the progress of the Strategic Parking Management Plan programme and subsequently raised concerns about whether there was the staffing capacity to deliver the programme and manage the

expectations of the community. It was resolved that the Cabinet Member for Highways and Infrastructure should review the RSA principles as well as the programme to confirm it remained deliverable, with regard to its resourcing and funding.

- 1.3 The Cabinet Member for Highways and Transport announced an intention to publish a new Parking Management Strategy in December 2021. In response to this the Communities, Highways and Environment Scrutiny Committee's Business Planning Group set up a Task and Finish Group (TFG) to scrutinise the proposals and make recommendations to the Cabinet Member ahead of the decision.
- 1.4 The TFG met on 2 November 2021 and comprised of Councillors Carson Albury, Andrew Baldwin, Caroline Baxter, John Milne and Simon Oakley. Simon Oakley was appointed as the Chairman of the TFG.

2 TFG Discussion

- 2.1 At the TFG, members were given a presentation by Miles Davy, Parking Manager, and Andy Ekinsmyth, Head of Transport and Network Operations, which outlined the current parking processes and the details of the proposed strategy.
- 2.2 The TFG members spoke through the proposals and the details of the new strategy. Concerns were raised where the strategy stipulates that all schemes were required to achieve a 50% response rate to a consultation, and of those responses 50% needed to be in support. Members felt that 40% would be a sensible level to ensure that schemes would progress, and also proposed further caveats to low response rates that would allow local councillors to comment on the proposals and potentially recommend them for progression.
- 2.3 The catchment areas for consultations needed clarity and how they would cover roads (including private roads) in the area and other stakeholders such as landlords and business owners.
- 2.4 The TFG members also felt that greater clarity was needed on how the new proposals would interact with existing schemes and other reviews not covered by the proposed Parking Management Strategy. It should also be established how the new policy would interact with other existing processes such as Community Traffic Regulation Orders (TROs), Community Highway Scheme and the existing CPZ Review processes. The TFG members agreed it was important that there were no gaps in the process.
- 2.5 Members felt that the rise in electric vehicles may need to be considered as part of the policy, along with the requests for dropped curbs.

3 Recommendations and Responses

- 3.1 The Group agreed on the following recommendations that were to be submitted to the Cabinet Member for Highways and Transport on 15 November 2021. The Cabinet Member responses are included below after each recommendation.
 - a) Clarity needs to be provided on the existing parking scheme designs and reviews that are not covered by the proposed New Parking Management Strategy. Any impact from the new Strategy on existing designs should be made clear.

- Cabinet Member (CM) response: The initial three-year programme for CPZ development is outlined in Appendix B and the main report (section 2.2) outlines the reasons why particular projects have been included in the programme.

It is proposed that the projects forming the initial programme would not be subject to the initial trigger stage, the assessment stage and the prioritisation stage, as they are either already underway or are long-standing priorities. However, any other project would be subject to these stages before it could be added to the programme.

Tier 1 projects would also not be subject to the 'consultation thresholds' outlined in the new framework. This is because Chichester and Horsham are reviews of existing CPZs and Manor Royal is at the final consultation stage. Tier 2 projects are classified as 'new' and therefore would be subject to the consultation thresholds.

- b) The proposed 50% thresholds are considered too high, with 40% being considered a more appropriate aspirational level for both overall and in favour responses. Caveats should be included in the policy to allow consideration of schemes with a lower response, with judgement from local County Councillors to be part of the consideration throughout the process. Flexibility to take into account specific circumstances is considered necessary.

- CM response: It is not considered necessary to lower the aspirational thresholds as long as the CPZ Policy Framework allows consideration of schemes with a lower response rate and/or other specific circumstances. It should also be stressed that as the Policy Framework/Programme will be reviewed regularly by the Director for Highways, Transport and Planning, there will be an opportunity to change the aspirational thresholds, based on the actual response rates from 'in-progress' schemes. So, for example, if initial rates are particularly low, the aspirational threshold could subsequently be lowered to 40%.

The framework has therefore been re-drafted as follows:

'Accepting that unanimity is extremely unlikely, a consultation response rate of 50% will therefore be the aspiration.

Where the initial response rate is lower than 50% or where less than 50% of those who responded supported the idea of a CPZ and its progression, the responses may be judged on their own merits and the Director of Highways, Transport and Planning will decide whether to make an exception and allow the project to progress to the next stage. As part of this decision making process, consultation will take place with the Cabinet Member and the relevant County Councillors.'

- c) Clarity is needed for consultation catchment areas and how these relate to roads (including private roads) in the area and other stakeholders such as landlords and business owners.
- CM response: A consultation catchment area (or 'study area') would consist of those roads initially forming part of the submission to WSCC as well as some peripheral roads, to account for potential displacement etc. The final extent of the study area would be agreed with the relevant

County Councillors before any engagement with residents/businesses begun. Engagement would primarily consist of letters being sent to all individual properties, including commercial premises, within the study area and including private roads.

Residents/businesses in private roads would be advised, as part of this initial engagement, of the options for future parking management. For example, WSCC could consider yellow lines in private roads for safety/access purposes but not permit controls or pay and display facilities.

Letters would be sent to individual properties and thereby the current occupants/residents would be expected to respond. Landlords are not considered to be residents/occupants of a property and would not be contacted separately. Landlords and business owners would be classified as 'non-residents' but would still be eligible to apply for particular types of permit such as Traders Permits or Visitors Permits.

d) The Strategy needs to include consideration for dropped curb and kerbside EV charging requests.

- CM response: It is not considered necessary to include specific information on Vehicle Cross Overs (VCOs) in the CPZ framework as WSCCs existing VCO policy already sets out an approach regarding requests for EV charging facilities. Any potential changes to this approach should therefore be considered in the context of the VCO policy rather than the CPZ framework.

Officers will ensure that the TFG are consulted on any potential changes to the VCO policy.

e) The relationship between this policy and the Community TRO, Community Highway Scheme and existing CPZ Review processes needs to be considered against the five-road threshold limit to ensure there are no gaps in the process. Transitions from one policy to another need to be considered, taking into account the Communities, Highways and Environment Scrutiny Committee's recommendations regarding the Community TRO process arising from its 24 November meeting.

- CM response: It is accepted that the CPZ framework can be amended in order to clarify the relationship between CPZs and other TROs. The framework has therefore been re-drafted as follows:

'It is also preferable that a submission refers to an area comprised of at least 5 roads, all of which must be public highway, that are either adjoining or in close proximity. In the majority of cases, it would be inefficient for the County Council to consider taking action in a smaller number of isolated roads as such schemes could have a disproportionate cost in terms of enforcement and administration, may create expectations that the Council is unable to meet and have limited traffic or parking management value for the surrounding area.

Operational guidance issued to Local Authorities via the Traffic Management Act (2004) states that a typical CPZ (sub-zone) should not exceed 12 roads so a submission that refers to an area comprised of between 5 and 12 roads is considered most appropriate. Submissions

comprised of less than 5 roads may still be considered in exceptional circumstances but a submission from an individual household or road will not trigger an investigation.

In cases where a request for a CPZ has been submitted by an individual household or road, or has no County Councillor and Local Council support, or has not been considered an exceptional circumstance, representatives will be advised to obtain further evidence and support from residents in surrounding roads in order to submit another request. Alternatively, they may be referred to the County Council’s Community TRO or Community Highways Scheme application process if it is considered that access and/or safety in a single road or small number of roads could be improved by a physical measure, such as build outs, or the introduction of waiting restrictions such as yellow lines or another restriction that does not involve the use of on-street permits.’

- f) Parish/Neighbourhood Councils need to be included in the trigger and consultation stages to ensure involvement of the local representative body.
 - CM response: A District, Borough, Parish, Town, City or Neighbourhood Council will be contacted as standard practice in any CPZ consultation exercise.

The framework has also been re-drafted as follows:

‘Evidence of initial support from the relevant County Councillor(s) and representative(s) of a ‘Local Council’, including a District, Borough, Parish, Town, City or Neighbourhood Council, will also be required as part of a submission.’

- g) The scoring level assessment should not use actual numbers of responses as a measure, due to the different demographics in each area.
 - CM response: The framework has been re-drafted as follows:

Level of Support (Resident/Stakeholder)	Less than 10% of the total households form part of the initial submission	10-20% of the total households form part of the initial submission	20-50% of the total households form part of the initial submission and/or identified in local policy	Over 50% of the total households form part of the initial submission and/or identified in local policy
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4 Other options considered (and reasons for not proposing)

- 4.1 Given the timing of the decision, the establishment of a scrutiny TFG was deemed to be the most effective means of undertaking scrutiny of the decision before it was required to be taken.

5 Consultation, engagement and advice

- 5.1 Highways Officers delivered a presentation during the TFG and also assisted members with responses and information to all queries.

6 Finance

6.1 The cost of the TFG was met from existing service budgets.

Cllr Simon Oakley

Chairman of the Task and Finish Group

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Appendices

Appendix A – Terms of Reference

Background papers

None