

CABINET



THURSDAY, 21 OCTOBER 2021 - 4.00 PM

PRESENT: Councillor C Boden (Chairman), Councillor Mrs J French (Vice-Chairman), Councillor I Benney, Councillor S Clark, Councillor Miss S Hoy, Councillor Mrs D Laws, Councillor P Murphy, Councillor C Seaton and Councillor S Tierney

CAB25/21 PREVIOUS MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting held 30 September 2021 were agreed and signed.

CAB26/21 CIVIL PARKING ENFORCEMENT UPDATE

Members considered the Civil Parking Enforcement Update report presented by Councillor Mrs French.

Councillor Mrs French had attended a meeting on 7 September where County Highways and Transport Committee approval was given to progress civil parking enforcement plans. She stressed that we are not bringing in car parking charges unless Government forces us to do so. Councillor Mrs French shared details of the project delivery timeline, which will include a period of statutory consultation, leading up to the planned implementation of civil parking enforcement in October 2023.

Councillor Mrs Laws said she welcomed this news; civil parking enforcement cannot come to Whittlesey quickly enough because of parking abuse. It is disappointing it will take so long but she understands that there is a procedure to follow.

Councillor Murphy also welcomed the news, but he is disappointed it will not be implemented earlier. Parking in Chatteris gets worse by the day with people parking on double yellow lines, bends and at road junctions etc.

Councillor Seaton said he fully supports the proposal. However, it is his understanding that initially only the four market towns will benefit from civil parking enforcement and he asked how long it will be before it is enforced in the rural areas. Councillor Boden responded that it would come into force across all of Fenland at the same time. There will have to be mechanisms in place as to how it will work but there will be discussions with the town and parish councils. Councillor Seaton welcomed the news that it will be incorporated across the whole district as we are all aware of rural parking problems.

Councillor Mrs French advised that she had this morning attended a meeting of the Community Safety Partnership and spoke to Inspector Ian Lombardo as to whether he would arrange some parking enforcement, particularly around schools, over the next few months.

Councillor Tierney said residents have been asking for years why we cannot have traffic wardens. This is a good policy and he also supports it as it has been demanded for some time. However, it is a shame we cannot dig into the bureaucracy; it should not be this difficult. We should not have to jump so many hurdles to do something that people clearly support. He asked if there is any way to speed up the process and make it simpler with checks and balances in place. One observation he would make for the record is that most of the public are very supportive of this, but he predicts that

a few years down the line there will be complaints about the system and the new rules brought into place; unfortunately, that is the nature of public service. Nevertheless, it is a good policy, well done to Councillor Mrs French and he hopes it crosses the line.

Councillor Boden said that he would like to make one correction to Councillor Tierney's comment and stressed that apart from any changes taking place in the ordinary course of business, we will not be creating any new rules; it will just be a matter of enforcing the current rules.

Councillor Mrs French said at the Community Safety Partnership meeting this morning she did ask Inspector Lombardo if the plan had the support of the police. He advised he is in full support and has already responded.

Councillor Benney said that he too fully supports this and agreed with Councillor Murphy's comments regarding parking in Chatteris. The proposal will also bring economic benefits to Chatteris if we can get the environment right for businesses to thrive. Currently people drive to March as they cannot park within the town centre, but civil parking enforcement will make traffic more fluid, and businesses will surely welcome this. There have also been problems in the car park so potentially it could also alleviate anti-social behaviour in the town. It is a good thing for the towns and villages.

Councillor Mrs Laws said she hoped the promise made by Inspector Lombardo to Councillor Mrs French would be fulfilled and it was not lip service. Councillor Mrs French said that she has been discussing parking issues with Inspector Lombardo for some years; he always responds to her and they get on well.

Councillor Boden said he would like officers particularly to note that we all know we are not doing this as a money-making exercise, but nor can the County Council expect that we will generate money for them out of this. We are trying to introduce a system of enforcement which will mean that our on-street parking arrangements become more effective. His concern is the draft agency agreement, and it is essential that there is no misunderstanding on the part of the County Council about what that should or should not contain. There should be nothing about parking fees, neither should there be onerous terms placed upon FDC. We must recognise that we will be operating this on behalf of CCC but not if over bureaucratic or more onerous than necessary. FDC will accept in principle responsibility for the initial deficit but he would not want to waste time arguing where surplus may go. There should not be any surplus as there will be no parking fees. He is also concerned that any SRA created is not overly restrictive or prescriptive as we need as much flexibility as possible to operate this scheme in the light of what we see the initial and longer-term requirements to be once people are used to enforcement taking place.

Councillor Mrs French said this is the purpose of the additional CCC Highways and Transport meeting on 4 November. We have stressed that there will be no parking charges and we will be keeping funding, it will not be going to Peterborough.

Cabinet AGREED to:

- a) **Note the decisions agreed in respect of Civil Parking Enforcement at Cambridgeshire County Council Highway and Transport Committee on 7th September 2021**
- b) **Note the progress being made by FDC and CCC in respect of moving the introduction of CPE forward.**

CAB27/21 DRAFT 6 MONTH CABINET FORWARD PLAN

Councillor Boden presented the draft Cabinet Forward Plan for information and announced that the reserve Cabinet meeting planned for 17 November is cancelled.