

Norfolk County Council & District Councils Norfolk Parking Partnership Joint Committee

**Minutes of the Meeting Held on Tuesday, 19 January 2021
at 2pm on Microsoft Teams (virtual meeting)**

Voting Members Present:

Cllr Martin Wilby (Chairman)	Norfolk County Council
Cllr Alison Thomas	South Norfolk District Council
Cllr Paul Kunes	Borough Council of King's Lynn and West Norfolk
Cllr Graham Plant	Great Yarmouth Borough Council

Non-Voting Members Present

Cllr Eric Seward	North Norfolk District Council
Cllr Mike Stonard	Norwich City Council
Cllr Jo Copplestone	Broadland District Council

Officers Present:

Martin Chisholm	Borough Council of King's Lynn and West Norfolk
Alex Cliff	Highway Network and Digital Innovation Manager, Norfolk County Council
David Disney	South Norfolk District Council
Michele Earp	South Norfolk District Council
Ian Gregory	Better parking Strategy Manager, Norfolk County Council
Miranda Lee	Great Yarmouth Borough Council
Andy Watt	Norwich City Council
Tim Young	Project Engineer (Network Policy & Performance), Norfolk County Council

1. Apologies for absence

- 1.1 Apologies were received from Joanne Deverick. Also absent was Cllr Paul Hewett.

1b Election of Vice-Chair

- 1b.1 The Chair nominated Cllr Graham Plant, seconded by Alison Thomas nominated Cllr Plant. Cllr Graham Plant was duly elected as Vice-Chair.

2. Minutes

- 2.1 The minutes of the meeting held on 30 September 2020 were **AGREED** as an accurate record.

3. Declarations of Interests

- 3.1 No interests were declared.

4. Items of Urgent Business

- 4.1 No urgent business was discussed.

5. Traffic Management Act (2004) - Decriminalisation of moving traffic offences

- 5.1 The Joint Committee received the report detailing proposals for implementation, in full, of Part 6 of the Traffic Management Act (TMA), which would provide additional tools with which to manage the way vehicles use the road network, allowing the Council to tackle safety issues for residents that have traditionally been the remit of the police.
- 5.2 The following points were discussed and noted:
- The County Council would be responsible for enforcing moving traffic offences as the Council's Highway Authority
 - The likely impact on the County Council would be reviewed and a policy put together now that a timeline was known from Government. Moving traffic offences were in operation in London already, and their policies would be used to inform this work.
 - This would be a county wide operation and a policy decision would need to be taken on how it would be enforced, with a view to take targeted enforcement where there were particular issues to solve.
 - A Member asked for clarification on why Government had asked for this operation to be carried out separately to the issuing of penalty charge notices (PCNs). The Project Engineer (Network Policy & Performance) **agreed** to seek clarity on this by writing to DfT (the Department for Transport).
 - Cllr Mike Stonard arrived at 14.14
- 5.3 The Joint Committee **RESOLVED**:
1. To **NOTE** the anticipated timeline for the implementation of Part 6 moving traffic offences
 2. To **NOTE** that the rest of Part 6 enforcement is likely to be separate to current Civil Parking Enforcement (CPE) arrangements.
 3. To **NOTE** that the impact on CPE operations, and the NPP will be minimal as a result of this.
 4. That Officers would **write** to DfT to seek clarity on why Government were seeking decriminalisation of moving traffic offences to be carried out separately to the issuing of PCNs

6. 2020-21 Finance Update

- 6.1 The Joint Committee received the report providing an update on the finance of the Norfolk Parking Partnership (NPP) for the financial Year 2020-21, from the budget which was set and endorsed on 5 March 2020 before the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic in the UK.
- 6.2 The following points were discussed and noted:
- The Highway Network and Digital Innovation Manager reported that due to the impact of the pandemic, parking charges in 2020 had reduced and this had contributed to a deficit of £1.296m.
 - The information reported was an estimate, and therefore this position could change over the next three months due changes brought about by the January 2021 lockdown and additional information due to be received from District and Borough Councils and Norwich City Council.
 - A discussion was held about why the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG) grant could not be used to recover losses to the County Council; the Highway Network and Digital Innovation Manager explained that the NPP

budget was held by the County Council on behalf of NPP as it was a separate entity to the Council. Because of this, the budget was not held on the Council's revenue sheet; claims could only be made against budgets on the Council's revenue sheet.

- The Vice-Chair confirmed that Great Yarmouth Borough Council intended to apply for the MHCLG grant to reimburse part of the loss of funding.
- The Highway Network and Digital Innovation Manager confirmed that during the first Covid-19 lockdown in March 2020, some enforcement activity was suspended, however, some enforcement continued, such as helping ambulances access hospitals. Some enforcement officers were redeployed to services helping local communities within District and Borough Councils, such as delivering prescriptions, however these staff costs were met through the NPP budget. Members queried the appropriateness of this funding arrangement and felt that Borough and District Councils should be meeting this cost. It was therefore suggested that the process for staff redeployment during the Covid-19 lockdown may need reviewing to see where costs for redeployed staff should be allocated.
- Martin Chisolm discussed that during the lockdown in March 2020, enforcement of on street restrictions was not suspended; a high visibility presence was required to support with the increase in deliveries and an increased number of cars parked on streets. April was reported as the only month in 2020 where no penalties or PCNs were issued.
- The lack of revenue from pay and display and reduced number of PCNs in 2020 had contributed to the deficit in the budget, although it was reported that some areas had seen an increase in PCNs and resort-level pay and display income due to people holidaying near to home in Norfolk or exercising locally.
- Members thanked enforcement staff for their work during 2020 helping with parking issues.
- Members expressed their concerns around the governance arrangements and the budget, owing to the large deficit being reported. The Highway Network and Digital Innovation Manager discussed that during the first lockdown from March-June 2020, when people were instructed to remain at home, a 30% reduction in traffic was seen which resulted in much reduced enforcement, particularly in Norwich city. When non-essential shops re-opened in June 2020, warning letters were issued rather than returning to full enforcement according to national guidance.
- The appendix on p18 did not give detail on the deficit by each District/Borough/City Council, to enable Members and officers to identify how much to apply for from the MHCLG grant; The Highway Network and Digital Innovation Manager confirmed this information was available and **agreed** to share it with the Members of the Committee.
- The increase in cost of cash collection and maintenance shown in the forecast was noted; the Highway Network and Digital Innovation Manager did not have information on why this had increased but **agreed** to look further into this and report back. Martin Chisolm suggested part of this increase could be caused by purchase of maintenance plans for pay and display machines on Great Yarmouth seafront.
- The Highway Network and Digital Innovation Manager clarified that the NPP Agreement identified Norfolk County Council as responsible for losses incurred by the NPP, however all members of the NPP should take reasonable steps to recover loss of income. The deficit had been reported as a corporate risk on the Council's Covid-19 register and the chief finance officer was aware; the deficit may be met from the Covid-19 fund but the decision for this would rest with the finance officer.
- To help reduce the NPP Deficit, Norwich City Council had already received a successful claim to MHCLG, and Great Yarmouth Borough Council had expressed their intention to put in a claim. Members asked for information on how much may be claimed back from District/Borough Councils from MHCLG and how much this would reduce the deficit. The Highway Network and Digital Innovation Manager **asked** for District and Borough Councils to report back their loss of income to NCC.
- It was noted that Norwich City Council came into the NPP arrangement in April 2020, therefore it was difficult to compare the deficit and forecast for this financial year, 2020-

21, to the last, 2019-20, when their finances were not included. The deficit from Norwich City Council alone was £1.027m; if Norwich City Council was excluded from the forecast, the deficit reported would therefore be approximately £371,000. A table was shown of the forecast budget without Norwich City Council's finances included (see appendix A)

- Andy Watt reported that on-street pay and display income in Norwich was greatly reduced during 2020, and it was anticipated that under 50% of the usual income from this avenue would be received. There had also been a shortfall on PCN income in 2020 and, due to less people visiting the City, there had been a large impact on parking income. The figures for permit parking income were not known at that time but it was not expected there would have been as great an impact on this area by the pandemic; he **agreed** to report back to NCC with the City's latest financial position.
- Norwich City Council had received a £429,000 grant but it was not known at that time how much of this could be taken off of the Norwich City Council NPP deficit; the City Council Officers **agreed** to report back as soon as possible. The Highway Network and Digital Innovation Manager **agreed** to update the budget sheets and circulate when this information was received.
- Members suggested receiving a Q3 prediction at the end of the quarter, with more detail included from the discussions held at the meeting.
- The Vice-Chair **requested** the pay and display and residential parking was shown in separate lines in the next report for clarity.
- The Highway Network and Digital Innovation Manager confirmed that officers were currently working on a business plan for 2021-22 which was planned to be brought to the March 2021 Committee meeting. The biggest impact on the budget for 2020-21 had been from urban areas, so enforcement in these areas may need to be reviewed.
- Members **agreed** to hold an additional meeting to review the business plan in 4-5 weeks' time. The Committee Officer **agreed** to arrange a meeting for this purpose.
- The decriminalisation of moving offences legislation was due to go to Parliament in Summer 2021 and therefore more information on this would not be available to bring to the additional meeting to be arranged.

6.3 The Joint Committee **RESOLVED** to

1. **ASK** that South Norfolk District, King's Lynn Borough, Great Yarmouth Borough and Norwich City Council to submit claims in April 2021 to the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government's (MHCLG) Income Compensation Scheme for lost sales, fees and charges for the amounts as detailed in Appendix A of the report.
2. **AGREE** that regular updates on progress on claims are communicated back to the NPP via the Highway Network & Digital Innovation Manager, in order that forecasts can be updated accordingly.
3. **HOLD** an additional meeting in 4-5 weeks' time

The meeting concluded at 15.40

Chairman



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	Budget 2020/21	Forecast 2020/21	Variance from Budget
Budget for NPP Operations 2020-21			
CPE Operations			
Costs			
Parking Enforcement - Annual Operating costs	726,961	663,949	
Efficiency savings from Annual Operating Costs - Parking Enforcement	0		
Parking Department (NCC) - Annual Operating Costs	80,764	80,764	
Central Processing Unit - Annual Operating Costs	218,500	145,786	
Efficiency savings from Annual Operating Costs - CPU	0		
Capital Contribution (CPE)	59,000	59,000	
Efficiency savings from Annual Operating Costs - Capital Contribution	0		
Total Costs	1,085,225	949,499	-135,726
Income			
On-street Parking Enforcement	-651,889	-315,232	336,657
Subtotal			
(Surplus) / Deficit from CPE	433,336	634,267	
On-Street Pay & Display			
Costs			
Cash Collection and Maintenance	9,956	32,499	
Residents Permit Scheme Costs	14,852		
Total Costs	24,808	32,499	7,691
Income			
Total Income	-525,347	-362,578	162,769
Surplus / Deficit from On-street P&D and Residents Parking Schemes	-500,539	-330,079	
Norwich City Forecasted Surplus/Deficit			
Net Position			
Gross (Surplus) / Deficit from NPP Operations	-67,203	304,189	
Financial Contributions	-35,000	-35,000	
NPP Operations (Surplus) / Deficit	-102,203	269,189	371,392