

**MINUTES**  
of the  
**SOUTH ESSEX PARKING PARTNERSHIP JOINT COMMITTEE**  
held on 8 August 2024 at 2pm

Members present:

Councillor Alan Ball – Basildon Borough Council  
Councillor Andrew Cross – Rochford District Council  
Councillor Mike Fuller – Castle Point Borough Council  
Councillor Hugh Gorton – Brentwood Borough Council  
Councillor Laureen Shaw – Essex County Council  
Councillor Terry Sherlock – Chelmsford City Council  
Councillor Emma Stephens – Maldon District Council

Officers present:

Nick Binder - Chelmsford City Council  
Heather Binns – Chelmsford City Council  
Sharon Braney – Rochford District Council  
William Butcher – Chelmsford City Council  
Carole Carr – Brentwood Borough Council  
Jan Decena - Chelmsford City Council  
Jo Heynes – Essex County Council  
Mike Packham – Chelmsford City Council  
Russell Panter – Chelmsford City Council  
Jack Sharp – Chelmsford City Council

## 1. Welcome and Introductions

Nick Binder welcomed those present to the meeting. Members of the Joint Committee and officers then introduced themselves.

## 2. Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor S Morgan – Maldon District Council, and Councillor D Sankey – Brentwood Borough Council. Councillor H Gorton – Brentwood Borough Council was the substitute for Councillor Sankey, and Councillor E Stephens – Maldon District Council was the substitute for Councillor Morgan. Apologies were also received from Stuart Jarvis – Castle Point Borough Council, Matt Harwood-White – Rochford District Council Council, Alex Underdown – Basildon Borough Council, and Nicola Syder – Maldon District Council.

### 3. Election of Chairman for the ensuing Municipal year

One nomination was made by members by the Joint Committee and seconded, for Councillor Shaw.

AGREED that the Chairman for the ensuing Municipal year would be Councillor Shaw.

### 4. Election of Vice Chairman for the ensuing Municipal year

One nomination was made by members by the Joint Committee and seconded, for Councillor Sherlock.

AGREED that the Vice Chairman for the ensuing Municipal year would be Councillor Sherlock.

### 5. Minutes of the Joint Committee Meeting 14 March 2024

The minutes of the meeting 14 March 2024 were confirmed as a correct record as per officers' recommendation. The minutes of the TRO Sub-Committee meetings on 14 February 2024 were also confirmed as correct records.

### 6. Public Question Time

Councillor A Sosin, from Chelmsford City Council, asked regarding four traffic regulation orders which had been approved by SEPP and awaiting funding. Officers advised for Councillor Sosin to contact them as the funding for these TROs were in different stages. It was also advised that SEPP, in consultation with the chair, would make the decision on the TROs. These would also be reported back to the Joint Committee.

### 7. Enforcement Operations Update (Verbal Update)

The Joint Committee received a verbal update on enforcement operational matters.

Regarding staffing, members was advised that there had been new staff which were three CEOs at Brentwood, due to retirement and people leaving. The recruitment had been successful, and the three CEOs were currently overseeing probation. Formal training would also be provided. It was also advised that there were three vacancies at Chelmsford, Basildon, and Maldon. The team would be interviewing for a position soon. Members were also advised that they had been successful with the agency staff in the last six months.

The Joint Committee were advised that all the PPE and equipment were provided by Chelmsford City Council, and that new items that came into the market would be investigated. Members was advised of the upgrades to certain equipment such as phones and body cameras. There would also be a transition from half-hybrid to full hybrid vehicles. All funding for the equipment were allocated from the previous years.

Members heard that three staff had passed the accreditation from Essex Police. The new round of police accreditation would be in Brentwood Borough Council as there was a community hub in there with the local police. They also heard of the new website design to

streamline the reporting of parking issues. The web design also ensured that users would be sign-posted to the appropriate services for some issues and that it would be further educational and engaging.

It was advised that the team were looking further into school streets and red routes as well as looking into solutions where applicable and where there was a reasonable need as data led enforcement could be expensive. Regarding footway parking, it was advised they were waiting to hear on a government decision and the next DFT meeting should have a bit more information.

The Joint Committee then heard a forecast update on PCNs from each of the Partner authorities. It was heard that Basildon was on target but dropped a little due to sickness and staff leaving. There had been a decrease in Rochford as well however it was advised that there would be a collaboration with Brentwood and thus, there would be opportunity there to offer resources. Caste Point was reported to be on target however this was a small team thus there would be an impact if there was leave or sickness. Chelmsford was above the forecast as there were consistent levels of staffing and enforcement whilst Maldon had decreased due to sickness and leave as well as being a small team. Brentwood was down had a team of five which was reduced to two however they moved very quickly on recruitment. Overall, SEPP was down on PCN's.

In response to comments and statements from members, it was advised that;

- In relation to enforcement surrounding pavement parking, there were two authorities looking at this. It was advised that the local authority could only look at this if it involved contravention of the yellow lines. If it was a matter of obstruction and no restriction placed on the road, then this would be a police matter however these would only be for significant cases. In terms of funding, this would need to be referred to the PFCC.
- It was advised that the new website design was an upgrade to the existing platform to be enhanced and made user-friendly, ensuring the issues were filtered to the right officers. It was also aimed to be a bit more educational and to give more information to user. Users would have a reference number and an email advising that the team received the report however it was not meant to operate as a response service. Officers advised that expectations would need to be managed.
- Regarding whether boroughs were able to be provided data, it was advised these would be from the back office database and depending on how formal or informal the enquiry. It was also advised that officers out in the streets tend to find the parking issues themselves.
- It was advised that third party retrospective evidence could not be used and they must be taken or obtained at the point of contravention by a trained civil enforcement officer. The evidence could only be taken by an approved device, and these were bound by legislation and audit control.
- Data retrieved by community speed watch groups also could not be used as evidence as they were under a different legislation.

RESOLVED that the update be noted.

(2.13pm to 2.44pm)

## 8. Financial Outturn 2023/24

The Joint Committee received a financial outturn detailing the financial position of the South Essex Parking Partnership for the period covering 1<sup>st</sup> April 2023 to 31<sup>st</sup> March 2024. The report also provided the details of the actual costs incurred and income received.

Members were advised of the closing positions for the account, including the TRO account, in the last financial year for the Partnership. They heard that by 31<sup>st</sup> March 2024, there was a surplus of £344,870 for SEPP and a deficit of £311,237 for the TRO account. This resulted in an overall surplus position of £33,634. The closing position for the Partnership on 2022/23 was a surplus of £129,714, including the TRO account. The difference was due to rising expenditure with direct expenditure as a whole totalling £2,225,937 for 2023/24 compared to £2,055,429 in 2022/23.

The Joint Committee heard that the income levels from PCN remained broadly unchanged between 2022/23 and 2023/24, receiving £1,616,229 in 2023/24. They also heard that the income from residential parking permits have increased from last year with £682,213 in comparison to £610,473 on 2022/23. Regarding the reserves, it was advised that the operational fund allocations to Basildon, Brentwood, and Maldon Councils, plus an amount for out of hours enforcement in Brentwood, resulted in total of £591,820. The net position for the Partnership, including the TRO account, after use of reserves, was a deficit of £558,186. The Partnership currently have a cumulative cashable position of £1,597,600 which did not include £401,809 of outstanding fines that were yet to be collected.

RESOLVED that the financial outturn for 2023/24 be noted.

(2.09pm to 2.11pm)

## 9. Financial Report 2024/25

The Joint Committee received a financial report regarding the financial position of South Essex Parking Partnership for the period covering 1<sup>st</sup> April 2024 to 30<sup>th</sup> July 2024. The report also provided details of the actual costs and income received in this period.

Members were advised that the SEPP account showed a surplus of £33,231 but also a deficit of £91,833 for the TRO account. The overall deficit position for the SEPP, including the TRO account, was therefore £58,602. The deficit position for SEPP in the same period last year was £56,460.

The Joint Committee also heard that the Partnership received an income totalling of £487,830 in 2024/25 compared to £532,060 which was received in 2023/24. It was advised that there were fluctuations during the year and from one year to the next, with PCN income being stable between 2022/23 and 2023/24, thus it was expected to be broadly similar for 2024/25. There was also no reserve spend to date in 2024/25.

AGREED that the financial report be noted.

(2.11pm to 2.13pm)

## 10. Annual Report of the South Essex Parking Partnership 2023/24

The Joint Committee received the 2023/24 Annual Report of the South Essex Parking Partnership as per required on Section 14.1.9 and 28.3 of the Joint Committee Agreement. It was also advised that the annual report was produced in line with the Traffic Management Act which placed a duty on enforcement authorities to produce and publish an annual report. The report detailed the financial position and reserves of the Partnership, team performance data, and PCN issue and recovery rates.

It was advised that one of the biggest issues was that PCN fines could not be increased which meant that the level of income stayed flat. It was also observed that 65% of motorists pay the discounted amount rather than the full amount. It was acknowledged that the expenditure was getting higher and thus there was more pressure on the services. There had also been an increase in operational expenditure, and it was advised that the surplus was starting to diminish which would be factored into the next business plan. Members were also advised that 80% of the PCNs were paid and allocations were made for new schemes requiring a TRO as well as essential maintenance of signs and lines. Members also heard regarding the 3PR and the School Parking Initiative.

Members were advised that the PCNs issued were compliant with the Traffic Management Act. Only 1% of the PCNs were written off due to a CEO error and only 6% were challenged due to a challenge or representation. Then, there were only 0.09% of motorists who appealed to the independent adjudicator. In relation to operational fund, it was understood that the fund position was at £1.5 million, and these would be allocated for launching the 3PR scheme, maintenance of signs and lines, parking scheme by the Beaulieu Station, handheld devices, and a pilot CCTV enforcement. Members were also briefed on the annual performance figures for each Partnership area.

In response to comments and statements from members, it was advised that;

- It was advised that Section 55 of the Road Traffic Regulations Act 1984 would be circulated to all members;
- It was advised that any income received should be dispensed accordingly either on off-street parking or on highway improvements.
- Officers also advised that there was a broad definition under the Act regarding highway and car parking improvements.

RESOLVED that for the Annual Report 2023/24 to be approved.

(2.44pm to 3.05pm)

## 11. Update on the School Parking Initiative

The Joint Committee received a verbal update on the School Parking Initiative. Members were informed that the 3PR scheme was set up in 2016 and it involved education on parking around schools. The scheme aimed to educate schoolchildren around the three parking rules which were care, consideration, and caution.

The Joint Committee heard that 51 schools had signed up to the 3PR scheme and there were a couple that were in the process of signing up. It was advised that there were three

packages available to schools: gold, silver, and bronze. The gold package includes patrol uniforms and 3PR zones (which zones were agreed with schools) and tokens which could be collected to win a 3PR trophy.

Members were also informed of the park and stride scheme and that one was recently launched at Barns Farm Primary School in Chelmsford. The scheme involved identifying the safest route to schools which would be a 5-minute walk. Leaflets had been given out and ensured that each child would get one. Members also heard what would happen on a launch day of the 3PR scheme in a school, including social media posts and being included as a case study on the website. It was also advised that schools with the 3PR scheme would get preferential treatment surrounding enforcement patrols around schools.

In response to statements and questions from the Joint Committee, it was advised that;

- Members would receive a PDF of the 3PR introduction along with a briefing document.
- There was no matrix on measuring the success of the 3PR schemes, however there had been positive feedback noted from the schools.
- It was noted that there were still problems with parents parking by the school and the success of a 3PR scheme also needed commitment from the schools themselves.
- There had been schemes to include car parks in park and stride schemes whereby there were either free or discounted slots in the morning and afternoon for school runs. These would be on a first come, first served basis and parents would be able to book the slots via MiPermit.
- A car park was not strictly needed for park and stride schemes as long as there was an area where vehicles could be safely parked and not inconvenience others.

RESOLVED that the report be noted.

(3.05pm to 3.24pm)

## 12. Essex County Council proposal for the allocation of the agreed share of operational fund

The Joint Committee received a report regarding a proposal from Essex County Council on how they intend to use the £186,000 allocation from SEPP operational fund in accordance with Section 55 of the Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984. It was heard that on 28 July 2022, the Joint Committee approved to equally share the £1,302,000 surplus at the end of the previous Joint Committee Agreement between the seven Partner Authorities.

The Joint Committee heard Essex County Council's proposals on how to spend the £186,000 allocation including maintenance of bus gates and lanes, as well as to be used for funding for Parkmap maintenance. It was advised that the proposals met the criteria of the subsection 2 of section 55 of the Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984 whereby "any deficit in the account shall be made good out of the general fund."

AGREED that;

- The proposed schemes totalling £186,000 are in accordance with Section 55 of the Road Traffic Regulation Act 1985 and;
- To authorise the South Essex Parking Partnership Manager to release these funds to Essex County Council from the SEPP parking account.

(3.24pm to 3.31pm)

### 13. Rochford proposal for the remaining allocation of the agreed share of operational fund

The Joint Committee received a report regarding a proposal from Rochford District Council on how they intend to use the remaining £26,000 allocation of the agreed £186,000 from SEPP operational fund in accordance with Section 55 of the Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984. It was heard that on 28 July 2022, the Joint Committee approved to equally share the £1,302,000 surplus at the end of the previous Joint Committee Agreement between the seven Partner Authorities. On 15<sup>th</sup> December 2022, the Joint Committee had approved a proposal from Rochford setting out schemes totalling of £160,000.

The Joint Committee heard Rochford District Council's proposal on how to spend the remaining £26,000 which would contribute to works on Approach Road car parks. This would include lighting works, reconstruction, resurfacing, and relining. It was advised that the proposals met the criteria of subsection 4(b) and met all or part of the cost of the provision and maintenance by the local authority of off-street parking accommodation whether in the open or under cover.

AGREED that;

- The proposed schemes were in accordance with Section 55 of the Road Traffic Regulation Act 1985, and;
- To authorise the South Essex Parking Partnership Manager to release the remaining £26,000 of the allocated funds to Rochford District Council from the SEPP parking account.

(3.31pm to 3.35pm)

### 14. Date and time of next meeting:

AGREED that the next meeting of the Joint Committee be on 10<sup>th</sup> October 2024 at 2pm.

The meeting closed at 3.35pm

Chairman