
**REPORT OF THE ENVIRONMENT
SCRUTINY COMMITTEE
17 JUNE 2003**

NOTE: A copy of the report mentioned below has been sent to all members of the Environment Scrutiny Committee and other members who have requested it. Further copies are available from Nicola Hayden, Room 222, County Secretary's Department, County Hall, Hertford. (Telephone: 01992 555560)

WITHDRAWAL OF THE TRAFFIC WARDEN SERVICE IN HERTFORDSHIRE

1. Background

The Scrutiny Committee have considered a report requested by County Councillor Brian York detailing issues generated by the decision of the Chief Constable to withdraw the traffic warden service in Hertfordshire by March 2004.

2. Information

In December 2002 the Chief Constable announced his proposal to withdraw the traffic warden service in Hertfordshire by March 2004. He also recommended the introduction of council-led Decriminalised Parking Enforcement (DPE) to replace the traffic warden service.

The County Council encourages the District Councils to take a lead in managing on-street parking. However it is the County Council, as the Highway Authority, that must submit the application for DPE powers. That power is then delegated to interested district councils simultaneously.

There is no obligation on the district councils to take on board on-street parking management, indeed, some district councils may withdraw from any involvement with on-street parking as a result of the decision to withdraw from the traffic warden service. At the time of the Chief Constable's decision, progress towards DPE across the county was as follows:

DPE powers in Force	Watford, Three Rivers
DPE powers to be pursued, subject to final feasibility	Dacorum, Hertsmere, St Albans
DPE under investigation	East Herts, Broxbourne
DPE not investigated	North Herts, Stevenage
DPE investigated & rejected	Welywn & Hatfield

3. Conclusion

Having discussed this issue, the Committee expressed their its concern about the timing and efficacy of this change in policy, and agreed to set up a short life Topic Group comprised of the three group spokesmen to meet with a representative of the Chief Constable to address issues concerning:

- the basis of the decision
- the timing/phasing of the implementation of DPE to ensure a smooth transfer
- how to enforce yellow line regulations in a district where there is no traffic warden or DPE

The following comments/recommendations were made to Cabinet:

- The Committee agreed with the recommendations of the Transport Panel that the scheme should be delayed and that a phased implementation should be requested to allow districts more time to make effective plans.
- That the Cabinet should assure themselves that adequate contingency plans have been made for a situation where Districts are unable or unwilling to bring in DPE schemes.
- That the County Council itself should not become involved in DPE schemes.

(At their meeting on 23 June 2003, Cabinet reached the following decisions:

1. To continue with the current approach of working with the District Councils to find a local solution to on and off street parking in order to implement DPE across the remainder of Hertfordshire in a phased manner in liaison with the Police and individual Districts
2. To support the comments of the Environment Scrutiny Committee as a useful aid in ensuring the minimum disruption arising from the decision of the Chief Constable).

CHRIS WHITE
CHAIRMAN
County Hall
Hertford, 17 June 2003