

NOTE of SEMINAR of Cabinet held in the Council Chambers, Midlothian House, Buccleuch Street, Dalkeith on Tuesday, 26 May 2015 at 11.20 am.

Present:- Councillors Beattie, Bryant, Constable, Johnstone, Imrie, Milligan, Pottinger, Rosie, Russell and Young.

1 Chair

In the absence of Councillor Thompson, Councillor Constable was appointed to the Chair.

2 Declarations of Interest

No declarations of interest were intimated.

3 Car Parking in Midlothian

Introduction and Background

The Head of Commercial Operations was heard advising that a report entitled 'Midlothian Council Parking Standards' was presented to Cabinet on 3 March 2015 for consideration. The report set out the standards for parking at all new developments in Midlothian. At the meeting the following was agreed;

- (a) To approve the new Midlothian Council Parking Standards as detailed in the report; and
- (b) To hold a Seminar to which all elected Members be invited on this matter.

The Head of Commercial Operations was heard in amplification of the report and thereafter provided a detailed presentation including:-

Parking Topics such as

- Proposed Parking Standards Residents Parking Survey (Dalkeith)
- Leased car parks (Dalkeith)
- Parking Restrictions / Yellow lines
- Decriminalised Parking / Traffic Warden Service

Options:

- Do Nothing (some local authorities are doing this)

- Consideration should be given to parking issues in Dalkeith and Penicuik currently with the skeleton service in place
- Seek agreement from Police Scotland for a longer term agreement to retain a traffic warden
- This may not be possible
- Commission a feasibility study specific to Midlothian – identifying the most cost effective scheme

This would provide profit / loss scenarios such as

Existing parking restrictions

Extending parking restrictions (more yellow lines)

More / less wardens

Adding off street parking charging

Adding on street parking charging

As a very rough estimate – audit of TROs, feasibility and business case could cost £100k-£200k

It was also highlighted that Edinburgh Council had a mature scheme with a variable contract and that Edinburgh were keen to expand and involve neighbouring authorities although this did not negate the legal requirements of auditing traffic regulation orders and presenting a business case to the Scottish Government.

4 Questions

Following questions from Members, the following points were particularly noted:-

- (a) That regular meetings were held with Traffic Wardens etc to monitor the situation throughout Midlothian;
- (b) That the issue of appropriate advertising and signage were continually discussed and largely covered by legal statute
- (c) That the possibility of longer free periods for parking could be considered as long as it remained cost neutral;
- (d) That the previous Scottish Government stance on decriminalisation having to be cost neutral had softened and that all options were considered on a case by case basis;

- (e) That the option of arranging a “one day blitz” on illegal parking etc throughout Midlothian by utilising Traffic Warden staff from Edinburgh on a 4 weekly basis for example was worth considering, although it could only be carried out following the introduction of decriminalised parking in Midlothian;
- (f) That in line with most of the views expressed by elected Members, the option of “buying in” to the City of Edinburgh scheme appeared to be the most sensible and cost effective way forward.
- (g) It was confirmed that any income from decriminalised parking would be used to offset the cost of introducing a scheme.

In conclusion, the Chair thanked Mr Moffat for his highly informative presentation and on behalf of the Council requested him to consider any other options and to consider further the option of linking in with the City of Edinburgh Council’s scheme and reporting back to Council in due course.

The meeting terminated at 12.22 pm.