

**MINUTES OF THE EXTRAORDINARY MEETING OF
WELWYN PARISH COUNCIL
HELD ON MONDAY 22ND AUGUST 2011 AT
THE PARISH CENTRE LOCKLEYS DRIVE WELWYN
WHICH COMMENCED AT 7.45PM**

PRESENT: Councillor P Neville (Chairman) and Councillors J Blackburn, M Benson, M Castle, J Khan, B McKay, B Morris, L McLusky and A Woolgar.

IN ATTENDANCE: A S Pack (Clerk to the Council)
Ms V Hatfield, Welwyn Hatfield Borough Council (WHBC) Parking Services Team Leader

APOLOGIES: Councillors C Hukin and I Skidmore.

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION: 19 members of the public

OPENING OF THE MEETING

The Chairman welcomed all present and opened the meeting.

2011/107 DECLARATION OF INTEREST

Councillor McKay declared an interest as a resident with no off street parking.
Councillor Woolgar declared an interest as his wife runs a business in the village.

2011/108 CAR PARKING RESTRICTIONS PROPOSED BY WHBC TO INCLUDE CHARGING FOR THE USE OF HIGH STREET AND LOCKLEYS DRIVE CAR PARKS.

A report of the meeting with WHBC Parking Officer was circulated with the Agenda as Appendix A

The Council to consider the following points:

Charging Policy

Do the Council agree with the proposed charging policy in Appendix 1 to Appendix A? If not what general principles would the Council recommend to WHBC?

The Council expressed concern that WHBC had agreed in principle to a charging policy for Welwyn Village in January 2011 and the first time the Parish Council were made aware of this was when Welwyn and Hatfield Times telephoned Councillor Blackburn for his comments on this change of policy.

Ms Hatfield advised that the company who manage car parks on the Council's behalf had issued a press release without the consent of WHBC and her intension had been and still was to consult with the Parish Council and the community prior to any decisions being taken regarding on and off street parking in Welwyn.

Informal consultation had begun on the change to the timing of on street parking from 60 minutes to 90 minutes. This informal consultation terminates on the 31st August 2011 and the formal consultation commences. Consultation on charging for parking in the High Street Car Park and Lockleys Drive Car Park commences in

September, and will close 21 days later; Ms Hatfield could not give dates at this time but would forward these to the Council in the next few days.

Ms Hatfield advised the purpose of the scheme was to increase footfall in Welwyn which she considered would be hampered by changing on street parking from 60 minutes to 90 minutes, she would recommend 30 minutes on street parking.

Following discussion the following points were raised:

- The Parish Council consider they could increase the footfall in Welwyn without the need to charge for parking
- A charging policy in Welwyn Village would have a detrimental impact on businesses in the village as agreed by WHBC who advised they would not implement charges before Christmas as this would have a detrimental effect on businesses.
- Concern expressed that this change of policy is proposed in August, a recess time for most Councils and a holiday period for the community.
- The Parish Council are concerned the charging policy recommended for Welwyn is about income generation for WHBC and not about the viability of the village, its business community, doctors surgeries, dentists, and the diverse facilities available to this community.
- The Parish Council consider the income WHBC can gain from implementing a charging policy for parking in Welwyn will be a net loss to the economy of the village. As WHBC have a duty to oversee all communities within WHBC this must be a consideration.
- WHBC should examine free parking for a period of time in all car parks, with some controls to ensure commuter parking is controlled
- The Parish Council to set up a Working Party to look in detail at the proposals and to recommend options which would enhance and preserve the character of the village without the requirement to charge for parking.

Following discussion it was proposed by Councillor McKay, seconded by Councillor Benson and

RESOLVED “that the Parish Council request a moratorium on the existing proposal in favour of the establishment of a working party consisting of representatives from WHBC Parking Services, the Parish Council, local businesses and local residents to work together to define objectives to optimise available parking facilities in Welwyn which meet the needs of Welwyn without the need to charge for parking in the Village Car Parks”.

**Vote: 7 for
2 abstentions
The motion was carried.**

2011/109 WHITEHILL CAR PARK

The Council to consider the refurbishment of the Whitehill Car Park in tandem with the introduction of parking restrictions by WHBC (completed by March 2012)

Three quotations to refurbish the Whitehill Car Park have been obtained and the lowest quotation was for the sum of £ 20,000. Following discussion it was agreed that lighting would be required in this car park also. Quotations for designing and providing a lighting scheme to be sought from Hertfordshire County Council (HCC).

Following discussion, it was proposed by Councillor Benson, seconded by Councillor Neville and

RESOLVED "that Welwyn Parish Council agree that the refurbishment of the Whitehill car park should be part of any solution to solving the problems of parking in the Welwyn Village".

**Vote: 8 for
1 abstention
The motion was carried.**

2011/110 LOCKLEYS DRIVE CAR PARK:

Do the Council agree that car parking charges in Lockleys Drive car park should be implemented Monday to Friday inclusive? Between what times of day? Is the proposed tariff appropriate?

Does the Council agree with splitting the car park in two, 50% long stay parking for permit holders and 50% short stay pay and display parking?

The Clerk has already requested that four spaces be allocated for Parish Council use, two opposite the Parish centre and two in the long stay section of the car park.

Following discussion it was agreed until the Working Party has put forward its recommendations for a solution to parking problems in Welwyn village, the Council do not want to make a decision on this matter.

2011/111 HIGH STREET CAR PARK

Do the Council agree that car parking charges for the High Street car park should be implemented Monday to Saturday inclusive? Between what times of day? Is the proposed tariff appropriate?

Following discussion it was agreed until the Working Party has put forward its recommendations for a solution to parking problems in Welwyn village, the Council do not want to make a decision on this matter.

2011/112 HERTFORD ROAD PARKING BAY

Do the Council agree with the restrictions proposed in the parking bay in Hertford Road adjacent to the Recycling Centre in the Civic Centre? The proposed restrictions

are to double yellow line one third of the parking bay to enable residents to stop to offload goods into the recycling bay. The remaining two thirds would be restricted to a stay of 90 minutes in line with the proposed new on street parking proposals.

It was proposed by Councillor McLusky, seconded by Councillor Blackburn and

RESOLVED “that Welwyn Parish Council support the proposals as detailed above for the Hertford Road parking bay”.

Vote: 8 for

1 abstention

The motion was carried.

2011/113

PROPOSED NON RESTRICTED AREAS

Councillors present at the 10th August meeting recommend that no restrictions be implemented in the following areas and these areas be considered at a later date if problems of displacement are experienced: Under this Council’s control: Civic Centre car park: Civic Centre turning circle at the front of the Centre: Ottway Walk car park Does the Council accept these recommendations?

The Working Party will consider the above areas as part of their recommendations for a solution to the parking problems being experienced in the village.

2011/114

ANY OTHER COMMENTS TO BE MADE TO WHBC IN RELATION TO THESE PROPOSALS.

Ms Hatfield advised as part of the on street parking recommendations, WHBC are to provide two disabled parking spaces near St Mary’s Church, two disabled parking spaces in School Lane and the existing disabled parking bay in Church Street will remain unchanged. These proposals were welcomed.

It was noted that there are between 16 – 24 parking spaces in the old telephone exchange which are now unused. British Telecom to be requested by Welwyn Parish Council to consider making these spaces available for public use.

It was suggested making the High Street one way could increase the on-street parking provision (echelon parking). The community have been consulted on this suggestion twice and both times this suggestion has been rejected by businesses in the village, having experience of the temporary one-way during the Wellington fire repairs.

Post meeting note: The consultation on the proposed charging policy in the High Street and Lockleys Drive car parks is to terminate on the 26th September 2011. The Parish Council’s comments must be received by WHBC by this date.

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WORKING PARTY MEMBERS.

The following Councillors were elected to service on the Working Party: Councillors M Benson, B McKay, B Morris, I Skidmore and A Woolgar,

2011/116

CLOSE OF MEETING

The Chairman thanked Ms Hatfield for attending the meeting and for her much appreciated help explaining the proposed changes to on street and off street parking in Welwyn. The Chairman thanked everyone for attending and closed the meeting at 9.17pm.

Signed.....Chairman, Welwyn Parish Council

26th September 2011