

SLOUGH BOROUGH COUNCIL

REPORT TO: Cabinet **DATE:** 13th July 2020

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WARD(S): All

PORTFOLIO: Councillor Robert Anderson -
Cabinet member for sustainable transport and environmental services

PART I **NON-KEY DECISION**

REFERENCES FROM OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY – **NEIGHBOURHOODS AND COMMUNITY SERVICES IN SLOUGH**

1. Purpose of Report

The purpose of this report is to ask Cabinet to consider the recommendation of the Neighbourhoods and Community Services Scrutiny Panel (17 March 2020) with regard to the report on Highways and Parking in Slough.

2. Recommendations

The Cabinet is requested to consider the following reference from the meeting of the Neighbourhoods and Community Services Scrutiny Panel held on 17th March 2020 and the response of Officers set out in Section 5 of the report:

- That the Cabinet allocate sufficient staff resource to the Parking Service Team, to enable officers to complete outstanding works as expediently as possible.

3. The Slough Joint Wellbeing Strategy, the JSNA and the Corporate Plan

3a Slough Joint Wellbeing Strategy (SJWS) Priorities

- Increasing life expectancy by focusing on inequalities

3b Five Year Plan Outcomes

- Slough will be an attractive place where people choose to live, work and stay
- Slough will attract, retain and grow businesses and investment to provide opportunities for our residents.

4. Other Implications

(a) Financial

If the Council were to allocate more staff resource to the Parking Service team, additional funding for the team might be required. A full assessment of the financial implications and how the post will be funded is being considered by the service.

(b) Risk Management

Assessment of the risks associated is currently under consideration by the Parking Service team.

(c) Workforce

Assessment of the associated workforce implications is currently under consideration by the Parking Service team.

5. **Supporting Information**

- 5.1 At their meeting on 14 January 2020, a member of the Neighbourhoods and Community Services Scrutiny Panel raised concerns regarding a number of highway issues in Slough, including yellow line painting, permit car parking, delay in works being carried out, and lack of disabled car parking bays.
- 5.2 At their meeting on 17 March 2020, the Neighbourhoods and Community Services Scrutiny Panel considered a report which sought to address these issues.
- 5.3 The report included information on various highways and parking issues around Slough and the reasons for the delays to complete some works.
- 5.4 It was explained that in 2015, an experienced Parking Engineer Officer had left the Council, and since then the service has been managing a backlog in the delivery of schemes. Recruitment to the vacant post had been difficult, due to the labour market's shortage of experienced parking engineers. In 2018, a Parking Appeals Officer undertook a six month training programme and was subsequently appointed as the Council's Parking Engineer in December 2018.
- 5.5 It was also explained that the volume of emails received by the service was very high and unmanageable for one engineer to respond to in a timely manner. A recent Star Chamber bid to fund an additional permanent Parking Engineer post had been successful and the recruitment process was scheduled to commence during April/May 2020.
- 5.6 Currently, the Parking Engineer deals with all administrative tasks and the delivery of schemes. Officers explained that while the recruitment of an additional Parking Engineer would assist with the current capacity issues, there is currently no financial resource in place to fund the appointment of a technical administrator that would assist engineers.
- 5.7 As part of the Star Chamber bid, it was agreed to take on an additional permanent parking Engineer. This process has commenced and will result in adverts going out soon. The additional technical administrator resource that was identified will not be recruited at present, as through a re-engineering of processes and workloads, capacity will be made available within the business support team which supports the wider service. This has the added benefits of support being provided from within a team, such as the ability to provide additional resource to meet periods of high demand, and to provide consistent support as the team will self-cover for absences. This means that no additional funding requirements need to be met at present, given the current level of work which will be undertaken within the support team. This may need to be revisited, as

part of the Our Future programme, as any proposed reorganisation of the service area will need to ensure sufficient administrative support resource is in place to enable subject matter experts and case officers (Engineers) to focus on the technical aspects of their role and deliver quality projects and schemes in a timely fashion.

- 5.8 The various stages identified will now result in a better and more focussed service delivery for the council meeting the expectations of members and our residential communities.

6. **Conclusion**

The Cabinet is requested to consider the recommendation from the meeting of the Neighbourhoods and Community Services Scrutiny Panel held on 17th March 2020 and the response of Officers set out in Section 5 of this report.

7. **Background Documents**

- ‘1’ Agenda papers and minutes, Neighbourhoods and Community Services Scrutiny Panel (17 March 2020).