

NORTH ESSEX PARKING PARTNERSHIP JOINT COMMITTEE FOR ON-STREET PARKING

22 January 2026 at 1.00pm
Uttlesford District Council offices, London Road, Saffron
Walden CB11 4ER

Members Present:

Councillor Mick Barry (Tendring District Council)
Councillor Graham Butland (Braintree District Council)
Councillor Neil Hargreaves (Uttlesford District Council) [Deputy Chairman]
Councillor Nicky Purse (Harlow District Council)
Councillor Ken Williamson (Epping Forest District Council)

Substitutions:

None.

Apologies:

Councillor Martin Goss (Colchester City Council)
Councillor Paul Honeywood (Essex County Council) [Chairman]

Also Present:

James Carstairs (Epping Forest District Council)
Trevor Degville (Parking Partnership)
Jake England (Parking Partnership)
Owen Howell (Colchester City Council)
Dean James (Harlow District Council)
Esme McCambridge (Braintree District Council)
Andrew Nepean (Tendring District Council)
Narj Sanghera (Colchester City Council)
Cassie Shanley-Grozavu (Uttlesford District Council)
Shane Taylor (Parking Partnership)
Richard Walker (Colchester City Council) (via Zoom)
Danielle Wood (Parking Partnership)

222. Have Your Say

Amanda Alexander, Town Clerk of Great Dunmow Town Council, attended and, with permission of the Chairman, addressed the Joint Committee to speak on behalf of the Town Council to raise safety risks and dangers being caused by parking by people using or working at Stansted airport. This included parking in no-parking areas on Rosemary Lane, in places reducing the Lane to a single carriageway and increasing the risk of collisions and blocked footways. Many residents had complained, and the Town Council had engaged with Essex Highways and the NEPP. A range of options had been discussed, such as use of the Essex Act. A request was made for regulation and enforcement across the area, to avoid problems being moved to other streets in the vicinity. A data-led, area-wide solution was called for that could be sustainable.

The Chairman highlighted two issues. Firstly, the situation on Rosemary Lane, where options to consider included use of the Essex Act and potentially a clearway. The second issue was of airport parking elsewhere. A request had been made to the District Council regarding these matters, but the District Council did not have the powers held by Essex Highways or the NEPP. An example was given where the Council had conducted a consultation on similar issues elsewhere, which had only received a response rate of around 20%. The Chairman noted that it was not possible for the Council to do this again. If Dunmow Town Council held a consultation, the District Council could cooperate with it and forward information to the NEPP and Essex Highways for consideration.

223. Minutes

RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting held on 13 November 2025 be approved as an accurate record.

224. NEPP Financial Update

Narj Sanghera, Senior Finance Business Partner (Colchester City Council), introduced the report, highlighting variances and underspend. There had been increased income from Penalty Charge Notices [PCNs], so the closing balance forecast for 2025-26 had increased to £332,815. An overspend on Traffic Regulation Orders [TROs] had been covered by an increase in income streams.

The trend on over-recovery on permits and PCNs was welcomed but queried as to why it was considered that it would continue. Jake England, Interim Head of NEPP, described the forecast as a conservative one for year end and stated that performance may exceed it. When the budget was set for 2025-26, the projection was based on MiPermit data and the agreed increase in fees and charges. Recruitment had been strong in 2025-26, balancing any attrition and resulting in more Civil Enforcement Officers [CEOs] working over the year. There were currently only two vacancies out of 42 FTE [full-time equivalent] employment of CEOs. This resulted in an increase in PCNs issued, with more efforts made to recover payment of PCNs. An overview was given of the enforcement and recovery processes.

A Committee member ventured that the NEPP would have a reasonable surplus by 2028, should the trend continue, and asked how the surplus would be distributed to the new unitary authorities and where that decision would be taken. The Chairman noted that the proposed changes to the NEPP Agreement that had been sent to Essex County Council's [ECC's] legal team included clarification of this issue, with the proposal that any surplus be split evenly by all existing partners, unless the Joint Committee should decide otherwise. The Interim Head of NEPP laid out that the NEPP Agreement required the NEPP to hold a £400k reserve, and that the draft service plan coming to the JPC meeting in March would set this out.

The Chairman asked for confirmation that ECC Legal had been instructed to consider the proposed amendments to the NEPP Agreement. The Interim Head of NEPP stated that Jo Heynes, Essex Highways' Head of Network and Safety, had confirmed that this had now been done, and that any questions about this should be sent to Jo Heynes for answers. The Chairman asked that the matter of dividing any surplus be raised with ECC.

A Committee member argued that it would be practical to tie the proposed Agreement amendments to the issue of extending the Agreement, and that any surplus should be shared between the existing partners, leading to the funds going to the unitary councils once they were established. It was queried whether any share going to ECC would be divided between the unitary councils which covered the current NEPP area of operation.

Officers were asked about the £43,220 delay in additional permits and season ticket income shown at 4.3 of the report. The Senior Finance Business Partner explained that these were 'year to date' figures, and that the data was not recorded in time but was expected soon. The full year forecast included an estimate at this point. The Interim Head of NEPP explained that the NEPP received files from its suppliers in the first few days of each month. The report assumed that the NEPP achieved the amount budgeted. The actual figures would be brought to the Joint Committee in March 2026; this did not undermine the budget position.

A Committee member asked whether the basic nature of the base provided without charge by Braintree District Council and used by the NEPP in Braintree was a cause of recruitment problems, and whether improved facilities would improve recruitment and retention. The Interim Head of NEPP welcomed any members who wished to visit the Braintree base, which had toilet facilities, lockers and a staff rest area, providing for all staff needs. The free provision of the facility did not mean that it was inadequate. Colchester also did not charge for the use of its bases by the NEPP. The main issue faced by field staff was to be able to find facilities for comfort breaks whilst out on duty. The Chairman extolled the quality of depots operated by Uttlesford District Council and suggested that they could also be used to accommodate NEPP officers. The Joint Committee discussed the NEPP's duty of care to its staff and expressed certainty that the NEPP's management team would bring any significant issues to the Joint Committee, should they appear.

RESOLVED that the JOINT COMMITTEE notes the Quarter 3 (Q3) 2025/26 year-to-date (YTD) financial position, the expected full year outturn for 2025/26, and the impact of the Parking Reserve balance.

225. NEPP Joint Committee Agreement Extension Report

Jake England, Interim Head of NEPP, explained that Essex County Council [ECC] wanted to obtain consent for an extension of the current NEPP Agreement to run up to 31 March 2028, which would align with the timeline for LGR [local government reorganisation]. The report laid out the process and asked partners to formally agree in writing by 20 February 2026, sending written approval to Jo Heynes at Essex Highways, and a copy to Jake England, as Interim Head of NEPP. The notice given for a contract extension needed to be given no later than 12 months prior to the Agreement's end. This would mean that the March Joint Committee would be the last chance for this to be done. As long as verbal agreement could be obtained from each partner by 20 February, there would be time to then obtain written approval by the time the Joint Committee agenda for March's meeting is published on 11 March 2026.

Answering questions, the Interim Head of NEPP underlined the need for any partner authority not intending to approve the extension to let him know as soon as possible. There was some flexibility to the 20 February deadline, but if any partner had concerns or did not wish to continue as a signatory to an extended NEPP Agreement, then the NEPP would continue to operate in that area, but the local authority would not have representation on the Joint Committee.

The Joint Committee were informed that Jo Heynes, Essex Highways' Head of Network and Safety, had stated that it was not possible for the County Council to agree the proposed Agreement amendments by the March 2026 JPC meeting, in line with the deadline for extension discussions and approval

Councillor Graham Butland, Braintree District Council, stated that his Council would want to approve the proposed Agreement extension, and that he would seek this approval from his Cabinet. Councillor Barry, Tendring District Council, said that the advice he had received from officers was that this would not be a key decision and would be a Portfolio Holder decision. Councillor Hargreaves, Uttlesford District Council, informed the Committee that Uttlesford's Cabinet was due to meet on 17 February 2026.

RESOLVED that the JOINT COMMITTEE agrees to request that the Committee Members of the NEPP Joint Committee return to their respective Partner Authority, seek consent to ECC's proposed 12-month extension of the NEPP Joint Committee to 31 March 2028 under The North Essex Parking Partnership Joint Committee Agreement 2022, and confirm their decision in writing (or if that is not possible, then initially verbally), to Jo Heynes, Head of Network & Safety at Essex Highways, and Jake England, Interim Head of NEPP, by 20 February 2026.

226. Red Route (parking restrictions) Policy

Shane Taylor, Interim Engineering Manager, described this Policy as being

guidance around use of red lines, which had been in use since 2017. These were an effective tool but were not always suitable and needed a policy to oversee their use. An explanation was given of the rationale behind not allowing red line usage to create new issues or move existing issues to other areas. Some feedback from Essex County Council [ECC] was awaited, including on matters regarding use around schools.

RESOLVED that the JOINT COMMITTEE agrees to the introduction and use of the proposed new Policy for the use of Red Routes (double and single red line parking control measures).

227. Essex Act (verge parking) Policy

Shane Taylor, Interim Engineering Manager, introduced the report. Two members of the Joint Committee described the successful use of the Essex Act by their respective local authorities.

RESOLVED that the JOINT COMMITTEE approves the introduction and use of the proposed new Policy for the Essex Act.

228. Pavement Parking Update

Jake England, Interim Head of NEPP, outlined the update produced following the release of a Department for Transport [DfT] report on its pavement parking consultation. The Joint Committee was asked to note the situation and the content of the DfT report. The current situation around enforcement of restrictions was summarised, along with the potential proposals to allow enforcement against obstructive pavement parking. Detail on the necessary statutory instrument content was awaited, along with detail on the consultation which would be needed with council leaders and whether this would only involve leaders of upper tier councils.

The developments were welcomed by the Joint Committee, but a Committee member urged consideration of issues around displacing parking, including from older streets which were not designed to accommodate car parking. A balance between enforcement and necessity was counselled, with the potential for exemptions to be sought. Defining what constituted an obstruction would be important and the Committee member argued that local authorities should be able to influence the approach to enforcement in their area.

The Interim Head of NEPP informed the Joint Committee that the statutory instrument was expected for this year, alongside statutory guidance. This had been laid out in a statement by the relevant parliamentary under-secretary of state. Once the wording of the Statutory Instrument was known, this would be brought to the Joint Committee for a briefing and discussion. It was not yet known who would be consulted prior to the Statutory Instrument being laid before Parliament.

A Committee member asked if the NEPP would prepare a draft local approach in advance, with standardised training for Civil Enforcement Officers [CEOs]. The Interim Head of NEPP confirmed that an approach would be put together and

proposed to the Joint Committee. The NEPP might experience an increase in workload as a result, which would increase the number of CEOs employed, however more information was needed before this could be confirmed, such as how any changes would affect the areas and residents where NEPP operated. A policy would be brought for Joint Committee approval prior to any additional training for CEOs being rolled out.

A Committee member described a successful use of pavement markings to show space that had to be left for pedestrians. The Interim Head of NEPP pointed out that footway parking issues could already be addressed by restrictions, where necessary.

RESOLVED that the JOINT COMMITTEE notes the original 'Managing pavement parking' consultation and the full outcome of 'Pavement parking options for change: government response'.

229. Forward Plan 2025-2026

Owen Howell, Democratic Services Officer, explained that an issue had been found with the proposed meeting date for 24 September 2026 and requested the Joint Committee's approval of the report and other proposed dates, and for permission to seek a new date, in consultation with Client Officers, to replace the 24 September meeting date.

RESOLVED that the JOINT COMMITTEE notes and approves: -

- a) The North Essex Parking Partnership Forward Plan for 2025-26, and;
- b) The dates for Joint Committee meetings to be held in 2026-27, with the exception of the 24 September 2026 date, an alternative for which would be set by the Clerk to the Committee in consultation with the Client Officers to the NEPP