

To: West Mersea Town Council

Report from the Parking Working Group – To consider conclusions 3.(1) and 3.(2)

### 1. Remit

The Working Group was established following the Extraordinary Council meeting of 17<sup>th</sup> August 2021. It was agreed that the group considers the views of residents on parking issues that had arisen including matters considered by a working group previously established by the Council. It was agreed that a group could assist the Council to find solutions that would support businesses and residents.

### 2. Meetings

A group of residents met on three occasions and wishes to thank all those that have given their views and provided information about parking issues and alternative schemes that could apply. Many comments received were keenly expressed and concerns detailed. These have been collated by the Town Clerk and available in full. The Working Party had fifteen members including four Councillors and was chaired by Cllr. Akker.

The material received has been considerable. As well as written concerns the group also took into account of views expressed to them personally; collective responses from societies and groups; and material in *Mersea Life*. It also had data and information provided by NEPP and it wishes to acknowledge the contact that has been forthcoming from them.

In summary the consultation pointed to the following, in general there was considerable concern expressed about the application of red lines. In particular, questioning that they were applicable to the Mersea situation and that they had caused considerable stress to some residents; that they had a detrimental impact upon businesses particularly along Coast Road leading to a reduction in trade; that other coastal locations similar to Mersea had not applied red lines; there was considerable concern by beach hut owners about access particularly for repairs; that there was a misuse of loading bays; the setting and ambiance of Coast Road adversely affected by the number and use of considerable signage. There were some that pointed to positive impacts but that the overriding weight of responses were opposing red lines.

### 3. Conclusions

The group's conclusion was that with the volume of evidence supplied and whilst unregulated parking had a very detrimental impact on the community, a decision was needed in the present circumstances as to whether NEPP should make the temporary Traffic Regulation (TMO)(Red Route) permanent.

It concluded to place before the Council:

- (1) red lines applied to areas in West Mersea be removed and that they be replaced by parking restrictions that were in place before their introduction. Also, that in respect to any further proposed TMO's that they are not taken forward for adoption.
- (2) the group continues to bring forward suggestions about a comprehensive response to parking issues that would include an improved system of parking restrictions based upon the locality; 'park and ride' and 'park and walk'; resident parking schemes; pedestrian zones; disabled parking; improved road safety; access for emergency services; issues that arose from the Neighbourhood Plan for areas on particular highway concerns; and any other relevant considerations. It recognised that these discussions would take some time and would in the interim with the removal of red lines cause difficulties and lead to an increase breach of parking regulations.

NEPP has indicated that it would assist in future consideration by the Council wherever possible though some of the above measures were outside their remit. The group noted that NEPP had stated if the Council decided to seek removal of the red lines by NEPP that the road markings would remain until March 2022 since in the winter period it would not be practical to remove them. It was felt that an arrangement could be sought with NEPP to provide an order for the red lines to be removed and their replacement by previous markings.

The Working Party agreed that it should provide a clear timetable for work. The Working Party set a date for a meeting on 16 November and that it would first consider Coast Road and wider issues. There would then be a set of further meetings agreed. It was also felt that local Borough Councillors involvement on occasions could be sought.

The group committed to meet regularly so it could assist the Council in support of the remit to seek solutions that would support residents and businesses. It agreed that there was a very positive feeling existing in the working party and that there was a strong commitment to take the work forward.

26.10.21

