



DECRIMINALISED PARKING ENFORCEMENT

**LOCAL COMMITTEE FOR WOKING
19 JANUARY 2005**

KEY ISSUE:

To update the Committee on the progress being made to introduce Decriminalised Parking Enforcement in Woking and to consider jointly funding the provision of an additional Parking Attendant for use in the Borough.

SUMMARY:

Following the recommendation of the Member Task Group and approval of the Local Committee for Woking, at its meeting on 14th October 2004, the Chairman, Councillor Marlow, wrote to the Executive Member for Transportation, Councillor Helyn Clack, to present a case for an additional 4 Parking Attendants for use in Woking Borough. The letter also requested that a single Agency Agreement dealing solely with Decriminalised Parking Enforcement be drawn up and the existing Controlled Parking Zone Agreement remain in force, for the time being, until one, combined Agreement is drawn up and approved.

An additional 3 Parking Attendants have been approved but a fourth could be funded jointly by Surrey County Council and Woking Borough Council from local allocations.

An opportunity exists to accredit an existing Parking Attendant with certain police powers. This will enable waiting restrictions to be enforced prior to the introduction of Decriminalised Parking Enforcement.

CONSULTATIONS:

Member Task Group – County and Borough Members, in association with County and Borough Officers. Surrey Police.

OFFICER RECOMMENDATIONS:

The Committee is asked to agree

- (i) that a fourth additional Parking Attendant be jointly funded between Surrey County Council and Woking Borough Council from local allocations; and**
- (ii) to note that;**
 - a) funding has been agreed for 3 additional Parking Attendants;**
 - b) lawyers from Surrey County Council and Woking Borough Council are currently working on the Agency Agreement; and**
 - c) an interim Parking Officer will be trained to enforce waiting restrictions in advance of the introduction of DPE.**

INTRODUCTION and BACKGROUND

1. The Local Committee agreed at its meeting on 12 June 2003 to the establishment of a Member Task Group, with Officer participation, to oversee the introduction of Decriminalised Parking Enforcement (DPE) in the Woking area.
2. At its meeting on 15 September 2004, the Member Task Group resolved to recommend to the Local Committee for Woking that a letter should be sent to the Leader of the County Council, Councillor Nick Skellett, requesting changes to the original proposals for DPE in the Borough, as outlined below. The Members of the Local Committee, at their meeting on 14 October 2004, approved the recommendation.
3. It was originally proposed that Surrey County Council would only fund an additional 2 Parking Attendants for use in the Borough. The Member Task Group and Officers suggested that 4 Parking Attendants would be needed for enforcement to be effective.
4. Similarly, it was originally proposed that a single Agency Agreement between SCC and Woking Borough Council would allow WBC to administer DPE on behalf of the County Council. This single agreement was to include the current Controlled Parking Zone and the existing agreement for the administration of the CPZ would have been terminated. There was concern amongst Members of the Task Group and Officers that there would be too many points of contention to resolve to produce a single agreement before the intended implementation date of DPE of July 2005. The Member Task Group and Officers suggested that the existing CPZ Agency Agreement should remain and a new agreement should be drawn up, dealing with the remaining waiting restrictions.

ANALYSIS AND COMMENTARY

Agency Agreement

5. The number of agreements is unresolved. However, there is no technical or legal reason for not having two agreements as opposed to one agreement. The Solicitors at Surrey County Council and Woking Borough Council are working together to resolve this matter. No answer is available at the time of writing this report but it is hoped that an update can be orally reported to the Committee.

Number of Parking Attendants

6. A well-argued case for 4 additional Parking Attendants was made to the Executive Member for Transportation, Councillor Helyn Clack, attached at Annex A to this report. Consequently, agreement has been received for 3 Parking Attendants being funded from central DPE funds. Although this is a very welcome improvement upon the original proposal, it is considered that 4 Parking Attendants are needed to provide the robust enforcement needed to have an effect on the parking enforcement in the Borough and the town

centre in particular.

7. Financial models indicate that the use of 4 Parking Attendants will reduce the deficit generated by DPE, compared with the use of 2 or 3 PA's. Historically, there were 6 Police Traffic Wardens working in Woking and the use of 4 Parking Attendants will go some way to redressing this and will provide a robust and visible enforcement presence in the Borough. This is essential if illegal and obstructive parking is to be tackled to give a freer flowing network, which is in line with LTP objectives.
8. A possible solution would be for the Members of the Local Committee to agree that Surrey County Council and Woking Borough Council jointly fund, from local allocations, the provision of the fourth additional Parking Attendant, the actual need for which can be assessed at the 2-year review of DPE.

Provision of an interim Police Accredited Decriminalised Parking Officer

9. Under the provisions of The Police Reform Act 2002, people who are not police officers may be accredited and can exercise certain police powers. These powers include the enforcement of waiting restrictions and means that, having undergone the necessary police checks and training, one of the existing CPZ Parking Attendants may be accredited to enforce the waiting restrictions in the town centre that can currently only be enforced by a Police Officer.
10. This accreditation process has been used in Spelthorne and Epsom and Ewell to undertake enforcement of double yellow lines and other non-CPZ waiting restrictions before the introduction of DPE.
11. There is agreement between Surrey County Council and Woking Borough Council that advantage should be taken of this opportunity to carry out some enforcement of the non-CPZ restrictions in the town centre in advance of the introduction of DPE.
12. Woking Borough Council and its parking contractor have identified a Parking Attendant who would be a suitable candidate for accreditation. Surrey Police have expressed their agreement, although a formal meeting has yet to take place at the time of writing this report. The DPE Project Manager at County Hall has confirmed that SCC will fund the provision of the Decriminalised Parking Officer.
13. Surrey Police will deal with all Penalty Charge Notices that are issued and all income will go to central government, as happens with any tickets issued by Police Officers.
14. It is hoped that an Accredited Decriminalised Parking Officer will be fully trained and operational by the end of January 2005.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

15. The County Council's financial model for implementation and operation of

DPE across the county showed no expectation of surpluses being generated following implementation of DPE. However, WBC's detailed financial models indicate that, in Woking, the deficit will be reduced by increasing the number of Parking Attendants.

16. An additional Parking Attendant, funded jointly, will cost approximately £25,000.
16. The other cost of funding the interim Decriminalised Parking Officer will be met from the central DPE start up revenue budget and not from Local Allocations.

SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT IMPLICATIONS

17. Enforcement of existing and proposed waiting restrictions should reduce congestion and the dangers from illegally stopped vehicles, bringing benefits to all highway users and the private and business communities. An increased number of Parking Attendants will ensure that this enforcement is far more visible and robust.

CRIME & DISORDER IMPLICATIONS

18. Waiting and loading restrictions are provided to serve a transportation purpose on the highway network. Currently, enforcement of these restrictions by the Police is limited to key areas that generate concern. DPE, enforced by a sufficient number of Parking Attendants, should encourage greater observance of the restrictions thereby minimising potential illegal behaviour, as will the use of a Decriminalised Parking Officer.

EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS

19. The enforcement of waiting and loading restrictions should assist those with mobility problems and help manage facilities for disabled parking.

CONCLUSIONS AND REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

20. When DPE is introduced, the enforcement presence needs to be visible and effective. Although the funding of 3 Parking Attendants from the central DPE budget is extremely welcome, it is still the opinion, locally, that 4 Parking Attendants will be required, certainly during the initial two years.
21. Funding a fourth Parking Attendant from local funds would realise the desire to provide robust enforcement, certainly for the initial period until the review after 2 years.
22. There is an opportunity to accredit one of the existing Parking Attendants with the power to enforce waiting restrictions that can currently only be dealt with by Surrey Police. This will allow some of the parking problems in the town centre to be enforced in advance of the introduction DPE in July 2005.

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BACKGROUND PAPERS:

Version No. 1

Date: 16/12/04

Time:

Initials: KP

No of annexes: 0