



WOKING JOINT COMMITTEE

DATE: 24 SEPTEMBER 2014

LEAD OFFICER: GAVIN MANGER, PARKING SERVICES MANAGER, WOKING BOROUGH COUNCIL

SUBJECT: ON STREET PARKING ENFORCEMENT UPDATE

AREA: WOKING

SUMMARY OF ISSUE:

This report provides an update regarding on street parking management and enforcement within Woking Borough.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

The Joint Committee (Woking) is asked to:

- (i) Note the contents of the report.

REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS:

Waiting and parking restrictions that are suitably/adequately enforced will help to:

- Improve road safety
- Increase access for emergency vehicles
- improve access to shops, facilities and businesses
- Increase access for refuse vehicles and service vehicles
- Ease traffic congestion
- Better regulate parking

The Joint Committee can contribute towards these objectives in partnership with the Parking Services Team.

1. INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND:

1.1 This report provides an update for on street parking in Woking, identifies continuing priorities and reports the On Street Parking account for the financial year 2013/2014.

1.2 The Borough Council is responsible for the enforcement of on street parking restrictions throughout Woking with the concentration of activity within controlled parking zones and village centres. Priority continues to be given to enforcement outside schools and a priority list is maintained to use the available resources to best effect.

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1.3 A total of 10,219 penalty charge notices were issued during 2013/2014 representing a 2.4% increase on the figure for the preceding year.

1.4 In addition to this annual report both on and off street parking services are reviewed during the year by the Parking Task Group consisting of both Borough and County Councillors.

2. OPERATIONAL REPORT:

2.1 The aim of parking enforcement in Woking continues to seek compliance within the available resources. Restrictions are enforced fairly and in accordance with the operational guidance for Civil Parking Enforcement contained in the Traffic Management Act.

2.2 We aim to achieve operational efficiency and value for money. Providing fair and adequate enforcement service to generally achieve compliance but at no net cost to the county council.

2.3 It is essential that parking enforcement within the borough is fair and consistent wherever possible. In Woking Civil Enforcement Officers are expected to adopt a common sense approach to enforcement. They are expected to be polite and informative, providing guidance on parking related issues. On occasion, warning notices are issued, this can be where new restrictions have been introduced or complaints have been received.

2.4 On waiting offences such as single yellow lines, five minutes observation is allowed. If it is a commercial vehicle, 10 minutes will be allowed to observe for loading / unloading before a penalty charge is issued.

Higher and lower rate Penalty Charge Notices (PCNs), and the grounds for appeal

2.5 We operate two different rates of penalty charge, of £70 and £50. In simple terms, this means the more serious the contravention is considered, the greater the penalty charge.

2.6 The Traffic Management Act 2004 (TMA04) lists what the parking contraventions are and the rates at which they are to be applied.

2.7 If a driver does not contest a PCN and pays it within 14 days, the penalty charge is reduced by half. Every driver who receives a PCN has a right of appeal if they feel there is a real and genuine reason for not paying.

2.8 An appeal is handled by Woking Borough Council at the first stage, and if the driver is not happy with our decision they can then take their case to the Independent Traffic adjudicators. The process is conducted according to national guidelines.

2.9 The decision of the Independent Traffic Adjudicators is final.

The grounds on which an informal appeal may be based are:

1. The vehicle was not in the locations described in the parking contravention.
2. Driver was not aware restrictions applied at that location.
3. The vehicle had broken down.
4. Passenger or driver was ill or some other emergency circumstances were involved which was beyond the control of the driver and prevented the vehicle being moved.
5. Unmarked vehicle being used by Emergency Services.
6. The vehicle was stolen at the time.
7. Driver over stayed time permitted – clear mitigating circumstances.
8. Loading/un-loading taking place

Below are some of the grounds that will not be considered as a means of appeal

“There was nowhere else to park.”

“Other vehicles were parked illegally and I did not see them get a ticket.”

“I did not see the lines or the signs.”

“I got lost and could not find my car.”

“I was delayed in an important meeting.”

“I went to get change for the Pay and Display machine and it took a long time.”

“This is the first time I have ever had a parking ticket and I won’t do it again.”

“There was no need for a yellow line at that location.”

“I had lent the car to a friend and they will not pay the Penalty Charge.”

“I was doing work at the property and there was nowhere else to park.”

Enforcement

2.10 To provide a structured, consistent approach to enforcement, there are defined beats which continue to be review for operational efficiency.

2.11 The greatest attention is normally focused upon the 3 controlled parking zones in Woking.

Woking Controlled Parking Zone

Area	Hours of Control	Time Limit	Type of Parking Permitted
1	8.30am – 6pm Monday to Sunday	1 hour	Pay and Display and Vouchers
2 & 3	8.30am – 6pm Monday to Saturday	3 hours	Vouchers and Permits
4 & 5	9.30am – 11.30am Monday to Friday	1 hour	Vouchers and Permits

West Byfleet Controlled Parking Zone

Area	Hours of Control	Time Limit	Type of Parking Permitted
Central	8.30am – 6pm Monday to Saturday (Saturday no charge)	4 hours	Pay and Display
Outer	11am – 3pm Monday to Friday	4 hours	Permit Holders only

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Brookwood Controlled Parking Zone

Area	Hours of Control	Time Limit	Type of Parking Permitted
1 Hour Zone	1pm – 2pm Monday to Friday	1 hour	Permit Holders only

- 2.12 Parking enforcement in outlying areas and villages remains important. However, the greater travelling time required means less frequent enforcement is possible. Enforcement of village centres will be carried out periodically at varying times/days to help achieve compliance.

Schools

- 2.13 Woking Borough Council continues to work with partners to improve road safety and promote the use of sustainable transport modes to bring health benefits for pupils and staff and help create a safer, cleaner and greener environment.
- 2.14 No parking, waiting, loading/unloading, dropping off or picking up of passengers is permitted on a School Keep Clear marking during its controlled hours. Blue Badge Holders are also not exempt from this restriction. Because there are no permitted activities, no observation will be given and a Penalty Charge Notice can be issued immediately if the parking enforcement officer observes abuse.
- 2.15 Despite this, the issue of illegal parking and safety is consistently raised by schools, parents and residents.
- 2.16 Wherever possible we work with local schools, the Parking Task Group, Surrey Highways and Surrey Police to undertake parking enforcement outside schools where it is necessary. It is not possible to provide enforcement outside every school where restrictions exist taking into account other enforcement commitments and it is recognised it is unlikely to result in many penalty charge notices being issued but will assist with safety and the safe movement of traffic in the area.
- 2.17 From the 1 September 2013 to the 30 June 2014, 256 school patrols were completed. In addition to numerous warnings over 70 penalty charge notices were issued for illegal parking and this will continue to be a priority task for Parking Services.

Private Hire Taxi Parking

- 2.18 Complaints have been received during the year relating to private hire vehicles parking illegally at various locations. Such parking is dealt with consistently by civil enforcement officers and where vehicles remain parked following an observation period a penalty charge notice will be served.
- 2.20 This remains a continuing issue in certain locations and individual companies have been written to directly seeking better management of drivers to prevent a poor image of the trade generally.

Faith Parking

- 2.21 Upon request and where it is safe to do so discretion is exercised to allow prayer, mourning and celebrations amongst the faith communities.

Signs and Lines Maintenance

- 2.22 Where resources allow the Parking Services Team continue to work with Surrey colleagues to maintain existing signs and lines and assist with the introduction of new restrictions arising through the parking review.

Residents Permits

- 2.23 During the financial year 2013/14 a total of 2,150 resident permits were issued and over 16,000 resident visitor permits were purchased across the 3 controlled parking zones.
- 2.24 Resident permits are administered by customer services staff at the Council's Civic Offices during normal office hours.

Suspensions and Waivers

- 2.25 Upon request, Parking Services will arrange for parking bay suspensions and waivers in accordance with the scale of charges set out in the county councils parking strategy.
- 2.26 A notice period of 5 working days is required in normal circumstances. However, this is flexible for emergency works.

3. PRIORITIES:

- 3.1 In addition to the normal parking enforcement duties it is proposed to prioritise the following areas during 2014/15:-
- School parking enforcement with support from partners where possible.
 - Assist Surrey County Council with roadmarking and sign maintenance.
 - Enforce new restrictions arising from the parking review with warning notices initially followed by penalty charge notices after a short period.

4. CONSULTATIONS:

- 4.1 Through the Parking Task Group, the advertisement of new restrictions and the annual report, consultation and review is a continuous process.

5. FINANCIAL AND VALUE FOR MONEY IMPLICATIONS:

- 5.1 The primary purpose of enforcing waiting restrictions is to help achieve compliance. Similarly parking charges are intended to help enforcement and improve turnover of high demand spaces. Parking enforcement is not intended to raise income, however it is reasonable to aim to carry out enforcement without operating at a deficit.

- 5.2 Where a surplus is generated on the borough or district parking account it has been agreed that it will be split:

- 60% to the joint committee
- 20% to the enforcement authority (district council)
- 20% to the county council

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5.3 The joint committee can decide how the 60% share of any surplus income derived in their area can be used within the confines of legislation.

5.4 Any surplus generated from managing on street parking can only be used as defined under S55 of the Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984 (as amended). This restricts use of any surplus for the maintenance and/or improvement of the Highway including environmental works or additional parking provision.

Annual On-Street Car Parking Return

Authority name	WOKING BOROUGH COUNCIL
Financial year	2013/2014
	£
REVENUE EXPENDITURE	635,405.78
REVENUE INCOME	-839,702.70
NET (SURPLUS)/DEFICIT	-204,296.92

Surplus share:		£
SCC	20%	-40,859.38
Joint Committee*	60%	-122,578.15
Local Authority	20%	-40,859.38

Local Authority*	40% of 60% to Local Authority to Woking Town Centre Agreement	-49,031.26
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Adjusted to account for LAC contribution of share to LA

Surplus share:		£
SCC		-40,859.38
Joint Committee*		-73,546.89
Local Authority		-89,890.64

6. RISK MANAGEMENT:

6.1 No risks identified other than normal operational issues which are covered by standard procedures.

6.2 Risk assessments completed annually for Parking Services .

7. LOCALISM:

7.1 Continued priority will be given to parking enforcement outside local schools to address local concerns.

- 7.2 Assisting with the implementation and subsequent enforcement of restrictions arising from the parking review.

8. EQUALITIES AND DIVERSITY IMPLICATIONS:

- 8.1 Effective parking restrictions and enforcement can assist accessibility for those with visual or mobility impairment by reducing instances of obstructive parking. Parking restrictions also allow blue badge holders better access to shops and services through the provision and enforcement of disabled bays. As part of this, checks are made where there is suspected misuse of blue badges, DWP Blue Badge Eligibility Enquiry Contact Number 0845 8503322.

9. OTHER IMPLICATIONS:

9.1

Area assessed:	Direct Implications:
Crime and Disorder	There should be fewer instances of obstructive and dangerous parking as a consequence of effective parking enforcement.
Sustainability (including Climate Change and Carbon Emissions)	No significant implications arising from this report.
Corporate Parenting/Looked After Children	No significant implications arising from this report.
Safeguarding responsibilities for vulnerable children and adults	No significant implications arising from this report.
Public Health	No significant implications arising from this report.
Human Resource/Training and Development	Recruitment and retention of Parking Services staff.

Human Resource/Training and Development.

- 9.2 During the last twelve months there has been a large turnover of personnel which at times has impacted upon the ability to deploy enforcement staff as consistently as we would like.
- 9.3 With a new Parking Services Manager now in post we are reviewing the operation to provide more resilience within the Parking Services team. Such review also extends to the notice processing service and operating systems with Capita as part of a wider Council review.

10. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS:

- 10.1 The Joint Committee are asked to note the contents of the report and the priorities identified by the Parking Services team.

11. WHAT HAPPENS NEXT:

11.1 The Joint Committee and members of the public have the continued opportunity to raise service queries through the Parking Task Group or direct with the Parking Services team.

Contact Officer: Woking Borough Council Parking Manager, Woking Borough Council
David Curl, Team Manager, SCC Parking Team

Consulted: Councillor John Kingsbury, Portfolio holder.

Borough Portfolio Holder
Councillor John Kingsbury

County Council Cabinet Member
County Councillor John Furey

Annexes:
None