

SURREY COUNTY COUNCIL**LOCAL COMMITTEE****DATE:** 2 March 2015

LEAD OFFICER: David Curl – Parking Team Manager (SCC)
 Gavin Handford, Corporate Policy and Governance
 Manager, Reigate & Banstead Borough Council

SUBJECT: On Street Parking Enforcement Update**DIVISION:** All in Reigate and Banstead Borough Council**SUMMARY OF ISSUE:**

Local Committees are responsible for installing and reviewing on street parking restrictions. Committees have a scrutiny role of the enforcement operation and a share of any surplus income.

This report sets out the background for these arrangements and provides an overview of the enforcement operation.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

The Local Committee 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 Local Committee can contribute towards these objectives in partnership with the Borough Enforcement Team.

1. INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND:

- 1.1 On the 23 October 2012, the Surrey Cabinet agreed the framework for new on street parking enforcement agency agreements with the majority of Surrey district and borough councils. This followed 2 years of discussion and negotiation about how enforcement could be carried out more efficiently and what should happen to any surplus income.
- 1.2 In terms of governance and scrutiny, the cabinet agreed that local committees would have an oversight role in terms of on street parking enforcement.
- 1.3 Local Committees already make decisions about new parking restrictions and this will continue. Parking reviews will involve a separate report.
- 1.4 A report regarding on street enforcement was deferred from the December meeting, with a special task group convened to review the matter further.

2. ENFORCEMENT TEAM

- 2.1 The aim of parking enforcement is to achieve compliance with the restrictions that are in place across the borough. However, in reality 100% compliance would be very difficult to achieve. Restrictions should be enforced fairly and in accordance with the operational guidance for Civil Parking Enforcement contained in the Traffic Management Act.
- 2.2 The enforcement authority and the county council also aim to achieve operational efficiency and value for money. We aim to provide fair and adequate enforcement service to generally achieve compliance but at no net cost to the county council.
- 2.3 Staff deployed in on street parking enforcement in Reigate and Banstead Borough as follows:
 - Parking manager (shared with off street)
 - 1 Supervisor, 2 Senior Civil Enforcement Officers
 - 7 full time Civil Enforcement Officers
 - Back office staff
- 2.4 Enforcement officers are deployed across the borough, covering core enforcement hours from 8am until 6:30pm. The enforcement team are supported by a manager and back office staff, who support the parking office based. The normal office hours are 9am until 5pm (Monday – Thursday) and 9am until 4:45pm (Friday). All staff are based at the Borough Council's depot in Earlswood.

- 2.5 Response time for enquiries will be based on Reigate & Banstead Borough Council corporate guidelines of 14 days.
- 2.6 The enforcement team benefits from the efficiencies of operating both on street and off street enforcement activity. In line with the agency agreement between the two Councils, the costs of these two activities are separated, as is the income received from penalty notices.

3. ENFORCEMENT ACTIVITIES

- 3.1 The Borough Council undertakes a range of enforcement activities under the agency agreement.
- 3.2 Some restrictions, such as yellow lines and residential permits, can be enforced immediately; the vehicle will be in clear violation of a restriction by parking on a yellow line or failing to display a valid permit.
- 3.3 Other restrictions have a waiting limit. These are used in commercial and residential areas to ensure turnover and deter commuter parking. Enforcement cannot be undertaken immediately as no ticket is displayed to show the arrival time for each vehicle. Instead the Civil Enforcement Officer is required to log all the vehicles in a particular area and then return later in the day. Only then can they undertake enforcement if it is clear that the vehicle has overstayed the waiting limit.

Town centres (Banstead, Horley, Redhill, Reigate)

- 3.4 Parking enforcement is carried out in the town centres to achieve compliance with parking and waiting restrictions that will help maintain traffic flows and access to businesses and services. This service is particularly valued by small business owners, as the restrictions ensure turnover in parking spaces along the main high streets.
- 3.5 There are a higher proportion of restrictions in the town centres and these consequently require a larger proportion of enforcement resource in the Borough.
- 3.6 There is generally 1 Civil Enforcement Officer deployed in each of the main towns throughout the core enforcement hours above.

Villages or local shopping parades

- 3.7 Parking enforcement in outlying areas and villages is important; however the greater travelling time required means less frequent enforcement is possible.
- 3.8 Enforcement of the village centres listed below is carried out at least 4 times per week at varying times/days to help achieve compliance.
- Kingswood
 - Nork

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- Tadworth
- Chipstead
- Tattenham
- Walton-on-the-hill
- Burgh Heath
- Merstham

3.9 As these areas do not have the same level of resource as the town centres, it is recognised that there is a perception that they are forgotten. Each area receives regular visits, as set out above, and the times and roads visited is logged by the enforcing officer.

Joint Enforcement Team

3.10 The parking enforcement team regularly work with the Joint Enforcement Team, which is a pilot scheme between Reigate & Banstead Borough Council and Surrey Police.

3.11 The JET undertakes regular joint patrols and seeks to improve the speed and effectiveness of enforcement activities through improved partnership working and greater use of the statutory powers available to the Borough Council and Police (for example, dangerous parking is only enforceable by Surrey Police).

3.12 Civil Enforcement Officers may identify non-parking contraventions such as graffiti, overhanging trees, littering, anti-social behaviour, abandoned vehicles, untaxed vehicles etc. These will be reported to the JET team or Surrey County Council as appropriate.

3.13 The new approach has improved the intelligence and information shared between Reigate & Banstead Borough Council and Surrey Police on a range of enforcement issues, including parking.

Schools

3.14 We work with schools, highways and Surrey Police whenever possible to target parking enforcement outside schools where it is needed. A joint programme of school visits has been agreed with the Joint Enforcement Team.

3.15 The team seeks to provide advice and guidance when visiting schools. However, penalty charge notices will be issued where appropriate, particularly where vehicles are parked on zig zag markings.

3.16 School enforcement has some unique challenges. The presence of the enforcement officers often disrupts usual parking patterns, which resume when the team is not present. It is not possible to provide enforcement outside every school, every day, due to other enforcement commitments.

Residential areas

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- 3.17 Parking restrictions in residential areas will be patrolled as required or in response to reported problems. Councillors and residents are encouraged to report any hot spots to the Council.
- 3.18 There are a small number of resident permit schemes in operation in Horley and Merstham. The Borough Council undertakes all administration in relation to these schemes, including applications, payment and issuing of permits.
- 3.19 Resident permit parking schemes will be patrolled as required or in response to reported problems.
- 3.20 Civil Enforcement Officers can enforce obstruction of 'official' drop kerb crossovers and pedestrian crossing points. This will require the permission of the property owner to request enforcement action. If the property owner does not contact the Council to request enforcement action, the Council is unable to take any action. The Council seeks to respond to these requests within 24 hours, however this will not apply to Sundays and bank holidays.

Suspensions and Waivers

- 3.21 There may be occasions, such as utility works or home improvement schemes, where a company or individual requires an existing parking restriction to be suspended or waived for a fixed period.
- 3.22 The Borough Council undertakes all the administration in relation to these requests, including application, payment and issuing of suspensions and waivers.
- 3.23 This is undertaken in accordance with the scale of charges set out in the county councils parking strategy.
- 3.24 In order to operate this process effectively a notice period is needed. The Council therefore requires a minimum period of 10 working days from request of application to allow processing and cleared payment prior to the suspension period.

Events affecting the highway

- 3.25 Where community events are arranged that will affect parking on the highway, the enforcement team will work with the organiser or highways to assist with traffic management arrangements.
- 3.26 Event organisers may be charged for this assistance if it requires out of hours working or distracts from the normal day to day enforcement activity in the borough. Clear requirements of the time required to assist in this is necessary to ensure adequate staff are available.

Lines and Signs

- 3.27 It is the responsibility of Surrey County Council to ensure that the lines and signs are enforceable. Reigate and Banstead Council will undertake unforeseen emergency work on behalf of Surrey County Council.

4. LOCAL COMMITTEE TASK GROUP

- 4.1 A Local Committee Task Group was established to review the on street enforcement activities within the borough. The Task group met on Tuesday 20 January.
- 4.2 The Task Group welcomed the opportunity to discuss parking enforcement in greater detail and the challenges that the team face.
- 4.3 There was particular interest in the accommodation charges. Reigate & Banstead Borough Council charge all property costs for all operational buildings, including heating, lighting, business rates and maintenance is to a central cost centre. At the end of each financial year these costs are recharge to services according to the frontline service staff within the organisation.
- 4.4 The total property costs for the Borough Council were £4.7m in 2013/14. This cost was divided by the 272.3 front line staff and recharged to those services.
- 4.5 Reigate & Banstead on street enforcement had 12.3 FTE, representing 4.52% of the total FTE. The proportion of property costs was therefore 4.52% of £4.7m, which equates to £212,000. However, only 72.6% (the proportion of PCN income that relates to on street enforcement) of the costs are recharged to the on street enforcement service, or £154,360.
- 4.6 The Task Group noted that the Borough Council was seeking to reduce the accommodation costs by releasing space that could be rented to other organisations. This will be progressed in 2015/16.
- 4.7 There was also discussion regarding the increased equipment and software charges. It was noted that the Council had introduced new handheld devices to improve the information available to Civil Enforcement Officers and improvements to the back office system. The new Online Case Management system enables customers to view their cases in real time. It also enables the customer to appeal on-line. These improvements were made to improve customer experience and improves back office processing, but has resulted in higher application costs to the service.
- 4.8 The Task Group noted that the total overheads charged by Reigate & Banstead Borough Council were consistent with those charged in other areas.

- 4.9 It was noted that the nature of on street restrictions meant the service was less efficient than an off street enforcement activity, where the vehicles display a ticket.

5. CONSULTATIONS:

- 5.1 District and Borough Councils have been consulted widely in the development of new parking enforcement arrangements.
- 5.2 Feedback and intelligence from local Councillors is also extremely helpful in identifying enforcement priorities. The Borough Council will shortly be undertaking a number of Councillor workshops to inform the future priorities and business plan for the parking service.

6. FINANCIAL AND VALUE FOR MONEY IMPLICATIONS:

- 6.1 The 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.
- 6.2 If a surplus is generated on the borough or district parking account it has been agreed that it will be split:
- 60% to the local committee
 - 20% to the enforcement authority (district council)
 - 20% to the county council
- 6.3 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.
- 6.4 Under the agency agreement, Reigate & Banstead is responsible for any operational deficit. Surrey County Council are not liable for any deficit in the delivery of the service.
- 6.5 The Local Committee can decide how the 60% share of any surplus income derived in their area can be used within the confines of legislation.
- 6.6 The Local Committee can request and fund (from budgets at their disposal) additional 'out of hours' enforcement if this is considered appropriate.

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- 6.7 There was no surplus generated in 2013/14. The outturn summary for the on street parking account in Reigate and Banstead is shown in Annex 1.

7. EQUALITIES AND DIVERSITY IMPLICATIONS:

- 7.1 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.

8. LOCALISM:

- 8.1 Communities are represented by local Councillors, who are involved in the decision making process to change or introduce new parking restrictions.

9. CRIME AND DISORDER IMPLICATION:

- 9.1 There should be fewer instances of obstructive and dangerous parking as a consequence of effective parking enforcement.

10. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS:

- 10.1 Changes to the use of the highway network, the built environment and society mean that parking behaviour changes. It is necessary for a Highway Authority to carry out regular reviews of waiting and parking restrictions on the highway network and provide adequate enforcement. This 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

- 10.2 This report provides a summary of the enforcement activities undertaken by Reigate & Banstead Borough Council, under agreement with the County Council. The report focuses on the performance during 2013/14 and the Local Committee is asked to note the report.

11. WHAT HAPPENS NEXT:

11.1 Local Committee can consider these arrangements and a Parking Enforcement Task Group will be set up at the June 2015 Local Committee to interact with the enforcement team as appropriate.

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Annexes:

Annex 1 – Annual On Street Parking Return

Annex 2 – On Street Parking Key Performance Indicators

Sources/background papers: SCC Cabinet, Parking Enforcement, Oct. 2012

Annex 1 – Annual On Street Parking Return (summary)

Authority name	Reigate and Banstead
Financial year	2013/2014

	£	
REVENUE EXPENDITURE		494673
REVENUE INCOME		-349561
NET DEFICIT		<u><u>145112</u></u>

Surplus share:		£
SCC	20%	0
Local Area committee	60%	0
Local Authority	20%	0

Annex 2 – On Street Parking Key Performance Indicators (Reigate & Banstead)

KPI	Details	Result
Total cost to administer the on-street parking service – the overall net cost of operating the on-street enforcement element of the parking service.	These are set out in annexes 1 and 2 above	£145,111
Civil enforcement officer (CEO) deployment efficiency – this measures the number of hours deployed CEO time spent on-street or travelling to sites as a ratio of the total cost of the enforcement operation.	Total enforcement cost is estimated at £270,129. Total hours deployed on-street or travelling is estimated at 9150.	£29.52
Penalty charge notices (PCN) issued per deployed hour – total number of PCNs issued as a ratio of the total number of CEO hours on-street.	The number of penalty charge notices issued on-street was 9247. The estimated time deployed was 7068 and travelling time was 2082.	1.48
PCN cancellation rate - the total number of PCNs cancelled as a ratio of the total number of PCNs issued.	9247 PCNs were issued. 752 PCNs were cancelled and	7.5%
PCN Appeal Rate - the total number of PCNs successfully appealed, as a ratio of the total number of PCNs issued.	Total number of PCNs issued was 9247. 28 PCN was successfully appealed at the formal appeal stage.	0.3%
Time taken to issue parking permits/ dispensations/ suspensions – measuring the average number of days taken to deal with general customer requests for service (excluding PCN appeals or comments on parking).		5 working days

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