

SURREY COUNTY COUNCIL**LOCAL COMMITTEE****DATE:** 11 December 2015

LEAD OFFICER: David Curl – Parking Team Manager (SCC)
 Jacquie Joseph Parking Services Manager, Reigate & Banstead Borough Council

SUBJECT: On Street Parking Enforcement Update**DIVISION:** All in Tandridge District**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 In Tandridge on street enforcement is undertaken by Reigate & Banstead under agreement with Surrey County Council.

2. ANALYSIS

- 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 extremely difficult to achieve. Restrictions must be enforced fairly and in accordance with the operational guidance for Civil Parking Enforcement contained in the Traffic Management Act 2004.
- 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. This has been achieved under the agency agreement in place, with no costs met by the County Council.
- 2.3 Enforcement officers are deployed across the District, covering core enforcement hours from 07:30am until 6:00pm. Any enforcement activity outside of these hours is possible through staff overtime, which is at a higher cost.
- 2.4 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.

4. ENFORCEMENT ACTIVITIES

- 4.1 The Borough Council undertakes a range of enforcement activities under the agency agreement.
- 4.2 Some restrictions, such as yellow lines and residential permits, can be enforced immediately; the vehicle will need to be in clear violation of a restriction by parking on a yellow line or failing to display a valid parking permit.
- 4.3 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 (Oxted, Caterham, Whyteleafe, Lingfield, Woldingham)

- 4.4 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.
- 4.5 There are a higher proportion of restrictions in the town centres and these consequently require a larger proportion of enforcement resource in the District.
- 4.6 There is generally 2 Civil Enforcement Officer deployed in the Tandridge District and which covers the main towns throughout the core enforcement hours above when fully staffed.

Villages or local shopping parades

- 4.7 Parking enforcement in outlying areas and villages is important; however the greater travelling time required means less frequent enforcement is possible.
- 4.8 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 and the times and roads visited are logged by the enforcing officer. Additional targeted enforcement is also undertaken when evidence of any parking issues are reported to the team. However, it is important that resources are targeted where they are most effective, in order to increase income and minimise the cost of enforcement activities.

Schools

- 4.9 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 is agreed with Police.
- 4.10 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.
- 4.11 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. However, when there are issues that have been highlighted, the enforcement team will work with Surrey County Council to identify wider issues (travel plans, alternative travel transport)

Residential areas

- 4.12 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.
- 4.13 Resident permit parking schemes will be patrolled as required or in response to reported problems.
- 4.14 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.
- 4.15 The Council have improved the communication with residents to ensure that they are clear what can be enforced by the Council and giving them the options to contact the Police where there may have greater or immediate powers of enforcement.

Suspensions and Waivers

- 4.16 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.
- 4.17 The Borough Council undertakes all the administration in relation to these requests, including application, payment and issuing of suspensions and waivers. These are being processed in a timely manner and the Council are continually looking to improve the method

in which customers apply, pay and have the approval for suspensions and waivers processed.

- 4.18 This is undertaken in accordance with the scale of charges set out in the County Councils parking strategy.
- 4.19 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

- 4.20 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.
- 4.21 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

- 4.22 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.
- 4.23 Enforcement activity cannot be taken if the lines and signs are not visible (i.e. faded or covered by detritus) and the signs are in accordance with the adopted Traffic Regulation Order. Where any issues are identified, the Councils seek to work together to resolve it as soon as possible to ensure enforcement activities can be resumed efficiently.

5. LOCAL COMMITTEE TASK GROUP

- 5.1 Reigate & Banstead Borough Council recharge the property costs for operational buildings according to the frontline service staff within the organisation. Within parking costs are divided between on and off street services on the proportion of time spent in each.
- 5.2 Previously Reigate Parking services have over deployed on enforcement officers in Tandridge district Council and this has resulted in a higher PCN income levels. We are currently operating enforcement in accordance with the agreement.
- 5.3 The Council had introduced improved back office systems to enable a more efficient permit application process and better was in which

customers are able to have queries answered having updated the Council web pages and are providing applications on-line with the facility to make payments remotely rather than by sending cheques, which reduces costs. The Online Case Management system enables customers to view their cases in real time and appeal on-line. It also enables the customer to appeal on-line. However, this has a higher application costs to the service.

- 5.4 The total overheads charged by Reigate & Banstead Borough Council are consistent with those charged in other areas.
- 5.5 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.

6. CONSULTATIONS:

- 6.1 District and Borough Councils have been consulted widely in the development of new parking enforcement arrangements.

Feedback and intelligence from local Councillors is also extremely helpful in identifying enforcement priorities.

7. FINANCIAL AND VALUE FOR MONEY IMPLICATIONS:

- 7.1 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 surplus income; however it is reasonable to aim to carry out enforcement without operating at a deficit.
- 7.2 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
- 7.3 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.
- 7.4 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.

- 7.5 The Local Committee can request and fund (from budgets at their disposal) additional 'out of hours' enforcement if this is considered appropriate. However, at a recent informal meeting of the local committee there was not support for additional funding for enforcement activities.

Therefore, the enforcement team will instead seek to utilise the feedback from the councillors to better inform enforcement priorities.

- 7.6 There was no surplus generated in 2014/15. The outturn summary for the on street parking account in Tandridge District Council and is shown in Annex 1.

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.

9. LOCALISM:

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

10. CRIME AND DISORDER IMPLICATION:

Area assessed:	Direct Implications:
Crime and Disorder	No significant implications arising from this report/)
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)

11. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS:

11.1 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
- Increase on-street compliance

11.2 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 2014/15 and the Local Committee is asked to note the report.

12. WHAT HAPPENS NEXT:

12.1 Local Committee can consider these arrangements and 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:
