

SURREY COUNTY COUNCIL**LOCAL COMMITTEE (TANDRIDGE)****DATE: 2 MARCH 2018**

**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 TANDRIDGE****SUMMARY OF ISSUE:**

Local Committees have a scrutiny role for the on street parking enforcement service in their area and a share of any surplus income that is raised.

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

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 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 The aim of parking enforcement is to achieve compliance with the restrictions that are in place across the district. Restrictions must be enforced fairly and in accordance with the operational guidance for Civil Parking Enforcement contained in the Traffic Management Act 2004.
- 1.5 Reigate & Banstead Borough Council (R&BBC) undertake parking enforcement within Tandridge District under an agency agreement with Surrey County Council. R&BBC is currently solely liable for any financial deficit.
- 1.6 R&BBC aim to achieve operational efficiency and value for money providing a fair and adequate enforcement service if possible at no net cost. i.e. the income from fines covers the cost of providing the service. This has proved difficult to achieve in recent years but under the agency agreement with the County Council the deficit is met by R&BBC.
- 1.7 Until recently R&BBC also enforced Tandridge off street car parks. However last year a procurement exercise was conducted by Tandridge District Council for the enforcement of their off-street car parks which resulted in Sevenoaks District Council being awarded a two year contract from the beginning of September 2017.

2. ON STREET ENFORCEMENT ACTIVITIES

- 2.1 R&BBC undertake a range of enforcement activities under the agency agreement including:
 - Waiting restrictions and parking bays
 - School Keep Clears
 - Pedestrian crossings
 - Loading, bus stops and taxi ranks
 - Temporary suspensions for events
 - Drop kerbs

- 2.2 Enforcement officers are deployed across the District, covering core enforcement hours from 8:30am until 6:00pm. Any enforcement activity outside of these hours is possible through staff overtime, which is at a higher cost.
- 2.3 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.
- 2.4 Limited waiting bays 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 (CEO) 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. This is a time consuming process for the CEO's.
- 2.5 There has been an increase in the CEO deployment from two to four allocated to Tandridge District since March 2017 and so at least three are deployed on each day, focusing on the main towns throughout the core enforcement hours and ad-hoc weekends with considerations for annual leave, sickness and staff movement.
- 2.6 Patrols are undertaken at varying times of the day and week to reduce awareness about exactly when CEO's will be in the area.
- 2.7 In the period between Aug 2016 - Feb 2017, there were 92 enquiries about 'Tandridge inconsiderate parking' registered on the R&B web site via the parking portal. A CEO attends the complaints raised as soon as possible unless further investigation is required.

Town centres (Oxted and Caterham Hill/Valley)

- 2.8 This is where the majority of enforcement is undertaken because there are a higher proportion of restrictions in the town centres and these consequently require a larger proportion of enforcement resource in the District.
- 2.9 Parking enforcement is carried out in the town centres to achieve compliance with parking and waiting restrictions that will help maintain traffic flows and support access to businesses and services. This service is particularly important to small business owners, as the restrictions ensure turnover in parking spaces along the main High Streets.

Villages and local shopping parades

- 2.10 Parking enforcement in outlying areas and villages is important; however the greater travelling time required means less frequent enforcement is possible.
- 2.11 As these areas do not have the same level of resources 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.
- 2.12 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. The ability to deploy staff more easily without having an impact of normal enforcement duties will assist in reducing the perception of lack of enforcement.

Schools

- 2.13 We work with schools, the Surrey Highways and Surrey Police whenever possible to target parking enforcement outside schools where it is needed.
- 2.14 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.
- 2.15 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 and potential solutions (travel plans, alternative travel transport).
- 2.16 Other methods of enforcing school keep clears are being considered. However, there is a cost that would need to be considered to ensure that the improvements in equipment or other products did not place an unbalanced financial burden on the stakeholders.

Residential areas

- 2.17 Parking restrictions in residential areas, including permit areas, will be patrolled as required or in response to reported problems. Councillors and residents are encouraged to report any hot spots to the enforcement team.

- 2.18 CEO's 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 enforcement team to request enforcement action, they will not take action. R&BBC seek to respond to these requests as soon as possible.
- 2.19 Both the Local Committee and enforcement team have improved communication with residents to ensure that they are clear what can be enforced and giving them the options to contact the Police where the use greater or immediate powers of enforcement are required.

Suspensions and Waivers

- 2.20 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.
- 2.21 R&BBC 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 we are continually looking to improve the method in which customers apply, pay and have the approval for suspensions and waivers processed.
- 2.22 This is undertaken in accordance with the scale of charges set out in the county councils parking strategy.
- 2.23 In order to operate this process effectively a notice period is needed. A minimum period of 10 working days from request of application is needed to allow processing and cleared payment prior to the suspension period.

Events affecting the highway

- 2.24 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.
- 2.25 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

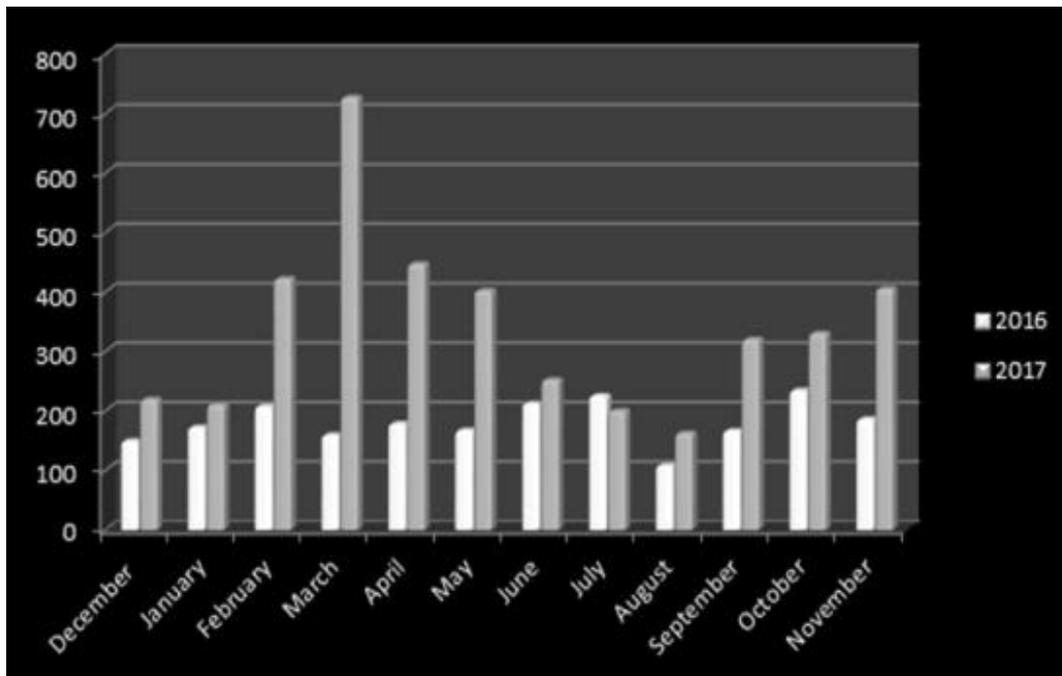
- 2.26 It is the responsibility of Surrey County Council to ensure that the lines and signs are enforceable. Reigate and Banstead Council will

undertake unforeseen emergency work on behalf of Surrey County Council.

2.27 Enforcement activity cannot be taken if the lines and signs are not visible (i.e. faded or covered by detritus). This is particularly challenging in the autumn when leaf fall occurs district-wide in a very short space of time.

3. ENFORCEMENT CHALLENGES AND IMPROVEMENTS

3.1 Two extra CEO's have been allocated to enforce in Tandridge since the beginning of March 2017, bringing the total to four. This effectively means there have been at least three CEO's on duty most days, allowing for leave and staffing issues etc. There has been a noticeable increase in the number of PCN's being issued and fewer complaints about poor compliance with parking restrictions.



3.2 The additional CEO's were initially taken on as a trial in March 2017 but given the positive early results this will be carried on indefinitely. In the six months since March, 2515 PCN's were issued, twice as many as the equivalent period March-September 2016 when 1221 were issued. See table above.

- 3.3 The additional PCN's provide income to cover the cost of the extra resources and this will be reflected in the 17/18 accounts rather than the 16/17 data reported here. An update on the 2017/18 financial situation will be provided at the meeting.
- 3.4 In January 2018, the deployment of CEO's in Tandridge was changed so that instead of the CEO's patrolling in pairs and sharing the contraventions identified on-street, they will patrol separately and should therefore increase coverage and improve compliance with parking restrictions. The enforcement officers will cover both towns and rural areas daily.
- 3.5 Early reports indicate that in Jan 2018, 358 PCN's were issued across the District compared with 211 for the same month in 2017 (67.8% increase).
- 3.6 A number of locations nominated by the committee have also been given priority:
- Woldingham – The Crescent (54 visits, 1 PCN issued in last 12 months)
 - Caterham – Croydon Road (Wapses Lodge to The Square) 1,130 visits, 447 PCNs issued in last 12 months)
 - Caterham – Parking on roundabout/centre square (outside dry cleaners) (243 visits in last 12 months, 36 PCN's)
 - Caterham – Railway station (taxi parking) (323 visits 181 PCNs issued in last 12 months) 399 visits in unnamed road connecting Croydon Rd and Station Avenue
 - Caterham – Harestone Valley Road (taxi parking (116 visits 6 PCN's issued in last 12 months)
 - A22 Blindley Heath – (between Smith & Western pub and j/w Ray Lane)(12 visits, 0 PCNs issued in last 12 months)
 - Godstone Green Forge Café (11 visits 1 PCN issued in last 12 months)
 - Bletchingley – A25 Barfields junction with Castle St (parked vehicles obstructing sight lines) (7 visits 0 PCN issued in last 12 months)
 - Warlingham green (206 visits 72 PCNs issued in last 12 months)

3.7 Sunday enforcement remains a demand in areas such as in Limpsfield Rd (and some side roads) between Warlingham and the Croydon boundary (Tithepitshaw Lane).

3.8 We are working with Parish Councils in the north of the District to evaluate additional enforcement requirements and the likely costs. This could see additional CEO resources deployed in this area and funded by Parish Councils.

3.9 Reigate & Banstead continue to seek new ways of improving the enforcement service they provide. This includes:

- Using additional enforcement officers as described above.
- Purchasing new vehicles. This may include the introduction of small motorbikes to enable faster, more flexible deployment of enforcement resources.
- Increasing the enforcement activity undertaken outside of 'normal' operating hours. This is in response to feedback that a number of double yellow line locations require enforcement in the early mornings and more frequently during the evenings. At present the effectiveness of the enforcement during these times are heavily dependent on whether people are willing to volunteer for overtime, but the additional resource referenced above will mean the service can respond more frequently and flexibly.
- A review and improvement of the back office systems to enable a more efficient service. Improved information and guidance has been provided on the website and the wording on penalty charge notices has been reviewed to promote online appeals above other channels. Reigate & Banstead also offer online and automated telephone payments services, which are available 24 hours a day.
- The online 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.

3.10 The efficiency of the on street enforcement service would increase significantly if vehicles were required to display a ticket showing their arrival time, in the same way as parking in off street car parks. This would enable enforcement offers to immediately determine if vehicles had overstayed and carry out enforcement. At present at least two visits are required, and as stated earlier in the report, the process is resource intensive.

3.11 There is an ongoing review of the parking enforcement arrangement in the County that could also lead to greater efficiency benefits. These

could start to materialise during 2018/19 with the introduction of new parking enforcement agency agreements.

4. CONSULTATIONS:

- 4.1 Feedback and intelligence from local Councillors is extremely helpful in identifying enforcement priorities. The fastest way to report illegal or inconsiderate parking, and request enforcement activity, is through the online form, with information sent immediately to the parking enforcement team:
http://www.reigate-banstead.gov.uk/info/20150/parking/465/report_inconsiderate_parking

5. FINANCIAL AND VALUE FOR MONEY IMPLICATIONS:

- 5.1 The purpose of enforcing waiting restrictions is to help achieve compliance with restrictions and not to raise income although we try to manage the service without operating at a deficit.
- 5.2 If a surplus is generated for the 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
- 5.3 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.
- 5.4 There was no surplus generated in 2016/17. The outturn summary for the on street parking account in Tandridge District Council and is shown in Annex 2. A verbal update on the projected out turn for 2017/18 will be given at the meeting.
- 5.5 There are a number of challenges that impact on the costs and income of on street enforcement in Tandridge, most significantly it is a large, rural district with towns spread across the District.

6. EQUALITIES AND DIVERSITY IMPLICATIONS:

- 6.1 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.

7. LOCALISM:

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

8. 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

9. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS:

- 9.1 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

- 9.2 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 financial performance during 2016/17 but highlights improvements that have been made during 2017/18. The committee is asked to note the report.

10. WHAT HAPPENS NEXT:

10.1 Local Committee can consider these arrangements and set up a further meetings to interact with the enforcement team as appropriate.

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Annex 1 – Annual On Street Parking Return

Annex 2 – PCN's issued by location

Annex 3 – On Street Parking Key Performance Indicator

Annex 4 – Key Performance Indicators

Annex 5- Proportion of time spent in each Division

