

**RUNNYMEDE BOROUGH COUNCIL AND
SURREY COUNTY COUNCIL**



RUNNYMEDE JOINT COMMITTEE

DATE: 18 JULY 2018

LEAD OFFICER: IAN MAGUIRE, CORPORATE DIRECTOR OF PLANNING
AND ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES, RUNNYMEDE
BOROUGH COUNCIL

SUBJECT: ON STREET PARKING ENFORCEMENT COLLABORATION
AND CONSIDERATION OF ON STREET PAY AND DISPLAY

**AREA(S)
AFFECTED:** ALL

SUMMARY OF ISSUE:

A report to outline Runnymede Borough Council's action in respect of the recent re-awarding of an agency agreement for on street parking enforcement and to describe the next, collaborative steps to be taken with partnership from Spelthorne and Elmbridge Borough Councils.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

The Runnymede Joint Committee is asked to recommend / agree that:

- i) The Committee recommends to Surrey County Council that a countywide On Street Parking Policy is produced which details their expected levels of enforcement in order to maximise efficiency and their priorities to deliver the County Council's transport objectives.
- ii) The Committee recommends to Runnymede, Spelthorne and Elmbridge Borough Councils that they commit to the future alignment of systems and hardware to enable future closer working, and that that commitment should be included in future procurement assessments.
- iii) That a joint assessment of on street parking charging across Runnymede, Spelthorne and Elmbridge Boroughs is carried out with the intention of identifying locations where such charging can be introduced to facilitate access to parking and efficiencies of enforcement.

REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS:

The recommendations have been made to ensure continued progress in the joint working required by Surrey County Council as part of the award of an agency agreement to Runnymede Borough Council.

1. INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND:

- 1.1 Surrey County Council are the Highway Authority for Surrey. Under the Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984 a local authority may by order authorise the use of any part of a road as a parking place. Consequently under the Traffic Management Act 2004 Authorities are empowered to develop and implement civil parking enforcement regimes to manage parking on the road and the on-street parking places.
- 1.2 For a number of years the Districts and Boroughs in Surrey have undertaken on-street parking enforcement on behalf of the County Council. This approach has been encouraged by national guidance as an efficient way of managing local parking because District and Borough Council's own and operate off-street parking places (car parks) and can therefore efficiently combine their management with the on-street parking enforcement functions. Agency agreements have been operating in North Surrey since 2005 with Civil Enforcement Officers ('CEOs') employed or contracted by the Borough's undertaking on-street enforcement work in combination with their enforcement work in the Boroughs' car parks. All Agency Agreements were scheduled for review at the end of the 2017/18 year
- 1.3 In March 2017 Surrey County Council wrote to all Districts and Boroughs advising that, while the existing arrangements had worked well, they were not minded to continue with individual Agency Agreements with the separate Boroughs and instead the County Council required the Boroughs to work in 'clusters' if they were to be awarded Agency Agreements beyond March 2018. This approach was intended to encourage joint working 'to ensure we are still as efficient as possible' and Boroughs were advised that should they not wish to participate in joint working arrangements they would be required to hand back on street parking enforcement to the County Council.
- 1.4 Runnymede Borough Council, Spelthorne Borough Council and Elmbridge Borough Council were obliged to work in a 'cluster' to explore efficiency opportunities and move towards joint working. Through County-wide working and discussions Runnymede, Spelthorne and Elmbridge reviewed all possible opportunities for efficiency savings and confirmed that no significant savings were available through joint working that would outweigh the negative impacts of disaggregating on and off street parking enforcement in each authority area.
- 1.5 Runnymede, Spelthorne and Elmbridge were therefore unable to agree to appoint a lead authority for the three areas to operate a joint working arrangement as required by the County Council. In December
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2017 the County Council therefore confirmed they were only willing to offer a two year agency agreement to the three authorities in north east Surrey and that was contingent on further joint working to see 'efficiencies' on track in the first year.

2. ANALYSIS:

- 2.1 This report therefore examines the work areas where efficiencies might be secured as part of changes to the delivery of on street parking enforcement. Through ongoing discussions three separate work streams have been identified as being capable of delivering greater efficiency: The creation and adoption of a joint enforcement procedure; the commitment to moving towards system and equipment alignment to enable future joint procurement; and the review of opportunities to introduce on street pay and display charging.

The creation and adoption of a joint enforcement policy

- 2.2 While all civil parking enforcement must have due regard to the Department for Transport's statutory guidance Enforcement Authorities are encouraged to design local parking policies to support managing the traffic network, improve road safety, the local environment and the quality and accessibility of public transport while meeting the needs of people with disabilities and managing and reconciling the competing demands for kerb space.

- 2.3 Currently Surrey County Council has not provided a universal local parking policy to guide the Boroughs in the delivery of their Agency functions. It is recommended that the County Council is encouraged to produce a policy to apply in the North East Surrey Cluster, and all other Districts and Boroughs, which details the level of enforcement they are expected to maximise efficiency and their priorities to deliver the County Council's transport objectives. Such guidance should provide information to the public regarding the frequency of patrols and the County's expectations as to resources expended to deliver their policy objectives. It must be noted that raising revenue cannot be an objective of civil parking enforcement and as such it is inappropriate to set targets for revenue or the number of Parking Charge Notices (PCNs) in a parking policy, but by setting expectations regarding the amount of enforcement resources expected forward planning to achieve a sustainable service on a cost recovery basis can be achieved.

The commitment to moving towards system and equipment alignment

- 2.4 Opportunities for integrating back office processing systems and undertaken joint procurement exercises over three Boroughs may provide opportunities to marginally reduce the cost of operating on and off street parking enforcement. Currently Spelthorne and Runnymede operate the same software system for processing PCNs, with Elmbridge operating a similar process through a different supplier platform. Moving all three near neighbour authorities onto the same system may create an opportunity for joint procurement of a supplier, system licence and system maintenance in the future. At

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the same time moving towards alignment of hardware, whether it is hand held machines for issuing tickets or pay and display machines will potentially provide opportunities for future joint procurement and maintenance. It is therefore recommended that the Boroughs should be encouraged to commit to aligning their systems and hardware when current licencing agreements allow.

Review of opportunities to introduce on street pay and display charging

- 2.5 From comparisons of the income generated related to the enforcement expenditure it is universally agreed that the most significant financial implications to on street parking can be achieved through the introduction of on street parking charging. This generates both direct income from charges, but also improves the efficiency of on street parking enforcement in those areas as pay and display tickets reduce the need for repeat visitation by CEOs.
- 2.6 Currently in areas without on street charging through pay and display ticketing a CEO must periodically visit each parking place to identify vehicles that have overstayed any parking period that is permitted. For polycentric Boroughs, such as Runnymede, Elmbridge and to a lesser extent Spelthorne, this means CEOs must either remain in a relatively small area for a significant period of time or alternatively undertake long distant patrols to ensure sites are regularly inspected at repetitive intervals. Through the use of pay and display tickets overstaying parking users can be identified from a single visit, vastly increasing the efficiency of inspections by officers.
- 2.7 The appropriate use of charging in appropriate areas, such as busier town and local centres, can also support and incentivise higher levels of churn to the benefit of local retail viability and better managing competing demands for kerb space. On street parking charging is, however, usually contentious both for users and for local retailers and businesses. Work by officers to identify good practice in this area has however identified that it can be beneficial to cost efficiency, local economies and congestion reduction. A case study from Farnham Town Centre is included in Appendix A to illustrate the delivery of such a change to on street parking.
- 2.8 The Joint Committee is therefore invited to consider the benefits of on street parking charging in Runnymede and of encouraging this approach elsewhere in North East Surrey in Elmbridge and Spelthorne.
- 2.9 Prior to the introduction of on street charging further work to identify appropriate areas will be needed. It is recommended that this work is undertaken as a single joint exercise across Elmbridge, Spelthorne and Runnymede Boroughs. By undertaking a joint review in this way the consultation involved will encompass a larger, more valid sample area and the consideration of responses can be undertaken in a more efficient manner. A cross boundary assessment will also allow for consideration of the implications of selectively introducing on street charging on town centre management and vitality and potential impacts on demand diversion between centres near the Borough boundaries.

- 2.10 The Joint committee may also wish to suggest locations within Runnymede, and encourage the local area and joint committees in Elmbridge and Spelthorne to similarly do so, wherein such charging could be beneficially introduced in order that the detailed assessment and consultation can incorporate their suggestions.

3. OPTIONS:

- 3.1 The Options available to the committee, in respect of whether they wish to support the work undertaken by Runnymede Borough Council and its partners in Spelthorne and Elmbridge are outlined in the report

4. CONSULTATIONS:

- 4.1 No public consultation has yet taken place on these proposals.

5. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS:

- 5.1 No financial implications of the recommendations have yet been assessed, and these will form part of the next stage of work.

6. WIDER IMPLICATIONS:

- 6.1

Area assessed:	Direct Implications:
Crime and Disorder	No significant implications arising from this report.
Equality and Diversity	No significant implications arising from this report.
Localism (including community involvement and impact)	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.

7. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS:

- 7.1 The Joint Committee is asked to note the ongoing work in North East Surrey regarding the efficiency of on street parking enforcement and

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make recommendations to the County Council and Borough Councils regarding future work to support further efficiency opportunities.

- 7.2 The Joint Committee is also asked to consider whether it wishes to support the use of on street parking charging, whether or not as part of a wider North East Surrey review of such opportunities, and suggest locations within Runnymede where further consideration should be given to its introduction.

8. WHAT HAPPENS NEXT:

- 8.1 The next steps are defined within the report and conclusions

Contact Officer:

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Consulted:

No consultation has yet been carried out

Appendices:

Appendix A

On-Street Pay & Display Parking Charging Implementation – Case Study Area –
Castle Street, Farnham GU9

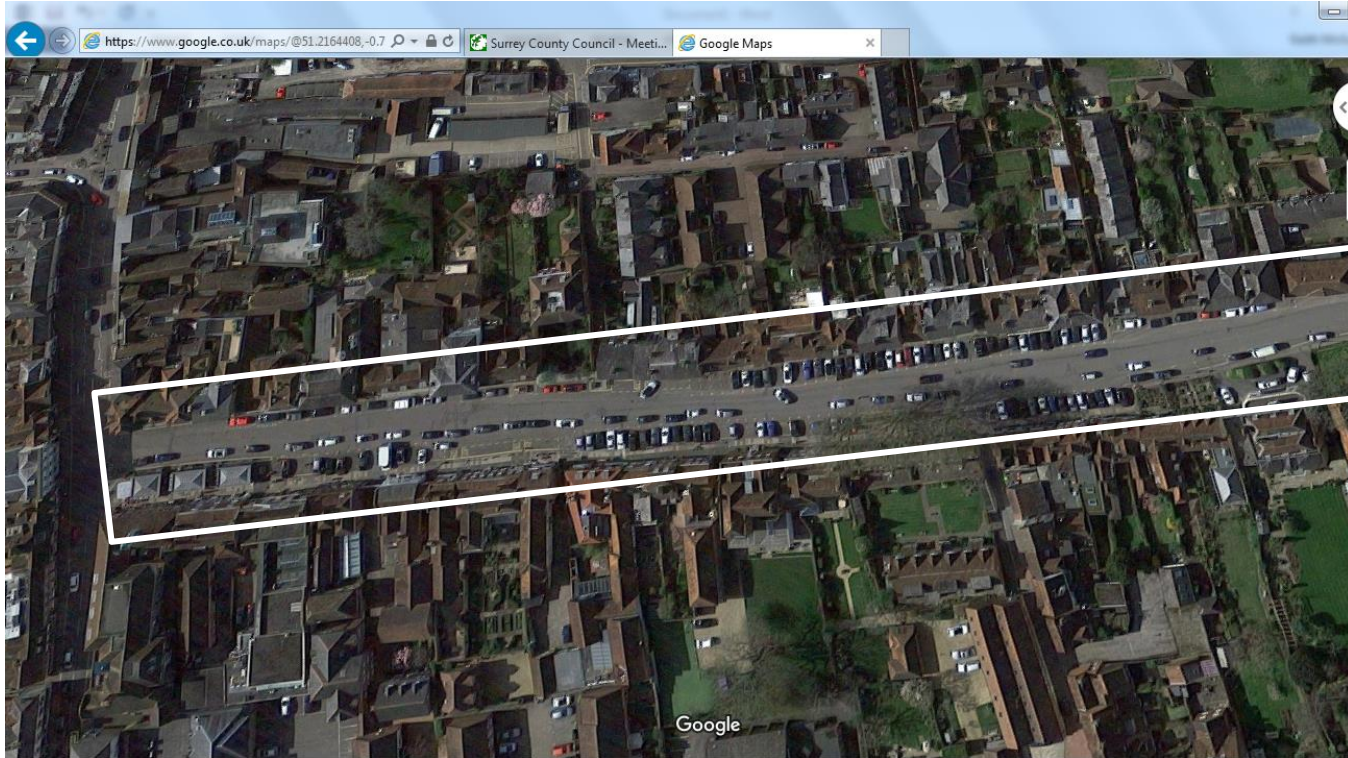
Background papers:

None

Appendix A

On-Street Pay & Display Parking Charging Implementation – Case Study

Case Study Area – Castle Street, Farnham GU9



Background

Farnham is a busy market town situated in the west of Waverley, close to the Hampshire border.

There are several off street pay and display car parks operated by Waverley Borough Council in the town centre. The roads in the town centre have a mix of waiting, loading and parking restrictions to help keep traffic moving but allow parking where there is space. There is a controlled parking zone covering most of the town centre and the railway station area to the south.

Previous Parking Arrangements

Castle Street is a conservation area and one of the key features of the town. It is wide and there are parking spaces on both sides. Castle Street has 99 on street parking spaces. Prior to the introduction of parking charges they were all dual use 2 hours limited waiting/resident permit holders.

Previous Parking Issues

- To avoid paying to use the car parks, cars would wait for spaces to become available on Castle Street and block through traffic, generally adding to the congestion in the town
- The 2 hour parking limit was difficult and time consuming to enforce. Civil Enforcement Officers had to log the location and details of each vehicle at regular intervals to determine whether it had overstayed. In addition vehicles could legally move from one parking bay to another to get around the 2 hour time limit

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- Resident permit holders were also unhappy with the situation. Complaints focused on not finding a parking space and being forced to contribute to congestion by joining other drivers waiting for spaces to become free

Proposed Solution

Developed by the Surrey Parking Team, in consultation with local members, residents and businesses, it was proposed to:

- **Allocate about 40 dedicated resident permit bays** on the part of the street further from the shops
- **Allocate 60 pay and display parking bays** in the remainder nearest the shops
- **Set charges at £1.40 per hour**

Charges for on-street parking are set slightly higher than charges in the town centre car parks in order to encourage visitors to go straight to car parks rather than circulate round the town centre. The on street spaces are usually the most convenient and the higher charge and shorter maximum stay reflects this and help to generate 'churn'

At the 16 March 2012 Waverley Local Committee meeting the committee agreed the installation of Pay & Display along Castle Street and other locations in the town centre, in order to increase vehicle 'churn' and lessen the opportunity for spaces to be monopolised.

Public Consultation Process & Member Involvement

The local county councillor was supportive of the proposals and met with local residents, business groups and the town council to promote the changes. Farnham has three county councillors covering the wider area of the town and all supported the scheme where possible.

The proposals were agreed by the Waverley Local Committee to go ahead for statutory consultation and this ran from 13 Jan – 10 Feb 2012 as part of the Waverley Parking Review.

Notices were placed in the Farnham & Haslemere editions of the Herald newspaper. Street notices were placed on all roads where changes to parking restrictions were proposed. As well as this there were letter drops, information put online, at libraries and Waverley Borough Council's offices. Local members continued to support the proposals in the area throughout the process.

Public Consultation Response

There were surprisingly few objections and many comments in support from local residents. The objections that were made involved concerns over:

- The impact on people on low incomes
- The impact on local business, stating that 'churn' was unnecessary
- That the money raised would go towards the deficit (at the time of the proposals) on parking enforcement

Proposal	Supportive Response	No. of Objections	Decision
Installation of Pay & Display meters on Castle Street and around the town centre with charge set at £1.40 p/hr	28	2	Proceed as advertised

Implementation & Public Response

With much of Farnham town centre is a conservation area, the locations for pay and display machines were agreed with the borough conservation officer. Signs were placed as discreetly as possible using existing street furniture where possible. Only 2 pay and display machines were installed in Castle Street to service approximately 60 spaces. At the time there was concern this would be too few but there has been no adverse reaction from visitors.

There has been very little adverse reaction to the parking charges since they were introduced. It was immediately noticeable on their introduction that spaces were more readily available in both the pay and display and resident permit bays. Traffic congestion has been reduced by reducing the number of drivers waiting for spaces. This has helped reduce vehicle emissions and improve air quality in the immediate area. Many businesses have reported better accessibility for their customers.

Operational Improvements

Guildford Borough Council enforces on street parking in Farnham for Surrey County Council.

Prior to charging –

Enforcement officers would spend approximately **45 mins initially patrolling Castle Street to log details of vehicles**. They would **then return around 2 hrs later. Re-checking bays would take around 1 ¼ hrs**. This would be **repeated two or three times a day**.

Total Enforcement Time per day pre-charging: 2½ – 3½ hrs

After charging –

Enforcement officers attend to **patrol for between 15 – 20 mins to check vehicles** for valid and clearly displayed tickets. This is **repeated five or six times a day**.

Total Enforcement Time per day post charging: 1½ – 2 hrs

Net result –

The **time saving has allowed the number of enforcement visits** to increase. Whilst this **has increased the cost** of enforcement, the **cost is offset from issuing of penalties and the Pay & Display revenue**. It also makes the enforcement officers more visible than previously which **benefits resident permit holders. This is by ensuring that the residents bays are more regularly monitored** stopping them being used by non-permit holders.

Financial Information

- Installation Costs

5 Solar powered pay and display machines were installed in the town centre, which includes the 2 placed on Castle Street, at a cost of approximately £30,000

- Other Costs

Signing, road marking and legal costs were approximately £7,000

- Ongoing Costs

Servicing the Pay & Display machines costs less than £10,000 per year (covering maintenance and cash collection) and is paid from revenue generated

- Revenue generated

Revenue from the parking charges has averaged £125,000 per year since its introduction. Some specific figures are below:

Year	Pay & Display Revenue	Net Total Parking Revenue*	Local Committee Share
2013/14	£141,999	£188,770	£113,262
2014/15	£129,486	£195,480	£117,288

*Net figure shows cost of operating parking management against revenue from resident permits, penalty charges and pay & display.

Local Decision Making

The Waverley Local Committee agreed to ring-fence any surplus generated from the on-street parking charges in the town centre to transport improvements in the Farnham area. This money has been allocated towards promoting sustainable travel alternatives for the town.

Summary

- **Political support is critical** to successful implementation of parking schemes, **by promoting and raising understanding** with residents, businesses, parish and town councils, chambers of commerce etc both **prior to decisions** being taken **on the introduction of the scheme** and on its **subsequent implementation**
- **Parking charges can improve access** to shops and facilities and **do not damage local economies**, as many people fear
- **Parking charges can help reduce congestion** and unnecessary journey around town centres, **by creating 'churn' and discouraging waiting**
- **Surpluses are reinvested locally** to improve the highway network and the public realm, **with decisions made by local members**