

**AGENDA MANAGEMENT SHEET**

**Name of Committee** Rugby Area Committee

**Date of Committee** 23rd November 2006

**Report Title** Decriminalisation of Parking Enforcement

**Summary** Following the introduction of decriminalisation of parking enforcement in Rugby Borough a number of issues have been raised, some of which cannot wait until the formal review of the scheme in 12 months time. The report gives an update on the present situation and the actions proposed. It also gives some further background to the rationale adopted in developing the parking restrictions across the Borough.

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**Would the recommended decision be contrary to the Budget and Policy Framework?** Yes/No

**Background Papers** None

**CONSULTATION ALREADY UNDERTAKEN:-** *Details to be specified*

Other Committees  Rugby Area Committee 10th May 2006

Local Member(s)  Councillor Ms K King - I am very keen as a local Member to work closely with officers of Warwickshire County Council and Rugby Borough Council to ensure that the scheme is of benefit to residents.  
(With brief comments, if appropriate) Councillor I Smith  
Councillor J Vereker – agreed.  
Councillor J Wells

Other Elected Members  .....

Cabinet Member  Councillor M Heatley – for information  
(Reports to The Cabinet, to be cleared with appropriate Cabinet Member)

- Chief Executive  .....
- Legal  I Marriott - agreed
- Finance  .....
- Other Chief Officers  .....
- District Councils  .....
- Health Authority  .....
- Police  .....
- Other Bodies/Individuals  .....

**FINAL DECISION**                      **YES/NO**      *(If 'No' complete Suggested Next Steps)*

**SUGGESTED NEXT STEPS :**

*Details to be specified*

- Further consideration by this Committee  Further reports as required
- To Council  .....
- To Cabinet  To consider a policy on the formalising footway parking – date to be agreed
- To an O & S Committee  .....
- To an Area Committee  .....
- Further Consultation  Further reports as required

## Rugby Area Committee - 23rd November 2006

### Decriminalisation of Parking Enforcement

#### Report of the Strategic Director for Environment and Economy

##### **Recommendation**

That the Committee notes and endorses the short, medium and longer term actions detailed in the report.

## **1. Introduction**

- 1.1 Members will be aware that decriminalisation of parking enforcement (DPE) was introduced in Rugby Borough on 2nd October. The County Council is committed to carrying out a comprehensive review of the overall scheme in 12 months time. However, there are a number of issues which have been raised with us, some of which need more urgent attention.
- 1.2 As part of the DPE scheme extensions to the residents parking scheme have been introduced as well as on-street pay and display arrangements in the town centre. Proposals for these arrangements were advertised earlier this year and the comments and objections received were considered by Rugby Area Committee at its meeting in May.
- 1.3 This report gives an update on the present situation and the actions proposed. It also gives some further background to the rationale adopted in developing the parking restrictions across the Borough.

## **2. Residents Parking Scheme**

- 2.1 Across the County there are competing demands for on-street parking spaces particularly in residential streets close to town centres and other places like railway stations. This demand is for both long and short stay periods. The residents parking scheme which operates in Warwickshire offers a degree of priority to residents by introducing a time-limited waiting restriction for which resident permit holders are exempt. The scheme operates in Rugby with a one hour restriction between 8am and 8pm, Monday to Saturday in four separate zones. The scheme does not guarantee a parking space but, with effective enforcement, residents now have many more opportunities during these times to find somewhere to park within their zone relatively near to where they live.

- 2.2 Residents-only parking is not County Council policy but a residents-only scheme has operated in Elsee Road for a number of years.
- 2.3 Many roads in the Borough are not wide enough along their entire length to accommodate parking on both sides. With increased car ownership the demand for parking in residential areas in the evenings, overnight and at weekends often exceeds the capacity of legitimate spaces available. In recent years this has led to a significant amount of illegal parking on footways (either wholly or partly on the carriageway and partly on the footway) and around the radii of junctions. The police have taken very limited enforcement action to discourage this. However, we are now in position to deal more positively with many of these traffic management and road safety issues but, only in those locations where there is a single or double yellow line where the restriction applies to the carriageway and the adjacent verge or footway. Elsewhere the responsibility for enforcement of parking on footways remains with the police either as a specific offence of driving on a footway or where the parking is causing an obstruction.
- 2.4 Although the opportunity was taken wherever possible to maximise the amount of legitimate parking spaces in residential areas it is accepted that there is now less parking availability in some streets than was previously the case. As a result there have been a number of requests for the County Council, as Highway Authority, to consider formalising parking on footways by introducing Footway Parking Orders. A key objective in the County Council's Local Transport Plan is to improve the quality of the walking environment. As a matter of policy and principle therefore, we should be working towards eliminating footway parking whenever possible. Footway parking can often represent a severe road safety problem particularly to the elderly, disabled, partially sighted and parents with prams and push chairs. In addition footways are regularly used to accommodate utility services. They are not constructed to the same standards as carriageways and therefore both the surface and any underground services are liable to be damaged by vehicle encroachment. Although there are some locations in the County where a special case for footway parking has been made out, there is no specific policy covering this matter and it is proposed that the views of Cabinet be sought before taking any further action in Rugby Borough.
- 2.5 In the meantime, following representations from residents and local Members, arrangements are in hand for proposals to extend eligibility to Clifton Road residents for permits to park in Zone R3 to be advertised together with proposals for some changes to the parking arrangements in Bath Street, Elsee Road, Little Pennington Street and Pinders Lane. In addition, to overcome difficulties for people attending the Rugby Parents Centre (where many of the sessions last for longer than 1 hour) we are intending to advertise proposals to extend the waiting period to 2 hours in the restricted streets to the north of (and including) Craven Road and Cross Street. Any objections received will either be reported to the Area Committee for a decision or, in the case of minor changes, to the Strategic Director if the local Member(s) does not object.
- 2.6 Two petitions have been received requesting a review of the waiting restrictions in Lower Hillmorton Road. Representations have also been received from residents in King Edward Road, Manor Road, Murray Road and Wood Street to re-consider the parking and/or traffic management arrangements in these roads.

The suggestions from residents include the introduction of one-way traffic and a review of the traffic calming which might allow additional parking spaces to be created. In addition it has been suggested that the customers and staff of some businesses which are located in residential areas may be disadvantaged by the 1 hour waiting limit. Consideration is being given to the possibility of some form of "Customer Permit" but, this and the other issues will require more detailed investigation before any action can be taken.

### **3. Parking Restrictions at Junctions**

- 3.1 A consistent approach has been applied in introducing double yellow lines as junction protection in the interest of traffic management and road safety:-
- (i) In the majority of residential streets 10 metres of no waiting at any time (double yellow lines) has been introduced. This is the minimum distance specified in the highway code and is designed to ensure adequate visibility when entering or exiting the junction and sufficient road space to facilitate the movement of larger vehicles.
  - (ii) At junctions with major roads (e.g. Clifton Road) this is extended to 15 metres to allow vehicles from the major road to enter the side road and not stack on the major road.
  - (iii) On the exit from a one-way street the distance is reduced to 5 metres.
  - (iv) At junctions where there are kerb build outs the double yellow lines extend to match the build out only.
- 3.2 However, there have been a number of requests received to reduce the length of restrictions wherever possible. These are actively being considered by officers and the local Member(s). Any changes will need to be advertised before they can be implemented and this will be carried out as soon as possible.

### **4. Enforcement**

- 4.1 The responsibility for managing on-street enforcement now rests with Rugby Borough Council acting as Agents of the County Council. The role of the Parking Attendants is to enforce the restrictions imposed by the Traffic Regulation Orders agreed by Rugby Area Committee. These restrictions can only be introduced or varied by advertising proposed changes.
- 4.2 The County Council can seek to influence the level and frequency of enforcement and one of our objectives is to ensure that this is seen as being fair and equitable. Although, ultimately, this is entirely an operational matter for the Borough Council, there will be regular liaison meetings between County and Borough officers to monitor the effectiveness of the scheme and, adopting a priority based approach, to try and resolve any issues which may arise.
- 4.3. There have been initial discussions between County and Borough officers and local Members in relation to enforcement. There has been a relatively relaxed regime across the Borough in the early stages. Serious infringements have

been enforced but, generally, Parking Attendants have been issuing warning notices rather than penalty charge notices.

- 4.4. With regard to those areas where follow up action has been identified, and until these matters have been resolved, the Borough Council has advised that enforcement will generally be carried out during the working day (defined broadly as 9am to 5pm) but, outside these hours and at weekends a more pragmatic approach will be adopted providing that vehicles are not parked at junctions or in other locations where they are causing a serious obstruction. It is important that the right message is given out in relation to the “pragmatic approach” and that drivers do not perceive that this means they can park with impunity in certain areas. This would have a serious detrimental affect on residents and would fail to achieve the objectives of the scheme.

## **5. Conclusion**

- 5.1 The new parking regime is significantly different to the situation which has prevailed for a number of years and the initial reactions are not totally unexpected. It has always been recognised that parking patterns would change and that the scheme will need a period of settling in.
- 5.2 Further reports will be presented to Rugby Area Committee on the scheme in due course.

JOHN DEEGAN  
Strategic Director for Environment and Economy  
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7th November 2006