

## **Prosperous Staffordshire Select Committee – 13<sup>th</sup> September 2016**

### **Briefing Report: On-street Parking Enforcement and Residents Parking Zones**

#### **Purpose**

This briefing paper has been prepared to help identify lines of enquiry for the scrutiny of parking enforcement activity during December 2016.

#### **Responsibilities for parking enforcement**

Since the decriminalisation of parking enforcement in 2008 enforcement powers have been shared between local authorities and the police.

Prior to April 2015 on-street enforcement was carried out on behalf of the County Council by each of the eight district/borough councils.

In April 2015 arrangements changed and the County Council entered into a single arrangement with Stoke-on-Trent City Council for enforcement and back office services.

The district/borough councils remain responsible for off-street enforcement in their public car parks with four districts using the services of Stoke-on-Trent City Council for enforcement and all using the back office services of Stoke for processing of penalty charge notices.

As part of this change the County Council now deals with all enquiries for on-street parking and enforcement. A new series of parking pages on the County Councils website was introduced in April 2015 including frequently asked questions and payment system for on-street penalty charge notices.

Staffordshire County Council is able to carry out enforcement where parking restrictions exist. The Council can also issue penalty charge notices to vehicles that are blocking pedestrian/disabled crossing points and vehicle access crossings where other parking restrictions do not exist. Enforcement of vehicle access crossings is only carried out at the request of and, with the property owner's permission. Enforcement can also be carried out where vehicles are double parked i.e. parked more than 50cm from the kerb.

Any issues of vehicles parked dangerously or causing an obstruction remains a matter for the police. The police can also address offences of wilful and unnecessary obstruction on the road or pavement, the blocking of pedestrian/disabled crossing points and vehicle access crossings, dangerous parking on chevrons at pedestrian crossings etc., and issues of double parking or parking too close to a junction.

With the exception of dropped kerb crossing points and double parking local authorities can only enforce where parking restrictions exist and Staffordshire County Council is therefore able to enforce the following:

- limited waiting bays
- double/single yellow lines
- on street pay and display bays
- resident parking zones
- disabled parking bays
- loading bays
- bus stops/stands
- taxi bays
- school keep clears (where a traffic regulation order is in place)
- clearways
- dropped kerb access (written consent from the property owner is required)
- double parking (vehicles parked too far from the kerb line)
- pedestrian crossings (also police)

In addition the above civil parking offences, the police are responsible for enforcement of the following:

- Illegal obstructions and dangerous parking
- double white lines (moving traffic offence to restrict overtaking)
- obstruction – e.g. pavements with no parking restrictions
- dangerous parking where there are no restrictions in place, for example, on bends, brows of hills and junctions
- dropped kerb access (where obstruction is being caused - see also local authority powers)
- double parking (where obstruction is being caused - i.e. vehicles parked obstructively either side of the road – see also local authority powers)
- one-way traffic
- box junctions
- access only
- white-hatched areas
- pedestrian crossings (also local authority)

### **Clear Streets – Civil Parking Enforcement**

Each year the County Council is required to prepare an annual report on civil parking enforcement. The report for the first year of the new arrangement is currently being prepared and will be brought to a future meeting of the Committee.

Some headline results for this year are:

Public satisfaction with measures to tackle inconsiderate parking continues to improve (annual NHT Public Satisfaction Survey) have slightly improved 44.4% in 2015 compared to 42.6% in 2014

The level of Penalty Charge Notices issued in 2015/16 decreased compared to 2014/15 with 19,763 issued compared with 21,261 in 2014/15.

The percentage of Penalty Charge Notices issued for which payment has been received, has increased (75% in 2015/16 compared to 72% in 2014/15). Over 82% of Penalty Charge Notices payments received are paid for at the discounted rate.

26% of Penalty Charge Notices issued receive representations

Of those Penalty Charge Notices that receive representation, 42% are cancelled in accordance with the Policy for the Processing of Penalty Charge Notices. The majority of cancellations are related to failure to correctly display blue badges or paid for parking tickets.

Less than 1 in 1,000 tickets are referred to appeal at the Traffic Penalty Tribunal with only 9 cases allowed demonstrating that good policies are in place, good decisions are being made locally by enforcement staff during representations to Stoke-on-Trent City Council Parking service and by County Council officers. 261,807 observations/visits were carried out. 10,098 enquiries dealt with by the contact centre (July 2015-March 2016). Approximately 500 enquiries/requests for enforcement were dealt with by the County Councils Clear streets team each month.

## **Residents' Parking Zones**

Before decriminalised parking enforcement (DPE)/civil parking enforcement (CPE) the County Council was unable to introduce Permit Parking Schemes as they required high levels of enforcement that the Police were unable to supply. With the introduction of DPE/CPE, the County Council was able to develop a policy to determine the selection, type, operational constraints and terms and conditions for the introduction of these permitted parking schemes and the Policy and Guidelines for Residents Parking was developed for that purpose.

The intention of a Residents' Parking Zone (RPZ) is to give residents priority and manage non-residents parking in the zone. The introduction of a scheme does not mean that residents have their own parking spaces, nor does it guarantee every householder a parking space within the zone at all times.

In 2013 the Joint Staffordshire Parking Board recommended the introduction of additional guidelines for the development of an RPZ focussed on the development of the role of a "Local Champion" who has a key role in demonstrating that there is majority support and acting as a link between the traffic regulation team and residents and businesses within the zone. This approach supports localism and the Local Champion could, for example be a resident, the local County Councillor or a member of the district, parish or town council.

There is currently 6 Residents Parking Zone in operation across the county at the following locations. Together over 475 properties are covered by the various zones with 470 permits being issued in a typical year.

- Victoria Street, Cannock ( 25 Premises)

- Lombard Street, Lichfield (34 Premises)
- Castletown, Stafford (159 Premises)
- Vessey Terrace (and surrounding streets), Newcastle (200 Premises)
- High Green, Brewood, South Staffordshire. (9 Premises)
- Cherry St & Cross St, Tamworth. (48 Premises)
- Since April 2015 the following new zones have been introduced
- Cherry St & Cross St, Tamworth. (48Premises)

Based on the priorities previously agreed by the eight district local parking committees the following zones are either currently under development or have not been progressed. This is generally due to either not obtaining the required level of support or other technical issues such as suitability e.g. inadequate number of spaces.

### **Zones under development:**

- Victoria Road area, Tamworth (172 premises, estimated date of introduction winter 2016/17)
- Queen's Hospital area, Burton upon Trent (663 premises, estimated date of introduction summer 2017 )
- Forebridge west, Stafford (226 premises, estimated date of introduction winter 2016)
- Forebridge east, Stafford (370 premises, estimated date of introduction spring 2017)
- Brunswick Terrace, Stafford ( 47 premises, estimated date of introduction summer 2017)
- Dunkirk / Stanier area Newcastle under Lyme ( 446 premises, estimated date of introduction autumn 2017)

### **Zones that have not been progressed**

Newhall Street, Cannock (143 Premises). During the initial design stage of the scheme it became evident that there was a considerable lack of road space available for parking when considering the number of vehicles that the properties who wished to join the scheme owned.

Requests for the development of zones remain high with 15 requests received since April 2015. The County Council's highways team is currently resourced to be able to progress a maximum of two schemes in each financial year.

Since April 2015 permit types have been simplified and in July 2016 an online application system for permits was introduced making it easier for residents to apply for new or renewed permits and supporting the county councils shift to digitally enabled services.