

READING BOROUGH COUNCIL

REPORT BY DIRECTOR OF ENVIRONMENT AND NEIGHBOURHOOD SERVICES

TO:	TRAFFIC MANAGEMENT SUB-COMMITTEE		
DATE:	1 NOVEMBER 2018	AGENDA ITEM:	8
TITLE:	RESIDENTS PARKING SCHEME - UPDATE REPORT		
LEAD COUNCILLOR:	COUNCILLOR T PAGE	PORTFOLIO:	STRATEGIC ENVIRONMENT, PLANNING AND TRANSPORT
SERVICE:	PARKING SERVICES	WARDS:	BOROUGHWIDE
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1. PURPOSE OF REPORT AND EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 1.1 This report advises the Sub-Committee on the update to the online application process that has been available to residents for almost a year.
- 1.2 Appendix 1 - Discretionary Permits issued 1 November 2017 to 18 October 2018

2. RECOMMENDED ACTION

- 2.1 That the update on the online application process be noted;
- 2.2 That the Sub-Committee review the options set out in 4.3 in relation to temporary permits and if agreed to authorise the Traffic Regulation Orders to be updated as set out in 7.1.

3. POLICY CONTEXT

- 3.1 The proposals are in line with current Transport and Planning policy.

4. THE PROPOSAL

4.1 Background

- 4.1.1 Residents' Permit Parking (RP) was established in Reading over 40 (1976) years ago and the Council provide a permit scheme through its parking services teams within the transport service area.
- 4.1.2 The current RP scheme was approved by the Council's Cabinet in December 2010, this followed a review of the service undertaken in 2009-2010 and reported through Cabinet and scrutiny processes in September 2009, February 2010 and July 2010. A revised scheme was introduced in April 2011.
- 4.1.3 Further amendments to the RP scheme and permit management rules were taken through Cabinet, Full Council and Traffic Management Sub-committee (and formally Traffic Management Advisory Panel) meetings in July 2011, September 2011, June 2012, February 2013, June 2013 and January 2014.
- 4.1.4 A further review of the service was undertaken through the Council's scrutiny process at the meeting in January 2013.
- 4.1.5 The Policy Committee meeting held on the 30th November 2015, agreed to increase the 2nd and 3rd resident permit charges to their current levels of £120 and £240 respectively from the 1st February 2016.
- 4.1.6 At Traffic Management Sub-Committee meeting held on the 14th January 2016 it was agreed to amend the charges for second discretionary permits, 2nd to 4th charity permits and community agency permits to £120 from the 1st February 2016. Other amendments to the permit scheme rules and definitions were also agreed at that time.
- 4.1.7 At Traffic Management Sub-Committee meeting held on the 15th June 2016, it was agreed to set up a Task and Finish Group to review the Parking Permit Scheme.
- 4.1.8 The Task and Finish Group review of the permit scheme was concluded and at Traffic Management Sub-Committee meeting held on the 12th January 2017 it was agreed to recommend a charge for first resident's permits, discretionary first residents permits, Healthcare Professional, Medical Practitioners and Teacher permits. The recommendations were formally agreed at the Policy Committee meeting held on the 16th January 2017.
- 4.1.9 The Committees agreed the first permit charge would be £30 and apply from the 1st April 2017.
- 4.1.10 The Committee agreed to keep Carer permits free and 1st Charity permits free on the 9th March 2017.
- 4.1.11 The Committee agreed some minor changes to the scheme on 13th June 2018

4.2 Current Position

4.2.1 Previously there were 52 Residents Parking zones across the Reading Borough but this has been revised to the current 19 Residents Parking Zones.

4.2.2 The 19 Residents Parking zones across the Borough encompass all the areas and residential properties covered by the previous scheme but they now provide more space on-street throughout the larger zones. These changes are in line with previous decisions by Cabinet and reflect the outcome of the survey of all residents within the Residents Parking Scheme.

4.2.3 Online Applications

4.2.4 The Council introduced a new online permit application system from the 1st November 2017. The decision was made for residents to re-submit their proofs as some residents had not had any checks made since 2011.

4.2.5 Between 1st November 2017 and 18th October 2018 the Council has issued the following permits through the online system

- 8,402 Resident Permits Issued (32%)
- 11,641 Visitor Permits (books) (44%)
- 26,244 Grand Total Permits issued

Permit Type	No. Issued	% of Grand Total
Business	22	0.8%
Business Visitor	17	0.06%
Resident	8,402	32%
Resident (Offline)	160	0.61%
Visitor	11,641	44%
Visitor (Offline)	936	3.6%
TOTAL	21,178	84%
GRAND TOTAL	26,244	

4.2.6 A further 5,066 temporary/discretionary permits have been issued, please see Appendix 1 for details.

4.2.7 The split of the Resident and Visitor permits is set out below.

Permit type	Number of permits
1st Resident Permit	6,993
2nd Resident Permit	1,409
Total	8,402
Free Visitor Books	9,978
Charged Visitor Books	1,663
Total Visitor Books	11,641

4.2.8 Resident who are unable to apply online can still apply by post and the following have been processed:

- 160 Resident Permits Issued (1%)
- 936 Visitor Permits (books) (4%)
- 34 Carer permits (0.1%)

4.2.9 The following is a split between online and offline applications

- Online 95%
- Offline 5%

4.2.10 The online system has improved the efficiency of the application process, reducing processing time from 28 days to 7 days for resident and visitor applications.

4.2.11 It can take up to 28 days to review discretionary applications.

4.3 Options Proposed

4.3.1 Temporary Parking Permits

4.3.2 The Committee is asked to consider the use of Temporary parking permits being issued as a download option and/or without the need to display a permit. This will reduce the number of residents attending the Council offices whilst also accepting applications outside of Council opening times

4.3.3 Temporary permits are issued for 8-weeks to resident who have just moved into a property, changed their vehicle or have a temporary change of vehicle.

4.3.4 The current charge is £15 and normally only one temporary permit per resident is issued, as it felt 8-weeks is sufficient time to acquire the correct proofs for a full residents permit.

4.3.5 There are two types of temporary permits available - scratchcards (issued in person) and disc permit (sent from printers).

4.3.6 There were 3,294 temporary permits issued and these can be broken down as:

Permit type	Number of permits	Percentage
Temporary - In Person	2,843	86%
Temporary - Online	397	12%
Temporary - Offline	54	2%

4.3.7 Applications made in person at the Civic Offices are issued as a scratchcard temporary permit for the resident to take away and display in their vehicle for the 8-weeks. Clearly this creates a problem where the Civic Offices are closed (at weekends and bank holidays) and where it is more difficult for a resident to attend.

4.3.8 Where a successful application is made online a disc temporary permit will be posted, this typically takes 5-7 days to reach the resident depending on the post.

4.3.9 Successful applications made offline (sent via post) will be posted a (scratchcard) temporary permit, which takes up to 10 days depending on the processing and post.

4.3.10 Temporary permits that are issued as a download and/or without the need to display anything will provide instant permitted parking which overcomes the current limitations in times of real need by the resident thus giving a positive and flexible experience for residents. With this download option there will need to be an allowed period of parking without displaying anything where residents do not have access to a printer. There needs to be a period long enough to allow a resident without a printer of their own to gain access to such a facility either themselves or from the Council. Therefore, this period needs to be long enough to enable residents to have access to a public printer such as those available in a library.

4.3.11 This eliminates:

- i) Uncertainty and delay with postal applications and processing;
- ii) The issues of delay in physical permits being received in the post (as with online and offline applications);
- iii) Problems with permits falling down/details obscured/incorrect details scratched out.

4.3.12 The new permit technology simplifies the monitoring and enforcement of permits. The enforcement contractor will be instantly aware of the temporary permit avoiding the issue of Penalty Charge Notices (PCNs) where a problem as identified in 4.3.11 occurs.

4.3.13 Conversely all permit data is linked with the back office software system to verify compliance and ensure prompt action is taken against vehicles without a valid permit.

5. CONTRIBUTION TO STRATEGIC AIMS

5.1 This proposal supports the aims and objectives of the Local Transport Plan and contributes to the Council's strategic aims, as set out below:

- Providing infrastructure to support the economy.
- Remaining financially sustainable to deliver these service priorities

6. COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT AND INFORMATION

6.1 The Residents Parking Review included a survey of all 12,000 households within the current Residents Parking zones completed in 2010.

6.2 The Council has written to resident permit holders to advise them on the changes to the permit scheme charges (letter issued 10th February 2017).

7. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

7.1 The Traffic Regulation Orders will need to be updated to allow for download and/or non-display of a permit for a limited period.

8. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 8.1 There are none arising directly from this report. However, there are expected to be efficiency savings in reduced attendance at the Civic Centre by those applying for a temporary permit.

9. BACKGROUND PAPERS

- 9.1 September 2009, February 2010, July 2010 and December 2010, July 2011 and June 2012 Cabinet reports. January 2013 Scrutiny Review and February 2013 Full Council reports.
- 9.2 Traffic Management Advisory Panel June 2012
- 9.3 Traffic Management Sub-Committee reports January 2014, January 2016, June 2016, January, March 2017 and June 2018
- 9.4 Policy Committee report 30 November 2015 and 16 January 2017

10. APPENDICES

10.1 Appendix 1 - Discretionary Permits Issued

Permit type	Number of permits	Percentage
Carer Permit	60	0.23%
Carer Permit (Offline)	34	0.13%
Charity/Community Agency	20	0.08%
Chester Street - Traders	12	0.05%
Discretionary (Business)	14	0.05%
Discretionary (Nannies)	2	0.01%
Discretionary (Resident)	325	1.24%
Discretionary (Teachers)	60	0.23%
Foreign Vehicle	2	0.01%
HealthCare Professional Permit	263	1.00%
Landlord (Annual Permit)	8	0.03%
Landlord (Daily)	5	0.02%
Medical Practitioner Permit	40	0.15%
Special Vehicle Access	109	0.42%
Special Vehicle Permit - Daily	19	0.07%
Temporary	3,240	12.35%
Temporary - (Offline)	54	0.21%
Tradesperson (Annual Permit)	85	0.32%
Tradesperson (Daily)	231	0.88%
Visitor Charity/Community	38	0.14%
Visitor Discretionary Business	67	0.26%
Visitor Discretionary Charity	1	0.00%
Visitor Discretionary Resident	377	1.44%
Total Discretionary permits	5,066	