

METROPOLITAN BOROUGH OF WIRRAL

CABINET – 16<sup>TH</sup> AUGUST 2007

REPORT OF THE DIRECTOR OF TECHNICAL SERVICES

## RESIDENT PARKING SCHEMES – RESIDENTS’ AND LOCAL BUSINESS RESPONSES TO THE PILOT CONSULTATION EXERCISE

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### 1.0 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 1.1 This report provides Cabinet with a summary of the public opinion and level of support for the proposed implementation of a residents’ parking scheme following trial consultations with a number of areas.
- 1.2 This report suggests from the public consultation exercise, that there is no consensus of support in regards to the proposals. Consequently, the report recommends that no further investigations into the pilot areas be undertaken. Similarly, it is recommended that historic requests for residential parking areas, which are held on the list, be cleared and a list for such similar requests not be maintained.
- 1.3 This is a key decision and is identified in the Forward Plan dated August 2007.

### 2.0 INTRODUCTION

- 2.1 The responses to the public consultation were assessed against the criteria documented in the “Guide to Residents’ Parking Schemes”. This list of requirements were approved at the Cabinet Meeting dated 14<sup>th</sup> December 2006 later to be amended at Cabinet dated 28<sup>th</sup> March 2007. Appendix 1 contains a full list of the approved criteria.
- 2.2 The history of residents’ parking schemes on Wirral and the creation and maintenance of a list of requests for such measures has been subject to a number of reports over several years, the most recent being a report to Cabinet on 28<sup>th</sup> March 2007.
- 2.3 At that meeting Cabinet approved a number of proposed pilot areas for consultation as follows;
  - Acacia Grove area, West Kirby
  - Alexandra Road area, West Kirby (incorporating Banks Road area)
  - Brookfield Road/Brookfield Gardens, West Kirby
  - Atherton Street area, New Brighton
  - Barnston Lane area, Moreton
  - Grasmere Drive area, Wallasey
  - Probyn Road/Ponsonby Road, Wallasey Village

### 3.0 PUBLIC CONSULTATION: SUMMARY OF RESPONSES

- 3.1 Each resident and business proprietor within the pilot areas received a public consultation pack, which included the “Guide to Residents’ Parking Schemes” leaflet and a questionnaire.
- 3.2 **Table 1** and **table 2** below detail the number of consultation packs delivered to residents and businesses in each area; the return rate; level of support; and, the willingness to pay.

3.3 It is important to note that none of the pilot areas achieved the minimum return rate of 80% in support as required by the approved criteria listed in the previous report (appendix 5, point f) to suggest that it would be worthwhile investigating further.

**Table 1** Summary of responses from residents' to the scheme

Area	No. Delivered	Return Rate	Total Support (%)	Willing to pay set up cost (%)	Willing to pay for visitor pass (%)
Acacia Grove	150	52% 78	29% 44	25% 37	26% 40
Alexandra Road	757	43% 325	6% 44	4% 28	5% 41
Brookfield Road/ Gardens	41	68% 28	51% 21	46% 19	46% 19
Atherton Street area	193	19% 36	5% 9	3% 5	3% 5
Barnston Lane	99	22% 22	9% 9	7% 7	9% 9
Grasmere Drive	102	37% 38	18% 18	9% 9	13% 13
Probyn Road/ Ponsonby Rd, Wallasey Village	40	38% 15	20% 8	10% 4	13% 5

*Note: The percentages express the number of residents supporting the scheme as a proportion of all residents within each area.*

3.4 **Table 1** above clearly shows that there is an insufficient level of support for the implementation of residents parking schemes in all of the pilot areas (Cabinet will recall 80% as being the desired level of support). In addition, the requirement to pay for the scheme has dissuaded residents further from supporting the scheme.

3.5 As shown below in, **Table 2** local businesses were strongly against the proposals to implement residential parking. This is particularly true in the Banks Road area where a petition was circulated which gained over 4000 signatures from residents, employees and visitors.

**Table 2** Summary of responses from local business to the scheme

Area	No. Delivered	Return Rate	Total Support
Acacia Grove	25	10 (40%)	8%
Alexandra Road	68	39 (57%)	0%
Brookfield Rd/ Gardens	2	0 (0%)	0%
Atherton Street	10	2 (20%)	10%
Barnston Lane	4	1 (25%)	0%
Grasmere Drive	7	2 (29%)	14%
Probyn Road	0	N/A	N/A

*Note: The percentages express the number of proprietors supporting the scheme as a proportion of all businesses within each area.*

- 3.6 In general, local businesses expressed the opinion that a loss in free local parking would deter customers and affect the number of visitors to the area. Consequently, this potential reduction in footfall may cause detriment to the viability of the local economy.
- 3.7 The level of concern raised is evident in the organisation and distribution of a petition organised by the Banks Road businesses. This petition of over 4,000 signatures, has gained a significant level of support from local residents, visitors and employees in the area. Furthermore, the local awareness of this petition was evident with frequent references to the issues it represented within the returned questionnaires.
- 3.8 In addition to the petition; Wirral Council has been in receipt of correspondence from residents neighbouring the pilot areas, in particular, a petition of 37 signatures from residents of the Madeley Drive area, just outside the West Kirby consultation zone and a petition of 337 signatures objection to the scheme in the Banks Road area. Again, negative concern was raised regarding the knock-on effects parking restriction would have in their locality with the vast majority being opposed to the progression of the scheme.

#### **4.0 GENERAL COMMENTS**

- 4.1 An addendum to the questionnaire invited residents to provide any further comments. In summary there were several common themes, which were cited by residents and are briefly described below. Here points 4.2, 4.3 and 4.4 are the main reasons residents opposed the scheme, whereas points 4.5 onwards are alternative solutions that were suggested.
- 4.2 The most frequent comment was in regards to the “detrimental impact a residents’ parking scheme would have on local businesses” as described previously.
- 4.3 A second theme was related to the scheme not being beneficial to residents for reasons including: “Out at work during proposed scheme hours”; “non-car owner”; “there is no parking problem “ and “multiple car-ownership cannot be accommodated on street”.
- 4.4 Thirdly, residents argued that road tax permits them to park on street and therefore, why should they pay again for a liberty they already have. Similarly, residents were requesting whether non-car owners required to pay for the scheme and also if a discount would be applied to pensioner and those receiving benefits.
- 4.5 Many residents suggested that encouraging visitors and commuters to use the existing off-street parking facilities by reducing parking charges and erecting effective signage could alleviate the level of on-street parking.
- 4.6 A second suggestion was the implementation of a limited waiting (e.g. 20 minutes no return) traffic regulation order to discourage all-day parking habits of commuters who use the train station; those employed by local businesses; and the few that leave their cars whilst travelling to the airport.
- 4.7 Thirdly, a number of respondents feel that residents do not use their driveways to their full potential and would like to see on-street parking prohibited to maintain emergency vehicle access and to encourage residents to use their private driveways and garages.

- 4.8 In general, the comments suggest that on-street parking demand is not constant throughout the year but fluctuates according to the season, the weather and at times of local events and attractions.
- 4.9 In response to these suggestions Cabinet will appreciate the rationale behind the charging policy for off street car parks (4.5) and the signposting support for this strategy.
- 4.10 In so far as limited waiting is concerned (4.6) such a suggestion has some merit however the detailed investigative work and consultation / design of such schemes cannot, within current resources, be carried out at present.
- 4.11 The availability of driveways for some residents (4.7) can ease the parking situation on street should residents chose to use them however the issue cannot be forced. To introduce parking restrictions to prevent on street parking and a return to driveway parking does not in general solve the on-street parking problem. The emergency services may see it as beneficial; however, they have not cited incidents of blocked roads hindering their passage.
- 4.12 It is agreed that the seasonal fluctuations do affect the parking demand (4.8).
- 4.13 The various suggestions put forward by respondents via the consultation exercise can be absorbed into the Traffic Regulation Orders process. This has previously been reported upon and priority is being given to those locations in Wirral where positive inroads to a poor personal injury accident record can be achieved within the level of resources available. I can report that looking across all seven pilot areas each has a good personal injury accident record.

## **5.0 FINANCIAL AND STAFFING IMPLICATIONS**

- 5.1 Resources within the Departmental Revenue Budget have been used to undertake the consultation exercise and prepare this report. Further work on residents parking schemes would necessitate additional resources to progress.

## **6.0 EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES IMPLICATIONS**

- 6.1 There are no specific ethnic minority or elderly persons implications. Residents' parking schemes and changes to restrictions may reduce overall parking levels, making it more convenient for residents with mobility problems.
- 6.2 Vehicles with legitimately displayed blue (disables) badges would be exempted from the requirement to display a resident or visitor permit within a marked bay.

## **7.0 PLANNING IMPLICATIONS**

- 7.1 There are no direct planning implications under this heading. However, the control of parking may have implications in terms of regeneration of certain areas.

## **8.0 COMMUNITY SAFETY IMPLICATIONS**

- 8.1 There are no specific implications under this heading. However, residents' parking schemes generally assist residents to park near to their properties with perceived safety benefits.

## **9.0 HUMAN RIGHTS IMPLICATIONS**

- 9.1 There are no specific human rights implications arising directly from this report.

## **10.0 LOCAL AGENDA 21 IMPLICATIONS**

10.1 The issue and possible control of parking is part of a wider strategy to reduce reliance on the use of the motorcar. There are no implications under this heading.

## **11.0 ACCESS TO INFORMATION ACT**

11.1 Cabinet will be appreciative of the consultation exercise and the return of many completed questionnaires and a petition which have been used in the preparation of this report.

## **12.0 LOCAL MEMBER SUPPORT IMPLICATIONS.**

12.1 Although this report directly affects the following wards: New Brighton, West Kirby & Thurstaston, Liscard, Moreton West & Saughall Massie, Wallasey and Hoylake & Meols; due to the extensive outstanding list of requests its also has implications for all other wards.

## **13.0 RECOMMENDATIONS**

That

(1) owing to the threshold of 80% support for the implementation of residents' parking schemes from both the residents and businesses in the seven pilot areas not being met no further action be taken in these seven pilot areas;

(2) the historic requests for residential parking areas, which are held on the list, be cleared and no future list be maintained in the future;

(3) the Director of Technical Services write to all lead petitioners informing them of the decision; and

(4) officers be thanked for the undertaking of this comprehensive consultation exercise which has involved the distribution of approximately 1500 letters, leaflets and questionnaires.

DAVID GREEN, DIRECTOR  
TECHNICAL SERVICES

**CRITERIA FOR THE INTRODUCTION AND OPERATION OF RESIDENT PARKING SCHEMES (Approved by Cabinet 28<sup>th</sup> March 2007)**

Criteria

In deciding whether or not a scheme should be introduced, the desirability of the scheme should be measured against certain criteria guidelines to determine the need, the acceptability and its practicality.

- a. Not less than 85% of the available kerbside space is occupied for more than six hours between 8:00 a.m. and 6:00 p.m. on five or more days a week from Monday to Saturday, and a bona fide need of residents is established. At least 50% of the 85% occupied kerbside space must be non-residents.

This is to ensure that before a scheme is considered, it is shown that the existing spaces are heavily used by non-residents and difficulty is experienced in finding a space on most days of the week.

- b. Not more than 50% of the car-owning residents have or could have parking available within the curtilage of their property or within 200 metres walking distance by way of rented garages or other off-street space.

This is to ensure that schemes are only introduced where a real need can be identified.

- c. The normal daily demand for resident spaces can be met.

On roads with a carriageway width of less than 6.6m it is important to protect the remaining carriageway with parking restrictions so as to be able to maintain a relatively free flow of traffic and to protect the pavement (which is part of the highway) from being parked upon. This measure would be in the form of parking restrictions denoted by yellow lines and is recommended along one side of the road for roads supporting a resident parking scheme and having a carriageway width of less than 6.6m. This essential measure has implications on the ability of a road to meet the normal daily demand for resident spaces.

- d. The introduction of the scheme will not cause unacceptable problems in adjacent roads.

- e. The scheme is acceptable both to the Police and the operations of the emergency services.

- f. The proposals are acceptable to the majority of the residents.

There must be a minimum of 80% support for the scheme from all residential properties within the scheme boundary (including nil returns). This is to ensure majority support from residents for the introduction of a scheme.

- g. In areas where parking space is severely limited, the introduction of reserved parking does not seriously affect the commercial viability of the area.

- h. There must normally be a minimum of 300 residential properties within the proposed scheme. For schemes of less than 300 residential properties, there must be other waiting restrictions in the immediate vicinity.

This is to ensure that the enforcement of the scheme would be self-financing.