

HIGHWAYS, TRANSPORT AND ENVIRONMENT OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY
PANEL

TUESDAY, 24 JULY 2018

PRESENT: Councillors Hari Sharma (Chairman), Eileen Quick (Vice-Chairman), Wisdom Da Costa and Shamsul Shelim

Officers: Wendy Binmore and Jacqueline Hurd

APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Hunt and Sharpe.

DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Cllr Quick – Declared a personal interest as she lived in a road which had a parking permit scheme in place.

Cllr Shelim – Declared a personal interest as he had received visitor parking vouchers in the past but, it was more than a year ago. He also uses the residents permit scheme and holds a residents parking permit.

The Chairman asked Members if they had been subject to the Party Whip with regard to any of the items on the agenda. Members confirmed that they had not been subject to the Party Whip.

MINUTES

RESOLVED UNANIMOUSLY: That the minutes of the meeting held on 21 June 2018 be approved.

PARKING VISITOR VOUCHERS

Jacqui Hurd, Head of Library and Resident Services introduced the reports and provided Members with a summary of the parking voucher scheme. She stated there were 98 parking schemes within the Royal Borough and the amendments to the visitor parking voucher scheme were designed to protect residents and their visitors parking needs.

Residents were entitled to up to two parking permits depending on the size of their drives and any restrictions placed by planning s, and 25 x 2 hour free visitors vouchers. In addition 50 x 6 hours and 50 x all day visitor vouchers can be purchased annually. The recommendations meant residents would now be entitled to 25 x 6 hours and 25 x all day visitor vouchers. .

Currently, whilst the permits were renewed annually there was no expiry date on the visitors parking vouchers, and it was difficult to know how many were still in circulation. The paper explained to Members how to protect parking schemes and make it fairer to residents and their visitors to park.

The recommendations included changes to the annual allowance of parking visitor vouchers from the 1 August 2018, changes to the minimum order number of paid for

vouchers to 10 and then in multiples of five within the same order, and they introduced a 12 month expiry date on each paper voucher with a no refund policy on any unused vouchers.

Vouchers already in circulation would now expire at the end of March 2020 and there would be a large media campaign to notify residents of the changes to the system. Residents parking permits under the new proposals, would now require renewal every two years and due to the working partnership with NSL, a new online virtual permits scheme would be available to make it easier to apply for a permit, buy visitor parking vouchers. It is anticipated that the virtual permit scheme would be available from October 2018.

There were no additional costs for implementing the scheme and the new system would allow better monitoring of permits and visitor permits in circulation; it would also ensure there were parking spaces for those that were entitled to park by issuing visitor parking vouchers with an expiry date.

The Chairman stated the Borough was a unique and special place with Windsor Castle, Ascot Racecourse and Legoland, among other attractions. The Borough had to be smart and efficient in monitoring parking. He noted the Borough had contacted 28 other local authorities to gain information into the types of schemes that were being run elsewhere. He queried if anyone changed their car, how would the new system work and if the appeals system would remain the same or, if NSL would carry out the appeals against parking fines. He also asked if it was possible to attach a trailer to a car and park it in a regular space. He added he was very pleased with the paper and the proposals within it. The Head of Library and Resident Services confirmed that there was no change to who was entitled to a parking permit. In the main, a house would be entitled to up to two residents parking permit which depended on how many cars the owner/occupiers could fit on the drive. However, if a planning decision to remove rights to parking permits was made, then that dwelling would not be entitled to any permits. First Responders would still receive permits which was unchanged from the current scheme. Appeals would continue to be carried out by the Borough.

The Head of Library and Resident Services stated the Borough had contacted 28 councils and all of them had implemented different schemes with different charges. The information from those councils obtained enabled the Council to benchmark what type of scheme should be implemented in the Royal Borough. If a vehicle was bigger than a space (such as a lorry), then that vehicle might have to park elsewhere. If a vehicle is changed temporarily, then residents could apply for temporary permit; when someone moves house, the Borough cancels their parking permit and requests the permits are returned. Once the system moved to online permits, it would be easier to monitor.

Councillor Quick stated it was a very good paper and the changes would make it fairer to the residents so the system was not abused. The Head of Library and Resident Services confirmed that residents would be written to, to explain the changes to the scheme. Residents would also be able to sign up to an online account and receive reminders for when their permits expired. The Borough would also carry out a mail drop to make all residents aware of the changes and ensure they used any vouchers they had stored before they expired in March 2020.

Councillor Quick stated in her Ward, they had a parking scheme described as a residents administered parking scheme. The Head of Library and Resident Services

responded there were Council run schemes and resident administered schemes. Resident administered schemes were usually operated in private road; the Council tried to work with resident administered schemes where possible.

The Head of Library and Resident Services confirmed that resident parking permits were free of charge. There was no refund scheme in place for returning visitor parking vouchers. Vouchers were only £1 for six hour stays and £2 for all day stays, therefore, it was not efficient to give refunds due to the low cost of the vouchers. She added there was no scope for residents to obtain more permits than the stated limit. The Council had looked at schemes across the board and it was about what was fair. The scheme was a way of identifying and controlling what permits and visitor parking vouchers residents had. Without monitoring, the Council had no idea how many vouchers were still in circulation.

Councillor Da Costa stated some people were stockpiling visitor parking vouchers but, there were people that had busy social lives and the new allocation might not be enough and so would be negatively affected by the scheme. Councillor Quick stated most permits did not create any more parking spaces and most schemes only required a voucher for a very short time during the day, so those residents only required a permit to cover selected times. The Head of Library and Resident Services confirmed that in the main, it was not a 24 hour restriction. If people were parking to use trains, there could be a slot in the morning that required a permit, and one in the afternoon.

The Chairman said it was always busy and so the Borough needed to manage parking. He felt it was a generous scheme and residents could also use an advantage card to get a reduction in parking costs if they needed to. Councillor Story said he was trying to understand the practical significance of reducing the amount of vouchers allocated from 50 to 25. The Head of Library and Resident Services confirmed residents would still receive 25 visitor parking vouchers for free before they had to start paying for vouchers. Councillor Quick stated if residents would know what the scheme entailed as it would only be implemented if residents wanted the scheme in their street. There were several schemes where there was no parking from 11am to 1pm and then after that, no visitor parking voucher was required. The Head of Library and Resident Services commented that at present, there was no way of knowing how many visitor parking vouchers were used or how many were still in circulation.

Councillor Da Costa suggested the Borough should have put the system online first before implementing the scheme. The Head of Library and Resident Services responded that residents requested the Borough make the changes as quickly as possible. The Chairman stated vouchers would now get an expiry date and then the Borough would know how many vouchers were issued once the new scheme was implemented. Councillor Da Costa said when or if the scheme became unworkable, the scheme could be reviewed and amended.

The Head of Library and Resident Services confirmed to Members that when a car went into a garage for a short period of time, residents could contact her team and then be issued with a temporary parking permit they could print off to leave in their windscreen; that could be done via email so they did not need to go to the Town Hall or spend time on the phone.

The Head of Library and Resident Services explained to Members that the current visitor parking vouchers would expire in March 2020 and residents would be notified of the scheme when they contacted the Borough and there was also a mail shot planned

to be sent out to current permit holders. Something would also be published in the Around the Royal Borough publication which was distributed to all residents.

Members noted that the new parking scheme would not cost anything more to implement than the current scheme and the approximately £50k revenue raised by the scheme was reinvested into infrastructure for the Borough. The Chairman stated if residents were not happy with their parking scheme in their street, they could request a parking consultation and any amendments to the scheme could be made then.

The Chairman stated when a resident moves out, it should be insisted that they return their visitor parking vouchers and residents parking permit. The Head of Library and Resident Services confirmed that at present, there was no way of identifying what vouchers were in circulation but, it would be easier to identify once the new technology was bought in. The Chairman stated putting an expiry date on the visitor parking vouchers would give the Council greater control over who had them and how many there were.

RESOLVED UNANIMOUSLY: That the Panel endorsed the recommendations to Cabinet.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 1972 - EXCLUSION OF THE PUBLIC AND PRESS

RESOLVED UNANIMOUSLY: That under Section 100 (A)(4) of the Local government Act 1972, the public can be excluded from the remainder of the meeting whilst discussion takes place on item 9 on the grounds that it involves the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in Paragraph 1 – 7 of Part I of Schedule 12A of the act.

The meeting, which began at 6.30 pm, finished at 7.30 pm

CHAIRMAN.....

DATE.....