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EXECUTIVE BOARD – 6TH NOVEMBER 2013

LATE ITEM OF BUSINESS

REPORT ENTITLED ‘PARKING PERMIT CHARGES’

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Report of Director of City Development

Report to Executive Board

Date: 6 November 2013

Subject: PARKING PERMIT CHARGES

Are specific electoral Wards affected? If relevant, name(s) of Ward(s):	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
Are there implications for equality and diversity and cohesion and integration?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
Is the decision eligible for Call-In?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
Does the report contain confidential or exempt information? If relevant, Access to Information Procedure Rule number: Appendix number:	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No

Summary of main issues

- 1 Members will be aware of the significant financial challenges that the council faces and the need to look at all operational areas to improve our financial performance.
- 2 This report follows on to that previously considered by the Board on 19 June 2013 at which the decision was taken to proceed with the consultation and development of a proposal to introduce a charge for residents parking permits. Of the city's 320,600 households 16,200 are situated in a parking permit area with 10,500 holding free residents and visitors permits of which 21,374 individual permits have been issued. The current annual running costs of residents parking permits schemes is £164,870.
- 3 This matter was previously brought to Board Members in the context of the longer term future of this service activity, the unprecedented budget challenges and reductions in funding faced by the Council and noting that such charges are already levied by many other local authorities in order that they may consider whether it would now be reasonable to seek a payment for the costs of this service in Leeds.
- 4 A consultation was subsequently conducted which included a questionnaire to permit holders in all zones and focus groups of residents and non-zone residents. A total of 4030 questionnaires were returned together with 230 other responses. This indicated a widespread lack of support for this proposal and that the initial indicative charge level was too high. A review by the Scrutiny Board (Sustainable Economy and Culture), together with responses from sixteen Elected Members and three Members of Parliament have also raised concerns about the proposals.

- 5 Having considered the Scrutiny Board findings, consultation responses received and also taken account of the judicial ruling against Barnet Council's proposals to increase its level of charge for such a service, it is considered that the proposal to introduce a fee for residential permits should not be progressed further at the present time.
- 6 It is noted in that in the consultation findings a number of issues were raised with the present residents' parking schemes and that a significant minority of households indicated that they had alternative off-street parking provision as an alternative to permit parking. Therefore in considering future scheme proposals it is intended that greater regard given to the alternative options to ensure that schemes are only introduced where absolutely essential.

Recommendations

- 7 Executive Board is requested to:
 - i) note the content of this report and the outcomes of the consultation and survey on initial proposals for making a charge for residents parking permits;
 - ii) consider the comments of the Scrutiny Board (Sustainable Economy and Culture);
 - iii) not proceed further with the introduction of a charge for residents' parking permits at this time on the basis of the responses and issues raised through the consultation exercise, whilst noting the costs associated with providing this service and the Council's overall challenging budget position;
 - iv) ask officers to consider further the views of residents, with a view to re-evaluating the criteria used to determine residents' parking schemes, ensuring a tailored approach to address the different needs across the city, reviewing those schemes which are no longer deemed appropriate by the public and considering how further economies can be made in relation to this service.

1 Purpose of this report

- 1.1 This report provides an update on the progress and consultation on initial proposals for the introduction of a charge for resident's parking permits and seeks a decision on the further progress of this matter.

2 Background information

- 2.1 At their 19th June 2013 meeting members of Executive Board considered and approved a report granting authority to progress with the further development and consultation on an initial proposal to introduce a charge for residents parking permits. This report detailed the background to the residents parking scheme, its implementation and operation. The basis for the proposal was for a charge within an indicated range of £35 to £70 per annum. An initial indicative figure of £50 per permit was quoted.
- 2.2 The report also made proposals for reviewing the existing fee levels which are already in place for Business Permits and for the replacement of lost, stolen or damaged Residents and Visitor Permits.
- 2.3 The proposals had been developed in the context of budget pressures faced by the City Council as detailed in the annual budget report for 2013/14. As a consequence, members at the Council meeting of 27 February 2013 determined to review the charges for parking including within this scope Resident Parking Permit Schemes (RPPSs) where charges are not currently levied.
- 2.4 It is further noted that the Council reports income and expenditure under various headings as part of its annual budget reporting process; for 2012/13 the following was reported in relation to car parking:

- Turnover - £12.575 million
- Net surplus - £5.579 million

Total expenditure on Highway related activities for the same period was £10.436 million.

- 2.5 There are 320,600 households in Leeds, of which an estimated 16,200 are situated within areas having the benefit of a free residents' parking permit scheme. Approximately 10,500 of these eligible households have currently taken up the opportunity to have either a visitor permit or residents' permits for their registered vehicle(s) or both. An estimated 21,374 residents and visitor permits are currently in circulation.
- 2.6 The costs associated with residents parking schemes are currently covered from within the existing budgets of the Directorates concerned and currently residents' and visitor permits are issued free. Charges are however made for business and contractor permits and permits which are lost, misplaced, damaged or stolen. Within the current financial climate, consideration has been given to reducing costs or securing income to offset the costs incurred. Currently both Environment and Neighbourhoods and City Development Directorates have subsumed respectively, the increasing and not inconsiderable costs of processing permit applications and

investigating and providing schemes on site within their current, increasingly pressurised, budgets.

- 2.7 A Scrutiny Board review into Resident Permit Parking was conducted in 2008 and this recommended that the introduction of a charge be considered further. However, on the 1st April 2009 the Executive Board resolved that no action should be taken to implement the recommendation of the review. Subsequently, with increasing pressure on Council budgets an external review of City Development Directorate funding and budgets was conducted which included considering the potential to offset the cost of some of its services. This study identified the potential for charges for RPP to contribute towards budget pressures as is the case in the majority of the Core Cities group of large local authorities and many other local authorities (Appendix 1).
- 2.8 Therefore following the approval of the 2013-14 budget work has been undertaken to investigate the options for the introduction of a charge for all RPPs. As indicated above, with increasing pressure on Council budgets, as part of the pre-budget preparations the City Development Directorate commissioned an external review of the potential to offset the cost of some of its services for example highways, transportation and allied services, from external income sources. The potential to charge for resident permits was one recommendation.
- 2.9 Following Executive Board's approval to progress with the development of proposals for a residents parking permit charge, a detailed consultation to inform the preparation of the proposals was instigated.
- 2.10 A consultation exercise was conducted in July/August 2013 seeking the views of resident and visitor permit holders and members via a postal survey. There was a particularly high response rate, with 4030 responses received which equated to 38.4%. Not surprisingly there was strong opposition to the introduction of a charge for permits.

3 Main Issues

- 3.1 Parking permit schemes form a part of the overall suite of traffic management and parking control measures that are available to the Highway Authority. They are used as part of traffic management schemes to manage parking where high, non-resident, demand for parking in residential areas leads to problems occurring due to insufficient spaces being available. This has resulted in inappropriate parking behaviours, obstructions as well as the adverse impacts on access and the movement of traffic in local neighbourhoods.
- 3.2 The introduction of a charge or fee for the amenity of a residents parking scheme can be beneficial in several ways. Firstly, it can help to offset the costs for providing the service thus allowing budgets to be utilised in other priority areas of the service. Secondly, the presence of charge for a service, which is neither a mandatory requirement nor an obligation on the Council, can help to ensure that the measures are properly prioritised and targeted at a time when there is pressure from other potentially higher priority calls for services from the available highways and traffic management budgets.
- 3.3 Following approval by the Executive Board a full consultation was conducted seeking the views of approximately 10,500 residents. There was a particularly high

response rate, with 4030 responses received which equated to 38.4%. In addition to this, 196 written responses and 34 calls were received (Appendix 2). An on-line petition opposing the proposal was also established. The petition received 75 signatures.

3.4 The key findings are detailed below:

- The Residents' Permit Schemes are generally well viewed by residents with a majority (61%) feeling their scheme has made parking easier near their home.
- Over half of all respondents (52%) indicated that they fully support the scheme; however, 20% of residents responded that while they supported the schemes, improvements could be made. Of these, the highest proportion (25%) expressed a desire to see Civil Enforcement Officers enforcing the zones more stringently.
- When asked, 65% of respondents stated that they wouldn't like to see the scheme removed.

Permits

- For both Residents' and Visitors' permits, the number of respondents who unreservedly indicated they would pay for the permits were in the minority (Visitors': 17%), Residents': 15%). Those stating that they wouldn't opt for a permit were 34% residents and 36% visitors. More indicated that the decision to purchase a permit would depend on the cost (Visitors': 43%, Residents': 34%).
- 26% of those respondents who would choose not to pay for a residents' permit indicated that having no permit would have no impact on them as they could park on a driveway.
- There was some evidence that introducing a charge may increase the parking demand upon those areas just outside the permit zone boundaries. A quarter (25%) of residents indicated they would park outside the permit zone should they choose not to have a permit.
- In terms of costs, 58% stated the costs was too high whilst 16% of residents indicated that they are prepared to pay £35 per annum (16%) and only 4% that were prepared to pay more than £35.
- Only 27% of respondents agreed that charging households an increased permit cost for additional vehicles would be a good idea, whilst the highest preference against was 32%.
- With regard to visitor permits; When asked whether they would still chose to have a visitors permits 34% stated they wouldn't, whilst 43% stated it was dependent on the costs. When asked how this would affect having visitors, 42% stated their visitors would find alternative parking arrangements and 39% stated they thought it would reduce the number of visitors.

- 3.5 During the course of the consultation period on the 22nd July 2013 the High Court issued a ruling in the case of R (on the application of David Attfield) v London Borough of Barnet. This case had been brought on behalf of residents contesting Barnet's increase in the cost of residents' parking permits and visitor vouchers, in which the local residents argued that the price increases were not needed to cover the cost of running the permit scheme, as it was already in surplus. Previously at year end any surplus made from parking permit charges was transferred into the general fund which was used to fund matters such as highways and transportation investment.
- 3.6 Justice Lang found in favour of the residents and stated that the 1984 Road Traffic Regulation Act *"is not a fiscal measure and does not authorise the authority to use its powers to charge local residents for parking in order to raise surplus revenue for other transport purposes"*. The judge also commented that *"the authority has discretion to set charges to reflect its parking policies. It is not restricted to levying a charge only to cover the base cost of running the schemes."* In other words, by using the charges primarily to increase revenue, the Council went beyond its powers. It's one thing to have a surplus from the parking fund and to spend it on those matters set out in the legislation, but another to use the charges for the principal purpose of raising revenue.
- 3.7 The legal case has confirmed that budgeting for a modest surplus was permissible, provided this related to the lawful objective for which the charge was being levied as opposed to an intention to fund other transport projects. In considering the implications of this judgement the advice of the Council's legal officers, is that due regard needs to be given in the further development of these proposals.
- 3.8 A Scrutiny Board review into Resident Permit Parking was conducted in 2008. Whilst this review recommended that the introduction of a charge be considered further the subsequent Executive Board meeting on 1st April 2009 resolved, 'That the response of the Director of City Development and the Chief Environmental Services Officer to the recommendations of the Scrutiny Board (City Development) be noted and that, for the reasons now stated, no action be taken by officers to implement these recommendations.'

Consultation conclusions

- 3.9 The survey has shown overall that whilst there is no appetite from residents for the introduction of a charge for residents parking permit, around 50% of residents may choose to have a permit, depending on the cost. The majority made it clear that the level of charge set out in the initial proposals was unacceptable.
- 3.10 The survey has revealed that a significant proportion of residents already have driveways and other alternative locations in which to park and as such would consider these alternatives if they did not hold a permit. Also in some cases the original purpose of the scheme no longer exists and residents may now reconsider the need for such a scheme. In addition dissatisfaction with the level of enforcement that schemes receive was also expressed.
- 3.11 The survey also indicated that the majority of respondents were satisfied that the Visitors' Permits suited their needs either completely or most of the time with 60%

of those that answered the question stating that they may choose to have a visitors' permit dependent on cost. Of those that would not choose to have a visitors' permit most indicated that their decision may impact on streets outside the boundary of their scheme or that they would receive fewer visitors.

- 3.12 Although the majority of respondents said that they believed that visitors' permits should be cheaper than residents' permits it has to be recognised that there was a degree of self-interest influencing opinion as respondents without a residents' permit were significantly more likely to express a preference for visitor permits to be cheaper or exempt.
- 3.13 In line with the level of support for the current provision for visitors, there was no significant appetite to exchange the existing single disk permit for the scratch cards that are offered by other authorities.
- 3.14 A significant majority of respondents disagreed with any proposal to offer discounts or exemptions for low emission vehicles. Some felt that these car owners already benefited from a reduction in road tax.
- 3.15 It is therefore suggested that irrespective of any decision on the future of a charge for residents parking permits there is a case for reviewing the overall approach and policy for the circumstances in which a scheme is justified and the subsequent application of schemes.

Scrutiny Board review

- 3.16 The Scrutiny Board (Sustainable Economy and Culture) received a report at its 8th October meeting further to request for scrutiny made during the consultation. The Board's report is provided in Appendix 3.
- 3.17 Members of the Scrutiny Board in considering the matter where mindful of the wider budget context for considering the introduction of a fee for this service but where also aware of the wide scope and range of residents permit area in the city and the impacts of introducing a charge in this diverse group of areas.
- 3.18 It was also noted (as this report does) that in some areas permit schemes may have outlived the usefulness and require review. Overall the Board was of the opinion that other sources of additional funding should be considered as an alternative to these proposals, such as enforcement revenues.

Proposal

- 3.19 Since the time of reporting in June 2013, the budget position has not improved and with the subsequent announcement of the Spending Review the present pressures on the Council's financial position is set to continue. As such, it is considered that there has remained a case for evaluating the merits of a charge for meeting the costs of this particular service.

3.20 The forecasted costs (at 13/14 prices) for the provision and operation of residents parking permit schemes are as follows:

Current scheme administration

Direct costs e.g. employees £100,200

Indirect costs e.g. accommodation £ 8,140

Borrowing cost £ 56,530

Current costs **£ 164,870**

Note: Costs associated with enforcement of the scheme have not been included. Whilst substantial, these are broadly cost neutral.

3.21 Taking into account the budget pressures, it is therefore considered that in raising a proportionate administration charge to cover the cost of the permits can be appropriate and any charge levied would be compliant within the 1984 Road Traffic Regulation Act.

3.22 Based on the figures detailed in 3.21 above and on moving to a more sustainable and robust annual renewal it has been estimated that including additional administrative and ancillary costs of £60,940 per annum the total annual cost would be £225,810 net of any enforcement costs and excluding any on-costs for general traffic management, technical input to parking strategy, liaison and project feasibility. Therefore, allowing for a degree of drop-out identified from the experience elsewhere and derived from the survey response at this would place the cost of annual resident or visitor permit at £25 per annum, within the range discussed at the recent Scrutiny Board investigation.

3.23 Following completion of the survey and consultation and in the light of the scrutiny review the initial proposals have been reviewed and reconsidered. Whilst there is clearly a case for considering alternative measures to ensure the longer term and fundability of this service area, at the same time there a range of issues arising from the consultation process which give reason to reconsider the initial proposal to develop charging proposals.

3.24 In view of these finding it is therefore recommended that the present proposals should not be progressed at the present time for the following reasons:

- The majority of residents do not support the introduction of a charge
- Ward Member responses to the proposals have not been favourable either through individual responses or as result of the Scrutiny Board investigation.
- The diversity of areas, extent of schemes and wide range of purposes for the present residents' parking schemes has raised significant issues
- The likely level of charge would be such that it would be difficult to tailor at different levels to meet local needs and area characteristics
- Many schemes are driven by external influences such that both Members and residents do not believe it is appropriate for residents to be charged for what they consider to be the necessary mitigation

Permit Zone Management

- 3.25 A number of issues were made apparent by the survey which may have bearing on the development of future schemes, particularly given the wider context of budget pressures and sustainability given in the original Executive Board report.
- 3.26 The survey information indicated that in a few areas in the event a fee was introduced some residents may seek to petition for the review of their local scheme. It is also noted that in some instances there may already be good reason for schemes to be reviewed or even withdrawn. It is therefore worth noting that historically it has only been feasible to resource reviews of existing permit zone areas when there has been a specific need to undertake a review such as new development proposals and where a specific budget provision has been made available and that with present budget constraints that this situation can be expected to continue to prevail.
- 3.27 In terms of future scheme proposals, it is proposed that the assessment scheme used to evaluate proposals will be revised to ensure that a rigorous appraisal is made of all proposals to ensure they are robust and meet criteria for real and meaningful benefits both to traffic management and to the local community and to ensure all alternatives are fully evaluated. There will also continue to be extensive community consultation as currently takes place.
- 3.28 It is considered that by amending practice to strengthen the assessment process, the future development of residents' parking permit schemes can be targeted to ensure schemes are more sustainable and Directorate budgets can continue to be targeted at the highest priority sites and issues.

4 Corporate Considerations

4.1 Consultation and Engagement

- 4.1.1 An extensive consultation has been undertaken in relation to the proposals set out in the previous Executive Board report. This has included the focus groups and residents' survey described in Section 3. In addition members of the public and residents have also responded informally during the consultation period and their comments have been taken into account in preparing this report.
- 4.1.2 All Ward Members were previously advised by letter ahead of the June Executive Board meeting of the intended report and of the intention subject to approval to proceed with a full consultation on the proposal to which Member feedback would be welcome. This was followed up by an e-mail on 24th July advising of the consultation process and residents survey. Questions and comments were received from 16 Ward Members and 3 Members of Parliament.
- 4.1.3 The overall view that has emerged from the consultation is that a third of those surveyed were opposed to a charge whereas, a third indicated that their position would depend on the level of charge as described in Section 3.

4.2 Equality and Diversity / Cohesion and Integration

- 4.2.1 An Equality Impact Assessment has been prepared and forms part of this report. This was conducted as a workshop within the two Directorates concerned and with input from the relevant Equality Officers.
- 4.2.2 The Assessment indicated the positive impacts of a scheme to charge for Residents' Parking Permits as being:
- Disabled drivers will continue to receive free permits.
 - Increased opportunity for residents to be able to park close to their property which will be of more benefit to those with mobility issues, parent and carers and the disabled.
 - Service users will pay for the service they receive directly.
 - Visitor permits will still be available and will allow medical provision to continue which is essential for the elderly and the infirm.
- 4.2.3 The negative impacts were identified as being:
- Financial, especially those on low incomes. In this regard it would be the intention to pitch the fee levels for Residents and Visitor Permits at a level which should be affordable for all users.
- 4.2.4 The proposal for an administration fee, if approved and implemented, will be accompanied by detailed monitoring arrangements to determine the extent of any local area and distributional impacts within and across Wards after the applications for new permits have been processed and the new arrangements are firmly established.

4.3 Council policies and City Priorities

- 4.3.1 The Cross Council Priorities include 'Spending Money Wisely'. A proposal for charging for Residents' Parking Permits would support Directorate budgets and the continued delivery of key services by relieving the cost of managing and operating the RPPS from present budgets. Whilst not intended any surplus resulting would be held against the costs for the provision of traffic management services from which budget residents parking permit costs are met. However, in terms of the Best Council agenda the results of the consultation into this proposal have shown that in this instance both Members and residents have indicated that their view is that any beneficial effect on the Council's financial position is more than offset by the disbenefits to the local communities and residents affected.

4.4 Resources and value for money

- 4.4.1 The development costs of proposals for the introduction of a charge for Residents Parking Permits are being provided from within existing Directorate resources.
- 4.4.2 The proposals identified in this report represent a variation to the assumptions made for the current and future year's budget forecasts, being less than those included within the Council's approved 2013/14 revenue budget and leaves a £400k shortfall in Highways' income against the 2013/14 budget.

The proposals identified in this report represent a variation to the assumptions made for the current and future year's budget forecasts, being less than those included within the Council's approved 2013/14 revenue budget

- 4.4.3 It is noted that in their comments the Scrutiny Board suggest that revenues from enhanced enforcement of permit zones may assist meeting budget pressures. However, the evidence from the present enforcement suggests that this element of enforcement is broadly cost neutral and therefore a greater level of activity may not yield significant surplus income to meet the scheme costs.
- 4.4.4 The costs for meeting any future review and any resulting project development costs associated parking permit planning and strategy will need to be identified from within the Directorate budget.

4.5 Legal Implications, Access to Information and Call In

- 4.5.1 The report is eligible for Call In.
- 4.5.2 A report and an updated position following the consultation period was considered by Scrutiny Board (Sustainable Economy and Culture) on the 6 October. Members of the Scrutiny Board in considering the matter were mindful of the wider budget context for considering the introduction of a fee for this service but were also aware of the wide scope and range of residents permit area in the city. So that overall the Board's opinion that alternative sources of additional funding should be considered as an alternative to making a charge to permit holders.
- 4.5.3 The legal implications of any proposals for charging were reviewed, particularly in the light of the recent Barnet judgement and it was concluded that the proposals to charge are permissible under the terms of section 122 of the Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984.
- 4.5.4 This report is required to be considered at the November Executive Board in order that it can inform forthcoming 2014-15 budget round considerations; to enable the development of a forward strategy for the future management of Residents Parking schemes to commence; and to draw to an early conclusion the present consideration of this matter and provide feedback to the public.

4.6 Risk Management

- 4.6.1 The project has been managed in accordance with the corporate project management procedures by a joint service Project Board.
- 4.6.2 The main residual risks arising from any decision not to proceed with proposals to make a permit charge relate to:
- i) the consequential shortfall in service income and Directorate budgets and the resulting impacts on the ability to maintain service levels;
 - ii) the long term future sustainability and deliverability of parking permits schemes and traffic management measures; and
 - iii) any consequential need to undertake the review and amendment of existing schemes as a result of the survey and public responses which is not explicitly provided for in present budgets.

5 Conclusion

- 5.1 Leeds is presently one of a very few of the large local authorities (Core Cities) which does not make a charge for residents parking permits unlike many other local authorities. Other authorities introduced the charge from the inception of their permit parking strategy.
- 5.2 There are approximately 16,200 households in Leeds eligible for the permit; within these there are 10,500 households holding free Residents / Visitors parking permits with 21,374 in circulation. Given the Council's current financial position, the initial proposal recommended moving from the current position whereby Residents' Parking Permits are free at the point of delivery to a system whereby a relatively low charge is introduced to cover the costs.
- 5.3 The proposals have been considered in the context of the present £164,870 costs of the residents parking permit schemes in the city for a service which is provided on a discretionary basis and currently only serves around 5% of households.
- 5.4 Following the detailed residents survey, wider public comment and review by the Scrutiny Board (Sustainable Economy and Culture) it is clear that the proposals command little support from residents nor many Members with a range of issues and consequence being potentially attributed to any future charge. As a result of this and the difficulties of tailoring any potential fee to the diverse range of schemes and communities in which schemes operate across the city this report has recommended not proceeding with any charging proposals at the present time.
- 5.5 The survey has also revealed that a small proportion of residents do not regard the scheme in their area to be necessary and others indicate that they have the option of parking off-street and are not dependent on the residents' parking permit scheme for the securing of on-street parking. As such a focus will be retained in the future to ensure that new schemes remain well targeted and are introduced only where the beneficial effects for traffic and the amenity of on-street parking for residents are clearly established.

6 Recommendations

- 6.1 Executive Board is requested to:
- i) note the content of this report and the outcomes of the consultation and survey on initial proposals for making a charge for residents parking permits;
 - ii) consider the comments of the Scrutiny Board (Sustainable Economy and Culture);
 - iii) not proceed further with the introduction of a charge for residents' parking permits at this time on the basis of the responses and issues raised through the consultation exercise, whilst noting the costs associated with providing this service and the Council's overall challenging budget position;

- iv) ask officers to consider further the views of residents, with a view to re-evaluating the criteria used to determine residents' parking schemes, ensuring a tailored approach to address the different needs across the city, reviewing those schemes which are no longer deemed appropriate by the public and considering how further economies can be made in relation to this service.

7 Background documents¹

7.1 None.

¹ The background documents listed in this section are available to download from the Council's website, unless they contain confidential or exempt information. The list of background documents does not include published works.

As a public authority we need to ensure that all our strategies, policies, service and functions, both current and proposed have given proper consideration to equality, diversity, cohesion and integration. In all appropriate instances we will need to carry out an equality, diversity, cohesion and integration impact assessment.

This form:

- can be used to prompt discussion when carrying out your impact assessment
- should be completed either during the assessment process or following completion of the assessment
- should include a brief explanation where a section is not applicable

Directorate: City Development	Service area: Highways and Transportation
Lead person: Howard Claxton	Contact number: 0113 3950851
Date of the EDCI Impact Assessment: 16 January 2013	

1. Title: Residents Permit Parking Scheme Charging Implications
Is this a:
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Strategy /Policy <input type="checkbox"/> Service / Function <input type="checkbox"/> Other
If other, please specify
Is this:
<input type="checkbox"/> New/ proposed <input type="checkbox"/> Already exists and is being reviewed <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Is changing
(Please tick one of the above)

2. Members of the assessment team:

Name	Organisation	Role on assessment team e.g. service user, manager of service, specialist
Howard Claxton	LCC	Manager of the Service
Nick Hunt	LCC	Principal Traffic Engineer
Gillian MacLeod	LCC	Transport Development Services Manager
Mark Jefford	LCC	Parking Enforcement Manager
Steven Milligan	LCC	Processing & Systems Manager
Mary Levitt-Hughes	LCC	Equality Champion

3. Summary of strategy, policy, service or function that was assessed:

The impact assessment focuses on Residents Permit Parking Schemes (RPPS) and the equality implications that introducing charges will have on current and future schemes.

RPPS are usually requested by local residents who have their parking facilities compromised by an increased influx of additional commuter parking for example, in the vicinity of hospitals, cinemas, offices etc. Developing an RPPS takes a significant amount of time, as each scheme is unique to that particular area, and involves extensive consultation and planning. Leeds City Council has provided this service free of charge, however, other Local Authorities have been charging for this facility for several years.

The RPPS allows permit holders preferential treatment when parking in the streets around their homes and also gives them the option to apply for a visitor permit if required. Permit holders can park without restriction, but non-permit holders, may park for a limited period in some locations.

4. Scope of the equality, diversity, cohesion and integration impact assessment
 (complete - 4a. if you are assessing a strategy, policy or plan and 4b. if you are assessing a service, function or event)

4a. Strategy, policy or plan
 (please tick the appropriate box below)

The vision and themes, objectives or outcomes	<input type="checkbox"/>
The vision and themes, objectives or outcomes and the supporting guidance	<input type="checkbox"/>
A specific section within the strategy, policy or plan	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

Please provide detail:

The Council has, for numerous years, promoted the introduction of Resident Permit Parking schemes in areas where inconsiderate parking has created difficulties for local residents. The investigation, design, legal processes, implementation and processing of permits has been funded largely through existing Directorate budgets. Over previous years efficiencies have been made in the processes to reduce the costs at a time when numbers of permit parking schemes were increasing.

Due to the budget pressures on Local Authorities it has been necessary to review the services provided for which no charge is made to the recipient. Following an external assessment undertaken across City Development it was considered that the introduction of a charge for permits within resident permit parking schemes should be investigated.

This impact assessment considers the equality, diversity, cohesion and integration impacts of the introduction of a charge for permits.

4b. Service, function, event please tick the appropriate box below	
The whole service (including service provision and employment)	<input type="checkbox"/>
A specific part of the service (including service provision or employment or a specific section of the service)	<input type="checkbox"/>
Procuring of a service (by contract or grant) (please see equality assurance in procurement)	<input type="checkbox"/>
Please provide detail:	
5. Fact finding – what do we already know Make a note here of all information you will be using to carry out this assessment. This could include: previous consultation, involvement, research, results from perception surveys, equality monitoring and customer/ staff feedback. (priority should be given to equality, diversity, cohesion and integration related information)	
Service Background Residents Permit Parking Schemes(RPPS) have been provided by Leeds City Council free of charge, however, there are considerable costs to the Council to provide this service. To implement a RPPS, involves extensive traffic investigations, consultation and the legal process of the Traffic Regulation Order and is very resource intensive. Current requests for RPPS are placed within the traffic prioritisation process, however, the demands on this funding stream are continually increasing. As a result of an independent review of income within City Development, it was recommended that a charge be made for RPPS and this has been indicated in the draft Council budget. Various other Local Authorities have been charging an annual fee for this service for several years, for example, the Core Cities fees are as follows:	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Birmingham - City Centre (Jewellery Quarter) £210, rest of city currently first permit £15, second £30 • Bristol - City Centre £50, rest of city currently first permit £30, second £80, subsequent £200 • Liverpool - Free • Manchester - £116 - £347 • Newcastle - First permit £25, second £75 • Nottingham - Free except for students (£70) • Sheffield - First permit £36, second and additional permits £72 	

What we know

- There are currently 95 RPPS in Leeds, each covered by an individual Traffic Regulation Order (TRO)
- Currently there is no charge to residents for this services. There is a charge for business permits and for those permits lost or damaged.
- Presently there are 30 thousand permits in operation
- The split between resident and visitor permits is 49% : 51% respectively
- The permits are issued on a 3 yearly cycle
- Blue Badge Holders are not allowed to park in RPPS unless they have a permit.
- If a place of worship is included in the RPPS this will be taken into account as part of the Traffic Regulation Order process to allow non residents to park at certain times/days.
- New developments may impact on the surrounding residential areas resulting in the need to introduce a RPPS. This issue may be resolved in the short term by the developers covering the first 5 years charges and then it would revert back to the residents for subsequent years.
- As with all parking restriction orders, except "Clearways", there is the provision to 'drop off and pick up/load and unload' within permit areas. This enables these actions to be undertaken without the need for a permit and therefore provides for relatives or friends picking up/dropping off those who are elderly or infirm, delivering shopping or for parents and carers with young children.

Are there any gaps in equality and diversity information Please provide detail:

Action required:

- Agree and set the level of the charges
- Review the existing 'Resident Permit Parking Zones'

6. Wider involvement – have you involved groups of people who are most likely to be affected or interested

Yes

No

Please provide detail:

As the introduction of RPPS's is an ongoing process there have been a small number of schemes in progress where residents have previously been consulted on introducing a scheme when there was no consideration of a charge. These residents have been re-consulted on their view should a permit charge be introduced in the future. The majority of respondents have indicated they would not wish the RPPS to progress if a charge was made for resident permits.

Action required:

None

7. Who may be affected by this activity?
please tick all relevant and significant equality characteristics, stakeholders and barriers that apply to your strategy, policy, service or function

Equality characteristics

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Age	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Carers	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Disability
<input type="checkbox"/> Gender reassignment	<input type="checkbox"/> Race	<input type="checkbox"/> Religion or Belief
<input type="checkbox"/> Sex (male or female)	<input type="checkbox"/> Sexual orientation	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Other		

(for example – marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, social class, income, unemployment, residential location or family background, education or skills level)

Please specify: Residents on a low income.

Stakeholders

<input type="checkbox"/> Services users	<input type="checkbox"/> Employees	<input type="checkbox"/> Trade Unions
<input type="checkbox"/> Partners	<input type="checkbox"/> Members	<input type="checkbox"/> Suppliers
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Other please specify		

Only residents within existing RPPS will be effected by the proposals.

Potential barriers.

<input type="checkbox"/> Built environment	<input type="checkbox"/> Location of premises and services
<input type="checkbox"/> Information and communication	<input type="checkbox"/> Customer care
<input type="checkbox"/> Timing	<input type="checkbox"/> Stereotypes and assumptions

Cost

Consultation and involvement

specific barriers to the strategy, policy, services or function

Please specify

8. Positive and negative impact

Think about what you are assessing (scope), the fact finding information, the potential positive and negative impact on equality characteristics, stakeholders and the effect of the barriers

8a. Positive impact:

- Residents will still have the benefit of designated restricted parking provision within the vicinity of their own homes which will be of more benefit to people with mobility issues and parents with young children and the disabled.
- Zones will continue to have disabled parking bays that allow any blue badge holder who has a permit to use this facility.
- A concession is to be given to residents who are blue badge holders who will be exempt from paying the annual fee.
- Visitor permits will still be available and will allow medical provision to continue which is essential for the elderly and the infirm.
- Service users will pay for the preferential service they receive directly.

Action required:

- Develop communication strategy to promote the privilege of parking in a defined area close to residence and surety of having a parking space.

8b. Negative impact:

- Financially we would not have any concessions, which may impact on people on low incomes.
- Visitor Permits would be included within the scope of fees

Action required:

- After applications for new permits have been processed review the level of 'drop out', i.e. number of residents not renewing their permits, from the schemes and check against identified disadvantaged wards.
- The arrangements and setting of fee levels for Visitor Permits should reflect the range of potential users and households that would wish to make use of this facility.

9. Will this activity promote strong and positive relationships between the groups/communities identified?

Yes

No

Please provide detail:

Action required:

10. Does this activity bring groups/communities into increased contact with each other (e.g. in schools, neighbourhood, workplace)?

Yes

No

Please provide detail:

Residents would be able to consider the parking issue close to their properties and as a group seek alternative methods of control if a permit charge is not agreeable.

Action required:

If a fee payment is introduced, residents may request a review of the permit zone to be undertaken

11. Could this activity be perceived as benefiting one group at the expense of another?

Yes

No

Please provide detail:

Residents on the edge of the parking zones may have an advantage as they have the option of free parking relatively closer to them than other residents who live in the centre of the zone.

Disabled motorist with a blue badge will benefit if these are free from the permit charge.

Action required:

- After applications for new permits have been processed review the level of 'drop out', i.e. number of residents not renewing their permits.

12. Equality, diversity, cohesion and integration action plan

(insert all your actions from your assessment here, set timescales, measures and identify a lead person for each action)

Action	Timescale	Measure	Lead person
Recommend levels of the charges	Mid July 2013	Consider proposed fee for resident and visitor permits. Review other permit fees. Consider whether any concessions can be agreed.	Traffic Engineering Services
Review the Existing Resident Permit Parking Zones.	Ongoing after any introduction of permit fee.	Review of existing permit zones, subsequent to any introduction of fee, if requested by residents.	Traffic Engineering Services
Develop and implement a consultation and communication strategy	From June and then ongoing	To highlight the benefits to residents from the provision of designated and restricted parking close to their place of residence and the surety this gives of finding a convenient parking space.	Corporate Communication Services
Make final recommendations	November 2013	To make final proposals following review and consultation.	Traffic Engineering Services
Review the level of 'drop out', ie number of residents not renewing their permits, from the schemes.	Subsequent to all permits being issued.	Check against identified disadvantaged wards. Confirm levels of 'drop out' in disadvantaged wards, all RPPS's and for low emission vehicles.	Parking Services

13. Governance, ownership and approval State here who has approved the actions and outcomes from the equality, diversity, cohesion and integration impact assessment		
Name	Job Title	Date
Andrew Hall	Head of Transport Policy	13 May 2013

14. Monitoring progress for equality, diversity, cohesion and integration actions (please tick)	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	As part of Service Planning performance monitoring
<input type="checkbox"/>	As part of Project monitoring
<input type="checkbox"/>	Update report will be agreed and provided to the appropriate board Please specify which board
<input type="checkbox"/>	Other (please specify)

15. Publishing	
Date copy sent to Equality Team	
Date published	

APPENDIX 1

COMPARISON OF PARKING PERMIT FEES FROM CORE CITIES

Authority	Annual Resident Permit Charge
Birmingham	City Centre (Jewellery Quarter) £210, rest of city currently first permit £15, second £30
Bristol	City Centre £50, rest of city currently first permit £30, second £80, subsequent £200
Leeds	Free
Liverpool	Free
Manchester	£116 to £347
Newcastle	First permit £25, second £75
Nottingham	Free except for students (£70)
Sheffield	First permit £36, second and additional permits £72

APPENDIX 2

1 SUMMARY OF CONSULTATION ACTIVITY AND FINDINGS FROM THE QA SURVEY REPORT

- 1.0 On 19th June, the Executive Board agreed to use the proposals outlined in the previous report as a basis for consultation.

Pre-Consultation Focus Groups

- 1.1 Initial engagement took place in late June. Four Focus Groups were held with permits holders, as well as non permit holders from the Citizens Panel. The findings of the sessions influenced the questions that were included in the Postal Survey.

Postal Survey

- 1.2 The questions in the survey were formulated after discussion with permit holders as well as on the advice of LCC's Communication Team and the independent research company that analysed the responses.
- 1.3 Qa Research was engaged to help with the survey development and to collect the returned surveys to analyse and provide a comprehensive written report.
- 1.4 The survey was sent to all 10,500 current permit holders on the Parking Services database and was open from 15th July to 1st August. Due to the high number of responses completed surveys were accepted until 7th August.
- 1.5 4,030 (38.6%) surveys were returned for analysis.
- 1.6 It is important to point out that there have been fewer than expected returned surveys from some communities.

Summary of the Findings of the Postal Survey The Existing Schemes

- 1.7 The Residents' Permit Schemes are generally well viewed by residents with a majority (61%) feeling their scheme has made parking easier near their home.
- 1.8 Over half of all respondent (52%) indicated that they fully support the scheme however, 20% of residents responded that while they supported the schemes, improvements could be made. Of these, the highest proportion (25%) expressed a desire to see Civil Enforcement Officers enforcing the zones more stringently.
- 1.9 When asked, 65% of respondents stated that they wouldn't like to see the scheme removed whilst 23% said that they would like to see their scheme removed completely.

Permits

- 1.10 For both Residents' and Visitors' permits, the number of respondents who unreservedly indicated they would pay for the permits were in the minority (Visitors':17%), Residents': 15%). Those stating that they wouldn't opt for a permit were 34% residents and 36% visitors. More indicated that the decision to purchase a permit would depend on the cost (Visitors: 43%, Residents: 34%).

- 1.11 25% of those respondents who would choose not to pay for a residents' permit indicated that having no permit would have no impact on them as they could park on a driveway.
- 1.12 78% thought that the current way that the Visitors' Permit operates met their needs most of the time. 39% indicated that not having a Visitors' Permit would reduce their visitor numbers.
- 1.13 There was some evidence that introducing a charge may increase the parking demand upon those areas just outside the permit zone boundaries. A quarter (25%) of residents indicated they would park outside the permit zone should they choose not to have a permit.
- 1.14 In terms of costs, 58% stated the costs was too high whilst 16% of residents indicated that they are prepared to pay £35 per annum (16%) and only 4% that were prepared to pay more than £35.*
- 1.15 Only 27% of respondents agreed that charging households an increased permit cost for additional vehicles would be a good idea, whilst the highest preference against was 32%.
- 1.16 When asked about the possible use of Visitor scratch cards the majority of respondents (74%) indicated a preference to keep the existing Visitors' Permit disk.
- 1.17 There was majority support for exemptions for Blue Badge holders (58%), but little support for exemptions for low emission or small vehicles – 62% and 59% disagreed with exemptions for LEVs and smaller vehicles respectively.
- 1.18 When asked if there should be a charge for the second and third permit, the highest response came from the view that the additional permits should be the same charge as the first and second permit.
- 1.19 With regard to visitor permits; when asked whether they would still chose to have a visitors permits 34% stated they wouldn't, whilst 43% stated it was dependant on the costs. When asked how this would affect having visitors, 42% stated their visitors would find alternative parking arrangements and 39% stated they thought it reduce the number of visitors.
- 1.20 45% respondents felt that the cost of a visitor permit should be lower than the residents' permits.

Additional Feedback

- 1.21 In addition to the findings of the postal survey, comments were recorded from 229 individual permit holders and residents associations via email, letter, phone calls etc. A detailed account of the comments is available. The most common subjects are summarised below:

- Opposition to the principle of charging - schemes were established to alleviate parking problems that were not of residents' making. Organisations including Leeds Metropolitan University, Green Flag were named as significant problems as were some hospitals and railway stations.
- Some respondents said that their schemes were no longer necessary as the original causes of the problems no longer existed.
- Many suggested that the level of enforcement in their scheme was insufficient and that additional revenue could be made if enforcement was increased.
- A few pointed out that the proposed charges were equivalent to a substantial increase in Council Tax and that the proposed starting price was too high especially for those on low incomes etc.
- Around a dozen respondents took issue with the survey itself, did not provide sufficient opportunity to express a true opinion.
- There was significant opposition to charges from the area around Elland Road, as the scheme is only required on match days.

1.22 There has also been an online survey posted at Change.org that received 75 signatories in opposition to the proposal.

1.23 We also received a petition from some residents of the Claremont Area containing 77 signatures calling for the scheme in their area to be removed.

*It should also be noted that a small number of survey respondents took issue with the survey having the view that it did not provide sufficient opportunity to express a true opinion and that they weren't given the opportunity to select a nil fee option (Q7)

However, the overall response would seem to indicate that the majority of respondents have been able to make known their views clearly.

APPENDIX 3

Scrutiny Board (Sustainable Economy and Culture)

8 October 2013

Proposals to introduce charges for residents' parking permit schemes

Comments to Executive Board

The Scrutiny Board (Sustainable Economy and Culture) considered a report on proposals to introduce charges for residents' parking permit schemes at its meeting on 8 October 2013.

The Scrutiny Board would ask the Executive Board to take account of the following observations in deciding whether to take forward proposals to introduce charges.

Background

Following the initial report to Executive Board in June, the Scrutiny Board considered a request for scrutiny from a member of the public at its July meeting.

The Board noted that a public consultation exercise was underway prior to a further report to Executive Board and planned implementation in November. It was also noted that a previous Scrutiny Board inquiry in 2008 had recommended that the council consider introducing charges for residents' parking schemes.

Members decided that they wished to scrutinise the proposals, following the consultation process and prior to the final proposals being presented to the Executive Board.

In October the Scrutiny Board considered a report from the Director of City Development providing an update on the position and summarising the findings of the consultation process and other comments received. The member of the public who made the original request for scrutiny was invited to attend the meeting and make an input to the discussion.

Comments

Members of the Board understood the reason why the introduction of charges for residents' parking permit schemes is being considered, in the context of the council's difficult financial position and the need to explore all potential avenues. They agreed that all options needed to be explored, but this did not necessarily mean they all had to be implemented.

They also noted the implications of the Barnet judgement on the level of charge that might be made, and consequently the potential amount of money that would be brought in. The Scrutiny Board felt that this called the viability of the scheme into question.

The Board echoed some of the responses to the consultation, that people in scheme areas felt they were already penalised through no fault of their own in having difficulty parking on their street.

Members were also concerned about the cost of collecting individual payments for permits, and that the administration costs could end up being higher than the sums collected.

The rationale for moving to an annual renewal cycle as opposed to the current three year cycle was also queried, given that this raised the administration costs.

Members noted the number of responses to the consultation which indicated that some schemes were no longer considered to be required by residents, and the number of residents who had indicated that they would not purchase permits if a charge is introduced. The Board was informed that there was currently no budgetary provision for reviewing schemes once they were introduced, but that this would be part of the new proposed service.

Concern was also expressed about the additional financial burden on residents on low incomes.

Members discussed the role of parking enforcement, both for residents' parking permit scheme areas and more generally, as part of the overall suite of traffic management and parking control measures available to the council. They also referred to the contracting out of enforcement services by some councils.

Recommendations

Overall, the Scrutiny Board would recommend that the Executive Board does not introduce charges for residents' parking permit schemes at this time.

The Scrutiny Board recommends that the Executive Board explores alternative options for covering the costs of this service, such as through parking enforcement.