

Report to the Cabinet

Report reference: C/098/2007-08.
Date of meeting: 4 February 2008.



Portfolio: Civil Engineering & Maintenance.

Subject: Parking Concessions for Key Public Health Service Providers.

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Recommendations/Decisions Required:

- (1) That, subject to appropriate proof of need, concessionary parking permits be made available to:**
 - (a) General Practitioners;**
 - (b) District nurses and midwives;**
 - (c) Pharmacists; and**
 - (d) Approved carers;**
- (2) To consider whether the permits should be provided free of charge or a fee of £25.00 per annum should be levied; and**
- (3) To review the operation of the scheme in six months**

Background:

1. Over many years there has also been a demand from providers of certain key public services for special dispensation from parking restrictions. In the main these have been refused. However, as parking restrictions have expanded within the district the pressure for concessions is increasing and it now seems appropriate for Cabinet to consider whether, and to what extent, concessions should be granted.
2. The types of professionals who have sought dispensations include:
 - (a) doctors;
 - (b) district nurses and midwives;
 - (c) various 'carers; and
 - (d) other health professionals.
3. Requests have been received from individual surgeries, the PCT, health trusts and the recipients of the actual services.
4. There are a number of issues which need to be considered, including:
 - (a) the definition of a key service provider;
 - (b) what restrictions are included;

- (c) preventing abuse;
- (d) preventing accidents due to improper parking;
- (e) that any such changes will require a revision to the existing traffic regulation order(s); and
- (f) whether a charge should be made for issuing any concession.

Proposal:

5. Any such scheme needs to be simple to administer and clear to the users what is permitted. Similarly, any badge or 'pass' needs to be such that the Council's enforcement contractors are able to determine legitimate use and not issue inappropriate penalty charge notices. It is therefore suggested that a scheme based on the current 'blue badge' for the disabled be considered, although it would be different insofar as:

- (i) the badge would be vehicle specific; and
- (ii) it would provide a more limited time, say up to 1 hour.

6. The concession would not permit parking:

- (a) in loading bays or disabled bays;
- (b) in bus stops or taxi ranks;
- (c) in a bus or cycle lane;
- (d) at school entrances;
- (e) at or near pedestrian crossings;
- (f) where no waiting cones are deployed;
- (g) where there are kerb markings indicating a loading ban; and
- (h) in any off-street car park.

7. Any application for a concession would require:

- (a) the applicants full working details; and
- (b) details from a senior manager as to why a concession is required for that particular public service worker or a relevant carer.

8. It is suggested that initially the list of potential concession holders be restricted initially to:

- (a) doctors;
- (b) district nurses and midwives;
- (c) pharmacists; and
- (d) carers.

9. Carers may of course include family members/neighbours but only where the relevant authority (e.g. Social Care or PCT) notify the Council of the full circumstances etc and

support the application.

10. The permits could be issued free of charge or a fee levied. The proposed system will have costs arising from the administration and preparation of the permits, plus any additional enforcement costs passed on by the Council's enforcement contractor. The costs are however unlikely to exceed those associated with the issue of a resident's permit and members are therefore requested to consider whether a similar fee, i.e. £25.00 per annum per permit would be appropriate.

Statement in Support of Recommended Action:

11. There is considerable concern amongst key public workers about their ability to provide a proper service in the community due to the expansion of on street parking controls. The scheme proposed would be relatively simple to administer and should also be able to reduce the potential for abuse. The scheme precludes parking in dangerous locations and in off street car parks.

Other Options for Action:

12. The options considered and rejected were:

- (a) not to introduce any scheme – this would perpetuate the current difficulties and pressure from the community workers would continue; or
- (b) some other form of permit system, but there are concerns about the ability to control the issue of permits and the prevention of abuse of any other arrangement.

Consultation Undertaken:

13. None directly but organisations providing relevant services would clearly support some form of permit system.

Resource Implications:

Budget Provision: Costs recovered through a permit fee of £25.00 per annum.

Personnel: Nil.

Land: Nil.

Council Plan 2006-10/BVPP Reference: N/A.

Relevant Statutory Powers: Road Traffic Act 1991.

Background Papers: Nil.

Environmental/Human Rights Act/Crime and Disorder Act Implications: Assisting key public service workers in undertaking their roles in the community through the issue of permits to enable parking in restricted areas.

Key Decision Reference (if required): Not a Key Decision.