

REPORT OF THE ON-STREET PARKING TASK GROUP

CABINET RESPONSE TO THE REPORT FROM ENVIRONMENT AND
TRANSPORT SELECT COMMITTEE'S TASK GROUP

Background

1. On 18 May 2011 the Environment and Transport Select Committee considered a report from the Transport Select Committee Parking Task Group about on street parking charges and enforcement.
2. The report has been submitted to the Cabinet and recommends changes to the way on street parking charges and enforcement are developed in the future. The Cabinet would like to thank the task group for their excellent work on this subject as well as everyone that contributed.
3. The Cabinet Member's response to the recommendations is set out below:

Response to recommendations

The recommendations from the Environment and Transport Select Committee are individually detailed along with the Cabinet Member's response.

- (a) ***That where parking reviews are currently taking place, they should try to anticipate the displacement parking that may result from the introduction of on-street charging and that a further review should be scheduled 6 – 12 months after introduction, in order to ensure that any problems are appropriately addressed.***

Response

It is planned to arrange parking reviews for the proposed on street charging areas approximately 6 to 12 months after any charges are installed. A budget has been set for this work as part of the project cost. When new parking restrictions are introduced it is usual for parking behaviour to change(s) and it can take several months for this pattern to settle down.

- (b) ***That the enforcement authorities report to officers in the Parking Team on a quarterly basis regarding the results of the implementation in different locations.***

Response

The Surrey Parking Team will work closely with district and borough enforcement teams to monitor the effects of any on street charges including displacement, income, occupancy and other enforcement issues. The County Council will also be able to remotely monitor the operational status of pay and display machines through the software provided by the supplier.

- (c) ***That in any future agreement, SCC should contractually stipulate the performance criteria that it expects enforcement authorities to meet, where failure to do so attracts a penalty.***

Response

This is being considered as part of the arrangement for new on street enforcement agreements post April 2012.

- (d) That the recommendations of the Task Group incorporating some of the suggestions proposed by Local Committees, as set out in Annexes 3-11, be approved as the basis for the formal public consultation.**

Response

The recommendations of the Task Group set out in the plans of the Annexes will be incorporated into proposals for future statutory advertisement.

- (e) That any surplus arising from on-street parking charges and their enforcement covered by any new agreement from April 2012, should be viewed as over and above the forecast highways budget.**
- (i) That any surplus arising from on street parking charges, should be split 35:65 between the enforcement authority and the County.**
- (ii) That in all cases, the 65% of any surplus arising that is due to the County should be spent on appropriate local schemes that are in compliance with the guidelines, at the discretion of the Local Committee from where that surplus arose.**
- (iii) That in cases where the enforcement authority is the same District from where any surplus is generated, the 35% that is due to the District, should be spent on appropriate local schemes at the discretion of the Local Committee. (The result under these circumstances would be that 100% of any surplus is available to the Local Committee, where District and Borough Members will continue to have voting rights for highway functions, as has already been established.)**
- (iv) That in cases where it is proposed that one local authority enforces in a different authority, SCC should ensure that there is a clear agreement between the two authorities, detailing how the 35% surplus will be distributed between the two Local Committees. (It is recognised that where an enforcement authority enforces on behalf of SCC in a different District, only the respective portions of the 35% surplus which have been agreed between the enforcement authority and the enforced authority, are returned to each respective Local Committees. This means that under these circumstances, the Local Committee of the enforcing authority will receive an additional sum to the 100% of the surplus that may have arisen in its own District. Correspondingly, the District where that surplus arose will still receive the 65% from County, but only the portion of the 35% that has been agreed with the enforcing authority, which inevitably will result in less than 100% of any surplus that has been generated in its own District, being at the disposal of it's Local Committee.)**

An alternative wording for this recommendation was discussed and agreed at the meeting.

"In recognition that the arrangements for enforcement may well change in the future, a more simple recommendation to (e) above, is that SCC agrees a cost for enforcement with whichever authority / authorities that will enforce on their behalf, over a given area. 100% of any surplus, however generated is then returned to SCC, who will then put this entire sum at the discretion of the Local Committee from where that surplus arose, which may, or may not, be the same Local Committee as that of the enforcing authority."

Response to all sections

There is a need to ensure we have proper and fair working relationships with our enforcement agents. The distribution of a "share" of surplus will be considered as part of any revised operating agreements.

During the budget setting process the county council needs to allocate resources to manage, maintain and improve the whole highway network. This recommendation from the task group will be given further consideration as part of future budget setting processes.

- (f) That a period of free parking of up to half an hour be permitted in commercially sensitive locations identified by Local Committees and agreed by the Task Group, as identified in the annexes to this report.**

Response

Please see earlier reply to recommendation d).

- (g) That to more effectively reflect local variances across the County, there should be wherever possible a link to off-street charging tariffs, by means of a premium on-street tariff, based on the cost of parking off-street, plus around 20%.**

Response

This can be considered as part of any future charging level reviews and is referenced in the reports of EBC and R&B.

- (h) That as a result of (f) and (g) the original proposal for a 'low' tariff be discontinued and that where reference is made to tariffs in general, the terminology is indicative rather than absolute, in that the cost of these tariffs will vary across the county.**

Response

This is accepted although there are some areas where a free parking period is not appropriate and a lower tariff than £1 per hour is needed to reflect local circumstances. In these cases there needs to be discretion to set the most appropriate tariff.

(i) That consideration should be given to the simultaneous introduction of residents parking zones wherever possible, to better manage displacement parking and increase resident's acceptance of the proposals.

Response

Residents Parking Schemes can be complex in terms of consultation and managing the varied parking needs of an area. Many schemes tend to be quite large, covering a number of roads to reduce the effect of displacement. Public engagement is crucial as there are often strongly held opposing views. There are potentially many towns that could be considered for residents parking schemes and to roll these out could take several years and / or significant resources. Wherever possible parking reviews with Local Committees will be coordinated to tackle displacement problems as quickly as possible.

(j) That where necessary, the number of machines per parking slot are kept to a minimum in order to minimise their impact on the street scene, particularly in less urban locations.

Response

The number of pay and display machines will be kept to a minimum and balance the needs and convenience of visitors and shoppers with the visual impact on the street scene.

(k) That wherever possible, road markings for the parking bays are kept to the legal minimum in order to minimise the impact on the street scene, particularly in less urban locations.

Response

Road markings will need to comply with the appropriate legislation. However, they will be kept to a minimum wherever possible.

(l) That the basic machine to be purchased should be able to record the registration numbers of vehicles, contain a modem to report faults and the operational status and accept payment by both coin and phone.

Response

This is the typical configuration for a pay and display machine that have been specified through the procurement process.

(m) That those machines in locations where payment by card could be appropriate in the future should be equipped with card technology at purchase, rather than being upgraded more expensively at a later stage.

Response

Pay and display machines can be configured to accept payment in a number of ways. The procurement process and call off contract allows for them to be fitted with a credit or debit card reader if needed, however pay by phone is likely to be a more viable alternative in most situations. We will be aiming to introduce pay by phone as the main alternative to cash payment.

(n) That the cost to those wishing to park on street should be the same, regardless of the method of payment and that tariffs should be set to reflect this. There should be no premium for paying by phone, or where applicable, card.

Response

The procurement for 'pay by phone' will aim to get the best deal for the Council and residents/customers of this service. This recommendation is desirable and will be investigated through the tender process.

(o) That SCC accepts the sum of £2,500 as the 'average' operational cost per machine, which cumulatively results in the SCC cost per District / Borough and then across the county itself.

Response

This sum is the accepted cost which has been used in assessing various sites.

(p) That SCC insists before any extension to any of the current enforcement contracts is considered, each authority completes a standardized spreadsheet, detailing the cost base for its enforcement measures, set against measurable performance criteria of officers employed and their frequency of patrol etc.

Response

Standardised financial reporting is being developed. Finance teams in the district and borough councils have been working with Surrey Treasurers to develop and agree a joint format. Sound financial and performance reporting will be a key requirement of any future agency agreements.

(q) That further to (o) and (p), where an enforcement authority enforces in a District / Borough other than its own, SCC ensures that the 'enforced' authority has had sight of the spreadsheet and agrees, both with the accuracy of the cost base and that there is a clear agreement as to how any surplus should be shared between the enforcing authority and the enforced.

Response

This is subject to agreements about on street enforcement post April 2012. Further consideration of this issue is needed.

- (r) That the space on the reverse of tickets be sold for marketing purposes, which would contribute to any surplus for SCC.**

Response

Ticket advertising will be investigated as on street charges are introduced.

- (s) That on introduction, there should be split tickets to allow retailers to refund the cost of parking to customers should they wish.**

Response

The pay and display ticket machines will have the facility to issue split tickets. This facility will be reviewed/discussed with local businesses as areas of pay and display are introduced.

- (t) That while it is not possible to park in a given space, it should be possible to purchase an annual season ticket in order to park in a given area, or zone.**

Response

This will be considered further if and when pay and display charges are more widespread. There is also a need to consider the cost and availability of season tickets in local car parks.

- (u) That the viability of payment by smart cards, or similar technology, be investigated with a view to their subsequent introduction.**

Response

Smart cards or residents parking cards can be considered if or when parking charges become more widespread in Surrey. The pay and display machines can be fitted with card readers as required. At the moment the cost of setting up such a scheme is unknown and would overly complicate the current initiative.

- (v) That given the more widespread introduction of charging to park on the street, the fees for parking permits again be reviewed and set to be more realistic in reflecting the benefit gained, rather than the current token charge of £50 per annum.**

Response

The cost of residents parking permits was reviewed last year and set to £50 for the first and £75 for subsequent permits from April 2011. The cost of permits will be reviewed as part of the county council's annual review of fees and charges.

- (w) That consideration should also be given as to whether a permit for a second vehicle at the same address should be offered at a lower, or a higher sum, in order to discourage multi vehicle ownership at locations where there is no off street parking.**

Response

Please see earlier reply to recommendation v). Revised guidance on the number and cost of resident permits has been endorsed as part of the Surrey Transport Plan (approved by Council in March 2011). The cost will be reviewed as part of the county council's annual review of fees and charges.

- (x) That the number of permits to be allowed per residence again be reviewed in order not to exacerbate the problem of on street parking by encouraging multi car ownership***

Response

Please see earlier reply to recommendation v). Revised guidance on the number of resident permits has been endorsed as part of the Surrey Transport Plan (approved by Council in March 2011)

- (y) That residents who reside within parking zones be enabled to purchase a book of visitor permits at a cost of £2 per permit per day.***

Response

This new charge has been adopted and came into effect in April 2011. Revised guidance on number and cost of visitor permits has been endorsed as part of the Surrey Transport Plan (approved by Council in March 2011). The cost of these permits is £2 per day and will be reviewed as part of the county council's annual review of fees and charges.

- (z) That SCC's Transportation Development Planning should continue to work closely with local planning authorities in determining how best to realistically address the acceptable provision of parking, both for new developments and particularly for conversions of larger properties into apartments, as necessary through a review of the current policy.***

Response

County Council Officers will continue to work with their colleagues within the Districts and Boroughs.

Summary and proposed way forward

The changes recommended by the Environment and Transport Committee will be incorporated where possible into the forward consultation programme for on street charging proposals.

The consultation programme will be modified to take account of this. It is therefore proposed to consult in the nine remaining districts and boroughs on the following timetable:

Area	Consultation period	Cabinet review of consultation and decision date
Epsom and Ewell Surrey Heath Spelthorne Guildford	July 2011	27 September 2011
Woking Tandridge Mole Valley Waverley Runnymede	September 2011	25 November 2011

Ian Lake
Cabinet Member for Transport
24 May 2011