

DECISION-MAKER:	CABINET
SUBJECT:	PROPOSED CHANGES TO PERMITS AND PERMIT CHARGES FOR RESIDENTS PARKING SCHEMES ZONES 1-12 AND 16 (TRO)
DATE OF DECISION:	1 AUGUST 2011
REPORT OF:	CITY PATROL AND PARKING SERVICES MANAGER
STATEMENT OF CONFIDENTIALITY	
None	

BRIEF SUMMARY

A Traffic Regulation Order was proposed on 27th May 2011 proposing changes to permits and permits charges in Zones 1-12 and 16 (see Appendix 1). In response to the public notice there are objections and concerns that are following due process in being brought to the Cabinet of the Council to consider and to decide whether the proposed changes are approved, amended or withdrawn.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

- (i) That the Cabinet approve the proposed introduction of charges for (day) Visitor Permits and the introduction of an Annual Visitor Permit, with consideration of any additional conditions of use that may be required to prevent misuse. Also that the Cabinet approves changes to the issue and conditions of use for Business Permits.
- (ii) That subject to the approval of the above changes, that the charge for a Second Residents Parking Permit is reduced from £60 to £30 per year.

REASONS FOR REPORT RECOMMENDATIONS

1. That the proposals align with Council Local Transport Policy in promoting sustainable travel and Parking Policy in assisting with the funding of the design, administration, and enforcement of permit parking schemes.
2. The proposed changes provide a framework in which the issue, conditions of use and enforcement of parking permits can be managed by Parking Services to deliver benefits to residents and commercial users, where appropriate.

ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED AND REJECTED

3. Taking no action was rejected on the basis that this could put at risk the level of enforcement of existing schemes and the capacity for the Council to promote sustainable transport and continue its policy of responding to community demands for permit parking.

DETAIL (Including consultation carried out)

4. Consultation

The budget review in July 2010 (including the proposed charges for Visitor Permits) was covered extensively by local media. A public notice detailing the proposed changes to permits and permit charges was then advertised in the Daily Echo in May, as is Council practice for variations in parking charges.

5. **Objections / Concerns**

Any prospective charges or increased charge for any Council service is unwelcome, particularly when many households are under financial pressure. In the case of permit charges, this is particularly the case, as most residents view the problem of non-resident parking, as not of their making. There are also often views presented by residents that the Council is infringing upon the right of residents to park freely outside their own property.

In terms of the specific responses to the Public Notice, the point that Mrs Roux raises (see extract below and at Appendix 2) on having to pay for visitors permits is therefore likely to be shared by many residents.

“I object to paying for visitors parking permits. I pay for my 2nd car, I pay road tax also council tax, therefore why should I pay for permits, so people can visit me.”

Mrs Roux also understandably highlights the impact on elderly people, who may not have vehicles but still would be expected to pay in circumstances where there are already financial pressures on the community from rising prices. Mrs Roux also objects to Annual Visitors Permits as they would extend the scope for misuse by enabling households to park a third vehicle. She also highlights the current misuse of Visitor Permits to support this view.

The practicalities of Annual Visitor Permits working in inner city areas such as the Bevois Ward, with the shortage of parking and potential for misuse is also stated by Councillor Rayment (see Appendix 2) in her objection. She also highlights the existing difficulties for residents finding available parking, with existing demands for short stay parking.

6. **Officer’s comments – Sustainable Travel and Permit Schemes**

The Local Transport Plan (LTP) 2006-11 emphasises Council policy in promoting sustainable travel and its support for residents affected by parking from major attractors (see below).

Residential areas – these are the living spaces for City residents and, as far as possible, the Council will ensure that the adverse effects of transport in them are minimised and that accessibility is maximised. This implies the adoption of effective traffic management measures and the promotion of sustainable travel modes. (LTP 2006-11)

Parking policy in residential areas will continue to focus on ensuring that residents do not experience problems resulting from commuter parking, or from parking generated by major attractors (such as hospitals, education establishments, leisure venues, etc). (LTP 2006-11)

Thus around the University of Southampton the introduction of permit parking has helped to both, make on-street parking available for residents and their visitors, and to promote the use of Uni-Link bus service which has grown to over 3 million passengers annually. Together these approaches have helped to reduce congestion and carbon emissions.

7. **Officer's comments – Permit Charges**

The Council recognises the importance of on-street parking to residents and has therefore maintained the principle of first Resident Permits being free of charge. Given concerns of residents, the proposals also sought to reduce the extent of any prospective increase in charges for Visitor Permits by seeking to reduce the cost (£55K) of printing of (day) Visitor Permits by introducing an Annual Visitors Permit. It was intended that those households contributing to the cost of permit schemes through second Resident Permits should, where possible, not be asked to pay more. The proposal facilitates this by setting the cost of an Annual Visitors Permit at £30 per year and reducing the cost of second permits from £60 to £30. Therefore for resident such as Mrs Roux it is intended that the savings in the cost of the second Residents Permits should cover the cost of visitor parking.

It is also important to note that there is no proposed charge for Essential Visitor Permits. Therefore elderly or disabled residents dependent on carers or family members can make of use of this permit for visitors without cost. The Annual Visitor Permits would also allow more visits that the current entitlement to 60 (day) Visitor Permits would allow.

It should also be noted that during public consultations we also receive concerns from residents outside of the permit parking zones objecting to bearing the costs of these schemes.

8. **Officer's comments – Permit Misuse**

The issue of the misuse of Visitor Permits for resident or commuter parking is a concern which these proposals are intended to deter rather than encourage. The absence of any charge for the existing Visitor Permits allows them to be transferred at no cost to the original applicant with potential for financial gain. This increases the cost of printing to deter counterfeiting and limits the availability to 60 per household to reduce costs and limit the scope of misuse. Whilst introducing a charge for these permits may not reduce calculated misuse it should help deter casual misuse. The intention is also very much to deter the misuse of Annual Visitor Permits. The limit of 8 hours per day parking (including limited waiting) is thus intended to benefit day-time visitors rather than extended periods of stay that might be associated with resident parking. The restriction on parking within 250m has two aims:-

- To prevent permit being used to commute or park across a zone
- To limit use in areas where there is a shortage of parking.

Another key aspect of the proposal is that the issue/reissue of Annual Visitor Permits is subject to limits. Therefore in zones where there are issues with available parking the initial issue may be limited or where difficulties arise in zones, the reissue of permits may be reduced. Whilst this procedure would be outside of the Traffic Regulation Order, it is intended that this process is undertaken through discussion between SCC Parking Services and Ward Councillors.

Given the concerns raised, Cabinet may however wish to consider the imposition of a further condition applied in Norwich *that holders of Annual Visitors Permit should inform the Council if they wish to use a permit for the same vehicle for a period of more than 14 days*. Such a specific condition of

use need not be stipulated within the TRO and is therefore is at the discretion of the Council.

9. Officers comments – Overall

Otherwise it is the view of the Traffic Management team that whilst appreciating the concerns raised, that the TRO provides an appropriate framework to continue to promote sustainable transport through helping to address future funding for the design, administration and enforcement of permit parking schemes. The proposals also help to manage the allocation and conditions of use of permits to meet current and changing circumstances across the zones.

RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

Capital/Revenue

10. The cost and revenue analysis is shown below, the part year covering the period from 1/9/2011-31/3/11 and the full year for 2012/13 and following years. The costs and revenue are managed through SCC Parking Services budgets.

Description	Part Year £	Full Year £
Set-up costs	10,000	0
<u>Income</u>		
Daily Visitor Permits	28,331	48,568
Annual Visitors Permits	45,308	77,670
Second Permits (reduced price)	-9,748	-16,710
Income sub-total	63,891	109,528
Administration (net increased costs)	11,391	19,527
Net Increase	42,500	90,000

Property/Other

11. None

LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

Statutory power to undertake proposals in the report:

12. The Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984 permits the introduction of the parking restrictions as set out in this report in accordance with a statutory consultation procedure set down in the Act and associated secondary legislation.

Other Legal Implications:

13. In preparing and determining the proposals set out in this report the Council is required to have regard to the provisions of Equalities legislation, the Human Rights Act 1988 and s.17 Crime and Disorder Act 1998 (the duty to have regard to the need to remove or reduce crime and disorder in the area). It is considered that the proposals set out in this report are proportionate having regard to the wider needs of the area

POLICY FRAMEWORK IMPLICATIONS

14. N/A

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KEY DECISION? Yes

WARDS/COMMUNITIES AFFECTED:	All
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SUPPORTING DOCUMENTATION

Non-confidential appendices are in the Members' Rooms and can be accessed on-line

Appendices

1.	Copy of Public Notice and Statement of Reasons
2.	Objections and Concerns over the proposed changes to Permits and Permit Charges
3.	Other objections or concerns received after the closure of the public consultation (<i>none at present</i>)

Documents In Members' Rooms

1.	N/A
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Integrated Impact Assessment

Do the implications/subject of the report require an Integrated Impact Assessment (IIA) to be carried out.	Yes/No
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Other Background Documents

Integrated Impact Assessment and Other Background documents available for inspection at: N/A

Title of Background Paper(s)	Relevant Paragraph of the Access to Information Procedure Rules / Schedule 12A allowing document to be Exempt/Confidential (if applicable)
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1.	None
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