

Information/Discussion Paper

Environment Overview & Scrutiny Committee –

16th January 2006

Members Parking at the rear of Municipal Offices and in Chapel Walk car park. Update on Permit Rules and Access Control

This note contains the information to keep Members informed of matters relating to the work of the Committee, but where no decisions from Members are needed

1. Why has this come to scrutiny?

- 1.1** At the Overview and Scrutiny meeting on 31st October 2005, it was requested by the Chairman for officers to update Members on the final proposals to manage the parking area at the rear of the municipal building. This was to include a detailed explanation of how the parking area was going to be controlled and enforced for the use of “Members only”, and how the parking charge was going to be administered.

2. Summary

- 2.1** Throughout 2005, a number of issues were raised regarding the misuse of the parking area to the rear of the municipal offices. This area is managed jointly by Property Maintenance and Parking Services. In September 2005 following requests from the Police, officers from Property Maintenance installed CCTV, telescopic bollards and new signage in order to tighten security and to ensure that parking was available for Members.
- 2.2** These measures followed a review of parking permit policies by the Parking Solutions Working Group and a decision by Cabinet to introduce a permit charge for Members who wished to park in this area for council business only. The proposed permit arrangement is consistent with other revised permit procedures agreed by Cabinet in September 2005 and with council policy to encourage businesses to manage their parking as part of a travel plan.
- 2.3** In October 2005 this Committee raised a number of administrative and operational issues arising from this proposal and the Chair requested that a protocol be developed for Members to consider. This paper sets out in more detail some of the key points regarding the scheme. As a new scheme officers would welcome feedback from Members during the initial months of operation to help them refine procedures and improve the service.

Permits

- An annual permit fee of £52 was agreed by Cabinet in September 2005. Due to elections being held there will be an interim permit costing £13 which Members may purchase for period 1st February 2006 to the election date in May. Thereafter Members may only purchase an annual £52 permit which expires the following May. There will be no special dispensation on the permit charge for Members who make more frequent visits to the Municipal Offices. Refunds will not be offered unless there are exceptional circumstances, each case being considered on its own merits. Member permits issued prior to the introduction of this scheme on 1st February 2006 will no longer be valid.
- Permit application forms will be sent to all serving Members by the Parking Office in May each year and also in response to individual requests by Members at other times. Members are responsible for ensuring that details on their permit are correct and that any amendments (e.g. change of vehicle) are communicated to the Parking Office in writing or by email within 7 days. A maximum of one permit per Member will be issued however two vehicles may be registered on a single permit provided all details are given on the application form. Applications will be processed within 10 working days and Members will receive a permit, a key to operate the bollards and instructions on how to use them.
- Eligibility – Only serving Members may purchase and use a permit. Once a Member ceases to hold office the permit will cease to be valid and it is their responsibility to hand in their permit and bollard key at the same time as they return other Council property.
- Availability of spaces: Permit holders will be entitled to park in the Members' bays at the rear of the Municipal Offices and in dedicated spaces in Chapel Walk car park. As there are 40 Members and only 15 spaces in total there will not be a right to a parking space. Spaces will be available to permit holders on a "first come first served" basis and only for Members on council business. Permit holders sitting on Planning Committee and Full Council may request a 'day permit' to park in front of the Municipal Offices if all spaces are occupied. Free parking in Chapel Walk car park and the Inner Prom will still be available after 6pm. Disabled spaces are only available for the use of blue badge holders.
- Lost or replacement keys for the bollards can be obtained from Parking Services. An £8 charge will be made.
- Therefore, from 1st February 2006, when enforcement will apply, all Members who park at the back of the Municipal Offices or in designated bays in Chapel Walk will be required to display a valid parking permit in their vehicle. The parking area will be controlled as follows:
- Property Maintenance has installed lockable telescopic bollards to manage access control regarding the usage of the parking area. These will be operational from 1st February 2006.
- During office opening hours the bollards will remain down and car parking will be closely monitored by council employees under the management of Front Line Services.
- Due to Health and Safety considerations some loading and unloading of bulky items will be necessary within this parking area. Parking will be limited to a maximum 30 minutes. Contractors carrying out major office refurbishment and emergency repairs will not have a right to park in the Members parking area but they can use the loading

bay in Royal Well Road if they wish. In exceptional circumstances discussions will take place with the relevant Cabinet Deputy to consider the implications and Members will be given advance notice of any variations to normal parking arrangements.

- At 6.15pm bollards will be raised and locked by council staff. Members who plan to use this facility after this time will need to operate the bollards themselves in accordance with the instructions issued to them previously. At 7.15a.m. each morning council employees will lower the bollards.
- At weekends/bank holidays the bollards will remain raised. Staff engaged in out of hours work at the Municipal Offices may request special permits to park in Chapel Walk car park at these times.
- Members with disabilities will be required to contact the Duty custodian prior to their journey for assistance to lower and raise the bollards for access to the disabled bays.
- Provision will be made in Chapel Walk car park for occasional VIP visitor parking, to be booked in advance.

3 Next Steps

3.1 A briefing note will be sent to all Members during January 2006, advising them of the new arrangements. All applications and permit enquiries should be addressed to Christine Westerman, Room 319, Parking Office at the Municipal Offices.

Background Papers	Parking Solutions Working Group 11 th August 2005, Environment O&S Committee 31st October 2005.
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