

REDDITCH BOROUGH COUNCIL

**OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY
COMMITTEE**

19th January 2011

Annual Report on Civil Parking Enforcement (CPE)

Relevant Portfolio Holder(s)	Councillor Brandon Clayton, Portfolio Holder for Housing, Local Environment, and Health; and Councillor Jinny Pearce, Portfolio Holder for Planning, Regeneration, Economic Development and Transport
Relevant Head of Service	Guy Revans, Head of Environment Services

1. SUMMARY

This report provides an annual update on the Civil Parking Enforcement service.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

**The Committee is asked to RESOLVE that
the report be noted.**

3. BACKGROUND

CPE formally commenced on 31st March 2009, with Wychavon District Council undertaking enforcement operations on behalf of this Council.

4. CURRENT SITUATION

4.1 As CPE has progressed, the general public have become used to seeing the Civil Enforcement Officers (CEOs) patrolling the Borough, and more importantly taking the time to park their vehicles in accordance with the current Traffic Regulation Orders (TROs).

4.12 The formal arrangements, whereby Wychavon District Council (WDC) operate CPE on behalf of this Council, the Officer is happy to report, has continued to work extremely well. Officers reiterate the statement from last year's Report, that it is an excellent example of how a successful partnership arrangement between adjacent Local Authorities can work.

4.2 Penalty Charge Notices

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- 4.21 The applicable tariffs for PCNs are currently set at either £70 or £50, depending on the seriousness of the contravention. If payment is received within 14 days, the fine is automatically reduced by 50%. Non payment of PCNs, will ultimately result, after the issue of statutory reminders, in Bailiffs being engaged to obtain the outstanding monies from the liable owners of the vehicles' responsible. To date, within this Financial Year, there are 404 cases of unpaid Penalty Charge Notices which Bailiffs will be instructed to recover, if left unpaid.
- 4.22 Contrary to public opinion, the CEOs are not set targets to ensure that a certain number of PCNs are issued to drivers.
- 4.3 Civil Enforcement Officers**
- 4.31 There are currently four CEOs employed by WDC, who patrol all areas of the Borough where TROs exist. The CEOs are managed by WDC's Parking Administration Supervisor, who undertakes regular Performance Management Reviews with the CEOs, to ensure the quality of the Service is maintained. The performance of these Officers has been exceptional.
- 4.32 CPE enables enforcement to be undertaken where drivers contravene TROs. Currently, for other traffic offences, such as causing an obstruction by parking in front of a vehicular crossing, where no TROs exist, then such offences must still be dealt with by the Police. CEOs will report such offences direct to the Police, if they witness these incidents during their daily routes.
- 4.4 Residents' Parking Schemes**
- 4.41 Around the Town Centre, there are currently five Residents' Parking Schemes (RPS) in operation. They are in Archer Road, Other Road, Oakly Road, Prospect Hill and Smallwood. Such schemes allow residents to park their vehicles at all times on the highway in the vicinity of their property, in preference to other highway users. For this facility residents pay a small charge for a permit for their vehicle (see 4.44). In addition, each property is entitled to one Visitors' Permit, at no cost.
- 4.42 These schemes are very advantageous, particularly where the properties are generally of older construction, and do not have off-street car parking facilities. Also, where such properties are located close to the Town Centre, the RPS restricts the parking of vehicles by drivers, who are either visiting the Town Centre for shopping purposes or actually working there.

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4.43 If residents feel that they would benefit from the introduction of RPS, they are advised that they should consult with their Local County Councillor in the first instance, who will, if considered appropriate, and meeting the necessary criteria, put forward the request to the County Council's Traffic Management Team. There have been a number of applications made to the County, but to date, unfortunately no additional schemes have been approved and implemented by them.

4.44 The cost of an individual Parking Permit is to remain at £10 for 2011/2012. The income received, only covers the administration costs incurred by the Council. With CPE now running effectively, there is obviously a greater demand for Permits.

4.5 Pay and Display Car Parks

4.51 With the introduction of CPE, this Council now has the Service necessary to monitor and enforce Pay and Display Car Parks. Consequently, Members resolved to make the appropriate Order for the Town Hall and Trescott Road car parks to become Pay and Display facilities, at weekends only. These commenced operation on 9 January 2010. Unfortunately, the income from these car parks has not reached their predicted targets, which is almost certainly due to the fact, that at present the Trafford Park Retail Area now offers free unrestricted parking.

5. Issues highlighted from Overview and Scrutiny Committee – 24 February 2010

5.1 Parking in locations where previously no enforcement action had taken place:

5.1.1 As stated previously, drivers are now used to complying with all TROs, where perhaps they had previously ignored such Orders in the past.

5.2 On a small number of occasions verbal abuse of CEOs had taken place:

5.2.1 These actions are of course of great concern. Since August, and in consultation with Redditch District Inspector Ian Joseph from West Mercia Police, the CEOs have been issued with body worn cameras that allow them to film any potential conflict that may occur during the course of their work.

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5.2.2 Body worn video cameras are a discreet, personal CCTV system, that provides high quality digital colour and sound recording that operates both in daylight and at night. In the event that a conflict is likely to occur, the camera is switched on, and the motorist is advised that they are being recorded. The CEOs also wear arm bands that clearly states, 'Body worn video in operation'.

5.2.3 Inspector Ian Joseph has stated within the local press, that, "Our support for these cameras follows numerous reports we have received from Civil Enforcement Officers, concerning confrontations with motorists over parking issues. The cameras seemed to be an ideal way to assist in managing these complaints, as they provide excellent evidence of disputes. They may also act as a deterrent. While the cameras have been in use for only a short time the initial results are encouraging."

5.2.4 Officers are happy to report that since introducing the cameras, the conflict and aggression towards the CEOs has been significantly reduced.

5.3 The TRO covering the Town Centre pedestrian area did not allow CEOs to undertake enforcement action, with regard to unauthorised parking:

5.3.1 The County Council have confirmed that a Temporary Order will be operative within the next few weeks, that will allow the CEOs to enforce unauthorised parking, covering all of the Town Centre pedestrian area. The Order will be reviewed after eighteen months, with a view to making it permanent.

6. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

6.1 The Financial Statement for 2009/2010 is available. This shows that income from PCNs from the first full operating year, provided sufficient funds to meet all of the initial Set Up costs, and the operating costs.

6.12 The third quarter financial report for this Financial Year is shown overleaf:

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Penalty Charge Notice (PCN) Report for third Quarter
(1 April 2010 – 28 December 2010)

Number Issued	2,973
Outstanding	404
Paid	2,251
Cancelled	207
Written Off	61
Part Paid	50
Collection Rate (%)	77.39
Total received (£)	<u>104,361.95</u>

6.13 It is the normal trend for the issue of PCNs within an Authority to reduce, during the following years after the introduction of CPE. This is obviously due to the public being aware of the consequences of contravening TROs. The inclement weather has also impacted on enforcement, with reduced patrols due to the snow.

6.14 However, as only operating costs need to be financed, it is anticipated that income received for this Financial Year will meet all such commitments for CPE.

7. WARDS AFFECTED

No direct ward relevance

8. BACKGROUND PAPERS

Civil Parking Enforcement Financial Statement (2009-10)

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