

Report of	Meeting	Date
Head of Public Space Services	Customer Overview and Scrutiny Panel	6 July 2005

DECRIMINALISED PARKING ENFORCEMENT

PURPOSE OF REPORT

1. To respond to questions raised by Members in relation to Decriminalised Parking Enforcement.

CORPORATE PRIORITIES

2. This matter is directly related to the key priority of "Serving our customers better".

RISK ISSUES

3. The issue raised and recommendations made in this report involve risk considerations in the following categories:

Strategy		Information	
Reputation	√	Regulatory/Legal	√
Financial		Operational	
People	√	Other	

4. Failure to operate the DPE process in a fair and equitable way will discourage visitors from visiting Chorley. Failure to comply with the various guidelines and statutes of the 91 Act could put the Council in an ultra vires situation.

BACKGROUND

Background Information on Financing for DPE.

5. Section 4.1 of the Guidance on Decriminalised Parking Enforcement Outside London states: each Local Authority operating the new system of decriminalised parking enforcement should ensure that it is run efficiently and economically. Each authority should also aim to make the new system overall at least self financing as soon as practicable.
6. Lancashire County Council commissioned a firm of consultants, RTA Associates Ltd, to prepare a Financial Model for the County as a whole and each individual district. The financial model is designed to assess the impact on the Council of adopting the powers to undertake decriminalised parking enforcement (DPE) throughout the Council area, by the transfer of responsibility from the Police. The full Financial Model runs to thirty-five pages and is available for inspection. The Model assesses the projected costs associated with setting up and operating DPE, and the projected income from PCN's based on the length of restrictions in place in the Borough, and from the Boroughs own Car Parks. Whilst the number of PCN's issued over the five years that the Model covers is stated, these figures are estimates only, based on the experience of the Consultants and what has been achieved in other Authority's. These figures are not targets, and are produced purely to establish a business plan.

7. Lancashire CC provided some two million pounds in set up costs and it is predicted that the operation will achieve breakeven point after approx. thirty months. All income received from DPE is held by Chorley Borough Council and used to offset expenditure until a surplus is achieved. It is only at that point the revenue due to Lancashire will be forwarded to them.
8. A report is run on a daily basis on the PCN's issued the previous day by the Attendants. This is checked by the Parking Manager to ensure that the Attendants are conforming to the guidelines laid down, e.g. observation times etc.
Weekly meetings are held with the Contractor, National Car Parks (NCP), to discuss any issues that have been raised.
9. Any comments regarding the Attendants that are raised in correspondence with Parkwise are forwarded to the Contractor for investigation and responses monitored by the Parking Manager.
Regular monthly meetings are held with all twelve districts, Parkwise management and NCP management.
10. When a new member of staff joins NCP, they are taken through a detailed training package approved by LCC and the District Councils. This course lasts 6 days, in the classroom, with an exam to take that they must pass to progress further.
The training is workbook based, and each PA keeps their training material to refer to should they need it.
The course is made up of a number of modules and includes: -
 - Customer Care
 - Interpersonal Skills
 - Dealing with Aggression
 - Driving Customer Focus

In addition to the relevant skill based modules.

What Targets/ Incentives are Offered to Attendants to Issue PCN's?

11. There are no targets on the number of PCN's issued, set by Lancashire or Chorley Borough Council, and the provision of Incentives to Attendants to issue PCN's would be illegal

Comparisons Between Attendants/Population.

12.

District	Population	Area (sq. km)	Deployed Hours/ Month	Ratio Population/ Hours	PCN Issued Sept - May
Preston	130,500	142	3614	2.77%	22,887
Burnley	88,500	111	1968	2.22%	12913
Lancaster	135,800	576	2020	1.49%	17594
Chorley	102,000	203	1392	1.36%	9555
Rossendale	65,900	138	768	1.17%	3319
Pendle	89,300	169	936	1.05%	6298
Fylde	75,000	166	648	0.86%	6876
Wyre	108,300	283	888	0.82%	1668
West Lancs	109,000	347	600	0.55%	4169
Hyndburn	81,700	73	408	0.50%	4798
South Ribble	105,100	113	504	0.48%	2995
Ribble Valley	55,900	583	200	0.36%	2,474
Total	1,147,000		13,946		95,546
Chorley % of Total	8.89%		9.98%		10.00%

13. In order to provide some flexibility in operation, the standard method of measuring the level of deployment is by using the number of hours deployed. This allows the use of full time and part time employees to ensure adequate coverage at all times. Chorley Borough Council has asked for 58 hours per day, six days per week. This provides for up to seven Attendants per day, consisting of a Supervisor, one Mobile Patrol for the Outer Core Area and the remainder deployed within the town. Immediately prior to the start of DPE, the feeling of dissatisfaction with the lack of enforcement by the Police was so strong that Members were asking for up to fourteen Attendants to be deployed on a daily basis. However, the advice received from RTA Consultants was for seven or eight attendants per day.

Comparisons with Other Authorities.

14. Sefton MBC introduced DPE in February 2000. PCN issues since introduction is: -
- | | |
|--------|--------|
| Year 1 | 37,000 |
| Year 2 | 38,000 |
| Year 3 | 40,000 |
| Year 4 | 50,000 |
| Year 5 | 52,000 |

These figures show that, rather than motorists learn from experience regarding Parking, the opposite applies, and we can expect to see a similar increase in the number of PCN's issued.

Comparisons between Rural and Urban Settings.

15. At least one Attendant is deployed on a mobile patrol each day, covering the Outer Core area of the Borough. On average, 7% of the weekly PCN's issued are in this Outer Core area. Of the 55,958 metres of restrictions enforceable within the Borough, 8950 metres are located outside the core area.

Why did Chorley BC go with the Lancs. CC Parkwise initiative?

16. The Parkwise initiative is driven by the vision to remove from the Police, the parking enforcement role that would allow them to concentrate their efforts on more serious crime. In addition, the level of inconsiderate and illegal parking was considered to be compromising road safety and seriously affecting the capacity of the County's road network.
17. Lancs. CC agreed at a very early stage to provide £2M to cover a wide variety of set up costs. They also agreed to work closely with all district councils and allow them to have a direct input in how the enforcement operation works in their district. Lancs CC are the Highway Authority and bound by the Road Traffic Act 1991, which places many restrictions, including on how the enforcement is carried out, both on street and in the car parks.
18. Had Chorley BC decided to work separately to the County it would have had to provide a back office system to process Penalty Charge Notices, with the appropriate staff and other resources. With regard to on-street enforcement it is likely that LCC would not have carried this out OR at best they would have organised for NCP to patrol without any influence from Chorley BC.

COMMENTS OF THE HEAD OF HUMAN RESOURCES

19. None at this stage.

COMMENTS OF THE DIRECTOR OF FINANCE

20. None at this stage.

RECOMMENDATION

21. That the information be noted.

KEITH ALLEN
HEAD OF PUBLIC SPACE SERVICES

There are no background papers to this report.

Report Author	Ext	Date	Doc ID
Iain Price, Parking Manager	5251	27 June 2005	ADMINREP/REPORT