

Report of	Meeting	Date
Director of Streetscene, Neighbourhoods and Environment	Corporate and Customer Overview and Scrutiny Panel	15 February 2007

DECRIMINALISED PARKING ENFORCEMENT – MONITORING OF INQUIRY RECOMMENDATIONS

PURPOSE OF REPORT

- To report to the Panel progress following their recommendations made to the Executive Cabinet on 29th June 2006

CORPORATE PRIORITIES

- The report deals with issues that relate primarily to the strategic objective of putting Chorley at the heart of regional economic development in the Central Lancashire sub region.

RISK ISSUES

- 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	

- The report relates mainly to procedural and customer care issues.

BACKGROUND

- The Panel carried out an enquiry to investigate the effectiveness of decriminalised Parking Enforcement in Chorley, and assessed the impact the introduction of this had on residents, visitors, motorists, traders and business. A summary of the Panel's recommendations, annotated with up to date comments on the progress made on the implementation of the recommendations, is set out overleaf.



Objective/Key Issue 1 To investigate the effectiveness of Decriminalisation of Parking Enforcement in Chorley,

Recommendation	Comments
1. That it be noted that in the early stages there was some cause for concern that generated media interest. There have been improvements since the Inquiry has been ongoing. Recommendations 4, 5, 6, 11c have already begun.	Not applicable.
2. That the Director of Customer, Legal and Democratic Services be requested to resolve the outstanding issues in relation to the agency agreement as soon as possible.	The Director is current waiting for a response from LCC legal to the outstanding issues.

Objective/Key Issue 3 To compare with Best Practice elsewhere.

Recommendation	Comments
3. That the Parking Manager liaise with the contractor (National Car Parks) to ensure that Parking Attendants make a note of circumstances when a driver returned to their vehicle, had been issued with a Penalty Charge Notice and was encouraged by the Parking Attendant to follow the appeals procedure.	This has been implemented.
4. That the Parking Manager liaise with the contractor (National Car Parks) to ensure that Parking Attendants record verbal abuse on the hand held equipment and in the pocket book.	This has been implemented.
14. That Lancashire County Council Social Services be requested to highlight which side of the Blue Badge should be displayed using a sticker.	LCC Social Services will implement this initiative early this year. Delayed due to move to the Hub.
5. That the Parking Manager liaise with the contractor (National Car Parks) to ensure that Parking Attendants use a leaflet showing additional information as to why a Penalty Charge Notice had been issued to Blue Badge holders, similar to that used in Bolton.	Implemented – this is now done County wide.
6. That the Parking Manager meet the Parking Attendants on their first day of employment to highlight certain points, for example, the importance of customer services.	This has been implemented.
7. That the Director of Streetscene, Neighbourhoods and Environment initiate Traffic Regulation Orders on the zig zag lines in front of schools in Chorley in conjunction with the “safer routes to school” initiative with Lancashire County Council.	Implemented - LCC now carrying this forward. Six schools included in report to be considered by Lancashire Local Chorley Committee on 8 February 2007.
18. To support the following recommendations of the Childs report: That the British Parking Association invites the Department for Transport: To undertake urgent work to make more widely known the link between road safety, free flow of traffic and kerb space management and parking control (R1).	Implemented - A copy of the Scrutiny recommendations was presented to the British Parking Association.

To seek from Local Authorities a full and audited annual disclosure which identifies income, expenditure and those specific areas in which any Decriminalisation of Parking Enforcement surpluses have been spent and the benefit they bring to all stakeholders and

Prescribe a national model for how this information should be provided and ensure that it was in a form that was easily understood (R2).

To specifically encourage the adoption of an appropriately balanced Model Contract for use by Local Authorities and contractors (R4).

To require Local Authorities to undertake regular and local public opinion surveys into parking controls and Decriminalisation of Parking Enforcement and identify key concerns the community have (R5).

To develop a communication strategy around parking control and Decriminalisation of Parking Enforcement aimed at improving the public understanding and perception of them (R6).

To consider how parking control and enforcement and the benefits they bring can be better represented in the Highway Code (R7).

To require Local Authorities to undertake regular audits of traffic regulation orders and signs to ensure that they remain relevant and necessary and signs are accurate, understandable and visible and that changes needed in regulations be made within a published time frame (R12).

To emphasise to Local Authorities the importance of regular reviews of traffic regulation orders and signage and seek the publication of a plan to achieve this (R13).

To consider whether through legislation, the name "Parking Attendant" should be changed to better reflect the role of such staff on the street (R15).

To consider ways in which it can be made obligatory to Parking Attendants to have undergone independently assessed training e.g. through the new City and Guilds qualification, either before appointment or within a set period of being appointed (R17).

To support an approach to the Home Office to explore how the victimisation of Parking Attendants might be made a higher priority for the Police (R23).

To urge Local Authorities to fully investigate and respond to requests to have a penalty charge notice withdrawn on receipt of the first communication from the driver (R32).

To urge Local Authorities to reinstate a full 14-day discount period if a road user can satisfy them that he/she did not receive the original Penalty Charge Notice (R33).

To encourage Local Authorities to publish annually the

- Number of Penalty Charge Notices issued each year
- Number of Penalty Charge Notices paid at the reduced rate
- Number of requests for Penalty Charge Notices to be withdrawn before the Notice to Owner was issued (R34)
- Number of formal representation made and allowed
- Time taken to respond to all requests

To collaborate with the British Parking Association in undertaking research to establish the most effective way of providing National good practice in parking control and the development of a good practice guide (R41).

That the British Parking Association

Explores the way in which the status and recognition given to Parking Attendants can be improved (R14).

Engages with specialist training advisors and reviews whether the levels of interpersonal skills and conflict resolution training in the Parking Attendant training syllabus was sufficient for the role they perform (R18).

Encourage Local Authorities and contractors who employ Parking Attendants, to provide specific financial support for those who wish to undertake job related and externally validated training, if the employer does not provide suitable training (R19).

Approach the Association of Chief Police Officers and seek to develop an enhanced response in case of Parking Attendant victimisation (R22).

Considers the establishment of an appropriate qualification for parking managers as a development on its work on training for Parking Attendants (R28).

And

That there was no change in the level of discretion given to Parking Attendants "on the street" (R27).

19. That the Department for Transport be requested to develop a guide to parking to be sent to drivers with their drivers license and to consider parking issues in more detail in the driving test.

Objective/Key Issue 4 To identify future improvements for customer service.

Recommendation	Comments
<p>8. To undertake the following to address the negative perception of the public in relation to Decriminalisation of Parking Enforcement:</p> <p>a, To request Lancashire County Council to produce a marketing toolkit for use by the districts, for example posters, leaflets, bus or radio advertising.</p> <p>b, That the Director of Policy and Performance include a question relating to Decriminalisation of Parking Enforcement on any suitable surveys with the citizens' panel to identify any concerns that the community have.</p> <p>c, That the Parking Manager distribute of publicity leaflets to local businesses and market traders such as, "pavements are for people" and "parking tips" to educate drivers that they can return to the vehicle and purchase additional time.</p> <p>d, That the Parking Manager arrange for a sign to be erected on site where revenue from Decriminalisation of Parking Enforcement had funded projects, for example, road safety schemes.</p> <p>e, That the Parking Manager place a helpline number on all of the car park tariff boards to enable the public to report faults or problems to the contractor (National Car Parks)</p> <p>f, That a leaflet be produced showing where the Car parks were in Chorley. The leaflet to be produced by an external company but co-designed with the Council with sponsored adverts in from local businesses. The leaflets to be distributed to local businesses, Market Traders and the One Stop Shop.</p> <p>g, That if a commercial or a new corporate video, was produced references should be made to Decriminalisation of Parking Enforcement.</p>	<p>LCC still working on this and looking at material produced by Chorley.</p> <p>Implemented - LCC now dealing with this, sending out questionnaires to all customers and spending £25,000 on market research.</p> <p>Will happen when appropriate.</p> <p>Will happen when appropriate.</p> <p>Dedicated line installed but information delayed until decision on co-location.</p> <p>Work in progress</p> <p>No current plans to produce a new video.</p>
<p>9. That the Parking Manager trial the use of mystery shoppers with Internal Audit. The Panel would monitor the results and regularity of mystery shoppers. A dispensation could be given to allow a vehicle to park in contravention on a car park allowing the mystery shopper to assess:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Whether a vehicle parked in contravention was issued with a Penalty Charge Notice, • How the customer was dealt with, • The quality of information given by the Parking Attendant and <p>How the appeal was dealt with by Parkwise.</p>	<p>Implemented - Officers from Internal Audit carried out "Mystery Shopper" exercises on four separate dates, using four different vehicles. On each occasion a Pay and Display ticket was purchased and displayed face down on the vehicles dashboard.</p> <p>Penalty Charge Notices (PCN's) were issued to three of the vehicles, all for the correct code of "Parked in a Pay and Display car park without clearly displaying a valid pay and display ticket."</p>

	<p>Following the issue of the PCN's the Attendant who issued the ticket was approached by the officer and engaged in discussion regarding why the ticket had been issued. A summary of the findings is shown below.</p> <p>Telephone calls were then made the following day to Parkwise to enquire about what to do next regarding the PCN and the findings are detailed below</p> <table border="0" data-bbox="833 622 1343 862"> <tr> <td></td> <td colspan="2" style="text-align: right;">Attendant Parkwise</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Appearance</td> <td>Good</td> <td>N/A</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Explanation for Issue</td> <td>Good</td> <td>Good</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Explanation of Appeals Process</td> <td>Good</td> <td>Good</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Courtesy</td> <td>Good</td> <td>Good</td> </tr> </table> <p>The exercise is considered to have been of value and should be continued. However, it is felt inappropriate that officers from Internal Audit continue to be involved, due the small numbers of staff and the limited number of vehicles available to carry out the process.</p> <p>Following discussions with the Contractor, it is proposed that as part of a Parking Enforcement Quality Management Initiative, that they carry out a Mystery Parker exercise, using staff from their Management Team and to serve as a check on the performance of their staff and to report their findings to the Council. The advantage to this proposal is the wide number of people available to take part and a much wider range of vehicles.</p>		Attendant Parkwise		Appearance	Good	N/A	Explanation for Issue	Good	Good	Explanation of Appeals Process	Good	Good	Courtesy	Good	Good
	Attendant Parkwise															
Appearance	Good	N/A														
Explanation for Issue	Good	Good														
Explanation of Appeals Process	Good	Good														
Courtesy	Good	Good														
<p>16. That the contractor (National Car Parks), in conjunction with Lancashire County Council be requested to review the Parking Attendant uniform</p>	<p>This will be raised via the Management Board at Parkwise to gauge reaction from the other Districts. If considered desirable, cost to be obtained from the Contractor.</p>															
<p>15. That Lancashire County Council be requested to create a recognised permit for registered carers within Chorley and South Ribble Primary Care Trust area.</p>	<p>This request is still being processed by LCC.</p>															
<p>10. That the Director of Streetscene, Neighbourhoods and Environment write to all Chorley Borough Councillors and Parish Councillors requesting that any requests for</p>	<p>Implemented - This has now been carried out twice, and has resulted in parish Clerks contacting the Parking Manager directly.</p>															

parking enforcement be made to the Parking Manager. 11. That the Parking Manager organise spot checks by Parking Attendants in residents parking areas out of hours, especially in the summer months. 12. To support the recent trial of a Parking Attendant using a scooter in the rural areas.	Implemented - Early morning and evening enforcement is being carried out on an irregular basis. Implemented - The scooter is now deployed daily, weather permitting.
13. That the Parking Manager, in conjunction with the Director of Human Resources, create a welcome pack for new Parking Attendants, including the Customer Charter and useful numbers including the Parkwise helpline, Borough Council Contact Centre and Police.	HR are currently updating the induction manual and the relevant parts of the new manual will be issued to new attendants.
17. To support the use of technology to enhance service provision, for example, the use of electronic hand held devices.	Implemented - The Contractor reviews available technology regularly.

COMMENTS OF THE DIRECTOR OF HUMAN RESOURCES

6. There are no direct HR implications associated with this report

COMMENTS OF THE DIRECTOR OF FINANCE

7. There are no financial implications associated with this report.

RECOMMENDATION(S)

8. It is recommended that the Panel notes progress on the various issues.

JOHN LECHMERE
DIRECTOR OF STREETSCENE, NEIGHBOURHOODS AND ENVIRONMENT

There are no background papers to this report.

Report Author	Ext	Date	Doc ID
Keith Allen	5250	5 February 2007	ADMINREP/94002LM