

CUSTOMER OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY PANEL SUB-GROUP

9 August 2005

Present: Councillor Mrs Walsh (Chair), M Lees, Malpas, Miss Molyneaux and E Smith.

01 DECRIMINALISATION OF PARKING ENFORCEMENT

Officers outlined background information on Decriminalisation of Parking Enforcement (DPE). This included the Road Traffic Act 1991, the role Lancashire County Council played in setting up the back office and investing in equipment.

The Panel noted that there was an increased number of man-hours spent in comparison with hours spent before DPE was introduced in September 2004. Consultants had given advice that Chorley should have 8 – 10 Parking Attendants (PA). One PA used a mobile patrol in the outskirts of the Borough. PA's were assigned a beat in the town centre and were monitored by two supervisors. Part of training involved shadowing meaning that on occasions two PA's would be on the same beat. PA's also received training in customer services.

In response to a query it was noted that in comparison with other districts, such as West Lancashire, Chorley had a high density of Traffic Orders, car parks and residents parking. This meant that comparison was hard. It was noted that Southport had been operating DPE for a number of years and that the number of Penalty Charge Notices (PCN's) had actually increased year on year. Members queried the use of publicity materials to raise awareness with the public.

Members discussed the fact that DPE had improved things for areas operating residents parking schemes and people now found it easier to park on the more popular car parks in the town centre.

The Panel commented that the negative press received in the early stages was common across Lancashire. All 12 districts and their PA's now had more experience of DPE and gained local knowledge in respect of their areas. There had been less than 1% low turnover of staff since implementation.

Members noted that the number of PCN's/Car Park tickets sold was less than 1% from September 2004 to June 2005. There was an appeals procedure in place when a PCN was issued. This meant that if a person had received a PCN as they had not displayed a valid ticket but did have a valid ticket the PCN would be cancelled.

It was noted that the perception of the public that a larger number of people were receiving PCN's than was actually the case needed to be addressed.

RESOLVED –

- 1. To request the following information for a future meeting:**
 - **DPE operations in the outskirts of the Borough in more detail,**
 - **Parking Attendant town centre beats,**
 - **Publicity materials used to raise awareness with the public,**
 - **Comparisons of the number of Traffic Orders in Chorley and other districts,**
 - **The appeals procedure,**
- 2. To hold a further Sub-Group on 17 August to consider the information**

on cancelled PCN's.

Chair