

ENVIRONMENT AND TRANSPORT SELECT COMMITTEE
March 2014

PARKING SERVICE ANNUAL REPORT FOR FINANCIAL YEAR
2012/13

Purpose of the report: To provide information about on-street parking enforcement within Surrey during 2012/13.

Introduction:

- 1 The County Council is responsible for the management of on-street parking enforcement. On the 31 March 2008, part 6 the Traffic Management Act 2004 (TMA) was enacted. This introduced a number of additional powers and changed the terminology from Decriminalised to Civil Parking Enforcement. Surrey Police do not enforce waiting restrictions in the county and enforcement patrols are carried out by Civil Enforcement Officers (CEOs) employed by the district / borough councils with the authority of the county council.
2. Within the Secretary of State's statutory guidance to local authorities on the civil enforcement of parking contraventions, it states that enforcement authorities should produce an annual report about their enforcement activities. The purpose of this report is to fulfil this requirement.

Background

3. The County Council started operating Decriminalised Parking Enforcement (DPE), in 2004. At that time the enforcement of restrictions and associated administrative functions was carried out by the eleven districts and borough councils on behalf of the County Council with localised agency agreements introduced on a staggered basis.
4. For the operation of CPE up to April 2011, the agency agreements stipulated that the County Council was responsible for all costs. From the 2011/12 financial year and beyond it was agreed that the district and borough Council's carrying out on street enforcement in Surrey would be responsible for any deficit within their areas. Nine districts agreed to this, with Tandridge and Waverley deciding to no longer be involved with on-

street parking enforcement. In these districts CPE was carried out by Reigate and Banstead and Guildford respectively.

5. Financial information has been reported by all nine agents (for eleven areas), and has been collated to give the total income / expenditure for on street parking enforcement for the 2012/13 financial year for the County Council as a whole. This is shown in Annex 1.
6. Part 6 of the TMA states that an annual parking report should detail all on-street income / expenditure plus various other figures relating to performance and should be put in the public domain. This report contains the recommended data broken down by individual district in Annex 2. Although not a County Council function, enforcement data for the district and borough council owned and managed car parks is also provided.

Financial reporting

7. The purpose of operating a parking service is not to generate income but to provide a quality service for residents, businesses and motorists within Surrey, helping improve road safety and reduce congestion as well as access to local businesses.
8. The introduction of the TMA created significant changes in the way parking enforcement is undertaken. A key change was the introduction of differential penalty charges, dependant on contravention. The reasoning behind this is that it is deemed some parking contraventions are more serious than others (such as parking on double yellow lines rather than overstaying your time in a parking bay) so the level of penalty charge should reflect this. There are two bands with the higher rate set at £70 and the lower at £50 (both discounted by 50% if paid within 14 days). Whether a contravention is a higher or lower rate is prescribed in the regulations and not subject to local discretion. Prior to these changes the standard charge was £60 (still discounted by 50% if paid within 14 days). The number of PCN's paid at each level is shown in Annex 2.
9. Where there is an operating surplus in any district or borough it has been agreed to split it 65/35 (county/district) respectively for the years 2011/12. Note: revised on street parking enforcement arrangements have been agreed by the Surrey Cabinet and are in place for the for 2013/14 financial year.
10. The total cost of operating on-street parking in each district for 2011/12 is detailed in Annex 1. The figures are as supplied by our enforcement partners and the actual outturn in the county's accounts is slightly different due to the timing of payments and need for accruals at the end of each financial year (this will balance over time).
11. The overall cost of operating on street parking enforcement in Surrey changed from a deficit of £314,431 in 2010/11 to a surplus of £644,377 during 2011/12. In 2012/13 the overall surplus increased to £848,430. Some of the reasons for this are explained below.

Operational Report

12. Surrey is a varied county and consequently the number of PCNs issued is not consistent in all areas. In simplistic terms the opportunity to undertake enforcement in a built up area is greater than in the countryside. The type of restriction can also have a significant impact. For example, limited waiting bays, where parking is permitted for a certain amount of time but then re-parking in the same place is not allowed for a set period (such as 1 hour, with no return allowed for 2 hours), while popular with residents and businesses, are difficult and require significant resources to enforce.
13. The number of PCNs issued in recent year's county wide remained at around 78,000 in 2012/13, very similar to the previous year. There is no single reason for this and the number of PCN's issued varies from area to area. Some of the factors that influence the numbers of PCN's issued include the economic downturn and the rise in fuel prices (reduced activity). The increased profile of parking enforcement in the national media could also mean that many people are less likely to take a chance on receiving a PCN, improving compliance. The picture is not straight forward however as some district and boroughs have improved the consistency and effectiveness of their parking enforcement operation leading to increased numbers of PCN's being issued.
14. In April 2011, Guildford Borough Council took over on street enforcement in Waverley. At the same time Reigate and Banstead took over enforcement in Tandridge. In both cases the transition went smoothly and helped turn around historical financial deficits for parking enforcement in these areas to a 'break even' situation or a surplus in 2011/12 and 2012/13.
15. The majority of the operating surplus derived from parking enforcement is from the largest towns with established CPZ's, Guildford and Woking. In late 2010 the County reviewed and revised resident permit charges. Until the review, permit charges were as low as £10 per year in some areas and varied considerably across the County. This did not reflect the true cost of administering a resident parking scheme and consequently a new charge of £50 was introduced from April 2011.
16. Annex 2 details operational parking data for the eleven boroughs / districts. It is laid out as recommended by the guidance; hence the inclusion of number of vehicles immobilised / removed. This is shown as not applicable because the county council and our agents do not immobilise or remove vehicles for parking contraventions, in line with the policy decision made by the former Executive.
17. There needs to be a fair enforcement regime if waiting restrictions are to be respected by motorists. This needs to be balanced against the cost of enforcement to ensure that any proposal is financially sound and does not generate unsustainable revenue commitments for the County or district. It

is not always possible to provide levels of enforcement that some residents would like.

18. The SCC and district/borough parking teams regularly assess and amend existing signs and lines on the ground to ensure that they meet the requirements of the legislation. This has helped make it clearer to drivers to understand what the restrictions are and helped remove any ambiguity.
19. Parking is a pressure in many locations within Surrey. The Council receives many requests to increase or introduce restrictions, and for additional enforcement where controls already exist. Reviews of restrictions are ongoing throughout the County, in accordance with the priorities of the Local Committee for that area. If the funding is available the Parking Team aim to review each area on an 12 month cycle, however this depends on the number of locations in the review.

New operational arrangements

21. New arrangements for on street parking enforcement were agreed by the Surrey Cabinet on the 23 October 2012 following extensive discussion with our enforcement partners. These took effect in April 2013 with the introduction of new 5 year agency agreements with district and borough councils covering the same as described in paragraph 4. The most significant changes are that the local committee now have a scrutiny or oversight role for on street parking enforcement as well as deciding how to spend 60% of any surplus.

Financial and value for money implications

22. The Secretary of State's statutory guidance states that it is a sensible aim for CPE operations to be self-financing, and that if they are not, the authorities should be certain that the operations can be paid for from within existing funding. With continued pressure on public finances, it is increasingly important for Surrey to try to run its CPE operation in a way that is at least cost neutral, as neither national nor local taxpayers should be expected to meet any deficit.
23. In order to help improve efficiency and reduce costs the county council has set up a two call off contracts in recent years that can be used by the district and borough councils. So far these have been for the supply and installation of pay and display machines and a 'cashless parking payment' system. These contracts make the most of the bulk buying power of all the authorities in the County.
24. The surplus identified in Annex 1 must be used in accordance with Section 55 of the Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984 (as amended). This generally limits use to highway, parking or environmental work in the public realm. The surplus created in Guildford covers the cost of park and ride in the

borough. In other areas, where a surplus has been created it was split 65/35 between the county/district.

Equalities Implications

25. Effective enforcement of parking restrictions and enforcement can assist accessibility for those with visual or mobility impairment by reducing instances of obstructive parking. Parking restrictions also allow blue badge holders better access to shops and services through the provision and enforcement of disabled bays.

Risk Management Implications

26. None

Implications for the Council's Priorities or Community Strategy/Local Area Agreement Targets

27. On street enforcement contributes to objectives of the Surrey Transport Plan helping tackle congestion and improve accessibility, which can be hindered by inconsiderate parking.

Recommendations:

- i) receive and note the parking services annual report
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Sources/background papers:

Parking Service Annual Report 2011/12.

Operation of Civil Parking Enforcement 23 October 2012, SCC Cabinet

TOTAL INCOME AND EXPENDITURE 2012/13

Enforcement Area (Borough/District)	Income Totals	Expenditure Totals	Net Cost of CPE in each area negative is a deficit
Elmbridge	£609,757	£472,524	£137,233
Epsom & Ewell	£204,798	£205,234	-£436
Guildford	£1,390,769	£802,897	£587,872
Mole Valley	£109,380	£173,712	-£64,332
Reigate & Banstead	£348,048	£312,171	£35,877
Runnymede	£77,505	£129,143	-£51,638
Spelthorne	£144,324	£117,578	£26,746
Surrey Heath	£329,630	£377,560	-£47,930
Tandridge	£97,669	£95,027	£2,642
Waverley	£237,938	£188,962	£48,976
Woking	£840,330	£666,910	£173,420
Totals	£4,390,148	£3,541,718	£848,430

Note

Income is from PCN's, parking charges, resident permits, suspensions and waivers
35% of any surplus is retained by enforcement authority for 2012/13

