

TONBRIDGE & MALLING BOROUGH COUNCIL

JOINT TRANSPORTATION BOARD

11 June 2018

Report of the Director of Street Scene, Leisure & Technical Services

Part 1- Public

Matter for Recommendation to Borough Cabinet - Non-Key Decision (Decision may be taken by the Cabinet Member)

1 PARKING ACTION PLAN – REVIEW OF ZONE D2 BUSINESS PERMITS

1.1 Summary

This report relates to a review of Business Permits within the D2 Parking Zone in the Barden Road Area, Tonbridge.

1.2 Introduction

1.2.1 Barden Road, Tonbridge has been a permit parking area for a number of years, introduced to deter the high level of commuter and town centre workers who were parking all day in the residential streets, reducing the already limited parking capacity.

1.2.2 The preferential parking scheme gives a greater level of opportunity to residents and businesses to park within the zone by displacing vehicles during the restricted periods.

1.2.3 Last year the Borough Council introduced changes to a number of restrictions across the Borough as part of Phase 8 of the Parking Action Plan, which included the subdivision of the existing Zone D permit parking area of Tonbridge into two separate parking areas (D1 and D2), and the extension of the permit restriction times. These zones are shown at Annex 1.

1.2.4 The extension of the permit restriction times has been beneficial in deterring non-resident parking, but there have been a number of requests from Members and residents to review the issue of Business permits within this zone.

1.3 Background

1.3.1 The Council currently has 52 business permits issued to businesses that are within the current D1 and D2 parking zones. The business permits currently allow users to park only in Zone D2.

1.3.2 The vast majority of Business permits (42) are issued to businesses that occupy the offices at Riverside Business Centre which is located on River Lawn Road.

1.3.3 In response to recent consultation the Council has received comments relating to the conflict between the business and residential permit holders along with requests to remove all business users from these zones. Following on-going liaison with the local Members the Parking team has carried out surveys to monitor the area to enable the development of further parking management proposals.

1.4 Survey Analysis

1.4.1 Surveys were undertaken to identify the location and number of business permit holders parking in the area. A summary of the survey results is shown at Annex 2.

1.4.2 The outcome of the survey is that although 52 business permits have been issued to qualifying business a maximum of 21 were used at any one time. The surveys also demonstrated that the location of the business permit holders was as close to the boundary of Zone D1/D2 as possible therefore the impact on those residents immediately at the boundary of D1 and D2 would be amplified.

1.4.3 Aside from the road locations immediately at the boundary of the D1/D2 zone it is apparent that there is capacity for parking on roads further into the D2 zone. Although Danvers Road and Holford Street are predominantly full at all times, the survey indicates that there is space elsewhere in zone D1.

1.4.4 It is worth noting that residents of D1 are also able to use road space in D2 but D2 permit holders are unable to use the D1 zone.

1.5 Options for consideration

1.5.1 There are a number of options that have been explored for Members to consider, each with their own advantages and disadvantages.

1.5.2 Option 1 – Do nothing

In light of the relatively low numbers of business permits being used compared to spaces and demand, the parking issue could be left.

- **Pros** – Over time the conflict could ease and settle. Resources can be used to address and review other parking issues
- **Cons** – Does not address residents or Member's concerns or relieve parking pressure around the D1/D2 boundary

1.5.3 Option 2 – Restrict business permit parking to specific underused roads

By using the planning classification for Businesses, Business parking permits for "commercial-office" premises could be changed when they come up for renewal to be restricted to Barden Park Road only – this would gradually shift business

permit holders away from the D1/D2 boundary to a road where there is significant levels of available parking.

1.5.4 The increased distance from the majority of the permit holders would likely result in a reduction in the number of business permits and there may also be a shift to parking in the long-stay car parks which may be more convenient. This can also be encouraged by offering car park permits to current business permit holders at a reduced rate for an introductory period.

1.5.5 The current cost of a business permit is £160 and with a move to a season ticket this would become £950 which is a significant change in cost. This could be mitigated in the first two years by reducing the cost during this transition, on an escalating scale to the full rate in the third year.

- **Pros** – This should gradually reduce parking pressure at the D1/D2 boundary.
- **Cons** – Increased business parking in roads that currently do not have a parking issue and increased distance for business permit holders to walk. Business in the commercial retail/showroom category would remain able to park around the D1/D2 boundary.

1.5.6 **Option 3 – Restrict business permits for Commercial – Office parking to specific underused roads, and allow the remaining Commercial businesses to park in D1**

This would work on the same principle as Option 2, but further remove the parking pressure at the D1/D2 boundary by allowing the Commercial retail/showroom businesses to park closer to their premises, which tend to be located in the D1 area, where it is demonstrated that there is spare daytime capacity.

- **Pros** – This would again gradually reduce parking pressure at the D1/D2 boundary, but more-so than Option 2. This would also be to the benefit of the businesses in the Retail/Showroom category as they would be able to park closer to their premises.
- **Cons** – Increased business parking in roads that currently do not have a parking issue (but to a lesser extent than Option 2), Increased parking in underused roads in the western end of D1, but for a much lower number of vehicles.

1.6 Officer Recommendation

1.6.1 **The option that seems to address the majority of concerns and have the least impact on businesses is Option 3.** This could be further modified by offering an additional option of a reduced-rate season ticket (as 1.5.5) for those that would be displaced.

1.7 Next Steps - Implementation

- 1.7.1 If the Board choose to take forward either option 2 or option 3 set out above, the changes could be introduced without a change to the on-street Traffic Regulation Order.
- 1.7.2 The Council would need to write to all the Business permit holders and notify them of the changes, which would come into effect at the next permit renewal date. The Council would look to start this process in the next couple of months.

1.8 Equality Impact Assessment

- 1.8.1 The decisions recommended through this paper have a remote or low relevance to the substance of the Equality Act. There is no perceived impact on end users.

1.9 Legal Implications

- 1.9.1 The on-street parking service is undertaken by the Borough Council on behalf of Kent County Council under terms of a formal legal agreement.

1.10 Financial and Value for Money Considerations

- 1.10.1 Funding to implement works associated with this proposal is provided within the Council's existing Revenue Budgets.
- 1.10.2 The proposed changes are not expected to impact the current revenue streams.

1.11 Risk Assessment

- 1.11.1 The assessment and consultation process applied to parking management should provide the assurance that the Borough Council has the will and ability to adapt the Parking Plans, in the light of comment and circumstances and to ensure that it achieves a best balance of local parking needs. A regular review of the schemes is crucial to ensure that we can correctly and effectively manage on-street parking in these areas as the proposals are either introduced for safety reasons or to provide a more appropriate balance of parking needs.
- 1.11.2 A major risk is that scheme proposals encounter significant lack of local support. This risk is mitigated by the considerable effort devoted to ensuring there is widespread consultation on proposals at this statutory formal stage.
- 1.11.3 Following an appropriate period of time, the Council will look to review the Business Permit Scheme for these zones as part of the Phased Parking Review process.

1.12 Policy Considerations

- 1.12.1 Asset Management
- 1.12.2 Communications

1.12.3 Community

1.12.4 Customer Contact

1.13 Recommendations

1.13.1 It is RECOMMENDED that:-

- i) Option 3 be taken forward to address the concerns around Business Permit Parking in the D1 and D2 Zones.
- ii) The review of D1 and D2 Business Parking Permits be added to the holding list for review as part of the Phased Parking Review.

The Street Scene, Leisure & Technical Services confirms that the proposals contained in the recommendation(s), if approved, will fall within the Council's Budget and Policy Framework.

Background papers:
Annex 1 – D1 & D2 Business parking permits surveys

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