

REPORT TITLE **On Street - Civil Parking Enforcement**

Submitted by: **Engineering Manager – Graham Williams**

Portfolio: **Environment and Recycling**

Ward(s) affected: **All**

Purpose of the Report

To seek approval of the proposal for on street Civil Parking Enforcement within the Borough of Newcastle under Lyme to continue to be operated on behalf of Staffordshire County Council using existing staff.

Recommendations (to be in bold)

That members:

- 1. receive the report**
- 2. approve the proposal to continue to undertake on street Civil Parking Enforcement on behalf of the county council under the terms as contained within this report**

Reasons

The on street Civil Parking Enforcement has been operated by NBC staff since November 2007, the County Council are undertaking county wide of how the service is provided by each of the district councils. The County Council intend to give 12 months termination of the current agreement by the end of March 2014. They have requested that each district produce a proposal how the district council would undertake the enforcement.

1. Background

- 1.1 The County Council introduced on street Civil Parking Enforcement (CPE) within the Borough in November 2007.
- 1.2 The Borough Council entered into an agreement to undertake the on street enforcement on behalf of the county Council.
- 1.3 All the other district councils have also entered into a similar agreement.
- 1.4 When the scheme was set up there was an expectation that the income from the issuing of the penalty charge notices (PCN) would fund the costs of the enforcement.
- 1.5 As part of the original scheme on street charging has been introduced, in parts of the Borough. Some of the districts have not introduced on street charging.
- 1.6 There has been a slight surplus which is currently paying back the set up costs. In future years when the set up costs have been repaid, the surpluses would be used to fund traffic related schemes within the area of the Borough Council. The Borough Councils element of the original setup costs was £22,000.

2. Issues

- 2.1 Whilst Newcastle BC has been showing a slight annual surplus from operating the on street enforcement, some of the other district councils have been operating at a loss (a contributory factor of this loss is due to the lack of on street charging in some of the districts).
- 2.2 Overall the County Council is operating at a deficit and under the agreements have to reimburse the district councils their losses.
- 2.3 The back office processing is undertaken by Stoke City Council for both the on and off street issued penalty charge notices. Separate agreements exist between the district councils and Stoke City Council.
- 2.4 Last year the County Council commenced a review of how the on street enforcement is undertaken in all of the district councils, with a view of improving the efficiency of the service. There has been engagement throughout the process both at officer and member levels. Back ground papers are available on request.
- 2.5 The County Council intend to give 12 month notice of the agreement to all of the district councils by the end of March 2014, with a new service commencing April 2015.

3. **Options Considered** (by the County Council)

- 3.1 The County Council have not ruled out any proposals for the on street parking enforcement. Some of the options are:
 - 3.1.1 District councils continue to operate along similar lines that currently exist, under a new agreement. This would provide an efficient and resilient team covering both the on and off street enforcement using NBC existing staff, whom have good local knowledge of area.
 - 3.1.2 A district led consortia provides the enforcement service both on and off street. This could be:
 - A single consortium which included all the district councils.
 - A combination of individual districts and consortia of district councils.
 - 3.1.3 One of the main issues with these alternatives is the distance to our closest neighbours and the travelling time that would be incurred on a daily basis.
 - 3.1.4 A County Council contract which would include all the on street enforcement and options for the district councils to buy into the contract for their own off street car parks. The use of an out sourced contract for the whole of the county, would not have the same degree of flexibility in the use of the enforcement staff for ad-hoc alternative duties.
 - 3.1.5 The provision of all the services using a County Council directly employed enforcement team. There would potentially be an increased level of travelling time which would have a effect on the efficiency of the service.
- 3.2 The existing management of the parking service is lean and efficient, and it is noted that any outsourced elements would need to be adequately monitored to ensure the desired outcome.

4. **Proposal**

- 4.1 In view of the apparent success of the previous arrangements within this Borough the preferred option would be for the Borough Council staff to continue to enforce the parking regulations both on and off street.
- 4.2 The current method of dividing the costs between on and off street is primarily in proportion to the number of PCN's issued; this is relatively simple to administer and it is proposed to continue to use this method.
- 4.3 Whilst NBC has always returned a slight surplus and has not had any financial support from the county council, any new agreement should include a clause to indemnify the Borough Council of any losses should the legislation change which would have an adverse financial effect on the service.
- 4.4 Due to the relatively small size of the parking enforcement team, there would be more resilience if the team continued to enforce both on and off street.
- 4.5 Enforcement of the Newcastle BC's car parks will still be required and it is proposed that some of the existing staff be retained for this purpose, should the County Council not offer the on street enforcement to NBC.
- 4.6 Upon receipt of the termination of the agreement from the County Council, NBC will give notice to Stoke City Council to terminate the NBC/Stoke agreement.
- 4.7 A new agreement with Stoke City Council or other provider would need to be produced, the details of which are dependant on the outcome of the County Council's CPE review.

5. **Reasons for Preferred Solution**

- 5.1 By having the same staff operating both on and off street there is greater efficiency.
- 5.2 A combined enforcement team provides greater resilience compared with a team which only carries out off street (car park) enforcement.
- 5.3 There is no evidence to suggest that there would be any significant improvement to the service as any alternative would still require adequate management.
- 5.4 The current arrangement has generated a consistent surplus.

6. **Outcomes Linked to Sustainable Community Strategy and Corporate Priorities**

The proposal contributes to the following corporate priorities:

- A clean, safe and sustainable borough
The on street enforcement manages the traffic freeing up spaces closer to businesses and our residents.

7. **Legal and Statutory Implications**

The County Council, the Highway Authority, have the enforcement powers. The Borough Council acts on their behalf in carrying out the on street parking enforcement.

8. **Equality Impact Assessment**

The proposal to continue using the Borough Council parking team to enforce both on and off street would have no change to the impact assessment

9. **Financial and Resource Implications**

- 9.1 The on street enforcement element of the service does not require Borough Council funding.
- 9.2 Whilst the Borough Council will not derive any income from any future surpluses, these would be used to undertake traffic related projects in the area.

10. **Major Risks**

- 10.1 Should the County Council not approve the Borough Council undertaking enforcement on street any surpluses may not be used within the area of the Borough.
- 10.2 A county wide model may be less effective to due longer travelling distances and the lack of local knowledge built up over a number of years.

11. **Key Decision Information**

This report is not a key decision as defined in the Council's Constitution.

12. **List of Back Ground Papers**

Copies of:

1. Report presented at the December meeting of the Staffordshire Parking Board 2013.
2. Summary of the individual meetings between the district councils and the county council.