

NAME OF COMMITTEE	Community Services
DATE	28th October 2014
REPORT TITLE	Proposal to introduce a Residents' Parking Permit
Report of	Street Scene Manager
WARDS AFFECTED	All Okehampton and Tavistock wards, plus Chagford and Hatherleigh

Summary of report:

This report makes a recommendation in respect of a proposal to implement a limited time Residents' Parking Permit in long stay car parks in West Devon, and to look at the amendment of the free school parking permit scheme in order to manage the service through a reasonable charging mechanism,

Financial implications:

Although it is impossible to accurately estimate the financial impact on the Council, this initiative will result in minimal savings in respect of the provision of free school permits, whilst offering a cheaper off-peak parking solution for residents.

The cost of amending the Off-Street Parking Places Order to support this facility is approximately £1,200. This will be met by the service budget. There will be an income related to the amendment of the school permit scheme but this is not quantifiable at this point.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

It is recommended this Committee resolve to recommend to Council:

1. That Residents' Parking Permits be implemented in respect of all long-stay car parks in West Devon for an annual sum of £50 operating between the hours of 3.00 pm and 10.00 am.
2. That the Borough Council ceases to issue free parking permits to schools, for use by parents.
3. That the Council's Off-Street Parking Places Order be amended accordingly.

Officer contact:

Cathy Aubertin, Street Scene Manager

Cathy.Aubertin@swdevon.gov.uk

1. BACKGROUND

- 1.1 The West Devon Car Parking Strategy Group is a stakeholder group which includes representatives from Town and Parish Councils, Tavistock BID and Chambers of Commerce, and which regularly meets to review the car parking strategy and service needs. The group met on 10th September and, as part of its agenda, regularly considers permits available within the Borough.

Residents' Permits

- 1.2 The feasibility of introducing a Residents' Parking Permit scheme was debated and the group requested that the proposal be brought to the Community Services Committee for formal consideration. Through debate a proposal was suggested that allows parking from 3pm to 10am each day, for the recommended sum of £50 per annum.
- 1.3 This would have the benefit of allowing residents to visit towns during the quieter trading periods and park without having to visit the Pay & Display machine. In addition, the permits may be purchased by parents wishing to drive their children to and from school, as it would allow them to park in a car park near school, again without having to visit the Pay & Display machine.
- 1.4 This is unlikely to have an impact on overall income levels as free permits are currently issued to parents, as detailed below. For all other customers, it is anticipated that the annual fee of £50 will make up for any lost Pay & Display income.
- 1.5 Similar schemes are currently operating in neighbouring authorities and offer valuable parking opportunities to local residents. The proposal was extremely well supported by the Tavistock BID who recognise the additional benefit which such a scheme might offer in raising footfall to shops at either end of the retail day.

School Parking Permits

- 1.6 Furthermore, and in connection with the above, the strategy group considered the issue of free school permits.
- 1.7 Currently, primary schools within, Hatherleigh, Okehampton and Tavistock are entitled to request unlimited parking permits, which are then issued to parents, and which permit free parking each morning and afternoon, so that parents may park in car parks when taking their children to, or collecting them from, school. The hours that permits are valid depend on each school but are generally for a half hour period in the mornings and another half hour period in the afternoons.
- 1.8 For the current academic year, 1010 permits were issued to Okehampton Primary School, St Rumons School and Tavistock Nursery and Primary Schools. Hatherleigh Primary School, who also usually receive permits, have not requested any this year.

- 1.9 There is a cost to the Council in producing and issuing the permits each year. In addition, it could be considered that there is a loss of income to the Council as, should permits not be issued, parents would have to purchase a 30 minute Pay & Display ticket for each parking period, although some may opt to purchase annual season tickets at a reduced rate, walk to school or choose an alternative solution.

2. PROPOSAL

- 2.1 The availability of a Residents' Parking Permit would mirror that which is available in some neighbouring authorities and would encourage more residents to make more use of the towns, where they would normally have to pay a Pay & Display fee for the hours when the permit would be valid, and when the car parks are generally quieter.
- 2.2 It is proposed that permits be offered for an annual sum of £50 and only be available to residents of the Borough. The fee, it is felt, makes parking more affordable, encourages more use of the car parks during the quieter hours, and will compensate the Council for the loss of Pay & Display income during those hours. It is possible for the annual fee to be paid by Standing Order, should customers wish to do so, making it even more affordable as the costs can be spread.
- 2.3 Furthermore, it will give parents the option of purchasing such a permit, giving them more flexibility and eliminating the requirement for them to rush back to their car from school, because school permits are only valid for half an hour at each end of the day. Parents may be encouraged to stay longer and visit shops or amenities in the towns.
- 2.4 The introduction of these permits would eliminate the cost to the Borough Council of providing free permits to schools each year and, indeed, the requirement for schools to administer them.
- 2.5 The proposal gained the support of the strategy group stakeholders who actively developed the option in conjunction with officers.

3. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 3.1 The Council has power to provide off-street parking under the Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984 (as amended).
- 3.2 The Council has the power to deal with the provision, management and control of car parks.

4. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1 Although it is impossible to estimate the increased income to the Council, this initiative will also result in minimal savings in respect of the provision of free school permits.
- 4.2 The cost of amending the Off-Street Parking Places Order to support this facility is approximately £1,200. This will be met by the service budget.

- 4.3 The proposed fee of £50 per annum for a Residents Permit is clearly equivalent to 100 ½ hour parking sessions per annum and, therefore, would seem to be a reasonable fee, particularly for those residents who regularly park in the towns in order to purchase essentials. The fee is also in line with that charged for similar permits in neighbouring authorities.
- 4.4 Season tickets still represent the best value for money for those customers wishing to park all day, so it isn't anticipated that this new initiative will impact upon the use of season tickets.

5. RISK MANAGEMENT

The Risk Management implications are shown at the end of this report in the Strategic Risks Template.

Corporate priorities engaged:	Community well-being; Access to services; Towards excellence; Customer first
Statutory powers:	As stated in paragraph 3
Considerations of equality and human rights:	An equality impact assessment has been carried out and, as a result, no further actions are required.
Biodiversity considerations:	None
Sustainability considerations:	None
Crime and disorder implications:	None
Background papers:	None
Appendices attached:	None

STRATEGIC RISKS TEMPLATE

No	Risk Title	Risk/Opportunity Description	Inherent risk status				Mitigating & Management actions	Ownership
			Impact of negative outcome	Chance of negative outcome	Risk score and direction of travel			
1	Objections from parents	Parents may object to no longer being issued with free school permits	2	1	2	↓	<p>Current permits to remain valid until the end of the academic year, giving parents plenty of notice of the change</p> <p>Permits may be paid for by monthly Standing Order, making them more affordable.</p> <p>Positive press releases to be issued.</p>	C Aubertin
2	Income	The initiative may result in reduced income for the Council	1	1	1	↓	<p>Although unlikely, the impact of the initiative will be monitored closely, and any further changes to the scheme, in order to maintain its cost-effectiveness, to be recommended to this Committee</p>	C Aubertin

Direction of travel symbols ↓ ↑