

CABINET MEMBER FOR HIGHWAYS AND TRANSPORT – CLLR R TONGE

DEPARTMENT OF NEIGHBOURHOOD AND PLANNING

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WAITING AND PARKING RESTRICTION REVIEWS

Purpose of Report

1. There is always a demand for new and changes to existing waiting and parking restrictions from individuals and communities, some are minor and some major, each is a cause of concern to the originator. The cost of processing individual requests is substantial (£3,000 for a simple change and up to £50,000 for a major review), therefore, to make the best use of taxpayers' money the approach to setting priorities has to be properly structured. The purpose of this report is to set out a policy for assessing and prioritising requests for changes to parking and waiting restrictions throughout Wiltshire (excluding Residents' Parking Schemes).

General

2. Waiting restrictions are often required to control or regulate inappropriate parking which may cause safety problems or obstruct the free flow of traffic. Where safety is concerned it may be appropriate to restrict parking at all times with the use of double yellow lines; however, in certain circumstances parking at particular times may be the best solution and it may be more appropriate to use a single yellow line restriction with controls, for example between 8.00 am and 6.00 pm. The intended use of the area of highway must also be taken into consideration using the hierarchy of road user needs when determining the appropriate restrictions, for example the area may also be used as a bus stop or loading area.

Kerb Space Hierarchy – detailed in the Local Transport Plan (LTP) 2011 - 2026

1. Bus Stop
 2. Taxis
 3. Blue Badge parking
 4. Car Clubs
 5. Deliveries
 6. Short stay parking
 7. Residents' parking
 8. Long stay parking
3. In some areas it may be appropriate to permit or formalise parking with some form of control – either by type of user (blue badge, taxi, doctors bay, etc.) or by time limit to ensure an appropriate turnover of the space, for example time limited to one hour in town centre locations.

4. All waiting and parking restrictions are controlled by a legal Order known as a Traffic Regulation Order (TRO). Enforcement is then carried out as a contravention of the legal Order. The TRO process can take many months to complete and the costs of developing proposals and consultation, together with the advertising and legal fees, can be substantial. For this reason, schemes requiring a TRO are not normally carried out on an ad hoc basis. Experience has also shown that the introduction of ad hoc restrictions can result in shifting the problem elsewhere. Accordingly, a comprehensive review of the parking in a Town or Parish as a whole is the most effective and efficient way of dealing with parking issues.
5. It should be noted that works resulting from new developments and associated S106 agreements are progressed independently of this review process and requests relating to restrictions outside of schools are dealt with in the first instance through the School Travel Plan advisors.

Background

6. Following the introduction of Decriminalised Parking Enforcement (now known as Civil Parking Enforcement) in the districts of North Wiltshire and Kennet during 2006, parking patterns were monitored to capture any displacement occurring as a result of the increased enforcement activity. Comprehensive reviews of the existing restrictions were then carried out, and the legal Orders changed to map based Orders to improve the accessibility of information.
7. Civil Parking Enforcement (CPE) was introduced in West Wiltshire during 2008 and reviews of the existing waiting restrictions were commenced but subsequently placed on hold pending the implementation of the Parking Strategy in April 2011. These reviews are now currently underway with an anticipated implementation early 2012.
8. CPE was introduced in Salisbury during 2002; however, a comprehensive review of the restrictions was not carried out. Over the past year the existing restrictions have been surveyed and draft maps have been produced to prepare for the transition to map based TROs. There is a large amount of work to be done in this area in ensuring that restrictions on the ground match those currently contained in the text based TROs before the legal Order process may be commenced. This work is a priority for the Authority. Maintenance work on signs and markings is currently ongoing and is due to be completed towards the end of the summer, following which the conversion to map based Orders will be implemented.

The Traffic Management Act 2004

9. The Traffic Management Act 2004 places new obligations on the Local Traffic Authority (LTA) regarding the way it assesses, implements and reviews TROs. There is clearly a duty to identify congestion points and take action accordingly. The Act cites implementation and enforcement of TROs as one of the prime factors affecting congestion. The Council must demonstrate that its TROs:
 - Are appropriate, adequate and relevant;
 - Are consistent along its own routes and along strategic routes which cross its boundaries into other LTA areas;
 - Are accurate, understandable and legally robust;
 - Follow appropriate implementation and management processes and systems;
 - Are properly maintained;
 - Are adequately enforced.

10. The Act emphasises the LTA's responsibility in ensuring that traffic (including pedestrians) flows with the minimum of delay across its network. The Authority has to demonstrate that the systems and procedures are in place to manage the network efficiently. This includes the need to review a road hierarchy that shows a structured approach to the allocation and management of road space. It is clear that the Council must move away from its current practise of assessing TROs in isolation and should adopt a more systematic approach.
11. Adopting the requirements of the Act will help achieve the Council's own core objectives and LTP aims. Refining the existing system will enable the TRO process to become part of an integrated transport planning strategy that will be better placed to solve traffic problems, take advantage of opportunities and enable resources to be used efficiently.

Demand

12. There are currently 18 Towns and 38 Parishes with existing waiting restriction TROs, with a further 197 Parishes which may request restrictions.
13. On average, the authority receives over 100 written requests each year for either new waiting / parking restrictions or changes to existing controls.
14. Resources are currently committed to the existing reviews in Melksham, Trowbridge, Westbury and Warminster and the conversion of the ex Salisbury area to map based TROs.
15. The implementation of the Parking Strategy involved changes to parking charges in some communities; in some cases there may be displacement from off-street car parks to unregulated highway, this is being monitored and assessed as a priority. It is normal practise to monitor changes in parking patterns for a period of six months as during this time the displaced parking locations often change. Therefore, following existing commitments, these Towns and Parishes need to be a priority for waiting restriction reviews.

Programme of works

16. Due to the extensive legal process involved in introducing TROs, even the simplest scheme can take around six months from initial consultation to implementation. On a larger scale review, this can extend to over a year, due in part to the level of consultation involved in developing an acceptable scheme. It is therefore proposed that any programme only identifies the date on which we are able to start progression of scheme design and it should be noted that implementation could roll over to the following financial year.
17. The progression of reviews needs to involve an assessment matrix to ensure that priority is given to appropriate schemes. This report outlines the proposed process for responding to and assessing the requests for waiting restriction reviews and to agree how schemes will be prioritised for implementation.

Existing commitments

Area	Start Investigations	Implementation
Chippenham – minor work - existing commitment	November 2010	July 2011
Devizes – minor work - existing commitment	November 2010	August/September 2011
Lacock – existing commitment	December 2010	Late 2011
Market Lavington – existing commitment	December 2010	2011
Tisbury (Station Parking)	Summer 2011	2012
Great Bedwyn (Station Parking)	Summer 2011	2012
Marlborough – Vicarage Close	January 2011	Late 2011
Wootton Bassett – Maple Drive area	January 2011	Ongoing
Trowbridge	Summer 2011	2012
Westbury	Summer 2011	2012
Warminster	Summer 2011	2012
Melksham	Summer 2011	2012
Salisbury - Survey, Map, assess existing restrictions prepare and progress Map Based TRO and continued maintenance programme	November 2010	2011

Future Works – Proposed Approach

18. A large proportion of officer time is involved with dealing with requests for amendment to existing or new restrictions. This includes written correspondence, lengthy telephone calls, familiarisation with site and local area (identifying plans, TROs and aerial maps and site investigations, etc.). In order to ensure that officer time is focused on designing and delivering schemes it is proposed that it would be more appropriate, and indeed in line with Wiltshire Council's Corporate Goals, that the requests go directly to the Towns and Parish Councils. They have a more detailed knowledge of the local area, the extent of the issue, and the conflicting demands on the road space and would also be aware of specific issues which often only come to the authority's attention during the formal consultation period. A simple guidance sheet has been produced to aid the Towns and Parishes in the initial analysis of the requests and to explain the prioritisation process (see **Appendix 1**). All existing requests on the current waiting list will be sent to the Town and Parish Councils for their consideration.
19. Should the Town and Parish Councils feel they are unable to take on this work, the assessment process will be passed to the Area Boards.

Process

- All requests for waiting and parking restrictions to be directed to the Town and Parish Councils.
- Town /Parish Council to send out standard request form to applicant (see **Appendix 2**).
- Town/Parish to complete assessment form (see **Appendix 3**) giving validation to resident's requests and rank requests in order of their priority, then send into Network Management team on an annual basis.
- Due to Wiltshire Council's statutory responsibility for highway safety, any requests which refer to obstruction of access for emergency service vehicles should be copied to the Network Management Team for assessment and action if necessary. These would also be reported directly to the Community Area Transport Group which currently considers other Traffic Management related requests.
- The top ranking requests from all areas will then be assessed against the matrix attached at **Appendix 4** and the scores reported to the Cabinet Member on an

annual basis, for agreement on which schemes to progress. It is anticipated that if an area within a Town or Parish is selected for progression, all requests for that Town / Parish will be considered as part of that review to ensure a holistic approach to the scheme design.

- The Area Boards will be advised of the schemes agreed for progression in their areas. All schemes which are not selected for progression will be included in the following year's report.

Capacity

20. It is anticipated that the team could commence between 6 - 8 area reviews in one financial year, with potential implementation the following year.
21. Priority needs to be given to Towns or Parishes affected by possible displacement as a result of the implementation of the Parking Strategy. Namely:

Bands 1-3 (inclusive)
Salisbury
Chippenham
Trowbridge
Amesbury
Bradford on Avon
Calne
Corsham
Devizes
Malmesbury
Melksham
Warminster
Westbury
Wootton Bassett

However following this work it will be necessary to assess other requests against the scoring matrix to ensure that appropriate schemes are prioritised for implementation.

Assessment Matrix

22. The proposed assessment matrix is attached at **Appendix 4**. Schemes would be assessed and prioritised for progression based on the following suggested criteria with the highest scoring schemes progressed first to ensure that resources are directed towards the most appropriate schemes. The criteria include:
 - Time since last parking review and number of other requests for restrictions in the local vicinity.
 - Road safety concerns based on accident records and issues such as parking contrary to the Highway Code.
 - Highway use, based on the kerb space hierarchy defined in the LTP Parking Strategy.
 - Environmental impact, such as air quality or noise improvement site, protection of Highway (verges, etc.).
 - Accessibility issues, problems with access due to parked vehicles for Emergency Services, Waste and Recycling, etc. Number of schools, retirement homes or

hospitals in vicinity. Issues with non residents parking, parking displacement, etc.

- Capacity and congestion, parking impacting on highway capacity, affecting public transport routes and proximity to alternative parking.
- Support for request, support from Member of Parliament and Wiltshire Councillors, Town/Parish Councils and Area Board. Emergency Services, Public Transport companies, Residents Associations and Petitions from Residents.
- Costing of the scheme (development and implementation) and deliverability of scheme (complexity of design and implementation).

Main Considerations for the Council

23. Due to the large demand for changes to waiting and parking restrictions and the limited staffing resources available, consideration needs to be given to an appropriate methodology for assessing and prioritising requests to ensure that staffing and financial resources are appropriately allocated.

Environmental Impact of the Proposal

24. The proposals aim to prioritise requests against a number of criteria shown in the matrix attached at **Appendix 4**, including accessibility, congestion and pollution.
25. The introduction of new parking controls will involve the laying of lines and installation of signs where necessary. This will have an impact on the visual aspect of the highway but has to be balanced against the need to ensure appropriate traffic management controls are in place.

Equalities Impact of the Proposal

26. This proposal ensures that all requests are assessed against a set criterion and the needs of Disabled drivers are taken into account under the kerb space hierarchy laid down in the LTP3. Requests for parking facilities for Blue Badge holders are also clearly identified in the assessment matrix under demand for highway use.

Risk Assessment

27.

Risks of not carrying out proposals	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continued inconsistency in prioritisation of parking controls across the county. • Schemes being introduced on ad hoc basis dependant on demand as opposed to need. • Staffing and financial resources being fully occupied on demand led schemes with the potential for more appropriate traffic management schemes not to be progressed. 	
Risks of proposals	Mitigation of risks
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Town /Parish councils not comfortable with prioritising requests received 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Information and support will be given to Towns and Parishes to enable them to

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Potential for matrix assessment not to support progression of a scheme with a unique demand. 	<p>rank requests or pass process to Area Boards.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Some flexibility has been built into the matrix to enable other factors to be taken into consideration.
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Financial Implications

28. The number of schemes to be progressed on an annual basis will be dependent on the size of the individual schemes. Assessing all requests against known criteria will improve transparency of decision making and ensure that the authority's financial resources are suitable allocated.

Legal Implications

29. All changes to existing parking and waiting restrictions require amendments to the Traffic Regulation Order. The process is governed by the Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984 and associated Procedural Regulations. Failure to adhere to the statutory processes could result in the restrictions being successfully challenged in the High Court.

Options Considered

30. An alternative option that has been considered would be to engage all Community Area Transport Groups in the request assessment process. As Town and Parish Councils are Statutory Consultees, dealing with them directly will reduce duplication of effort and ensure that engagement is at the appropriate level.

Reasons for Proposal

31. That In order to appropriately manage the demand for changes to parking controls it is necessary to engage the Town and Parish Councils in the prioritisation of local demand for new controls in their area, so that limited resources of the Council are directed to deal with the demands which are supported by Town and Parish Councils and identified locally as a priority.

Proposal

32. That the proposals are adopted as outlined in this report.

The following unpublished documents have been relied on in the preparation of this Report:

None