

RESIDENTS' PARKING INFORMAL MEMBER/OFFICER WORKING GROUP**14 December 2005**Attendance:Councillors:

Knasel (Chairman) (P)

Busher
De Peyer (P)

Learney (P)

Others in attendance who addressed the meeting:Beveridge
DaviesMather
VerneyOfficers in attendance:

Neville Crisp, Basil Davies, Alan Jowsey, Fred Lyon, Steve Tilbury

1. APOLOGIES

Apologies were received from Councillor Busher.

2. MINUTES OF THE PUBLIC SESSION HELD ON 7 DECEMBER 2005

During discussion it was reiterated that house numbers had been removed from residents' parking permits as there had been concerns that car thieves could see what houses the cars belonged to, break in and steal the keys. Mr Davies confirmed that there had not been any such reported incidents in Winchester but that it had occurred in London. He continued that although there had been a suggestion that the second permit displayed a registration number to limit the amount of abuse this would take away the flexibility of the scheme. He added that scratchcards could also be used instead of a second permit.

Councillor Knasel commented that there had been a general feeling amongst the public at the public session the previous week that they would like to see the house number reinstated on the visitor permits in an attempt to identify those residents that were abusing the scheme. Mr Davies informed the group that residents did report abuse to the council and that if the house number was included this would provide further evidence. He continued that the parking office received approximately five letters per month reporting suspected abuse of permits, which was agreed to be a large number of complaints.

Mr Tilbury stated that the issue of 75% of residents being required for withdrawal or admission to the parking scheme had been discussed at the public session. He explained that it was important for a substantial majority of residents to agree a change to the parking scheme in their road in order for officers to be able to justify changes once implemented. Mr Jowsey also confirmed that some streets had recently been added to the scheme after a full consultation with residents, which was held up by Councillor Beveridge as a model. Councillor Learney stated that she would prefer to see a minimum figure of two thirds of households, as this echoed the general

feeling of the public at the previous meeting of the Group. This was agreed as reasonable by the majority of the Group.

Councillor Knasel raised the concern that some members of the public had about the scheme not being cost neutral. Mr Davies reported that although there had been a suggestion to reduce the number of parking attendants by one, he could not run an effective service with less staff. He added that he receives many complaints requesting more enforcement and reducing staff would increase complaints. Mr Davies stated that the office could stop sending out reminders in order to save money but that this would also increase complaints. He continued that the parking team provided excellent customer service and the scheme could only be made cheaper if the level of service was cut. Mr Jowsey added that the officer structure in the parking administration office was being reviewed in the run up to some services being moved into the Customer Service Centre.

The issue of changing the enforcement start time for the parking scheme from 08.00 hours to 10.00 hours was discussed by the group. It was agreed however, that all streets should have the same restrictions in order to avoid confusion and it was noted that the change in hours would not generate any savings for the Council. During discussion it was also agreed that a one hour restriction in certain streets would not allow flexibility for attendants. It would also not provide a more efficient service and would not provide a saving that could be passed onto the residents. Councillor Learney summed up by saying that the key to the scheme was simplicity and that although the fairness agenda was important it was necessary to avoid confusion as much as possible.

Pay and display meters were suggested as an idea to be trialled in those streets that had shared parking bays. Mr Jowsey reported that this had already been reviewed recently and not much revenue could be generated from these machines. He continued that some on-street machines currently do not cover their costs, but that the officers would look again at other streets that could have this scheme implemented. Mr Davies stated that the short term parking bays helped to limit the congestion in the town centre and also reduced pollution. Responding to a Members' question, Mr Jowsey confirmed that a national trial of stored value cash cards had folded as it was not a popular scheme. Mr Davies added that there was a pre-pay Park and Ride card in use but that to roll this out to the rest of Winchester would incur huge costs.

Responding to a suggestion by a member of the public, Councillor Knasel raised the issue of discounts for those drivers that have hybrid cars or small cars. Mr Jowsey reported that the Cabinet (Traffic and Parking) Committee were in the process of reviewing low emission vehicles, with a view to recommending that those with low emissions would continue to get a 50% discount on their parking permit and those drivers with hybrid cars would get a 75% discount. This would give residents an incentive to buy low emission cars, but would only apply to residents' permits not visitor permits.

Mr Lyon presented his revised On-Street Parking Budget 2005/06 and explained that although he had re-allocated some overheads following the discussions at the public meeting there was still a need to recover additional costs to reduce the deficit. He suggested that the cost of the first parking permit for each household could be increased from £20 to £24 which would generate £16,000 of income per annum and would also demonstrate to residents that their comments had been taken into consideration. Mr Davies confirmed that an information leaflet could be enclosed with the reminder letters informing residents about the discounts for low emission cars,

and information would be included on the website and would also feature on the application forms.

3. **RECOMMENDATIONS TO CABINET**

Report 2A – Background and Principles of the Permit Scheme

RECOMMENDATIONS:

1. That the contents of this report be noted.
2. That there should be no changes to the general principles of the permit scheme.

Report 3A – Financial Appraisal of the Permit Scheme

RECOMMENDATIONS:

1. That the 2005/06 budget for the on-street parking permit scheme be noted.
2. That Cabinet be recommended to increase the charge for the first annual permit per household within the residents permit scheme from £20 to £24 from July 2006.
3. That Cabinet be recommended to introduce a 50% discount on residents parking permits for low emission vehicles in VED band B and a 75% discount for hybrid and electric vehicles and vehicles in VED band A.

Report 4A – Options for Changing the Permit Scheme

RECOMMENDATIONS:

1. That the contents of this report be noted.
2. That consultation should be carried out and proposals prepared for extending the permit restrictions from 6pm to 10pm where requested by residents.
3. That requests for adding or removing areas from the residents permit scheme should only be considered if they are supported by at least two thirds of the households in that area.

The meeting commenced at 2.30pm and concluded at 4.30pm.

Chairman