

FAREHAM

BOROUGH COUNCIL

Report to the Executive for Decision 2 September 2013

Portfolio:	Public Protection
Subject:	Parking Enforcement Service Annual Report 2012/13
Report of:	Director of Regulatory and Democratic Services
Strategy/Policy:	
Corporate Objective:	A safe and healthy place to live and work

Purpose:

This report provides the Executive with an update in respect of the last 12 months operation of the Fareham parking Enforcement Service.

Executive summary:

The Fareham Parking Enforcement Service covers the management and enforcement of both on and off street parking regulations and orders within the borough. The Council took over the overall responsibility for both on and off street enforcement in April 2007 and the Executive received a report in June 2008 on the first twelve months operation of the service. An annual update report is provided to the Executive each year, the last one being presented to the Executive in September 2012 and this report provides Members with a further update on the last 12 months operation of the service.

The enforcement function is delivered in line with a Parking Enforcement Policy that is reviewed and approved by the Executive biannually, the emphasis being to improve the management of both on and off street parking for the benefits of residents and in the interest of safety.

The parking enforcement service operates seven days a week, including evening patrols in the summer months. Enforcement of the residents parking scheme has also been accommodated within the existing resource for the service.

The last six years operation of the service has enabled a more realistic approach to be developed in terms of both enforcement and the cost of providing the service; this has included adjustments to the day to day running of the service, targeting hot spots within the borough and ensuring the correct balance of enforcement is being delivered.

In order to monitor the provision of the parking enforcement service, the budget relating to both on and off-street enforcement was split so that it could be better monitored. Members have previously requested that they are kept informed of the cost of on street enforcement especially as it is this element of the service that is undertaken on behalf of Hampshire County Council under an agency agreement.

Members will note that the cost of on street enforcement has decreased from £36,725 during 2011/12 to £34,646 in 2012/13. However it is also important to note that whilst the budget shows a deficit, it does not reflect the amount of income still to be received by the Council from unpaid PCNs issued during this same period which is approximately £45,477.

The challenge and objective facing the service is to make it as far as practicable self-financing.

The report was presented to the Public Protection Policy Development and Review Panel on 23 July 2013 who acknowledged the good work and achievements of staff delivering the service and recommended the report to the Executive prior to it being published on the Council's webpage.

Recommendation:

- (a) That members note the performance of the service and that this continues to be closely monitored; and,
- (b) Members' comments are sought on the service that is being provided and the content of the Annual Fareham Parking Enforcement Report, attached as Appendix A, prior to it being published on the Council's website.

Reason:

To ensure the overall cost of providing the Fareham Parking Enforcement Service is delivered in line with the existing Fareham Parking Enforcement Policy at minimum cost to the Council.

Cost of proposals:

When decriminalised parking was first introduced in Fareham, the Council subsidised its introduction and operation of the on street enforcement service by approximately £158,000 during its first year. The cost of providing the on street enforcement service has decreased from £36,275 in 2011/12 to £34,646 in 2012/13, however this does not take account of £45,477 still to be received in payments for PCNs issued during this period.

The costs and projected income for the current year needs to be closely monitored so that any deficit is kept to a minimum.

Appendix A: Annual Parking Enforcement report 2012 - 2013

Background papers:

Report to Executive 4 September 2006 - Implementation of Fareham Parking Enforcement

Report to Executive February 2007 – Parking Enforcement Policy

Report to Executive 2 April 2007 Fareham Parking Enforcement Service Plan

Reports to the Public Protection Review Panel and Planning and Transportation Review Panel – January 2008 Implications of the Traffic Management Act - Implications for Fareham Parking Enforcement Service

Report to Executive 4 February 2008 Implications of the Traffic Management Act - Implications for Fareham Parking Enforcement Service

Report to Public Protection Review Panel 4 March 2008 Fareham Parking Enforcement – Enforcement Policy

Report to Executive 7 April 2008 Fareham Parking Enforcement Policy

Report to Executive 6 April 2009 Fareham Parking Enforcement Policy

Report to Executive 4 April 2010 Fareham Parking Enforcement Policy

Report to Executive 11 April 2011 Fareham Parking Enforcement Policy

Report to Executive 10 June 2013 Fareham Parking Enforcement Policy

FAREHAM

BOROUGH COUNCIL

Executive Briefing Paper

Date: 2 September 2013

Subject: Parking Enforcement Service Annual Report 2012/13

Briefing by: Director of Regulatory and Democratic Services

Portfolio: Public Protection

INTRODUCTION

1. The Fareham Parking Enforcement Service covers the management and enforcement of both on and off-street parking throughout the Borough. The service aims to discourage indiscriminate parking that causes obstruction to other motorists, pedestrians, cyclists and people with disabilities. This will ensure that the Borough remains accessible to all, equally and safely. The service is delivered by Council staff and consists of two distinct areas: office staff that deal with the processing and management of the parking enforcement process; and a team of Civil Enforcement Officers (CEOs).
2. All the CEOs and back office staff have been trained to the appropriate City and Guilds level 2 standards by an external trainer. Regular on-site training and updates are carried out when any new legislation or equipment is introduced.
3. All Civil Enforcement Officers are properly and prominently identified as Fareham Borough Council employees and CEOs by badges and/or wording on their uniforms. In addition to their parking enforcement role, the CEOs report other enforcement related issues that might affect the street scene or adjoining areas, for example abandoned vehicles, fly-tipping, graffiti, vandalism and damage and any other environmental defacement and related issues whilst on patrol. This is part of the Council's 'Eyes and Ears' initiative.
4. Responsibility for the delivery of the Fareham Parking Enforcement Service, which includes the day-to-day functions of maintaining the car parks and equipment; and also includes the responsibility for the procurement of CCTV, Pay on Foot and Pay and Display equipment, lies with the Department of Regulatory and Democratic Services and falls within the Public Protection Portfolio.
5. The service is also delivered in line with the Fareham Parking Enforcement Policy that was reported to and approved by the Executive at its meeting on 10th June 2013. The Enforcement Policy is reviewed every 2 years or sooner if required by any major changes required to the policy. The Policy sets out the main principles for enforcement associated with the delivery of this service. The policy itself is publicised on the Council's web pages and is available to members

of the public and sets out the approach of the Council in the enforcement of both on and off-street parking.

6. The performance of the service is closely monitored and officers have been requested to ensure that an annual report continues to be provided on the standard and cost of providing the service.

ANNUAL FAREHAM PARKING ENFORCEMENT REPORT

7. The Director of Planning and Environment developed a 5 year Fareham Parking Strategy which was adopted by the Executive in 2008, a further 5 year strategy was presented to the Executive and approved in December 2012. These strategies consider the availability and management of the Council's off-street and on-street parking in Fareham town centre and includes a series of policies and actions. Including the re-designation of car parks from long/short stay to outer/inner car parks. The strategy provides the overall strategic direction and approach to parking within the Borough and it is within this that the structure of car parking charging and the flexibility of season tickets are reviewed as well as the development and introduction of new parking schemes such as the Fareham town centre residents' parking scheme.
8. However, the day to day implementation and delivery of the actions coming out of the strategy and policies is very much an operational matter much of which is delivered by the Parking Enforcement Service and this report provides an overview of the service. Indeed Members have requested that an annual report is provided on the Fareham Parking Enforcement Service.
9. Two years ago the opportunity was taken to provide the report in a different format which is attached as Appendix A. The Executive's views and comments are sought on the performance of the service, areas where improvements can be made as well as the actual content of the report which, after being approved by the Executive, will be published on the Council's web site.

PERFORMANCE MONITORING

10. One area that members have requested is closely monitored is the cost of providing the Parking Enforcement Service, in particular, the element that relates to on-street enforcement.
11. When decriminalised parking enforcement was introduced six years ago the objective was that it should be self-financing. Consultants who had undertaken the implementation of decriminalised parking in many other local authorities were employed by the Council. The introduction of the service in Fareham was based upon the consultants' feasibility study and financial model and this has been reported to members previously.
12. The attached report provides details of the number of PCNs issued off-street and on-street over the last twelve months and this is also compared to the performance over previous years to monitor performance of the service as well as identifying any trends. The report also sets out the cost of providing the service and how this is offset by the income from the PCNs that have been issued.

ON-STREET ENFORCEMENT

13. In order to monitor the provision of the parking enforcement service, officers have split the budget relating to both on and off-street enforcement so that it can be better monitored. However, it is important to recognise the collective impact that a more robust parking enforcement service can deliver in terms of additional income from cars using the Council's car parks as well as income resulting from the enforcement and issue of Penalty Charge Notices in line with the Council's Parking Enforcement Policy. Table 1 on page 27 of the report attached at Appendix A indicates the on-street enforcement budget for 2012/13 and the base budget for 2013/14.
14. £183,532 has been generated from the issue of PCNs and other charges such as dispensations and it is this income that should offset the cost of providing the on-street enforcement service.
15. When decriminalised parking was first introduced in Fareham the Council subsidised the introduction and operation of the on-street enforcement service by approximately £158,000 during its first year. The cost of on-street parking to FBC in 2011/12 was £36,725 and in 2012/13 was £34,646.
16. As such the cost of providing the on-street parking enforcement service is costing the Council £34,646. The challenge facing the service is to try and drive this deficit down with the objective of making it self-financing as far as possible, but a balance has to be arrived at in terms of the correct level of resource required for delivering the service and the level of compliance. During the last year this cost has slightly reduced compared to the previous year. The level of PCNs now being issued and the income from PCNs, now that the residents parking scheme has bedded in, provides a reflection of higher compliance rates with Traffic Regulation Orders and a more realistic figure in terms of the numbers of PCNs issued and income generated.
17. It is also important to note that the deficit does not take account of the unpaid PCN's which total £45,477 for 2012/13, the recovery of which is being progressed through the recovery process.
18. As can be seen from the above, officers have made progress to date in reducing the cost of the service, and are looking at ways of further reducing costs, whilst at the same time ensuring the correct level of enforcement is being achieved. However, what also needs to be acknowledged is that as a result of effective on-street enforcement more drivers use the Council's off-street car parks and there is more compliance with the requirements of the Traffic Regulation Orders (TRO's) throughout the borough.
19. It is also worthy of note that the town centre residents' parking scheme was introduced with no additional enforcement costs as this element has been accommodated within the existing parking enforcement team. The same can also be said for new Traffic Regulation Orders that are introduced throughout the borough each year. Therefore these factors need to be taken into account when arriving at the real cost of on-street parking enforcement

20. The cost of the Parking Enforcement Service, in particular on-street enforcement needs to be closely monitored so that it does not become an unreasonable cost to the council tax payer. The Executive Portfolio Holder for Public Protection receives a monthly update on the performance of the service from the Director of Regulatory and Democratic Services.

OFF-STREET ENFORCEMENT

21. Table 2 on page 28 of the report attached as Appendix A indicates the off-street enforcement budget for 2012/13 and the base budget for 2013/14. The enforcement in off-street car parks has generated income from the PCNs issued of £84,868.
22. The income from the issue of PCNs within the off-street car parks will not cover the employee costs of patrolling these car parks. Officers are required to work within the off-street car parks not only to make sure that the parking regulations are being followed and where this is not the case PCNs will be issued, but also to check and maintain the pay and display and pay on foot equipment as well as assisting the car park users. There is also a control room within the Osborn Road Multi-Storey Car Park that needs to be staffed and from where the pay on foot equipment is operated and controlled.
23. Total income from parking charges for 2012/13 was £2,273,258. This represented a reduction against the previous year by £205,107 but a £79,742 shortfall against a budget of £2,353,000. However, the effect of on-street enforcement does in fact result in more drivers using the off-street car parks and this together with the extension of the residents' parking scheme ensures use of the off street car parks which otherwise would not be the case if there was no on street regulation enforcement.
24. The actual income from PCNs set against the budgeted income from both on and off-street enforcement for the last three years is shown in graph 10 on page 25 of the attached report.
25. Whilst good progress has been made in managing the cost of providing the service the costs and projected income for the current year need to be closely monitored so that any deficit is kept to a minimum.

CONTRAVENTIONS

26. A breakdown of the type of contraventions for which PCNs have been issued for both on and off-street is detailed in the attached report and highlights the main contraventions for off-street are, no ticket displayed, parked after expiry of ticket, and no disabled badge shown. The three main contraventions for on-street are parked on yellow lines, parking in residents' space and parked for longer than permitted.

CONCLUSION

27. Officers are constantly reviewing existing working arrangements and practices to ensure best use is made of the resource to deliver the service objectives as well as enforcing the regulations. This needs to be closely monitored to ensure the cost of providing the service, in particular on-street enforcement, does not become a cost to the Council.

28. Since decriminalised parking was introduced 6 years ago, the opportunity was also taken to combine parking and enforcement services together with Traffic Management and Community Safety under a single Head of Service to give economies and efficiencies in service delivery. This has worked well and provides a co-ordinated approach in the delivery of these related services.
29. It is also important not to forget that the objective of the Parking Enforcement Service is to provide a higher profile enforcement regime to achieve the service objectives contained in the Parking Enforcement Policy and this is being done. This obviously comes at a cost and performance is continually being monitored and reviewed in order to keep the costs to the Council of undertaking the on-street enforcement function at a minimum.
30. Members have requested that annual reports are provided on the Fareham Parking Enforcement Service and again the opportunity has been taken to provide the report in a new format that, whilst providing all the key information, is more informative and 'user friendly'. It explains the rationale behind parking and enforcement and provides an overview of the service and how it is delivered in Fareham.
31. When the report was presented to the Public Protection Policy Development and Review Panel on 23rd July 2013, the Panel acknowledged the good work and achievements of staff delivering the service and recommended the report to the Executive prior to it being published on the Council's website.

Reference Papers: None.