

Cabinet Member for City Services

25 July 2016

Name of Cabinet Member:

Cabinet Member for City Services - Councillor J Innes

Director Approving Submission of the report:

Executive Director of Place

Ward(s) affected:

All

Title:

Report Back – The Introduction of an ANPR Camera Car to Enforce Dangerous and Illegal Parking

Is this a key decision?

No - Although the matter affects all Wards of the City, it is not anticipated that the impact will be significant

Executive Summary:

In July 2014, the Cabinet Member for Public Services approved the use of an enforcement car fitted with an Automatic Number Plate Recognition (ANPR) camera for a 12 month trial period, to undertake the enforcement of parking restrictions where the stopping of vehicles isn't permitted. This report considers the results of the 12 month trial which commenced in March 2015 and, based on the results of the trial, seeks approval for the continued use of an enforcement vehicle to assist with civil parking enforcement.

Recommendations:

The Cabinet Member for City Services is recommended to:

- 1) Note the results of the 12 month trial following the introduction of the ANPR enforcement car to enforce 'no stopping' restrictions.
- 2) Approve the continued deployment of an ANPR camera enforcement car to tackle the problems with illegal and dangerous parking where the stopping of vehicles isn't permitted and where enforcement by a foot patrolling Civil Enforcement Officer is difficult or not practical.

List of Appendices included:

None

Background Papers

None

Other useful documents:

Cabinet Member (Public Services) report – The introduction of an ANPR camera car to enforce dangerous and illegal parking

<http://democraticservices.coventry.gov.uk/documents/g10307/Public%20reports%20pack%2007th-Jul-2014%2010.00%20Cabinet%20Member%20for%20Public%20Services.pdf?T=10>

Has it been or will it be considered by Scrutiny?

No

Has it been or will it be considered by any other Council Committee, Advisory Panel or other body?

No

Will this report go to Council?

No

Report title: Report Back – The introduction of an ANPR Camera Car to Enforce Dangerous and Illegal Parking

1. Context (or background)

- 1.1 In July 2014, the Cabinet Member for Public Services approved the introduction of an enforcement car fitted with an ANPR camera on a 12 month trial basis to complement the work of the foot patrolling Civil Enforcement Officers (CEO). It was agreed that a report would be brought to a future Cabinet Member meeting to consider the results of the trial and to make a recommendation on whether the use of the ANPR camera enforcement car should continue long term.
- 1.2 The following are examples of the types of restrictions that are difficult to enforce on foot and where the ANPR car can be used.
- Yellow zig-zag lines outside of schools
 - The red route
 - Urban Clearways
 - Taxi ranks
 - Bus stop clearways
 - Where there is a loading / unloading ban
- 1.3 The ANPR enforcement car is fitted with an on-board computer that is linked to a Global Positioning System (GPS). The computer and ANPR camera are configured in such a way that the camera starts to record video footage when it is driven where there are ‘no-stopping’ restrictions. The video footage is subsequently downloaded and reviewed by a trained enforcement officer in order to identify any vehicles that are parked in contravention of the restriction. Thereafter, a penalty charge notice is generated and issued by post to the vehicle owner. The penalty charge notice incurs a fine of £70 which is reduced to £35 if it’s paid within 14 days.
- 1.4 The trial period started during week commencing Monday 16th March 2015.
- 1.4.1 For the purposes of the trial, the asset, comprising the vehicle and the on-board computer, together with the staff resources to operate the vehicle and review the contraventions, have been provided at no cost to the Council by an external supplier as this was considered more cost effective than the Council procuring and operating its own vehicle.

Throughout the trial the system was used in unattended mode, i.e. the driver is not supported in the vehicle by a CEO and the computer system automatically identifies offending vehicles that are parked in locations where stopping is prohibited at certain times.

- 1.4.2 Prior to the start of the trial, consideration was given to the areas to be targeted. It was decided that the ANPR enforcement car would specifically target the yellow zig-zag lines outside 89 primary schools in Coventry as these locations are an increasing priority for Parking Services due to the level of abuse of the restrictions and the numerous complaints that the Council receives.

Some motorists frequently ignore the restrictions and this is to the obvious detriment of pedestrian safety.

The yellow zig-zags lines are enforceable during the “drop-off” and “pick-up” times on Monday to Fridays throughout the school terms. It should be noted therefore, that the enforcement car was not used for several weeks of the year during school holidays or during the day when the parking restrictions were unenforceable.

1.4.3 No other 'no stopping' restrictions were enforced by the car during the trial period.

1.4.4 A press release explaining the benefits of having the ANPR car and reminding drivers of the need to comply with parking restrictions was issued prior to the start of the trial period. In addition, a 'Smarter Parking' information leaflet was distributed through schools to parents of school children. The leaflet highlighted the safety risks caused by poor and inconsiderate parking close to schools. It also informed parents that the Council would be using an ANPR car to assist in the enforcement of illegally parked vehicles at schools.

1.5 The following results refer to the period from 16th March 2015 up to 31st March 2016.

1.5.1 Parking offences were recorded at 50 of the 89 schools that were patrolled by the ANPR car. In total 1,006 penalty charge notices (PCNs) were issued.

1.5.2 By way of a comparison, the foot patrolling CEOs issued a combined total of 66 PCNs at 19 different schools during the same period.

It is generally recognised that the enforcement of restrictions outside of schools by CEOs is largely ineffective as:

- a) Motorists tend to drive away whenever they see the CEO approaching and before the PCN can be issued.
- b) There isn't the resource capacity due to other demands on the service

1.5.3 Although the ANPR car is overt and is signed to show that it is undertaking enforcement, many motorists seemed unaware that their vehicle was being recorded when they were illegally parked. Consequently, the ANPR car was far more effective in its enforcement compared to the CEOs.

1.6 The actual time that the ANPR car was enforcing restrictions outside of schools amounted to about 2¼ hours per day (i.e. between 08:30 to 09:30am and 14:45 to 16:00pm) for 34 weeks during the school terms. Assuming that the vehicle was deployed on each day during Monday to Friday, this is equivalent to about 382½ hours active enforcement or about 10 full working weeks based upon a 37 hour week.

This suggests that an average of 2.4 PCNs were issued per enforceable hour during the trial period.

By way of a comparison, the CEOs issue 1.3 PCNs per hour.

1.7 During the course of the trial it became apparent that certain schools required a greater level of enforcement than the majority of others due to the high level of illegal parking that was taking place.

In particular, Richard Lee School (209 PCNs) and Keresley Grange School (101 PCNs) were two locations where many motorists regularly and persistently parked in breach of the restrictions. These two locations accounted for 31% of all PCNs issued by the ANPR car during the trial period.

It is encouraging to note that there was a high level of compliance recorded at many other schools where very few vehicles were parked in contravention at the time that the ANPR car patrolled the area.

- 1.8 As the ANPR car is far more mobile than a foot patrolling CEO it can patrol several schools within the same locality during a single shift, which isn't as practical for the CEOs. For example, within the Allesley area, the ANPR car can typically patrol eight primary schools whereas the CEOs may only be able to patrol just one or two.
- 1.9 The results outlined above indicate that:
- a) The ANPR car was nearly twice as effective at enforcing illegal parking outside schools compared to a CEO.
 - b) the ANPR car was able to patrol more locations than the CEOs during the same period
 - c) the ANPR car is more efficient than a CEO in covering multiple locations in each shift
 - d) although the ANPR car is more effective and efficient than a CEO at enforcing the restrictions, the issue of illegal parking outside of schools is still a widespread problem in Coventry

2 Options considered and recommended proposal

The options considered were:

- a) Do Nothing
 - b) Continue with the deployment of an ANPR car to assist with parking enforcement
- 2.1 **Do nothing** - Stop using the ANPR car and revert to the conventional methods of enforcement. This doesn't tackle the current parking malpractice or improve the safety of pedestrians and other road users. Historically, CEO enforcement of 'no stopping' restrictions, particularly outside of schools, has been ineffective as many motorists drive away whenever they see a CEO approaching or before the PCN can be issued. In addition, Parking Services does not have the staff resources required to effectively tackle the current level of illegal parking outside of schools due to other demands and priorities on the service.
- 2.2 **Continue with the deployment of an ANPR car to assist with parking enforcement** - The results from the trial period outlined earlier in this report indicate that there is a high level of non-compliance with 'no stopping' restrictions, particularly outside of schools. The current service providers derive revenue equivalent to £15 for each PCN that is issued using the ANPR enforcement car. During the trial period 1,006 PCNs were issued which resulted in revenue of £15,090 to the service provider.
- The Council does not incur any other operating or capital costs. The ANPR car has proven to be a cost efficient and effective approach to tackling parking problems in areas where conventional enforcement methods are difficult.
- 2.3 The recent trial focussed solely on the enforcement of yellow zig-zag lines outside of schools. However there are numerous other restrictions (e.g. the red route, clearways, taxi ranks, loading / unloading bans, zig-zags at pedestrian crossings) that are also difficult to enforce in high priority areas where the ANPR car can be deployed in future. In addition, there are other applications where the ANPR car can be deployed in 'attended mode' (i.e. with a CEO on board) to maximise its effectiveness in areas that are difficult to enforce.
- 2.4 The results of the trial confirm that the ANPR car is a useful asset for dealing with illegal parking which can help to reduce congestion and improve road safety.

- 2.5 In light of the above considerations the proposed and recommended option is Option (b) – To continue with the deployment of an ANPR car to assist with parking enforcement. It is further proposed that the vehicle is used to assist with the enforcement of other parking restrictions in addition to school keep-clear restrictions.
- 2.6 Subject to the approval of the above recommendation, officers will undertake an options appraisal to identify the most cost effective approach to delivering the service long term.

3. Results of consultation undertaken

- 3.1 No consultation has been undertaken.

As a Civil Parking Enforcement authority the Council is empowered to use approved devices to undertake the enforcement of parking contraventions where it is difficult to do so using conventional methods.

4. Timetable for implementing this decision

- 4.1 The initial 12 month trial of the ANPR camera enforcement car ended on 31st March 2016. Subject to approval of this report, Parking Services will adopt the use of the car on-going for the enforcement of 'no stopping' parking restrictions.

5. Comments from Executive Director of Resources

- 5.1 Financial implications

The primary purpose of Civil Parking Enforcement (CPE) is to achieve the Council's wider transport policy objectives. Raising revenue is not an objective of CPE.

The level of penalty charge is regulated by the Secretary of State and currently the penalty for parking on a 'no-stopping' restriction is £70. The charge is reduced by 50% if the fine is paid within the first 14 days.

The ANPR camera enforcement car together with the associated staff resources needed to operate the car and review the contraventions is provided at no cost to the Council by an external supplier. In exchange, and in order to off-set operational and capital costs, the supplier collects £15.00 (excluding VAT) for each valid PCN that is issued.

- 5.2 Legal implications

The Traffic Management Act (TMA) 2004 enables Civil Parking Enforcement authorities to enforce parking using an 'approved device', (i.e. a camera and associated recording equipment that has been certified by the Secretary of State), and to issue a postal penalty charge notice for these parking offences.

6. Other implications

- 6.1 How will this contribute to achievement of the Council's key objectives / corporate priorities (corporate plan/scorecard) / organisational blueprint / Local Area Agreement (or Coventry Sustainable Community Strategy)?**

The continued use of the ANPR enforcement car will contribute to the Council's aim of improving road safety.

The enforcement of parking restrictions contributes to the expeditious movement of traffic on the road network which improves the accessibility and reliability of public transport and other public services.

6.2 How is risk being managed?

There is a potential reputational risk if the Council ignores and does nothing to tackle the issues of illegal parking that comprise road safety.

6.3 What is the impact on the organisation?

There is a potential for negative reputational damage if the Council does not effectively tackle the issues of illegal and unsafe parking. Equally, there is likely to be a negative reputational impact to the Council if the correct procedures are not followed.

6.4 Equalities / EIA

There are no negative impacts or adverse impacts on any particular groups as a result of parking enforcement. Civil Parking Enforcement has a positive impact of keeping traffic moving and removing obstructive parking which is to the detriment of pedestrians and the most vulnerable members of the community.

6.5 Implications for (or impact on) the environment

None

6.6 Implications for partner organisations?

The civil enforcement of on-street parking restrictions encourages motorists not to break the law by parking illegally. It also reduces the need for Police resources to deal with these offences, thereby enabling the Police to devote greater attention to tackling higher level crime and disorder.

It also has a positive impact on other key stakeholder such as public transport operators by deterring and reducing illegal parking at bus stops, thereby contributing towards public transport accessibility and reliability.

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