

Cabinet Member for Policing and Equalities

25 July 2019

Name of Cabinet Member:

Cabinet Member for Policing and Equalities – Councillor A S Khan

Director Approving Submission of the report:

Deputy Chief Executive (Place)

Ward(s) affected:

Westwood

Title: Petition – Requesting a review of the 10 minute observation period in Residents' Parking Schemes

Is this a key decision? No

Executive Summary:

This report responds to a petition containing 53 signatures from residents within the Knights Templar Residents Parking Scheme requesting a review and modifications to the 10minute observation period that the Council's Civil Enforcement Officers apply when monitoring vehicles that are unauthorised to park within residents' parking schemes.

Residents are concerned that the existing arrangement has resulted in traffic congestion and parking problems outside of Knights Templar Primary School during the school drop off and pick up times.

The petition is supported by Councillor Lapsa, a Westwood Ward Councillor.

Recommendations:

The Cabinet Member for Policing and Equalities is recommended to:

1. Consider the content of the petition and note the concerns of the petitioners.
2. Approve that Parking Services continue to apply a 10minute observation period when undertaking parking enforcement activities within the Knights Templar Residents' parking scheme and other residents' parking schemes throughout Coventry.
3. Approve that Traffic Management colleagues investigate, develop and consult with residents and local ward councillors on a pilot scheme, similar to one operating in Solihull Borough Council, to control parking around Knights Templar Primary School during peak times.

List of Appendices included:

Appendix A – Location plan

Background papers:

None

Other useful documents

None

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: Petition – Requesting a review of the 10minute observation period in Residents’ Parking Schemes

1. Context (or background)

- 1.1 The Council has received a petition containing 53 signatures from residents living within the Knights Templar Residents Parking Scheme. The petition requests the Council reviews and modifies the existing 10minute observation period that the Parking Civil Enforcement Officers apply when enforcing any unauthorised vehicles that are parked within residents’ parking schemes.
- 1.2 There are currently twenty-three (23) residents’ parking schemes in Coventry. Knights Templar residents parking scheme is one such scheme located in Westwood Ward. The scheme was implemented in August 2017 and comprises Templar Way, Lomsey Close and Monksfield Close.
 - 1.2.1 The parking scheme consists of permit holders only parking and operates during Monday to Friday for one hour in the morning between 8am – 9am and for one hour in the afternoon between 3pm – 4pm. Nowadays, many of the parking schemes in Coventry, including the Knights Templar scheme, operate using digital permits whereby residents and their visitors register for permits online.
 - 1.2.2 The rear access to Knights Templar Primary School is located within the area covered by the Residents Parking Scheme and many parents park within the area when dropping off and collecting school children.
- 1.3 In August 2015, Parking Services adopted a practice where the Civil Enforcement Officers (CEOs) are required to apply a 10minute observation period when monitoring vehicles that are unauthorised to park within residents’ parking schemes before issuing penalty charge notices (PCN).
 - 1.3.1 The adoption of a 10min observation period is considered a pragmatic approach as it allows residents enough time to register their visitors’ for a parking permit before any enforcement action is taken by officers.
 - 1.3.2 Furthermore, it enables parents the time to drop off or collect children from schools without fear of being penalised. It also helps to avoid any criticism that the CEOs are overzealous.
 - 1.3.3 The 10min observation period is not a legal requirement but it is a local convention.
- 1.4 Petitioners living in the Knights Templar scheme consider that the 10min observation period has resulted in traffic congestion, parking problems, and road safety issues for school children and pedestrians during the school drop off and pick up times.
- 1.5 The application of the 10min observation period in residents’ parking schemes hasn’t resulted in any similar issues elsewhere across the city where a school is located within a resident parking zone.

2. Options considered and recommended proposal

- 2.1 The option to remove the observation period has been considered but it has been rejected as it would effectively mean that CEOs would issue ‘instant PCNs’. It would not afford officers enough time to collate evidence and satisfy themselves that a contravention was being committed. Neither would it allow residents time to register their permits online.

- 2.2 The option to reduce the observation period to 5mins has also been considered. Although it would allow time for residents to register permits online and the CEOs to collate evidence, it is impractical to think it would allow parents enough time to escort their children to / from school, especially when parents are being actively discouraged from parking near the school gates.
- 2.3 The Council is aware of other initiatives that have been developed to address similar issues with 'school gate' parking, e.g. the Solihull School Streets project.

Through the scheme, *most* traffic has been prohibited from entering selected roads leading to certain schools during drop-off and pick-up periods. The intention being to create a safer, more pleasant environment which reduces congestion and improves air quality in the area.

The restrictions include a prohibition of motor vehicles, applicable Monday to Friday during school pick-up and drop-off times, with exemptions for permit holders. Permits are issued to residents living on roads affected by the restriction.

Coventry City Council proposes to explore the Solihull scheme in conjunction with the West Midlands Police with the aim of implementing it and trialling it in Knights Templar Way, Lomsey Close and Monksfield Close.

In the intervening period whilst the scheme is being considered and explored, the option to continue to retain the 10min observation period when enforcing residents' parking schemes is the preferred way forward as any traffic congestion or parking issues should be relatively minimal and only for a brief period during the mornings and afternoons during school term times.

3. Results of consultation undertaken

- 3.1 No consultation has taken place on this issue.

4. Timetable for implementing this decision

- 4.1 Subject to approval of the recommendation the decision will be implemented with immediate effect as it is a continuation of an existing arrangement.

Alongside this the option as outlined in section 2.3 will be investigated, developed and consulted with residents and local ward councillors.

5. Comments from Director of Finance and Corporate Services

5.1 Financial implications

There are no financial implications associated with the recommendations.

5.2 Legal implications

Civil Parking Enforcement operates under part 6 of the Traffic Management Act 2004.

Observation periods are set by the Local Authority, they are not defined in legislation. The length of the observation period is based on the type of contravention.

In the interests of openness and transparency local authorities are encouraged to publish observation periods.

Local authorities must provide evidence of a parking contravention from direct observations. The Regulations recommend that observation start and finish times are provided on the penalty charge notice.

6. Other implications

6.1 How will this contribute to the Council Plan (www.coventry.gov.uk/councilplan/)?

Not applicable

6.2 How is risk being managed?

None

6.3 What is the impact on the organisation?

None

6.4 Equalities / EIA

No specific equalities impact assessment has been carried out.

6.5 Implications for (or impact on) the environment

None

6.6 Implications for partner organisations?

None

Report author(s):

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Place

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Councillor A S Khan	Cabinet Member for Policing and Equalities		15/7/2019	16/7/2019

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Appendices

Appendix A – Location Plan showing Knights Templar Residents' Parking Scheme

