

LONDON BOROUGH OF CROYDON

REPORT:	CABINET	
DATE OF DECISION	26 July 2023	
REPORT TITLE:	PARKING POLICY 2023	
CORPORATE DIRECTOR / DIRECTOR:	NICK HIBBERD, CORPORATE DIRECTOR OF SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITIES, REGENERATION & ECONOMIC RECOVERY	
LEAD OFFICERS:	STEVE ILES, DIRECTOR OF SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITIES	
LEAD MEMBER:	CLLR SCOTT ROCHE, CABINET MEMBER FOR STREETS AND ENVIRONMENT	
KEY DECISION?	YES	Meets the Community Impact Criteria KEY DECISION REFERENCE NO.1323EM
CONTAINS EXEMPT INFORMATION?	NO	Public
WARDS AFFECTED:	All	

1 SUMMARY OF REPORT

1.1 This report sets out a new parking policy to play its part in transforming the council into one that delivers sound and sustainable local government services, and in so doing will transform our borough into one that Croydonians can once again be proud to call home. The policy will support efforts for our town centre and high street recovery. The draft policies ambition is underpinned by four policy drivers, to ensure that it supports the Executive Mayor’s Businesses Plan:

- Fair – parking which will be provided to benefit our users, robustly enforcing blue badge fraud and targeted enforcement in non-compliant areas.
- Supportive – Providing free limited stay parking in our district and local centres.
- Efficient – managing the parking service effectively and putting the customer at the forefront of everything we do and introducing virtual permits and technologies to aid our customers.
- Transparent – communicating openly with our customers, making fair assessment of footway parking across the Borough and introducing transparent parking tariffs.

- 1.2 The way that the council manages its parking and balances the competing uses of its limited roadside space is vitally important to the vibrancy and vitality of the town, district and local centres. The successful and safe movement of people and goods is critical to the borough including residents, businesses and visitors.
- 1.3 This new draft policy replaces the current policy 2019 – 22 and this report presents this council's approach to the Parking Policy and to ensure that it meets the needs of residents, businesses and partners, we intend to consult on the draft policy in the summer of 2023.

2 RECOMMENDATIONS

For the reasons set out in the report and its appendices, the Executive Mayor in Cabinet, is recommended to:

- 2.1 Note the priorities of the draft new parking policy to be fair, supportive, transparent and efficient as set out in Appendix A.
- 2.2 Delegate authority to the Corporate Director of Sustainable Communities, Regeneration and Economic Recovery, in consultation with the Executive Mayor, Cabinet Member for Streets & Environment and the Cabinet Member for Finance to:
- 2.2.1 Approve the draft Parking Policy for public consultation.
- 2.2.2 Adopt the Parking Policy taking into account the outcome of the consultation to ensure the policy addresses the needs of the community, whilst enabling the objectives of the Executive Mayor's Business Plan.
- 2.2.3 Develop the proposed action plan into a programme of initiatives to meet the objectives of the parking policy.
- 2.2.4 Recognise that the Parking Policy is a live document and in accordance with this to review and amend the policy periodically to ensure that it reflects the needs of the community and remains compliant with legislation.

3 REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

- 3.1 The proposed new parking policy has been developed to provide a service that is fair, supportive, transparent and efficient for our residents, businesses and partners. The Parking Policy is framed around five specific policies to deliver on these ambitions by:
- supporting our local economy
 - appropriate parking management
 - supporting our disabled residents
 - efficient service management
 - Intelligence led enforcement

- 3.2 The importance of community feedback is recognised and to ensure we are listening to the community and that the policy is addressing both their needs and supporting the objectives set out in the Executive Mayor's Business Plan, we propose to undertake a public consultation exercise during the summer of 2023. To maximise the engagement with the community, the proposed consultation will be across multiple channels, including the council's website and social media and will include community workshops.
- 3.3 Croydon is the largest London borough, with an estimated resident population of 390,506 in 2021, which represents a 7.5% increase in population since 2011. This, along with the fact that Croydon is one of the largest commercial districts in Greater London, means that we continue to experience pressure and competing demands on Croydon's finite road space. The policy sets out the council's strategic approach to managing the road space. The policy will be a live document with a customer focus and as such will need to respond fairly to the community needs.
- 3.4 The Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984 gives the council power to introduce and operate parking schemes and the opportunity for the public to engage with the council on proposals. The policy needs to be responsive to this legislation to ensure that the council is meeting its statutory requirements. We also need to embrace and utilise new technologies to drive forward improvements and efficiencies into the Parking Service.

4 DETAIL

4.1 The new parking policy proposes a number of action points to support the five policies with an aim of revitalising the borough and ensuring that Croydon is a place that people want to live, work and shop:

- supporting our local economy
- appropriate parking management
- supporting our disabled residents
- efficient service management
- intelligence led enforcement

4.2 The following paragraphs set out the proposed action points and provide an explanation on how they support the policy objectives and the Executive Mayor's Business Plan.

4.3 Policy One – Supporting our Local Economy

Proposed Actions:

4.3.1 Developing a loading / servicing policy

The council will review how it will manage delivery and servicing vehicles and the roadside interactions with those vehicles going forward. With online shopping, there is increased demand for home deliveries, plus with renewed focus on revitalising town centres and high streets the council needs to ensure that loading / unloading and servicing for businesses is available and practical.

4.3.2 **Review of free short stay parking provision**

The council's current free parking arrangements in town centres and high streets supports local businesses but we need to ensure turnover of available spaces to encourage vibrancy of these businesses. It is proposed that the current free period will be reviewed to maximise spaces for short-term visits and provide consistency across the borough.

4.4 **Policy Two – Appropriate parking management**

Proposed Actions:

4.4.1 **Develop and deliver a programme of appropriate parking and traffic management schemes including controlled parking zones**

The council will develop a programme of reviews of areas of parking and traffic management schemes across the borough, using best available information to not only address any existing parking and traffic stresses and resident requests in areas, but to also take steps to avoid developing preventable parking pressure in the future as the borough grows. A targeted approach will help ensure schemes are implemented in areas that efficiently deliver the most support to residents and businesses.

4.4.2 **Review of operational hours of on-street controls**

For consistency, fairness, and to help support local businesses, a review of existing hours of control within areas of controlled parking will be undertaken. Many existing parking controls and zones have been in place unchanged for decades, so it is appropriate to review those to ensure they remain the most appropriate hours of operation for the area. This is particularly relevant in light of changing work patterns, commuter behaviours etc.

4.4.3 **Update Electric Vehicle Charging Strategy**

The council will continue to rollout electric vehicle charging points and where possible seek external funding through government grants. As electric vehicle take-up continues at pace over the coming years, the council will revisit and articulate its position regarding public on street charging provision.

4.4.4 **Developing a car club policy**

Shared mobility is an important factor in supporting residents where parking stress is particularly high. The council currently has several commercial providers of car clubs operating in the borough utilising borough roads and roadside space at no cost. The policy will review and establish whether limiting numbers of operators – or potentially contacting exclusively with one provider – will deliver a better and fairer provision for the borough users.

4.5 **Policy Three – Supporting our disabled residents**

Proposed Actions:

4.5.1 **Boroughwide Review of Disabled Bay Parking Provision**

It is proposed that the current disabled parking provision across the Borough will be reviewed to meet the needs of our disabled residents and visitors now and in the future. In reviewing this the council will also update related exemptions and disabled bay provisions on its streets and car parks, ensuring that the service to the disabled is fair to help support the council's overall ambitions for accessibility and vibrancy of its town centres and high streets.

4.5.2 **Blue Badge Fraud**

Fraudulent use of Blue Badges undermines the entire Blue Badge scheme and disadvantages the very people the scheme is intended to support. The council will work internally across relevant departments and outside the council with key external partners (e.g., Police, Department for Transport) to tackle fraudulent use of Blue Badges. Specialist third parties may be utilised where required and any enforcement campaigns will be supported by effective communications.

4.5.3 **Review of existing footway parking provision across the borough**

There are in the region of 300 roads (or parts of roads) across Croydon that currently allow footway parking. Although such parking may be necessary in certain locations it can significantly impact on the health and wellbeing of disabled and less mobile pedestrians. It is proposed to review and assess the footway parking provision.

4.6 **Policy Four – Efficient Service Management**

Proposed Actions:

4.6.1 **Review of Pay & Display machine provision across the borough**

As part of the budget setting process, at Budget Council on 7 March 2022, a savings proposal was ratified as part of the Medium-Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) proposal (2022/23 MTFS Saving COR Sav13x) for removal of Pay and Display Machines. The proposal identified a saving of £300,000 associated with the removal of the 683 Pay & Display machines across the borough. Also, the mobile communication technology within the Pay & Display machines is impacted by the mobile providers 3G sunset clause, where the phasing out of the 3G network will mean that machines would require upgrading so that they could operate on the 5G network.

With the increasing demand for cashless transactions, post Covid, and a decrease in Pay & Display usage and the acceptance new technologies, we are developing a phased programme for the removal of Pay & Display machines across the borough.

4.6.2 **Update and simplification of parking fees and charges**

The council will review parking fees and charges and parking permit products, simplifying the structures and improving the fairness of the tariffs. The updated fees and charges will be established in a way that simplifies the charging levels. This will help those parking with more transparent information to understand the tariff rates and make more informed decisions about when, where and how long they park.

4.6.3 **Rollout of virtual parking permits**

The council intention is to replace the current process of issuing paper-based parking permits. Technology has existed for several years which can mean applications, payments and issuing of parking permits no longer requires a physical permit being issued. The process of moving to what is commonly referred to as 'virtual permits' is well established and has been done by the majority of London boroughs and is relatively straightforward. It will be supportive of residents and contribute to a more efficient service.

4.7 **Policy Five – Intelligence led enforcement**

Proposed Action:

4.7.1 Review of parking enforcement operations

Our enforcement efforts will be 'intelligence led', striking a balance between achieving an acceptable standard of compliance and being robust and responsive to local problems and concerns. Our enforcement actions will be carried out in a way that is proactive, transparent and supported by good communications. We will be consistent and fair but also sensitive to local businesses across the different areas of the borough. Priority will be given to enforcing locations and at times of the day where compliance with restrictions is low. The enforcement will be proactive to target illegally parked vehicles and aim to boost levels of compliance across the borough.

5 ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED

- 5.1 The council has a statutory duty under the Traffic Management Act 2004 to manage road space and the expeditious movement of traffic. The current Parking Policy has expired, and the new Policy needs to align with the Executive Mayor's Business Plan. There are no alternative options if the council is to deliver on the ambitions and policies of supporting the local economy, introducing appropriate parking management, supporting our disabled residents, introducing efficient service management and intelligence led enforcement.

6 CONSULTATION

- 6.1 The council will consult on the parking policy document during the summer of 2023. To maximise the engagement with the community, the proposed consultation will be across multiple channels, including the council's website and social media and will include community workshops.
- 6.2 Following the public consultation if it is agreed that amendment of parking charges is necessary and / or the introduction of parking schemes would require the making of a Traffic Management Order. The legal process for making a Traffic Management Order requires statutory consultation to take place in the form of Public Notices published in the London Gazette and a local newspaper (Croydon Guardian). Although not a legal requirement, this council may fix street notices to lamp columns in the vicinity of the proposed scheme and writes to occupiers who are directly affected to inform as many people as possible of the proposals.
- 6.3 Official bodies such as the Fire Brigade, The Pedestrian Association, Age UK and bus operators are consulted under the terms of the Local Authorities' Traffic Orders (Procedure) (England and Wales) Regulations 1996. Additional bodies, up to 27 in total, are consulted depending on the relevance of the proposals.
- 6.4 Once the notices have been published, the public has 21 days to comment or object to the proposals. If no relevant objections are received, the Traffic Management Order may then be made. Any relevant objections received following the giving of public notice will be considered by the relevant decision-maker, being either the Corporate Director, Sustainable Communities, Regeneration and Economic Recovery, or the Executive Mayor in Cabinet in accordance with Executive Decision No: 8222EM.

7. CONTRIBUTION TO COUNCIL PRIORITIES

- 7.1 As a key Mayoral pledge, we are committed to include improving the quality and appearance of our street space environment and encourage investment. This service is directly linked to the Executive Mayor's Business Plan 2022-26. The Executive Mayor's Business Plan sets out to transform the council into 'one that delivers sound and sustainable local government services, and in so doing will transform our borough into one that Croydonians can once again be proud to call home'.

8. IMPLICATIONS

8.1 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 8.1.1 The new parking policy for Croydon forms part of the Transformation programme for the Borough and £0.200m of capital funding is available to develop the policy and improve the efficiency of the service.
- 8.1.2 Further to this, there is £1.463m allocated in the 3-year Capital Programme for the phased programme for the removal of Pay & Display machines to move to Cashless Pay and Display.
- 8.1.3 The transformation project for the parking policy aims to generate savings of £200,000 annually.
- 8.1.4 Comments approved by Nish Narendran Finance Manager SCRER on behalf of the Director of Resources & S151 Officer (07/07/2023)

8.2 LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 8.2.1 The Head of Litigation and Corporate Law comments on behalf of the Director of Law and Governance Sections 6, 45, 46, 47, 49, 124, Schedule 1 and Part IV of Schedule 9 of the Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984 (RTRA) provides the council with the power to implement the changes proposed in this report. This legislation gives a local authority the power to make Traffic Management Orders (TMO) to control parking by designating on-street parking places, charging for their use and imposing waiting and loading restrictions on vehicles of all or certain classes at all times or otherwise.
- 8.2.2 In making such Orders, the council must follow the procedures set out at Schedule 9, Part III of the Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984 and detailed in the Local Authorities Traffic Orders (Procedure) (England and Wales) Regulations 1996 (the 1996 Regulations). The 1996 Regulations, prescribe inter alia, specific publication, consultation and notification requirements that must be strictly observed. It is incumbent on the Council to take account of any representations made during the consultation stage and any material objections received to the making of the Order, must be reported back to, and considered by, the decision maker before the Order is made.
- 8.2.3 By virtue of Section 122(1) of the RTRA, the council must exercise its powers under that Act so as to secure the expeditious, convenient and safe movement of vehicular

and other traffic including pedestrians, and the provision of suitable and adequate parking facilities on and off the highway. Decisions by the Courts show that this duty needs to be balanced in substance against the factors which may point in favour of imposing a restriction on that movement specified in Section 122(2). Broadly, these factors are, the desirability of securing and maintaining reasonable access to premises, the effect on the amenities of any locality affected, including the importance of regulating and restricting heavy commercial vehicles, the national air quality strategy, the importance of facilitating public service vehicles, and the safety and convenience of people using or wanting to use such vehicles, and any other matters appearing to the authority to be relevant.

8.2.4 The council must have proper regard to the matters set out at Section 122(1) and (2) and specifically document its analysis of all relevant Section 122 considerations when reaching any decision.

8.2.5 Comments approved by the Head of Litigation and Corporate Law on behalf of the Director of Law and Governance (13/07/2023)

8.3 EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS

8.3.1 Under the Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED) of Equality Act 2010, decision makers must evidence consideration of any potential impacts of proposals on groups who share the protected characteristics, before decisions are taken. This includes any decisions relating to how authorities act as employers; how they develop, evaluate and review policies; how they design, deliver and evaluate services, and also how they commission and procure services from others.

8.3.2 Section 149 of the Act requires public bodies to have due regard to the need to:

- Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct prohibited by the Act.
- Advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic
- Foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it.

8.3.3 An equality analysis was undertaken and identified an adverse impact for some older people and some disabled people and the programme of phasing the removal of Pay & Display machines aims to mitigate the impact on the disabled people by initially retaining machines that are more likely to be used such as in town, district and local centres. Should there be any changes to the proposals and, for example, all the Pay & Display machines are to be removed then it will be necessary to re-visit and update the EQIA which is a live document.

8.3.4 Approved by: Denise McCausland – Equalities Programme Manager (13/07/2023)

9 HUMAN RESOURCES IMPACT

- 9.1 Subject to consultation, if a decision is made to remove the majority of ticket machines there are potential staff implications with a reduction in the amount of work required to maintain machines. It is likely that the removal will be phased over a number of months which will give sufficient time to consult with affected staff over potential re-deployment.
- 9.2 As staff may face job losses which could result in redundancy or redeployment the process will be formally managed under the council's Reorganisation and Restructure Policy and Procedure.
- 9.3 If any other HR issues arise these will be managed under the council's Corporate Policies and Procedures.
- 9.4 Approved by: Jennifer Sankar, Head of HR – Housing Directorate and Sustainable Communities, Regeneration, Economic Recovery, for and on behalf of Dean Shoemith, Chief People Officer (12/06/2023)

10 APPENDICES

- 9.1 The following appendices are attached to this report:
- Appendix A: Draft Parking Policy 2023
- Appendix B: Equalities Impact Assessment

11 BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS

- 10.1 None