

## **TRAFFIC, ENVIRONMENT & COMMUNITY SAFETY SCRUTINY PANEL**

Minutes of the meeting of the Traffic, Environment & Community Safety Scrutiny Panel held on Monday, 20 March 2017 at 3pm at the Civic Offices, Portsmouth.

### **Present**

Councillors Steve Hastings (in the Chair)  
Frank Jonas  
Tom Wood

#### **9. Apologies for Absence. (AI 1)**

Councillors Stuart Potter and Ian Lyon sent their apologies.

#### **10. Declarations of Members' Interests (AI 2)**

No interests were declared.

#### **11. Minutes of the Previous Meeting. (AI 3)**

**RESOLVED** that the minutes of the previous meeting be agreed as a correct record.

#### **12. Review of general parking issues in Portsmouth with a view to considering alternative strategies. (AI 4)**

Rachel Hudson, Co-ordinator for Portsmouth Friends of the Earth (Pfoe) gave a deputation and circulated 'Walking in Portsmouth: A report summarising the comments of people who live, work or visit Portsmouth.'

Parking is one of few tools available to reduce traffic, obesity and pollution.

Portsmouth Friends of the Earth has a campaign to make the city walkable. The aforementioned report summarised the comments on walking made by the public which included:

- Traffic is seen as a barrier to walking.
- The parking systems need to be reviewed.
- End free parking in the city.
- Improve the bus service.
- Introduce citywide permits.
- Introduce a Park and Stride scheme.
- Have car pool parking.

Fewer cars on the roads would lead to more reliable public transport and more people walking which would be better for the economy and people's health and wellbeing.

In response to questions from the panel, she clarified the following points:

Pavements are generally narrow and used by pedestrians some with walking sticks or pushchairs, people in mobility scooters, joggers etc. The problem for both cyclists and pedestrians is too much traffic on the road. In order to accommodate cyclists as well as pedestrians, the pavements need to be

wide. Shared pavements can work well when all users show respect and consideration to each other. Cyclists should use their bells to warn people that they are approaching from behind.

Pfoe has talked to Councillor Fleming and officers about creating a network of walking routes between key areas including transport hubs, city centres, high street and neighbourhood streets. There could also be a flagship route.

The Park & Stride scheme started with schools asking parents not to drop off their children outside the school gates and could be expanded to encourage everyone to park further from their destination and enjoy a short walk.

#### Action

The Discussion paper: towards a walking strategy for Portsmouth - creating a connected city will be sent to members and published on the website.

Paul Nicholls, Joint Acting Head of Parking and Network Operations at Brighton & Hove City Council explained that:  
Brighton and Portsmouth have many similarities.

He worked in Westminster from 1993-2001 and in Brighton since 2001. He is also a member of the Advisory Board for PATROL (Parking and Traffic Regulation Outside London).

#### Residential Parking Zones

Half the city of Brighton is controlled by residential parking zones (RPZ).

When a zone is created, displacement parking is created in neighbouring areas.

Five of the nineteen zones have waiting lists. It is hoped that this will be reduced to three soon by improving alternative modes of transport, the creation of car-free developments where residents would not be entitled to any parking permits and increasing the capacity of the city car clubs.

Permits are issued for 110% of the spaces available and are only for vehicles up to 2.5m height and 6m long.

Permits cost £135. There is a 50% discount for cars that have low emissions.

Larger zones are more effective.

#### Public Transport.

Brighton has the highest bus use outside London. Free passes are issued to the elderly and people with disabilities.

#### A Typical Street

Parking bays are continuous and do not have individually marked bays as these were not enforceable and most people park sensibly. One side of the road is for permit holders only. The other side is for both permit holders and

people using pay & display. At one end of the street there is a parking area for motorbikes and at the other end one for bicycles.

#### Outside Shops

There are exclusive pay and display bays for shoppers but overall there are ten times as many shared bays as exclusive pay and display bays.

#### Echelon Parking

There is echelon parking on one side of wide roads, into which drivers reverse and on the other side there is parallel parking.

#### Off Street Parking

Directing drivers to off street parking is a challenge. There are websites and apps which help you plan your journey.

#### Electric Charging Points

There are charging points in every council car park and have been recently upgraded to 3-pin. These points are not in individual bays.

#### Students.

The council is working with the university to dissuade students from bringing cars with them. Their car must be registered at their house in Brighton to be eligible to apply for a parking permit.

In response to questions, he clarified the following points:

#### Public Transport.

The free bus passes can be used from 09:00.

#### Displacement

The council has been successful in preventing displacement of parking problems when a parking zone is introduced. When a majority of residents in an area request a parking zone, the potential impact on the wider area is considered. Residents in these neighbouring areas are offered a full scheme or a light touch scheme. In the latter, there is a mixed use of permit holders and people who use the pay & display meters all day except for 2 hours a day when it is for permit holders only. The times vary according to the area. The light touch schemes have become more and more popular, particularly in areas where there are fewer parking issues. The enforcement costs are the same as in a permit only full scheme.

#### Permits

There is a maximum of one permit per person and initially one per household. Once all households have a permit, applications for a second one are considered.

#### Variable message signs

These are situated in the city centre and are based on historical data.

#### Online parking information.

Real time information is provided on parking availability

### Residents' parking zones.

On average, three RPZs are created a year.

The smallest residents parking zone comprises approximately 300 residents and the largest has 8,000 households. There is a higher turn around in larger areas.

Most London boroughs have no waiting lists. However, Brighton council prefers to give people a reasonable chance of getting a space. The waiting lists were introduced in Brighton in 2001.

Virtual permits will be introduced shortly.

Scooters will read number plates as the cars enter the car parks. If there is no record that a parking charge has been paid, a CEO would be dispatched to investigate.

### Automatic Number Plate Recognition (ANPR).

This is being rolled out following an initial trial.

### Pay by Phone.

This was introduced in 2013 and now accounts for 50% of all transactions. The Civil Enforcement Officer checks that a parking charge has been paid using their hand held machine. Drivers can also pay by card, apple and other methods. There are fewer parking meters that accept cash. There are currently 800 and the aim is to reduce this to 150.

### Park & Ride

The unofficial site is a free car park close to bus stops.

### Pricing Strategy and Occupancy Rates

Members review fees and charges every year based on occupancy rates. The aim is to maintain 85-90% in all streets so that the casual parker can find a space when needed. Some streets are 100% full. In these cases, it is recommended that members increase the charges to encourage a higher turnover of spaces which is better for traders.

Members are currently considering raising the price of permits when there is a long waiting list.

Alan Cufley, Director of Traffic, Environment and Business Support informed members that Portsmouth City Council uses ANPR readers.

Charles Burns, Secretary Portsmouth & South East Hampshire, Federation of Small Businesses informed members that:

The Federation of Small Businesses (FSB) has more than 170,000 members in the UK including 19,000 members in the Portsmouth travel to work area. It is not possible to say what particular branches they are in. 50% of small businesses employ fewer than 50 staff.

He circulated an extract from the FSB's website which explained that the FSB supported the parking bill that was going through Parliament which gives government the power to force councils to consult before increasing parking charges. This extract will be published on the panel's website page.

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He gave a summary of some of the comments received by members in response to a survey he had conducted:

- There was concern about the number of trade vehicles in residential areas.
- There was support for using the Park & Ride for parking commercial vehicles overnight. However, the question was raised of how drivers would get to the site if they are not on the bus route.
- It might be possible to use supermarket car parks for commercial vehicle overnight parking.
- Tradesmen need to park their vans outside the house/ site where they are working; often in several different RPZs a day. A scratch card tradesmen's permit for would not be practical.
- Many contractors use sub-contractors. Sometimes they have to collect permits from the Civic Offices.
- Vehicles registered in Portsmouth should have Portsmouth tax disc.

Mr Burns explained that he had been self-employed in the city for about 40 years. Charles. His trade van was used in the city's first car club which operated for 17 months. In response to questions, he clarified the following points:

Pool car could be used to ferry commercial drivers who park their vehicles in the Park & Ride overnight and live in the same area. However, self-employed people do not tend to work 9-5pm. A car share system could be developed working with Uber as that company was originally set up for car sharing and this idea is being developed in the US.

The Cango service was trailed outside Petersfield and is now operated by Stagecoach

Many FSB members are 'white van men'.

If a tradesman works across the city, a city wide permit would be useful.

Alan Cufley, Director of Traffic, Environment and Business Support informed members that virtual residential parking permits are used.

#### Actions

It was agreed that the following documents be sent to the panel:

- A full summary of the survey results.
- Details of the possibility of virtual work permits being issued.

The meeting concluded at 4:15pm.

Chair