

## ACTION TAKEN BY CABINET MEMBER (EXECUTIVE FUNCTION)

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<b>Subject</b>	<b>North Finchley Business Permit Parking Review</b>
<b>Cabinet Member</b>	Cabinet Member for Environment
<b>Date of Decision</b>	30 July 2013
<b>Date of decision comes into effect</b>	30 July 2013

<b>Summary</b>	This report recommends the introduction of a permit for use by employees of businesses and staff of educational establishments in certain car parks within North Finchley Town Centre.
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<b>Officer Contributors</b>	Lisa Wright Traffic and Development Manager, Traffic and Development Environment, Planning and Regeneration
<b>Status (public or exempt)</b>	Public
<b>Wards affected</b>	Woodhouse, West Finchley
<b>Enclosures</b>	N/A
<b>Reason for exemption from call-in (if appropriate)</b>	
<b>Key decision</b>	No

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## **1. RELEVANT PREVIOUS DECISIONS**

- 1.1 Leader of the Council's Delegated Powers Report 1727 of 9 July 2012 approved new parking initiatives and charges in Environment Planning and Regeneration.
- 1.2 Cabinet Members for Environment's Delegated Powers Report 1847 of 5 November 2012 North Finchley Parking Review Experimental introduction of Parking Changes.

## **2. CORPORATE PRIORITIES AND POLICY CONSIDERATIONS**

- 2.1 The Corporate Plan 2013/16 defines the Council's vision (under the priority to promote responsible growth, development and success across the borough) in delivering sustainable growth to ensure Barnet continues to be successful and prosperous place where people want to live and work.
- 2.2 The London Mayor's Transport Strategy also addresses these areas through: "Proposal 30: The Mayor, through TFL, and working with the London boroughs and other stakeholders, will introduce measures to smooth traffic flow to manage congestion (delay, reliability and network resilience) for all people and freight movements on the road network, and maximise the efficiency of the network. These measures will include ...c) "... keep traffic moving ...", e) Planning and implementing ... improvements to the existing road network, ... to improve traffic flow on the most congested sections of the network, and to improve conditions for all road users.

## **3. RISK MANAGEMENT ISSUES**

- 3.1 It is considered that the issues involved are likely to give rise to policy considerations as failure to sustain and enhance Barnet's town centres will impair their key contribution to the social, economic and environmental well-being of the borough.
- 3.2 The proposed dedicated car park permit has been designed to make better use of the under-utilised car parks on Stanhope Road, Castle Road and Woodhouse Road, and potentially free up on-street parking space closer to the town centre through existing business permit holders migrating to these car parks using these new permits. There is a theoretical risk that the new permit and associated parking arrangements may not achieve an increase in parking income, or may result in a loss of parking income. (This has been assessed against existing generated income, which is currently significantly below the level predicted for the financial year 12/13). Should income not match currently achieved parking revenue, then a recovery plan will be developed by the DRS directorate to mitigate the loss in revenue.
- 3.3 The proposals have been formulated having given consideration to the responses from consultation with the businesses in North Finchley (see paragraph 8.6 below), comments made at meetings with local stakeholders, and council priorities.

## **4. EQUALITIES AND DIVERSITY ISSUES**

- 4.1 Section 149 of the Equality Act 2010 requires a decision-maker to have 'due regard' to achieving a number of equality goals: (i) to eliminate discrimination, harassment,

victimisation and any other conduct that is prohibited by the Act; (ii) to advance equality of opportunity between those with protected characteristics and those without; and (iii) to foster good relations between persons with a relevant protected characteristic and those without. The relevant protected characteristics are age, disability, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation. It also covers marriage and civil partnership with regard to eliminating discrimination.

4.2 The North Finchley Town Centre (NFTC) Parking Review aims to create the right environment for a vibrant and viable town centre in Barnet. Integral to this is the need to respect the diversity of the town centre network and to take into account the different requirements of each town centre, and the different needs and preferences of those who use them.

4.3 As part of the Parking Review, the establishment of a new permit will identify opportunities to enhance the public realm and improve accessibility for all users and will seek to support the provision of a wide range of shops and services to meet the needs of diverse local populations.

## **5. USE OF RESOURCES IMPLICATIONS (Finance, Procurement, Performance & Value for Money, Staffing, IT, Property, Sustainability)**

5.1 The introduction of a new permit type would require amendments to existing Traffic Management Orders. Statutory procedures require a public consultation to take place. Total estimated costs for the necessary statutory process, including advertising, printing, and all officer time, including consideration of any comments received, report writing and the introduction of the measures, are estimated to be approximately £7,000 , which can be met from the existing capital budget for these types of initiatives.

5.2 The cars parks which would be subject to the new permit and neighbouring car parks are currently under-utilised, therefore it is not envisaged that they will be a loss of income from paid for parking in the North Finchley Town Centre as a result of the changes.

## **6. LEGAL ISSUES**

6.1 The Traffic Management Act 2004 places an obligation on authorities to ensure the expeditious movement of traffic on their road network. Authorities are required to make arrangements as they consider appropriate for planning and carrying out the action to be taken in performing the duty.

6.2 The Council's charging powers are regulated by the general duty on Authorities under Section 122 of the RTRA. The Council must exercise the powers (so far as practicable having regard to the matters specified in subsection (2), below) 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.

## **7. CONSTITUTIONAL POWERS**

7.1 Council Constitution, Part 3, Responsibility for Functions, Section 3.3 provides that Cabinet Members may discharge the executive functions that fall within their

portfolio, whether or not they are also delegated to officers except for matters specifically reserved to Council, Cabinet or Cabinet Committees.

## **8. BACKGROUND INFORMATION**

8.1 As part of the North Finchley Outer London Fund, a review of car parking in North Finchley Town Centre (NFTC) was conducted during July and August 2012. The NFTC Parking Review was seeking to obtain knowledge of the on-street parking requirements from businesses and traders in the Town Centre, with a view to establishing whether the current arrangements could be improved to better serve the town centre community.

8.2 Measures were implemented on an experimental basis on 19 November 2012 which included:

- Reduce parking charges by 35% to increase turnover of prime on-street and off-street parking - (Proportionately less reduction for off-street car parks to ensure overall parity)
- Focus medium and long stay parking to off-street car parks
- Introduce dedicated bespoke business parking bays within off street car parks, to maximise on street parking space
- Standardise hours of operation within on street bays to a maximum 2 hours duration
- Adapt existing on street 2 hour bays, to include a paid 15 minutes parking period, in order to increase parking turnover
- Adapt existing loading bays to allow free parking '15 minutes, no return within 1 hour' during the hours of 10am and 4pm, Monday to Saturday
- Adapt the parking bay outside of the Post Office on Lodge Lane to accommodate a free '15 minutes, no return within 1 hour' short stay bay
- Introduce a number of new 'Pay by Phone' short stay parking bays at specific locations on the High Street, to provide additional parking space for local shops

8.3 In addition to the above measures it was also agreed to investigate improvements to the operation of business permits. The costs of the Business Permits prior to April 2011 were £310 for a specific vehicle permit and £620 for an any-vehicle permit and a maximum of 3 permits can be applied for by each business. These costs rose to £525 and £840 respectively in April 2011 as part of periodic reviews of parking charges across the borough. Following the price increase there was a marked reduction in the uptake in business permits in North Finchley and across the rest of the town centres in the Borough. At the beginning of 10/11 there were 194 permits issued to businesses in North Finchley this dropped to 23 immediately after the increase, it rose to 79 in 12/13 and there are currently 110 Business Permits issued in North Finchley.

8.4 Therefore, it is considered that the introduction of a new permit enabling permit holders to park in dedicated car parks in North Finchley would be of benefit to the community. This would utilise some of the more underused pay by phone car parks situated slightly further away from the town centre and depending on permit take-up, could enable parking spaces to be freed up on-street. The charge for these permits would be lower than the existing business permit charge.

- 8.5 In February 2013, the Council delivered approximately 450 no. letters to the North Finchley Town Centre business community eliciting opinion on the possibility of introducing a permit which would be applicable in dedicated car parks in the area, and of the charges businesses think would be appropriate.
- 8.6 In response to the letter, the Council received 7 responses. The main issues raised were as follows:
- 2 responses suggested £300 as an appropriate business permit charge
  - 1 response suggested £500 as an appropriate business permit charge
  - 1 response suggested £250 as an appropriate business permit charge, and £300 for an 'any registration no.' business permit charge
  - 3 responses mentioned Stanhope Road as a suitable car park for the possible arrangement
  - 1 response mentioned that the Lodge Lane car park should be included in the possible arrangement
  - 1 response mentioned that they would take up 10 permits
  - 1 response mentioned that they would take up 2 permits (whilst keeping 1 on the current arrangements)
  - 1 response suggested more dedicated on-street business parking places, as opposed to the current shared arrangement with resident permit holders
  - 1 response mentioned that the 2 car parks mentioned in the Council's letter was too far away
  - 1 response advised that they wouldn't be interested in the arrangements now, as they stopped using the business permit system after the last price increase
  - 1 response advised that they would be prepared to pay the full permit price if spaces were guaranteed
- 8.7 The response rate was approximately 1.5%, so it is difficult to gauge an overall consensus. However, from the responses received it is considered that, given that there is a finite number of parking spaces, that there is sufficient support for a permit which would enable a guaranteed space in a car park slightly further away from the Town Centre, which would be cheaper than a business permit . It is considered that the number of permits that are issued to employees of a business could be an increased number than the limit of three on business permits.
- 8.8 In addition, the Council has been made aware of a situation relating to a new school in the same road as one of the car parks being considered for use with this new permit. The school has approached the Council to request permits to enable their staff to park in the surrounding CPZ or in the nearby car parks. Although the council are under a separate process seeking to establish permitting arrangements for teaching staff that would entitle eligible staff at qualifying schools within the borough, to park in relevant Controlled Parking Zones, it is considered that this school and other schools could be accommodated as part of this scheme.
- 8.9 When considering establishing a new permit, the day to day practicalities of administering the permit must be also considered. In particular, these permits would need to be closely monitored on a day to day basis, to ensure that the number of permits issued for a particular car park or car parks does not exceed the total number of spaces in that car park or those car parks. Additionally it is considered that should there be a high demand for these permits, it may be wise to keep a waiting list of interested parties so to ensure that if any live permits are

surrendered, the Council could contact the next in line on the waiting list to establish interest, with a view to filling the space.

8.10 In that respect, discussions have taken place with the Permit Team and the Parking Client Team who confirmed that they could accommodate such arrangements in their day to day working arrangements.

8.10 Therefore it is recommended that Officers carry out a statutory consultation on a proposal to convert the Stanhope Road Lower (32 spaces), Castle Road (48 spaces) and Woodhouse Road (10 spaces) car parks from pay by phone car parks to permit holders only car parks, with all businesses and educational establishments within the North Finchley CPZ eligible to apply for the car park permits. Each permit would be linked to a specific car park, the price of the permit would be £350 per annum, and there would be a maximum of 10 permits per organisation, however this number may be varied at the discretion of the Council.

8.11 It is envisaged that as part of the statutory consultation, the exact level of interest of permit numbers per car park will be established, after which decisions can be made whether or not to introduce the proposed changes in full, part or not at all.

## **9. LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS**

9.1 Consultation responses.

## **10. DECISION OF THE CABINET MEMBER(S)**

**I authorise the following action:**

**10.1 To, subject to the outcome of a statutory consultation, approve the introduction of the Car Park Permits for Stanhope Road Lower, Castle Road and Woodhouse Road Car Parks, through the making of the relevant Traffic Management Orders;**

**10.2 That any unresolved material objections received to the statutory consultation are dealt with by the Director for Place under delegated powers, in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Environment before a decision is made in due course on whether or not to introduce the proposal, and if so, in full or in part or not at all.**

**Signed**  
**Cabinet**  
**Member for**  
**Environment**

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**Date**

**30 July 2013**

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