

Briefing document for Finance & Enterprise Scrutiny Committee - Civil Parking Enforcement

Introduction to Civil Parking Enforcement

We believe local authorities are best placed to carry out the traffic management duties within their local communities. With over 90% of English Local Authorities taking on the responsibility of on-street parking enforcement from the police, we feel there is a strong case for local authorities to take on CPE powers.

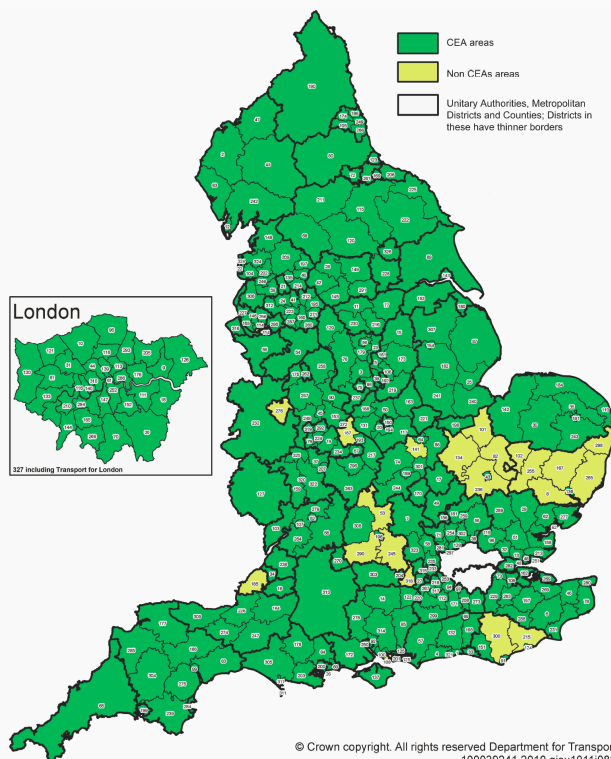
In 2004, the Government through the Traffic Management Act (2004) gave councils the option to assume parking enforcement powers from the police. In addition to this, the local authority would be able to collect any fines, which would go to the local authority rather than central government.

Telford and Wrekin Council are the only local authority to not have assumed these powers in the West Mercia Police area, and are one of only a handful to have not assumed them nationally. The purpose of penalty charges is to dissuade motorists from contravening parking restrictions. The objective is for 100 per cent compliance, with no penalty charges.

Why adopt Civil Parking Enforcement Powers?

- To enforce parking contraventions fairly, accurately and expeditiously.
- To increase compliance with parking restrictions through clear, well designed, legal and enforced parking controls.
- To deliver wider transport strategies and objectives through appropriate parking.
- Charges to balance supply and demand for available parking and consequently encourage sustainable travel options.
- Improving road safety.
- Improving and maintaining unrestricted access to premises.
- Improving the quality and accessibility of public transport.
- Meeting the needs of people with disabilities.

List of areas in England designated as a Civil Enforcement Area (CEA) for the purposes of enforcing parking contraventions – 13 June 2016



Parking Enforcement is about ensuring the rules are followed and to encourage users to be considerate and comply with the law.



The Government believes that rather than creating top down solutions, local authorities should work together and use current systems of transferring responsibilities to meet local need.

The government recognised that local authorities were better placed to deal with this problem and by empowering councils to be able to deal with this. The overwhelming majority of Councils assumed CPE powers for the benefit of their residents and there is a clear level of support from the local community in Telford & Wrekin to improve the level of parking enforcement – see Figure 1 below.

Proper management of parking on public roads is essential to ensure the smooth flow of traffic and to allow drivers to park near their destinations. It is right that parking restrictions and charges should be imposed and that penalty charges should be levied on those who do not comply. The level of charges must be based solely on the need to manage parking; if that level generates a surplus then it may be used for other purposes, which can be invested back into the Borough.

The lack of effective parking enforcement for on-street parking negatively impacts areas across the Borough and it is important to recognise the wider benefits of adopting CPE powers and the opportunities this could present to also more widely enforce issues such as dog fouling and littering.



Figure 1 - Twitter Online Survey conducted by Telford Live

Conclusion

Civil Parking Enforcement (CPE) is a complex matter and requires careful consideration and planning to ensure that any scheme developed is suitable for the circumstances in Telford & Wrekin and sustainable in financial terms. On July 14th 2016 a notice of motion was put forward at Full Council by Councillor E Carter and was seconded Councillor N Lowery.

The proposal for T&W Council to assume CPE powers has received support from both our MPs in Telford & Wrekin, local Parish and Town Councils, the Police Crime Commissioner for West Mercia and the Police Inspector for Neighbourhood Policing. The PCC has also made a financial commitment to contribute to the scheme.

As our Borough continues to grow in terms of housing, population and development, it is essential we develop a credible strategy to improve road safety to ensure the efficient operation of our highway networks to help encourage responsible and safe parking.

We feel that the Council is best placed to address illegal and inconsiderate parking and its decriminalisation will enable Telford & Wrekin Council to respond to an important aspect of our communities needs and priorities now and in the future as we continue to grow as a Borough. Therefore, we urge Scrutiny to support our recommendation for Telford & Wrekin to apply for civil parking powers and to ensure the Council's Parking Policy and Traffic Regulation Orders are up to date to support this recommendation to Cabinet.