



## **Report to the Policy Review Scrutiny Committee**

**Subject: On Street Parking Review**

**Date: 27 March 2012**

**Author: Councillor S Poole**

**Working Group Members: Councillors P Allan, B Collis, S Prew Smith, G Tunnicliffe.**

### **1. Purpose of the Report**

To present the final report and recommendations of the On Street Parking Review.

### **2. Background**

The Policy Review Scrutiny Committee established a scrutiny review in September 2011 to examine a range of issues related to on street car parking. The review examined a number of concerns associated with poor parking practice and enforcement, and sought to determine measures that could be taken to encourage better parking behaviour. The review was carried out after a suggestion from a member of the public who was concerned about the inconsiderate parking of drivers in the area where she lived.

The review sought to:

- identify the dangers caused by poor parking practices and particular problem areas in Gedling Borough
- identify the difference between inconvenient and dangerous parking practices
- ascertain what parking restrictions can be legally enforced and who has responsibility for enforcement
- examine what solutions have been used to encourage improved parking behaviour
- develop new approaches to raise awareness and encourage improved parking behaviour

- consider parking issues around schools.

The review received briefings from Gedling Borough Council's Parking Manager and departmental officers from Nottinghamshire County Council. Members were aware of a number of issues in their own wards and were able to discuss examples of poor parking behaviour and possible solutions.

### **3. Information**

Legislation introduced in 1991 allowed local authorities to take responsibility for parking enforcement from the Police. In Nottinghamshire district and borough councils in partnership with the County Council assumed responsibility for parking enforcement on Nottinghamshire's roads and council opened public car parks in 2008. The partnership known as the Nottinghamshire Parking Partnership has responsibility for ensuring that parking enforcement is provided consistently and fairly across the county.

Double yellow lines are the only legally enforceable parking restriction.

Consideration will be given to applying double yellow lines where situations are deemed to be dangerous, there is a history of accidents or impacts on access for emergency vehicles and buses. Officers from the County Council or Gedling Borough assess a problem to determine if it requires a legally enforceable solution or is irresponsible or inconvenient parking behaviour. Members felt that the introduction of double yellow lines whilst resolving parking problems in one location could sometimes just move the problem to another area.

Poor parking practices generate many complaints to the Parking Partnership, the most frequent relate to parking around junctions, turning heads, across driveways and around schools. These are mainly inconvenient rather than dangerous.

Where there is not a legally enforceable solution and there is a genuine problem consideration will be given to a number of different ways to resolve a problem. This can include the use of bollards, residents only parking zones and advice about improved parking practices.

Currently the production of a range of leaflets is under consideration which will address problems caused by parking and encouraging improved parking behaviour, this could include issues like verge parking, blocking driveways and parking near junctions.

Problems with cars impinging on the footway can be exacerbated by overhanging trees/hedges encroaching on pavements. One of the responsibilities of the 3 County Council Highways officers based in Gedling is to carry out programmed inspections and react to specific complaints. Action can involve discussing the issue with offending householders backed up by a leaflet explaining their responsibility to keep hedges etc. from encroaching on the pavement. Formal letters will be sent and as a last resort the trees will be cut back and the cost charged to the house holder. The tree maintenance budget is small so this is only done in the worst offending cases. Within the Nottinghamshire Parking Partnership the district councils have a greater front line presence employing civilian parking attendants to enforce parking contraventions of car parks and areas with yellow lines. Where there are no legal restrictions in place these officers can provide legal advice, one of the most frequent complaints received by officers involves parking across dropped curbs.

Residents only parking schemes can be implemented to help residents park their vehicles. They are generally enacted in areas where vehicles that belong to non

residents are making it difficult for residents to park. They are usually operated during the working day and clearly signposted. Spaces during this period are reserved for permit holding residents and their visitors. Members agreed that these help some residents but they are not always popular because it puts a restriction on how many cars resident and their visitors can park.

Parking on footways and verges is becoming more widespread due to the lack of drive and garage facilities at some properties and the narrow width of roads. This causes a road safety hazard for pedestrians and causes damage to footways and grassed areas. Although this is illegal there is no penalty unless double yellow lines are in force on the road.

Schools put pressure on an already difficult situations residents experience inconsiderate parking by parents and carers dropping off and collecting children at the beginning and the end of the school day. Members understand that there by few alternatives and some pupils have to be driven to school but felt that poor parking could be a hazard for pedestrians and other road user.

The County Council provided a range of services to promote road safety around schools. This includes the School Crossing Patrol Service, road safety education and training, safer routes to schools, 20mph zones, and no stopping and zig zag markings – these are advisory only and not enforceable. School Travel Plans which encourage schools and the local community to work together to reduce congestion and encourage older pupils to take a lead on road safety and activities in school and the wider community, using a 'Junior Road Safety Officer' scheme. Walking buses, Park'n'stride schemes and walk to school days are also used to reduce vehicle activity around schools.

Although the issues of parking outside schools is perceived to be a road safety hazard in reality it acts as a speed reduction measure limiting speed and keeping accidents down. However it can still be a problem for residents parking at certain times of the day.

#### **4. Conclusions**

There are many diverse parking issues throughout the Borough and it quickly became apparent that there is no easily identifiable solution to these long standing parking problems.

There are many areas in Gedling Borough where there is insufficient parking space available to meet the demand of residents. In new developments there is a need to provide sufficient parking provision during the planning process.

Parking is an extremely controversial issue causing disputes between neighbours but is often an inconvenience rather than a danger. Irresponsible parking near junctions can be safety hazard for other drivers and cyclists and may make access difficult for emergency vehicles.

Parking on footways and verges is becoming more widespread due to the lack of drive and garage facilities at some properties and the narrow width of roads. This causes a road safety hazard for pedestrians, in particular those with poor sight, using mobility scooters and pushing buggies and prams. In addition this causes damage to footways and grassed areas.

Traffic around schools increases parking problems particularly at the beginning and the end of the school day. Members understand that some pupils have to be driven

to school but felt that poor parking could be a hazard for pedestrians and other road users, and an inconvenience for residents.

## **5. Recommendations**

The working group makes the following recommendations to:

- The Portfolio Holder Environment and Sustainability
- That greater consideration be given during the planning process for new housing and schools to the potential impact of the increase in the number of vehicles will have on parking issues and road safety.
- That increased publicity and communication to encourage better parking behaviour and consideration for others be undertaken via the Contacts magazine and the website
- When available parking enforcement officers and neighbourhood wardens fully utilise the postcard currently being developed by the County Council, designed to encourage improved parking practices for vehicles that are not parking illegally, but are parking inconsiderately.
- Gedling Borough produces its own leaflet to encourage good parking practices.
- Consideration and examination of how parking on pavements could be better organised, for example parking bay or lines down the middle of the pavement, to indicate safe parking areas be undertaken.
- Members in their school governor role work with parent, and the community, to encourage parking practices which minimise inconvenience for residents.
- Greater use of 'Park'n'stride' schemes, enabling parents and carers to use identified parking and drop off areas and complete the journey to school on foot.

## **Appendices**

### **Appendix 1: On Street Parking Review Scope**

## Scope

<b>Scrutiny committee:</b>	<b>Policy</b>
<b>Working Group:</b>	<b>On Street Parking</b>
<b>Chair of group:</b>	<b>Councillor S Poole</b>
<b>Working group members:</b>	<b>Councillors: Prew-Smith, B Collis, P Allan</b>
<b>Portfolio holder/s:</b>	<b>Councillors P Feeney, M Payne</b>

### (1) Scope

Why this review is being undertaken

(List the specific outcomes – **S**pecific, **M**easurable, **A**chievable, **R**ealistic and **T**ime bound)

To examine concerns relating to on street parking, identify issues to improve safety and access for pedestrians and vehicles, and consider initiatives that could be implemented to encourage improved parking behaviour

### Aims

<b>Aim</b>	<b>Corporate Priority</b>
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<p><b>Identify the dangers caused by poor parking practices and particular problem areas in Gedling Borough.</b></p> <p><b>Identify the difference between inconvenient and dangerous parking practices.</b></p> <p><b>Ascertain what parking restrictions can be legally enforced and who has responsibility for enforcement.</b></p> <p><b>Examine what solutions have been used to encourage improved parking behaviour.</b></p> <p><b>Develop new approaches to raise awareness and encourage improved parking behaviour.</b></p> <p><b>Consider parking issues around schools.</b></p>	<p>A place of Safe and Strong Communities</p> <p>A place where we take care of our environment</p>
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**(2) Timetable**

The review will commence in:	<b>22 September 2011</b>
Milestones:	<b>Information gathering September - December</b>
The review will report in:	<b>To be established</b>
Committee dates:	<b>TBA</b>
Frequency of meetings:	<b>Monthly</b>

**(3) Information gathering and consultees**

The working group has requested the following information:

<p>Parking enforcement practice and processes.</p> <p>The technicalities of parking – parking permits, controlled parking areas.</p> <p>Problems of access for emergency vehicles.</p> <p>The role of the County Council to enforce/ encourage good parking behaviour.</p> <p>What work is currently undertaken to encourage good parking behaviour.</p> <p>Specific problem areas - ‘Hot spots’ - in Gedling.</p>
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What can be legally enforced to reduce encroachment on streets by overhanging trees and hedges?

The responsibilities of Neighbourhood Wardens, Gedling Borough Parking Manager and enforcement officers.

Differences between urban and rural parking issues

Establish if Gedling Borough Council Departments report feedback potential problems – refuse lorries/ street sweepers etc.

Specific problems around schools.

Notts. County Councils Parking Around Schools Scrutiny review.

Photos of specific parking problems

What are the main questions to be asked and of what parties?

Notts. County Council Parking Manager

The County Council's role in enforcing parking restrictions, what issues and activities are problematic, what is and can be done to encourage good parking?

Neighbourhood Wardens

Gedling Borough Parking Manager

Enforcement Officers

- How and who is responsible for
  - § Parking enforcement issues,
  - § parking permits
  - § enforcement of taxi bay/loading bays
  - § complaints,
  - § problems caused by overhanging trees, hedges encroaching on pavements.

The working group will be inviting the following persons/organisations to one or more meetings to help with the review:

Neighbourhood Wardens

Gedling Borough Parking Manager

Enforcement Officers

### ***Visits***

The working group might need to consider a visit to:

Possible visits to poor parking 'hotspots'

**(4) How the community will be consulted, informed and involved**

The working group wishes to consult through:

Members of the working group discussing issues with members of the public in their wards.

**(5) Equality of opportunity**

The following Equality impact Assessment method will be applied

The needs of rural/urban residents and people with disabilities will be considered when making recommendations.

**(6) Resources**

The working group is supported by:

Members Services Manager

Members Services Officer

**(6) How the effectiveness of the review will be measured**

After the initial review the working group will...  
(Review date to be included in Scrutiny Forward Plan)

A six month follow up review of recommendations made will be included in the scrutiny work plan.