

RHONDDA CYNON TAF COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL

MUNICIPAL YEAR 2014 - 2015

ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

6th OCTOBER 2014.

REPORT OF THE GROUP DIRECTOR, ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES

<u>Agenda Item No. 5</u>
CIVIL PARKING ENFORCEMENT: SUMMARY REPORT

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1 PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

- 1.1 To provide Members with an updated position in relation to the performance of the Civil Parking Enforcement (CPE) service for its second year of operation: 1st August 2013 – 31st July 2014.

2 RECOMMENDATIONS

It is recommended that:

- 2.1 Members consider the content of this report with respect to the ongoing performance management of the CPE service.

3 BACKGROUND

- 3.1 The CPE service has been in operation across the County Borough for over two years and its implementation previously involved:
- Reviewing all on-street Traffic Regulation Orders (TROs) and undertaking any subsequent remedial works in conjunction with any and all relevant Traffic Management legislation (lines and signs).
 - Implementing the enforcement role for the whole of Rhondda Cynon Taf including the employment of a new team of Civil Enforcement Officers.
 - Externalising the back-office processing functions to Merthyr Tydfil CBC, which required collaborative ICT, financial and Customer Care work.

4 ENFORCEMENT

- 4.1 The Council's Civil Enforcement Officers (CEOs) issued a total of 9266 Penalty Charge Notices (PCNs) to unlawfully parked vehicles across the

County Borough in the period covered by this report i.e. the second 12 months of operation.

- 4.2 This figure represents a drop from the previous year of operation (12440) of around a quarter and is not unexpected. It should be remembered that the service was introduced after a parking enforcement hiatus of nearly three years whereby parking restrictions were habitually abused. It therefore stands to reason, (and is also the experience of neighbouring local authorities), that the first year of such parking enforcement results in more PCNs being issued for more parking contraventions, than in the second year when motorists become more compliant and so less PCNs are issued as observed contraventions are also fewer and further between. However, going forward, and again in line with experiences from elsewhere, it is believed that another significant drop in PCNs is not expected and that the trend of the next few years may well “plateau” with similar figures to this years’ being reported.
- 4.3 Of these 9266 PCNs, approximately 77% were issued on-street, with the remaining 23% issued in the Council’s off-street Car Parks. These figures can be seen as broadly similar to the trend identified in the first year of operation where the two figures were 73% on-street and 27% off-street respectively.
- 4.4 The current PCN payment rate is approximately 80%. This figure represents an increase on the 75% payment rate achieved last year, which was already well above the identified national trend rate for PCN payments, (which is approximately 60%) and thus emphasises the quality of the enforcement service provided.
- 4.5 The current PCN cancellation rate (i.e. PCNs that have been cancelled upon receipt of an informal challenge) is 8.7%%, which is a slight improvement on the figure of 9.2% reported last year. Once again, such a figure is significantly lower than the identified national trend for PCN cancellations, which is approximately 15%.
- 4.6 Approximately 15% of PCNs issued to vehicles in the selected period remain unpaid. These are either being pursued as a debt through the Traffic Enforcement Centre or have been registered as Appeals with the independent Traffic Penalty Tribunal (and thus the ticket is “on hold” pending the outcome). Please note that all debtors are chased to an appropriate conclusion without exception.

5 BACK OFFICE PROCESSING FUNCTION

- 5.1 Throughout the period covered by this report, the Council can proudly boast a 100% record in responding to any incoming PCN challenges within the set timescales. Noting that approximately 35 informal challenges are received by the back office on a weekly basis.

6 FINANCIAL ASSESSMENT

- 6.1 The CPE service had a £340k set-up cost, and with an anticipated operational surplus of around £60k per annum. Initially, it was anticipated that this would provide for a crude payback on the outlay of approximately 5 years.

- 6.2 The success of the Civil Parking Enforcement has exceeded expectations and shows a very healthy financial position, a full financial review is currently underway. It should be noted that any operational surplus, after set up costs have been met is ring fenced to be reinvested into Highways Technical Services and Traffic Management.

7 APPENDIX 1: PCNs ISSUED: STATISTICS

Penalty Charge Notices (PCNs)

The table below shows some key statistics relating to the number of PCNs issued to unlawfully parked vehicles during the period 1st August 2013 to 31st July 2014 when compared with the same period between 2012 and 2013.

Description	Total 13/14	Total 12/13	On- Street 13/14	On- Street 12/13	Off- Street 13/14	Off- Street 12/13
No. of Higher Level (£70) PCNs	5875	7580	5716	7316	159	264
No. of Lower Level (£50) PCNs	3391	4860	1429	1793	1692	3067
Total No. of PCNs	9266	12440	7145	9019	2121	3331
No. of PCNs paid	7409	9286				
No. of PCNs paid at discounted rate (50% if paid within 14 days)	6073	7940				
No. of PCNs cancelled as a result of an informal challenge	809	1172				
Percentage of Higher Level PCNs	63%	61%				
Percentage of Lower Level PCNs	37%	39%				
Percentage of PCNs paid	80%	75%				
Percentage of PCNs paid at discounted rate	82%	86%				
Percentage of PCNs cancelled as a result of an informal challenge	8.7%	9.2%				

8 APPENDIX 2: PCNs CANCELLED: STATISTICS

Penalty Charge Notices (PCNs) - Reasons for Cancellation

The table below shows how many PCNs were cancelled following receipt of an informal challenge in the period 1st August 2013 to 31st July 2014 when compared with the same period between 2012 and 2013, and the reasons for cancellation.

Reason for Cancellation	No. Cancelled 13/14	No. Cancelled 12/13
Valid Permit Holder	198	252
Valid P & D Ticket	149	261
Valid Disabled Badge	190	381
Machine Fault	5	4
Mitigating Circumstances	33	11
Other	234	263
Total Cancellations	809	1172

9 APPENDIX 3: TRAFFIC MANAGEMENT REVIEW OF RESIDENTIAL PARKING

9.1 Following the Cabinet Decision of the 19th February 2014 recommending a review of residents parking arrangements in the Pontypridd/Treforest and Aberdare areas, the Traffic Management Team have initiated the review process with the aim of implementing identified amendments by the end of the 2014/15 financial year. Key milestones completed to date are as follows:

9.2 Pontypridd/Treforest

9.2.1 A period of informal consultation with Members and the general public was conducted in May/June 2014. During this time public exhibitions were held at Pontypridd Museum and Taf Meadow Community Hall where proposals were placed on display and officers were present to answer any queries.

9.2.2 A large number of responses were received during the consultation period, which have now been analysed. The proposals have been amended to reflect the comments received as and where appropriate and will be distributed to Members for their approval prior to the general public being re-consulted on the amended proposals. The next round of informal public consultation is due to commence early October 2014, following which the Council is required to initiate a final statutory period of Public Notice before any proposals are approved and implemented.

9.2.3 Subject to approval it is proposed that any new and or amended residents parking restrictions are implemented in the Pontypridd/Treforest areas by the end of March 2015.

9.3 Aberdare

9.3.1 Officers have concluded their initial site investigation works of existing residents parking zones as well as those sites where a potential need for new zones has been identified.

9.3.2 Local Members have been consulted on the initial findings of the officers investigations and proposals are currently being prepared in preparation for informal consultation with residents. The consultation is programmed to commence in early November 2014.

9.3.3 Subject to a satisfactory response during the various rounds of consultation that the Council is required to undertake, officers intend to seek final approval of the 'final proposals' by the end of March 2015.

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