



OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY BOARD

27 JUNE 2006

FINAL REPORT – REVIEW OF THE RESIDENTS' PARKING SCHEME

PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

1. To present the findings of the Economic Regeneration and Transport Panel's review of the Council's current Residents' Parking Scheme.

AIM OF THE SCRUTINY INVESTIGATION

2. The overall aim of the Scrutiny investigation was to review the operation, boundaries and effectiveness of the current Residents' Parking Scheme in Middlesbrough. To consider the findings of, and comment on, the recommendations of the Faber Maunsell report into residents' parking in Middlesbrough which is being developed during the period of the scrutiny review.

TERMS OF REFERENCE OF THE SCRUTINY INVESTIGATION

3. The terms of reference for the Scrutiny investigation were as outlined below:
 - (a) To gain an understanding of the Residents' Parking Scheme that is currently in operation in Middlesbrough.
 - (b) To identify and consider issues relevant to the operation of the scheme and those issues which are also being investigated on behalf of the Council by the consultants Faber Maunsell
Including:
 - Current and future levels of parking demand
 - Current and possible boundaries
 - Implications of charging

- (c) To consider the options for the Council as presented in the consultants' report
- Including:
- the size and location of the current Residents' Parking Scheme
 - whether or not any improvements can be made to the current scheme
 - results of consultation with residents
- (d) Are there any lessons that can be learnt from good practice in other local authorities?

METHODS OF INVESTIGATION

4. Members of the Panel met formally between 15 December 2005 and 3 May 2006 to discuss/receive evidence relating to this investigation and a detailed record of the topics discussed at those meetings are available from the Committee Management System (COMMIS), accessible via the Council's website.
5. A brief summary of the methods of investigation are outlined below:
- (a) Detailed officer presentations supplemented by verbal evidence.
 - (b) Meeting and detailed discussions with Faber Maunsell.
6. The report has been compiled on the basis of their evidence and other background information listed at the end of the report.

MEMBERSHIP OF THE PANEL

7. The membership of the Panel was as detailed below:

Councillors M Booth (Chair), Councillor P Sanderson (Vice-Chair), Councillors S Bloundele, K Hall, B Taylor, J Taylor and M Williams

THE PANEL'S FINDINGS

TO GAIN AN UNDERSTANDING OF THE RESIDENTS' PARKING SCHEME THAT IS CURRENTLY IN OPERATION IN MIDDLESBROUGH

8. In order to gain an understanding of the current position the panel heard from the Head of Transport and Design and the Group Leader – Parking Solutions.
9. The panel learnt that the Council currently operates 10 Residents' Parking Schemes, which were introduced in the late 1980s and early 1990s. (Details of which can be found in Appendix 1). These 'zones' will be referred to within this report as Residents' Parking Zones (RPZs). They were introduced to protect residential areas in and around the town centre from indiscriminate parking by commuters and shoppers who were parking in the nearby streets in order to avoid parking charges. Currently residents, their visitors and businesses located within the zones have never been charged for their permits. The cost of the operation of the scheme and its enforcement were seen as an on-cost against the Council's town centre off-street car park operation.

Operation of the Scheme

10. The scheme operates between Monday to Saturday 8.00am until 6.00pm. There are approximately 10,000 properties located within the zones and the Council issue approximately 5,000 permits a year.
11. The make up of the zones is generally characterised by high-density housing where car ownership levels tend to be relatively low. It is the case that once the commuters and shoppers' vehicles have been removed that there is ample space on street for the residents and their visitors. At present, and unlike many areas, in Middlesbrough the demand for on street spaces by residents has yet to exceed supply.
12. The permits allow residents to park in the zone, and display the vehicle registration number, the zone and a serial number, are automatically renewed by zone on an annual basis, with residents informing the Council of any change to vehicles or other personal circumstances. Currently the Council does not place a limit on the number of permits than can be issued to a particular property.
13. Visitors are also entitled to a parking permit. Visitors must apply to the Council in person and must have a signed declaration from the resident concerned confirming that they are a genuine regular visitor. Again, there are no limits on the number of visitors' permits that can be issued in respect of a particular property.
14. To accommodate professional visitors such as health visitors, nurses, social workers, building inspectors etc, who may need day to day access to residents with the RPZs, an All Zones Permit is issued. These permits are charged at £10 each and are valid for a period of 1 year. They allow parking for a maximum of 1 hour in any street and in any zone.

Background to the Council's Charging Policy

15. The Council has never charged residents, their visitors or the businesses situated within the zones for a permit. Previous consultation with residents regarding the possible introduction of a charge for the permit was opposed by residents groups. However, evidence gathered from surveys of areas that do not currently have a parking scheme, but who would like one, indicates that they would be prepared to pay a small charge for a permit. In the past, the Council has always taken the view that town centre residents should be able to enjoy the same convenience that people living in the suburbs take for granted, i.e to be able to park in the street outside, or near to their homes for free and that there should therefore be no charge for residents parking permits.

Enforcement

16. The enforcement of the scheme is carried out by the Council's team of Parking Patrol Officers. Since the introduction of Decriminalised Parking Enforcement (DPE) in September 2003 the Patrol Officers have been able to issue £60 Penalty Charge Notices (PCN) to vehicles failing to display valid permits in the relevant parking zones. This has improved the Council's ability to effectively enforce the scheme, prior to DPE the Council could only issue Notices of Office to illegally parked vehicles and could not impose any financial penalty on the driver. In 2005 the Council issued 2,000 PCNs to illegally parked vehicles in RPZs.

Review of the Scheme

17. The Council is receiving an increasing number of requests for new schemes in locations outside of the town centre boundary (see table 1). These requests tend to be in locations where demand for parking at adjacent destinations either exceeds supply or where 'charge avoidance' parking spills into residential streets.

Table 1

LOCATION	DESCRIPTION OF AREA CONCERNED	PERCEIVED PROBLEM
Gresham Ward	From boundary of existing Zone A south to Parliament Road	Commuters, Students, Shop Workers & Shoppers parking
University Area	Area bounded by Linthorpe Road, Borough Road, Marton Road & Park Road North	Students & Commuters & Shoppers parking
Linthorpe Village	Streets off Linthorpe Road between St Barnabas Road & Devonshire Road	Shoppers & Shop Workers parking
North Ormesby	Streets off Kings Road shopping area. Oakfield Road, Millfield Road & Beaumont Road area	Shoppers, Shop Workers, Commuters (Police staff) & Matchday parking
St Johns Gate	Off North Ormesby Road	Commuter & Matchday parking
Douglas Street	Off Borough Road	Commuter Parking
Saltwells Road area	Between Borough Road & Longlands Road	Matchday Parking
Martonside Way & Cavendish Road area	Off Marton Road opposite James Cook Hospital	Hospital Visitors & Staff
Linden Grove Linthorpe	Behind Roman Road shops, between Oxford Road & Cambridge Road	Shoppers and Students Parking (see below)
Middlesbrough College Linthorpe	Area bounded by Roman Road, The Crescent, The Avenue & Orchard Road	Students Parking
Belle Vue Grove & Coppice Road	Off Marton Road close to Belle Vue shops	Shoppers Parking
Alphonsus Street area North Ormesby	Off West Terrace	Matchday Parking

18. There are also a number of longstanding requests for extensions to the existing town centre schemes. In the light of the issues detailed above and given the Council's ability to now enforce the schemes effectively it was decided that it was an appropriate time to conduct a review of the council's residents' parking policies and as such traffic consultants Faber Maunsell were contracted to carry out a review. Their findings will be used to inform this scrutiny review and Members will have the opportunity to consider and make recommendations regarding the findings and recommendations of that report.

TO IDENTIFY AND CONSIDER THE RELEVANT ISSUES AND THOSE ISSUES WHICH ARE ALSO BEING INVESTIGATED ON BEHALF OF THE COUNCIL BY THE CONSULTANTS FABER MAUNSELL

19. A review of residents and businesses within the pilot zone (known as Zone A) was conducted by Faber Maunsell in order to gauge opinion and attitudes towards the existing Residents Parking Zones (RPZ) and the potential extension of the current RPZ. The survey therefore targeted residents and businesses both within the zone and in its surrounding areas.

Methodology

20. All residents and businesses within the pilot zone received a hand delivered questionnaire on 9 December and a notice about the consultation was placed in the Evening Gazette in order to raise awareness and boost response rates. Approximately 2,300 houses and businesses were targeted ensuring 100% coverage. Approximately half (49%) of the targeted properties were located in the RPZ. A total response rate of 14% was achieved, of which 91% of the responses were from residents, with the remainder being from the local businesses that were targeted.

21. The panel was concerned about the low response rate of 14%, however the panel were assured by the consultants that this figure was relatively high for surveys of this type.

Findings from the Questionnaire - Results from the non-residents' parking zone

22. The results of the survey were summarised into those responses from the non-residents parking zone and the residents parking zone. Results from the non-residents parking zone showed that 45% of the residents thought that there was not enough parking available on their streets, when residents were asked who they thought were parking in their streets, the results were as follows: residents 31%; shoppers 23%; and students 17%. In order to alleviate the problem 65% of residents thought that they, as residents, should be given permits to enable them to park in their streets. However only 51% of residents thought it would be a good idea for the area to become a RPZ.

23. There were only 10 businesses from within the non-residents parking zone area that responded to the questionnaire. The consultants rightly suggested that this number was too low to provide an accurate representation of the business community within the area, however their responses have been included in order to provide an insight into their opinions. The businesses that responded thought that the introduction of a RPZ would have a negative effect on their businesses in that their customers would not be able to park near their businesses. 8 out of 10 responses were opposed to the RPZ.

Findings from the Questionnaire - Results from the residents' parking zone

24. Within the RPZ, 84% of respondents thought that the RPZ was a good idea, with 49% of residents that were satisfied or very satisfied with the current arrangements. However 32% of people were dissatisfied or very dissatisfied, with the main reason for this being a perception of insufficient levels of enforcement.

25. There were 14 businesses that responded from within the RPZ, again this is too low to provide an accurate representation of the business community in the area, however their views were still valuable. 10 out of the 14 responses thought the RPZ was a good idea but only 5 of the 14 were satisfied with the current RPZ, the reason being again,

the perceived lack of enforcement and also the lack of customer parking within the zone which could be seen to affect business.

Parking Survey

26. In addition to the questionnaire, an on-site survey was completed which took place on Wednesday 14 December 2005, the survey took place in 1 hour 'beats' between 0700 and 1900. The purpose of the survey was to show the numbers of vehicles parked in each site and the duration of their stay.

27. The results showed that the busiest time of the day was between 1300 and 1400, with 22 survey sites that had 50% of their capacity in use and this reached 80% in 2 sites during this period. The main sites which regularly reach an 80% capacity were Albany Street and Cobham Street, these 2 streets lie just outside of the zone. Within the RPZ there are several streets which exceed 50% capacity, namely Tennyson Street between 0700 and 0800.

28. Overall, although some streets were reaching 80% capacity at times the consultants concluded that there were enough places for residents to be able to park.

University Area

29. The consultants also undertook an on-site street survey of the University Area. It was evident from that survey that there was a severe parking problem in that area. The university area is that bounded by Southfield Road, Linthorpe Road, Park Road North and Park Vale Road. The consultants carried out the survey on a Wednesday, additional vehicles are expected in the area, mainly for visits to the Mosques on Mondays and Fridays, which would create an increased need for street parking.

30. As the survey took place on a Wednesday, it was considered that the primary source of vehicles in the area throughout the day was that of students attending the university.

31. As part of the consultation, representatives from the Council and from Faber Maunsell met with members of the Black and Ethnic Minority (BME) Group and the Secretary of the Waterloo Road Mosque. A RPZ in this area would obviously restrict on street parking for non-residents and affect parking for those people who wish to visit the Mosque by car.

32. There are a number of ways that the consultants suggested that might be appropriate in order to accommodate residents and the BME communities' needs. There are two possible types of permit that were suggested. The first is an annual permit which would allow visitors to the places of worship to park in the RPZ on the relevant day, in the case of the Mosques in Middlesbrough, Monday and Friday, during the hours of worship. The second type of permit could take the form of a time disk, which would be set when the visitor arrives, this would allow parking for two hours.

33. In order to accommodate visitors to the area's specialist food shops, a 1 hour limited waiting bay could be introduced within the proposed university RPZ, predominantly in Victoria Road and Waterloo Road.

34. The consultants and officers from the Council have also spoken to representatives from the university and are helping the university to develop a work placed travel plan for its staff to assist in dealing with their parking needs.

35. The consultants have recommended that further consultation with residents, the BME community and local businesses should take place to ensure that people's views are taken into account.

Relevant Issues

36. From the evidence received in the earlier panel meetings Members had a number of issues that they wanted to focus on and for which they had questions for the consultants, which are highlighted as follows

Extension of the Existing Zone A Scheme as a result of the Consultation

37. The panel wanted to establish whether or not the Zone A RPZ had sufficient demand to warrant the extension of the scheme. As the results of the survey in the Gresham area showed that there was sufficient space for the residents and their visitors to park. However the surveys do suggest that some extensions to the scheme in the area were required. The details of which are outlined in the consultants' recommendations at paragraph 45.

Extending the scheme to Sundays

38. The panel was interested to investigate whether Sunday trading had provided an increased demand for on street parking near shops. The panel heard from officers that whilst there is a £1 charge for Sunday parking in the Council's short stay car parks, the long stay car parks are free and with the absence of commuters there is ample space for shoppers and shop workers who wish to park for free. It was noted that there was no reason for motorists to park in the residential areas in order to avoid parking charges on Sundays.

Impact of local businesses

39. The panel was concerned that any scheme that included, or was extended to include areas where local businesses were located, could have a detrimental effect on those businesses if customers could not park close enough to them to visit them. The officers present at the panel meeting recognised the delicate nature of some of the businesses in the area. They assured the panel that any proposed extensions to existing schemes would take into account the possible impact on local businesses and that customer and operational business parking will be incorporated into any schemes or its extension.

Number of Visitors Permits Available

40. The panel was interested in the impact of the unlimited number of visitors' permits that were available to each household within the RPZ and to ensure that this was not subject to abuse. The panel learnt that the existing RPZs operated on the principle that the Council wished to interfere as little as possible in the lives of the residents within the zones. Hence to date there were no limits placed on the number of permits which could be issued to a property. The on street survey within the zones clearly showed that there was enough space for all the residents to park and hence there appeared to be no need to impose a limit on the number of visitors permits that were issued.

Enforcement

41. The survey of Zone A suggested that there was a perception that the scheme could be better enforced. The panel asked the consultants the question of whether or not the current level of enforcement was sufficient. The consultants reported that the on street survey carried out within Zone A showed that the existing level of enforcement maintains sufficient space on the street for the residents and their visitors to park. This suggested that the current levels of enforcement were correct.

Implementing and Prioritising New Schemes

42. Members of the panel learnt that there were requests for new RPZs in other residential areas in Middlesbrough, (see Table 1) in addition to the town's existing schemes. The panel considered those schemes and wished to know how priority was given to the implementation of new schemes.

43. The consultant outlined how a number of factors would be considered which included

- The seriousness of the parking problems for residents
- The availability of alternative parking for those motorists that would be displaced
- The potential impact on shops, businesses and places of worship
- Whether the scheme could be effectively enforced, the cost of implementation
- Whether the scheme will contribute to the Council's overall objectives for that particular part of the town

44. A more thorough set of criteria was set out in the consultants' final report, they are detailed in paragraph 56.

TO CONSIDER THE OPTIONS FOR THE COUNCIL AS PRESENTED IN THE CONSULTANT'S REPORT

Extending the Existing Zone A Residents Parking Zone

45. The consultants presented their findings to the panel. Following their public consultation and the parking survey results the consultants recommended an extension to the existing RPZ, known as Zone A. It was considered that the extent of the proposed zone did not need to be as large as first thought. It was proposed that the boundary should extend from the southern boundary of the existing RPZ to Princes Road, the western boundary would then extend down Princes Road and Finsbury Street to Parliament Road. The southern boundary would follow Parliament Road to Linthorpe Road, where it would tie in with the existing RPZ. The boundary was determined whilst taking into account the possible displacement of vehicles from the proposed parking zone. The zone was not extended to where it would have included the businesses located on Princes Road in order that those businesses would not be affected as customers will still be able to park on Princes Road.

Developing and Prioritising New Schemes

Residents Parking

46. The consultants considered all the requests for RPZs, observed the sites and made the following priorities.

47. Table 2

Priority	Area
1	University Area
2	Linthorpe Village
3	Linden Grove
4	Martonside Way and Cavendish Way
Discounted	Middlesbrough College Area
Discounted	Belle Vue Grove and Coppice Way

48. The overall results showed that the university area was the area that was most affected by parked vehicles and was therefore recommended as priority one. In respect of the need for a RPZ in the Linthorpe Village area, the on-street survey had revealed that parking levels were at 70% capacity. One of the main problems was that shoppers and commercial vehicles were parking on footpaths.
49. Priority 3, the Linden Grove area, was another problem area, two site visits had been conducted, one in term time and one in half term, and it was noted that there were significant parking problems regardless of whether the nearby college was open or not.
50. The on street survey of priority 4, Martonside Way and Cavendish Way, revealed that demand for parking was not only caused by cars avoiding the charges at James Cook Hospital but by visitors to the Martonside Medical Centre and the Holiday Inn. It was noted that caution would be needed prior to any introduction of a RPZ in this area, due to the issue of displacement. Providing a RPZ would mean that people visiting the medical centre would still need to park somewhere, so it could push the problem out to the streets bounded by any potential RPZ.
51. The other 2 potential schemes, the Middlesbrough College area and the Belle Vue Grove and Coppice Way area were discounted by the consultants as on site surveys had revealed that there were no significant parking problems in those areas.

Business Parking Zone Priorities

52. Following the review of the Business Parking Zone Priorities, the consultants presented their priorities, which are as follows:

53. Table 3

Priority	Area
1	Corporation Road East
2	Bedford Street and Baker Street
3	Johnston Street
4	Borough Road
5	Queen's Square and Exchange Square
Discounted	Dunning Road

54. The Corporation Road East area was recommended as priority 1, due to the high volume of vehicles parking on the road and its location close to a busy shopping and business area. A RPZ in this area would allow short stay parking for customers to shops in the area and also provide for local business parking.
55. Priority 2, Bedford Street and Baker Street have a large volume of vehicles parked on the road due to their locations close to shopping and business areas. As did Priority 3 and 4, however they were a lower priority. Dunning Road was discounted due to the current closure of the road for building works purposes.

Methodology for prioritising and setting potential Residents Parking Zones

56. The panel agreed with the consultants that any assessment and prioritisation of RPZs should be transparent so that Members and the public can readily appreciate the basis

on which decisions are made. Ensuring the assessment process is cost-effective and does not take too much officer resource to manage are also an important factors.

57. The panel learned that a RPZ is most appropriate where the uncontrolled demand for on-street parking will be close to or exceed the kerb capacity on a regular basis and where extraneous parking (i.e. parking not generated in the area itself) contributes significantly to that demand.

58. It was therefore important that any criteria should measure the extent to which those conditions are met. The consultants outlined the principles of the revised policy which were:

- new schemes should only be considered where requested by residents or Members on residents' behalf
- during daytime hours the introduction of a new scheme should only be considered where 85% of the kerbside parking capacity is being used and the proportion of non residents' car parking is greater than 60%
- during night time hours the introduction of a new scheme should only be considered where 85% of kerbside parking capacity is being used and the proportion of non-residents' car parking is greater than 40%
- schemes should normally be based upon zones rather than individual streets although the 85% criterion may not necessarily be satisfied throughout the zone.

59. The consultants outlined that if all the RPZ criteria are met, then it needs to be determined what effect the displacement of the traffic within the proposed RPZ will have on the surrounding streets and the local economy. The introduction of a RPZ in an area with local businesses can have a detrimental effect on the local economy, as potential customers will not be able to park next to those businesses. This can also lead to the parking problems of one area migrating to another outside the RPZ, as motorists look to the nearest street where they can park.

60. The panel thought the criteria was a valuable way to be able to judge the strengths and weaknesses between potential schemes and that it allowed Council officers the ability to clearly tell residents and those people requesting schemes why particular schemes were chosen and why some were given priority over others.

Dealing with Match Day Parking

61. One of the potential schemes that had been suggested was one which would involve the North Ormesby, St John's Gate and Saltwells Road areas which it was hoped would deal with the issue of increased on-street parking in those areas, by people attending matches at the Riverside Stadium. There was a large amount of displaced traffic from these areas during match days. It was proposed that the displaced traffic could use several car parks located to the north west of the proposed RPZ. Following the consultants discussions with the council it was recognised that those car parks were already at capacity during match days and it would be unrealistic to assume that cars displaced from the potential RPZ would be able to park in those areas.

62. A number of options were considered, such as the use of public transport to access the football ground and a park and ride scheme. However, the panel heard that the club had a wide catchment area and along with the several access routes into

Middlesbrough, several park and ride sites would be needed to accommodate the influx of vehicles from various directions. This would be expensive to introduce and enforce due to the numerous route choices available to visitors. Extra policing would also be required to ensure public order at those sites.

63. It was recognised that an additional problem of this proposed RPZ, would be the size of the area to be included. This could cause problems with the enforcement of the scheme as numerous parking attendants would be required to enforce the zone and enable the scheme to be effective, which would also in turn increase the scheme's running costs. The panel agreed that the problems in this area were not of a daily nature and that the location of the stadium left little in the way of options as to how to rectify the problem

64. It was therefore recommended that the introduction of the RPZ in Ormesby, St John's Gate and Saltwells Road should be moved to a low priority.

Additional Signing and Lining of Residents Parking Zones

65. In assessing the current RPZ signing, the consultants recommended that the Council removes the existing general signs and replace with signing the restrictions within the street to which they apply. A minimum of one sign for each type of restriction with further signage a maximum of 30m from adjacent signs. Road markings/bays should also be marked on street to comply with the adjacent signs. The panel agreed that this was the correct way forward.

66. The panel learned that as new residents' parking schemes were set up, that they would become self-financing, generally through the receipt of enforcement fines. However initial costs would be incurred with the purchase of signage etc. It was also noted that there were no provisions in the capital budget for new residents parking schemes.

Overall Recommendations

67. The suggested scheme, as determined by the consultants, using the review of the 13 comparator local authorities, by utilising best practice and making modifications to suit the specific needs of the RPZ in Middlesbrough

- i. that residents within the RPZ are entitled to one resident permit per vehicle registered at that property
- ii. that the price for each permit should be less than £30 per annum
- iii. that permits for visitors are made available to residents within the RPZ
- iv. that visitor permits should take the form of scratch cards
- v. that the cost for visitor scratch cards should be £5 per book of 25 with a limit to the number of books issued in a year
- vi. that one business permit per business is issued which can hold up to three vehicle registrations
- vii. that a charge of approximately £80 should be introduced for the business permit

- viii. that a carers' permit is made available for carers regularly visiting residents within the RPZ
- ix. that this carers permit continues to reflect the existing All Zones Permit in Middlesbrough
- x. that electronic parking permits are considered as a replacement to paper permits in Middlesbrough

ARE THERE ANY LESSONS THAT CAN BE LEARNT FROM GOOD PRACTICE IN OTHER LOCAL AUTHORITIES?

68. The consultants drew comparisons with 12 other local authorities' residents parking schemes. One of the main issues that the consultants considered was whether other local authorities charged residents for their parking permit.

69. The comparisons are attached at Appendix 2. In summary the comparisons included

- the number of permits allowed per household
- cost of permit
- number of visitors' permits available
- cost of visitors permit
- number of business permits available
- cost of business permits
- the permits that are issued to carers.

70. In general all the councils issued one permit for every vehicle registered at the household. In Durham 2 permits were issued per household, unless on street space is severely restricted then one permit was allowed.

71. The cost of a permit varied, from free, as is the present case in Middlesbrough, to an administrative fee of about £6, to about £60-80. Out of the 12 Councils that were compared, only 3 Councils did not charge residents.

72. The number of visitors' permits varied from none (in Darlington) to unlimited numbers in Middlesbrough. Generally a small number were issued per household with some councils using a scheme where a limited number of tickets were issued to households to be used by visitors. Where tickets were issued there was a charge for this, with the exception of Middlesbrough's scheme that was free.

73. For business permits, Middlesbrough Council currently issues 1 per business, which was similar to many of the other councils in the comparison, where business permits were available. Again there is currently no charge for a business permit in Middlesbrough but by comparison, most of the councils in the comparison charged a fee, ranging from a £12 to £350 in Durham.

74. In Middlesbrough, carers are entitled to a permit that allows one-hour parking across all zones. Of those other councils where arrangements were in place for carers this ranged from allowing carers a visitor pass, permits at a small charge of £5 and permits at the council's discretion.

75. The idea of charging for a permit was an issue considered by the panel in some depth. Views ranged from one panel member who would like to see the introduction of a nominal charge for the residents parking permit to assist in covering the cost of administering the scheme, to keeping residents parking free of charge. Whilst the panel recognised the need for the RPZs, they also wanted to ensure that residents in the town all have a broadly equal opportunity to park their cars near their homes for free as those residents do who live outside of RPZs. However, this had to be balanced with the cost of implementing and administering the growing number of RPZs that were needed.
76. As the comparisons regarding the charge for a permit varied, the panel considered the idea of maintaining free parking for residents but charging a small fee for visitors parking to cover the administration of the scheme.

CONCLUSION

77. Based on evidence given throughout the investigation the Panel concluded:

- a) The panel recognised the importance of reviewing the existing schemes and the assessment of the need for new schemes, in the light of many requests from the public. The panel considered that the methodology proposed by the consultants for prioritising new schemes would be helpful in the future and would enable the council to focus on those schemes that were most needed.
- b) In light of the recognition of this approach in prioritising new schemes, the panel agreed with the priorities for the potential RPZs that were outlined by the consultants.
- c) The panel emphasised the importance of the consideration for local businesses located within such schemes.
- d) There is no capital budget for the implementation of new RPZs. The Council have always ensured that the scheme is free for residents to ensure that they are afforded the same rights as those who live outside of RPZs. However the panel considered that, whilst residents' permits should still be issued at no cost to the resident, a small administrative charge for visitors' permits would be acceptable and would help with the costs of running the schemes.
- e) Following the recommendations by the consultants regarding the area surrounding the university, it was recognised that there were parking problems in this area and that more consultation should take place, working with the local community and the university
- f) A number of requests had been received regarding the problems match day parking can create in the Ormesby area. The panel appreciated the reasons for this area being a low priority, however the panel considered that further thought be given to this issue in the future.
- g) The consultants' report made a number of recommendations about the administration of the scheme, which were based on the survey evidence and comparisons with other local authorities. The panel was supportive of those recommendations that are outlined in paragraph 67.

RECOMMENDATIONS

78. That the Economic Regeneration and Transport Scrutiny Panel recommends to the Executive:

- a) That the Council maintains its policy of free parking for residents. However in order to cover the costs of administering the scheme, the panel concurred with the consultants, and agreed that a nominal charge for visitors' parking of £5 per book of 25 scratch cards should be introduced as should the £80 charge for a business permit. However the panel considered the situation regarding charging for permits should be reviewed in 2 years.
- b) In recognition of the capital costs needed in order to set up any new residents' parking scheme, provision should be made within the capital budget for such schemes and in order to plan for the cost of the possible introduction of electronic parking permits in the future.
- c) To limit the effect on local businesses, where they are located within RPZs, provision should be made, where possible, for 1 hour limited stay spaces to allow customers to be able to park and access shops etc.
- d) That further consideration be given to the problems created by match day parking, especially in regard to consideration of the provision of a rail halt outside the stadium.
- e) That further consultation is undertaken in the university area, in order to alleviate the parking problems in that area.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

79. The Panel is grateful to all those who have presented evidence during the course of our investigation. We would like to place on record our appreciation, in particular of the willingness and co-operation we have received from the below named:

- Brian Glover, Head of Transport and Design
- Steve Webster, Group Leader, Parking Solutions
- Bob Major – Faber Maunsell Consultants
- Sarah Oddy - Faber Maunsell Consultants

COUNCILLOR MARTIN BOOTH
CHAIR OF THE ECONOMIC REGENERATION AND TRANSPORT SCRUTINY PANEL

May 2006

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BACKGROUND PAPERS

The following background papers were consulted or referred to in the preparation of this report:

(a) Consultation Recommendations – Faber Maunsell – 3 May 2006