

**OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY BOARD****4 MAY 2010****FINAL REPORT OF THE ECONOMIC REGENERATION AND  
TRANSPORT SCRUTINY PANEL****UNIVERSITY RESIDENTS PARKING SCHEME****PURPOSE OF THE REPORT**

1. To present the Economic Regeneration and Transport Scrutiny Panel's final report on the University Residents Parking Scheme.

**SUMMARY**

2. The overall aim of the Scrutiny investigation was to consider whether the recently introduced Residents Parking Scheme in University Ward has been enforceable and workable for all parties and to consider whether the scheme should be extended. The panel held a meeting on 8 March 2010 to consider this topic and a number of representatives were invited to attend the meeting to present their views.

**BACKGROUND AND FURTHER INFORMATION**

3. A request was submitted to the Overview and Scrutiny Board on 12 January 2010 for the Board to consider the appropriateness of undertaking a review of the Residents Parking Scheme in University Ward. The Board agreed that the subject was appropriate for review and the Economic Regeneration and Transport Scrutiny Panel was asked to undertake the investigation.
4. The panel agreed for the matter to be considered at its meeting scheduled for 8 March 2010. A number of external representatives were invited to attend the meeting to give their views and hold a discussion on the scheme from their perspective. Representatives from the following organisations were invited to attend:-
  - Teesside University
  - University Ward Residents Association

- Local Business Community

In addition the Executive Member for Transport and the University Ward Councillors were invited to the meeting.

5. A visit to see the Residents Parking Scheme in operation and to observe the impact that the scheme has had on the affected residential streets in both University and Gresham Ward was also undertaken by a number of the panel Members. This report has been compiled on the basis of the evidence gathered by the scrutiny panel.
6. A Scrutiny Support Officer from Legal and Democratic Services co-ordinated and arranged the submission of written and oral evidence and arranged witnesses for the review. Meetings administration, including preparation of agenda and minutes, was undertaken by a Governance Officer from Legal and Democratic Services. Copies of papers considered by the scrutiny panel, including agenda, minutes and reports, is available from the Council's Committee Management System (COMMIS), which can be accessed via the Council's website at [www.middlesbrough.gov.uk](http://www.middlesbrough.gov.uk).
7. The membership of the scrutiny panel was as follows: Councillors Cole (Chair); Kerr (Vice-Chair), Hubbard, Khan, Lowes, Mawston, Rehman, G Rogers and Taylor.

#### **PARKING SCHEME UPDATE**

8. The panel heard that the University Parking Scheme was implemented in the streets around Teesside University in September 2009. The Residents Parking Zone operates from Monday to Friday 8.00am to 6.00pm and Zone 'U' parking permits for residents are issued free of charge and renewed annually by the Council. All residents parking spaces are subject to a free 45-minute limited waiting before a permit needs to be displayed.
9. The panel was advised that the residents parking restrictions are enforced by the Council's Civil Enforcement Officers who issue £70 Penalty Charge Notices to vehicles parked in contravention of the parking regulations.
10. The overall cost of implementing the project was £140,000, some £35,000 more than was originally estimated. The Group Leader for Parking Solutions explained that there were several reasons for this additional cost. The main additions were to aid restricted parking for small businesses, additional advertising costs for Traffic Regulation Orders, the extension of the Ringo mobile phone payment system to include the University Ward, and the installation of signs, lines and road markings. Additional pay and display ticket machines were also purchased in the University Ward, which are generating new revenue income streams. There was also a need for some elements of this work to be carried out at weekends and out of hours in order to ensure the scheme was implemented by the start of the new academic year, thus incurring additional costs. It was noted that the scheme had been identified as a priority in the Mayors' town plan.
11. The Panel heard that to date 770 Residents Parking Permits have been issued along with 180 Business Permits to shops and businesses located within the Residents Parking Zone. When the scheme was introduced every residential property within the zone, which consists of approximately 1300 properties, were

issued with one book of 20 daily visitors scratch cards. A further 78 books have been sold to residents since the scheme began, although the majority of residents are taking advantage of the 45 minute wait period for visitors.

12. In terms of achieving the scheme's objectives the Panel was informed that anyone visiting the area would see that the introduction of the scheme had transformed the environment and changed the feel of the area. Most importantly, students' and commuters' vehicles have been successfully removed from the residential streets within the zone, allowing residents and their visitors to park in their own streets throughout the day.
13. It was emphasised that when the scheme was first introduced new car parks and on street parking areas were provided by the University and the Council. A free park and ride facility for students, which is paid for by the University and utilises a car park in Cannon Park provided by the Council, is also on offer. These measures were designed to accommodate vehicles displaced from the streets within the new Residents Parking Zone.
14. With regard to the success of the park and ride scheme the Panel was informed that the scheme has surpassed all expectations. The University currently has over 500 registered users and the park and ride car park is busy every day. The Council has worked particularly closely with the University on developing the scheme. It was stated that once the necessary measures were in place to extend the scheme the objectives for the area would be achieved. It was emphasised that the Council has appreciated the co-operation of everyone involved in developing the scheme, as many compromises have been made.

### **PROPOSED SCHEME EXTENSION**

15. In terms of displaced vehicles the Panel heard that following the introduction of the scheme there has been some displacement and one of the first areas affected were the streets to the east of Park Vale Road (Angle Street, Lothian Road and Byelands Street area). As part of the scheme's monitoring arrangements the residents in those streets have been consulted on the possibility of extending the current zone to incorporate their streets. It was advised that a survey was undertaken and 82 per cent of respondents stated that they wished to see the zone extended. The Panel heard that the extra cost of extending the scheme is estimated to be £21,000 and although this would add to the current overspend on the initial scheme budget it is seen as an integral part of the overall success of the scheme. It was noted that this was the situation at present and efforts were being made to secure the funding for these additional streets to be added to the zone.
16. It was acknowledged that there had been some displacement of vehicles into the Gresham Ward, although a complete assessment of the problem had not been undertaken. The Panel heard that although there were some parking issues within this area it was unclear whether the problems were a direct result of the introduction of the scheme or whether there were a number of other factors. Civil Enforcement Officers had visited the area over the last six months and there was a definite perception of an increased parking problem in the Gresham area. It was noted that residents from Gresham Road, Aske Road, Athol Street, Bow Street and Cobham Street had all reported difficulties in parking in their own streets. The Panel had also

previously identified the area as one of a number of priority locations for a new Residents Parking Zone.

17. It was advised that although the costs for introducing a residents parking scheme in Gresham Ward had not been calculated it was anticipated that the introduction of a scheme would cost in the region of £80,000-£90,000.
18. The Panel heard that to date the Council had only allocated the necessary funding for the University Residents Parking Scheme. Whilst efforts were being made to secure funding to extend the scheme some of the existing restrictions were being removed from those streets in the Gresham area that are no longer occupied and are due for demolition. It was advised that this would provide some alternative parking for students and commuters.
19. The Chair of the University Ward's Residents Association was asked for his views on whether the scheme had been a success. The Chair advised that the scheme had been a success and that the Residents Association had been involved as an active stakeholder. The remaining issues in respect of the scheme related primarily to the area covered by the proposed extension in particular the streets to the east of Park Vale Road. Residents, however, were concerned that following the implementation of the proposed extension displaced vehicles would go further into the ward, affecting other areas including Lytton Street, Wellesley Road and Douglas Street.
20. The representative from the University was asked for his thoughts on the scheme and the perception that over the last few months parking problems in the Gresham area had increased. It was noted that the Gresham Ward Councillors had advised that the parking problems seemed to be much worse on Tuesdays and Wednesdays. The representative from the University advised that it was unknown as to why the problems would be worse on those days, as 90 per cent of students were not in University on a Wednesday. Mondays were a particularly busy day and yet Mondays were not being highlighted as a specific issue. The Panel was advised that there are clearly other factors in play and it is not as simple as the introduction of the University Residents Parking Scheme in University Ward directly resulting in displaced vehicles parking in the Gresham Ward.
21. Reference was made to the vacant land on Princes Road / Clifton Street and the Panel questioned whether there was any possibility of a car park being provided there if the site was not to be built on for a number of years. The Panel heard that there was an existing planning condition on that site and that a development would be starting there fairly soon.
22. In terms of the success of the park and ride scheme the Panel was advised that it had surpassed all expectations, although it was unknown as to why the scheme was working so well. It was suggested that perhaps the students at the University were used to using park and ride schemes in their hometowns and were therefore happy to use this type of parking provision. The Panel heard that the University was covering the cost of the bus, which was approximately £70,000-£80,000 per annum and the bus ran for 32 weeks per academic year.
23. As an indication of the significant cost involved in providing this service the Panel heard that the figure of £80,000 was approximately half the sum that the Council

contributed in supporting all bus services across the town. The Council could not therefore provide additional park and ride facilities where free parking and a free bus service were on offer. Charges would have to be introduced, which would reduce the appeal of such a scheme and there would always be people who refused to pay to park.

## **CONCLUSIONS**

24. All parties accepted that although there remained a number of advantages and disadvantages about the current scheme overall the scheme had been a great success. A lot of compromises had been reached to deliver the scheme, which has now been in operation for a period of six months and all stakeholders are pleased with the outcomes achieved.
25. As a direct result of the introduction of the scheme there has been some displacement of vehicles into the streets to the east of Park Vale Road (Angle Street, Lothian Road and Byelands Street area) and when consulted 82 per cent of residents in those streets have indicated that they are in favour of the scheme being extended. The extra cost of extending the scheme is estimated to be £21,000 but this is seen as an integral part of the overall success of the scheme.
26. Consideration needs to be given to the potential impact on Lytton Street, Wellesley Road and Douglas Street if funding to extend the scheme in the proposed area is secured.
27. Since the introduction of the residents parking scheme in University Ward there is clearly a perception that parking problems in the Gresham area have increased, although a complete assessment of the problem has not been undertaken. It appears that a number of factors other than the introduction of the Residents Parking Scheme may be attributing to the parking problems but at present these other factors are unknown.

## **RECOMMENDATIONS**

28. Having considered the updated position on the Residents Parking Scheme in University Ward, the scrutiny panel wishes to make the follow recommendations:-
  - a) That efforts continue to secure the necessary funding from the capital programme for the proposed extension to the University Residents Parking Scheme to go ahead.
  - b) That Gresham and Linthorpe Village remain the two priority areas for the introduction of a residents parking scheme following the proposed extension to the University Residents Parking Scheme, as detailed in the panel's 2006 report on the topic. An assessment should be undertaken as to how this can be achieved.
  - c) That an update in respect of the impact on Lytton Street, Wellesley Road and Douglas Street be provided to the Panel if the funding for the proposed extension to the University Residents Parking Scheme is secured.

## **ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS**

29. The Panel is grateful to the following officers and representatives from external organisations, who presented evidence during the course of this investigation:

- B Glover – Head of Transport and Design Services, Middlesbrough Council
- S Webster – Group Leader for Parking Solutions, Middlesbrough Council
- B Hussain – Local Businessman
- S Robb – Teesside University

**COUNCILLOR JOHN COLE**

**CHAIR OF THE ECONOMIC REGENERATION  
AND TRANSPORT SCRUTINY PANEL**

April 2010

## **BACKGROUND PAPERS**

The following background papers were consulted or referred to in the preparation of this report: Agenda, reports and minutes of Economic Regeneration and Transport Scrutiny Panel meeting – 4 February and 8 March 2010.

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