

**STOCKTON-ON-TEES BOROUGH COUNCIL**

**CABINET RECOMMENDATIONS**

**PROFORMA**

Cabinet Meeting .....14th July 2022

1. Title of Item/Report

Place Select Committee - Scrutiny Review of Residents Parking Zones

2. Record of the Decision

Consideration was given to a report that presented the outcomes of the Place Select Committee's review of Residents Parking Zones.

The Council had only a 'high-level' policy regarding Residents Parking Zones (RPZs) which had not been fully reviewed since 2004. There were regular requests for them from residents living near town and local shopping centres, as well as near traffic generating facilities such as hospitals and schools. Many residents think that RPZs were a panacea with no downsides, the reality was that there were a range of issues that could arise out of them (e.g. costs to residents and visitors, no guarantee of a parking space for residents or visitors, issues with enforcement, potential loss of parking spaces, moving the problem to areas immediately outside any residents parking zone, etc.).

To fully investigate the need for a RPZ required a reasonable amount of staff resources and had a financial impact on the Council, but ultimately lead to the majority of requests being turned down either because there were no justifiable reasons to implement a scheme or because they were not supported by the majority of residents. An updated and more detailed policy and procedure might result in fewer resident requests and a more efficient way of dealing with these, thereby saving both money and officer time. The administration, maintenance and enforcement of these schemes were also an ongoing burden on Council resources.

There was limited publicly available information on how the Council assesses a request, and further clarity as to the role of Ward Councillors would be useful. Councillors could find themselves in an invidious position if they were asked whether they supported a request without having the results of the investigation arising from the request itself.

Residents had an understandable desire to be able to park near their homes, however, the full consequences of implementing a RPZ to residents were not always clear when initially requesting a scheme.

This review tied in with the Council's town centre regeneration proposals. There was an important interface between encouraging businesses and customers, and impact on residents living nearby, requiring a balance to be struck. Areas where demand on parking was oversubscribed could lead to road safety and accessibility issues, especially to those who were mobility impaired.

RPZs could help keep people safe and healthy by managing parking in areas where it was oversubscribed to ensure roads and pavements were safe to use by all. Correctly balancing the needs of residential and business-related parking could also help support jobs and the economy.

The overall aim of the review was to inform the objectives / components of a revised policy on RPZs to be contained within the revised Car Parking Policy for the Borough, and provide:

- Updated clear and transparent policy and procedures for assessing the need and implementing RPZs.
- Full information available to residents on the pros and cons of a RPZ so that they can make informed decisions about whether to request one in the first place.
- Minimise the cost to the Council of investigating, introducing, enforcing and ongoing administration of RPZs.
- Clarification of the Ward Councillor role in the process for determining whether a scheme is progressed or not.

The Select Committee took evidence from relevant Council departments, engaged with local business groups, and considered information on similar schemes from other Local Authorities across the UK. An Elected Members survey was also conducted to elicit the views of Ward Councillors on RPZs.

RESOLVED that:-

Process

1. To increase understanding around Residents Parking Zones (RPZs), Stockton-on-Tees Borough Council (SBC) produces and publishes a flowchart outlining the key aspects involved in the process, determination and, if approved, implementation of this scheme.
2. SBC revises its existing 'high-level' RPZ policy (making this available on the SBC website and via any other relevant publicly-accessible mechanism) to:

- a) Clearly define the different types of permits available and what these allow / prohibit.
- b) Provide clear guidance on the eligibility requirements for a RPZ and define what is appropriate (giving any relevant examples).
- c) Clearly define where a RPZ would not be appropriate (e.g. around schools and not deterring people visiting high-use areas like parks).
- d) Outline who should be consulted regarding the determination of an RPZ request (i.e. affected residents, business forums, SBC Ward Councillors, Parish / Town Councils).

3. SBC reviews the current RPZ charging policy, particularly around the cost of business permits, and the maximum quantity of permits per household / business.

4. Ward Councillor briefings are scheduled to raise awareness of a revised RPZ policy, reinforcing eligibility / exclusion criteria and opportunities for Elected Member input during the process (including ways Councillors can feed back on the any issues regarding RPZs in their Ward).

#### Determination

5. When responding to a RPZ request, SBC ensures that clearly defined criteria is used to identify the appropriate extents of a RPZ, taking account of the impact this would have on residents, nearby businesses, and visitors to that particular part of the Borough.

6. The revised RPZ policy allows for consideration of permits to be approved for single streets (where appropriate) in addition to the existing 'zonal' approach.

#### Implementation

7. Work is undertaken with the SBC Civic Enforcement team to establish an enforcement plan around existing, and potentially future, RPZs, and that any enforcement action be highlighted via SBC communication platforms as a means of deterring abuse of RPZs.

8. A periodic review of any RPZ is included as part of a revised RPZ policy (akin to West Sussex County Council).

9. An audit of existing RPZs be undertaken to ensure line markings are clear and signage is appropriate.

### 3. Reasons for the Decision

This topic was included on the Scrutiny Work Programme for 2021-2022. The review is now complete, and the recommendations have been endorsed by the Place Select Committee for submission to Cabinet.

4. Alternative Options Considered and Rejected

None.

5. Declared (Cabinet Member) Conflicts of Interest

None.

6. Details of any Dispensations

N/A

7. Date and Time by which Call In must be executed

Midnight Friday 22 July 2022

Proper Officer  
18 July 2022