

CONTROLLED PARKING AREAS – WORKING PARTY

ABERDEEN, 24th February, 2011. - Minute of Meeting of the CONTROLLED PARKING AREAS WORKING PARTY of the Enterprise, Planning and Infrastructure Committee. Present:- Councillor John West, Convener; and Councillor Laing.

Apologies for absence had been intimated from Councillors Boulton and Wisely.

Also in attendance:- Councillors Adam, Allan, Collie, Cormack, Donnelly, May, Robertson and Jennifer Stewart.

ON AND OFF-STREET CONTROLLED PARKING IN ABERDEEN – VARIOUS ISSUES

There had been circulated a report by the Director of Enterprise, Planning and Infrastructure reviewing a wide range of issues relating to on and off-street parking policies in Aberdeen. The report is attached as the appendix to this minute.

After initial discussion, the Working Party agreed to use the recommendations in the report as a framework for discussion, as follows:-

- (1) ***That the introduction of exclusively residential bays in the most central zones (where they did not exist at the moment) would be detrimental to the economy of the city centre and should not be progressed.***

With the clarification that this was indeed intended to refer only to the most central areas in the city (those shown in pale yellow on the first of the circulated plans), it was agreed to accept the recommendation.

- (2) ***That city centre residential permits be able to be used within Chapel Street, West North Street and Mearns Street off-street car parks during off-peak hours (i.e. 1800-0800 hours).***

With the proviso that the lower ground floor of Denburn car park be added to this category, it was agreed to accept the recommendation, notwithstanding doubts expressed by Councillors Adam and Collie.

- (3) ***That residents of developments specifically put forward as low or no car housing developments should not be able to purchase on-street permits.***

This recommendation was accepted.

- (4) ***That any resident/business with access to off-road parking as part of a development should not be able to purchase an additional on-street parking permit.***

This recommendation was accepted.

- (5) ***That a review of parking charges set by other Council services be reported to the relevant Committee for consideration and possible revision.***

After detailed discussion, it was clarified that this was a reference to parking opportunities in various off-street areas not run by the Council as public car parks (e.g. housing parking areas) where use had sometimes passed to individuals with no convincing locus in the matter. These people now enjoyed cheap parking purely as a result of a historical quirk, with the result that alternative off-street parking opportunities were running alongside the Council's official off-street strategies. Under these circumstances, it was agreed not only to review the charges but also to review the entire situation, and the value judgements implicit in it, and to bring the matter to the Enterprise, Planning and Infrastructure Committee in the first instance to allow that Committee to assess it first of all from the point of view of transportation strategy.

- (6) ***That an emissions-based permit system be established for the city centre, with incentives for the lowest emitting cars and a financial disincentive for the highest.***

It was agreed not to accept this recommendation at this time, but to affirm that, in the longer term, the principle of emissions-based incentives and disincentives was a coherent proposal.

- (7) ***That a revised city centre parking boundary be established (i.e. for the one-permit per household zones) on the basis of a single subdivision into east and west parking zones.***

It was agreed to accept this recommendation on the basis that it would be simpler to understand, and formalise the existing tendency for drivers to stray into neighbouring zones (which was outwith the rules but often made the subject of discretion on the part of parking attendants).

- (8) ***That the price of city centre residential permits (ie those released in the areas where only one permit per household was allowed) be increased from £80 per year to £160 per year, that an intermediate zone immediately beyond the city centre be established (for the purposes of pricing policy only) in which the first of two permits would cost £120 (instead of £80) and the second of two permits £180 (instead of £120), but that prices further out, in the peripheral zones, remain unchanged..***

On a majority view, the Working Party rejected this recommendation.

- (9) ***That Sunday charging hours applicable in central areas from 1.00pm until 5.00pm at the moment be extended to run from 11.00am until to 5.00pm, to match Sunday retail hours.***

It was agreed unanimously to reject this recommendation.

- (10) That the recently-introduced overnight charge of £1.50 in off-street car parks be removed, and that it be replaced by extended operational hours in the most straightforward sense (ie 8.00am until 10.00pm instead of 8.00am until 8.00pm).**

It was agreed to welcome this recommendation unequivocally.

- (11) That the price of parking vouchers in the Foresterhill and Garthdee on-street zones (where pay and display did not apply) be increased to £1.50 for up to two hours and £4.50 for the whole day.**

The Working Party reached no conclusion on this matter, having heard that there was a serious problem in Foresterhill and Garthdee in that retail outlets (where parking vouchers could be purchased) were few in number and by no means evident to drivers. This meant that ad hoc parking by non-residents was unlikely, except that vouchers were available from *machines* on Westburn Road, where their low cost probably did mean that they were a favourable option for Foresterhill staff - precisely at odds with the strategic objective. However, Councillor Laing made it clear that, in her view, in the Foresterhill zone in general, parking pressures caused by Foresterhill staff buying vouchers in bulk did not exist, even though they might be evident on Westburn Road. In view of the continuing uncertainty about these issues, the Working Party declined to reach any conclusion on this recommendation.

- (12) That residential parking bays be established between 6.00pm and 8.00pm at locations where pay and display bays now applied until 8.00pm but single yellow lining nearby ceased to apply at 6.00pm.**

It was agreed to accept this recommendation.

- (13) That the introduction of exclusively residential parking provision in Albert Terrace was unnecessary.**

It was agreed to drop this recommendation altogether.

- (14) That 2-hour maximum stay pay and display bays be established in Bon Accord Crescent.**

This recommendation was accepted.

- (15) That proposals to introduce one-way regulations on Rose Street, Chapel Street and Marischal Street be assessed further and made the subject of a report back to a future meeting of the Enterprise, Planning and Infrastructure Committee.**

This recommendation was accepted.

- (16) *That the priority listing for future controlled parking zones be revised in line with the ordering indicated in the report; namely (1) Palmerston Area, (2) Mearns Street area, (3) Ashley / Brighton area, (4) Holburn / Hardgate area, (5) Carnegie Crescent area, (6) Seaforth Road area and (7) Elmbank area.*

This recommendation was accepted.

- JOHN WEST, Convener.

ABERDEEN CITY COUNCIL

COMMITTEE Controlled Parking Working Group

DATE 24 February 2011

DIRECTOR Gordon McIntosh

TITLE OF REPORT Various issues from the Controlled Working Party

REPORT NUMBER

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

To advise the Committee of the outcome of a review of a number of outstanding issues which were remitted by the Controlled Parking Working Group; particularly those relating to city centre parking management, possible emissions based permit charging, and the correlation of policy in line with the Regional Transport Strategy (RTS), Local Transport Strategy (LTS), Local Development Plan (LDP) and the Air Quality Action Plan (AQAP).

2. RECOMMENDATION(S)

It is recommended that the Committee agrees:

- i. That the conversion of "Pay and Display" parking bays to "Residents Only" would be detrimental to the economy of the city centre and should not be progressed.
- ii. To a trial where city centre residential permits are valid within Chapel Street, West North Street and Mearns Street off-street car parks during off-peak hours, 1800-0800 hours.
- iii. That residents of developments specifically put forward as a low or no car housing development should not be able to purchase on-street permits
- iv. That any resident / business with access to off-road parking as part of a development should not be able to purchase an additional on-street parking permit.
- v. That a review of charges set by other Services be reported to the relevant Committee for consideration and possible revision.
- vi. To the establishment of an emission based permit system for the city centre, with incentives for the lowest emitting cars and a financial disincentive for the highest.
- vii. To a revised city centre parking boundary, subdivided into east and west parking zones.
- viii. An increase in the price of city centre residential permits from £80 per year to £160 per year for a standard permit
- ix. The creation of intermediate parking zones, with differential permit prices reflecting the premium for parking spaces.

- x. The extension of Sunday charging hours from 1300 -1700 hours to 1100 – 1700 hours to match Sunday retail hours
- xi. To the removal of the overnight flat rate charge of £1.50 for parking between 2000 – 0800 hours in the off-street car parks, to be replaced by extended operational hours to 0800 - 2200 hours.
- xii. To increase the price of parking vouchers within the Foresterhill and Garthdee Controlled Parking Zones to £1.50 for up to two hours and £4.50 for all day parking.
- xiii. To instruct officers where appropriate to promote “residents only” parking bays between 1800 – 2000 hours on the existing 0800 - 1800 single yellow line waiting restrictions within the city centre
- xiv. That the introduction of “Residents Only” parking in Albert Terrace is unnecessary.
- xv. The promotion of 2-hour maximum stay pay and display bays in Bon Accord Crescent
- xvi. To further assessment of proposals relating to the introduction of one way restrictions on Rose Street, Chapel Street and Marischal Street with a more detailed report brought back to a future Committee
- xvii. To a revised priority list for future potential parking zones

3. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

Depending on the decision on each option there will be a range of impacts on the revenue position of the Council. In each case this detail is set out within the report.

4. OTHER IMPLICATIONS

Whilst Controlled Parking Zones (in terms of the statutory definition in the *“Traffic Signs Regulations and General Directions 2002”*) no longer exists in the majority of Aberdeen, the presence of on-street parking controls remains. These controls are grouped collectively into administrative zones. For simplicity this report will maintain the popular name of controlled parking zone (CPZ)

A number of the proposals will require the promotion of new traffic regulation orders in accordance with the procedures set out in the *“The Local Authorities' Traffic Regulation Order (Procedures) (Scotland) Regulations 1999”*. There is a risk that the traffic orders could be overruled following the objection process.

The report has links to the Regional Transport Strategy (RTS), Local Transport Strategy (LTS), Local Development Plan (LDP) and the Air Quality Action Plan (AQAP).

5. BACKGROUND/MAIN ISSUES

Background

- 5.1 The first controlled parking zones (CPZs) were introduced into Aberdeen city centre in the mid 1980s. The purpose of the zones was to encourage parking turnover, discourage all day commuter parking, and to improve traffic flow and road safety within the city centre. City centre businesses benefit from the improved availability of on-street parking for their customers and clients, with longer duration parking available within the off-street car parks.
- 5.2 Following the creation of the city centre zones, further parking zones were established on an area by area basis, as the need and demand required. These later schemes were primarily a strategic transportation measure aimed at discouraging all day commuter parking and encouraging more sustainable forms of transportation but also more recently as a means of preserving the residential environment and amenity.
- 5.3 As the zones extended out from the city centre the nature and environment of the streets changed. Consequently the operation of the zones changed with increased numbers of permits available per property, and extended periods of maximum stay. These changes reflect the increased distances from public transport links and also from alternative parking places such as off-street car parks.
- 5.4 Over the last twenty five years the requirement to remove non-essential parking from the city centre and to create parking turnover for the benefit of the businesses and residents has remained. At the same time, car ownership levels have increased and subsequently the demand for on-street parking has grown whilst the amount of available kerbside has remained constant. The result is an ongoing demand for some form of parking permit. The increased number of permits also causes a reduction in parking turnover which has a corresponding affect on the city centre businesses.
- 5.5 Appendix 1 shows the existing parking zones plus the Aberdeen City Centre boundary for the application of parking standards for new developments.
- 5.6 This report looks at a number of issues concerning the current policies, management and operation of the parking controls.

“Residents Only” Parking

- 5.7 Currently all city centre parking bays operate as shared bays where both permit holders and “pay and display” users utilise the same bays. This differs from the peripheral areas where “pay and display” users are excluded from certain areas with the use of “residents only” parking. In recent years discussions have been ongoing regarding the introduction of “residents only” parking into the city centre zones.

- 5.8 The main concern regarding the introduction of “residents only” parking bays is the impact on the businesses within the city centre. Restricting the amount of “pay and display” parking limits the availability of spaces, affecting parking for the customers and clients of businesses. Reduced city centre parking would compromise the economic viability of the city centre, particularly for small businesses.
- 5.9 As a representative sample of city centre parking, surveys have been carried out in zones C & F to identify parking patterns. Whilst both surveys indicate that the number of parked cars exceeds the number of available spaces, this is primarily due to parking on waiting restrictions in Rose Street, Chapel Street, Kidd Street in Zone C, and in the Adelphi, Marischal Street and Justice Street within zone F.
- 5.10 The maximum stay for pay and display in both of these zones is either one or two hours, therefore hourly beat surveys were carried out from 0700 – 1900hours. Long stay parking is classified within the table as cars parked for 3 hours or more, exceeding the two hour maximum stay permitted for pay and display parking.
- 5.11 Parking zone C is in the west of the city centre on the north side of Union Street and contains both the Chapel Street and the Summer Street car parks. Chapel Street car park reaches capacity from approximately 0930 to 1330 hours. Observational surveys indicate that Summer Street operates at capacity for extensive periods of the working day.

Zone C (139 Estimated Pay and Display Spaces)

Hour beginning	7:00	8:00	9:00	10:00	11:00	12:00	13:00	14:00	15:00	16:00	17:00	18:00
No. of cars	179	139	148	161	151	158	164	169	155	148	155	181
Parking on waiting restrictions (0800 – 1800)	41	15	19	22	14	19	25	30	16	9	16	42
No. of cars in pay and display bays	138	124	129	139	137	139	139	139	139	139	139	139
Parking Bay Capacity	99%	89%	93%	100%	99%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%
% long stay parking (= 3hrs)	44%	64%	76%	73%	79%	77%	71%	67%	70%	69%	57%	37%

- 5.12 The on-street survey for zone C shows that parking levels are high overnight, with the number of cars decreasing between 0800-0900 hours. From 0900 the number of parked cars rises again to capacity for the remainder of the day. In general 70-80% of parked cars stayed for longer than the maximum permitted stay for pay and display and can be assumed to be permit holders. The lower proportions of long stay parking in the morning and evenings represent residents going to / leaving work during the surveyed hours.
- 5.13 The parking recorded on waiting restrictions as shown in the above table consists of overnight parking on the single yellow waiting restrictions, blue badge parking in streets such as Kemp Street, and

also the use of the restrictions for activities such as loading and unloading.

- 5.14 The results of the survey indicate that there is a very low turnover of parking within zone C, with parking bays at capacity throughout the working day, as such visitors to the area will experience difficulty in finding a parking space after 9am in the morning.
- 5.15 Parking zone F is in the east of the predominantly the city centre, the zone covers both the Green and Castlegate areas. The Trinity Centre and Union Square car parks are both within zone F.

Zone F (120 Estimated Pay and Display Spaces)

Hour beginning	7:00	8:00	9:00	10:00	11:00	12:00	13:00	14:00	15:00	16:00	17:00	18:00
No. of cars	137	121	145	108	135	136	143	132	124	135	130	156
Parking on waiting restrictions (0800 – 1800)	24	21	27	10	22	30	36	19	21	29	14	36
No. of cars in pay and display bays	113	100	118	98	113	106	107	113	103	106	116	120
Parking Bay Capacity %	94%	83%	98%	82%	94%	88%	89%	94%	86%	88%	97%	100%
% long stay parking (=3hrs)	45%	55%	58%	78%	69%	64%	62%	67%	67%	57%	53%	40%

- 5.16 The parking recorded on waiting restrictions consists of overnight parking on the loading bays / single yellow line waiting restrictions, blue badge parking in streets such as Justice Street / Marischal Street, and also the use of the restrictions for activities such as loading and unloading.
- 5.17 The survey for zone F indicates that this zone is near capacity throughout the day. Introducing “residents only” parking would detrimentally affect the availability of parking spaces for the customers and clients of the businesses in the area, and would have an economic impact on the small business community.
- 5.18 Both surveys indicate that unless permit holders are specifically excluded from parking in open “pay and display” areas, it is unlikely that “residents only” parking could be introduced in any notable quantity. Limiting the availability of city centre parking would cause problems for the customers and clients of businesses, impacting the economic viability for small businesses within the city centre. Limiting parking turnover is contrary to one of the founding principals of parking controls. Similarly excluding residents from “pay and display” areas would limit their ability to park, detrimentally affecting their amenity.
- 5.19 It is therefore proposed that the current shared system be maintained as the introduction of “residents only” parking within the city centre will detrimentally impact on both the business and residential community within the city centre.

Off-peak Residential Parking in Car Parks

- 5.20 With the extension of the operational hours in the off-street car parks and the overnight parking charge, residents are no longer able to park within Aberdeen City Council operated car parks for free after 6pm. A number of requests have been made to allow resident permit holders off-peak access to the car parks.
- 5.21 From automated traffic counters the parking capacities of Chapel Street and Denburn Car parks have been reviewed.
- 5.22 Within Chapel Street car park the average number of cars parked overnight is generally between 60 – 80 cars. The number of parked cars increases rapidly from 0730 each day and peaks when the car park reaches capacity at approximately 0930 – 1000 hours. Chapel Street car park begins to empty at 1500-1600 hours each day, with approximately 120 cars parked at 1800 hours each day. Over the weekend Chapel Street is not at capacity, with the majority of vehicles parked in the late morning to early afternoon. Survey data indicates that Chapel Street car park would have capacity to allow resident permit holders access between 1800 – 2000 hours.
- 5.23 The Denburn Car park follows a differing trend with a clear double peak in the evenings except on Sundays. The second peak starts at 1900 hours until approximately 2230 hours; reaching approximately 190 cars on the Friday evening. The timing and extent of the second peak reflects the proximity of the Denburn car park to His Majesty's Theatre. There is a possibility that allowing residential access into the Denburn car park could prevent visitors from finding a parking space.
- 5.24 The survey information for West North Street Car park indicates that there are limited numbers of cars parked overnight, with the car park available for residential parking in this period.
- 5.25 It is therefore proposed to introduce a trial where resident permit holders are allowed to use the long stay car parks during off-peak hours. Permit holders in the west would be allowed to use Chapel Street, permit holders in the east - West North Street and Mearns Street. Due to capacity concerns and impact on city centre activities the Denburn is not proposed for inclusion at this time.
- 5.26 These proposals could be accommodated as part of the existing permit renewal process and therefore no direct costs would be associated with the proposal. Potentially revenue could be reduced as a result of the loss of residents purchasing evening tickets in the car parks but is unlikely to be significant.

Residential Developments

- 5.27 At the Policy and Strategy Committee on 29 September 2004 the Committee approved the terms of a Notice of Motion "That the policy to withhold residential permits from residents of new developments be

abandoned, being unworkable, and also unfair, in that it is not a City-wide principle". As a result of this decision any new residential development within the city centre was entitled to obtain parking permits.

- 5.28 Prior to the decision in 2004, after the establishment of the city centre CPZs, any new development on a Brownfield site, did not qualify for residential parking permits. It was considered that the parking needs of any new development should be addressed as part of the planning process, and should not have a detrimental impact on the operation of the CPZs. New developments within the city centre have excellent access to city wide public transport and the residents have more opportunities to utilise more sustainable forms of transportation
- 5.29 The Proposed Local Development Plan now includes a statement of support for the introduction of developments within the City Centre with low or no parking provision. This was considered prudent given the Scottish Governments willingness to overturn appeals/ refusals for development by Aberdeen City Council on the basis of objections to low/ no car parking. It is also true that city centre residents are best placed to take advantage of the array of other options to the car and that this should be encouraged if at all possible.
- 5.30 There is however significantly reduced benefits from car free housing developments if there is then an associated knock-on impact on-street. In order to maintain the support for low and low parking developments, it is considered necessary to review policy with regard to Brownfield development and the application of residents' permits.
- 5.31 It is recommended that if a development is specifically put forward as a car free housing development then individuals/ businesses within that development should not be able to purchase on-street permits. It is further recommended that any resident / business with access to off-road parking as part of a new development should not be able to purchase an additional on-street parking permit.

Private Garage and Parking Space Lease

- 5.32 At present Aberdeen City Council operates a number of parking areas which are not accessible to the wider public and are regulated by a number of different services.
- 5.33 For example Housing and Environment, rent out spaces on a commercial basis, or via the Garage Lettings Service. These are not subject to the charges set for off-street public parking with significant numbers of spaces offered at relatively low prices for both commuters and residents. This practice is seen to undermine the Local Transport Strategy's action to implement a comprehensive parking policy aimed at discouraging parking for non-priority users, in particular commuter parking

- 5.34 To maintain consistency across the Council and to encourage more sustainable forms of transportation, the parking charges in the city centre by other Services should, at a minimum, reflect the charges for public off-street car parking. It is thought that this will require further discussion with other Services.
- 5.35 It is therefore proposed that a review of charges set by other Services be reported to a future Committee for consideration and revision.

Emission Based Permits

- 5.36 One of the issues identified in both the Local Transport Strategy (2008) and the Draft Air Quality Action Plan (2010) is the problem of air quality within the City Centre. In the Air Quality Management Areas it is estimated that transport and traffic emissions are causing up to 90% of air quality pollution. Measures to remedy the problem are being looked at as part of the European Interreg IVB project CARE North (Carbon Responsible Transport Strategies in the North Sea Area). One of the emerging solutions is emissions based parking charges.
- 5.37 Unfortunately whilst the idea of emissions based parking seems simple – higher parking charges per hour for the more polluting vehicles and reduced charges for cleaner vehicles – the practical implementation of the scheme would be fairly complicated. With no obvious national emissions standard displayed on the vehicle, for instance like in Germany, it is very difficult for both individuals and parking wardens to then establish who should be paying what amount per hour. The older parking ticket machines are also unable to cope with numerous charging options. Until such time as a national standard is adopted and the replacement ticket machine programme in place, emissions based parking charges for city centre visitors cannot be applied but should be reviewed in future.
- 5.38 Another option however is to look at emissions based parking charges for permits holders. Since March 2001 all new vehicles registered in the UK have carbon emission levels stated on the V5C Vehicle Registration Document. These emissions are then grouped into 13 bands (A-M) which are used to determine the Vehicle Excise Duty (VED) that must be paid each year. So whilst we cannot establish emissions based charging for visitors we can establish the emissions of a vehicle when the owner comes in to purchase a residential or business permit.
- 5.39 The potential for the introduction of emission based parking permits has been reviewed and similar systems used by other councils have been investigated. These include ones run by the City of Edinburgh Council, City of York Council, Brighton and Hove City Council, Haringey, Lambeth, Tower Hamlets, Islington and Camden Councils. Whilst some Councils have chosen to operate schemes where the VED

bands are categorised into multiple groups, other Councils operate a simple reward system for the lowest most environmentally friendly VED bands A-C.

- 5.40 Recent EU Regulation setting emission performance standards for new passenger cars is expected to further reduce CO₂ emissions from light-duty vehicles in view of the 130 g/km and 95 g/km emission targets set for 2015 and 2020 respectively. Therefore, due to the potential improvement for all cars it is believed that the most effective scheme would be to reward the most environmentally friendly vehicles, whilst introducing a financial disincentive for the least environmentally friendly vehicle types.
- 5.41 Vehicle surveys have been undertaken throughout the core city centre zones (appendix 2). The emissions levels were determined by putting the make and registration of the car into the DVLA database. These surveys indicate that approximately 20% of vehicles are within the highest 3 VED bands, with up to 10% within the lowest bands, A-C.
- 5.42 An option would be to give a 50% permit discount for the three lowest bands of vehicle A-C, (=120g/km CO₂), vehicles with VED bands D-J (120g/km - 199 g/km CO₂) remaining at a standard price and the highest bands K-M, (200+g/km CO₂) considered for the most polluting vehicles seeing a 50% increase in the cost of permits.
- 5.43 For vehicles registered before March 2001 the carbon emissions are not stated on the V5C registration document. Whilst some authorities have set equivalent bandings for these vehicles based on engine size, the age of vehicles may mean that engine size does not directly relate to emission levels. The scheme would therefore not apply to older vehicles at this time and they would pay a standard charge
- 5.44 In order to encourage uptake of electric vehicles, and on the basis of an emissions based policy, that parking permits for electric (i.e. non-polluting vehicles) is provided at 25% of the standard cost of permits.
- 5.45 Given the general movement towards improvement of emissions the above should be reviewed on an annual basis to encourage the uptake of the cleaner vehicles. This fits with the Councils Climate Change Declaration (2007) to ensure on going commitment to reduce emissions from specific council operations and the wider authority area and makes inroads to dealing with air quality issues in the city centre.
- 5.46 It is therefore proposed to introduce an emission based permit system for the city centre, with financial incentives for the for the lowest emitting cars and a disincentive for the highest polluters. It is intended that the establishment of an emission based permit system will be budget neutral.

City Centre - Boundaries

- 5.47 In the last year the number of residential permits sold, excluding zone X, has risen by 11.5%. As a result an assessment of each zone has been undertaken on a street by street basis. Appendix 3 provides a zone by zone tabulation whilst Appendix 4 identifies parking / permit issues on a street by street basis.
- 5.48 Detailed observations show that the city centre zones (A-G), with the exception of zone B, are over subscribed. Whilst this is not unexpected within the city centre there is a concern that the increasing residential demand for on-street parking, particularly in the evening and weekends, presents a real issue to those who compete for on-street parking. As a result some vehicles are displaced into adjacent zones and are reliant on the judgment of City Wardens to avoid penalty charges notices.
- 5.49 Options which have been considered include the rigid enforcement of existing zone boundaries, the control of the number of permits issued through permit pricing, or a flexible approach, whereby larger city centre zones are created.
- 5.50 Rigid enforcement of the current zone boundaries would unrealistically restricts parking for city centre residents. Parking pressures within the city centre can result in residents being unable to find parking spaces within their zone, issuing a penalty charge for parking in an adjacent zone is strictly correct but the implications for residents are overly restrictive and impractical.
- 5.51 The price of permits could be increased considerably to a degree where it becomes an influencing factor on car ownership levels within the city centre. This would require significant price increases for permits that would not be seen to be acceptable at this time. However, a more reserved approach to price increases could be used to assist in the reduction of permit applications.
- 5.52 A more flexible approach would be for the creation of larger city centre zones where parking is permitted over a larger area. It is important however to ensure that each zone is not too large as there is then the possibility that residents could drive within the zone when these journeys should be undertaken by walking.
- 5.53 In order to ensure a consistent approach to enforcement it is proposed to formally rectify this situation by merging the zones in the east end of the city centre, zones F and G, and to merge the zones in the west, A, B, C and E. Residents individual permits could be updated as part of the existing permit renewals process therefore there would be no increase in cost as a result of merging the parking zones
- 5.54 Whilst this cannot directly address the problems of oversubscription, it does formalise an existing situation and removes unnecessary barriers for residential parking in the city centre.

- 5.55 In recognition of problems faced by residents of Union Terrace, it is proposed to relocate it into the western zone as it is disconnected from the remainder of the eastern zone. The railway line represents a natural boundary within the city centre. Appendix 5 shows the proposed city centre zone boundaries.
- 5.56 The redefined city centre zones would complement the boundary for other city centre policies such as parking standards, and also for the potential introduction of the emission based parking permit.

Residential Permits within the City Centre

- 5.57 Each property within the city centre is entitled to one parking permit which must be registered to a specific car. However, as stated, the number of permits being issued still exceeds the availability of on-street parking spaces. The tabulation in Appendix 3 indicates that there is clear competition for spaces caused by the demand for residential / business permit parking plus the need to create parking turnover.
- 5.58 The potential introduction of a cap on the total number of parking permits issued per zone, as operated by some councils within England, has been considered. This would be very difficult to administer and there would be concerns regarding the fairness of such a scheme, therefore officers do not recommend proceeding with such measures at this time.
- 5.59 To balance the competing demands for on-street parking the cost of permits within the city centre should be managed. The price should reflect the premium for parking, the availability of alternative forms of transport and the need to control the growth in the number of permits issued. In comparison with other cities in Scotland, Aberdeen City Councils permit charges are relatively affordable. The price of a residential permit in similar cities is as follows:

	Annual Cost of City Centre Permit
City of Edinburgh	£140 - £320 *(Emission based)
Glasgow City Council	£250
Perth and Kinross Council	£160

In recognition of the need to manage the number of permits being issued within the city centre and to reflect the premium for parking spaces officers recommend an increase in the price of city centre residential permits from £80 per year to £160 per year for a standard permit. The increase in the price of city centre permits would result in an increase in revenue of approximately £60k to the Car Parking trading account.

Intermediate Zones

- 5.60 Outside of the city centre, properties are entitled to two permits, one “fixed” permit, which must be registered to a specific car and one “flexible” permit which is non car specific. The first permit is currently £80 per year; the second permit is £120 per year. The cost of the permits relates to the number of permits, it is not an extra cost for a “flexible” permit.
- 5.61 As indicated by Appendix 4, the oversubscription problems which occur in the city centre also occur throughout zones K, N and in parts of zone H (particularly the Hollybank, Howburn, Hardgate area where a ratio of 1.8 – 2.0 permits are issued per available space). Again the property density, levels of permit ownership and limited available kerbside space have meant that there is increasing pressure on parking.
- 5.62 One issue which has been reviewed is the allocation of second permits and whether these permits could be managed to reduce parking pressure. Options which have been considered include:
1. Prohibiting second permits within these areas,
 2. Allowing existing permit holders the ability to renew their second permits but stopping new applications for second permits.
 3. Introducing a financial disincentive by increasing the price of the second permit
- 5.63 Stopping residents from renewing their second permits would resolve the issues of oversubscription but it is unrealistic to expect residents who have two cars, to give up one permit. The second option of removing the entitlement to second permits for new applicants would represent the most practical solution, but this could be considered as discriminatory.
- 5.64 The third possibility of increasing the price of the second permits within these areas is perhaps the most equitable solution. Officers recommend this option as the most practical solution, which would be supported by the proposed introduction of a car club, a scheme currently being progressed by the Council. The increase in the price of second permits in the intermediate zones would result in an increase in revenue of approximately £12k to the Car Parking trading account.
- 5.65 As stated, the problems predominantly occur within zones K, N and parts of zone H and L. It is unnecessary to introduce similar restrictions within other areas, as currently they do not experience the same problems. It is therefore proposed to introduce intermediate zones where the entitlement to second permits is managed. Plan 2 shows the proposed arrangement of the zones; this includes proposals to divide zones H and L.
- 5.66 The following charging structure is recommended for residential permits

	First Permit	Second Permit
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City Centre Zone	£160 +/- 50% for Emission based charging	Not Available
Intermediate Zone	£120	£180
Peripheral Zone	£80	£120

Sunday Charging

- 5.67 Within the city centre on and off-street parking charges apply throughout the week but with reduced operational hours on a Sunday between 1300-1700 hours. Sunday shopping hours differ from these times operate between 1100 – 1700 hours. It is recommended that the charging hours are extended to reflect the periods of demand of the Sunday shopping hours.
- 5.68 It must be highlighted that the current times were set to allow free access to car parks for church goers on Sunday mornings, adjusting timings could have a detrimental impact on these places of religious worship.
- 5.76 These proposals require the successful promotion of a new traffic regulation order and would have implementation costs of totaling approximately £5k, it is estimated that the changes would generate approximately £10k per year additional revenue to the Car Parking trading account.

Overnight Charge

- 5.70 Since the overnight charge was introduced in September 2010 a number of issues have been experienced. Complaints have been received from members of the public who have had difficulties paying the overnight charge, the problems occur particularly in the evenings during the transition between the day rate and night rate at 2000 hours. The complaints have been about the amount of text contained in the operating instructions, the size of the text and the difficulties understanding the instructions.
- 5.71 The operating instructions on the parking ticket machines have been reviewed and subsequently revised, however the detail which must be included is perceived by the general public as complicated and lengthy.
- 5.72 Complaints have also been received regarding the way in which the overnight charge is applied, where drivers must pay the £1.50 for parking at any time between 2000 – 0800 hours. This means that tickets bought just before 2000 hours will expire at 2000 unless the overnight charge is paid, similarly night tickets bought just before 0800 hours will expire at 0800 hours unless additional daytime hours are purchased. The result is disproportionately high parking rates for short periods of parking around the changeover between day rate and night rate or vice versa.

- 5.73 Ticketing information indicates that only 10% of overnight tickets are purchased after 2200 hours, therefore replacing the complicated overnight charge of £1.50 with two hours of charging at the newly approved rate of £1 per hour, would offset the removal of the overnight charge. It is recommended that the overnight charge is replaced with a simplified system where one rate operates over an extended day period from 0800 – 2200 hours.
- 5.74 In order to preserve the ability to park for an entire day within the long stay car parks it will be necessary to revise the maximum duration of stay within the long stay car parks. It is therefore proposed to introduce a 10 – 14 hour parking band for £14. Short stay charges would remain unchanged.
- 5.75 There would be costs associated with the promotion of a new traffic regulation order however, it is estimated that the revised proposals would not reduce the revenue generated by the current charge.

Foresterhill and Garthdee Vouchers

- 5.76 The Foresterhill and Garthdee controlled parking zones were both introduced to support Green Travel Plans (GTP) for developments at Aberdeen Royal Infirmary and Robert Gordon University respectively and to limit traffic generation on the local road network. The GTPs were created to support alternative more sustainable forms of transport within the development and have been actively supported by both parties.
- 5.77 Since implementation in 2002 and 2005 the cost of parking vouchers has stayed at £1.00 for up to two hours parking or £2.00 for parking for an entire day. In the same timescales the cost of taking the bus has increased from £1.70 for an off-peak return ticket to £3.50 for a similar return ticket.
- 5.78 In order to support the sustainable objectives of the GTPs it has become necessary to reassess parking prices so they relate to the cost of public transport. It is recommended that the price of the vouchers be increased to £1.50 for up to two hours and £4.50 for all day parking.
- 5.79 To implement these proposals it will be necessary to advertise new charges and to replace the existing stock of vouchers. Calculating approximately 20% customer resistance it is estimated that these proposals will generate approximately £50k to the car parking account

Off-peak Residential Parking on Waiting Restrictions

- 5.80 Single yellow line waiting restrictions are timed restrictions which prevent parking during peak traffic periods. Outside the operational times parking on these restrictions is acceptable. In September 2010 when the “pay and display” bays within the city centre were extended to

0800 – 2000 hours, the single yellow line restrictions were kept at 0800-1800 hours. This was done because extending the time of the waiting restrictions would have reduced the overall parking capacity, limiting parking availability, including for residents.

- 5.81 The result of this is that the single yellow line waiting restrictions are uncontrolled whilst the “pay and display” bays are in operation. In some circumstances it would be possible to introduce “residents only” bays over the same section of kerbside as a single yellow line outwith the restricted period. As a result parking would still be restricted during peak traffic periods but between 1800-2000 hours “residents only” restrictions would give priority parking to residents.
- 5.82 It is therefore proposed that each area be assessed on merit and, where appropriate “residents only” parking bays be introduced between 1800 – 2000 hours where single yellow lines are in operation. These areas would be identified and promoted through the small scale traffic management process.
- 5.83 Currently there is no budget available to progress these measures, if approved funding would need to be identified.

Albert Terrace

- 5.84 Over a number of years the Albert Terrace Residents Association has campaigned for the introduction of “residents only” parking bays into their street. In the past surveys have been undertaken to assess the need for “residents only” parking. These surveys have suggested that “residents only” parking is unnecessary as there are no problems for residents finding parking spaces. The Residents Association continues to disagree with this finding
- 5.85 In order to reassess the parking within Albert Terrace, hourly registration surveys were carried out throughout the day. Based on the lengths of pay and display parking it has been estimated that there is space for approximately 70 cars to park on Albert Terrace. The highest number of parked cars was 58 (83% capacity) this occurred between 1000 – 1100 hours. At this time 40 cars (57% of the on-street capacity) were displaying residential permits, and 18 cars were displaying parking tickets.
- 5.86 From the surveys it can be concluded that there are no sound traffic management justifications to create residents only parking, particularly as the street is never at capacity. The potential to affect the adjacent businesses and the medical centers would suggest that this proposal would have a negative affect on the wider community. It is therefore recommended that no changes are implemented on Albert Terrace.

Localised Issues

Bon Accord Crescent

5.87 There are currently a number of 3 hour maximum stay parking bays on Bon Accord Crescent. These parking bays differ from the others in the area which are limited to 1 or 2 hour maximum stay. As the 3 hour parking bays are generally only used in peripheral areas the cost for parking is different from the 1 or 2 hour bays, and charges do not apply on Sundays. From 1 April 2011 one hour of parking will cost £3 in the 1 and 2 hour maximum stay bays, but will only cost £1 in the 3 hour parking bays. Having 3 hour maximum stay parking bays in Bon Accord Crescent represents an anomaly that does not reflect the premium for parking in the City Centre.

5.88 The opening of the off-street car park on Justice Mill Lane has introduced a new element of off-street parking to the city centre. This car park allows parking for longer durations than the 1 or 2 hour maximum stay bays and therefore the need for 3 hour maximum stay parking in the area is reduced. To reflect this it is proposed to change the 3 hour maximum stay parking bays to 2 hour parking bays, with charges also applying on a Sunday

Rose Street / Chapel Street

5.89 Requests have been received from members of the public for the introduction of a one-way system in the area. This would allow the creation of approximately 20 additional parking spaces within the west end of the city centre. Introducing the one way would increase journeys for residents of Margaret Street when in the north of the city

5.90 Traffic modeling in this area has been carried out and would suggest that there is limited impact on the overall road network. It is recommended that further assessment is carried out, and if appropriate a scheme developed and reported back to the Enterprise, Planning and Infrastructure Committee

Marischal Street

5.91 Residents have requested consideration be given to the introduction of a one-way restriction on Marischal Street. This proposal would allow the creation of approximately 20 parking spaces within the east end of the city centre. Traffic Modeling has been carried out and suggests minimal impact on the road network, however, further issues will require investigation. A more detailed assessment will be reported back to a future meeting of the Enterprise, Planning and Infrastructure Committee

Future Proposed CPZs

- 5.92 Since the last priority list for future parking zones was approved by the Environment and Infrastructure Committee in January 2006, parking zones V, W, X and the extension to M have all been implemented. In addition the opening of Union Square has had an affect on the parking in and around the city centre. It is therefore proposed to recommend a new priority list to determine the requirements for any future zones within the city.
- 5.93 Hourly registration surveys have been undertaken in the following areas and have been prioritised as follows.

Palmerston Area (Priority 1)

This area was previously approved as a potential future zone in 2006. Since this time the area has been affected by the opening of the Union Square development.

Survey

The parking surveys suggest that there is a significant volume of commuter parking within the Palmerston area. Daytime surveys indicate that the number of parked cars between 0700-0800 hours was 322, rising to 428 cars at 1100 hours before gradually dropping to 200 cars between 1800-1900 hours. The surveys reinforced the need for traffic management measures as frequent occurrences of obstructive and indiscriminate parking were observed, in addition to the loading and unloading operations of the businesses in the area.

Due to the nature of the area the 0700 hours survey start time is unlikely to reflect the beginning of the working day for some businesses in the area. A night time observation survey at 2300 hours indicates that there are very few cars parked on-street during the late evening.

A business case for the future introduction of a parking zone should be prepared for the Palmerston area and the potential risk that parking may displace into nearby Torry should be considered.

Mearns Street area (Priority 2)

This city centre area is bounded to the north and west by parking zone F, by the Waterloo rail branch to the east and by the harbour to the south. Uncontrolled parking in this area is an issue with commuter parking having a subsequent impact on residential parking amenity in the area. The area is a relatively short walking distance from the city centre and attracts commuter parking.

Survey

The actual number of parking spaces in this area is relatively low with only approximately 41 parking spaces. The survey indicates that morning occupancy is at 76% between 0800-0900 hours increasing to between 85% - 98% during the daytime.

The introduction of parking controls would aid residential parking amenity and would discourage all day commuter parking.

Ashley / Brighton Area (Priority 3)

The Ashley Gardens to Forest Avenue area has previously been removed from parking zone proposals as a result of adverse resident feedback during the informal stages of consultation. Since that time parking zones T, to the north and east and parking zone X to the north and west have caused displacement into the area between Brighton Place and Forbesfield Road.

Survey

The survey confirms that commuter parking impacts on this area during the working day; with some 130 cars arriving in the area and parking for more than 3 hours before departing in the evening. It was noted that 45% of these cars stayed in excess of 7 hours.

Both Ashley Gardens and Ashley Park Drive are between 80%-90% occupancy throughout the working day whilst Brighton Place and Forest Avenue are close to capacity in the morning and evening.

Holburn / Hardgate area (Priority 4)

This is a densely populated, mainly residential area within close walking distance of the city centre. The area is bounded to the north east by parking zones N and V. The areas to south and west are for the most part residential. Residential demand for parking controls is relatively low with a general acceptance of a high demand for parking.

Survey

The survey confirms that commuters are parking within this area during the day, with the survey indicates 149 cars arrived in the area and parked for more than 3 hours before departing in the evening. It was noted that 42% of these cars stayed in excess of 7 hours. Holburn Street and Hardgate are at 100%–90% occupancy throughout the working day dropping to 87% and 82% respectively in the early evening.

Carnegie Crescent Area (Priority 5)

Originally promoted as part of the on-street parking zone X, this area was removed from the scheme as a result of public objection process. Since implementation of the remainder of zone X commuters have displaced into the area

Surveys

The surveys indicate that there is a localised issue with commuter parking on Morningfield Road. When considering the area as a single entity the volume of commuter parking is limited. Residential parking in the area is affected but not to an extent where residents cannot park.

Seaforth Road Area (Priority 6)

This area has previously been identified within the future priority list. Site observation surveys have been carried out in this area but due to the continuing development of First Headquarters and also the former John Clark car showroom, the parking patterns are unlikely to reflect a normal situation. Residential demand for parking controls in this area is limited, therefore officers believe that the area should be noted and reviewed again in future years.

Elmbank area (Priority7)

During the public advertisement for the Aberdeen University parking controls, some residents expressed concern regarding displacement into this area. Officers would confirm the need to review parking patterns once the new zone has been implemented however the existing parking conditions would suggest that there is limited opportunity for commuters to be displaced into this area.

- 5.72 The development of any future controlled parking zone proposals would be subject to a business case submission.

6. IMPACT

This report is in accordance with the administrations Vibrant, Dynamic and Forward Looking, under the heading of Transport and highlighted in Paragraph 7.

It also meets the local community plan objectives to continually improve road safety and maximise accessibility for pedestrians and all modes of transport.

7. BACKGROUND PAPERS

8. REPORT AUTHOR DETAILS

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