

ABERDEEN CITY COUNCIL

COMMITTEE	Communities, Housing and Infrastructure
DATE	27 October 2015
DIRECTOR	Pete Leonard
TITLE OF REPORT	Garthdee / Kaimhill Controlled Parking Zone – (i) Feasibility of allowing households the opportunity to obtain a third residents’ parking permit; (ii) Feasibility of providing business parking permits at zero cost to qualifying businesses within the CPZ.
REPORT NUMBER	CHI/15/222
CHECKLIST COMPLETED	Yes

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

At the Communities, Housing and Infrastructure Committee on the 19 May 2015, the committee instructed officers to make “The Aberdeen City Council (Garthdee / Kaimhill Area, Aberdeen) (Zone YY) (Controlled Parking and Waiting Restrictions) Order 201(X)” with amendments and commence implementation of the Controlled Parking Zone. The Committee, also instructed Officers should report back to a future Committee on two specific queries with respect to both the existing Garthdee Controlled Parking Zone, and the soon to be implemented new zone; specifically the queries were: -

- (i) to report back on the feasibility of allowing households the opportunity to obtain a third residents’ parking permit.
- (ii) report back in relation to the feasibility of providing business parking permits at zero cost to qualifying businesses within the CPZ.

The purpose of this report is therefore to consider the above two queries.

2. RECOMMENDATION(S)

It is recommended this Committee notes the content of this report and instructs officers to take no further action.

3. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

There would be no financial implications based on the recommendations of this report.

4. OTHER IMPLICATIONS

None

5. BACKGROUND/MAIN ISSUES

5.1 At the Communities, Housing and Infrastructure Committee on the 19 May, 2015, the committee instructed officers to make “The Aberdeen City Council (Garthdee / Kaimhill Area, Aberdeen) (Zone YY) (Controlled Parking and Waiting Restrictions) Order 201(X)” with amendments and commence implementation of the Controlled Parking Zone. The Committee, also instructed Officers should report back to a future Committee on two specific queries with respect to both the existing Garthdee Controlled Parking Zone, and the soon to be implemented new zone; specifically the queries were: -

- (i) to report back on the feasibility of allowing households the opportunity to obtain a third residents’ parking permit.
- (ii) to report back in relation to the feasibility of providing business parking permits at zero cost to qualifying businesses within the CPZ.

5.2 When considering resident’s parking permits it is the case a household is entitled to obtain two permits, one of these must be ‘fixed’ in that a single identifiable vehicle kept at the home address is associated with the permit, while the other can be flexible and displayed on any vehicle, be it for a second household vehicle or a visitor’s vehicle.

5.3 In one of the objections received during the public consultation for the new controlled parking zone the following was stated “Households with more than 2 cars will be penalised. In the current financial climate young people tend to live longer in the family home due to the lack of affordable housing, therefore there can be 3 cars plus.” Similar objections have also been received when considering past Controlled Parking Zones that have been introduced in the City.

5.4 When examining the operation of Controlled Parking Zones across the City, the central core zones have been limited to 1 ‘fixed’ permit per household, while in peripheral zones and those outlying, Garthdee, Foresterhill and Old Aberdeen, households have been limited to two permits; the limited capacity and sheer demand for parking in the core zones being the basis for limiting households to one permit. Whereas the peripheral and outlying zones can accommodate a greater number of vehicles, hence the additional permit.

- 5.5 The current issue of up to two permits in those zones where eligible provides a balance between providing and protecting the amenity of on-street parking for residents, and encouraging sustainable transport options. Many of the properties, where it would be possible to accommodate a household regularly using more than two vehicles, will have off-street parking for at least one vehicle. It would also be expected there would be few occurrences of households having multiple vehicles parked simultaneously during the operational hours of the Zone, between 10am and 4pm, Monday to Friday. The argument being that at least one vehicle user would usually be out during the working day, and so the 'flexible' permit can be displayed in any parked vehicle remaining.
- 5.6 The issue of a third permit would also bring the possibility of lessening the effectiveness of the Controlled Parking Zone with the potential for the 'flexible' permit to be distributed to commuters. Such misuse of 'flexible' permits is very difficult to enforce and at worst can involve permits being sold for profit. While, such actions are not considered widespread, the advertisement of permits 'for sale' has already been observed/investigated in existing zones. The introduction of an additional permit would therefore have the potential to exacerbate this aforementioned practice.
- 5.7 Councils throughout the United Kingdom have different regimes for managing Residents' Parking Permits and examples follow: -

Edinburgh City Council

A maximum of two permits per household may be issued. Each resident may apply for one resident's permit only, but each permit can have up to 2 vehicle registration numbers on it; albeit the vehicles concerned must be associated with the home address, so the only real flexibility is on the occasion where the property has a driveway and the permit can be interchanged between two household vehicles to allow one to park on-street.

Glasgow City Council

Similar to Aberdeen, there is a particular zone where a household is limited to one 'fixed' permit due to parking capacity and demand. Thereafter within other zones there is no limit, albeit the permits are all 'fixed' with reference to a specific vehicle that is associated with the property and a person residing in the property.

Newcastle City Council

A household can obtain two 'fixed' residential permits, and additionally a Visitor Permit which can only be used by legitimate visitors (social or domestic) to the property for the duration of their stay and so cannot be used by residents.

City of York Council

In certain zones a household can obtain a first permit (vehicle not necessarily kept at home address) and two or three additional 'fixed' permits escalating in price (the third additional fixed permit will only be issued to a property that has no off-street parking facility). The first permit price is based on vehicle size or emissions, while the second, third and fourth permits have set annual prices of £165, £330, and £660 respectively; the aforementioned price escalation being a financial disincentive that is used to encourage sustainable transport.

Southampton Council

There are particular zones where households are limited to one 'fixed' permit, while in other zones two 'fixed' permits can be obtained, albeit in all zones, should the household have off-street parking, there allocation is reduced respectively for each vehicle the off-street facility can accommodate. A Visitor's Permit can be obtained and is for the exclusive use of visitors and provides for a maximum stay of up to eight hours.

- 5.8 While the aforementioned examples are by no way exhaustive, they do provide an indication of how other Councils are operating parking permit options with respect to residents. To this effect, Edinburgh, Newcastle and Southampton restrict resident's permits to identifiable vehicles associated with the property, with two resident's parking permits, at most, depending on the particular zone, issued to households. In contrast, while Glasgow release additional permits in certain zones, all the permits are still 'fixed' and therefore associated with specific vehicles. The only example, in which a 'flexible' type permit is available, with the additional release of multiple 'fixed' type permits, is York, however these escalate in cost to discourage multi-car households, and thereby promote sustainable transport.
- 5.9 When considering the current Aberdeen City Council management of parking permits, it provides a balance by offering the 'fixed' and 'flexible' options. As highlighted earlier, a proposal to introduce a third permit option would raise concerns the effectiveness of the Zone would be diminished. Indeed, if the Council were inclined to consider introducing an additional permit, there would be a strong case for removing the 'flexible' permit option, while also taking into account the off-street parking capacity of properties. The aforementioned would be considered robust with the potential for the misappropriation of permits reduced.

- 5.10 Albeit, the additional permit option highlighted in the previous paragraph could cause difficulties, particularly so for those that obtain the 'flexible' permit primarily for visitors. This would raise the possibility that a limited concessionary scheme for genuine visitors to residential properties would be required. In this regard some Councils, such as Newcastle and Southampton in the examples above, offer residents the opportunity to purchase a Visitor's Permit, that either stipulates a maximum stay or alternatively states it can only be used for the duration of the stay, but again this possibility raises the issue of misappropriation and subsequent enforcement. Another option is the possibility of a household being able to purchase/obtain a limited number of visitor tickets every year. This limited option already exists in all city zones, with the exception of Foresterhill and Garthdee, where a household can purchase, at reduced cost, a maximum of 15 one-day parking tickets annually. Likewise, other Councils provide similar options which vary both on cost (some provide an initial number of tickets free of charge) and maximum number of tickets per household annually.
- 5.11 The question over the possibility of a third permit was specifically raised in relation to the new Garthdee/Kaimhill Controlled Parking Zone, but it should not be considered in isolation from the other zones in the City. Specifically, any change within this new zone and the original Garthdee zone would have to be considered across all similar zones in the city, where it could be envisaged there was on-street parking capacity to accommodate such change.
- 5.12 At the outset of this report it was highlighted similar objections have been received with respect to households wanting additional permits during consultations for other controlled parking zones introduced in the City. These objections have tended to be few in number, and it's notable once the parking controls are established there are few on-going complaints received by the Traffic Management Team over the issue of permit allocation. Indeed, the few complaints that are received tend to come from the core zones where households are restricted to one permit, where there is simply not the on-road parking capacity to provide additional permits. It can therefore be inferred while a few households have concern at the outset, in practice the current permit allocation works well for the vast majority of households.
- 5.13 In conclusion, the current two permit allocation provides a balance between flexibility and providing an effective controlled parking zone that both protects on-street parking amenity for residents and promotes sustainable transport. Any proposed change would require an extensive review of the fifteen controlled parking zones where two resident's permits are available per household. Surveys to assess current on-street parking capacity/use would be required, along with informal community consultation. Thereafter, if change was considered appropriate, the necessary statutory process would be required to change existing Traffic Regulation Orders. At this current time, the recommendation to this Committee is the current evidence available

does not warrant such action at this time and accordingly the maximum allocation of two resident's permits per household is sufficient.

- 5.14 The other query this Committee sought to address was the suggestion businesses should be provided with Business Parking Permits at zero cost; akin to the provision of Resident's Parking Permits at zero cost for a period of ten years.
- 5.15 Businesses within the new zone will be able to purchase a maximum of two business permits (one of which can be flexible) at a cost of £500 each annually. The permits must be used solely for business purposes and therefore should preclude its use by any trader, professional, employee etc. for long stay commuting purposes.
- 5.16 The £500 annual charge for a business permit is standard across all controlled parking zones within the City, and as a daily charge* amounts to approximately £2, which is considered modest in the context of on-street parking charges. For example, the cost of a 'full day' parking (operational period 10am-6pm, Mon-Fri) parking in the new Garthdee/Kaimhill Zone will be £4.50.

**Based on five day working week*

- 5.17 While the controlled parking zone protects residential parking amenity, it also ensures there is parking capacity for visitors, both to residential properties and business premises. To this effect, it's appropriate there should be a charge associated with a business permit to discourage its possible use for commuting purposes. Likewise, this position also meets with the Transportation Strategy to promote sustainable transport.
- 5.18 The cost of a business permit is always likely going to prove contentious in an outlying zone where the function of the zone is to mitigate parking/congestion issues and support sustainable transport associated with one particular large institution, in the case of Aberdeen, the zones associated with the universities and NHS Grampian Foresterhill Complex. The proprietors of small businesses may feel they are being subjected to unjustified costs; however as highlighted in the previous paragraph, it will protect parking for visitors to these businesses, while at the same time providing the opportunity to obtain a permit for vehicles that are in genuine use for business purposes.
- 5.19 The ten year agreement with Robert Gordon University for providing the Council with an annual financial contribution to manage the existing Garthdee zone will be made on the proviso the Council does not charge residents for permits during that period. The University makes no mention of businesses. Thereafter, for the Council to provide free Business Permits out-with the realms of this agreement would be in contradiction to the arrangements in all the other controlled parking zones. To do so would cause discontentment and complaint from businesses in other zones.

5.20 Accordingly, based on the information provided in the previous paragraphs, it would be recommended the current charge for Business Permits in the existing and new Garthdee/Kaimhill controlled parking zones is retained.

6. IMPACT

Improving Customer Experience – As the recommendation is to take no further action there is no impact on current customer experience.

Improving Staff Experience – Not applicable.

Improving our use of Resources – Not applicable.

Corporate - The contents of this report link to the Community Plan vision of creating a “sustainable City with an integrated transport system that is accessible to all”. Likewise the current management with respect to Controlled Parking Zones links to the delivery of the Smarter Mobility aims of Aberdeen – *The Smarter City*: “We will develop, maintain and promote road, rail, ferry and air links from the city to the UK and the rest of the world. We will encourage cycling and walking”, and “We will provide and promote a sustainable transport system, including cycling, which reduces our carbon emissions.”

Public – This report will be of interest to the residents/proprietors/businesses within both the new and existing Garthdee/Kaimhill controlled parking zones.

7. MANAGEMENT OF RISK

If this Committee was not in favour of the recommendations there would be implications on financial and human resources. As indicated in the report, the introduction of a third resident’s permit would require extensive survey/consultation that would take in to account the majority of the controlled parking zones in the City.

8. BACKGROUND PAPERS

[“Garthdee/Kaimhill – Proposed Controlled Parking Zone \(Stage 3 – Public Advert\)”, Report No. CHI/15/176, Communities, Housing & Infrastructure Committee, 19 May 2015](#)

[Minute to the above report \(Item 27\)](#)

9. REPORT AUTHOR DETAILS

Graeme McKenzie
Technical Officer
gmckenzie@aberdeencity.gov.uk
(01224) 522308