

COMMITTEE Enterprise, Planning and Infrastructure DATE 20 April 2010

CORPORATE DIRECTOR Gordon McIntosh, Enterprise Planning and Infrastructure

TITLE OF REPORT Contractors Permit Scheme

REPORT Number EPI/10/097

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## 1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

To advise the committee on the proposed detail of the Contractors Permit scheme recommended by the Controlled Parking Working Group based on a variation of the system operated by the City of Edinburgh Council.

## 2. RECOMMENDATION(S)

It is recommended that the committee approve the following detail for the proposed scheme

- a)
  - i. The monthly permit system
  - ii. The vehicles do not have to be liveried
  - iii. There is no requirement for the businesses to be paying business rates
  - iv. The associated trade must be one of, or related to one of, the trades in the enclosed list of qualifying trades and they must be able to demonstrate that they have a requirement to operate from a vehicle.
  - v. The permit allows parking within both the "Residents / Permit holders only" and the "Pay and Display" parking bays.
  - vi. The permit allows parking in the said bays only between 9am and 4.30pm
  - vii. The scheme be reviewed after one year of operation and indications of abuse be monitored
- b) The committee approves the proposed monthly charge of £50 in principal and refers the charge to the Finance and Resources Committee for approval, and instruct officers to commence with the year trial.

## 3. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

The financial implications connected to this report relate to income generation, efficiency savings and staff costs incurred from establishing and monitoring the system. It is not envisaged that there will be any impact on current income from the current system for contractors

#### 4. SERVICE & COMMUNITY IMPACT

This report links with National Outcomes 10, 11, 12 and 14 of the Single Outcome Agreement.

In terms of 'Vibrant, Dynamic & Forward Looking' the following policy commitment applies 'Only introduce further on-street parking controls where there is local support or a requirement for traffic management or road safety reasons.'

#### 5. OTHER IMPLICATIONS

There is a risk that the proposed system could be open to abuse from businesses and commuters particularly because the cost of the permits is less than £2 per day. The proposed charge is significantly less than the existing monthly permit for off-street car parks

#### 6. REPORT

##### **Introduction**

6.1 At the Council meeting of 25 June 2008 Councillor Alan Donnelly raised a Notice of Motion regarding the contractors daily parking permits

*Calls on this Administration to introduce a levied "Trades Annual Parking Permit" to assist the city's plumbers, electricians and joiners, etc. to carry out their work unhindered in the city's parking areas. This would not apply to parking in no parking areas."*

This was reported to the Policy and Strategy Committee on 2 September 2008 and subsequently discussed at the Controlled Parking Working Party of 18 May 2009.

6.2 A further report on value judgments and benchmarking comparisons with other cities was reported to the Controlled Parking Working Group in December 2009. The report detailed the potential options and recommended the introduction of a monthly / annual permit scheme similar to the system operated by the City of Edinburgh Council. The working group approved this recommendation and the minute was subsequently approved by the Enterprise, Planning and Infrastructure Committee which requested a further report on the proposed detail of the scheme

6.3 The City of Edinburgh Council scheme operates as follows:-

Tradesmen may buy a Trades Parking Permit for £100 per month or £1000 per year. Tradesmen qualifying to buy a permit are defined and must pay non-domestic (or business rates) for their business premises. There is no limit on the number of permits that may be purchased and more than one vehicle can be registered to each permit (but only one vehicle can use the permit at any one time). The vehicle must be registered to the business, be

insured and be liveried. The permits may only be used between 9am - 4.30pm (because outside these times demand from residents is highest).

6.4 There are a number of potential benefits for the adoption of the City of Edinburgh scheme; however, the working group recommended a couple of deviations.

- It is considered that the cost of £50 per month is a more acceptable charge, particularly when considered in respect to smaller businesses and the self employed who could otherwise be disadvantaged.
- The requirement for a liveried vehicle is considered unduly restrictive as a significant number of tradesmen within Aberdeen City do not use liveried vehicles.
- The requirement to pay business rates to qualify for a permit could disadvantage the self employed.

6.5 It is proposed that the parking permits are non-vehicle specific and businesses will be able to transfer permits between vehicles as and when necessary. If accepted the business will be placed on an approved register and will not be required to demonstrate their requirement on every application. Registered businesses will be able to purchase either monthly permits when required at the cost of £50 per month or annual permits at £550 per year.

6.6 The enforcement and administrative burden are two of the main difficulties with the existing system and the proposed scheme has similar issues. Initially businesses will be required to demonstrate that their vehicle is essential to their business operation. This business will then be able to register for the scheme. In order to minimise the administrative burden, it is recommended that the criteria be reduced to contractors proving their involvement with one of the following qualifying trades as listed below. This list is not exclusive and closely related trades may also be considered.

- Aerial installation
- Bathroom fitting
- Building
- Carpentry
- Carpet fitting
- Painting & Decorating
- Electrical installation and maintenance
- Insulation installation
- Joinery
- Kitchen fitting
- Masonry
- Painting
- Plumbing
- Roofing
- Tiling
- Window fitting

6.7 Whilst it is difficult to assess whether a company must operate directly from a vehicle on every occasion, it is proposed that the City Wardens can, at their discretion, request post dated evidence that a permit was being used appropriately. Companies must be able to demonstrate within 24 hours that their permits were being used for the purpose of operating within a parking zone. Failure to comply could result in permits being cancelled and the company removed from the register permanently.

6.8 The City of Edinburgh scheme allows contractors to use permits between 9.00am and 4.30pm; these being the hours when residential parking demand is at its lowest. A similar system could be adopted in Aberdeen as this could address some concerns regarding the abuse of permits for all day parking. However, this could add an additional complication to enforcement. It is recommended that this timed restriction is adopted as part of the trial.

6.9 A further consideration must be the entitlement given by the contractor's permits. Parking on waiting restrictions could not be justified, but should the permit allow use in "Pay and Display" parking bays and in "Permit holders / residents only" parking bays. It could be said that "Residents / Permit holders only" parking must be kept exclusively for use by residents, contractors permits could be made purely as an exemption to "Pay and Display" requirements. The Pay and Display areas are distributed throughout the parking zones but officers believe that the purpose of the permit is to allow for close proximity parking because a vehicle is necessary to operate. It is therefore recommended that the contractors permit exempts parking in both types of parking bay.

### Consultee Responses

Councillor Ron Clark	Would suggest that contractor start time on site would be more like 8 am to 5 pm the normal working for trades people Why vary from recognized start times
Councillor Kate Dean	Has been consulted and has no comment
Councillor Callum McCaig	Has been consulted and has no comment
Councillor Alan Donnelly	Has been consulted and has no comment
Councillor Andrew May	Has been consulted and has no comment
Councillor Bill Cormie	Has been consulted and has no comment
Councillor George Adam	Has been consulted and has no comment
Councillor Irene Cormack	Has been consulted and has no comment
Councillor Jim Hunter	Has been consulted and has no comment
Councillor James Kiddie	Has been consulted and has no comment
Councillor Jennifer Laing	Has been consulted and has no comment
Councillor Jennifer Stewart	Has been consulted and has no comment
Councillor John West	Has been consulted and has no comment
Councillor Kirsty West	Has been consulted and has no comment
Councillor Martin Greig	Has been consulted and has no comment
Councillor Neil Fletcher	Has been consulted and has no comment
Councillor Yvonne Allan	Has been consulted and has no comment

Susan Cooper, City Chamberlain, Resources Management - I've no comments to make on your report.

Jane MacEachran, City Solicitor, Continuous Improvement has been consulted and has no comment

Ciaran Monaghan, Head of Service, Office of Chief Executive has been consulted and has no comment

Gordon McIntosh, Director of Enterprise, Planning and Infrastructure has been consulted and has no comment

Hugh Murdoch, Head of Service, Shelter and Environment has no comment to make on these proposals

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Margaret Bochel, Head of Planning & Infrastructure, Strategic -

Whilst P&SD agree with the principle behind the Contractors Permit Scheme we believe that as it is proposed it is will be abused given the cost and width of the scheme. In consequence it will likely result in a reduction in provision of parking spaces for residents, shoppers and visitors, and the Council subsidising parking for businesses - as outlined in the Other Implications section of the report. There is no clear evidence as to why Contractors Permits would be provided at an arbitrary figure of £50.00 a month when a cost of £100 in line with Edinburgh already represents a significant saving and benefit to any existing contractor. We would recommend that the cost of the parking permit is increased so that it is consistent with other authorities in Scotland and that consideration be given to the permits being allowed on a maximum number of vehicles, as well as a restriction on number of permits allocated to any business.

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Mike Cheyne, Roads Manager has been consulted and has no comment

Neil Carnegie, Community Safety Manager - £50 is a low charge per month in comparison with all other permit types.

There is substantial potential for abuse due to a combination of factors. This includes the low charge and their flexibility of use (ie not being vehicle specific).

Many contractors require parking before 9am.

Removal companies are amongst the most frequent requesters of dispensation but aren't on the approved list. An officer should be empowered to use discretion to allow other trades onto the list and deal with exceptional cases.

The option to feed the meter must be formalised through the report.

Confirmation of arrangements for the current scheme during the trial needs is required.



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Elaine Hourston, Account Manager, Service Design and Development

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## 7 REPORT AUTHOR DETAILS

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