



Highways Committee

27 June 2017

Report of the Operational Director, Environmental Services

For Decision

Wards Affected:
All

Parking Annual Report 2016-17

1.0 Summary

- 1.1 Brent Council is committed to providing a high quality parking service and a fair, consistent and transparent approach to parking and traffic enforcement. We hope that the publication of statistical and financial information will support achievement of these objectives. The purpose of the Annual Report is to explain the aims and objectives of the Council's Parking service and the key achievements of the last financial year. The Report includes a statistical analysis setting out information on the number of parking and traffic related Penalty Charge Notices (PCNs) issued for the period 2016/2017, the revenue and expenditure recorded in our Parking Account, and how the surplus on this account has been spent or allocated.
- 1.2 The Report also meets a key requirement set out in the Statutory Guidance issued under the Traffic Management Act 2004. This requires local authorities to produce and publish an annual report on parking enforcement activities.
- 1.3 At its meeting on 25 July 2016, Cabinet specifically delegated to Highways Committee responsibility for approval of Parking Annual Reports from the 2016/17 report onwards.

2.0 Recommendations

That Highways Committee:

- 2.1 Approves for publication prior to October 2017 the Council's Parking Annual Report 2016/17, as set out as the Appendix to this report, subject to amendment in respect of 2016/17 ETA data; and
- 2.2 Notes that additional information on the outcome of appeals to the independent appeal service, Environment and Traffic Adjudicators (ETA), in 2016/17, will be added to the published Annual Report in September 2017.

3.0 Background

- 3.1 The purpose of the Annual Report is to provide statistical and financial information relating to all aspects of parking, and traffic enforcement, operations. This includes the number of PCNs issued, the number of PCNs paid, the revenue and expenditure related to the enforcement activities recorded in the Parking Account, and how the surplus on the account has been spent or allocated.
- 3.2 Publication of the report allows residents, motorists, local businesses, and other interested parties easy access to information regarding last year's parking and traffic enforcement operations. The report will be published on the Council's website.

4.0 Executive Summary

The table below summarises Key Performance Indicators agreed for the Parking service in 2016/17, as well as performance in previous years for comparison.

Key Performance Indicators	2013/14	2014/15	2015/16	2016/17
PCNs issued by Civil Enforcement Officers for parking contraventions	75,458	87,347	99,145	103,363
PCNs issued by CCTV for parking contraventions	37,353	36,584	991	2,160
PCNs issued by CCTV for bus lane contraventions	5,681	11,362	8,370	10,349
PCNs issued by CCTV for moving traffic offences	24,029	27,512	73,990	72,221
Parking account: net revenue	£7.914m	£8.957m	£10.119m	£11.724m

- 4.1 Since 2015/16 the number of **parking PCNs issued by CCTV** has dropped by almost 95%, following the introduction of the Deregulation Act 2015. This also had the effect of reducing enforcement revenue by an estimated £1.8m p.a. from 2015/16 onwards. From 1st April 2015 local authorities have only been able to enforce parking restrictions through CCTV in the following areas: school Keep Clear zig-zag markings; bus stops; red routes; and bus lanes. Enforcement of moving traffic contraventions is not affected. The restrictions on CCTV use have had a particularly detrimental impact on authorities' ability to enforce parking restrictions if drivers are present and able to avoid a PCN being issued by driving away. Typically these are drivers waiting for children in the locality of schools, or vehicles parked illegally in commercial areas with the driver nearby. An increase in the number of CCTV-issued parking PCNs in 2017 has resulted from focused action to reduce the number of illegally parked vehicles blocking bus lanes in Harlesden.
- 4.2 To address the parking enforcement gap caused by the 2015 Deregulation Act, additional CEOs were deployed on-street from 1st April 2015, and improvements were made to the efficiency and effectiveness of CEOs during their deployed hours. Since then **parking PCNs issued by Civil Enforcement Officers** have increased by almost 20%, reflecting more effective deployment and higher levels of activity.
- 4.3 **PCNs issued for bus lane contraventions** increased by almost one quarter. This reflects a higher level of enforcement activity during 2016/17, rather than a decrease in compliance by motorists.

4.4 **PCNs issued for moving traffic contraventions** decreased by just over 1,700. This has resulted from significantly improved compliance by motorists with traffic restrictions, following the deployment of 13 new unattended camera systems during 2015/16. These cameras provide consistent and reliable enforcement at key locations where traffic congestion and safety has caused concern in the past. The new cameras have had a major impact on improving motoring standards, reducing traffic congestion and enhancing road safety. After the 13 cameras became operational, the number of PCNs issued for moving traffic offences peaked at 6,985 in May 2016. By March 2017 compliance at most locations had significantly improved; the number of PCNs issued that month had declined to 5,391, an improvement in compliance borough-wide of over 22%, in addition to the improvement achieved in 2015/16. PCN issuance does vary from month to month; nonetheless, at key locations compliance has improved markedly and the number of PCNs issued has correspondingly declined:

- Glacier Way – PCNs reduced from 1,855 (September 2015) to 604 in March 2017
- Chamberlayne Road/Bolton Gardens – PCNs reduced from 1,377 (October 2015) to 164 in March 2017 (an 88% reduction in non-compliance)
- Craven Park Road – PCNs reduced from 1,866 (October 2015) to 553 in March 2017

A further 10 cameras are intended to be deployed in 2017.

4.5 **Complaints** about the service in 2016/17 fell to 146, compared to 164 in 2015/16. In 2016/17 the council received 56% less parking complaints than were received in 2013/14. Generally, Parking services have become more reliable and responsive. In addition, the increased familiarity of residents with the online permit and visitor parking booking system has reduced complaints. The provision of Interactive Voice Recognition technology for the Serco Parking call centre has reduced waiting times and abandoned calls, and thereby reduced both call volumes and complaints about telephone service standards. Finally, all correspondence concerning disputed PCNs and associated debt recovery is being dealt with through the statutory appeals process as required by law.

4.6 **Payment for parking** using mobile phones and tablets continues to show strong growth. In 2016/17, 59% of on-street parking payments were made using the Council's cashless parking provider RingGo. This compares with just 19% in 2012/13. In Brent's car parks, 52% of bookings last year were cashless; compared to 20% in 2013/14.

4.7 Information on the Council's 2016/17 record at the London-wide **independent appeals service**, Environment and Traffic Adjudicators (ETA), is not yet available. This data will be published in September, and will be added to the published Annual Report as soon as it becomes available. The most recent data available is from 2015/16 which showed a 36% decline since 2013/14 in the proportion of PCNs issued which were appealed to ETA. This shows increasing confidence amongst motorists in Brent's enforcement decisions. There was also a 30% reduction from 2013/14 in the proportion of PCNs which were cancelled by ETA, showing an improvement in the reliability of civil enforcement undertaken by Brent.

4.8 **Recovery of Penalty Charge Notice debt:** Of the 188,093 PCNs issued in 2016/2017, 129,433 were paid by 31st March 2017, an overall recovery rate in-year of 69%. Over the first 6 months of 2017/18, the recovery rate of PCNs issued in 2016/17 is expected to eventually rise to at least 71%. The average yield per PCN has remained at £51.50. Both the average value and recovery rate have remained steady throughout the past two years as we continue to make improvements in the quality of the PCNs issued and in the collection of outstanding debt. This performance puts Brent in the top rank of performance nationally, in line with industry benchmarked standards. Strong debt recovery performance is a significant factor in making enforcement an effective deterrent.

- 4.9 The Parking service undertook a **borough-wide consultation** in April 2016, seeking the views of residents, local businesses and schools on a number of proposals to changes in the way the council manages, and charges for, on-street parking within Controlled Parking Zones (CPZs). A series of focus groups, a public meeting and attendance at the Brent Connect Forums were also arranged as part of the consultation. A total of 3,319 responses were received through our engagement with residents that helped shape and deliver changes to parking management.
- 4.10 Working with the local business community to address a series of parking concerns in the Lower Place Industrial Estate, Stonebridge, the council successfully introduced the borough's first ever **business specific CPZ** in November 2016. The scheme provides business permits and a new flexible 'business visitor' permit. The scheme also included comprehensive refurbishment and clearance of abandoned vehicles from the Disraeli Road car park. The car park has subsequently been awarded *ParkMark* accreditation (see below).
- 4.11 The Council operates 12 public car parks across the borough, including the Brent Civic Centre car park which is managed by Bilfinger Europa on behalf of the council. These car parks provide a combined total of 893 spaces. The Metropolitan Police *Park Mark* aims to reduce crime and the fear of crime within parking facilities through the achievement of high standards in lighting, signage, cleanliness and surveillance. Prior to April 2016 just two of our car parks (Elm Road and St John's Road) had secured the **Park Mark Award**. In 2016/17, six more car parks gained accreditation, bringing the number of accredited car parks to eight.
- 4.12 **Vehicle ownership** has continued to decline in areas covered by CPZs, as shown in the table below. Correspondingly, revenue from sales of resident parking permits is declining.

Permits Issued	2014/15	2015/16	2016/17
Resident Permits	34,427	31,132	31,098

5.0 Financial Implications

- 5.1 There are no direct financial implications as the report simply provides a summary of the previous financial year's activity by the Parking service.
- 5.2 The report discusses the activities and finances of parking operations during the last financial year. A summary of the headline figures is set out below.

5.3 Parking Account 2016/2017

	Net Expenditure (£000)
Parking Administration	4,532
On-Street Parking	-4,017
Off-Street Car Parks	-365
Parking Enforcement	-12,526
London Bus Initiative	323
Parking Control Account Projects	329
Total	-11,724

5.4 Application of Net Revenue

Transfer (£,000)	
Concessionary Fares	11,724
Surplus	Nil

5.5 Overall the Parking service fully met the expectations set out in the Council's agreed budget for 2016/17. The net revenue on the Parking account increased by almost 16%, from £10.119m in 2015/16 to £11.724m in 2016/17. The service raised £0.406m more revenue than was originally anticipated in budget planning, despite the introduction of revised visitor permit charges being delayed until November 2016. For 2017/18, the service has committed £386k to fund a range of service improvement projects, including the removal of surplus pay and display machines, and the replacement of machines which have a poor record of malfunctions.

5.6 The surplus on the parking account covered 72% of the total expenditure incurred by the Council on Concessionary Fares (£16.284m in 2016/17), up from 48% in 2015/16.

6.0 Legal Implications

6.1 The civil parking enforcement powers of local authorities are set out in the Traffic Management Act 2004. The Secretary of State for Transport has given statutory guidance under section 87 of the Traffic Management Act 2004 to which local authorities must give due regard when exercising their parking management functions.

6.2 Part 6 of the Traffic Management Act 2004 (TMA) provides for the civil enforcement of parking contraventions. The Statutory Guidance from the Department of Transport entitled "The Secretary of State's Statutory Guidance to local authorities for the civil enforcement of parking contraventions", issued in March 2015, pursuant to Part 6 of the TMA, confirms enforcement authorities should produce and publish an annual report about their enforcement activities within 6 months of each financial year-end, and as a minimum, include the financial, statistical and other data as set out in Annex A of the said Statutory Guidance.

6.3 Under section 55 of the Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984 (as amended and hereafter referred to as "the 1984 Act"), parking enforcement authorities must keep account of their income and expenditure in respect of on-street parking places. This ring fenced account is known as the Special Parking Account. The 1984 Act requires that any surplus in income that is generated and appropriated into the Council's General Fund at year end must be applied towards specific purposes as set out under Section 55(4) of the 1984 Act which are related to on and off street parking, transport, environmental improvement and highways matters and they are listed in page 31 in the Appendix to this report.

6.4 As stated in paragraph 1.3 above, on 25 July 2016, the Cabinet delegated the function of approving the Council's Parking Annual Reports from 2016/17 to the Highways Committee.

7.0 Diversity Implications

7.1 None

8.0 Staffing/Accommodation Implications

8.1 None

BACKGROUND PAPERS

Parking Annual Report 2014/15

Parking Annual Report 2015/16

Parking Annual Report 2016/17 (see Appendix)

CONTACT OFFICERS

Anthony Vartanian – Parking Policy Manager

Gavin F. Moore – Head of Parking and Lighting

Chris Whyte – Operational Director, Environmental Services