

TO: THE EXECUTIVE

DATE: 11<sup>th</sup> June 2013

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**RESIDENTS' PARKING SCHEME – PUBLIC CONSULTATION**  
**(Director of Environment, Culture & Communities)**

**1 PURPOSE OF DECISION**

- 1.1 To seek approval to an initial public consultation exercise involving residents and business, in streets surrounding Bracknell town centre, on the principles of a Residents' Parking Scheme.

**2 RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 2.1 That the Executive:
- (i) Notes the information contained within this report; and
  - (ii) Approves the initial public consultation exercise on a Residents' Parking Scheme, including the distribution of the consultation leaflet (Appendix A) to the residential areas outlined (Appendix B).

**3 REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATION**

- 3.1 As the town centre expands through regeneration, the day-to-day needs of residents will become a high priority. The Council must plan for the changes that come with a regenerated town centre, and this includes making sure residents living close to the town centre are protected from increased parking pressures.

**4 ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED**

- 4.1 Not to progress with the initial consultation and feasibility work at this time. However, given the timescales associated town centre regeneration, a later decision to proceed could result in a delay in responding to residents needs.

**5 SUPPORTING INFORMATION**

**Background**

- 5.1 The regeneration of Bracknell town centre is making good progress. When complete, the regenerated town centre should create an additional 2,800 jobs and attract eight million shoppers each year. As the town centre expands, the day-to-day needs of residents will become a high priority and the Council must plan for the changes this will bring. This includes making sure residents living close to the town centre are protected from increased parking pressures.
- 5.2 The Council does not currently operate a Residents' Parking Scheme. Some residential streets near the town are already protected from the effects of parking by town centre shoppers or workers, typically with yellow line parking restrictions, and in

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the future other streets may also need to be protected in this way. However, there are some residential areas surrounding the town centre where residents need to park their vehicles on the road and it is these areas that would benefit most from the protection of a Residents' Parking Scheme.

- 5.3 Last year, reports were received regarding the impact of construction workers parking within residential streets during the Waitrose store construction - an indication that parking pressures are likely to increase from the early stages of regeneration. The Council have already received requests for a Residents' Parking scheme in some roads surrounding the town centre and as demolition and construction work starts, it will become increasingly important to protect residents from these parking pressures.
- 5.4 Early feasibility work needs to explore how a Residents' Parking Scheme could work in Bracknell. Residents' general views on a scheme, alongside information on their local needs and preferences, will be key to achieving the right outcome. Whilst the town centre regeneration plans are driving the need for such a scheme, it is critical that we ensure residents' help to shape the scheme being developed. The fundamental aims of a future Residents' Parking scheme would be to:
- Protect residents from increased parking pressures;
  - Be simple for residents to use; and
  - Be cost effective to operate.
- 5.5 It is considered that the best parking solution for residents is one which would cause little change to their existing parking habits. A modern day Residents' Parking Scheme would allow this by avoiding the need for official marked parking bays, instead only requiring that vehicles display a permit in the streets affected. Vehicles parked in a road where a scheme operates would need to display a permit in their window – with permits being issued for use by residents, their visitors or other legitimate users of the street. Accordingly, vehicles not displaying a permit during the schemes' operating hours could then be issued a parking fine. Standard exemptions would apply to postal deliveries, public services and for general loading/unloading of goods etc.
- 5.6 Initial parking surveys and assessment work has identified the residential areas that could experience increased parking pressure as a result of the regenerated town centre, and which of these would be most suited to a Residents' Parking Scheme. The attached plan ([Appendix B](#)) shows 6 residential areas within which the Council needs to engage with residents on the outline principles of a scheme. Through an initial consultation exercise in these areas, which would include the gathering of information from residents on their current parking patterns, a future plan would be developed.
- 5.7 Not all streets consulted would experience increased parking pressures at the same time and it is likely that, in the early stages, any future scheme would be introduced in phases. Other areas further from the town centre, and beyond those being initially consulted, may need to be considered for inclusion in a scheme later on if necessary to protect residents' needs - subject to further outline consultation. However, the first phase of a Residents' Parking Scheme could be introduced from spring 2014 with the aim of protecting residents from parking pressures associated with the town centre's early construction phases.
- 5.8 The initial consultation exercise would seek information and views from residents and local businesses, such as:

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- Information on current parking patterns and parking needs, within individual roads;
- Views on the principle of introducing a Residents' Parking Scheme; and
- Views on particular aspects of a scheme, such as permit allocation and the periods during which a scheme could operate.

5.9 The public consultation exercise would involve a freepost questionnaire (see Appendix A) delivered to all properties within the areas shown in Appendix B, alongside the opportunity to respond via a dedicated page on the Council's website. Further printed copies of the consultation material would be available from Council Offices. A consultation period of 4 weeks is currently planned beginning 21<sup>st</sup> June, which would conclude prior to the school summer holiday period in order to maximise response rates. A further report on the consultation's findings, and subsequent proposals, would be brought to a future meeting of The Executive and shared with Ward Members.

## **6 ADVICE RECEIVED FROM STATUTORY AND OTHER OFFICERS**

### Borough Solicitor

6.1 The process of consultation contains a number of components:

- (i) that it is undertaken at a time when proposals are still at a formative stage;
- (ii) the proposer must give sufficient reasons for any proposal to permit intelligent consideration of the proposals and intelligent response;
- (iii) adequate time must be given for consideration and response;
- (iv) that the product of the proposals must be conscientiously taken into account in finalising any statutory proposals.

The Council has both the power to consult and to introduce a Residents' Parking Scheme if the consultation process indicates the need and a desire to introduce a scheme.

### Borough Treasurer

6.2 The financial implications will need to be assessed following any proposals for a residents' parking scheme. Depending on any future decision by members regarding permit charges, there may be a significant financial pressure on the council if this scheme was to be introduced without charges.

### Equalities Impact Assessment

6.3 Not applicable at this stage.

### Strategic Risk Management Issues

6.4 None.

### Background Papers

None.

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Contact for further information

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