

An Overview of Hertsmere Borough Council Parking Services

Hertsmere vision and objective for Parking Services

Hertsmere introduced Parking Services in January 1996 in order to reduce the traffic flow and enable local economic regeneration.

In order to mitigate adverse impact arising from traffic congestion on local business and the community Hertsmere devised a parking strategy. The main objectives being to reduce dangerous, illegal and inconsiderate parking, supporting local businesses by introducing charges that on one hand allow shoppers to access shops, but discourages all day parking by commuters/employees, assisting local commuters and businesses by providing business parking permits and at the same time discouraging parking in surrounding residential streets. Furthermore improving conditions, residential areas and controlled parking zones (CPZ). Also assisting off street parking where Council car parks add value for money for its users.

Hertsmere Parking Services have a very successful track record over the past 20 years from managing decriminalisation of parking on double yellow lines to CPZ and local car parks.

With the increasing population growth, housing growth and growth in local businesses this has meant Hertsmere's parking, if it had not been strategically managed, would have created significant issues to both. It is not Hertsmere's intention to generate revenue from Car Parking Services but it is about providing effective and economical services to its users whilst ensuring the safety and convenience of the residents and road users.

Hertsmere is conscious that if there is a lack of parking it will have an impact on local businesses as the local community will favour out of town shopping centres (e.g. The Harlequin Shopping Centre and Brent Cross).

Hertsmere is committed to finding a balance between all the conflicting demands for space that is seen to be fair and equitable by all sections of the community.

Background

Initially two of the boroughs settlements, Borehamwood and Radlett were subject to CPZ, as well as off-street pay and display in a total of four car parks. A team of 2 parking attendants were employed to carry out enforcement with a supervisor and a back office administrator.

In October 1998, CPZs were also introduced into Potters Bar town centres and pay and display in 6 car parks which resulted in an increase to a total of 5 parking attendants.

On 30th January 2006, Hertsmere Borough Council (HBC) took over responsibility from the Constabulary for the enforcement of all parking restrictions in the borough. The Council's Civil Enforcement Officers (CEOs) enforce all yellow lines and other waiting restrictions throughout the borough, as well as the council owned car parks.

HBC now has 467 roads with parking enforcement, 13 car parks with a total of 1,652 on and off street parking bays. For this the Council employs 10 CEO's plus 2 supervisors and has a back office admin team of 6 including a team leader.

Parking Services is responsible for the introduction of traffic schemes for controlled parking zones (CPZs), loading bays, pay and display bays and other minor parking matters. The council also undertakes the enforcement of parking on behalf of Hertfordshire County Council under a Highways Agency Agreement.

HBC ultimate goal would be 100% controlled parking compliance without issuing penalty notices.

CEO as an Ambassador

Since the role of a parking assistant/civil enforcement officer was introduced in January 1996, Hertsmere has had an expectation that the role is to be part of the community, to provide information and understanding, to help discourage illegal parking. They are expected to report defects, inspect parking equipment and be a point of contact for the public.

With the introduction of the Traffic Management Act 2004 this was a key area that was highlighted to local authorities to ensure that their CEO's were trained to understand that their role was not just about issuing Penalty Charge Notices (PCN), so as to provide an all-round service to the public.

Income Generation

Over the last three years HBC has seen between an 8 to 9% increase in income across the parking service. Of this 66% is generated from on and off street pay and display income, 20% from parking permits and just 14% from the issue of PCNs.

As previously stated HBC sees a reduction in PCN income as an indication of successful parking enforcement. This change can be seen in a reduction in PCN since 2011 when PCN income equated to nearly 24% of total parking income.

Reinvestment in the Future

Guidance suggests that Decriminalised (CPE) parking should be self-financing as soon as practicable and any surplus income must be used specifically for local transport related purposes.

HBC has been successful in increasing parking income over the last few years and has used these funds to not only future proof our service but also help sustain other services.

- HBC have entered in to a £1M refurbishment programme for all its council owned car parks. This has included the provision of electric cabling to enable the introduction of electric car charging points in the Borough. The 1st of these points are to be installed this month at the Civic Office car park and if successful will be extended to other areas.
- Hertsmere is always looking at ways to improve our parking service make paying for parking as and assessable for our residents. We have facilitated this by the Introduction of Pay by Phone in May 2013 which now accounts for 26% of all

machine income. We are also looking at the introduction of credit card or contactless payment machines and virtual permits.

- Parking Services now provides funding of £128K annually for the Council's Police Community Support Officers (PCSO). PCSOs have powers to deal with certain minor traffic offences and the council is working with Hertfordshire Constabulary to identify how PCSOs can best utilise their powers in dealing with certain traffic and parking issues.
- Parking Services contributes £105K towards the Council's CCTV service thereby providing a safer street environment for the residents of Hertsmere.
- A grant of £20K is also made to Hertsmere Community Transport who provide an affordable door-to-door transport for people with mobility problems; thereby promoting better access to healthcare, greater community participation and increased social inclusion.

Summary

In summary, with Hertsmere Parking Services successful trajectory of service delivery we believe working in partnership with Three Rivers District Council (TRDC) will definitely deliver benefit to TRDC's residents, commuters and local businesses. It will also afford Hertsmere Parking Services the opportunity to learn from the experiences of TRDC.

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