

## **Review of Care / Support Workers Parking Exemption Scheme**

Report of the Chief Officer for Highways, Infrastructure Development and Waste

***Please note that the following recommendations are subject to consideration and determination by the Cabinet (and confirmation under the provisions of the Council's Constitution) before taking effect.***

### **Recommendations: that the Cabinet**

- (a) approves the revised Care Workers Parking Exemption Scheme described in Section 3, with the inclusion of an extended exemption;**
- (b) agrees to a new Traffic Regulation Order being advertised in order to implement the revised Care Workers Parking Exemption Scheme, and that authority to resolve any objections be delegated to Chief Officer in liaison with the Cabinet Member for Highway Management, and the Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care & Health Services.**

### **1. Summary**

This report is regarding a proposal to extend the Care Workers Parking Exemption Scheme, and, the management of permits.

Following the meeting of the South Hams Highways and Traffic Orders Committee (HATOC) on 6 July, it was identified that the current arrangements for Care Workers provided limited assistance in some communities, notably Kingsbridge and Dartmouth, the HATOC Committee resolved to ask Cabinet to review the County position on this exemption.

See extract from minutes in Appendix I.

### **2. Background & Consultation**

The current parking exemption scheme allows care workers, social care staff and health staff who use on-street parking while delivering essential services to residents in their own homes to use a special permit allowing them to park on-street without time limit (or requirement to pay) in areas of limited waiting, residents parking, and pay & display.

These exemptions apply to social care staff, care workers, personal assistants for disabled people, Devon Carers' staff and health staff, when delivering essential support to people in their homes. The exemption was extended to include areas of pay & display and promoted (on our webpages and elsewhere) in 2015.

Since relaunch in 2015, comments have highlighted issues in some communities where parking remained an issue. At the meeting of the South Hams HATOC on 6 July 2018, it was identified that the current arrangements for Care Workers provided limited assistance in some communities, notably Kingsbridge and Dartmouth. The Committee resolved to ask Cabinet to review the County position on this exemption.

A consultation as detailed in Section 4 was carried out to identify if there are specific locations or communities where the existing exemptions do not assist staff, and whether there was a demand for an extension to the scheme.

### **3. Proposal**

It is proposed to extend care / support workers exemptions to assist in areas of highest demand by allowing access to yellow line (no waiting) restrictions when there is no parking available in other areas (such as limited waiting, residents parking, and pay & display bays). It is proposed that up to 1-hour parking will be permitted on a yellow line restriction (so long as there is no restriction on “loading”) when undertaking a visit to a client.

The proposal will require a formal application and provision of an official permit. Permits will be issued for 12 months.

The permit will consist of 2 parts, a permit (including security features), and a timeclock similar to those found on blue badges.

### **4. Consultations/Representations**

A consultation exercise was undertaken via the care commissioning team with an online questionnaire published on 11 October and running until 12 November <https://inside.devon.gov.uk/news/how-is-the-current-parking-exemption-scheme-working-for-you-and-your-teams/>

There were 150 responses to that questionnaire and based upon those responses (See Appendix III) it is clear that an extension to the scheme is welcomed. The key points are summarised below:

- 71% of respondents knew of the existing scheme; 80% felt this was helpful.
- In general, it was felt that exemptions assisted in managing stress, and improving staff retention.
- 89% of respondents agreed that an extension to the scheme (to include single and double yellow lines) would be helpful, it was noted that there were issues in accessing clients in many of our communities, including: Totnes, Dartmouth, Lympstone, Exmouth, Exeter, Barnstaple, Ottery St Mary, Honiton, Salcombe, Teignmouth, Newton Abbot, Bideford, Braunton, Woolacombe, Morteohoe, Kingsbridge and Ilfracombe.
- The majority of respondents felt that a managed scheme would be beneficial to both client confidentiality (57%) and staff security / lone working (63%). And any new scheme would be best managed by issuing a permit to a specific worker / vehicle (65%).
- There were general concerns in relation to any charge, with only 31% stating this was acceptable, 19% believing this to be unacceptable, and 50% being unsure. Comments reflect concerns over staff having to pay and / or burden being passed onto already stretched care budgets.

Further consultation will take place as part of the formal Traffic Regulation Order.

### **5. Financial Considerations**

There would be a cost to the Council in advertising a new Traffic Order for the revised exemption scheme, this is likely to be shared with work to relaunch the Parking Dispensations Scheme, this will be met from the On-street Parking Account.

The Parking Enforcement Service currently meets the costs of managing the existing exemption scheme. If a fully managed service were to be introduced, including a physical permit, there would be costs associated with enforcement, administration, printing and postage.

The financial pressure experienced by frontline care services is recognised and has been considered in proposals on the setting of charges. Within Devon the closest comparable charge is for the Annual Contractors Dispensation Permit, £45, this has a similar level of verification at application, interaction with enforcement officers, and similar physical design. Benchmarking neighbouring Authorities (See Appendix II) it is noted that the similar permits range in price from £15 to £60. However, recognising the existing pressures on care services it is proposed to provide the permit without charge.

There are less than 7000 care workers and not all will require this permit. It is considered that the overall benefits to the County Council if no charge were levied include,

- enhancing staff welfare by reducing stress and showing care workers that we are on their side; trying to make their lives easier
- enhancing service delivery making visits easier and more efficient by making car parking easier
- enhancing client experience by making appointment times easier to keep, and minimal time is spent trying to park
- reducing costs to the Authority in handling claims when pay & display is used (for example, in off street carparks)

It is therefore proposed that no charge is levied, and that the costs are met by the On Street Parking Account.

## **6. Sustainability Considerations**

The scheme is sustainable when considering the overall costs and savings to the Authority.

## **7. Carbon Impact Considerations**

The Exemption Scheme contributes to the effective management of traffic and should therefore have a positive impact on reducing carbon.

## **8. Equality Considerations**

The effective management of care / support worker vehicles should enable improved accessibility which in turn will have a positive impact on equality and quality of life for those requiring support.

## **9. Legal Considerations**

A revised Exemption Scheme will require a new Traffic Regulation Order, which will need to be advertised and any objections considered. It is proposed that authority to resolve any objection be delegated to Chief Officer in liaison with the Cabinet Member for Highway Management, and the Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care & Health Services.

It would be proposed to include changes to the Care / Support Workers Exemption with the Traffic Order promoting planned changes to the Contractors Parking Dispensation Scheme.

## **10. Risk Management Considerations**

This proposal has been assessed and the necessary action has been taken to safeguard the Council.

There is a reputational risk to not addressing the issues raised by care / support workers.

## **11. Public Health Impact**

There is a positive public health impact, allowing care / support workers to have improved access to clients in their own homes and assisting in continued independent living.

## **12. Options/Alternatives**

### ***Option 1: Do Minimum – Maintain existing exemption scheme as is***

The existing parking exemption scheme is maintained allowing care workers, social care staff, and health staff who use on-street parking while delivering essential services to residents in their own homes to use a special permit allowing them to park on-street without time limit (or requirement to pay) in areas of limited waiting, residents parking, and pay & display. However, issues with access to parking facilities in key communities would remain.

### ***Option 2: Maintain existing exemption scheme, and add an additional tier to include single and double yellow lines (where there are no other loading restrictions), along with a centrally managed permit database***

The existing parking exemption scheme is maintained allowing care workers, social care staff and health staff who use on-street parking while delivering essential services to residents in their own homes to use a special permit allowing them to park on-street without time limit (or requirement to pay) in areas of limited waiting, residents parking, and pay & display and along with an additional managed permit which would provide an extended exemption to allow greater parking opportunities in key communities. However, having a 2-tier scheme may cause confusion for users who may assume that the extend scheme is of the same design as the original. This could mean that penalty charge notices are issued, and the appeals process would need to establish where they should be cancelled, increasing overall administrative costs.

### ***Option 3: Extend the exemption scheme to include single and double yellow lines (where there are no other loading restrictions), along with a centrally managed permit database.***

This is the recommended proposal.

## **13. Reason for Recommendation/Conclusion**

It is recommended that we extend the exemption scheme to include single and double yellow lines (where there are no other loading restrictions), along with a centrally managed permit database (Option 3).

It is considered that this proposal will permit the flexibility that care / support workers require, provide a sustainable and cost-effective solution for the Authority.

To avoid any abuse, officers will determine suitable measures to be taken to determine the authenticity of any applicants.

The recommendation to develop the service is made based upon feedback from users to provide improved access to parking for care / support workers. It would also support the Parking Enforcement Service in the delivery of statutory parking enforcement duties, enabling efficient 'one stop' enforcement and ensuring the exemption is used by those undertaking appropriate activities.

It is therefore recommended that this proposal be advertised as part of a new Traffic Regulation Order

In addition to the required Traffic Regulation Order advertising process, officers will proactively engage with care / support workers that are likely to use the service. This will involve providing clear information on County web pages, and newsletters.

Meg Booth  
Chief Officer for Highways, Infrastructure Development and Waste

**Electoral Divisions: All**

Cabinet Member for Highway Management: Councillor Stuart Hughes

Local Government Act 1972: List of Background Papers

Contact for enquiries: Chris Rook

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Background Paper	Date	File Reference
Nil		

cr261118cab Review of Care Support Workers Parking Exemption Scheme  
hk 04 291118

Extract from South Hams Highways and Traffic Regulation Orders Committee Minutes,  
6 July 2018

<https://democracy.devon.gov.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=164&MId=2914&Ver=4>

**Minute\*43 (a) Exemptions for Carers**

Councillor Brazil reported that this was an issue in towns such as Kingsbridge and Dartmouth, particularly with increasingly more care being delivered within the local community and health & social care professionals having nowhere suitable to park near to client's homes, exacerbated in the holiday season. Members considered it was an appropriate time to review the County Council's approach to support this crucial service.

The Chief Officer for Highways, Infrastructure Development and Waste advised that the County Council had been promoting the exemptions for carers visiting clients at the home address for several years, and most recently had extended provision to include areas of Pay & Display. The scheme had been well received with positive feedback from monitoring after relaunching. None the less, in several communities there had been continued concerns regarding access to parking. This typically resulted in limited residents parking restrictions meaning less opportunity to utilise the exemption and greater competing demand for parking from other users (i.e. visitors, commuters, and shoppers). It had been requested that Officers look to extend provision to allow access to single and double yellow lines where there were not these competing demands.

Officers were initially undertaking benchmarking work to understand what was being done in other Authorities to address this issue. Following benchmarking, it was proposed that an extended scheme to meet the needs of care providers be considered. As this was a countywide matter this should be considered by Cabinet.

RESOLVED that Cabinet be asked to note that the South Hams HATOC supports a review of exemption parking permits for carers with a countywide approach and asks that Cabinet consider this with a view to it being carried out as soon as possible.

**Appendix II  
To HIW/18/93**

Benchmarking with other Authorities

Authority	Scheme Offered	Exempted Restrictions	Cost	Link
Torbay	Yes	DYL / SYL (except where "no loading" applies)	£15	<a href="https://www.torbay.gov.uk/roads/parking/parking-permits/heb/">https://www.torbay.gov.uk/roads/parking/parking-permits/heb/</a>
Plymouth	No	N/A	n/a	n/a
Cornwall	No	N/A	n/a	n/a
Dorset	No	N/A	n/a	n/a
Somerset	Yes	Resident permit areas (2 hours max)	£10	<a href="http://www.somerset.gov.uk/roads-parking-and-transport/parking/care-worker-parking-permits/">http://www.somerset.gov.uk/roads-parking-and-transport/parking/care-worker-parking-permits/</a>
BathNES	Yes	On street in any parking zone	£60	<a href="http://www.bathnes.gov.uk/services/parking-and-travel/parking-permits/medical-permit">http://www.bathnes.gov.uk/services/parking-and-travel/parking-permits/medical-permit</a>
Gloucestershire	Yes	Any permit parking scheme	Free	<a href="https://www.gloucestershire.gov.uk/roads-parking-and-rights-of-way/parking/parking-permits-and-zone-maps/">https://www.gloucestershire.gov.uk/roads-parking-and-rights-of-way/parking/parking-permits-and-zone-maps/</a>
Bristol	Yes	Any permit parking scheme	Free	<a href="https://www.bristol.gov.uk/parking/medical-and-social-care">https://www.bristol.gov.uk/parking/medical-and-social-care</a>

Consultation Responses

How is Devon CC's Care/Support Workers exemption for parking scheme working for you?

150  
Responses

14:53  
Average time to complete

Closed  
Status

1. Are you aware of the current exemptions available to community-based staff to support clients in their own homes?

● Yes	107
● No	43



2. How many care / support workers benefit from the scheme? i) If you are a care / support worker, do you utilise the exemption? OR ii) If you are a manager, or employer, of care / support workers, how many people do you have in your team? How many utilise the exemption?

150  
Responses

Latest responses  
"I do use it"

"As a health visitor I utilise the exemption when visiting my clients at h..."  
"Yes I am a Health Visitor and use the exemption to visit clients in their..."

3. Do you feel that the exemptions assist in service delivery?

● Yes	120
● No	9
● Not sure	21



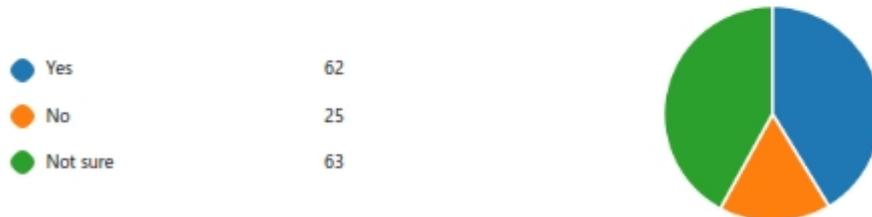
4. Do you feel that the exemptions assist in managing stress and stress related absence?



5. Do you feel that the exemptions assist in staff retention?



6. Are there other benefits of the current exemptions to your staff, clients and patients?



7. Are there specific locations / communities where the existing exemptions do not benefit you / your staff? For example, if there is still insufficient parking opportunities in areas of limited waiting, residents parking, or, pay & display.

150  
Responses

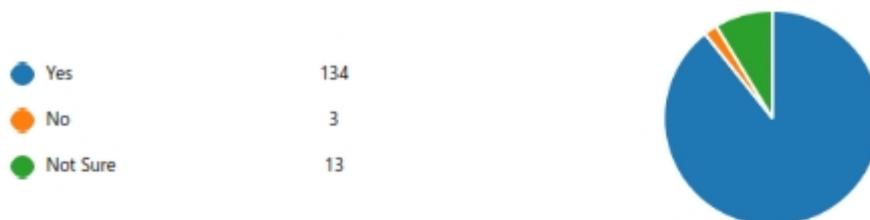
Latest responses

*"Residents only"*

*"If roads are full then I have to go to a pay and display and pay for par..."*

*"There are a lot of private car parks in Exeter in which the exemption d..."*

8. There is a proposal to review care / support workers exemptions with consideration to extending the scheme to assist in areas of highest demand by allowing access to yellow line restrictions when there is no parking available in other areas (such as limited waiting, residents parking, and pay & display bays). The proposal is likely to require a formal application and provision of a official permit. If this proposal is progressed. Would this proposed extension assist you / your staff?



9. How should permits be issued to most benefit care / support workers?



10. In order to ensure that any new scheme is sustainable it is likely that a charge would be needed to meet costs relating to administration and provision of permits. Similar schemes in nearby Authorities have charges in the range of £15 (Torbay Council) to £60 (Bath and North East Somerset) Do you believe that the benefit of additional flexibility for parking for you / your staff would exceed any likely permit cost?



11. Who would you anticipate would meet any cost relating to permit?



12. With a managed permit system, holder details would be retained on a central database removing the requirement to identify the employer / service provider, or staff members contact details in the car window Would this system assist with client confidentiality?



13. Would this system assist with staff security / lone working?



14. Please could you identify your service / organisation / employer

150  
Responses

Latest responses  
 "reablement team"  
 "Virgin Care - however from April 2018 this will be devon county council"  
 "Virgincare"

15. Do you have any other comments regarding proposal to extend the care / support workers exemption scheme?

150

Responses

Latest responses

"No"

*"As long as the worker is not out of pocket for doing their job. Some m...*

*"The more support we get the better as trying to park before a visit can...*