

## ANNEXE 12

### **PARKING QUESTIONNAIRE – ADVICE FROM GORDON BELL**

**This note outlines how we could involve the wider community in Teddington in determining whether and how changes could be made to overcome parking problems.**

The Council will be investigating similar problems in other areas of the borough, and a coordinated approach would be desirable for all concerned. Teddington is the only new area at present, however, where the community has been involved in considering parking problems and developing a solution.

The Council has, of course, been involved in consultation exercises in other parts of the borough. This experience has been used to put together the following proposals.

There are a number of principles, which it is worth setting out at the outset.

- Consultation should take place over the area where parking problems exist, but not in fringe areas which currently do not suffer undue problems. Our experience, backed up by others in other boroughs, is that if these roads are included in the consultation, there is a significant likelihood of a backlash with petitions against any form of zone, with the danger of derailment of proposals for areas where there is a strong demand for change. It has sometimes been the practice to target a question to those in fringe areas such as "If you have voted 'No' to the introduction of parking controls, would you change your mind if controls were introduced in roads next to you". This can be seen as 'blackmail' by some recipients, and might be best avoided.
- All residents and other occupiers of premises should be consulted and offered the opportunity to comment. Consideration needs to be given to who is asked to respond. Traditionally, parking questionnaires have been aimed at 'households' or 'businesses', and this has not generally caused undue problems. However, some residents say that each adult resident should have a vote. This is a complex issue, which could be debated by the Working Group.
- Residents and others in any fringe area which might suffer displaced parking, should receive a short letter explaining that a consultation exercise is taking place, and that any comments are welcomed.
- People can be put off by use of the term controlled parking zone or the initials 'CPZ', even though the implementation of a zone is the only means of giving priority to certain types of motorist, eg resident, businesses. Consideration could be given to designing a questionnaire using alternative wording or at least headed in a different way.
- When it comes to analysis, the traditional approach has been to count only those responding to questionnaires and to accept a simple majority as a mandate to proceed (see separate comments on procedures below). In other words, if 6 vote in favour, 4 against and 8 do not respond, this is taken overall as a vote in favour (just like the election process). Some object to this and say an actual majority is required of all those consulted. The decision making process should be made clear to those receiving questionnaires.

- Questionnaires can achieve varying response rates. One authority has adopted a minimum response rate of 30% in order to validate a questionnaire, and this would be a response rate for the whole area. A similar approach could be used in this borough. Low returns for an area or individual street could be increased by reminders/chasers.
- It is desirable to adopt an 'area' approach to a parking scheme. Thus, if residents in four out of a group of five roads vote in favour of a scheme, and the fifth votes marginally against, then introducing parking controls in all five roads has some sense. This is ultimately a committee decision. [Having said that, there are locations where streets or parts of streets remain outside a controlled area. Normally where this has happened, the zone has soon extended (on demand) to include these areas.] Scheme boundaries will ideally be natural ones - railways, rivers, parks, etc - but otherwise should be at or near road junctions.
- **Procedures.** Following the questionnaire, a report is made to the Council's Transport Consultative Group, and the Cabinet Member for Traffic, Transport and Parking then decides on the way forward.

There are two procedural ways to introduce parking controls.

- Introduce under experimental powers. This has the following advantages:-
  - quicker
  - allows changes to be made without any red tape. [NB. There are some limits. Additional parking spaces cannot be introduced under these procedures.]
  - effectively allows for a six-month consultation period, whereby people can make formal representations, which must then be formally considered.
  - does not give the impression that any scheme introduced is a fait accompli, which cannot or will not be changed.

Introducing parking schemes under experimental powers has become more widespread in recent years, and seems to be an appropriate procedure. There should be some element of uncertainty/experiment under these procedures.

- Introduce under permanent powers. This procedure is appropriate where there is more certainty about the future of a proposed scheme. It has the advantage that all representations must be made during a short period following advertisement, and thus perhaps concentrating the mind during this period.

It is also probably the most appropriate method where considerable costs are involved in implementation, particularly, for example, where large numbers of ticket machines are required, or where considerable set-up costs are required to administer a scheme - this might be the case for the first controlled parking scheme in a borough. The full range of pros and cons can be considered before this expenditure is incurred.

## **CONSULTATION LEAFLET OUTLINE**

Explain background

- concerns of residents and petitions
- involvement of working group

Outline Purpose of Controls:-

- provide priority for residents
- provide for visitors to residents and businesses
- remove commuter parking from those areas where it causes problems
- ensure parking does not occur on corners making access difficult
- ensure there is space for loading/ unloading where this is needed

Outline Options for Times/Days of Control

- all day controls where this is needed to ensure spaces are always available for short-term parking to support businesses, or to ensure that vehicles do not park just outside an 'all-day' zone in a 'limited-time' zone to the detriment of residents.
- part-day controls where these would provide an adequate measure to resolve current problems.
- must include as an option - "No Change"

NB. It is desirable to have a limited number of types of control/ variations on hours of control across the borough. This aids enforcement and understanding by motorists, residents and others.

Outline Scheme Features

(for details, see, for example, the Mortlake leaflet)

Outline the Options for Visitor Parking

- meters or ticket machines
- parking vouchers
- free parking (subject to approval of method)

Outline the area being consulted - include an outline map

Outline Financial Considerations and Probable Charges

#### Outline Miscellaneous Matters:-

- disabled person's parking
- loading/unloading
- motor-cycle parking
- parking for workmen/trades people
- skips
- dispensations
- suspending parking places

Outline 'review' proposals

#### **Questionnaire**

Design to be based on above considerations. Needs to be kept simple to encourage a response.

To be returned by FREEPOST

#### **Exhibition**

An exhibition is possible but may not be needed

#### **Scheme Design**

It is possible to consult on either the principle of a parking scheme or a detailed layout. This would need to be discussed.