

Annex 2 – Van and Trailer Permit Scheme - Paperless System Update

A system to apply for, renew and issue permits was developed by the Council's ICT Services Team which are printed out and posted to customers.

The permitting scheme was formally reviewed by the Council's Waste Management Team in 2011 and the recommendations from the review were approved under Delegated Decisions by the Cabinet Member for Growth and Infrastructure on 31st August 2011.

One recommendation was to introduce a paperless system for administering the scheme by issuing permits electronically via emails sent to the customer. Anyone who applied online would no longer be sent a physical paper permit but could print it out themselves if they so choose.

A paper permit can still be provided for customers without internet access or email although the permit format will change so visits aren't marked off. Site operatives will be able to notify the customer of the number of visits remaining on their permit from the electronic record.

The intention is that the system should be developed in house by ICT Deployment Team, and specified and tested by the Waste Management Team.

The record of visits would be maintained by the site staff recording visits as they currently are with the Blackberry devices. The computer record would become the 'official' record.

On each anniversary of the issue date of the application, the system will automatically reset the visit limit for a user to twelve. This alleviates the need for a separate renewal process. On the second consecutive automatic renewal, where no visits have been used, the permit will automatically expire.

The expected business and customer benefits are:

- to reduce the time and cost of issuing and posting paper permits – there is a reduced admin resource needed to manage this process
- to respond to customer preference - only 8% of customers now apply for the permits using paper applications
- to reduce discrepancies and disputes arising from having two records of visits made – one on customer's paper permit and another on the electronic system
- to improve customer service by providing customers the opportunity to check their balance of remaining visits online or by email
- to improve customer service by enabling the database to update customers by email with their usage and current balance (optional)
- to improve customer service by removing the potential for permits to become lost (because the database holds up to date details of the permit number and balance of visits remaining)

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Consideration will be given as to the possibility of incorporating technologies such as Automatic Number Plate Recognition (ANPR) and Quick Response (QR) codes.

Further consideration will be required with regard to the possibility of extending system use to cater for Schedule ii permits as a variant or 'bolt-on'. Although there are some similarities with the main Van and Trailer Permit system, there are also significant differences which make it difficult to apply certain rules. For example a single organisation may use multiple vehicles, be located in a commercial address, or be operating a commercial business within a non-commercial building (e.g. a café within a church).

The aim is to implement a paperless system within six months of the date of the report.

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