

Divisions Affected – All in West Oxfordshire

CABINET

15 March 2022

Civil Parking Enforcement within West Oxfordshire Report by Corporate Director Environment and Place

RECOMMENDATION

1. The Cabinet is RECOMMENDED to approve notice being given to West Oxfordshire District Council to terminate the s101 Agency Agreement in respect of the management of highway parking enforcement within the district of West Oxfordshire.

Executive Summary

2. Civil Enforcement powers to manage highway parking and bus lanes is now enforced across the whole of Oxfordshire. The County Council is directly managing this service with the exception of West Oxfordshire where a historic agency agreement is in place.
3. It is considered that it is no longer necessary or efficient for West Oxfordshire to operate this service for the county council, and more importantly, potentially creates confusion for the public and other users of the network as to whom is responsible for on-street parking across Oxfordshire.
4. The agency agreement is in perpetuity but has a termination clause of 12 months by either party. The intention would be to serve notice to enable the agreement to terminate on 31st March 2023.

Rationale for ending the arrangement

5. Oxfordshire County Council introduced Civil Parking Enforcement in Cherwell, South and Vale District Council areas on 1 November 2021. The City and West were already operating Civil Parking Enforcement, with the City being managed directly by the County Council, but with West being undertaken by the District Council through a long-standing agency agreement for the provision of services (back office and 'feet on the ground'), dating back to 2009.
6. With the County Council now directly managing civil parking enforcement for all district areas other than within the West Oxfordshire area, Officers are

recommending the ending the West Oxfordshire District Council agency agreement for the following main reasons:

- Clarity and single organisation for members of the public and users of the network to contact about on-street parking within Oxfordshire.
 - Consistency of approach, resilience, and converge in terms of enforcement levels and deployment.
 - A single back-office system serving all areas of the county providing economies of scale and resilience to deal with varying workload demands.
 - Implement intelligent deployment via data driven deployment plans and introduce new technologies to enhance the on-street and back-office service.
 - An additional benefit would be the alignment and operation as a single enforcement service, if the application to enforce moving traffic offences is approved.
7. During the implementation of Civil Parking Enforcement in Cherwell, South and Vale District Council areas, similar agency agreements with Henley, Thame and Abingdon Town Councils were terminated by mutual consent.
 8. West Oxfordshire District Council will continue to manage and operate off-street enforcement via their existing contracts and arrangements, which will include continuing to offer free parking within their existing off-street car parks.
 9. The County Council will need to continue to work with West Oxfordshire District Council and the town and parish councils to ensure that the parking management regimes and enforcement services meet the needs of the local community, that the right restrictions are in the right places, and that access to on-street parking creates the right mix of needs for residents, shoppers and commuters.
 10. Any new parking proposal such as a residential parking permit or on-street pay and display scheme would need to be consulted upon and determined in its own right. Indeed, at the request of the Town Council and local community, there is a scheme within Woodstock being explored with the proposal soon to be consulted on to help address local challenges faced by the town.

Corporate Policies and Priorities

11. The proposal will help support the fair deal alliance priority to 'Invest in an inclusive, integrated and sustainable transport network' by ensuring that the right level of parking management is in place to manage the network in line

with adopted policies and strategies, including in particular the emerging Local Transport and Connectivity Plan.

Financial Implications

12. The operation of parking enforcement in West Oxfordshire currently runs at a loss (for both off and on-street parking management). The annual parking report indicates that the provision of on-street parking enforcement in West Oxfordshire costs the District Council £114k per annum (pre-covid figures).
13. On a purely 'like for like' basis, the operational costs of Civil Parking enforcement in West Oxfordshire would cost the County Council £88k per annum. However, opportunities in the West Oxfordshire area for increased enforcement of restrictions and management of on-street parking through paid-for provision exist. The tables below compare the current West Oxfordshire activity with our own activities and makes some reasonable assumptions based on our own experiences in the Districts on cost and income levels.
14. To implement the proposed pay & display scheme in Woodstock there will need to be an initial capital investment of £120k to £150k which would be funded by unplanned income generation, potential S106 or parish/town funding, or existing capital funding.

TABLE 1 Expenditure per year

| Costs - Item: | West Oxon (Current) | OCC (Direct Comparison) | OCC Predictions |
|---|--------------------------------|--|----------------------------|
| Supplier Costs including Software licensing and support | £9,297 | £8,000 | £8,000 |
| Back office services (including representations, appeals, management etc) | £61,428 | £30,000 | £40,000 |
| Permit Admin costs | | | £4,280 |
| Transport Costs | £930 | £1,000 | £1,000 |
| Contract costs (including enforcement, fleet, clothing etc.) | £172,225 | £208,429 | £208,429 |
| Pay and Display Operating Costs | | | £6,000 |
| GRAND TOTAL | £243,880 | £247,429 | £267,709 |

TABLE 2 Income per year

| Income: Item | West Oxon (Current operations) | OCC (Direct comparison) | OCC (predicted additional income) |
|--|-----------------------------------|-------------------------------|--|
| PCNs | £129,281 | £129,281 | £155,137 |
| Permits (Woodstock only) | | | £28,000 |
| Pay and Display Income (Woodstock only) | | | £298,000 |
| Bay Suspensions | | £30,000 | £30,000 |
| GRAND TOTAL | £129,281 | £159,281 | £511,137 |

TABLE 3 Summary

| | | | |
|------------------------|------------------|-----------------|------------------|
| ANNUAL OPERATING COSTS | £243,880 | £247,429 | £267,709 |
| ANNUAL REVENUE | £129,281 | £159,281 | £511,137 |
| Surplus(+)/Deficit(-) | -£114,599 | -£88,148 | +£243,428 |

15. Key assumptions are increasing Penalty Charge Notices output by 20% due to greater coverage and a more consistent approach to enforcement, and income from the scheme proposed in Woodstock. These assumptions are based on the recent Civil Parking Enforcement business case and existing experience in Oxford, Cherwell, South and Vale. The proposals in Woodstock are currently being consulted upon.
16. It is predicted that the service will be self-funding from income generated in year through enforcement, permit fee income and charges for parking bay suspensions.

Comments checked by: Rob Finlayson, Finance Business Partner
rob.finlayson@oxfordshire.gov.uk

Legal Implications

17. The proposal calls for the termination of the agency agreement with West Oxfordshire District Council. Provision for this is contained in Clause 10 of the agency agreement. Notice will be given in writing with an end date of 31 March 2023. Oxfordshire County Council would then take on management of parking enforcement from 1 April 2023. During the Notice period, Officers will work up a programme of proposals for paid for parking in the West Oxfordshire area.

Comments checked by: Jennifer Crouch, Principal Solicitor (Legal Services)
Jennifer.crouch@oxfordshire.gov.uk

Procurement Implications

18. No procurement exercise is required in respect of resources required to bring back the service into the county council. Management of parking enforcement and the deployment of 'feet on the ground' services were catered for in the recent District Civil Parking Enforcement procurement exercise. It is a contract variation (planned for) and contains sufficient contract value to add in this service.

Comments checked by: Basil Waloff - Category Manager (Procurement)
Basil.Waloff@Oxfordshire.gov.uk

Staff Implications

19. Additional staff resource will be required, expected to be 1FTE at an officer grade level, together with additional contracted Civil Enforcement Officer support. TUPE will be applicable and due process will need to be undertaken with West Oxfordshire District Council. These costs are included in the costs identified.

Equality & Inclusion Implications

20. Implications on Equality and Climate are considered in the CIA Statement. Officers have identified no Equality Implications. The CIA considers the implications on Climate.

Sustainability Implications

21. Sustainability implications are also considered in the Climate Impact Assessment.

Risk Management

22. The key risk identified is around income generation to ensure that the proposal and future management of parking enforcement is cost neutral. This will be mitigated by creating greater efficiency and effectiveness in parking management of the service, estimated at a 20% improvement (based on existing District data), through intelligent data driven deployment plans, deployment of scan-bikes and other technological advances emerging in the industry.
23. There is also the potential to implement on-street parking should this be of benefit to local communities which would also help increase income generation to cover the cost of operating the parking service more broadly.

Consultations

23. No formal consultations are required to end the agency agreement with West Oxfordshire District Council. Where new restrictions are required, or resident permit schemes introduced, these will be subject to formal consultation as part of the normal traffic regulation order process.

BILL COTTON
Corporate Director of Environment and Place

Annex: None

Background papers: None

Other Documents: s101 Agency Agreement (West Parking Enforcement)

Contact Officer:
Paul Fermer, Assistant Director (Operations), paul.fermer@oxfordshire.gov.uk
Keith Stenning, Head of Network Management, keith.stenning@oxfordshire.gov.uk

February 2022