

LINCOLNSHIRE PARKING POLICY



ISSUED

JANAUARY 2012

1. Introduction

This document sets out and explains the County Councils Parking Policy.

The County Council is planning to apply for powers to take over on street parking enforcement from Lincolnshire Police through the introduction of Civil Parking Enforcement (CPE). The Department for Transport requires the County Council to review its Parking Policy as part of the process of preparing for an application for CPE powers. This document is therefore written in the context of preparing for CPE being in place in Lincolnshire, and will be updated accordingly once CPE is in place.

This car parking policy covers the on street parking operations, which are the responsibility of Lincolnshire County Council, and the off street parking operated by the following district councils:

- Boston Borough
- City of Lincoln
- East Lindsey
- South Holland
- South Kesteven
- North Kesteven
- West Lindsey

The County Council objectives for the Policy are:

- To ensure a clear and consistent approach to parking issues throughout the County
- To ease congestion by improving compliance with

Traffic Regulation Orders (TRO's)

- To enhance and support local economies in Lincolnshire, especially the towns and the City Of Lincoln

2. Background

The County Council, as the local transport authority for Lincolnshire, has recently published its third Local Transport Plan (LTP). The LTP is a strategic overview of the Council's transport policies and plans. The third LTP states:

Currently the responsibility for parking in Lincolnshire is divided between the County Council (on-street provision) the seven District Councils (off-street provision and enforcement) and the Police (enforcement of on-street restrictions). However, the County Council intends to seek authorisation from the Department for Transport to take on Civil Parking Enforcement (CPE) powers for most areas of the county during 2011. It was initially proposed to implement a scheme that would have integrated on-street enforcement with that carried out by District Councils in their off-street car parks but it was not possible to reach agreement with all districts. However, consideration continues to be given to finding ways of ensuring the service is as cost effective as possible and this could involve joint working with some district councils. As part of the proposal, a countywide Parking Strategy is being developed for the first time.

3. Land Use Planning

Central Government has stated its commitment to localism in the land use planning process and is revising national planning guidance and legislation to reflect this.

The Localism Bill will confirm this framework along with on-going changes to the National Policy Statements.

In January 2011 central Government revised *Planning Policy Guidance Transport (PPG13)* to stress that parking standards for new development should be determined locally.

The County Councils approach to parking at new developments is a web based resource that can be found at:

www.lincolnshire.gov.uk/developers.

This advice is regularly updated in response to local and national policy changes.

In Lincolnshire, the lead authorities in the land use planning process are the District Councils. The Districts are in the process of compiling their Local Development Frameworks (LDF) by determining their Core Strategies. The emerging Core Strategies will establish a basis for the suite of policies that comprise the LDFs for each area. The City of Lincoln, West Lindsey and North Kesteven Councils have established a Joint Planning Unit to take forward a Core Strategy for their areas in partnership with the County Council.

The County Council's approach to development and parking will be reviewed as necessary in the light of changes to national guidance and the outcomes of the LDF process.

4. Parking On Street

There is a complex relationship between the demand for and the availability of parking. On street parking is controlled in and around town centres principally to ensure that traffic flows as freely as possible and to enhance safety for other road users. On street parking is often time controlled to provide convenient stopping for retailing, loading and other purposes.

The Traffic Management Act 2004 requires local authorities to manage the network and take steps to ensure the free flow of traffic. Parking on street should be managed in the light of this requirement whilst taking account of the needs of local residents and traders.

Enhancing the vitality of Lincolnshire's town centres is an important objective of the County Council. Providing on street parking is necessary to ensure the vitality of local economies.

It is necessary to ensure that on street, short stay parking is effectively managed to prevent spaces being blocked by vehicles parked for longer than the allowed duration.

Motorists will benefit from the availability of short stay on street parking, as the effective CPE enforcement is likely to ensure

adherence to the regulations. This will benefit local businesses by providing the opportunity for a regular throughput of customers.

The County Council will introduce effective enforcement of on street parking in Lincolnshire.

5. Residents Parking

The control of on street parking in town centres can have the effect of displacing parking to residential streets. This reduces the amount of parking available for residents as drivers who do not wish to pay for parking use streets that have unregulated parking.

In some places residents can be caused significant inconvenience by all day parking outside their homes. Residents parking schemes can be an effective means of managing this situation.

The schemes are introduced to improve the opportunity for residents to find a parking space close to where they live.

Existing residents parking schemes are in operation in Lincoln and Louth. The County Council will continue to work with Lincoln City Council with regard to managing the existing residents parking locations in Lincoln. The Scheme in Louth is operated directly by Lincolnshire County Council.

Any new residents parking scheme locations in the County, including any future proposed extension of the existing schemes in Lincoln or Louth, will be considered as part of schemes agreed locally between the

County Council and the relevant district council.

The principles of the local agreement will be:

- The district councils who choose to operate residents parking schemes will provide the local administration for the scheme
- the County Council will manage the parking enforcement and parking regulations.

Any new schemes will have the support of the majority of the residents (majority of those who respond to any consultation process).

The district councils who choose to introduce new schemes will determine locally the financing arrangements for introducing and operating the scheme.

The introduction and operation of new residents parking schemes will be cost neutral to Lincolnshire County Council.

The required enforcement regime will be agreed between the local district council and Lincolnshire County Council.

Any additional enforcement costs incurred as a result of the new resident parking schemes will be included in the local operating costs for the scheme.

Income from Penalty Charge Notices issued in residents parking areas will be used to offset the enforcement costs for Lincolnshire County Council.

With the introduction of CPE it is expected that demand for new residents parking schemes could increase. The County Council will work with district councils to investigate parking problems and introduce solutions should they be appropriate and the necessary funding is available.

The County Council will work with District Councils to introduce schemes where they are appropriate and locally supported.

6. On Street Enforcement Policy

The enforcement of on street parking restrictions under CPE will be the responsibility of the County Council.

It is proposed that the enforcement function is outsourced to an external contractor.

When Penalty Charge Notices (PCNs) are issued, the processing of the notices will be carried out by either a contractor or through agreement with another local authority already operating this service.

It will be a condition of these arrangements that the service supplier must comply with national best practice and their staff will comply with the appropriate Code of Professional Conduct.

The purpose of enforcement is to ensure compliance with the TROs not to raise revenue. The County Council will ensure that any contracts entered into reflect this objective.

Disputed Penalty Charge Notices will, in the first instance be considered by the County Council's PCN Processing Service. Unresolved issues will be passed to Lincolnshire County Council officers for a decision. This process involves considering the supporting evidence from the person disputing the PCN and from the parking enforcement officer from the contractor.

Appeals to a parking adjudication service relating to disputed PCNs will be managed and defended by the Lincolnshire County Council. Income from PCNs will be used to offset the operating costs of CPE.

7. Off Street Parking

Off Street Public Parking in Lincolnshire is provided by both District Councils and private providers. The availability of parking is a key factor in maintaining local economies. In Lincolnshire's urban areas the majority of the available parking is in off street car parks operated by the district councils.

In areas where CPE is introduced, it is required that district council will operate their car parks under CPE regulations.

The District Councils can procure their enforcement and ticket processing services from the County Council's service providers should they chose to do so.

Any disputed PCNs issued in district council off street car parks will be dealt with by the relevant district council.

Under CPE district councils will be able to set parking charges

appropriate to the local area but PCN charges use tariffs that are set nationally.

Car parks provided by private operators are not controlled by the local council and are free to set tariffs at market rates.

Many business premises have private parking on their sites for business vehicles, employees and visitors.

Over recent years sites that generate significant amounts of traffic have been encouraged to develop site specific travel plans to promote other means of travelling to and from their premises.

The County Council will work with its partners the District Councils to ensure that parking provision and transport policy are aligned. Where appropriate the County Council will seek to work with private operators to align their provision to that provided by the District Councils.

8. Park and Ride

Park and Ride (P&R) is an effective means of reducing congestion in cities and towns. Work undertaken during LTP 2 has identified that Lincoln could benefit from P&R. During LTP 3 the County Council will continue to work with its partners to seek to find funding to progress this project. In other towns there is less potential to develop P&R. However, if it is identified that there is an opportunity to develop P&R in other towns these will be examined.

The County Council will continue to examine the feasibility of P&R in the County.

9. Traffic Regulation Orders

Traffic Regulation Orders (TRO) are the legal means by which parking restrictions are introduced. The process of introducing a TRO is strictly controlled. Traffic Regulation Orders (TRO's) are the main means by which the County Council can regulate and control traffic in Lincolnshire.

Many new TRO's come about as a result of input from local communities, or the Police. They are introduced with the purpose of addressing specific traffic management problems or to support local business and cultural activity.

To introduce a TRO the County Council consults with the public, the police, the Local County Councillor, the parish Council and other statutory consultees

The process includes a defined period of time in which people can consider the scheme and raise any objections that they may have. If there are objections the County Council seeks to resolve them. Unresolved objections are reported to the Planning & Regulation Committee which will make the final decision on the implementation of the order.

Recently the high cost of advertising new TROs in local newspapers as part of the public consultation process has been considered. Representations have been made to central government to allow the adverts to be placed only on an internet web site with the objective

of making the adverts more accessible and to reduce costs.

The County Council will continue to explore cost effective ways to advertise Traffic Regulation Orders.

The County Council will respond flexibly to the changes in the vehicle fleet and new technologies and modify its approach to parking provision according.

10. New Technologies

Vehicle technology is changing and will require new forms of infrastructure. The Government has set out a number of incentives to increase the uptake of electric vehicles. It is likely that in the near future there will be a need to supply parking and charging points for electric vehicles. Where these are provided the costs of charging are the responsibility of the vehicle operator. Capital costs of providing the parking space will either be recouped through charges or external income. In the case of spaces within car parks these will be the responsibility of the car park operator.

The development of commercial web based information systems is enabling drivers to be aware of car park locations and real time occupancy information.

This offers the potential to develop local information systems to reduce congestion. The County Council will review these technologies as they develop.

As a result of development there may also be opportunities to develop on street electronic parking signage systems to indicate the availability of spaces.