

ASSEMBLY

15 SEPTEMBER 2010

REPORT OF ACTING CORPORATE DIRECTOR OF CUSTOMER SERVICES

Title: Petition for a change of use of a number of residents parking bays in Salisbury Avenue, Barking	For Decision
<p>Summary:</p> <p>The Council has received a petition containing 276 signatures, requesting changes to the current parking arrangements near a doctor's surgery at Salisbury Avenue, Barking. In accordance with the Council's procedures for petitions, officers consulted with the lead petitioner, Dr S N Gupta, to ascertain further information and it appears that patients with mobility problems are having difficulty accessing the surgery.</p> <p>It has been requested that a number of residents parking bays (approximately seven) near to the surgery be changed to Pay and Display.</p> <p>As lead petitioner, Dr S N Gupta has been invited to the meeting of the Assembly to present the petition.</p> <p>Due to the close proximity of the surgery to Barking town centre it is likely that any pay and display bays would be used by local shoppers or visitors to local restaurants and therefore in addition to the disadvantage to local residents who will be losing parking spaces, there would be no guarantee of any benefit from such bays to patients with mobility difficulties attending the surgery.</p> <p>Within 50 metres of the surgery there are seven disabled parking bays. Drivers displaying a valid disabled badge with a clock can park within the residents' parking bays in the area for approximately 3 hours. In addition they can park on single yellow lines near to the surgery.</p> <p>It appears that the surgery and patients have not been aware of this information and it has been agreed that officers of the Parking Service work with the surgery to ensure of increased publicity of these facts.</p> <p>There are excellent public transport links to the Barking Station area and the surgery is very close thereto. It seems clear that this petition relates to those with mobility problems and although officers do not accept that the request for Pay and Display parking bays will improve conditions, by working with the surgery and their staff it is hoped that drivers with disability badges will have a better understanding of where they can park and that this will alleviate the difficulties being encountered by them.</p> <p>Wards Affected: Abbey</p>	
<p>Implications:</p> <p>Financial: Costs of the recommended option can be contained within existing budgets.</p>	

Legal: In accordance with the Council's procedures for petitions, if the lead petitioner is not satisfied with the way the Council has dealt with their petition, they have the right for the matter to be referred to the appropriate Select Committee as determined by the Designated Scrutiny Officer. Should the Select Committee consider the response to the petition was not adequate, it may be referred back to the Assembly for further debate, the outcome of which will be the final decision on the matter. (The subject matter of this petition would fall within the terms of reference of the Living and Working Select Committee).

Risk Management: No specific implications.

Social Inclusion and Diversity: It does not appear to be widely known that one of the current benefits available to Blue Badge holders is that of being able to park in residential areas of a Controlled Parking Zone near to their doctor's surgery. The recommendations of this report are to assist both the surgery and the patients in understanding these benefits – and the service will consider, following working with the surgery (the subject of this petition), how best to roll this information out to the wider community.

Crime and Disorder: No specific implications.

Options Appraisal:

Two options were considered:

1. Changing the bays from controlled parking zone residents' bays to pay and display time limited bays. This would not necessarily increase parking capacity for patients with mobility issues as it is likely that the bays would be used by visitors to the town centre. Residents' capacity to park would be reduced and there would be additional costs associated with installation of pay and display machines, modification of lines and signs, and changes to the parking orders.
2. Making no changes in the use of bays but
 - (i) increase public awareness – particularly with regard to disabled users of the surgery
 - (ii) work with Dr Gupta and his staff to ensure patients were made aware of the Blue Badge scheme and how to apply if they required help
 - (iii) monitor the parking situation over the coming months.

Option 2 is recommended to the Assembly.

Recommendation(s)

- (i) To reject the application to convert Resident Parking spaces to Pay and Display in Salisbury Avenue near to Barking town centre;
- (ii) To agree that officers of Parking Services work closely with the Doctors' surgery over the coming three months to ensure that the surgery and their patients fully understand parking facilities for those with disabled badges.

Reason(s)		
<p>The provision of Pay and Display bays is unlikely to make a significant increase in parking capacity for drivers with mobility problems as they will be used by shoppers and visitors to restaurants in the area.</p> <p>It appears that drivers with Blue Disabled badges may not be aware of where they are permitted to park close to the surgery – and that parking space may already be available.</p>		
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1. Background

- 1.1 Dr Gupta (the lead petitioner) submitted a petition containing 276 signatures with addresses. Following officer discussions with the lead petitioner, it was clear that the petition was with regard to his patients with disabilities having difficulties gaining access to his surgery because of the lack of parking provision.
- 1.2 It has been requested that seven of the existing residential parking bays be changed into pay and display bays for the use of patients with mobility issues. These bays would be limited to one hour's stay. Due to public transport and car parks, those without mobility difficulties are catered for.
- 1.3 The surgery is situated in Salisbury Avenue, near to Barking Station within the Barking Town Centre controlled parking zone. Residents wishing to park in marked bays have to purchase permits for their vehicles and those of their visitors. The Zone was installed in the early Nineties after consultation with the local community to address parking problems by motorists who used Salisbury Avenue as a convenient place to park when visiting the facilities of the Town Centre. It is very close to Barking Station, Barking's shopping areas, and to many takeaways and restaurants.
- 1.3. On the 6th August 2010 the lead petitioner was visited by an officer from Parking Services who discussed with him the report that would be put to the Assembly. The lead petitioner has also been invited to attend the Assembly meeting to present the petition.

2. Report

- 2.1 The surgery is very close to Barking Town centre in Salisbury Avenue and residents in this area benefit from the Controlled Parking Zone where only vehicles with permits are allowed to park. Within 50 metres of the surgery there are a number of disabled badge parking bays that are regularly used by visitors to the town centre.
- 2.2 It is possible to install a number of Pay and Display bays in the Salisbury Avenue area with an equivalent loss of parking space for residents. It would not be possible to dedicate these for sole use by visitors to the surgery and therefore they would be available for any driver to park and pay.
- 2.3 Drivers with disabled badges are allowed to park within the residential bays for approximately three hours. This means that they can park within the Barking Town centre residential bays adjacent to the surgery without the need to make any changes to the parking restrictions. They can also park on single yellow line restrictions.
- 2.4 From discussions with the lead petitioner, it appears that drivers with disabled badges visiting the surgery may not be aware of these arrangements and by informing patients accordingly the majority of their problems could be resolved.
- 2.5 It is essential that the information given to surgery visitors, and to the public in general, is accurate and appropriate in order to avoid misunderstandings that could lead to the issue of Penalty Charge Notices (parking tickets). Therefore it seems beneficial for officers of Parking Services to work with representatives of the surgery over the coming few months to ensure that an appropriate message is being provided to their patients and to monitor progress.

3 Options appraisal

3.1 Changing the bays from CPZ resident's bays to pay and display time limited bays

It would not necessarily increase parking capacity for patients with mobility issues as it is likely that the bays would be used by visitors to the town centre.

Residents' capacity to park would be reduced

There would be additional costs associated with installation of pay and display machines, modification of lines and signs, and changes to the parking orders.

3.2 Make no changes in the use of bays but increase public awareness – particularly with regard to disabled users of the surgery.

The Council would be keen to work with Dr Gupta and his staff to ensure his patients were made aware of the Blue Badge scheme and how to apply if they required help. The Council would also monitor the parking situation over the coming few months. This option is recommended to the Assembly

4 Customer Impact

- 4.1 The potential removal of residents' bays are likely to cause an adverse reaction from residents. However parking by drivers with disabled badges in residents bays and on certain yellow line restrictions is accepted practice across the Borough. The recommended option is likely to bring benefits to disabled visitors of the surgery without any significant deleterious affect on the local community.

Background Papers Used in the Preparation of the Report:

Petition submitted by Dr Gupta

Consultees:

Councillor Alexander, Cabinet Member for Crime, Justice and Communities

Councillor Vincent, Cabinet Member for Environment

Councillor Butt

Councillor Hussain

Councillor Saeed

Andrew Yellowley, Interim Divisional Director of Environment and Enforcement Services

Ruth Du-Lieu, Waste and Street Scene Strategy Project Leader

Philip Thurgood, Parking Services Manager

Winston Brown, Legal Partner Corporate Law and Employment