

Southend-on-Sea Borough Council

Report of Corporate Director of Enterprise, Tourism and
the Environment

To

Cabinet

On

8th January 2013

Agenda
Item No.

Report prepared by:

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Proposed Policy on Residents Parking Schemes

Executive Councillor: Councillor Cox

1. Purpose of Report

- 1.1 To review the process of instigating the investigations and implementation of Parking Management Schemes (PMSs) across the borough and seek Members' approval to the proposed new policy framework to deal with all future requests. This will enable Members to make better informed decisions which clearly demonstrate significant community support for any proposed new schemes.

2. Recommendation

That Members:

- i) Agree the proposed policy framework contained within this report on the instigation of investigations and implementation of all future Parking Management Schemes (PMSs) which is detailed in the Appendices to the report.
- ii) Agree the proposed consultation response thresholds for new PMS proposals.
- iii) Agree the new process and associated criteria for considering and prioritising requests for PMSs;
- iv) Agree the proposed consultation response threshold for reviewing existing parking management proposals,
- v) Agree that Officers will consider alternative measures to address parking stress before considering PMSs.

3. Background

- 3.1 Many residential areas throughout the borough suffer from parking stress from time to time. This causes a detrimental impact on local residents in these areas, who find they have to compete with commuters and/or shoppers for the limited suitable kerb space for on-street parking. Local businesses are also adversely affected when their customers cannot find parking spaces nearby to their shops/businesses and may choose to shop elsewhere, in shopping locations where parking is more readily available. Consequently, the Council receives regular requests through Members, petitions and directly from residents and businesses to investigate local parking problems and to consider Parking Management Schemes (PMSs) that give priority to local residents and also provides parking for shoppers where it is essential.
- 3.2 The recent introduction of PMSs in 5 areas in the borough, has inevitably resulted in parking pressures in the adjacent nearby areas that do not have parking management measures resulting in more requests for PMS's being received. Recent experience has shown that that PMS's have proved difficult and controversial to implement at times and have generated significant concerns amongst residents. Where there are many who like the scheme, there are also others who equally dislike it. This means that the Members get no clear steer from residents and often The Traffic & Parking Working Party and Cabinet Committee (TPWPCC) are taking decisions where response rates are low but the impact of the scheme is felt widely by all residents in the proposed zone. This in turn has run the risk of setting neighbours against their neighbours.
- 3.3 The Council needs to review its policies and procedures to be explicit that the new policy proposals are designed to provide a clear mandate to elected Members to enable them to progress any parking management scheme proposals. If this is not done the Council will not be in a position to justify proceeding with such proposals. There has been a substantial media interest and focus on recently consulted PMS's which has added to the debate about future PMS's. In order that the Council's limited financial resources are used in the most effective way to deal with these increasing requests, and prioritise the areas where the greatest parking pressure exists, it is clear that there is a need to review the existing approach and develop a new policy framework that makes the most effective use of the limited staffing and financial resources.
- 3.4 As Members are aware, in the past, informal consultations undertaken proposing PMSs have not resulted in a clear mandate, or significant support which resulted in complex discussions at the TPWPCC as well as numerous issues at the formal consultation stage. This has a big impact on resources and has given rise to considerable public concern. This is clearly not an ideal proposition and does not represent effective use of resources as the investigations and consultation process takes up valuable officer time and limited financial resources, and does not give the TPWPCC a clear mandate, when asked to make decisions on potential schemes.
- 3.2 As part of the Council's future approach to PMSs, at its meeting on the 19th June 2012, the Cabinet Committee agreed that Member Workshops be convened to engage all Members in seeking their views on the current processes and the future proposals for a new policy and to report back its

progress. This Workshop was held in July 2012 and was well attended by Members who contributed to the discussions on the way forward. The outcome of the discussions at this workshop is reflected in the proposals contained in report. In brief the key points discussed at the workshop were:

- The consultation process
- The lack of a clear mandate for decision making
- What is an acceptable %age level for responses to provide a clear idea of public support
- The role of Ward Councillors in gauging public support in an area; and
- The Perception of PMSs among residents.

4. Proposals

- 4.1 It was the view of Members at the workshop that the new policy must include significant involvement of local residents and businesses in the consultation process and that we should do all we can to increase their participation at this critical informal consultation stage. It was also the view of the Members that a more strategic approach, underpinned by clear guidelines and procedures is essential in dealing effectively with areas suffering from parking stress and the phenomena of 'parking displacement'. This is reflected in the proposed procedures dealing with all future investigations which are outlined in the Appendices to the report.
- 4.2 Such an approach, if agreed, would reduce the likelihood of rejection of the detailed proposals at a late stage in the process and will hence reduce unnecessary abortive costs. It is also important that there is active engagement by local Ward Councillors to encourage local residents to contribute to the consultation process. This necessitates the requirement for Ward Councillors to gauge a degree of support before seeking any approvals to proceed from the TPWPCC. It needs to be noted that this approach has already been agreed by the TPWPCC at its meeting in September 2011 as part of the review of workload priorities and Members Requests.
- 4.3 It is proposed that at least 40% of local residents that are consulted on PMS proposals in a given consultation catchment area respond to the initial informal consultation, of which at least 70% express support, before a scheme can be progressed to the next stages. Whilst this option has a lower initial threshold of response, it does show that there is reasonably high level of response and high degree of support from those who responded. However, there would still be some 60% of local residents and businesses who have not responded at this stage. This may be seen as "passive" support or lack of awareness of the process, or that they may wish to engage at a later stage once they see the detailed proposals.
- 4.4 When a PMS is successfully implemented, as part of the design process, it is usually reviewed for appropriateness to the area. This review is carried out between 6 months to 1 year of a scheme becoming operational, depending on the availability of funding and/or other competing priorities. This review is carried out in order to ensure that the scheme layout design, (i.e. scheme boundaries, parking bay numbers, locations and types and yellow line

restrictions), and the hours and days of operation of the scheme, meet the initial objectives and take into account any changes in the needs of the local area and community. Such reviews are usually less controversial and are often led by post implementation queries from residents and are generally supported. As such for existing PMS's, it is proposed to lower the threshold to 35%, which provide a mandate for decision making so that essential changes to existing PMSs can be made. The lower requirements in terms of consultation responses are reflective of this need.

- 4.5 A new process and policy criteria for the identification and technical assessment of requests for new PMSs is being proposed that if adopted will provide a clear framework for Officers to follow when assessing whether to progress these requests to the initial informal consultation stage. This is detailed in the Appendices in this report. The need for ward Councillors to assist in establishing strong initial support is part of the proposed criterion for investigations.
- 4.6 The report was considered by members of the Economic & Environmental Scrutiny Ctte at their meeting on 29th November as part of pre cabinet scrutiny. Members were supportive of the proposals in the report and were pleased to see a more strategic view being taken as they were concerned about the potential piecemeal development of proposals without this wider overview. Members were concerned about the impact of parking displacement that often resulted when schemes were implemented – they wanted and were given reassurance that this issue would be considered as part of the assessment of any future schemes.
- 4.7 Members were also keen to see that where a scheme had the potential to overlap ward boundaries that members in each of the affected wards would be actively consulted. Members identified some issues with previous consultation exercises and requested that all future consultations used clearly marked envelopes so that residents new that the content of the letter was something that needed their consideration.
- 4.8 Whilst members of the Committee were supportive of the proposed consultation thresholds they did request that flexibility be exercised where the outcome of the consultation missed the 70% support threshold by 1% or 2% - this flexibility was accepted.
- 4.9 Members of the Committee resolved 'that the proposals in the report be endorsed for submission to Cabinet for consideration at its meeting on 8th January 2013'.
- 4.10 Opposition portfolio leads have also been briefed on the content of the report

5. Conclusions

- 5.1 Using the adopted criteria, if there is an area with no clear majority of those living in the area in favour of enhanced parking restrictions, then proposals for a PMS will not proceed further. This will help ensure that the Council's staffing and financial resources are used more effectively and will also mean that any scheme that is progressed will enjoy significant support from the residents,

based on priority criterion. This will enable smooth and successful progression of schemes through all stages resulting in outcomes that meet the needs of the local community whilst ensuring greater community engagement.

6. Other Options

- 6.1 Members could consider and agree any other level of response and degree of support than that presented in this report.
- 6.2 To 'Do nothing' and maintain the status quo is not a realistic option due to the difficulties experienced through the past implementation of PMSs as this will continue to provide an unclear mandate for decision making. Hence, decisions will be more difficult to make and will continue to result in much more intense post implementation queries and dissatisfaction. This situation is also costly and does not represent value for money.

7. Reasons for Recommendations

- 7.1 To help ensure that only viable schemes are investigated for further action and to ensure that the Council's resources are used effectively and that any scheme that is taken forward is supported by residents.

8. Corporate Implications

8.1 Contribution to Council's Vision & Corporate Priorities

- 8.1.1 Areas that are considered dangerous by local people due to excessive on-street parking that can be verified by adopting the new assessment criteria and are likely to achieve successful outcomes to informal PMS consultations and lead to scheme implementation. The improvements in road user sightlines and reduced vehicular conflicts in these areas will lead to a safer local environment. There is also likely to be improvements in the general environment of these areas, e.g. improvements in air quality and traffic noise.

8.2 Financial Implications

- 8.2.1 There is likely to be more efficient and effective use of limited existing budgets for any resulting works. Any income generated by permit sales in PMS areas will offset against scheme costs. If the scheme does not progress following the outcome of the informal consultation, the design and others cost incurred will fall to the revenue account and cannot be capitalised. This places additional pressure on limited revenue budgets.
- 8.2.2 The currently approved three year funding for PMSs is concluding at the end of this fiscal year (2012/13) and there is no current future provision for continuation of this programme of work. Members may consider use of the income generated from the permits and enforcement of such schemes to fund future schemes. However, it needs to be noted that such income generally will not be sufficient to meet the costs due to parking charges and take up on permits. Officers will continue to explore other sources of funding to meet these needs through integration of traffic management and parking schemes to use LTP capital funding where possible.

8.3 *Legal Implications*

8.3.1 Any schemes receiving support to informal consultation as a result of these new procedures being adopted will also be subject to statutory consultation as part of the Traffic Regulation Order (TRO) procedures. Any valid objections that cannot be overcome through negotiation and/or scheme redesign will be reported to the Councils Traffic and Parking Working Party and Cabinet Committee for their consideration and final decision.

8.4 *People Implications*

8.4.1 For schemes that are progressed as a result of the adoption of these new proposed procedures, there is likely to be increased customer satisfaction for those who supported the proposals.

8.5 *Property Implications*

8.5.1 Neutral

8.6 *Consultation*

8.6.1 Any proposals would be subject to full consultation including statutory consultation processes required for any resulting Traffic Regulation Orders.

8.7 *Equalities and Diversity Implications*

8.7.1 By implementing what will be improved policy on parking management, this will assist in improving accessibility for the infirm and mobility impaired, particularly at junctions and natural crossing points, as parking will be prohibited at these locations.

8.8 *Risk Assessment*

8.8.1 None

8.9 *Value for Money*

8.9.1 If the new procedure is adopted, value for money will be achieved due to the high level of support expressed for the successful proposals by consultees, hence only schemes demonstrating a high level of support will proceed to implementation stage.

8.10 *Community Safety Implications*

Where there are narrow streets and on-street parking which narrows the available carriageway width, emergency service vehicles sometimes experience difficulties in accessing emergency situations when responding to 'blue light' calls. The implementation of PMSs ensures that adequate access is maintained for emergency service vehicles such as fire tenders.

8.11 *Environmental Impact*

8.11.1 Areas that are considered dangerous by local people due to excessive on-street parking that can be verified by adopting the new assessment criteria are likely to achieve successful outcomes to informal PMS consultations and lead to scheme implementation. The improvements in road user sightlines and reduced vehicular conflicts in these areas will lead to a safer local environment. There is also likely to be improvements in the general environment of these areas, e.g. improvements in air quality and traffic noise.

9. Background Papers

- 9.1 Residents Parking Management Scheme report that went to Cabinet on 16th June 2009.

10. Appendices

- 10.1 Appendix 1 – Proposed Process for instigating the investigation and Implementation of Parking Management Scheme proposals.

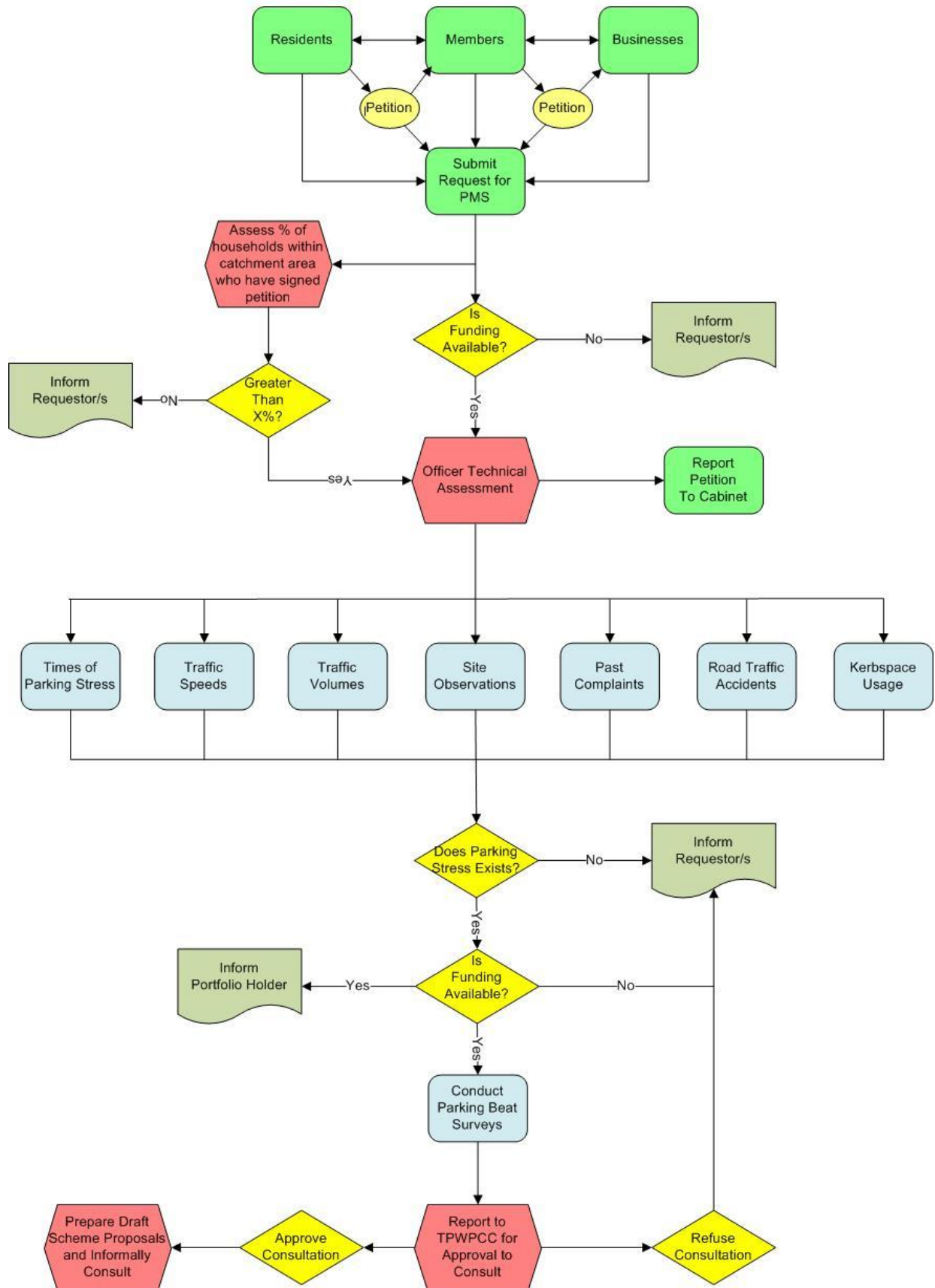
Appendix 1

Parking Management Policies

The introduction of Parking Management Schemes (PMS's) enables the Council to balance the parking needs of residents, businesses & visitors and is a fundamental component of national, regional and local transport policies. PMS's are areas where permitted parking areas are designated by regulation. The aims of this policy are to provide further transparency and enable a consistent approach across the borough. The main objectives of the policy are to:-

1. Remove the danger to other road users caused by obstructive parking;
2. Ensure adequate road space is available for the free movement of all road users;
3. Regulate and control the parking of vehicles, as far as is possible, to such places and times as are convenient to all road users and the needs of the community;
4. Ensure a fair distribution of suitable on-street parking space, within competing demands and resources available and give residents needs a priority;
5. Reduce the need to travel by private car and encourage the use of alternative means;
6. Minimise the adverse effects of motorised transport on the environment and health;
7. Improve accessibility, particularly for non-car owners and people with mobility or sensory impairment;
8. Maximise parking in off-street car parks;
9. Enable the safe servicing of industrial and commercial premises;
10. Reduce personal injury accidents;
11. Provide a level of enforcement commensurate with the scale of contravention and the finances available;
12. Ensure adequate access is maintained particularly for emergency vehicles.

**PARKING MANAGEMENT SCHEMES
STAGE 1 – SCHEME INCEPTION**



Appendix 3

Proposed Process for Instigating the investigation and Implementation of Parking Management Scheme proposals

Stage 1 – Identification of potential schemes

Originator of request for PMS	Assessment criteria
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Residents • Members • Businesses • Officers 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All affected Ward Councillors support the scheme proposals. • Ward Councillors to demonstrate to the Traffic and Parking Committee that their proposals have a degree of local support with supporting evidence, (for example correspondence, petitions, survey data etc.) before their request is added to the “Members’ Request” List. • Officers provide technical reasons for justification of schemes proposals (traffic volumes, speed, accident and/or emergency services needs) schemes will not be progressed if criterion agreed by the committee is not met(see recommendations). • Officers are to consider alternative measures to address parking stress other than PMS’s. • Availability of sufficient funds to undertake the works is to be assessed. • Decision on whether to proceed to informal consultation stage of design process is to be made by the Councils’ Traffic and Parking Working Party & Cabinet Committee based on the agreed policy.

Stage 2 – Feasibility - Quantifying type of parking stress

What measured	Assessment criteria
Available kerbside space	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 85% of the kerbside parking capacity is being used and the proportion of non-residents’ car parking is greater than 35%. • Less than 60% of the residential premises have, or could make parking available within the curtilage of their property.
Times of parking stress	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Daytime problem (8am – 6pm) – i.e. 60% of available kerb space is occupied by non –residents’ vehicles for more than 6 hrs during which 85% of the available kerb space are occupied by all parked vehicles. • Night time problem (6pm – 8am) – 40% of available kerb space is occupied by non residents’ vehicles for more than 4 hrs during which 85% of the available kerb space is occupied by all parked vehicles.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 24 Hour problem - A combination of the daytime and night time problems.
Stage 3 – Feasibility - Define suitable parking remedies to address type of parking stress	
Type of parking stress	Suitable PMS remedy
Long stay parking problem	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Shared use parking provision – If an existing or proposed parking restrictions is believed to disadvantage local residents(residents living in households within the consultation catchment area) then issue permit but restrict parking to 1 or 2 hours in order to allow access to local facilities but prevent all day parking in the area. • If it is evidenced through initial surveys that the problem exists due to residents owning too many vehicles, a residents’ scheme should not be considered.
Short stay parking problem	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Exclusive use parking provision – Where the demand for parking by residents and visitors is currently greater than the existing number of parking spaces, introduce restrictions to provide equal advantage to residents and visitors (or a proportional split to suit local requirements, e.g. 60/40).
Stage 4 – Feasibility – Scheme justification	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gather evidence and data from stages 2 and 3 above to assess the feasibility of a viable scheme that addresses the identified type of parking stress. • From evidence of parking problem at stage 2 and identification of the possible type of schemes at stage 3, an assessment can be carried out as to the scope and the impact of the implementation of scheme. • From this, the cost implications can be calculated - are there sufficient funds available to implement the scheme? • These are to be set out in a report showing the conclusions of the findings to date. This will support the consultation and suggested marketing process. • The report should also provide justification for the scheme or the need for support from the permit income where appropriate. • Set out written justification for recommendation to the Traffic & Parking Working Party and Cabinet Committee for the scheme proposals to progress to consultation outlining criteria and observation data. 	
Stage 5 – Prioritisation of scheme in work programme	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If there are a number of requests for schemes then a priority process needs to be undertaken. • All schemes should be assessed as part of the annual programme and priorities. • Ranking should be completed against the common criterion such as scale of parking problem assessed at stage 2, the likely cost of implementing the scheme and public and Member support for the scheme. • Work programmes and priorities will be assessed and decided upon by the Councils Traffic & Parking Working Party and Cabinet Committee. 	

Stage 6 – Consultation

- The scheme prioritisation stage (Stage 5) is a key and significant stage in the whole process.
- Developing a strategy for whom and how residents are consulted needs careful preparation.
- The area that is to be consulted needs to be identified and methodology agreed.
- A budget is to be identified and agreed.
- The streets adjacent to those under investigation and consideration of PMS proposals can also be considered in the consultation process.
- The views and requirements of surrounding local businesses are also important in the potential implementation of a scheme.
- Consider the level of responses and degree of support that is needed in order to progress a scheme to the detailed design formal consultation and implementation, as agreed by Members in line with the threshold agreed by the Committee as per the recommendations of this report.
- Any valid objections that cannot be overcome through negotiation, or design amendments are to be referred to the Councils Traffic & Parking Working Party and Cabinet Committee for consideration and decision.
- Any PMS under consideration should be introduced to work on an area basis rather than individual streets.
- Appropriate traffic and parking surveys will be used as a means to determine the nature of the parking problem, the streets directly affected and those potentially affected by any displacement of parking.
- Feedback communications on the outcome of consultation, (both formal and informal), will be given to all consultees.
- Any successfully implemented schemes will be subject to appropriate period of operation and Review period agreed by the Committee.

Stage 7 – Scheme approval and implementation

- Any decisions and recommendations made by the Traffic & Parking Working Party and Cabinet Committee are to be implemented by the design team in accordance with the approved design procedures.
- Gateway approvals at each stage of the detailed design are to be agreed and signed off by the design Team Leader followed by the Group Manager and the Head of Service.
- All TROs and associated schedules are to be drafted and agreed and signed off by the design Team Leader followed by the Group Manager and Head of Service before they are sealed by the Borough Solicitor.
- An Implementation Plan and Programme is to be agreed for the implementation of all on street changes, including signs, lines and any associated civil engineering works.
- The implemented scheme and the TROs are to be agreed and signed off as fit for purpose by the Parking Manager, Group Manager and the Head of Service before a 'go-live' date is agreed, before enforcement of the new parking regulations and controls can commence.

Stage 8 – Permit policy and entitlement

- Permit entitlement and charging levels for permits to residents, businesses and visitors needs to be communicated to the community affected by the new PMS, and be in line with the Council current approved fees and charges.
- Allow for permit allocation to residents living in any buffer zones. This also needs to be reflected in the TRO.
- For residential permits the maximum number of permits per household will be agreed for the particular PMS, to control oversubscription.
- Permits will be allocated based on the availability of on street parking spaces.
- Permit Packs need to be sent to entitled local residents and businesses 1 month before the 'go-live date'.

Stage 9 – PMS enforcement and monitoring

- Civil Enforcement Officers to patrol and monitor the operation of the scheme for two weeks after the 'go live' date offering advice and guidance to road users on the requirements and operation of the PMS.
- Enforcement of the PMS regulations and controls is to commence two calendar weeks after the 'go live' date to ensure compliance with the new parking controls and regulations.
- Enforcement is to be in line with the Councils Parking Enforcement Policy and agreed guidelines
- Any observations and feed back on the scheme operation is to be routinely monitored and logged and used to inform the next scheduled Review of the PMS.

Stage 10 – PMS Review

- The Council's Traffic and Parking Committee to agree when the PMS will be reviewed at the same time as it approves the implementation of the PMS.
- The first review of the PMS should be undertaken in a reasonable timeframe, ideally with 6 months to 1 year of the implementation date to ensure that it is fit for purpose.
- All correspondence and other communications with regard to the PMS are to be collated in the interim period, before the review is undertaken.
- Any recommendations for proposed changes to the hours of operation, boundary extensions, parking layout, lines and signs etc is to be presented to the Councils Traffic & Parking Working and Cabinet Committee at the agreed time for the approval to proceed to the informal consultation stage of the process.
- The outcome of the informal consultation is to be referred to the TPW&CC for their consideration and decision, in line with the recommendations contained within this report regarding level of responses and degree of support for the proposed changes.
- Should the TPW&CC agree to proceed to next stages in the process, (i.e. detailed design formal consultation and implementation), stages 6 to 9 above are to be repeated.