

Meeting Date	Monday 7 th December 2015
Report Title	Parking Issues in Swale
Cabinet Member	Cllr David Simmons
SMT Lead	Dave Thomas
Head of Service	Dave Thomas
Lead Officer	Mike Knowles (SBC)
Classification	Open

Recommendations	Members are asked to note the contents of this report.
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Purpose of Report and Executive Summary

- 1.1 This report presents a letter and documentation submitted to the Chief Executive of Swale Borough Council for discussion in the Council Chambers. The resident, Mr Peter England, was advised that as the Council Chambers was not the appropriate forum to discuss issues such as this, the matter would be referred to the Swale Joint Transportation Board for discussion.

2 Background

- 2.1 A letter has been received from a resident of Swale asking for the submitted documentation to be discussed. The title of the documentation is "Inconsiderate and anti-social, nuisance parking in the Swale Borough area". The issue of parking on footways has also been raised by Members over the years and by members of the public at other forums such as at the Local Engagement Forums.

3 Issue for Decision

- 3.1 A copy of the submitted letter and documentation can be found in Annex A.
- 3.2 The documents refer to various issues around vehicles parking on footways and verges, and asks for consideration and action on the topic of inconsiderate and nuisance parking within the Borough.
- 3.3 There are many locations around the Borough where vehicles currently park on the footway, generally partially but in some cases entirely. The Police have powers to deal with any vehicles parked in such a way as to cause an obstruction, and this can include obstructing the safe passage of pedestrians such as wheelchair users and those with pushchairs. In some areas where the issue of obstruction is prevalent, the Police have placed warning letters on the offending vehicles.

- 3.4 Where parking restrictions exist, such as double or single yellow lines, vehicles parked on the adjoining footway or highway verge can receive a Penalty Charge Notice from Civil Enforcement Officers, as the restrictions apply to the full extent of the Highway boundary. There is also a Bylaw in place in the Swale Borough area which enables the Environment Wardens to take action against vehicles habitually parked on grass verges.
- 3.5 The Kent County Council Parking Delivery Protocol, which sets out a framework of common principles for the management of parking, states that *parking restrictions for movement/safety* are a County function, although this does not prevent Borough and District Councils from implementing schemes where funding is available to do so.
- 3.6 Colleagues in our Parking Operations Team have introduced prohibitions of footway and verge parking in several roads in Maidstone, in most cases requested and funded by Members. These prohibitions require a Traffic Regulation Order to be made, specific to each road, and must be accompanied by on-street signing. There are cost implications to be considered with the implementation of any similar restrictions in Swale. As well as the cost of preparing and advertising the Traffic Regulation Order, estimated to be around £1,000, there is also the cost of physical on-street signing. The cost of this signing will vary considerably based on the length of the road, but for an average road would be between £1,000 to £3,000 for each side of the road.
- 3.7 Prior to implementing any such restrictions, serious consideration would need to be given to the consequences of introducing such restrictions. In many cases, a scheme would merely displace the problem into adjoining streets. In other cases, prohibiting vehicles from parking on the footway will force them into the carriageway where the parked vehicles would obstruct the safe movement of vehicles. An example of this is Chalkwell Road in Sittingbourne, where Police wrote to residents advising them not to park on the footway. The result was vehicles parking entirely on the road, having a severe impact on the passage of for buses and other vehicles.
- 3.8 Another option to tackle isolated issues would be the installation of bollards to physically prevent vehicles parking on footways. Kent County Council as Highway Authority have previously undertaken such work in various areas, but now look to avoid the installation of new bollards presumably because of the cost of the works and the on-going maintenance costs, together with a national drive from Central Government to reduce street furniture and de-clutter the Highway.
- 3.9 The submitted documents ask for consideration to be given to look at areas where we could improve parking for residents. It is suggested that where footways are wide enough, provision could be made for on-street parking with the construction of laybys and narrower footways. A number of years ago, when the Highway functions were undertaken by Borough and District Councils under the Highway Agreement prior to 2005, works were carried out in Barton Hill Drive in Minster on the Isle of Sheppey. This work consisted of lowering the kerbs along both sides of the road, re-constructing the footway to take vehicular traffic and installing a broken white line to denote where vehicles could park part on the footway whilst still allowing a suitable

width for pedestrians to pass. Presumably the scheme was completed to ensure the free flow of traffic along Barton Hill Drive whilst minimising the impact on residents' on-street parking capacity. Any schemes for future consideration would require specific funding to be sourced as well as the consent of KCC Highways, and would be subject to the suitable width of footway and depth of Utility services.

3.10 As the issue of footway parking is not unique to the Swale area, it is felt that a County-wide policy needs to be developed, led by the Kent County Council Parking Manager and discussed through the regular District Engineers' Meetings. In the meantime, any requests for schemes to prohibit parking on footways and verges in particular areas should initially be addressed to Kent County Council. However, if Members wish to fund such schemes the Borough Council has powers to implement the restrictions.

3.11 Members are asked to note the contents of this report.

4 Implications

Issue	Implications
Corporate Plan	Improving Community Safety through safer Highways.
Financial, Resource and Property	Costs associated with Traffic Regulation Order, and necessary signing.
Legal and Statutory	Traffic Regulation Orders to be sealed by Kent County Council.
Crime and Disorder	None at this stage.
Risk Management and Health and Safety	None identified at this stage.
Equality and Diversity	None identified at this stage.
Sustainability	None identified at this stage.

5 Appendices

5.1 Annex A – Copy of Letter and Documentation received.

6 Background Papers

6.1 None