

# Parking and Modern Technology - Delivery Drivers

Committee name	Residents' Services Select Committee
Officer reporting	Roy Clark, Parking Services
Papers with report	Appendix A
Ward	All

## HEADLINES

This report is intended to provide advice to Members of the Residents' Services Select Committee on Parking and Modern technology & Delivery Drivers, in accordance with their request for an information report.

## RECOMMENDATION

**That the Residents' Services Select Committee notes and comments on the information presented in the report.**

## SUPPORTING INFORMATION

### BACKGROUND

1. In July 1994, the Road Traffic Act 1991 was enacted and parking enforcement powers in London were transferred from the Police to local authorities. All parking offences were decriminalised, so they were no longer dealt with in the criminal courts.
2. At the time, Hillingdon Council undertook parking enforcement using its own directly employed operatives who carried out patrols throughout the Borough and issued Penalty Charge Notices (PCNs) where contraventions of the parking regulations were witnessed.
3. The parking enforcement service was outsourced in August 2003 and four successive contracts to cover this service have been competitively tendered since that time.
4. The current parking enforcement contract was re-tendered in 2021 with the contract being approved for award by Cabinet in January 2022 and awarded to APCOA Parking (UK) Ltd ('APCOA') with an initial contract duration of five years from April 2022, with an option to extend for a further five years.

### CURRENT PARKING ENFORCEMENT ARRANGEMENTS

5. As part of the parking enforcement contract, APCOA's Civil Enforcement Officers (CEO)s are required to patrol the Borough's adopted roads and 35 public car parks on foot, by bike, by moped and in vehicles.
6. There are currently 22 separate CEO deployment beats used by APCOA across the Borough. These deployment beats require some areas to be patrolled on foot and others by

mobile (e.g., moped or car). This is set based on the parking restrictions within the area or expected higher levels of vehicle traffic (such as in town centres).

7. The CEOs use a handheld computer which records all the details, including evidential photographs, of the contravention and, via a Bluetooth printer, issues a paper PCN, which is placed on the vehicle or handed to the driver. The data collected by the CEO is then downloaded to a specialised PCN ICT processing system which is used to process the PCN in accordance with legislation. The PCN processing system is also used to handle any challenges or appeals that the motorist may make against the issue of the PCN.

## **USE OF MODERN TECHNOLOGY**

8. When a PCN is issued, the CEO collects data relating to the vehicle and where it was parked. The data collected also includes photographs demonstrating that the parking contravention occurred.
9. The PCN ICT processing system includes an option to enable the motorist to log in online to the system and see the evidence that the CEO has collected and to then make a payment or to submit a challenge/appeal ('appeal') against the PCN. If the PCN is a CCTV PCN then the motorist can also view a video clip of the evidence that relates to their PCN.
10. The PCN ICT processing system also includes a frequently asked questions (FAQs) type system which highlights to the motorist how successful their appeal is likely to be based on the Council's policy and legislation. Even if the FAQs system suggests that the appeal is unlikely to be successful, based on the questions they have provided, the motorist is not restricted from submitting an appeal. Any mitigation put forward by the motorist is taken into account when an appeal is considered, and a response provided to the motorist.
11. The PCN ICT processing system is due to be further enhanced over the summer of 2023, with a chatbot being introduced to assist motorists in reviewing their PCN and submitting an appeal or making a payment.
12. Appeals can be made in a variety of ways, such as online or by letter. Whilst all the PCNs issued include information on how to pay or contest a PCN, along with the details of the Council's website and postal address, to make it easier for motorists to appeal online, the Council has included QR codes on the PCNs it issues. The QR code on the front of the PCN will take motorists directly to the website and will also pre-populate the registered information making the process of accessing the website quicker and more efficient for motorists.

## **CCTV enforcement**

13. The Council also uses unattended CCTV cameras to undertake enforcement of some parking and moving traffic contraventions. Following a change in legislation in 2015, CCTV cameras can only be used to undertake the parking enforcement in certain areas, which are:
  - School Keep Clear (zigzag) area
  - Bus lanes
  - Bus stops
  - Red routes
14. Councils are not permitted to use CCTV cameras to enforce against any other parking matters. However, CCTV cameras can be used to undertake enforcement of moving traffic

contraventions, such as no entry points and banned turns. A list of the moving traffic contraventions that can be enforced are detailed in Appendix A.

15. Legislation requires that any alleged contraventions captured by an unattended CCTV enforcement unit must be reviewed by a specially trained CCTV enforcement officer before being issued to ensure that the evidence captured by the system justifies a PCN being issued.

### **Virtual Parking Permits**

16. As part of the parking enforcement contract that was awarded to APCOA in April 2022, there was a requirement for a virtual self-serve parking permit and visitor voucher system to be implemented. A virtual parking permit/visitor voucher is an electronic permit which does not require a paper permit to be displayed (in a similar way as a DVLA car tax disc). Instead, when a virtual parking permit/visitor voucher exists, the central ICT system is updated to record that the vehicle has a valid parking permit/visitor voucher and this is electronically passed to the CEOs handheld computer to show the enforcement officer that the vehicle is parked legitimately.
17. The virtual parking permit system was rolled out from June 2022 and, at the current time, there are 6,710 virtual residents' parking permits on issue. This equates to approximately 45% of the total residents permits' on issue.
18. Whilst the majority of permit holders have created parking permit accounts to manage their permits online, some vulnerable residents have been unable to use the virtual system. Those residents who are unable to use the self-serve system are provided with additional support from the Parking Permits team to ensure they are not disadvantaged and still have access to parking permits.

### **Global Positioning System (GPS)**

19. The Handheld Computers (HHCs) used by patrolling CEOs also include a GPS tracking system so that the CEO's location can be verified in the event of an emergency and support provided as necessary.
20. The GPS system also enables APCOA to ensure that the closest CEO is sent to a location when a request for support due to an illegally parked vehicle is received.
21. The Council regularly use this GPS mapping system to analyse the number of visits to roads within the Borough and to ensure high profile locations are receiving regular monitoring from CEOs.

### **VRM Scanning**

22. As detailed above, with the deployment of a virtual permit system, the requirement for paper permits to be displayed in vehicles is no longer needed (except for Carers and Business Permits which currently remain paper based). Instead of CEOs being able to do visual checks for permits they are required to enter vehicle registration numbers into their HHCs.
23. In order to speed up this process and enhance the operation, the HHCs provided to the CEOs include a 'scan a car' function. This allows CEOs to scan the vehicle registration and the system will automatically carry out the required virtual permit checks. This function

makes it easier for the CEOs to check whether a vehicle has a valid parking permit/visitor voucher.

### **Body Worn Cameras**

24. All deployed CEOs are required to wear body worn cameras, which must be switched on during their patrols and only turned off during comfort breaks and lunch. These body worn cameras have become instrumental to the enforcement operation to verify complaint allegations against CEOs as well as providing evidence to the Police when incidents involving CEOs are reported and investigated.

25. When the Council receives complaints against the conduct of CEOs regularly and, as part of the investigation process, officers' body worn video (BWV) is reviewed to ascertain exactly what occurred during an alleged incident.

### **Cashless parking system**

26. A cashless parking payment system (commonly known as a mobile phone parking system), is due to be introduced across the Borough shortly. A contract was awarded to PayByPhone in 2022 and the software is currently being amended to enable it to accommodate the HillingdonFirst card system so that it offers residents the differential, cheaper, parking rates that they currently enjoy when using the pay & display parking machines.

27. The system is due to be released for testing shortly and, following testing, will be rolled out across the Borough to give residents and visitors an additional payment option that they can use when parking in Hillingdon.

28. Once the system is live, it will link with the CEOs' HHC, in the same way as a virtual parking permit, so that the CEOs can check whether the motorist has paid for their parking.

### **DELIVERY DRIVERS**

29. Since the pandemic in 2020, the proliferation of delivery drivers and riders ('drivers') has caused parking problems across local authorities, including in Hillingdon.

30. Prior to the pandemic the number of delivery drivers was much lower and many of them tended to be directly employed by local fast-food shops. Where the delivery drivers were directly employed by the shops parking enforcement could be targeted around the specific shops and it was also possible to liaise directly with the shop management about the parking problems that were being reported.

31. However, the vast majority of delivery drivers are now no longer employed by individual shops but work for themselves and nominated delivery companies. This results in the local fast-food shops having no direct employer control over the drivers and they will frequently wait around for a delivery job to be received before moving.

32. This has resulted in large numbers of delivery drivers parking illegally whilst waiting for a delivery job to be received and numerous complaints are received about them causing congestion and being intimidating to residents and other local visitors.

33. Whilst the Council does actively target parking enforcement around known hotspots for delivery drivers, or where specific complaints are received, unfortunately, when a CEO

arrives, the vast majority of the illegally parked delivery vehicles will move away before any parking enforcement action can legally be taken, as the driver is often with the vehicle or close by and sees the CEO arrive. Once the CEO leaves the area, the delivery drivers return until the CEO returns to the area once again.

34. For a PCN to be legally issued, the CEO must serve it by placing it on the vehicle or handing it to the motorist in control of the vehicle. Regardless of what illegal parking may have been witnessed by the CEO or captured by the public on camera, etc, a PCN cannot be retrospectively issued by post, etc (unless the CEO is prevented from serving the PCN by threats or actual violence).
35. At times, the number of delivery drivers in one area has been excessive and the CEOs have been subjected to verbal and physical abuse whilst trying to enforce the parking restrictions. In cases like this, the Council has had to deploy multiple CEOs to the same location on safety grounds.
36. Numerous initiatives have been undertaken in respect of trying to manage the problems caused by delivery drivers. These have included undertaking visits to the area and remaining on site for a longer period of time and, whilst this results in vehicles parking correctly whilst the CEO is on site, once the CEO leaves the delivery drivers return.
37. The Council has also undertaken joint patrols with the Police during which the CEOs undertake parking enforcement, and the Police undertake vehicle checks to ensure that the delivery vehicle is correctly licensed, insured and roadworthy. This has resulted in some delivery vehicles being seized. Further joint patrols will be undertaken in the future.
38. Where the majority of issues appear to be related to a specific fast-food outlet, the Council has tried to engage with the business owner/franchisee in an attempt to get them to exercise what limited control they have over the delivery companies. This work is still on-going at the present time.
39. The Council regularly liaises with other local authorities, including London Councils, over parking matters and keeps abreast of initiatives that are being investigated or have been trialled in other areas to try to manage parking issues caused by delivery drivers. At the current time, no effective solution has been identified but other authorities have reported that joint patrols with the Police have been found to work well.

## **FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

There are no financial implication arising from this report.

## **LEGAL IMPLICATIONS**

There are no legal implications arising from this report.

## **BACKGROUND PAPERS**

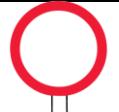
None.

## **APPENDICES**

**Appendix A – details of Moving Traffic Contraventions that can be enforced.**

## Appendix A - Moving Traffic Contraventions

Moving Traffic Contraventions are listed in the Highway Code. They include making banned turns, weight restrictions and restrictions around entering a box junction. The table below details the Moving Traffic Contraventions, and their associated traffic signs that can be enforced.

Description of traffic sign	Sign
Vehicular traffic must proceed in the direction indicated by the arrow	
Vehicular traffic must turn ahead in the direction indicated by the arrow.	
Vehicular traffic must comply with the requirements prescribed in regulation 15.	
No right turn for vehicular traffic	
No left turn for vehicular traffic	
No U turns for vehicular traffic	
Priority must be given to vehicles from the opposite direction	 Give way to oncoming vehicles
No entry for vehicular traffic	
All Vehicles prohibited except non – mechanically propelled vehicles being pushed by pedestrians	 No vehicles

Entry to pedestrian zone restricted (Alternative types)		
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Entry to and waiting in pedestrian zone restricted (Alternative types)	
Entry to and waiting in pedestrian zone restricted (Variable message sign)	
Motor vehicles prohibited	
Motor vehicles except solo motorcycles prohibited	
Solo motorcycles prohibited	
Goods vehicles exceeding the maximum gross weight indicated on the goods vehicle symbol prohibited	
One way traffic	
Route for use by buses and pedal cycles only	
Route for use by tramcars only	
Part of the Carriageway outside a school entrance where vehicles should not stop.	
Marking Conveying the requirements prescribed in regulation 29(2) and Part II of Schedule 19 of the Traffic Signs Regulations and General Directions 2002	

