

Disabled Parking Spaces

Cabinet	16 December 2021
Report Author	Penny Button, Director of Safer Neighbourhoods
Portfolio Holder	Cllr David Saunders, Cabinet Member for Finance, Strategic Licensing, Estates & Parking
Status	For Decision
Classification:	Unrestricted
Key Decision	No
Ward:	All

Executive Summary:

A motion to Council requested that:

This Council commits to an internal audit of the number of disabled parking spaces available in relation to the numbers of residents requiring them, and commits to contacting and working with Kent County Council (KCC) to bring forward personalised permits, so that our application based disabled parking bays can perform the role that is intended.

The council already provides 164 disabled bays on-street that have been applied for by members of the public as well as bays in our off-street car parks

The process for applying for on-street disabled parking bays is controlled by KCC under the existing Agency Agreements. Their policy does not allow personalised permits for individual bays as these are provided on the public highway and accessible to all those who hold a relevant disabled parking badge.

Recommendation(s):

The council engages with KCC on options available to accommodate all those who need access to disabled parking bays.

Corporate Implications

Financial and Value for Money

This proposal will not have an impact on the General Fund, because all income and expenditure associated with on-street parking is recorded in an earmarked reserve called the 'Decriminalisation reserve'. Any reduction in the number of on-street parking bays may result in a reduction in on-street parking income and consequently impact on the money held in the decriminalisation reserve. The funding held in the decriminalisation reserve can only be spent on traffic management, environmental improvement and other projects that meet the requirements of the Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984.

Legal

There is an existing agreement between Kent County Council and Thanet District Council which sets out the responsibilities for the various parking powers including the Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984. Under this agreement the decision on location of disabled parking bays on street is made by Kent County Council. There are no legal implications of this report

Corporate

This petition and its proposal to have individually allocated bays would potentially have corporate impacts on a financial nature on the decriminalisation reserve if located in on-street parking bays as well as impact on the parking team if changes were made to the current agreement with Kent County Council which leads to an increase in workload.

This petition and proposal should be considered under communities corporate priority.

Equality Act 2010 & Public Sector Equality Duty

Members are reminded of the requirement, under the Public Sector Equality Duty (section 149 of the Equality Act 2010) to have due regard to the aims of the Duty at the time the decision is taken. The aims of the Duty are: (i) eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment, victimisation and other conduct prohibited by the Act, (ii) advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it, and (iii) foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it.

Protected characteristics: age, sex, disability, race, sexual orientation, gender reassignment, religion or belief and pregnancy & maternity. Only aim (i) of the Duty applies to Marriage & civil partnership.

This report relates to the following aim of the equality duty: -

- To advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it
- To foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it.

CORPORATE PRIORITIES

This report relates to the following corporate priorities: -

- Communities

1.0 Introduction and Background

1.1 A motion to Council requested that: This Council commits to an internal audit of the number of disabled parking spaces available in relation to the numbers of residents requiring them, and commits to contacting and working with Kent County Council (KCC) to investigate the possibility of personalised permits, so that our application based disabled parking bays.

2.0 The Current Situation

- 2.1 This is a process controlled by KCC under the existing Agency Agreements and does not allow personalised permits for bays. We currently have 164 disabled bays on-street that have been applied for by members of the public.
- 2.2 The application process is very lengthy and throughout it the documents state that it is chargeable due to the amount of work it takes to get the bay written into a Traffic Regulation Order and that the bay is not personalised as the bays are part of the highway which gives any blue badge holder the right to park in a disabled marked bay.
- 2.3 The council receives very few complaints about misuse of these bays, additionally the complaints we do receive are that a vehicle without a blue badge has misused the bay, a permit system would not resolve this issue.

3.0 Options

- 3.1 To review the provision and potential options to provide more disabled parking bays with KCC and also understand their rationale regarding not allowing personalised bays.
- 3.2 Take no further action

4.0 Next Step

- 4.1 To discuss the issues raised in the motion with KCC parking manager if agreed by Cabinet

Contact Officer: Rebecca Glacier
Reporting to: Penny Button (Director of Neighbourhoods)

Finance: Chris Blundell, Director of Finance

Legal: N/A