

Guildford Borough Council

Report to: Executive

Date: 15 July 2024

Ward(s) affected: All

Report of Director: Transformation & Governance

Author: Andrew Harkin, Parking Lead

Tel: 01483 444535

Email: andrew.harkin@guildford.gov.uk

Lead Councillor responsible: Cllr Catherine Houston

Tel: 01483 574072

Email: catherine.houston@guildford.gov.uk

Report Status: Open

Proposed traffic regulation order amendments to off-street parking place order

1. Executive Summary

To request the authority to formally advertise the amendment of the off-street parking places traffic regulation order (TRO) to revise the prioritisation of parking for the benefit of specific user-groups. For Guildford Lido car park, Millmead House front car park and Lawn Road and Station Road (East Horsley) Car Park.

To formalise the charging and approach to Electrical Vehicle Charge Points (EVCP) throughout all car parks.

2. Recommendation to Executive

That the Executive agree to formally advertise amendments to the TRO as follows:

- 2.1 To formalise the Electric Vehicle Charge Point (EVCP) spaces in all car parks where they are made available;

- 2.2 To standardise the EVCP kWh tariff so that it operates 24/7 rather than part-time, so that both parking charges and tariffs will apply simultaneously during the hours when parking charges apply;
- 2.3 In regard to Guildford Lido car park, to change name from Lido car park to Guildford Lido car park and introduce a (virtual) permit / prioritisation scheme for users of the Guildford Lido facility that operates between 8am-6pm Monday-Sunday;
- 2.4 In regard to Millmead House (front) car park / Lawn Road car park, to extend the control hours of the car parks from Monday-Sunday 8am-6pm to Monday-Sunday 8am-10pm, extending the virtual permit scheme in the 'front' car park to cover the Monday-Friday 8am-10pm period and parking charges in both car parks to cover the Saturday 6pm-10pm and Sunday 5pm-10pm periods. These car parks are presently only charged during the daytime at weekends;
- 2.5 In regard to East Horsley Kingston Meadow and Sutherland Memorial Park car parks, to revise the formalised parking controls so that only the disabled bay and manner of standing provisions are retained and all other restrictions relating to free limited waiting, payment and no return on the same day are removed;
- 2.6 To revoke the orders relating to the following car parks – these have either closed, or GBC Parking no longer has any involvement with their enforcement, management and upkeep: Bellerby Theatre car park, College Road car park, Commercial Road 1&2 car parks, Guildford Youth & Community Centre car park, Moorfield Road car park, Old Police Station car park and Ripley (White Hart Meadows) car park and Victoria Court car park.
- 2.7 In regard to the Green Scheme, to cease the informal concession/permit scheme for users of full-EVs (FEVs) and to allow the annual permits to expire at the end of March 2025 and not renew, nor allow new applications to join the scheme during the remainder of FY24-25.

3. Reason(s) for Recommendation:

- 3.1. To improve prioritisation of the parking spaces within car parks to better meet the needs of their intended users and for those car parks where it is recommended that the parking orders should be revoked, to reflect the closure / changed circumstances associated with those facilities.
- 3.2. Previously EVCP recharging the in daytime was free and, in the evening/overnight its was charged. Although not covered by the TRO published by the government in November 2023, it is recommended that the EVCP tariff be standardised.
- 3.3. The informal Green Scheme discounted/free parking in several of the Borough Council's car parks should be formalised to manage the permit scheme more effectively.

4. Exemption from publication

- 4.1. No

5. Purpose of Report

- 5.1. To obtain authority from the Executive to formally advertised the amendments to the TRO, necessary to meet the objectives outlined in 3.1.
- 5.2. To seek authority to delegate the consideration of any representations received because of the formal advertisement process to the Assistant Director of Commercial Services in consultation with the Lead Councillor, for the purpose of determining whether to implement the proposed amendments, and if considered appropriate, to make the TRO to introduce those amendments.
- 5.3. To realign the Borough Council's EV charging to bring it in line with the recently published national guidance and to discontinue the Green Scheme.

6. Strategic Priorities

- 6.1. The provision and effective management of off-street parking feeds into various of the Council's strategies, including transportation, economic development, climate change and sustainability.

7. Background

- 7.1. **EVCPs** - Although misuse of the EVCP spaces is not a particularly widespread issue, at peak times, there can be a tendency for Internal Combustion Engine Vehicle (ICEV) users to occupy the spaces made available for EVs users to recharge. Similarly, there can also be circumstances where EVs occupy the EVCP spaces when they are not recharging. Presently, enforcement action cannot take place in either of these circumstances. The recommendation would allow for this, improving the availability of EVCPs for those EV users wishing to recharge their vehicles.
- 7.2. Currently, EVCP users only pay for parking during the day and receive the electricity for free. In the evening and overnight, the opposite is presently true. EVCP users pay for the electricity, but do not pay for parking, when parking charges would ordinarily apply.
- 7.3. In November 2023, the Government published The Public Charge Point Regulations 2023 ('the Regulations') which came into force on 24 November 2023. This was published to ensure that the experience of consumers using public charge points across the UK is consistent and positive. One of the regulations relates to charging for electricity and suggests that 'The price of a charging session in pence per kilowatt hour (p/kWh) must not increase once a charging session has commenced'. Given the limitations of our current supplier's charging software, this effectively means that the recharge session either has to be completely free from start to finish or charged at a single rate throughout. Providing free electricity to the end-user and placing the whole burden for the cost of providing electricity on the Borough Council (as currently occurs during the daytime but would need to be expanding to evenings and overnight, if free electricity was to be provided at all times) would increase the financial burden on the council. Therefore, it is recommended that these costs are instead

borne fully by the EVCP user. Furthermore, it is recommended that the parking tariffs apply consistently, so that users pay for both parking (when charges apply) and the electricity used (at all times) when recharging.

- 7.4. **Guildford Lido car park** – although already subject to a TRO, the present controls do not differentiate between those wishing to use the Guildford Lido leisure facility and other motorists. Occupation of the car park by those living at the new accommodation associated with the Guildford College is a particular issue. Therefore, the recommended proposal to introduce a (virtual) permit scheme for visitor of the Guildford Lido will help resolve the availability of space issues caused by others at times when the Lido is open. It is anticipated that the (virtual) permits will be free to Guildford Lido users and acquired via the Lido's reception kiosk via an online portal.
- 7.5. **Millmead House (front) car park / Lawn Road car park** – these car parks are presently uncontrolled in the evenings. This can be particularly problematic in terms of inconsiderate parking restricting access and the availability of space for evening visitors to meetings at Millmead House. Therefore, the recommended proposal is to extend the formalised hours of the car park during weekday evenings and the need for visitors to the council's offices to acquire free (virtual) permits, as already occurs during the day. This will help ensure that use is prioritised for those for whom the spaces are provided and blue badge holders, in particular. The introduction of evening charges on weekend evenings will improve the regulation of the facility at those times and help cover the cost of the additional enforcement patrols.
- 7.6. **East Horsley Kingston Meadow and Sutherland Memorial Park car parks** – following the statutory formal consultation, TROs were introduced in both car parks on behalf of GBC's Parks team in 2019. However, within weeks of their implementation and the commencement of enforcement, the Parking team were instructed to stop enforcement, remove all signs and switch off and bag any payment equipment that had been installed. This was primarily due to the subsequently received, negative feedback. Over the past 5

years, no enforcement has taken place. Whilst there have been occasional issues in Sutherland Memorial Park, the recommendation of the Cllr that represents Burpham is that the TRO should be revoked. However, the Parks team would prefer the retention of a limited number of controls, so that enforcement action can still be undertaken for issues associated with misuse of the disabled spaces, inconsiderate parking and prolonged stays. East Horsley Parish Council and the Village Hall have also been contacted about East Horsley Kingston Meadows car park proposals. Therefore, the recommendation is to revise the TRO, so that only the disabled space and manner of standing provisions are retained and that all other restrictions relating to free limited waiting, payment and no return on the same day are removed.

7.7. TRO revocations

- 1.7.1. **Bellerby Theatre, Commercial Road 1&2, Guildford Youth & Community and Old Police Station car parks** – all these car parks have now been closed and redeveloped or are in the process of being redeveloped. Therefore, it is recommended that these should be revoked as part of a tidying up exercise.
- 1.7.2. **Moorfield Road car park** – whilst an off-street TRO covers much of the GBC-owned land, the parking area resembles a road, with a carriageway and parking in lay-bys. The GBC-owned areas and areas of public highway are indistinguishable from each other. As a result, when GBC re-engineered both the GBC-owned areas and the areas that form part of public highway in the early 2010s, an on-street TRO was introduced to cover both the areas that are public highway and the areas that are GBC-owned. Therefore, it is recommended that the off-street TRO, which is now also covered by an on-street TRO, should be revoked as part of a tidying up exercise.
- 1.7.3. **White Hart Meadows Ripley car park** – when a temporary, unmade car park was also built on land owned by Ripley Parish Council (RPC) in the mid-2000s, a TRO introduced in this location. The TRO also covered the GBC-owned access road

and parking associated with a GBC-owned old peoples' home. However, when RPC sold its land for redevelopment and GBC closed its old peoples' home, the areas available for public parking were completely revised. RPC now manage the car park, which is located on land leased from GBC. Unlike, EHPC they have not requested the introduction and enforcement of any restrictions within the car park. Therefore, given the above, it is recommended that the off-street TRO should be revoked as part of a tidying up exercise.

7.8. Green Scheme – the scheme was first introduced in the mid-2010s to encourage the take-up of FEVs, whilst the power-source was in its infancy. It now has around 200 holders. The scheme has operated within several of the council's less popular car parks. This provides completely free parking in some car parks and 3 free additional hours of parking in others, for users of FEVs. Now that FEVs and HEVs (Hybrid EVs) make up a sizeable proportion of the new car sales market, and national legislation has banned the sale of new petrol and diesel vehicles from 2035, the need for local schemes to encourage take-up has diminished.

Indeed, if the scheme was retained, it could significantly impact council revenue moving forward and thereby impact the ability of the council to fund additional EVCP infrastructure. The latter is likely to encourage greater take-up / patronage of the borough council's car parks, particularly for those without an ability to charge their vehicle at home. Furthermore, FEVs are generally heavier than ICEVs causing greater wear and tear on car park surfaces, resulting in an increased need for maintenance and upkeep. It is recommended that Green Scheme permit-holders, contribute towards these increased costs, through their payment of standard car park tariffs.

8. Consultations

- 8.1. Colleagues from the council's Legal, Finance, HR, Facilities and Parks team have been consulted as has the Lead Councillor.
- 8.2. Ripley Parish Council has been consulted on the proposal to revoke the TRO relating to White Hart Meadows Ripley Car Park following

previous discussions about the possible management and enforcement of the car park.

- 8.3. East Horsley Parish Council and the Village Hall have been consulted on the proposal to revoke the TRO relating to East Horsley Kingston Meadow car park.
- 8.4. In line with the Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984 and SI 1996 No2489 TRO Procedure Regulations 1996, the proposed changes to the TRO require formal advertisement and the consideration of any representations subsequently received. This gives the public the opportunity to object or support the proposed amendments and the consideration of any representations received will be undertaken in line with the legislative requirements.

9. Key Risks

- 9.1. None identified.

10. Financial Implications

- 10.1. The costs of proposing to revise the TRO and subsequently making the order and amendments will be < £1,000.
- 10.2. The removal of the Green Scheme concession will increase revenue. Given that there are around 200 holders of Green Scheme permits, many of whom are generally regular users, they are presently afforded concessions of up to £4 per day, in some of the car parks where parking is currently free to permit-holders. Those that take advantage of the 3 hours extra free parking will also contribute more to the maintenance and upkeep of the facilities that they use.

11. Legal Implications

- 11.1. None identified. The amendments sought are within the scope of section 35 of the Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984.

12. Human Resource Implications

- 12.1. None

13. Equality and Diversity Implications

- 13.1. Some of the car parks where amendments are proposed have disabled only spaces. Amending the controls and in some cases, extending the hours of control, will improve the prioritisation of these spaces for blue badge holders.
- 13.2. Wider implications – none identified.

14. Climate Change/Sustainability Implications

- 14.1. The provision and effective management of off-street parking feeds into various of both Council's strategies, including transportation, economic development, climate change and sustainability.
- 14.2. Controlling parking through effective enforcement, allows spaces to be prioritised for particular user-groups and this can assist with traffic, congestion, the resultant journey times and pollution.

15. Summary of Options

- 15.1. Do nothing – Were this approach to be adopted, the parking issues experienced at various of the car parks would persist, resulting in poorer ongoing service provision for those users for whom the spaces are intended.
- 15.2. Some or all of the recommendations could be implemented however this would not resolve all the issues raised and identified.

16. Conclusion

- 16.1. These changes will clarify the situation at those car parks that are closed and allow enforcement at the appropriate times of the other car parks identified.
- 16.2. The standardisation of the approach to EVCP will clarify the charging position across the borough and ensure consistency for users.

17. Background Papers

None

18. Appendices

- 20.1. Appendix 1 - Maps of Car Parks where revisions to the parking controls is recommended.
- 20.2. Appendix 2 - Maps of Car Parks where the revocation of the TRO is recommended.