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Pembrokeshire
Business Network

helping your business and Pembrokeshire grow
yn helpu eich busnes a Sir Benfro i dyfu



Rhwydwaith Busnes
Sir Benfro

Dear Colleague,

With the ongoing issue of parking charges in the county, the review of parking restrictions and the new Civil Parking Enforcement Officers (CPE) on the beat, Pembrokeshire Business Network (PBN) has met with Dr Steven Jones, Director of Development at Pembrokeshire County Council (PCC) to discuss the impact on the county's businesses, particularly those in high street locations. The meeting took place at the PLANED Offices, Narberth on Thursday 3rd March, with attendance from Business Groups and Chambers of Trade and some individuals too. Full minutes will be published on the PBN website this week - see

www.pembrokeshire-business.net

Historically, well intentioned restrictions imposed on "on street parking" have all been introduced in the knowledge that enforcement has been minimal, often friendly and relaxed. The introduction of "hunting packs" of CPE enforcers changes this long established situation in what has already been seen to be a very negative way for individuals and businesses.

We understand that the Highways Division of PCC will also be organising meetings with local towns on an individual basis to discuss issues specific to local areas. We consider that there are also many issues which apply to all areas, and that taking a joint approach to highlighting these issues through PBN will be beneficial.

While we are conscious that it is a little early in the CPE regime to get large volumes of objective evidence of the impact that the parking measures are having on high street businesses, it is already clear that some critical issues have emerged. This note gives a brief summary of those issues so far noted, and invites those affected to feed back to PBN and to PCC so that corrective action may be proposed.

Issues noted so far.

1. The "rules" for parking enforcement are not widely known and not openly published, not available on the PCC website. (But are available on request from PCC).
2. Application of rules by Enforcers is sometimes contrary to the Traffic Order and Wales Penalty Processing Partnership procedures.
3. Reliance on studies of vacant business premises and car park usage will miss impending business closures and not encourage corrective action until it is too late.
4. Most towns in the County have insufficient parking spaces, particularly in the tourist season, this encourages use of free out-of -town multiple store parking to the detriment of town centres.
5. Many businesses have survived because of "quickstop" trade using technically illegal very short term parking which is now being greatly inhibited by CPE.
6. Parking for tradesmen - builders, plumbers, electricians often needs to use restricted parking locations, the 3 day notice period to gain parking dispensation is seen as too long, and the £15 fee too big.



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7. Parking for emergency tradesmen - e.g. gas leaks or electrical faults is still subject to no immediate dispensation and CPE enforcement.
8. Care workers, Community nurses, and other social community workers often need speedy access to locations where the only reasonably adjacent parking is restricted. CPE will severely impact on their productivity and the costs of their operations.
9. The impact of CPE on tourists, in the tourist season when parking availability is very limited, will be extremely negative.
10. Imposition of strict CPE on B&B and Hotels during the arrival and departure phases for visitors, particularly those with luggage, will be very damaging to the visitor experience.
11. Enforcement activity has been observed from 8 am to 8 pm, 7 days a week on occasions. This results in penalties being imposed on residents who have become accustomed to returning from work and parking on restricted areas outside their homes.
12. School pick ups by parents often uses restricted parking for a short while, enforcement at these times would cause anger and chaos.

Examples noted to illustrate the above issues :

1. Florist being denied the ability to load vehicles outside the shop - intends to cease trading when lease expires.
2. Delivery lorries being allowed 20 minutes to offload " whether finished or not" prior to issue of fine.
3. Funeral Director no longer allowed to put red cones on building access to ensure exit for hearse - resulting in exit blocked and funeral missed.
4. Tradesmen declining job offers because of parking unavailability.
5. Decline in business in high street locations in excess of 20% for newspapers, and up to 26% for overall business turnover.
6. Reduced footfall in retail locations in Narberth
7. Serious concern in takeaway catering locations reliant on temporary illegal parking for food pick up.

Corrective actions so far proposed :

1. Urgently to review parking restrictions, especially in high streets with the objective to reduce and relax the parking restrictions in the new context of CPE.
2. Publish the WPPP procedures on PCC website.
3. Retrain CPE Enforcers to ensure correct compliance with procedures.
4. Give tradesmen leave to make use of residents parking /single yellow lines during office hours.
5. Create faster special dispensation procedures for tradesmen.
6. Review tradesmen's special dispensation procedure to account for emergency call outs.-gas leaks for example
7. Enable care workers, community health and other key workers to park short term close to client locations, stop on yellow lines to pick up and drop off disabled clients.
8. Reduce pavement width and increase short term (30 minute) parking spaces in Milford.
9. Other county towns would also benefit from more short term parking spaces on high streets.

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