

Place & Resources Overview Committee

1 June 2021

Immobilisation and Removal of Vehicles Parked in Contravention of On-Street and Off-Street Parking Places

Support of the committee

Portfolio Holder: Cllr R Bryan, Highways, Travel and Environment

Local Councillor(s): All

Executive Director: J Sellgren, Executive Director of Place

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Report Status: Public

Recommendation:

That the Place and Resources Overview Committee support the approach outlined to remove vehicles parked in contravention of on-street and off-street parking regulations.

Reason for Recommendation:

It is an offence to park in contravention of the relevant traffic orders. However, vehicles continue to do so. The option to remove vehicles is necessary so that a fair approach to enforcement can be taken. Furthermore, it is important that we can ensure inappropriate parking does not inhibit passage along our highways and in particular access for emergency vehicles.

1. Executive Summary

It is Dorset Council's aim to undertake a fair and transparent approach to the immobilisation and removal of vehicles on its highways and car parks. The linked

policy document “Immobilisation and Removal of Vehicles Parked in Contravention of On-Street and Off-Street Parking Places” outlines the policy used in relation to immobilisation and removal of vehicles parked in contravention of on and off-street parking restrictions.

These guidelines are designed to deal with vehicles that are parked in contravention in the following circumstances:

- Persistent evader vehicles found parked in contravention
- Fraudulent use of disabled persons parking blue badges or an article that purports to be a disabled blue badge.
- Parked in a disabled persons parking bay without displaying a disabled blue badge.
- Parked using a fraudulent permit, scratch card or pay and display parking ticket; inclusive of cashless parking sessions and virtual permits
- Parked in a manner that causes serious obstruction to emergency services and other highway users.

2. Financial Implications

We are able to charge release fees if vehicles are collected. However, this is capped at £105 plus the original Penalty Charge Notice amount. The process to remove a vehicle is likely to cost a similar amount. Where a release fee is charged, there is not likely to be a significant financial cost to Dorset Council if vehicles are removed.

In certain situations, it may be more cost effective to not charge a release fee. For example, if the cost of setting up and manning a suitable temporary compound is greater than the likely income from release fees. In such circumstances a typical rate for removal/repositioning of vehicles to ensure the highway remains unobstructed would be in the order of £1,500 per day. Instances where vehicles need to be removed without charging a release fee are likely to be low. Based on experience from 2020, we could expect to enact this around five times a year. The annual cost would therefore be in the region of £7,500.

3. Well-being and Health Implications

The risk associated with blocking access for emergency vehicles has potential health and wellbeing implications. Following this approach would have a positive impact in this respect.

4. Climate and ecological implications

This approach improves access to our coast, countryside and greenspaces.

5. Other Implications

There are no other implications to different areas of the council.

6. Risk Assessment

Having considered the risks associated with this decision, the level of risk has been identified as:

Current Risk: Medium

Residual Risk: Low

7. Equalities Impact Assessment. There are no equalities implications arising from this report.

8. Appendices

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9. Background Papers None

Footnote:

Issues relating to financial, legal, environmental, economic and equalities implications have been considered and any information relevant to the decision is included within the report.