Background

There are currently seven Controlled Parking Zones (CPZ's) throughout the Borough, all of which were implemented to assist local residents by deterring commuter parking and therefore stop vehicles parking all day in residential streets. Each individual CPZ area operates by having signage at the entry and exit points of each zone, with the actual restriction being indicated by a single yellow line throughout the roads within area. Residents that live within a zone can purchase waiver permits to exempt their vehicles and their visitors’ vehicles from the short restricted period. Each resident is eligible to apply for a waiver permit and two visitor waiver permits. Whilst the CPZ’s were introduced to combat genuine parking problems, and have been successful in forcing commuters to make use of appropriate parking areas and giving local residents priority, there are opportunities to improve some aspects of the current schemes, in particular some operational weaknesses that need to be resolved, and in particular, within the large CPZ close to the Town Centre.

Town Centre CPZ

This CPZ was introduced in 2010 to reduce the impact of high numbers of commuters parking in residential streets to make use of HS1 from Gravesend train station. Due to the success of the CPZ’s within the more rural areas of the Borough, the same principles were applied to this scheme which in reality has not translated in the same way, purely due to the scale of the areas covered. Due to the amount of the CPZ’s within the Borough, and the consultation process that will need to take place with residents, it would be impractical to review all CPZ’s together and so an initial review of the largest zone, the Town Centre CPZ, will be conducted first with further reviews on the rural CPZ’s later in the year.

Next Steps

Due to internal resource limitations and the specialist technical knowledge required to complete this work, the initial review cannot be facilitated solely in house and therefore Officers will work alongside an external contractor that has the Traffic Regulation Order management expertise needed to create and review parking restrictions. It is estimated that this work will cost in the region of £28,000 and this can be funded from the Decriminalised Account reserves. The CPZ review process will consist of on-street audits of the current enforcement model, customer satisfaction surveys with door to door collections, a redesign of the enforcement area including options on different delivery models and charging structures, public drop-in sessions for formal consultation. The outcome of the consultation process will result in the amending, advertising and sealing of a new Traffic Regulation Order. Without incurring any delays, the review is likely to take around 18 weeks from an initial inception meeting through to the end of the review, including the advertising of the new TRO.

Likely Outcomes

- An increase or decrease of CPZ area based on resident feedback during consultation process
- Better definition of internal amended zoned areas to ensure appropriate usage
- Increased control of permit usage to reduce the likelihood of fraudulent use
- An amended pricing structure to ensure consistency with other charges within the Borough.

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