
By: Interim Director, Kent Highway Services
To: Highways Advisory Board – 6th January 2009
Subject: **Enforcement by Motorcycle Patrols – One Year Pilot Scheme**
Classification: Unrestricted

Summary: This report advises Members of the forthcoming Motorcycle Enforcement Pilot Scheme being introduced by Kent County Council in partnership with Thanet District Council under the current Decriminalised Parking Agency Agreement.

This will be a rapid response patrol unit to serve school and rural enforcement providing a highly visible and reactive service.

Introduction

1. The 12 Kent District Councils are responsible for the practical application of parking policy within a framework set by the County Council.
2. The requirements of the Traffic Management Act 2004 and the associated Network Management Duties have placed a responsibility on KCC as the Highway Authority to provide a more efficient and economic civil enforcement package. There is an expectation that local authorities will provide a universal level of enforcement across the highway network with a concentrated presence in areas of increased risk, such as school sites.

Background Information

3. There is a general concern that vehicles parked outside schools on legally enforceable school keep clear markings are causing a potential safety issue in many parts of the County.
4. Traditional enforcement patrols consist of one Civil Enforcement Officer in a van. To regularly enforce school keep clear markings, this patrol must negotiate town centre traffic during the two busiest times of the working day, resulting in the possibility of only one school receiving enforcement per day. As an example, Thanet District contains 54 school keep clear markings and effectively, a regular patrol may take upward of eight weeks to complete an enforcement circuit of the school keep clears within the District.
5. Although the possibility remains of using more than one enforcement patrol to visit the schools, this has serious repercussions on the enforcement of the remainder of the District on a day-to-day basis.

6. There is also a concern that more rural areas and those locations where there are few waiting restrictions are not being enforced as rigorously as other localities and that illegal parking may cause safety issues. Although these sites are included within regular enforcement beats, they are often not enforced as frequently as the busier town centre and heavy residential areas.
7. There are often telephone calls received from members of the general public reporting illegal and unsafe parking both at school sites and in more remote locations. If an enforcement officer is despatched, the vehicle has more often moved on by the time the patrol is able to reach the location.

Future Proposals

8. Kent County Council have agreed to operate a one-year motorcycle enforcement pilot scheme in partnership with Thanet District Council to provide high level enforcement to all schools within their District along with a rapid response to more remote locations. This scheme will commence, following a publicity campaign to local schools, on 1 April 2009.
9. The pilot scheme will be closely monitored in order that all results can be analysed at the end of the 12 month period.

Financial Implications

10. Kent County Council are to provide funding of approximately £40k to purchase one motorcycle, one staff member, all equipment and full training. Thanet District Council will provide all insurance costs, running cost and maintenance. They will employ the necessary staff member under their terms and conditions for a 1 year period.

Benefits and Conclusions of the Pilot Scheme

11. Similar motorcycle enforcement schemes across the Country have been successful in reducing the problems caused by inconsiderate parking outside schools and in more remote locations.
 12. Patrols by motorcycle will significantly increase enforcement outside schools during opening and closing hours and reduce the risks of accidents outside these sites. There will also be a highly visible enforcement presence at these areas of increased risk.
 13. There will be an increase in a rapid response service to enforce more remote and rural areas, especially during those times of the day when congestion occurs within town centres making it difficult for a conventional patrol to reach these sites.
 14. As a consequence of this highly visible, reactive service there should be a resulting increase in positive publicity and public confidence.
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Accountable Officer: Lorna Day, Kent Parking Manager, KHS Network Management
Tel: 01622 693718 E-mail: lorna.day@kent.gov.uk

Background Documents: None