

REPORTING OF UNLICENSED VEHICLES IN COUNCIL CAR PARKS

1 SUMMARY

- 1.1 Members to consider an initiative put forward by the Driver and Vehicle Licensing Agency (DVLA) which involves Local Authority Car Park Patrol Officers fixing a warning notice to the windscreens of unlicensed vehicles in car parks.

2 INTRODUCTION

- 2.1 In June 2000, the DVLA was contacted by a Local Authority concerned about the number of unlicensed vehicles using council car parks. A DVLA representative attended meetings in Winchester and Wigan where it was accepted this was a problem for many Local Authorities.
- 2.2 In December 2000, DVLA, working with 48 Local Authorities from Southern and North West England, introduced a pilot scheme whereby Council Car Park Patrol Officers detected unlicensed vehicles in public car parks and attach a windscreen warning notice (WWN), issued by DVLA, to the vehicles. Carbon Copies of the WWN's are forwarded to DVLA by the Local Authority. The Notice informs the keeper of the vehicle that it is an offence to use or keep an unlicensed vehicle on the public road and, if they intend to do so, they should relicence immediately.
- 2.3 All the carbon copy tickets received at DVLA are entered onto a database, the licensing position checked and if the vehicles are not subsequently relicenced, a letter is sent to the keeper re-iterating the message. Very often the keeper advises DVLA that they have sold the vehicle and notifies them of the change of keeper. A letter is then despatched to the new keeper.
- 2.4 DVLA report that the pilot scheme has exceeding all expectations with 27,500 vehicles reported to date which has resulted in over 40% to relicence voluntarily. DVLA also believe this initiative has a positive effect on road safety as relicensing involves a check of MOT and Insurance Certificates. It also improves the accuracy of the vehicle record which is paramount in helping to reduce vehicle-related crimes.

3 OPERATIONAL IMPLICATIONS

- 3.1 The increase in workload for Car Park Patrol Officers would appear to be minimal, indeed, Officers already note vehicle licence details when issuing a Penalty Charge Notice. The carbon copies of the windscreen warning notices would be returned to the office and despatched on a weekly basis in envelopes supplied by DVLA.
- 3.2 Recent conversations with DVLA indicate that the fine detailing of the initiative is still in progress. However, in view of the negligible increase in workload and the positive contribution the Council would be making in reducing the number of unlicensed vehicles on the roads, it is recommended that the Head of Service is delegated the authority to introduce the scheme when it is rolled out to all local authorities.

4 RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1 The relatively minor administration of this scheme could be absorbed into the daily duties of affected staff.
- 4.2 Ultimately, any initiative that improves the accuracy of vehicle records at DVLA assists the Council when pursuing the non-payment of Parking Penalty Notices.

5 RECOMMENDATION

It is proposed that the Committee **RESOLVES**

- 5.1 That the contents of this report are noted and that the Head of Revenues & Housing Management be delegated powers to determine the introduction of this initiative.
- 5.2 That any progress on this matter be reported in the Members Bulletin.

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