

# MINUTES OF CABINET MEMBER SIGNING MEETING HELD ON MONDAY, 31ST OCTOBER, 2022, 10.30 - 10.35 AM

**PRESENT:** Councillor Seema Chandwani, Cabinet Member for Tackling Inequality and Resident Services.

**In attendance:** Ann Cunningham, Head of Highways and Parking; Andrew Bourke, Parking Policy and Projects Manager; and Fiona Rae, Acting Committees Manager.

## 1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

There were no apologies for absence.

## 2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

## 3. CHANGE TO DISABLED RESIDENTIAL PARKING PERMIT

The Cabinet Member for Tackling Inequality and Resident Services considered the report which noted that the disabled virtual residential parking permit was introduced in December 2021 to replace the Companion Badge. Both of these schemes were introduced to reduce the theft of Blue Badges and associated car break-ins. The original Companion Badge allowed Blue Badge holders to park in disabled bays, residential and shared parking bays, as well as pay to park bays and for up to 3 hours on single or double yellow lines (where no loading restrictions apply), across the borough, without the need to display the Blue Badge thereby reducing the risk of theft.

The new disabled virtual residential parking permit was introduced with slightly less favourable conditions in an attempt to balance the benefits of the scheme with risk of abuse. The disabled virtual residential parking permit scheme has since been reviewed to now fully align with the original Companion Badge. The permit arrangements were currently that:

- Eligibility was extended to allow the vehicle to be registered to anyone in the same household. This was intended to deal with situations of a Blue Badge holder being precluded where the vehicle was registered in the partner's name or where the Blue Badge was issued to a minor.
- Usage was extended borough-wide, allowing holders to park in non-dedicated parking bays, residential, shared use and pay by phone bays across the borough.
- Permit holders were prohibited from parking on single or double yellow lines unless the Blue Badge and the Blue Badge clock were displayed.
- When using the disabled virtual residential parking permit, the Blue Badge must be available for inspection when requested by an Enforcement Officer.
- When using the free (disabled) virtual residential parking permit, the Blue Badge holder must be present either as the driver or passenger of the vehicle and therefore personally making use of the concession, unless parked outside the home of the Blue Badge holder.

The report sought authority to carry out a consultation on a proposal to change part of the arrangements detailed above. The proposal was to allow holders of a disabled virtual residential parking permit to park on single or double yellow lines for up to 3 hours where loading restrictions did not apply, without the need to display the disabled Blue Badge itself. The Blue Badge clock, however, would need to be displayed to determine the time that the vehicle was left. Disabled virtual residential parking permit currently needed to display both the Blue Badge and the Blue Badge clock if parking on single or double yellow lines for up to 3 hours where loading restrictions did not apply.

**The Cabinet Member RESOLVED**

To authorise officers to proceed to statutory consultation under Regulations 6-7 of the Local Authority Traffic Orders Regulations 1996 and Schedule 9 of the Road Traffic Regulations Act 1984 on changing the legal Traffic Management Orders under Section 6 of the Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984 to incorporate the following:

To extend the concessions of the disabled virtual residential parking permit to allow those permit holders to park on single or double yellow lines for up to 3 hours where loading restrictions do not apply, without the need to display the disabled Blue Badge itself but displaying the Blue Badge clock to indicate the time that the vehicle was left.

**Reasons for decision**

Statutory consultation is required prior to changes being legally implemented to parking permit schemes. This report seeks approval to proceed to statutory consultation on the extension of concessions that apply to the disabled virtual residential parking permit. This is intended to increase take up and reduce the theft of Blue Badges.

**Alternative options considered**

Consideration was given to retaining the current conditions which prevented holders of a disabled virtual residential parking permit from parking on single and double yellow lines. This was viewed as unsatisfactory as many Blue Badge holders want to retain as many of the concessions that apply if they were displaying the Blue Badge itself and often there is no other suitable parking within the desired location available especially for those with mobility issues.

CABINET MEMBER: Cllr Chandwani

Signed by Cabinet Member .....

Date ...31 October 2022.....