



Internal Audit Report 2010-2011

Civil Parking Enforcement



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Civil Parking Enforcement
30th June 2011**



INVESTOR IN PEOPLE

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Audit: Civil Parking Enforcement Audit
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1 Introduction

- 1.1 Civil Parking Enforcement (CPE) was introduced in Chichester on the 12th April 2010. Prior to this date Chichester District Council's Patrol Officers enforced off street car parks owned by the Council while Traffic Wardens employed by Sussex Police enforced on-street parking within Chichester City Centre only.
- 1.2 The introduction of CPE has meant West Sussex County Council (WSCC) has taken overall responsibility for on-street parking including all costs for providing this service, but the responsibility to enforce this area has been passed to Chichester District Council. In doing so enforcement of on-street parking is no longer restricted to the city centre but the whole of the district and Traffic Wardens and Patrol Officers have combined and are called Civil Enforcement Officers (CEO's).



2 Scope

- 2.1 The Parking Services Manager who came into post on the 1st January 2011 manages the Civil Parking Enforcement Service. The audit reviewed only Civil Parking Enforcement including the issuing and collection of Penalty Charge Notices (PCN)
- 2.2 The audit focused on the following areas: -
- Project Control
 - Performance Management in the Service
 - Skills and knowledge in the Service
 - Adverse Publicity
 - Risk Assessments
 - General and IT Contingency Planning



3 Findings

- 3.1 The Road Traffic Act 1991 introduced the concept of local authorities undertaking the enforcement of parking management schemes now called Civil Parking Enforcement. West Sussex County Council has an Agency Agreement with Chichester District Council to carry out the Civil Parking Enforcement for Chichester District.
- 3.2 Representatives from both Councils on a monthly basis monitor the Agreement between the two Councils and Chichester District Council's Parking Services Manager produces a monthly Performance Management Report for West Sussex County Council.
- 3.3 The Performance Management Report includes information such as the number of Penalty Charge Notices issued and the income received, this includes both on and off street parking, complaints received and staffing.
- 3.4 Testing on a sample of functions within the agreement found that they had been followed.
- 3.5 The Civil Enforcement Officers employed by Chichester District Council attended the City and Guilds Civil Enforcement Officers Roles and Responsibilities training. Employees who work in the Car Parks Office dealing with Penalty Charge Notices (PCN's) attended the Notice Processing Course.
- 3.6 To ensure PCN's are valid it is important that the correct signage and information is made available to the public. Testing found that all car parks had signs next to the pay and display machines informing the public of the hours and the penalty charge for failure to display a valid ticket. Testing on road markings found that they were not always clear and therefore there are concerns that there are areas that may not be enforceable. Internal Audit was informed that these concerns had been highlighted to West Sussex County Council within their monthly meetings who have responsibility over maintaining road markings.
- 3.7 A sample of roads and car parks to be patrolled by the Civil Enforcement Officers were found to be included on the Services weekly rota giving assurance that necessary areas are being patrolled.
- 3.8 Prior to CPE debt was recovered through the Council's Legal Services. New procedures introduced this year include the use of bailiffs, which are currently being procured by the Parking Services Manager.
- 3.9 It is important that members of the public are provided with all the information about paying and challenging PCNs. Internal Audit found that the back of the PCN and the Council's website informed the recipient on how to make a payment and how to challenge the PCN. The Service has a PCN



Cancellation Policy that is used when members of the public made a challenge.

- 3.10 The Service is able to waive fines for certain circumstances for example if a Penalty Charge Notice contains incorrect information such as the make of car. There is a policy stating action to be taken when such circumstances occur and testing found that this had been followed. Waived fines are currently not reported to anyone, Internal Audit recommends that the Assistant Director (Property Services) is informed of the number and amount on a monthly basis and this information is passed to the Director of Employment and Property when necessary. All remaining debts that cannot be recovered after the full recovery process has taken place are to be reported to Cabinet in accordance with the Councils Constitution for write offs.
- 3.11 The Council is insured to carry out the Civil Parking Enforcement Service covering the liability stated in the contract. Under the Civil Enforcement Officers duty of care they have a responsibility to report any defects or faults as they undertake their duties.
- 3.12 The Parking Services Manager is still to complete the Risk Assessment course enabling him to undertake Risk Assessments for the Civil Parking Enforcement Service. Internal Audit recommends that this be done so that outstanding Risk Assessments can be updated.
- 3.13 Shadow Planner is a business continuity disaster recovery aid used by the Council to ascertain priorities in areas if a disaster occurred. Internal Audit reviewed the disaster recovery procedure currently in place and recommends that the Service includes CPE where relevant into the plan.



4 Conclusion

- 4.1 Internal Audit is satisfied with the way that this service is run.
- 4.2 Internal Audit has made three recommendations.
- 4.3 The implementation details of this recommendation can be seen in the Action Plan below.



5 Action Plan

Recommendation		Officer	Priority	Agreed?	Comments	Implementation Date
3.9	Internal Audit recommends that where tickets have been issued and legitimately been cancelled they should be reported to the Assistant Director (Property Services) on a monthly basis and the Director of Employment and Property when necessary. With all remaining debt that cannot be recovered after the full recovery process has taken place it should be reported to Cabinet with all other write offs.	Parking Services Manager	Medium	Yes		June 2011
3.11	The Parking Services Manager completes his coursework to become fully qualified and therefore able to ensure all Risk Assessments are up to date as required by Health and Safety.	Parking Services Manager	Medium	Yes		July 2011



Recommendation		Officer	Priority	Agreed?	Comments	Implementation Date
3.12	That the Service includes CPE in their Disaster Recovery Plan	Parking Services Manager	Medium	Yes		August 2011

 **High = Fundamental System Weakness – Action is Essential**

 **Medium = Potential Control Weakness – Action Required**

 **Low = Advised for Best Practice**

