

WELWYN HATFIELD BOROUGH COUNCIL
ENVIRONMENT OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE – 23 SEPTEMBER 2019
REPORT OF THE CORPORATE DIRECTOR (RESOURCES, ENVIRONMENT AND
CULTURAL SERVICES)

DRIVEWAY KEEP CLEAR POLICY AND PRICING STRATEGY

1 Executive Summary

- 1.1 An H-Bar (also known as access protection markings, vehicular entrance markings etc.) is an elongated white 'H' on the carriageway that is marked across a vehicular crossing where there is a dropped kerb. Their main purpose is to remind drivers there is an access present and the area should be kept clear of parked vehicles. Hertfordshire County Council has discontinued the practice of putting in H-Bars within the County. Parking Services receive a number of requests from residents regarding the provision of H-Bar road markings.
- 1.2 Vehicular and pedestrian dropped kerbs form part of the borough's Special Parking Area. This means on a request from a resident and if resource is available, an enforcement officer will visit the potential offence, if the vehicle is deemed to be obstructing access a parking ticket will be issued. Although, most dropped kerbs are honoured the visible marking would advise drivers of the extent of the dropped kerb. Particularly in areas which do not want any formal restrictions, this would provide an alternative by providing a visual deterrent to drivers.
- 1.3 In January this Committee recommended to officers to communicate with Hertfordshire County Council (HCC) with a view to amend the current Parking Services Agency Agreement, to allow Welwyn Hatfield Council to offer the installation of H-Bar road markings to their residents. This work on H-Bar has been completed and agreement reached with HCC.

2 Recommendation(s)

- 2.1 The Committee recommends to Cabinet to approve the process outlined in sections 3.3 and 3.4, including the terms and conditions outlined in Appendix A.
- 2.2 To introduce a fee of a £100 to residents for the provision of an "H-Bar", and for the service fee to be included in the fees and charges from 1st April 2020, in line with the Council's budget setting process.

3 Explanation

- 3.1 HCC are responsible for the installation of H-Bar road markings but have discontinued the practise. Many local authorities up and down the country have varying approaches to providing this service to residents.

3.2 The costs for providing H-Bar markings also vary widely. Many authorities charge a non-returnable survey fee for the initial application which covers the inspection and response. An additional fee is then requested for the installation of the markings. The cost for refreshing a H-Bar, once installed, is borne by the authority and carried out as part of their general maintenance. Some councils dispense with an application fee, but charge for the installation of the markings, with an additional fee for any refreshment remarking.

3.3 Officers are proposing to adopt the following process:

- The resident completes' an application form for an H-Bar and makes a payment (£100) at the same time as the application. The form will then be passed through to Parking Services (See Appendix A).
- An officer will go out to the site, and if required and possible meet with the resident to measure the length of the proposed H-Bar.
- Consideration of the application will be assessed as per the requirements detailed on the application form.
- If the application is approved, this will then be added to the next lining order (these are carried out twice a year)
- The drawings will be kept on file if the residents decides to have this refreshed at a later date.
- It is intended that any lining works will be added to the next lining order of which the Council carry out two orders per year. These are carried out between April-September when the weather is generally better.

3.4 If residents already have an H-Bar marking, which was originally marked out by HCC, they will have to apply for the initial application. This is because an officer will still need to go out on site, produce a design and manage the process with a line marking contractor.

4 Legal Implication(s)

4.1 WHBC currently carries out the Borough's Parking Management through an Agency Agreement with HCC. HCC have confirmed that they are happy for us to provide this service, the Agency Agreement will be amended to reflect this retrospectively.

5 Financial Implication(s)

5.1 The intention is that the service will incur no cost to the Council, therefore the fees and charges will be reviewed as part of the Council's budget setting process each year to ensure this it maintained. An unsuccessful application would not be refunded, as the cost of the investigation and administration of payment/refund would equate to the "H." Bar fee.

6 Risk Management Implications

- 6.1 As mentioned this type of marking is only advisory and not enforceable. The applicant would need to be made aware of this at the time they apply for this work.
- 6.2 Payment would need to be made by the resident before an officer investigates and the application may be refused. This is similar to how Herts County Council administer dropped kerb applications and other local authorities which provide such services.

7 Security & Terrorism Implications

- 7.1 There are no known security & terrorism implications inherent in relation to the proposals in this report.

8 Human Resources

- 8.1 There are no known Human Resources implications in relation to the proposals in this report.

9 Communication and Engagement

- 9.1 Any application form must mention how the process works, and the timescales involved. The application form in Appendix A makes it clear that this type of marking is only advisory and not enforceable. Payment must be made before the location is investigated/assessed.

10 Health and Wellbeing

- 10.1 There are no known Health and Wellbeing implications in relation to the proposals in this report.

11 Procurement Implications

- 11.1 There are no known procurement implications in relation to the proposals in this report.

12 Climate Change Implication(s)

- 12.1 There are no known climate change implications in relation to the proposals in this report.

13 Link to Corporate Priorities

- 13.1 This report is linked to the Council's Corporate Priority Protect and Enhance the Environment, and specifically to the achievement to Deliver Effective Parking Services
- Protect and enhance the environment and deliver effective parking services;
 - Engage with our communities and provide value for money

14 Equality and Diversity

14.1 I confirm that an Equality Impact Assessment (EqIA) has been carried out.

14.2 The EqIA found that there is potential for positive impacts on Age, Pregnancy and Disability. The advisory white line (H Bar) could help residents to enter and exit their private property more easily. Therefore, could encourage those vulnerable residents to go out more.

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Background papers

- Appendix A - Application for Advisory Access Marking