

Transport and Environment Committee

10.00am, Thursday, 7 March 2024

Healthcare Worker and Carer (Parking) Permits

Executive/routine
Wards

Executive
All

1. Recommendations

- 1.1 Transport and Environment Committee is asked to:
 - 1.1.1 Note the engagement carried out with key stakeholders, including those currently using a Healthcare Workers' Permit (HWP), to gather views from both paid and unpaid carers on proposals to introduce parking permits to assist them in their duties and the information gathered from other Local Authorities; and
 - 1.1.2 Agree the recommendations set out within the report in respect of eligibility for each type of permit, the duration of parking periods, and the proposed cost of each permit type (as set out in the main report section).
- 1.2 If recommendation 1.1.2 is agreed, Committee is also asked to:
 - 1.2.1 Approve the start of the legal Traffic Order Regulation Order (TRO) process to make the changes to the HWPs; and
 - 1.2.2 Approve the start of the legal Traffic Regulation Order (TRO) process to introduce Carers' parking permits.

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Healthcare Worker and Carer (Parking) Permits

2. Executive Summary

- 2.1 This report provides an update on the results of an engagement on potential changes to the Council's HWP and on the proposed introduction of Carer (parking) permits. The report seeks authority to commence the necessary legal processes to proceed with changes to the HWP and to introduce two new permit types for Carers.

3. Background

- 3.1 In December 2020, the Council approved a [motion](#) which sought to examine the feasibility of implementing parking support to carers.
- 3.2 The motion was addressed in a [report](#) to the Transport and Environment Committee in November 2021.
- 3.3 The November 2021 report identified where the HWP scheme could be improved and modernised and set out how a new permit scheme for both paid and unpaid carers could work.

4. Main report

- 4.1 In considering the proposed approach to supporting healthcare workers, paid carers (who are currently not eligible for an HWP) and carers who are not formally employed by an organisation or who are volunteers (unpaid carers), it is important to recognise the distinction between these types of healthcare professionals and how their needs vary.
- 4.2 Therefore, the proposals outlined below suggest retaining the HWP for NHS employed staff with expanded eligibility criteria to include a limited number of registered charitable organisations who offer similar services to healthcare professionals, such as services provided by specialist cancer nurses.
- 4.3 In addition, it is proposed to introduce two new permits to cover both paid and unpaid carers - a professional Carers' Permit for employed, paid carers and a Personal Carers' Permit will cover informal or unpaid carers.

Engagement Feedback

Healthcare Workers' Permit (HWP)

- 4.4 In addition to the changes identified in the report from November 2021, respondents were asked about the cost of an HWP, the duration of stay period, the terms and conditions of use and the format of the permit.
- 4.5 Regarding cost, most respondents indicated the existing price, set at £10, was about right. However, data from an earlier benchmarking task found that the fee for an HWP in Edinburgh was low in comparison to other Local Authorities (LAs) where healthcare permit costs were equivalent to 13% of the cost of business permits.
- 4.6 The current £10 charge for an HWP equates to roughly 2.5% of the cost of a Business Permit in Edinburgh. If the Council was to consider increasing the cost of an HWP to 13% of the cost of a Business Permit, the cost would be approximately £53.20.
- 4.7 Given the fact that the cost of an HWP has not changed since 2008, it is likely that such an increase in permit price would be considered too great by current users. Therefore, taking into account the positive changes being suggested for the scheme and its users, it is proposed to increase the price of a HWP to £25.00.
- 4.8 Currently, the HWP allows for a two-hour maximum stay in one location. Feedback was split on this, with just more than half indicating this was the right amount of time and similar numbers suggesting two hours was too short to carry out their obligations.
- 4.9 Therefore, it is proposed to extend the maximum stay duration for the HWP to four hours.
- 4.10 Many respondents said they were often left confused by the terms and conditions of use surrounding where and when an HWP can be used. For example, the permit can be used to park in pay and display and shared use parking places in all zones except the Central Zones (Zones 1 to 4). This means healthcare workers always need to correctly identify which zone they are parking in and ensure the HWP is valid in that zone which is an additional unnecessary burden.
- 4.11 Therefore, it is proposed to allow all HWP holders to park in pay and display and shared use parking places in all zones, including the Central Zones. This will deliver consistency and reduce confusion.
- 4.12 In addition, the terms and conditions will be updated to allow permits to be used in permit holder parking places within Priority Parking Areas (PPA) due to the scarcity of yellow lines and public parking places in these areas.
- 4.13 These improvements to the HWP will benefit permit holders, with more parking places being made available to them.
- 4.14 HWPs are currently issued in a paper format. All respondents wanted to retain this current format and due to the conditions in place (such as the requirement to set a

clock on arrival and the fact the permit is intended to be shared between users) it is recommended to retain the permit in its current format.

Carers' Permits

- 4.15 Research from the benchmarking exercise showed that most similar sized LAs had a broader ranging scope for their version of an HWP than is covered in the current criteria.
- 4.16 The most common category of permit issued by the other LAs is a Carer Permit. As care is not always provided by an NHS healthcare worker, this category of worker is currently at a disadvantage when it comes to parking within the Controlled Parking Zones (CPZ).
- 4.17 Our consultation results demonstrated that both paid (97%) and unpaid (90%) carers were interested in the introduction of a Carers' Permit.
- 4.18 As outlined in the November 2021 report, it is therefore proposed to proceed with the introduction of a Professional Carers' Permit and a Personal Carers' Permit.
- 4.19 To avoid the excessive uptake of permits that could potentially adversely affect delivery of the City Mobility Plan, the number of permits issued should be limited to those who are eligible and would see the most benefit.

Professional Carers' Permit

- 4.20 The eligibility criteria for this permit type were set out in the November 2021 report.
- 4.21 The Permit would be available to applicants who can demonstrate proof of providing care in the community. This would include the requirement to provide an employer/work ID card to identify the individual along with a letter, signed by their employer confirming their requirement for a permit.
- 4.22 The Permit would be valid in all CPZs and PPAs in Edinburgh and would allow holders to park for up to a maximum of two hours in pay and display, shared use and permit holders parking places.
- 4.23 The benefits available from the proposed Professional Carers' Permit are comparable with the Council's other parking permit schemes and therefore it is proposed to price these permits at a similar level to the Trades parking permit, currently charged at £1,520.20 per annum.
- 4.24 To reflect the fact the Professional Carers' Permit can be used at multiple locations throughout the day but each stay is limited to a two hour maximum per location, it is proposed that Permit should be priced at £700. The cost of a permit will increase annually in line with the Fees and Charges agreed by the Council each year.
- 4.25 As this permit type will only be available to employed professionals, the cost is not considered unreasonable and is in keeping with the recommendation from the benchmarking exercise. The permit will be issued to an organisation, or self-employed Professional Carer, and a number of vehicles can be registered to use the permit (although only one can park at any one time). There is no maximum number of permits that can be purchased. This means a sufficient number of

permits can be purchased by organisations and passed out to the staff member who needs it each day.

- 4.26 Applications for this permit type can be managed by the Council's existing permit management system, with proof of eligibility forming part of the application process.
- 4.27 As this permit will be transferrable between staff and has a maximum stay allocation, the permit will need to be issued in a paper format with a moveable clock.

Personal Carers' Permit

- 4.28 This permit would be available to applicants that can provide evidence of a formal requirement of care declaration, from a cared-for person's General Practitioner (GP) which establishes the cared-for person's name and registered address and their requirement for 20 or more hours of care per week.
- 4.29 In addition, the applicant (as the person providing the care) must supply proof that they are in receipt of Department of Work and Pensions (DWP) Carers' Allowance or Carers' Credit.
- 4.30 The Permit would be valid for use within shared use and permit holders parking places within a single zone or area in which the cared-for person resides.
- 4.31 As this permit will essentially offer similar concessions to a residential parking permit, it is proposed that the permits are priced at a comparable level. Residents' parking prices are based on the zone or area for which they are applying and on the CO2 emissions or engine size of the vehicle and are subject to a diesel surcharge. More information on parking permit prices is available at:
<https://www.edinburgh.gov.uk/parking-permits/residents-parking-permit-prices/1>.
- 4.32 Only one permit will be issued for an address, however a maximum of two vehicles can be registered to use it. There is no maximum stay imposed on this permit type which means the unpaid carer is free to spend as much quality time with their family or friend as required.
- 4.33 Applications for this permit type can be managed by the Council's existing permit management system, with proof of eligibility required as part of the application process.
- 4.34 As it is proposed to issue this permit in a similar way to a Residents' Permit, it will be issued in an electronic format. This means the permit will be available for the Parking Attendant to view on his handheld device.

5. Next Steps

- 5.1 If Committee agree to proceed with the three permit types set out in the main section of this report, officers will begin to:
 - 5.1.1 Commence the start of the legal Traffic Order Regulation Order (TRO) process to make the changes to the HWPs; and

- 5.1.2 Commence the start of the legal TRO process to introduce Carer's parking permits as outlined above.

6. Financial impact

- 1.1 All costs associated with the consultation were met from within existing Parking and Traffic Regulation budgets in financial year 2022/23.
- 1.2 These costs relate to consultant's fees for undertaking the consultation, advertising it and producing a report on the findings.
- 1.3 Costs associated with the next stage of this process, including any legal Traffic Regulation Order (TRO) processes, will also be met from within existing Parking and Traffic Regulation budgets.
- 1.4 There will also be costs associated with developing the permit management software to deal with applications and costs associated with the printing of the Professional Carers Permit.
- 1.5 It is currently estimated that all costs for enforcement and delivery of the service will be covered by income generated by the sale of the new permit types.
- 1.6 This will be monitored and should there be surplus income generated by the new permit types it will be reinvested in transport improvements.

7. Equality and Poverty Impact

- 1.7 All of the Integrated Impact Assessments relating to the Council's Parking Action Plan and associated projects can be found on the Council's [website](#).

8. Climate and Nature Emergency Implications

- 8.1 As a public body, the Council has statutory duties relating to climate emissions and biodiversity. The Council

“must, in exercising its functions, act in the way best calculated to contribute to the delivery of emissions reduction targets”

(Climate Change (Emissions Reductions Targets) (Scotland) Act 2019), and

“in exercising any functions, to further the conservation of biodiversity so far as it is consistent with the proper exercise of those functions”

(Nature Conservation (Scotland) Act 2004)

- 8.2 The City of Edinburgh Council declared a Climate Emergency in 2019 and committed to work towards a target of net zero emissions by 2030 for both city and corporate emissions and embedded this as a core priority of the Council Business Plan 2023-27. The Council also declared a Nature Emergency in 2023.

Environmental Impacts

- 1.8 The introduction of new permit types and associated charges will have a positive impact on the climate and will be fully supportive of the Council's City Mobility Plan objectives and Net Zero ambitions.

9. Risk, policy, compliance, governance and community impact

- 9.1 These proposals have been discussed with key stakeholders as part of a consultation which ran from 6 March until 30 April 2023. The survey received 554 responses in total.
- 9.2 Respondents were given the opportunity to complete an online survey to share their views on the HWP and proposals to introduce two new carer permits.
- 9.3 Stakeholders from GP surgeries, community and healthcare organisations were also invited to book a virtual meeting with our independent project team to share their feedback and to ask questions about the project and consultation. A total of six meetings took place between 22 and 28 March 2023.

10. Background reading/external references

- 10.1 [Healthcare Worker and Carer \(Parking\) Permits](#) reported to the Transport and Environment Committee on 11 November 2021
- 10.2 [Controlled Parking Scheme - Edinburgh Healthcare Worker's Parking Permits](#) reported to the Transport, Infrastructure and Environment Committee on 29 July 2008.
- 10.3 [Controlled Parking Scheme - Update on Edinburgh Healthcare Workers' Permits](#) reported to the Transport, Infrastructure and Environment Committee on 25 November 2008.

11. Appendices

None.