

Request:

FOI Request – Scrutiny of Parking Control in North Tyneside, Zone LB1

In order to determine if residents are being targeted for parking infringements, rather than benefitting from a paid-for service, to discourage non-residents parking, please supply the following data for Zone LB1 :-

For Period 1, from 1st January 2018 to 31st December 2018, and for comparison, the previous year, Period 2, 1st January 2017 to 31st December 2017 :-

1. How many PCN's were issued by CEOs for parking infringements within the Zone LB1?

The Permit Zone is not a designated parameter within the Council's Notice Processing software system. The Council can only provide penalty charge notice data by specific street/road.

2. Of those receiving PCNs in Period 1, what is the breakdown of residents, versus non-residents of Zone LB1? Records of the vehicle having had a recently expired permit for Zone LB1 (within 6 months of the PCN) will be accepted as evidence of residence, in addition to DVLA records where available.

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Also the current parking permit database is not linked to the Notice Processing system so the Council cannot determine whether a vehicle issued with a penalty charge notice has a valid permit registered to it. It is also worth noting that Residents' Visitor Permits are not assigned to a specific vehicle.

With regard to the supporting evidence associated with an appeal against a penalty charge notice, each case is considered on its own merits. However, the terms and conditions of the permit and the Traffic Regulation Order associated with the permit scheme confirm that there is no legal obligation on the Council's behalf to notify the applicant when their permit is due to expire. The expiry date is printed on the permit as well as the permit zone that it is applicable for and it is not unreasonable to expect the driver to make themselves aware of these details. The terms and conditions make it quite clear that it is the permit holders' responsibility to ensure that they display a valid permit whilst parked in the permit zone during the restriction period. This is also repeated on the letter that is sent out with the permit.

3. Do Parking Control still assist residents in complying with regulations by sending reminders for upcoming renewal of parking permits, and if not, why not?



Reference: FOI0848

The Council have issued a letter 28 days prior to the expiry of the permit(s) for the past few years however this was not specifically intended to be a reminder letter. This letter contained an activation code that enabled the applicant to renew the permit via the Council's website without the need to speak to an officer of the Parking Control team, provided that the applicants' details were unchanged. The letter was generated automatically by the Permit Management software system and sent out to the permit holder by an external print company. The system was created a few years ago to overcome issues experienced by the public in contacting the Parking Control team during periods of high demand and provided the applicant with a process that enabled them to renew their permit at any time during the 28 day period prior to the permit expiring.

Due to security concerns associated with the platform that this previous software system was operating on, the Council took the decision to deactivate that permit management IT system on 05 September 2017, in advance of a new software system becoming operational later this year. Unfortunately development of the new permit management IT system could not be completed until the Council's parking permit review was completed, which established the new polices and charges. This was completed in June and came into operation on 16 July 2018. The software developer has now been notified of the Council's new permit polices, including the Virtual Permit facility that will replace the Resident Permit, and is developing a bespoke solution to achieve this. It is hoped that the new system will be operational by summer 2019.

As the permits are currently being managed by Parking Control staff on a simple excel spreadsheet during the interim period, it is not possible to continue with the automated letter/activation code system. A similar system will however be re-introduced when the new IT system is fully operational. The Council have continued to operate an online renewal facility, although it does require an officer from Parking Control to ring the applicant back to take payment for the permit, where applicable, before it can be processed. The renewal form creates a simple e-mail request to the Parking Control team with the relevant details – the Council require the applicant to complete this as it is in effect a declaration that the applicant will use the permit in accordance with the terms and conditions of use. The link to the current Renewal facility on the Council website is <https://my.northtyneside.gov.uk/category/709/renew-parking-permit>

4. For Period 1 and Period 2, how many PCNs were appealed, and how many rescinded, and on what grounds?

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