

DOVER DISTRICT COUNCIL

REPORT OF THE DIRECTOR OF ENVIRONMENT AND CORPORATE ASSETS

DOVER JOINT TRANSPORTATION BOARD – 9 JUNE 2016

## **APPLICATIONS FOR DISABLED PERSONS' PARKING BAYS**

### **Recommendation**

The Board is asked to comment upon draft revised procedural guidance in relation to applications for Disabled Persons' Parking Bays. Comments from the Dover Joint Transportation Board will, wherever practicable, be incorporated into the final version of the procedural guidance.

### **Background**

The working practices and procedures have been considered by Officers as part of a wider review of the workings of the Council's Property Services team. In relation to Disabled Persons' Parking Bays (DPPBs), consideration was given in particular to:

- Measures to **simplify the application process** for both applicants and DDC. These include encouraging on-line transactions, which are the most cost-effective form of transaction but which also give applicants the convenience of completing the forms at the time of their choosing.
- Measures to **shorten the time period from initial application to both interim and full installation of the DPPB.**
- Measures to **ensure that the various procedures within the application process are dealt with by the appropriate member of staff.** Administrative processes should be undertaken by administrative staff whilst the decision to approve or refuse needs to be retained as a function of suitably qualified professional staff.

### **Review Findings**

As part of the review, Officers created a process map for the DPPB function, which identified the steps in the procedure as well as the points in the process which caused delay and cost.

The key features of the existing process that were identified as causing delays were:

**The fact that Officers were presenting recommendations for decision by JTB** and hence the decision could not be made until the following JTB meeting. The legislation is such that the JTB is an advisory body considering among other things the appropriateness of Officer decisions. Hence by adjusting the process to allow for very early informal comments to be fed in to the process by the Chairman and/or Vice-Chairman on behalf of the JTB:

1. Individual decisions can be made at Officer level and reported to JTB, thereby eradicating any delay.
2. Advertising: Since advertising in the local press is expensive practice in recent years has been:
  - a. to conduct an informal consultation so that the formal consultation was less likely to lead to objections, in turn triggering an amendment and further consultation;
  - b. to save up individual DPPBs until there are enough to warrant the cost of a press announcement. Often the notice gives details of other highways schemes involving changes to Traffic Regulation Orders.

This causes delays, sometimes of up to 3-4 months and, in part because of the delays, there have been two adverts in the press, one as the formal consultation process and one to announce the installation of the formal DPPB. The regulations controlling amendments to traffic orders requires that there is 'at least' one press announcement, which means that the second advert is in fact a non-statutory addition to the process, which again leads to delays.

The review concluded that alterations to the procedures and processes, as described in the attached document, could lead to a quicker, easier process for the applicant and a significant saving in resources on the part of DDC.

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