

Open Report on behalf of Richard Wills, Executive Director for Economy and Environment

Report to:	Highways and Transport Scrutiny Committee
Date:	14 December 2015
Subject:	Permit Scheme

Summary:

This report sets out the detail for the proposed introduction of a Permit Scheme for Lincolnshire. The Permit Scheme will improve the Council's ability to manage all works on the highway network, to minimise inconvenience and prevent disruption to road users.

Actions Required:

The Committee is asked to note and make comment on the report.

1. Background

The Authority is considering the introduction of a Permit Scheme to replace its existing Notice Scheme to control third party activity on the highway. The Permit Scheme will allow the Authority to proactively manage this activity to minimise its impact on the highway network and its users.

The Department for Transport (DfT) have just issued standard, national guidance on the introduction of a Permit Scheme. This has simplified the consultation and other elements required to introduce a scheme and it is now believed to be an appropriate time to consider the introduction of a scheme in Lincolnshire.

Working with our professional services partner, Mouchel, we have undertaken a preliminary review of the introduction of a Permit Scheme and have visited existing schemes to develop an understanding of the issues which may materialise.

Permit schemes provide highway authorities with the means to better manage activities on their road network, to minimise inconvenience and prevent disruption to road users. Permit schemes require that anyone carrying out works in the highway needs to apply for permission, in advance of the works.

A Permit Scheme has the potential to improve management of all works on local highway networks including our own works and significantly reduce unnecessary disruption to road and highway users. Where schemes are implemented, the

Authority grants permits to undertake works on the highway which enables improved co-ordination of works and reduced disruption on the network. This provides greater control over works in their areas, for example, working outside peak hours when appropriate.

There are a number of different types of Permit Schemes:

- **Single Authority Schemes** - cover some, or all, of the highway network managed by an individual local highway authority
- **Common Schemes** – a group of local highway authorities, covering a particular area or sub-region, agree to implement functionally identical permit schemes, which are then managed separately by the individual local highway authorities
- **Joint Schemes** – a group of local highway authorities agree to implement a single scheme, managed and run centrally on behalf of them all

We are exploring the opportunity to develop a common or joint scheme with neighbouring authorities.

There are then two recognised approaches to implementing one of the Permit Scheme models identified:

- Permits required for all roads, including minor roads, each application scrutinised individually with fee discounts waivers applied clearly set out in the scheme; or
- Permits required only for strategically significant streets (usually reinstatement categories 0, 1, 2 and traffic sensitive street) using the NRSWA noticing regime on all other roads

We currently expect to implement a scheme for the whole network.

The successful introduction of a scheme will require around twelve additional staff to those currently deployed on our street works operation. The additional cost of this resource will be offset by the income received from permit fees. A robust cost benefit analysis will be undertaken as part of the implementation process to ensure that the Authority is not exposed to any cost risk.

A comprehensive consultation process will be undertaken as part of the project commencing in January and lasting for three months. Main consultees will include organisations which have used the existing service over the last two years such as utility companies.

The implementation date for the scheme is currently planned for October 2016.

2. Conclusion

The Committee's comments are sought on the proposals prior to the implementation of the scheme in October 2016.

2. Consultation

n/a

a) Policy Proofing Actions Required

n/a

3. Appendices

None

5. Background Papers

There are no background papers associated with this report.

This report was written by Paul Rusted, Infrastructure Commissioner, who can be contacted on 01522 553071 or paul.rusted@lincolnshire.gov.uk.

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