



TITLE OF CONSULTATION: VOLUNTEER AND NHS / SOCIAL CARE PERMIT SCHEMES

OFFICER REQUESTING: AMY THOMAS – PRINCIPAL ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT OFFICER

1.0 PURPOSE

1.1 To seek approval for a Volunteer Car Parking Permit Scheme and an NHS / Social Care Worker Car Parking Permit Scheme as outlined below.

2.0 RECOMMENDATION(S)

2.1 It is recommended that:

- (i) The existing Volunteer Permits which have been issued by NYCC as part of the Community Connect Volunteer Scheme are formalised into an RDC scheme so they can be managed and accounted for fully.
- (ii) A new RDC administered scheme for NHS and Social Care workers is established to meet the needs of those who cannot currently access the government universal health care and volunteers parking pass and concessions scheme.

3.0 REASON FOR RECOMMENDATION(S)

3.1 Currently there are approx. 135 NYCC issued volunteer permits in circulation in Ryedale. These were issued to volunteers registered with the Community Support Organisation by NYCC / the Community Support Organisation without prior agreement of RDC. This permit entitles the holder to free parking in all RDC car parks whilst undertaking duties in relation to their volunteering role.

3.2 Volunteers are expected to begin ending their volunteering roles on a phased basis from 31 July. It is proposed that the existing permits are retained and that permit holders are informed via the Community Support Organisation that these permits are valid until the date their volunteering role ends, after which point they will expire and a valid ticket will be required to park.

3.3 The number of active volunteers and live permits will be reviewed in mid-September and if permits are still required for volunteers beyond the end of September, the Community Support Organisation will inform RDC and time limited RDC permits will be issued.

3.4 Any enquires for permits from volunteers volunteering on an independent basis will be directed to the Community Support Organisation to register with them and receive a

permit if deemed appropriate.

- 3.5 Any new RDC permits and their expiry date will be issued in consultation with the Head of Customer Service.
- 3.6 It has become apparent that the Government's universal parking pass and concessions scheme for NHS and health care workers is not accessible to all who are working in this sector. Passes for this scheme are applied for through the NHS and Local Authorities, however the council is not aware of NYCC issuing these permits. Several direct communications have been received from local GP surgeries and the CCG requesting permits for staff as they cannot access this scheme and are looking to RDC to provide some assistance. As free car parking for workers in this sector is legally required, an RDC scheme to fill the gap is required. There is no indication of how many passes would be required. It should be noted that the universal scheme permits will also be eligible in Ryedale due to some NHS workers already having these.
- 3.7 Government guidance online (<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-health-care-and-volunteer-workers-parking-pass-and-concessions/covid-19-health-care-and-volunteer-workers-parking-pass-and-concessions>) for the Health, Care and Volunteer Workers Parking Pass and Concessions Scheme states that the 'pass provides evidence of entitlement to free parking for those on duty as an NHS staff member, health or social care worker, or NHS Volunteer Responder. This is to enable them to access parking concessions in local authority-owned off-street car parks and on-street bays during the COVID-19 emergency response period'. The guidance does not specify which roles this will apply too. Blanket coverage is therefore assumed.
- 3.8 It is proposed that an online application form be developed and an application be submitted by each Ryedale based health organisation requiring permits for staff working in Ryedale. Requests will be processed by the Customer Services Team / Communities Team and issued to each organisation. Both teams have been involved in discussions and the design of the process. In addition the IT team have been consulted and have agreed to this process.
- 3.9 As no government confirmation has been received regarding how long this scheme is to be offered for, permits will initially be issued until 30 September 2020.
- 3.10 Applicant organisations will be requested to submit details for each member of staff requiring a permit including name, position or role within the organisation, temporary / permanent staff, car registration number and NHS number if applicable.
- 3.11 RDC produced permits suitable for use in all RDC car parks will be issued with the above details on. Standard terms and conditions of use (similar to those on RDC Staff Permits) will be printed on the reverse along with the requirement for the applicant organisation to surrender the permit if an individual leaves the organisation. Permits will not be transferable.
- 3.12 If additional permits are requested in the future, these requests must be made via the same online form and requests will be processed as and when required.
- 3.13 The situation will be reviewed in early September and new, extended permits can be issued if required.
- 3.14 Details of any schemes developed will be shared with the Parking Enforcement Team at SBC.
- 3.15 Any vehicle parked without displaying a valid permit will be issued with a Parking Contravention Notice if appropriate.

- 3.16 All permit holders must adhere to all existing rules of use as indicated both on the permit and on existing car park signage.

4.0 SIGNIFICANT RISKS

- 4.1 There appears to be a significant number of health care workers employed via the CCG or GP practices, which technically operate as small businesses within the NHS system (as NHS England pays GP surgeries to deliver services), who cannot access the government scheme. For example, in Pickering Medical Practice alone, permits have been requested for around 50 members of staff. Issuing permits on this scale across Ryedale could result in a significant impact on car park revenue generation and space availability, particularly in those car parks closest to medical centres such as Water Lane in Malton, Vivis Lane in Pickering and Town Farm car park in Kirkbymoorside. As permits will be required to be requested by the employer, permits will only be issued to workers working in Ryedale and therefore requiring use of the car parks. The existing government guidance does not distinguish between different roles that would be eligible for a permit – it only states it is for ‘those on duty as an NHS staff member, health or social care worker, or NHS Volunteer Responder’.
- 4.2 The number of permits which will be requested and issued is unknown as we have no way of knowing how many health and social care workers there are within both the public sector and private health care providers.
- 4.3 Other independent volunteers / volunteer groups not connected to the Community Support Organisation may also request permits for their volunteering duties. A small number of comments / complaints about the lack of provision of permits for volunteers has been made via social media. Communications will need to be clear that volunteer permits are only being provided to volunteers registered with the Community Support Organisation. A permit system open to all individuals volunteering on an independent basis will be difficult to manage and monitor for authenticity, and could be open to misuse.

5.0 IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 The following implications have been identified:
- a) Financial – the following figures have been discussed with Finance officers.
- Car parking charges were reintroduced from 6 June 2020. If permits are provided with an expiry date of 30 September 2020, this is the equivalent of approximately 4 months free car parking. To provide an indication of cost, the closest permit the council offers to this is a 6 month short stay permit at £30.00. Across the 135 volunteers this equates to £4,050. This figure will be added to the MHCLG Cost Register.
 - For the health and social care workers scheme, as the council has no indication of how many permits will be requested. The cost of providing this cannot be indicated in advance. However as an example if 100 permits are issued the cost of this will be a further £3,000. A register of permits issued will be maintained and a figure will be provided for the MHCLG Cost Register in the future.
 - The online form and permits can be created and produced in-house. This has been discussed with the Customer Services, Communications and IT teams.
 - The costs associated with purchasing card for the permits and the cost of postage will be recorded and assigned to the COVID ledger codes and identified on the MHCLG Cost register. These are expected to be minimal

as permits will be posted in single batches to applicant organisations. Postage costs will depend on how many permits are requested and their collective weight.

- b) Legal
Provision of free car parking for health and social care workers and NHS Volunteers is a government requirement of Local Authorities.
- c) Other (Equalities, Staffing, Planning, Health & Safety, Environmental and Climate Change, Crime & Disorder)
The proposed schemes have been discussed with the appropriate officers from the Customer Services and Communities Teams as staffing from within these teams will be utilised to administer the schemes. IT and Communications support will also be required and this has been discussed with the relevant officers. All teams have confirmed that they are able to resource the above proposals.

6.0 MONITORING OFFICER ADVICE

This is effectively a policy decision to agree to exempt certain groups from the agreed car parking fees through the operation of two permit schemes. The Leader as the Chair of the Policy and Resources Committee should therefore be consulted.

7.0 CONSULTATION RECORD

According to the Constitution, under urgency powers, decisions usually taken by the Council and its committees are taken by the CEO following consultation with the appropriate elected members.

The appropriate elected members are:

- The Leader of the Council
- The Chair of the appropriate committee, for matters relating to that specific committee¹
- Relevant Ward member(s), if any, for matters of particular relevance to that ward²

Name of consultee	Cllr Duncan – Leader of Council
This decision is urgently required in order to comply with the government's new scheme and recognise hard-working volunteers. The permits should be strictly controlled and time-limited to ensure they are benefitting those who are eligible.	
Date consultation completed	10-07-20

8.0 DECISION

Decision of the Acting CEO (Phillip Spurr) based on consultation	The recommendations are approved.
Date	10-07-20

¹ "Chairman of the appropriate Committee" refers to committee specific matters and does not mean that all Committee Chairs will be consulted on everything

² "Relevant Ward Member(s), if any" refers to ward specific matters and does not mean that all Members will be consulted on everything