Information

PROVIDING SUPPORT FOR COUNTY COUNCILLORS

Sheet Number:

2017-21/02

for County Councillors

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| From: | Oliver Woodhams, Strategic Manager, Community & Traded Services |

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| Date: | Monday 5 June 2017 |

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| To: | All County Councillors |

# Summary: To provide all County Council Members with information relating to changes to Somerset’s Parking Enforcement and Parking permits

# New Parking Permit portal

Background

**Background**

Somerset County Council is the highways authority for the County and is responsible for civil parking enforcement services for on-street parking throughout the county and for car-parks in four of the districts: Mendip; Sedgemoor; Taunton Deane; and West Somerset.

Since 2012 the enforcement and processing of all penalties and permits has been undertaken on behalf of SCC by our outsourced parking contractor NSL. Following a review and a Cabinet Member key decision in October 2016, the processing of penalties and permits is being insourced to SCC to be undertaken by Council officers from 12 June 2017.

These changes will reduce costs and will improve some aspects of the service to residents. Following a full tender process, a new parking IT system is being provided by Chipside Limited which provides a similar service to other local authorities including Dorset and Gloucestershire.

Residents will not see a difference to parking enforcement and penalty payments except the addresses and telephone numbers involved will move to Taunton in respect of penalties and Wiltshire in respect of permit enquires.   
NSL are to continue with the on street and car park enforcement.

**Weekend maintenance Friday 9th - Monday 12th June**

To enable an efficient and secure hand-over to the new process, the old IT and payment systems will cease during Friday 9th June. At that point customers wishing to make payments, lodge challenges or order permits via the website or pay via the voice recognition system will receive a message advising the system is down for essential maintenance. This will confirm that all penalty cases have been placed on hold (to avoid customers being penalised for any delayed payment / appeal as a result of the system being down). No customers will be disadvantaged by the downtime, which is necessary to ensure the safe and secure transfer of data between the old and new systems.

From 12th June the new system will be up and working and customers will be able to pay / appeal / apply as normal.

**Change to Parking permits**

The annual resident permit and the annual care workers permit are to be become ‘virtual’ and there will be no need to display a permit. This will be the same as car tax since the phasing out of the tax disc.

Visitor permits will continue to be available as physical annual permits or a series of scratch cards. All existing permit holders will be receiving a letter explaining this new process. When annual permits are due to expire residents will receive a renewal reminder by email (if held) or a letter.

The administration of permits will move from NSL’s offices in Oldham to County Hall and our IT Partner based in Wiltshire.

Apart from permits, contact details and some improvements to the SCC parking web pages, residents will see little change to how parking is administered and enforced in the county. All payments will be received directly by SCC via online, automated telephone system, or by post, rather than via our current parking contractor NSL.

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