

Proposed changes to parking enforcement policy

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Introduction

The control and policing of parking controls and restrictions in Dublin City Council's administrative areas is undertaken by the Parking Enforcement Contractor, Dublin Street Parking Services (DSPS). The options for enforcement currently available to the agents are clamping, where an immobilisation device, the clamp, is applied to the vehicle and it remains in-situ until the release fee is paid. They may also relocate the vehicle and subsequently clamp it, and finally where necessary the offending vehicle is brought to the DSPS Pound.

The focus for DSPS is to keep the movement of people and vehicles around the city as free as possible by ensuring that parking is carried out in a legal fashion especially in relation to bus, cycle lanes, clearways and access to driveways. In addition they to keep a regular turnover of legal parking in pay & display areas and discourage all day commuter parking.

This is primarily achieved by using the methods outlined above. While these methods continue to be effective for the majority of enforcement actions, there remains a constant challenge for Dublin City Council in tackling illegal parking on bus and cycle lanes, short stay illegal parking in general and footpath parking in particular.

In the case of a vehicle illegally parked in a bus lane or cycle track, clamping the offending vehicle ensures that the disruption to the bus or bike lane continues until such time as the owner returns and pays the fine and has the clamp removed and so in general is not the preferred option. Relocating the vehicle is therefore the preferable approach but while waiting for the tow truck to arrive the offending vehicle may be removed by the owner without any penalty.

Similarly for short term illegally parking on footpath loading bays etc. regular clamping does address the issue but it is not as effective where several vehicles are illegally parked, say outside a commercial area, as the clamp takes a few minutes to apply and often the other vehicles in the area can be moved away by the owners without any enforcement. This has brought Dublin City Council to the conclusion that an additional form of enforcement is required.

Proposal

In an effort to address specific illegal parking offences, listed hereunder, Dublin City Council are proposing to commence issuing a Fixed Penalty Notice with respect to these. The issuing of the Fixed Penalty Notice will complement the existing parking enforcement methods and this will not be a standalone service.

Dublin City Council will still use clamping and relocation of vehicles as before but now add the ability that enforcement may also be by way of fixed penalty notices where appropriate. Initially to gauge the effectiveness of the Fixed Penalty Notice, Dublin City Council will carry out a pilot scheme, where the incumbent contractor DSPS will issue the notices on behalf of the City Council. Parkrite, who

manage DSPS, have extensive experience in this area and carry out this function for a number of other local authorities. The list below are the main offences that a Fixed Penalty Notice is better suited to addressing;

- Blocking Clearways, Cycle tracks, Bus lanes
- Footpath Parking
- Non Commercial Parking in Loading bays
- Illegal Coach / Bus Parking

Again this will be deployed to complement the existing measures used to tackle illegal parking. It is proposed that after the pilot scheme of 12 months, Dublin City Council will report back to the Transportation SPC on how effective the Fixed Penalty Notices have been and outline further proposals for consideration.

Dublin City Council has done much research into this area over the last few months both with the DCC Law Agent and DLR Co. Council and it is proposed that the issuing of Fixed Penalty Notices would commence in the second Quarter of 2021. The commencement date will be well publicised both to the Full Council members and the wider public.

Dublin City Council is of the opinion that this additional enforcement tool will increase parking compliance in key areas and lead to less obstructions and interference with pedestrians, cyclists and vehicle flows.

Therefore we believe that the policy around parking enforcement should be changed to now include the addition of Fixed penalty notices as outlined above.