

Enquiries to: Mary Pitcaithly  
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Date: 7 November 2013



**Falkirk Council**  
*Chief Executive Office*

Ch Supt D Flynn  
Local Police Commander  
Forth Valley Division  
Police Scotland  
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Dear Davie

### **Review of Traffic Warden Provision**

I refer to your letter dated 1 October 2013 concerning Police Scotland's proposal to withdraw the provision of your traffic warden service.

I understand that Police Scotland has conducted a review of the service delivered by traffic wardens and concluded that this service should be withdrawn. I would acknowledge your invitation to provide views on this matter, albeit that no timescales for response have been indicated. Given the likely adverse and significant impact that these proposals will have on Falkirk Council, I would ask you to consider the following comments. Members will have a chance to consider the proposals at a meeting of our Executive on 19 November and further comments may follow at that stage.

In your letter of 1 October 2013 you indicate that Police Scotland no longer considers the duties carried out by the traffic warden service to be "core policing" business and, as such, only parking issues that are considered dangerous or causing significant obstruction would be responded to by Police Scotland.

The lack of enforcement of illegal or indiscriminately parked vehicles will create significant road safety and congestion issues. In addition, this will undermine formalised disabled parking, residents and pay and display parking areas, bus stops and loading bays within the Falkirk Council area, which is considered to be unacceptable.

Decriminalised Parking Enforcement (DPE) has been suggested as a solution for all Councils to pursue to address Police Scotland's withdrawal of the traffic warden service, however this formal legal process can take up to two years to complete. Given that Police Scotland intends withdrawing the traffic warden service early in 2014, this obviously poses significant concerns for the residents and businesses across the Falkirk Council area. In these circumstances, the proposed timescale for withdrawing the traffic warden service is considered unrealistic. This

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suggestion merely moves an area of public service provision from one public body to another but without corresponding transfer of budget.

Previous consideration of DPE by Falkirk Council demonstrated that such a proposal would not be self-financing and would be an additional financial burden on Falkirk Council at a time when existing budgets are under severe pressure. A full business case would have to be undertaken however this position is unlikely to change bearing in mind the nature of on-street and off-street parking provision across the Council area.

I also refer to your letter of June 2013 in which you detail the background of the police traffic warden service. I note that, in relation to service provision, you indicate that *"This service has been carried out differently by the legacy police forces and local authorities and we are taking the opportunity to review, in partnership with local authorities, how this service is best delivered in the future."* Whilst I accept that Police Scotland is entitled to review its service provision, I am disappointed with the manner in which this consultation has been handled, particularly since Falkirk Council considers Police Scotland to be a valued community partner.

Having regard to these issues, it is considered that Police Scotland should revisit its proposals with a view to retaining the traffic warden service. Failing that, if Police Scotland is intent on removing this service, implementation should be delayed to allow local authorities to put in place alternative arrangements, such as DPE. It is important that any due legal process is properly completed to ensure that the withdrawal of the traffic warden service does not have an adverse economic impact on our town centres which rely on short term limited waiting to provide customer turnover. In the interim, a Police Scotland enforcement regime should be retained, given the major public service and road safety impact that removal will have.

In light of the above, I consider it likely that my Council will wish to refer this matter to COSLA.

I trust that Police Scotland will take on board the views of Falkirk Council and actively engage in a partnership approach to reach agreement with us before taking any final decision to remove the traffic warden service.

Finally, I can confirm that my Council has no objection to Police Scotland's proposals in relation to the changes of opening hours of the public counter service at Falkirk, Larbert and Grangemouth police offices as described in your public briefing paper on this subject dated 26 September 2013.

Yours sincerely

CHIEF EXECUTIVE

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