

# Press Releases - Parking restrictions must be the subject of a plebiscite - 28/06/01

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Councillor Eoin Costello (FG) is insisting that a plebiscite be carried out in those areas where there is considerable opposition to the proposed parking byelaws. He is also calling for the number of resident's permits per dwelling be raised to a minimum of 4. According to Councillor Costello there is a proven need in the County for restrictions on parking but these restrictions should not be forced on areas where the majority are against them. He stated that the only democratic way to establish the majority opinion is to carry out a plebiscite.



According to Councillor Costello the Council regularly carry out plebiscites when determining a change of the name of a road. All houses affected by the proposed change are entitled to vote for or against the proposed change and the majority view prevails. On the matter of residents permits Councillor Costello insisted that the limit per house be increased from the proposed 2 permits to 4 permits per dwelling (the same as that implemented by Dublin Corporation).

The Parking Byelaws have met mixed responses throughout the County. A council report on the parking proposals presented to the June County Council meeting proposed that the plan be divided into two phases of implementation. The council are recommending that the byelaws be implemented immediately in Category 1 areas (Boosterstown, Blackrock, Seapoint, Monkstown, Dun Laoghaire and Dalkey). According to the report Category 2 schemes include Glenageary, Killiney, Shankill, Dundrum and Stillorgan.

The report goes on to state that it was evident from the submissions received and discussions with public representatives and residents representatives that in some areas there is a definite need for parking control measures, while other group representatives are uncertain of the necessity to introduce the proposed measures at this time pending the assessment of the impact of the parking regime in adjacent locations.

To get a feel for how parking restrictions worked in other areas Councillor Costello spoke to the town clerk in Bray Urban District

Council and to the chief executive of Bray Chamber of Commerce where Parking Byelaws were introduced in 1997. He found that on the whole the feedback from Bray was overwhelmingly positive. He believes that parking restrictions will work, almost every town in Ireland has them in place at this stage. However Councillor Costello stated that areas must be entitled to opt out of the parking restrictions if they wish.

Councillor Costello will be proposing the following amendment at the adjourned Council meeting where the parking proposals will be voted on.

*"If the Council wishes to proceed with the implementation of parking restrictions in an area where clear agreement cannot be reached, the Council will carryout a plebiscite of the area affected in advance of the implementation of parking restrictions in the proposed area. The decision to implement restrictions is then based on a simple majority result."*

Councillor Costello stated that this would be in line with the policy of the Fine Gael group. At a recent FG group meeting the following policy statement was agreed with regard to the Byelaws;

*"That the byelaws will be implemented in town centres and along transport corridors. That implementation of the scheme in peripheral and residential areas may only be implemented where there is majority local acceptance. That the strategy and the byelaws be reviewed annually following a process of local consultation. That allowance be made for parking bays at schools and business premises where they are deemed to be essential."*

Councillor Costello stated that it is clear that the Council have engaged in a considerable dialogue with those who will be affected, and that on the whole the Parking Restrictions will be welcomed.

However a number of areas have considerable difficulties with the Byelaws as they currently stand. By adopting the plebiscite approach the Byelaws could be implemented immediately where there is majority acceptance and no need for a plebiscite. In areas where there is difficulty a decision would be made on the basis of a plebiscite. Councillor Costello stated that this way local residents will have a direct democratic and transparent say in the plan for their area.