CABINET	17 February 2021
Subject Heading:	Virtual Permits
Cabinet Member:	Councillor Osman Dervish
SLT Lead:	Barry Francis – Director of Neighbourhoods
Report Author and contact details:	Steve Halsey 01708 434172 steve.halsey@havering.gov.uk
Policy context:	**Connections –** Delivering digital improvements to enhance the customer experience and enable self-service
Financial summary:	The cost for printing a paper permit is £2.03 which will be reduced to a maximum £1.50 for the virtual equivalent. Based on printing costs of £17,793.89 for the 2019/20 financial year this is a minimum saving of £4,617.89
Is this a Key Decision?	Significant effect on two or more wards
When should this matter be reviewed?	First opportunity after Cabinet decision on 10th February 2021
Reviewing OSC:	Environment

The subject matter of this report deals with the following Council Objectives

Communities making Havering   []
Places making Havering   []
Opportunities making Havering   []
Connections making Havering   [x]

SUMMARY

Highways traffic and Parking (HTP) services are proposing paper permits are replaced by virtual permits (MiPermit) provided by our contracted Notice Processing System supplier – Chipside.

Changing permits to a virtual system will make savings and improve efficiencies for HTP, Customer Services and Corporate Support and improve the customer journey, which in part delivers on the Council's corporate plan for digital improvements to enhance the customer experience and enable self-service.

Chipside also offer a telephony service which manages all calls received relating to MiPermit. This would make further efficiencies by directing calls to a dedicated service able to provide specialist advice and reduce call volumes and email enquiries for the Contact Centre.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Recommendations

It is recommended Cabinet agree:

1. To implement Chipside's virtual permit (MiPermit) solution for new permit applications for all types listed below from May 2021.
   - Business
   - Carer
   - Car park season tickets
   - Critical duty
   - Havering clinical commissioning group
   - Havering hero
   - Health and homecare
   - Members
   - Parking waiver
   - Resident
   - Staff car park season tickets
   - School streets exemption
   - Voucher
2. To migrate all existing permit holders to the MiPermit solution from their date of expiry after May 2021;
3. To offer a virtual visitor permit option from May 2021 to run concurrently with paper visitor scratch cards.
4. To transfer the responsibility for answering all calls relating to parking permits handled by the Contact Centre and other Havering services to Chipside's MiPermit helpline.

<div align="center">

┌─────────────────────────────┐
│   **REPORT DETAIL**   │
└─────────────────────────────┘

</div>

Background

The Council currently operates a manual paper permit process for all types of permits that are either applied for online through individual Service pages or via the 'My Havering Account'.

The only exceptions to this are internal permits for staff and Members that are applied for via email directly to Corporate Support, and the School Street exemptions that are also applied for directly to HTP.

All online applications are routed through to individual Service inboxes via Customer Relationship Management (CRM) system. Each Service has developed their own application processes to print permits through Havering's Print Service. Corporate Support are an exception to this and print their own permits locally and do not send them out in the post.

The School Streets exemption applications do not result in a physical permit being produced because it is used to whitelist vehicles to CCTV cameras that detect vehicle registrations through automatic number plate recognition technology.

The body of this report will explain what each Service does to deliver permits to our customers and how the Council can make savings by reducing administration costs.

Neighbouring Boroughs

The London borough of Havering shares borders with 5 other boroughs that are both part of London and Essex. All of these boroughs provide permits of a similar type to Havering. The table below shows how their permit schemes are administered.

Borough	Permit type	Provider
Barking and Dagenham	Virtual	Chipside (MiPermit)
Brentwood*	Virtual	Chipside (MiPermit)
Epping Forest*	Virtual	Chipside (MiPermit)
Redbridge	Paper	In house
Thurrock	Paper	In house

*Members of the North and South Essex Parking Partnerships deliver virtual permit parking solutions for 12 boroughs in Essex.

Customer service permit administration

Customer Services are responsible for processing the majority of permit applications made online.

Applications for all permits other than residents' and visitors' and the 'ask parking' online form is received by the Contact Centre through a dedicated email inbox.

These permit applications need to be manually added to the CRM system by the Customer Service team.

Residents' permits and Visitor scratch card applications are an automated process managed via a CRM system that does not require human intervention unless there has been an error in the application.

In a typical month the Contact Centre will receive approximately:

- 450 general parking email enquiries
- 600 verification emails

And send approximately:

- 300 'ask parking' emails

General parking email enquiries cover everything related to parking from a request for enforcement to a permit renewal.

When renewing an existing permit through 'My Havering Account' a system error can create a duplicate permit. As a consequence the renewal permit application is followed up by a general enquiry asking for assistance which further increases the volume of emails received.

Verification emails are generated when a new permit application is submitted. Each verification email should include the evidence required to qualify for a permit.

Emails sent by the contact centre are marked as 'ask parking'. A sent 'ask parking' email is not monitored by the sender and not able to receive email. These are sent when the permit application received is lacking evidence or a query is being re-routed to the correct contact form, for example reporting illegal parking using the online request form.

Customer service CRM application process:
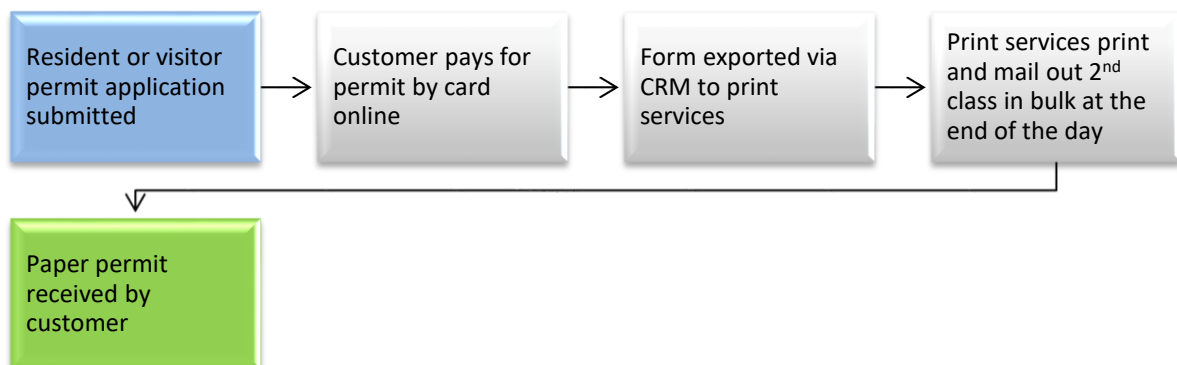
Customer service manual application permit process:

```
┌─────────────────────┐     ┌─────────────────────┐     ┌─────────────────────┐
│ Online permit*      │ →   │ Customer pays for   │ →   │ Form imported to a  │
│ application submitted│     │ permit by card online│     │ dedicated email inbox│
└─────────────────────┘     └─────────────────────┘     └─────────────────────┘
          │                                                         │
          ∨                                                         │
┌─────────────────────┐     ┌─────────────────────┐     ┌─────────────────────┐
│ Application assessed │ →   │ Customer may be     │ →   │ Application may be   │
│ by customer services │     │ asked for additional│     │ queried with Traffic │
│                     │     │ information         │     │ and Parking Control  │
└─────────────────────┘     └─────────────────────┘     └─────────────────────┘
          │
          ∨
┌─────────────────────┐     ┌─────────────────────┐     ┌─────────────────────┐
│ Permit processed by │ →   │ Print services print│ →   │ Paper permit received│
│ customer services and│     │ and mail out 2nd class│    │ by customer         │
│ sent to print services│    │ in bulk at the end of│     │                     │
│ via CRM             │     │ the day             │     │                     │
└─────────────────────┘     └─────────────────────┘     └─────────────────────┘
```

*An application will be for any one of the following permits: Business, Havering Hero, Parking Bay suspension, Domestic Carer, Health and Home Care or Voucher.

Customer service permit volumes

The number of permits issued for 2020 is less than expected due to the impact of Covid and the free extension of all existing permits by 3 months.

The volume of permits issued under the current process is detailed in the table below.

	2019*	2020*
Parking Permit - Business	66	60
Parking Permit - Cancellations	150	65
Parking Permit - Carer	16	12
Parking Permit - Health and Homecare	454	463
Parking Permit - Parking Waiver	0	1
Parking Permit - Resident	4,570	3,978
Parking Permit - Visitor	3,645	2,953
Parking Permit - Voucher	33	23
Grand Total	8,934	7,555

*calendar year

Visitor permit numbers reflect how many orders have been received, not how many visitor permits are in circulation. Each book has 10 scratch cards, limited according to the zone they have been ordered for. This can be between 150 to 230 visitor permits calculated in 4 or 6 hours in a rolling year depending on the zone.

Each order does not reflect how many books have been issued on each occasion making it difficult to accurately measure how many individual visitor scratch cards have been delivered.
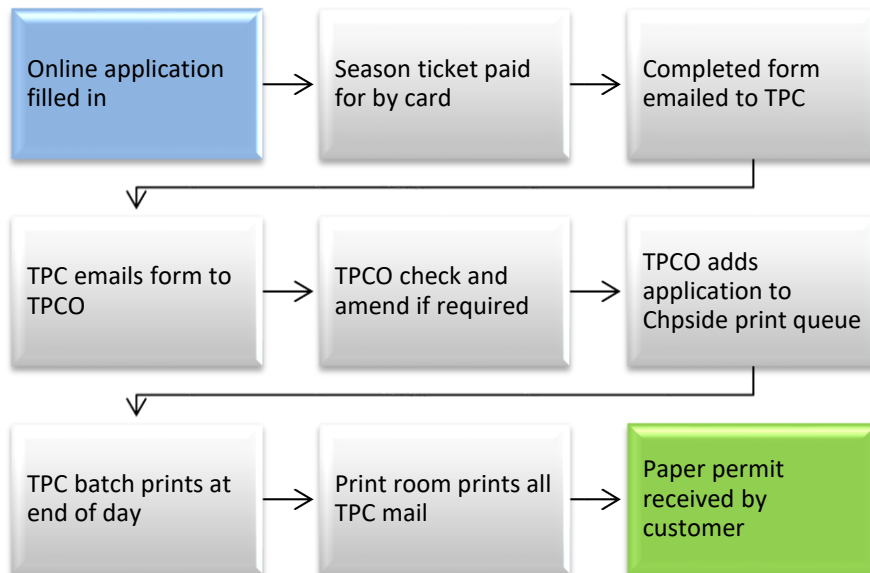
The number of visitor permits bulk ordered twice a year is 5,000 books, which equates to 50,000 visitor permits. This means 100,000 visitor permits for 4 or 6 hour stays are in circulation each year without an expiry date.

HTP service permit administration

All season tickets issued for car parks is managed by Traffic and Parking Control (TPC) and Traffic and Parking Control Officers (TPCO). The 2 teams are responsible for the on street enforcement for parking and the back office administration.

All new applications or renewals for car park season tickets are required to give 10 working days' notice to allow for processing and for a paper permit to be posted to and received by the applicant.

HTP car park season ticket application process:

```
┌─────────────────┐    ┌─────────────────┐    ┌─────────────────┐
│ Online          │ →  │ Season ticket   │ →  │ Completed form  │
│ application     │    │ paid for by     │    │ emailed to TPC  │
│ filled in       │    │ card            │    │                 │
└─────────────────┘    └─────────────────┘    └─────────────────┘
         │                                              │
         ▼                                              ▼
┌─────────────────┐    ┌─────────────────┐    ┌─────────────────┐
│ TPC emails form │ →  │ TPCO check and  │ →  │ TPCO adds       │
│ to TPCO         │    │ amend if        │    │ application to  │
│                 │    │ required        │    │ Chpside print   │
│                 │    │                 │    │ queue           │
└─────────────────┘    └─────────────────┘    └─────────────────┘
         │                                              │
         ▼                                              ▼
┌─────────────────┐    ┌─────────────────┐    ┌─────────────────┐
│ TPC batch       │ →  │ Print room      │ →  │ Paper permit    │
│ prints at end   │    │ prints all TPC  │    │ received by     │
│ of day          │    │ mail            │    │ customer        │
└─────────────────┘    └─────────────────┘    └─────────────────┘
```

A maximum of 75% car park capacity is made available for season tickets in all car parks. 25% must remain available to short stay and casual customers at all times to ensure Havering has capacity for visitors.

The Havering Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG) have a specific permit type that is used to access Angel Way multi-storey car park.

The administration responsibility for providing CCG staff permits is currently managed by TPCO. CCG can manage this duty using the MiPermit app for their own permit holders through a Memorandum of Agreement with the Council.

HTP service permit volumes

There are 16 car parks in operation throughout the Borough. The number of season tickets in circulation are listed in the following table:

Permit Type	Permit Count
Season Ticket - Non Romford Area (Active)	37
Season Ticket - Romford Area (Active)	105

Civil Enforcement Operation

Civil Enforcement Officers (CEO) are already familiar with virtual parking sessions used for cashless parking provided by RingGo in all of Havering's car parks.

When a customer uses the cashless option they are activating a virtual parking ticket that can be seen by a CEO through their handheld device used for day to day enforcement.

The virtual cashless parking ticket is in essence exactly the same as a virtual permit purchased through MiPermit, and would therefore be accessible to a CEO through their handheld device in the same way.

Corporate Support Permit Administration

The Corporate Support team are responsible for the administration of all oneSource employees, business partners, staff, agency and Members' permits. All applications are made by filling in a Microsoft Word application form and emailing or handing it to the Corporate Support team for processing.

Options for payment are by debit / credit card in person at the Town Hall. Permanent members of staff can opt to have a monthly payment deducted directly from their salary.

Corporate support permit process:

Microst Word application downloaded by customer	→	Completed application emailed or given to corporate support for processing	→	Permit added to Chipside and printed	→	Customer collects permit and pays on collection or through their salary
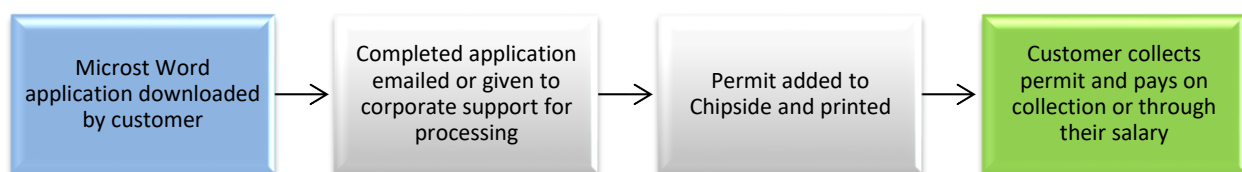
All new applications and renewals are processed on an ad hoc basis.

Corporate Support service permit volumes

As of December 2020 the number of valid Member and Staff Permits in circulation are as listed below.
- 52 Member permits
- 1435 Staff permits

Library support

It is necessary to provide options for customers who don't have access to the internet at home and don't use smart phones to still be able to purchase all types of permits available from Havering.

Havering Libraries are an alternative point of contact for customers who need assistance when purchasing permits.

However, it is not proposed additional staff be recruited to work at the libraries to provide this help, but rather existing staff are trained in using the MiPermit system so they can easily advise customers on how to do it for themselves. This may be just to direct a customer to a publicly accessible computer or to a phone so they can speak directly with the MiPermit contact centre for assistance.

Printing volumes

Havering Print Services are responsible for printing and posting all paper permits produced through CRM.

They have indicated the approximate number of permits printed for calendar year 2020 is 21,000.

The expenditure for Printing Services is provided in the Finance section of this report.

Staff processing time

Not all staff with a responsibility for processing permit applications have the specific duty itemised in their job descriptions as it is included in other general administration duties.

Customer Service officers spend 15% of their time managing queries relating to permits as part of their role as described in their job description for handling enquiries across a range of front-line services, through a variety of access channels including but not limited to telephone, web and face to face.

A HTP Traffic and Parking Control Officer is predominantly responsible for ensuring Havering's car parks remain operational, are monitored through CCTV and to assist with cash collection and banking. Issuing season tickets is only 2% of their role which does not constitute a major change.

Existing job descriptions for Corporate Support staff providing permits may require a revision. However, issuing staff car parking and Member permits is a minor part of their job role taking up less than 15% of their overall responsibilities and does not constitute a major change.

Current library support for the existing permit application process is limited to a small section of the community who are unable to contact the Council through any other

channels. The infrequency of this occurrence constitutes a nominal part of their role which is classed as general customer service.

Print Services are part of One Source and deliver all printing for Havering, Newham and Bexley. Removing the need to print parking permits does not have a significant effect on Print Services operation as it only makes up 2% of their duties.

How the virtual permit system will work

The MiPermit paperless system will go live in May 2021 and will apply to all new permit applications. It will be rolled out to renewals over the rest of the financial year at the time of their expiry.

Therefore, only those customers renewing or buying a new permit will be affected from May 2021. Customers buying visitor scratch cards will be given the option of paper or a virtual permit.

As the virtual system is rolled out over the following 12 months from May 2021 there will be a combination of paper and virtual permits in operation until the end of April 2022.
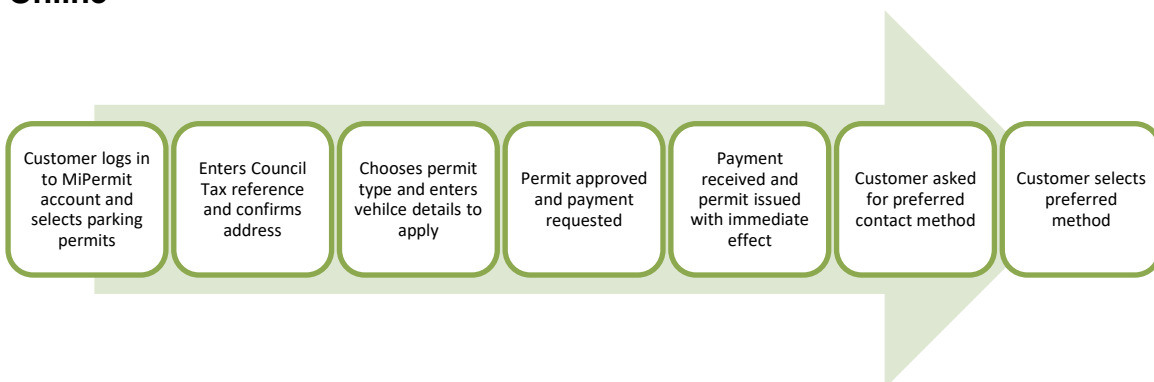
Current visitor scratch cards do not have an expiry date. Therefore, in order to move all permits to paperless by May 2022, no additional paper scratch cards will be purchased after the current stocks run out.
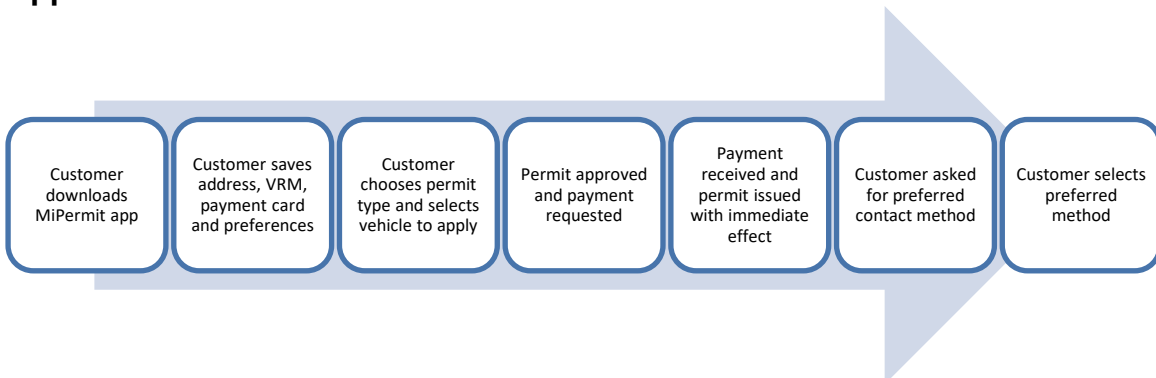
Customer Journey

The process maps below show the customer journey for a person applying for a permit online or through the app and by calling the contact centre or MiPermit helpline to obtain a virtual parking permit.

In order to enable residents who may be vulnerable or not familiar with using a computer to apply for a parking or visitor permit it is envisaged that training will be rolled out at a select number of local libraries to provide support for parking permit applications.
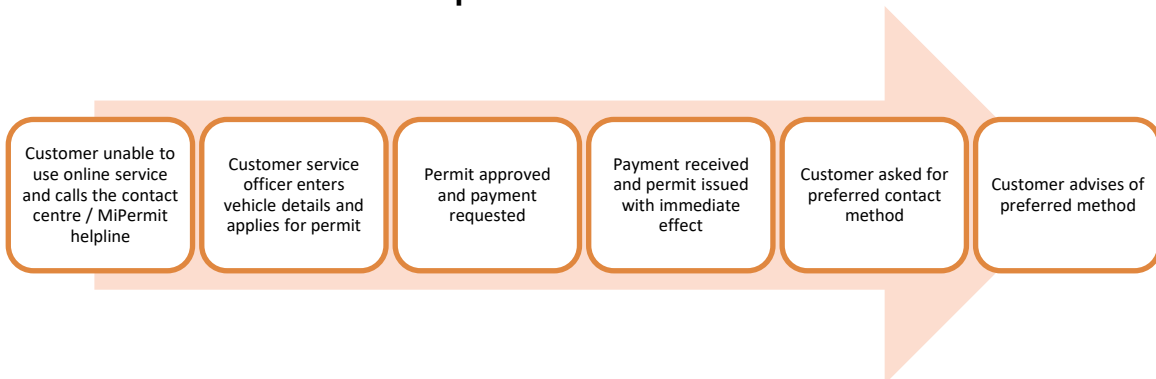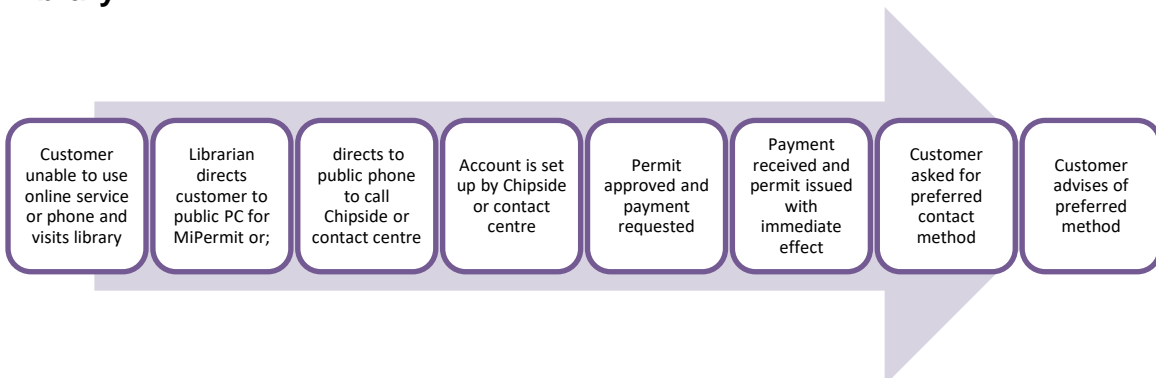
Online

Customer logs in to MiPermit account and selects parking permits → Enters Council Tax reference and confirms address → Chooses permit type and enters vehilce details to apply → Permit approved and payment requested → Payment received and permit issued with immediate effect → Customer asked for preferred contact method → Customer selects preferred method

App

| Customer downloads MiPermit app | Customer saves address, VRM, payment card and preferences | Customer chooses permit type and selects vehicle to apply | Permit approved and payment requested | Payment received and permit issued with immediate effect | Customer asked for preferred contact method | Customer selects preferred method |

Contact Centre / MiPermit helpline

| Customer unable to use online service and calls the contact centre / MiPermit helpline | Customer service officer enters vehicle details and applies for permit | Permit approved and payment requested | Payment received and permit issued with immediate effect | Customer asked for preferred contact method | Customer advises of preferred method |

Library

| Customer unable to use online service or phone and visits library | Librarian directs customer to public PC for MiPermit or; | directs to public phone to call Chipside or contact centre | Account is set up by Chipside or contact centre | Permit approved and payment requested | Payment received and permit issued with immediate effect | Customer asked for preferred contact method | Customer advises of preferred method |

REASONS AND OPTIONS

Reasons for the decision:

With the introduction of paperless permits the following benefits will be realised for;

The customer
- The customer will not be required to provide proof as this will be checked automatically and the permit authorised based on the declaration made before payment. There will be an exception for new applications if after two

- attempts to verify the customer this cannot be achieved automatically, the customer will be required to provide evidence.
- A permit will be active from the moment it is paid for. No longer will customers have to wait for their permits or visitor vouchers in the post.
- An option for preferred communications method (for example reminders) by; email, text and post will be offered, explaining the costs to the council and encouraging more sustainable options, such as paperless by email or text).
- An option to automatically renew your permit via your credit / debit card will be offered.
- New applicants will get a permit instantly and not have to wait to be registered, they will be granted a permit for 10 days and a second check will be completed automatically. If they are then registered no further action is taken, but if not, the customer service team will contact them to obtain their evidence.
- Customers will be able to upload documents, like evidence, if they wish.
- When a permit holder's circumstances change (e.g. change of address or vehicle) they will be able to update their permit online instead of contacting customer services to receive a new paper permit.

The Council
- All vehicle details will be available like, height, weight, class of vehicle, emissions and much more. This will allow the council to understand the types of vehicles in the Borough and make informed policy decisions in the future.
- Random checks will be made on permits issued annually to ensure that the vehicles are registered within the Borough.
- Fraudulent permits will be harder to fake as all enforcement will be carried out by checking the vehicle registration via the permit database and not checking a permit
- The new paperless solution, will be much more cost effective and cost less than £1.50 to issue a permit.

Case studies showing the positive impact changing from paper permits to MiPermit has had on other Local Authorities can be seen in published articles on Chipside's website: http://www.chipside.com/blog/

Other options considered:

RingGo cashless contract

The Council have operated a cashless parking solution provided by RingGo since 2019. RingGo also provide a virtual permit solution similar to Chipside's MiPermit which was considered.

However, the terms of the Crown Commercial Service call-off contract for delivering the Cashless Parking Solution does not allow for a variance to add a virtual permit solution under the current terms and conditions. A change can only be made to the call-off contract if it isn't a material change.

To make a change of such significance would effectively end the contract by giving 30 days' notice and restart the procurement process.

Do nothing

Continuing with the paper based solution for permits does not make any savings for any services responsible for issuing permits, nor does it deliver on the corporate priority under connections by using technology to improve the way we live.

IMPLICATIONS AND RISKS

Financial implications and risks:

Chipside:

Implementing MiPermit does not have to be an upfront cost to the Council. Chipside have flexibility in their contracts that allows for clients to pay for the MiPermit installation, and ongoing support through an agreed cost from permit transactions. This also includes telephone support during usual core hours of business for the public facing MiPermit helpline from Mon-Fri 8am-8pm, Sat 8am-4pm and Sun 10am-4pm.

For example:

Permit type	Permit price	Quantity	Total paid	Fee per item	Total fee	Total income
Virtual resident permit	£35.00	4570	£159,950.00	£1.50	£6,855.00	£153,095.00
Virtual visitor book*	£13.00	3645	£47,385.00	£0.25	£911.25	£46,473.75

*10 virtual visitor permits

The fee prices given are a maximum fee example provided by Chipside and are likely to be less. The numbers for permits are taken from the previous full financial year shown under the section titled 'Customer service permit volumes' in this report.

There are no hidden costs that will be billed at a later date as all server space, hosting and maintenance is covered by the ongoing permit transaction fees. Additional costs would only be incurred if Chipside were engaged for development work, but this would be at an agreed cost set by a schedule of rates as part of the contract.

Printing of paper scratch cards can also be managed by Chipside during the transition to virtual permits. The cost for doing this in the interim would be up to £1.50 per scratch card book, of which 76p would be the cost of a first class stamp and up to 50p the cost of permit paper if it had to be provided.

All existing scratch cards in stock held by the print room will be delivered to Chipside for their use, which would reduce the cost for posting to just 76p per order.

Printing

The costs to the Council for printing and posting for the last 2 financial years:

Fin. Yr.	Stationary costs
2019/20	£17,793.89
2020/21*	£4,670.00

*reduced numbers due to Covid

Saving

The following table is a hypothetical comparison for the stationary cost for 2019/20 against virtual permits for resident permits issued for 2019/20 under the section titled 'Customer service permit volumes' in this report.

	Paper	Virtual	Printing £	Virtual £	Difference
Parking Permit - Resident	4,570	£2.03	£1.50	£9,277.10	£6,855.00	£2,422.10

The total cost per paper permit is calculated by dividing the total amount paid for printing by the number of permits issued less the cancellation figure. There is a margin of error in this because the number of visitor permits ordered doesn't reflect the amount of scratch card books issued.

Legal implications and risks:

1. The Council has a "general power of competence" under Part 1 Chapter 1 of the Localism Act 2011 which gives it the same power to act as an individual, subject to other statutory provisions limiting or restricting its use of that power.

2. The Council is also a traffic authority with responsibility for the management of parking on local roads and under section 45 Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984 (RTRA), local authorities have the power to designate parking places on the highway, charge for use of them and issue parking permits for a charge.

3. The Council's proposal to issue virtual parking permits is therefore compatible both with the Council's exercise of its general power of competence and the power conferred on it by section 45 of the RTRA.

4. The MiPermit functionality of the Chipside system has always been within the scope of the call-off contract between the Council and Chipside entered into in 2017 and extended for a further term of 2 years till 30 April 2022.

5. In so far as the use of Virtual Permits falls within the scope of the Chipside contract, and this report is seeking to trigger that element of the contract, there

is no legal risk of challenge to the recommendations in this report being granted and it is very unlikely that such a challenge, if brought, would succeed.

Human Resources implications and risks:

Based on the analysis detailed in the Staff Processing Time section there is no requirement to TUPE any LBH staff to Chipside. However, there may be some minor adjustments to Job Profiles necessary as a result of the proposals but these are not expected to result in any changes to existing grades.

All proposed changes have been communicated directly with all teams affected through one to one and group meetings.

An interactive presentation of the virtual permit solution has been demonstrated by Chipside to all key stakeholders. They have offered to demonstrate the system to a wider audience including Members should it be requested.

Equalities implications and risks:

The Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED) under section 149 of the Equality Act 2010 requires the Council, when exercising its functions, to have 'due regard' to:

(i) The need to eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct that is prohibited by or under the Equality Act 2010;
(ii) The need to advance equality of opportunity between persons who share protected characteristics and those who do not, and;
(iii) Foster good relations between those who have protected characteristics and those who do not.

Note: 'Protected characteristics' are age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnerships, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex/gender, and sexual orientation.

The Council is committed to all of the above in the provision, procurement and commissioning of its services, and the employment of its workforce. In addition, the Council is also committed to improving the quality of life and wellbeing for all Havering residents in respect of socio-economics and health determinants.

Health and Wellbeing implications and Risks

Health and wellbeing implications and risks are covered in the EqHIA document attached as an appendix.

<div style="border:2px solid black; display:inline-block; padding:6px 20px;">

APPENDIX PAPERS

</div>

EqHIA-E-permits
Communications Plan for Virtual Parking Permits service change 20Jan
v0.2Mipermit Virtual Permits Schematic v100 011209

<div style="border:2px solid black; display:inline-block; padding:6px 20px;">

BACKGROUND PAPERS

</div>

None