

INTRODUCTION TO THE ACCOUNTS FOR 2009/10

I am pleased to introduce the PATROL Adjudication Joint Committee Accounts for the year April 2009 to March 2010 which includes the external audit opinion from Grant Thornton UK LLP and the accounts for the Bus Lane Adjudication Service Joint Committee.

The PATROL Adjudication Joint Committee has been established to enable Councils having Civil Enforcement Area Orders to exercise their functions under Section 81 of the Traffic Management Act 2004 and Regulations 17 and 18 of the Civil Enforcement of Parking Contraventions (England) General Regulations 2007. These functions are exercised jointly with the other councils in accordance with the requirements of Regulation 16 of the Civil Enforcement of Parking Contraventions (England) General Regulations 2007.

The functions exercised by the PATROL Adjudication Joint Committee on behalf of its constituent councils are appointing independent adjudicators to the Traffic Penalty Tribunal, a function which is formally delegated to the Chief Adjudicator and subject to the consent of the Lord Chancellor, providing these adjudicators with administrative staff and accommodation and providing hearing venues. Its remit in relation to the Tribunal is limited to these matters. Further information on the Traffic Penalty Tribunal can be found in the Adjudicators' Annual Reports which are available on the tribunal's web site at www.trafficpenaltytribunal.gov.uk.

During 2009/10 five new councils became party to the Joint Committee: City of Newcastle upon Tyne, North Lincolnshire Council, Walsall Council, West Berkshire Council and West Oxfordshire Council.

In recognition of the devolution of traffic management to Wales and separate regulations applying the principles of the Traffic Management Act 2004, the Joint Committee has established an Executive Sub Committee (Wales). The Joint Committee is grateful to Councillor Jim Jones of Carmarthenshire County Council for chairing this committee during the year.

The Traffic Management Act 2004 came into force on 31 March 2008 with the expectation that local authorities would produce an annual report in order to increase public awareness and understanding of civil parking enforcement locally. In January 2009, the Joint Committee established the PATROL Annual Report Award in order to promote best practice in this important area of public information.

An independent review group was established. The group comprising: David Leibling of the RAC Foundation; Karen Naylor; Parking Manager from Waltham Forest and Colin Eaketts from the Integrated Transport Unit of the Welsh Assembly Government was chaired by David Marklew, Retired City Engineer of Winchester.

The group circulated a report evaluation framework to local authorities focusing on the following themes:

1. Presentation
2. Local Context
3. Customer Service
4. Performance
5. Statistical Information
6. Financial Information

Shortlisted councils for the inaugural award for 2008/09 were:

Brighton and Hove City Council
Colchester Borough Council
Sheffield City Council
Torbay Council
Weymouth and Portland Borough Council

Chair of the Review Group David Marklew said 'Given that this was the first year of reporting by Local Authorities, the standard of the shortlisted entries was extremely high and demonstrated that these councils had sought to provide comprehensive information to the public about civil parking in their areas. In turn, these entries will help to promote best practice in reporting amongst councils generally.'

Brighton and Hove City Council was identified as the overall winner. In presenting the award to the Parking Team and Councillor Geoffrey Theobald OBE in Brighton, Councillor Phrynnette Dickens on behalf of the PATROL Joint Committee said that 'the winning report had demonstrated how it is possible to provide clear and accessible information to the public on a wide range of parking issues.'

The Annual Report Award is part of a range of public information initiatives undertaken by PATROL which aim to be beneficial for both the public and the Joint Committee members. This includes a web site at www.patrol-uk.info, an accompanying information leaflet and more recently the annual publication of Traffic Penalty Tribunal statistics.

Ken Gregory
Chair of the PATROL Adjudication Joint Committee