

| | | |
|--|---|------------------------------|
| Title of Report | A REVIEW OF THE COUNCIL'S CAR PARKING SERVICE AND ACTION PLAN | |
| Presented by | Councillor Andrew Woodman Community Services Portfolio Holder | |
| Background Papers | Car Parking Strategy and Cabinet Report 2016 | Public Report: Yes |
| | Community Scrutiny Agenda and Minutes – 25 November 2020 | Key Decision: Yes |
| Financial Implications | The proposed charge increases and staffing efficiencies are included in the proposed final General Fund budget for 2021/22. A revised budget in respect of the asset transfer and other future proposals will be required to be aligned to the action plan. | |
| | Signed off by the Section 151 Officer: Yes | |
| Legal Implications | Changes to the Off – Street Parking Places Orders may be required | |
| | Signed off by the Monitoring Officer: Yes | |
| Staffing and Corporate Implications | A review of staffing resources will be required within the three year action plan. | |
| | Signed off by the Deputy Head of Paid Service: Yes | |
| Purpose of Report | To update Cabinet on the review of the council's car parking service and action plan. | |
| Reason for Decision | To seek approval from Cabinet for the plan as it is a key decision. | |
| Recommendations | THAT CABINET: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. ADOPT THE ACTION PLAN FOR THE PARKING SERVICE IN ANNEX A 2. AGREE TO THE CHANGES TO THE PARKING ARRANGEMENTS DETAILED IN PARAGRAPH 2.4 3. DELEGATE AUTHORITY TO THE STRATEGIC DIRECTOR OF PLACE TO MAKE AMENDMENTS TO THE PARKING ORDERS 4. NOTE THE INTENTION OF THE HEAD OF PAID SERVICE TO COMMENCE A REVIEW OF STAFFING RESOURCES IN THE ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION TEAM IN LINE WITH THE REVIEW OF THE CAR PARKING SERVICE 5. BRING TO A CLOSE PARKING ENFORCEMENT CONTRACTS WITH LEICESTERSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL FOR ASHBY AND COALVILLE LIBRARIES | |

1.0 BACKGROUND

- 1.1 The council's parking service is important for a wide range of stakeholders including residents, businesses, shoppers, tourists, community groups and parish/town councils. On street parking is managed by the Highway Authority (Leicestershire County Council) and off street parking by a range of land owners of which the district council is one.
- 1.2 The district council operates and maintains a range of off street car parks in the district. Each car park provides a service for its locality whether it be to support shoppers and local businesses or for residential purposes.
- 1.3 The district council operates pay and display car parks in Coalville and Ashby but also manages car parks in the villages of Ibstock, Whitwick, Castle Donington, Measham and Thringstone which are not chargeable.
- 1.4 There are a wide range of costs associated with operating and maintaining car parks as follows;
- Repairs, resurfacing, line marking
 - Grounds maintenance, sweeping, litter picking, winter gritting
 - Cash collections, purchase of tickets, computer software, licences
 - Electricity, sewerage, business rates
 - Enforcement activities including Car Park orders and signage
 - Staff recharges, corporate overheads
- 1.5 In 2016 Cabinet adopted the Car Parking Strategy which set out a number of actions in relation to the management of the car parks in the district. In particular Cabinet agreed:
- No parking price rises until 2020
 - New Short Stay Car Park for Ashby
 - Introduce Free After 3pm in Coalville
- Cabinet also agreed that a review of prices and all current and proposed parking initiatives including Free After 3pm would take place in 2019. The Parking Strategy suggested that Coalville and Ashby should be treated differently with regard to pricing strategies and differential pricing for each town will be considered as part of that review.
- 1.6 Due to car parking charges not increasing since 2009 our income has not kept pace with expenditure. In March 2020, the car park trading account was in deficit by £1.874 million. Therefore, there is a need to bring North West Leicestershire in line with neighbouring districts and parking tariffs along with a detailed review of the car parking services to identify further efficiencies to move towards a more cost neutral position.
- 1.7 The ambition is to be a carbon zero council by 2030 therefore the focus is on providing green and alternative solutions.

2.0 PLAN OVERVIEW

- 2.1 The Future Provision of Car Parking Services and action plan can be found at **Annex A**.
- 2.2 The Medium Term Financial Strategy sets out the financial plan for the next five years. It sets out the importance of services being self-reliant and more resilient to future financial changes. With this in mind, a review of the car parking service is timely and important.
- 2.3 The overall aim of the car parking service review is to set out a new direction which takes account of all the changes and promotes a way forward which meets the needs of residents in the area, protects the provision of car parks and promotes a green agenda going forward.

2.4 To achieve the vision, six themes have been identified:

- **Car parks and equipment**
 - Start the installation of additional Electric Vehicle Charging Points (EVCPs) throughout the district with Podpoint
 - Progress discussions, as part of the accommodation review, with ultimate transfer of council office parking to property services
 - Provide a digital method for parking permits to Hood Park Leisure Centre users
 - Introduce Pay by Phone
 - Phased removal of pay and display machines following the cashless payment systems brought in due to the Covid19 pandemic
- **Legal and administration / parking orders**
 - The Strategic Director of Place has delegated authorisation to make amendments to the parking orders
 - Start the process of removing Free after 3pm from the parking orders in Coalville
 - Start the process for changing tariffs in Coalville and Ashby de la Zouch
 - Start the process for charging for short stay parking in Ashby for up to four hours with no return within one hour
 - Give notice on Coalville and Ashby Library car park enforcement contracts
 - Options for Market Hall Car Park to be developed in line with regeneration projects.
 - Look at possibilities for shared service delivery for parking enforcement
- **Asset Transfer**
 - Start the process of asset transfer to parish councils that have expressed an interest in acquiring car parks – Ibstock
 - Options for asset transfer with potential for electric vehicle charging points
- **Charging Tariffs**
 - Review for Christmas free parking
 - Electric vehicle charging point tariffs
- **Review of re-charges**
 - Reallocation of recharges
- **Resources**
 - Service staffing review

3.0 CONSULTATION

- 3.1 As part of the review process key stakeholders and town and parish councils which have council operated car parks within their boundaries have been engaged, particularly with regard to their interest in asset transfer of non – pay and display car parks.
- 3.2 Local relevant consultation will be undertaken with key stakeholders including town and parish councils over the three year duration of the plan.

4.0 PLAN DELIVERY

- 4.1 A report with recommendations and an action plan went to Community Scrutiny Committee on 25 November 2020, the minutes which include comments from members can be found

at **Annex B**. Members were generally supportive of the recommendations and it was resolved that the report be noted and comments made be provided to Cabinet when considering the item.

4.2 Running in parallel to this parking review is a service review within the Facilities Team within Environmental Protection to ensure that there is a fit for purpose staffing structure in place to carry forward the recommendations and actions from the review.

4.3 Timelines

| Activity | Target Date | Financial Implications |
|--|-------------|---|
| Pay by phone only | 2022/23 | Savings of £14,160 |
| Increase charges | 2021/22 | Increased income of £42,740 |
| Remove 'Free after 3' free parking in Coalville | 2021/22 | * £1,200 for advertising costs as part of the changing parking orders process |
| Asset Transfer – Ibstock Parish | 2021/22 | £10,540 |
| Electric charging points, ERDF and capital bids | 2021/22 | Funds secured; capital funding allocated £115,000 and external grant fund £45,000 |
| Increase short stay - Ashby | 2021/22 | See * above |
| Remove charges in Ashby Car Parks between 8am and 9am | 2021/22 | Estimated £3,000 loss of income |
| Bring to a close LCC contracts | 2021/22 | See below |
| Service efficiency - Includes close of LCC contracts and staffing review | 2022/23 | Savings target of £17,430 |

5.0 FININANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

5.1 A summary of the financial implications of each recommendation can be found in the table above, with the detail around each below.

5.2 Tariff Changes

The parking tariffs have not seen an increase since 2009. Recommendation 3 within the Provision of Car Parking Services document found at **Annex A** reflects the need to consider raising charges in line with market trends and neighbouring authorities.

The rationale taken in calculating the proposed increases from April 1 2021 was to reflect a minimal increase rather than one that would meet the 11 soon to be 12 year deficit from no parking tariff increases. This approach would have seen a 36% uplift of the council's 1hr and most popular tariff representing a 22p increase. A more palatable increase of 10p has

been proposed with a year on year review which will be aligned with the council's annual fees and charges process.

The other tariffs with proposed increases from April 1 2021 represent a pro rata uplift due to length of stay with greater value for money being offered to season ticket holders who pay up front with greater savings to those regular long stay visitors to the town who purchase a monthly permit.

Based on the 21/22 budgeted car parking income figures the proposed increase in tariffs would generate an estimated additional £42,740 in car parking income per annum, from April 2021.

| | Current charge | Proposed charge | Difference | % increase |
|-------------------|----------------|-----------------|------------|------------|
| 1 hr | £0.50 | £0.60 | 10p | 20% |
| 2 hr | £0.80 | £1.00 | 20p | 25% |
| 3 hr | £1.20 | £1.50 | 30p | 25% |
| 4 hr (Ashby only) | - | £2.00 | - | - |
| Long stay | £2.00 | £2.50 | 50p | 25% |
| Week | £9.00 | £11.00 | £2.00 | 22% |
| Month | £30.00 | £36.00 | £6.00 | 20% |

5.3 Potential Savings for going Cashless and Pay by Phone Only.

The highlighted column shows our current position and the savings made now that the machines are no longer taking cash payments. The last column shows the potential savings to be made once there is a channel shift to only taking Pay by Phone payments.

| Description | Cash | Cashless (Debit/Credit cards) As a result of covid | Pay by Phone by 2022/23 |
|---|---------|--|---------------------------------|
| Collection of Cash | £10,030 | - | - |
| Vandalism/theft (average per year) | £4,500 | - | - |
| Maintenance of machines | £10,000 | £4,000 | - |
| Insurance of machines | £720 | £300 | - |
| Debit/Credit card charges (8p per transaction + 1.44% of transaction value - estimated average %) | - | £20,620 | - |
| Pay by phone charges (3p per transaction + 2% per transaction value) | - | - | £11,090 |
| Total Estimated Cost | £25,250 | £24,920 | £11,090 |
| | | Saving £330 from cash option | Saving £14,160 from cash option |

Notes:

Cash is based on 20/21 budgets

Cashless & pay by phone based on 21/22 budgeted income but if each service was 100%

5.3 Asset Transfer to Ibstock Parish Council

Recommendation 21 within the Provision of Car Parking Services document found at **Annex A** includes the proposal to continue conversations with Ibstock Parish Council about the asset transfer of the car park. It would be a condition of transfer that the car park had

to remain as car parking for the community and restricted covenant would be added to this transfer.

- Immediate savings to the car parking service: £10,540

5.4 Recommendation 7 within the Provision of Car Parking Services document found at **Annex A** reflects the need to refine staffing and management costs to reflect service reduction due to the reduction of car parks.

- Service staffing review target of £17,430

5.5 Potential Efficiency Savings

| No | Item | Potential Efficiency Savings | | |
|--------------------------------|------------------------|------------------------------|----------------|---------------|
| | | 21/22 | 22/23 | 23/24 |
| 1 | Tariff income increase | £42,740 | - | - |
| 2 | Asset Transfer | £2,635 | £7,905 | |
| 3 | Pay by phone only | - | £7,000 | £7,000 |
| 4 | Staff savings target | £17,430 | - | - |
| Total Potential Savings | | £62,805 | £14,905 | £7,000 |

| Policies and other considerations, as appropriate | |
|---|--|
| Council Priorities: | Developing a clean and green district & Our communities are safe, healthy and connected |
| Policy Considerations: | None |
| Safeguarding: | No concerns |
| Equalities/Diversity: | None |
| Customer Impact: | There will be an impact on customers – see the action plan in Annex A for details. |
| Economic and Social Impact: | The economic and social impacts are detailed in the report at Annex A |
| Environment and Climate Change: | Any environmental and climate change impact as a result of the decision is detailed in the report at Annex A . |
| Consultation/Community Engagement: | Engagement with key stakeholders and Parish and Town Councils is detailed in the report at Annex A |
| Risks: | Risks have been managed through the project board |
| Officer Contact | Paul Sanders Head of Community Services paul.sanders@nwleicestershire.gov.uk |