

FLINTSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

REPORT TO: **ENVIRONMENT OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY COMMITTEE**

DATE: **WEDNESDAY 15 APRIL 2015**

REPORT BY: **CHIEF OFFICER (STREETSCENE AND TRANSPORTATION)**

SUBJECT: **FLINTSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL'S CAR PARKING STRATEGY**

1.00 **PURPOSE OF REPORT**

- 1.01 To seek a recommendation from the Committee to Cabinet to approve the Council Car Parking Strategy and the introduction of parking charges at all viable town car parks within the ownership of the Council.
- 1.02 To seek a recommendation from the Committee to Cabinet to approve the introduction of a workplace and visitor parking permit scheme at specific Council office facilities where staff and visitor parking overlaps with the local parking strategy.
- 1.03 To seek a recommendation from the Committee to Cabinet to approve the level of charge for the issue of residents parking permits associated with local residents parking schemes

2.00 **BACKGROUND**

- 2.01 Parking management and appropriate enforcement are key tools in managing the highway network and supporting the effective movement of traffic. There are numerous examples of conflict between town centre visitors and residential parking areas where previously ineffective management has led to congestion and consequential delays to road users
- 2.02 Civil Parking Enforcement was introduced in Flintshire in October 2013 and through effective on-street enforcement many vehicles have now been displaced to off street car parks. In order to maintain the vibrancy and vitality of the towns in Flintshire, it is essential to also effectively manage off street parking.
- 2.03 In addition, a number of Council car parks in local towns are utilised by car sharing groups, with vehicles being left for long periods whilst the owners commute to other areas of the North West of England. This activity utilises available capacity and results in a lack of space for shoppers and visitors to the towns. Car park charging has proved to be an effective mechanism elsewhere to encourage commuters to utilise the car parks on the periphery of the town, leaving town centre proximity spaces for short stay shoppers and visitors.

2.04 Staff and visitors parking in Mold (County Hall) and Flint offices currently utilise car parks which are designated within the local car park management areas and therefore parking permits will be required by both staff and Council members who work or regularly visit these buildings.

3.00 **CONSIDERATIONS**

3.01 After considering the feedback received during the open public consultation period and the member workshops, the proposed parking management arrangements will be applied only in towns where the total number of available Council owned parking spaces exceeds 50 spaces

3.02 Parking charges will therefore apply in the following towns across the County

- Flint
- Holywell
- Mold
- Buckley
- Connah's Quay
- Queensferry
- Shotton

3.03 Talacre will also be included in the car park management arrangements because of local concerns regarding parking and the impact it has on the local community and businesses.

3.04 An overarching Council Parking Strategy has been developed to capture the fundamental principles that will be applied in the individual town parking strategies. **Appendix 1.**

3.05 Where possible a single and consistent charging level will apply at each car park and a Council wide summary charging sheet lists the charging bands that will apply in each town, depending on the nature and classification of the car parks available there – **Appendix 2.** The charges will be reviewed annually by the Chief Officer (Streetscene and Transportation) after consultation with the Cabinet Member for Environment.

3.06 In order to develop local parking strategies, a full assessment of the current parking availability (within the ownership of the County) compared to the local demand for parking has been completed for each town. Each study considered the levels of demand and the optimum car parking provision to be provided i.e. Short stay or Long stay provision. It also defines the status (and therefore the appropriate charging regime) for each car park. The local parking strategies are shown in **Appendix 3.**

- 3.07 The proposed car parking charges will be introduced in a phased manner in each town across the County as detailed on the attached programme. **Appendix 4.**
- 3.08 An integral part of introducing off street parking charges is a review of the existing highway Traffic Regulation Orders (TRO's) to ensure the consequences of vehicle displacement within the local community are considered. Any additions or extensions to existing TRO's, required as a result of the introduction of parking charges will be detailed within each of the local parking strategies.
- 3.09 In addition, the introduction of car park charges will impact on the availability of local on-road parking for residents. To overcome this issue, effective residents parking schemes will be required in some areas of the County. Each local parking strategy will therefore contain details of any local resident parking schemes which may be required as a result of the new proposals.
- 3.10 The programme to introduce both the revised TRO's and the resident parking schemes will be prioritised and delivered to coincide with the introduction of parking charges, if necessary in a particular town. The outcomes to the pilot residents parking scheme (which is currently being trialled in the Mold area), will also be taken into account in the introduction of any of the proposed residents parking schemes.
- 3.11 Based on the information gained from the pilot it has been assessed that the cost of delivering the residents parking scheme can be recovered through a charge for each residents parking permit of £25 per annum (per car) in 2015 – 16. Second and subsequent permits can be purchased at the same rate, for use in restricted on-street parking areas (subject to availability) and for use in named off street parking facilities, subject to the vehicle being registered to properties within the affected area. The charge will be reviewed annually by the Chief Officer (Streetscene and Transportation) after consultation with the Cabinet Member for Environment.
- 3.12 As previously stated the introduction of the parking charges in both Flint and Mold will require that the associated staff and visitor car parks in those areas are considered under the umbrella of the local parking strategy. This will therefore necessitate the introduction of an affordable and equitable parking permit scheme for the staff that work at these facilities and use the Council car parks.
- 3.13 Following a period of staff consultation and discussions with the Trades Unions, the original proposed charging arrangements for parking permits have been modified to provide parity of treatment with the town centre and to take account of the main concerns raised by both parties.
- 3.14 The cost of a parking permit will be equivalent to that provided to non Council staff at the public commuter car parks (currently £100 per

annum) with a zero permit charge applying to those staff employed on salaries at or below the nationally recognised living wage and to any modern apprentices employed by the Council. Senior staff would continue to be offered designated spaces at a premium rate and in line with current arrangements.

- 3.15 In common with other town car parks there will be no charge for evening parking in Mold however a contribution towards the cost of car park maintenance will be raised through a levy applied to all theatre tickets sales in Clwyd Theatr Cymru.
- 3.16 Where car parking charges are introduced in a town or area that are above the County wide base level, a contribution to the local T&CC equivalent to 10% of the net difference between base level and actual charge level will be provided to the T&CC to invest in the community – subject to the national guidelines for the expenditure of car parking income by a public body.
- 3.17 Enforcement of the new arrangements will be carried out by officers based in the Streetscene and Transportation portfolio. The new officers will take on the combined enforcement role including enforcing any environmental issues (dog fouling and littering etc) which may occur across the County.
- 3.18 Two all Member workshops were held in March 2015 in order to consider the car parking management proposals and make recommendations to the appropriate Scrutiny Committee. Where it has been possible and affordable within the business case the feedback from the workshops have been included into the final proposals and a full list of the comments made and the action identified are included as the attachments to this report - **Appendix 5**
- 3.19 The workshops considered the following aspects of the proposals and the new Policy reflects the majority recommendations and comments received at the workshops
- Application of charges on Sunday and Bank Holidays
 - Charges and provision for motorcycles
 - Daily charging periods
 - T&CC contribution levels
- 3.20 An open public consultation exercise has been undertaken on the proposals and a summary of the feedback received is shown in **Appendix 6**
- 3.21 The Environment Overview & Scrutiny Committee considered the Policy in April 2015. A verbal report on the outcome from the committee meeting will be supplied at the Cabinet meeting

4.00 **RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 4.01 That the Committee recommend Cabinet approves the County Parking Strategy - **Appendix 1**.
- 4.02 That the Committee recommend Cabinet approves the Council wide charging sheet which lists the proposed charging bands (**Appendix 2**) and provides delegated authority to the Chief Officer (Streetscene and Transportation) following consultation with the Cabinet Member for Environment, to review the charging arrangements applied at each car park on an annual basis.
- 4.03 That the Committee recommend Cabinet approves the introduction of car parking permit schemes at County Hall and Flint to allow staff and visitors to utilise the car parks within the local parking strategies
- 4.04 That the Committee recommend Cabinet approves the proposals to make a contribution to any T&CC with car parking charges above the base rate as highlighted in the Council wide summary charging sheet - detailed in paragraph 3.16 of this report
- 4.05 That the Committee recommend Cabinet approves the proposed charge for the residents parking permit and the continued rollout of the residents parking scheme if required by the local parking strategy.
- 4.06 That the Committee recommend Cabinet grants delegated authority to the Chief Officer (Streetscene and Transportation), following consultation with the Cabinet Member for Environment, to review the proposed charge for residents parking permits an annual basis.
- 4.07 That the Committee recommends that a report detailing the progress made in delivering the proposals is brought back to the committee in 12 months time

5.00 **FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 5.01 The introduction of charging and increased management in the nominated car parks will incur initial capital cost however it is predicted that revenue will cover these costs in year 1 and provide the £382k of the projected £400k income level projected in the 2015-16 Business Planning proposals. (**Appendix 7**).
- 5.02 The removal of Caergwle and Hawarden car parks from the proposals will reduce income levels by approximately £18k per annum

6.00 **ANTI POVERTY IMPACT**

- 6.01 None as a direct result of this report.

7.00 **ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT**

7.01 Enhanced parking controls throughout the authority should promote proximity spaces for short stay users and where practical encourage the use of public transport or car sharing, thereby resulting in a positive environmental impact.

8.00 **EQUALITIES IMPACT**

8.01 The proposed strategy will reduce the present inequality in the parking provision throughout the individual towns in the County. There are no plans to introduce charges for disabled car users at Council car parks in designated disabled parking bays.

9.00 **PERSONNEL IMPLICATIONS**

9.01 The business case includes the provision of Enforcement Officers as proposals will increase the number of sites requiring enforcement.

10.00 **CONSULTATION REQUIRED**

10.01 Statutory consultation will be required prior to the introduction of local TRO's and resident parking schemes

11.00 **CONSULTATION UNDERTAKEN**

11.01 Trade Unions regarding workplace and visitor charging
11.02 Cabinet Member for Environment.
11.03 All Member workshops which included representatives from Town and
11.04 Community Councils
11.05 Public consultation exercise (9 March to 29 March).

12.00 **APPENDICES**

12.01 Appendix 1 – Countywide Parking Strategy
12.02 Appendix 2 – Council wide summary document listing the County wide charging bands
Appendix 3 - Individual Parking strategy for each Town or Community area
Appendix 4 – Programme of introduction
Appendix 5 - Feedback from workshops
Appendix 6 – Feedback from public consultation exercise
Appendix 7 – Financial Model and projected income from individual car parks

**LOCAL GOVERNMENT (ACCESS TO INFORMATION ACT) 1985
BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS**

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