

CABINET

Date of Meeting	Tuesday, 17 th December 2019
Report Subject	Short Stay Car Parking in Buckley
Cabinet Member	Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Streetscene and Countryside
Report Author	Chief Officer (Streetscene and Transportation)
Type of Report	Operational

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

In April 2015 Cabinet approved the County wide car parking strategy which introduced parking charges in all town centre car parks which were designated as being within the scope of the new strategy.

The impact of car parking charges on the vibrancy of the town centres was considered at length during their introduction and subsequent reviews of both the strategy and the charging levels were aimed at striking a balance between affordability for shoppers and visitors, raising income to cover the cost of providing the car parking service and managing car parking availability in our town centres.

The availability of a small number of free, short stay, on-street parking spaces in a town centre is essential to allow shoppers to make short visits to collect shopping and staff from the portfolio have worked with each Town Council to review the number of spaces available. The local road layout in the area around Buckley town centre does not permit the provision of on-street parking and this may discourage shoppers who may wish to visit the town for short periods. A report was approved by Cabinet in October 2019 to provide free half an hour parking in one 'off street' car park, to balance the free parking availability in other towns across the County.

Buckley Town Council has requested that further consideration be made to increase the half hour free parking to an hour, to allow shoppers more time to make use of town centre facilities and support local businesses, with the Town Council subsidising the cost of the additional free period. This report seeks Cabinet approval to accommodate this request.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1.	That Cabinet approves increasing the free short stay parking time limit from half an hour to an hour in Brunswick Road Car Park, Buckley with financial support from Buckley Town Council for the lost revenue.
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REPORT DETAILS

1.00	BACKGROUND OF THE CAR PARKING STRATEGY
1.01	<p>Following approval of the Council's car parking strategy in April 2015, car parking charges were introduced at the following locations within the County:</p> <p>Mold – Revised charging tariffs introduced in August 2015 Buckley – Introduced charging arrangements in August 2015 Talacre – Introduced charging arrangements (partial) in July 2015 Holywell – Introduced charging arrangements in September 2015 Connah's Quay – Introduced charging arrangements in November 2015 Shotton – Introduced charging arrangements in November 2015 Queensferry – Introduced charging arrangements in November 2015 Mold, County Hall – Introduced Summer 2016 Flint – Introduced charging arrangements in May 2018</p>
1.02	<p>The availability of a small number of free, short stay, on-street parking spaces in a town centre is essential to allow shoppers to make short visits or to collect shopping and staff from the Portfolio have worked with each Town Council to review the number of spaces available.</p> <p>Whilst it is difficult to define the town centre area in each case, the approximate number of free on-street parking spaces available in each town centre is as follows:</p> <p>Mold – Approximately 55 Shotton – Approximately 25 C'Quay – Approximately 50+ side street parking spaces available Flint – Approximately 45 Queensferry – Approximately 45 Holywell – Approximately 20 on street spaces - following reconfiguration of High Street</p> <p>The road layout in the Buckley area does not permit the provision of short stay parking and the provision is therefore limited to just a handful of spaces.</p>
1.03	<p>In order to provide some balance between the provision of on-street free parking in Buckley and every other town in the Council, in October 2019 Cabinet approved the re-designation of a section of Brunswick Road car park to offer free car parking for up to half an hour which would provide 18 free spaces for short visits to the town centre.</p>
1.04	<p>Officers of the Council attended a meeting with Buckley Town Council to explain the proposal and gain their support. At this meeting representatives of the Town Council suggested that half an hour would not be sufficient for shoppers or visitors to make use of the facilities available in the town centre and that one hour would be more suited to encourage shoppers to stay longer in the town centre.</p>

1.05	The cost in terms of lost income is difficult to assess because there will inevitably be some displacement from existing car parks as a result however an accurate figure can be gained from the number of free tickets obtained by users of the car park. This will form the basis of future year's recharges however an estimate of £9 - 11k per year has been made based on current utilisation levels. The figure will be reviewed monthly to ensure the figure recharged to the Town Council is a true representation of the utilisation level.
1.06	In order for the proposal to remain compliant with the parking strategy, it will still be necessary for users to display a parking ticket, albeit that the ticket is provided free of charge from the ticket machines. This will ensure that the management of parking within the town centre area is continued and to avoid abuse of the car park by long stay motorists.

2.00	RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS
2.01	The cost of advertising and reconfiguring the signage and ticket machines in Brunswick Road car park would be £5k and will be funded from existing maintenance budgets. The lost income for providing free parking for the first 30 minute period will result in a financial pressure detailed in the October Cabinet report.
2.02	The cost of the additional half an hour has been assessed at £9 - 11k (although some of this saving may be included in the initial reduction in income levels detailed in the October Cabinet report), which will allow the Town Council to budget for the new arrangements. The final recharge will be dependent on the number of tickets issued by the machines, which will allow the share of the financial loss to be calculated for both the County Council and Town Council.

3.00	IMPACT ASSESSMENT AND RISK MANAGEMENT
3.01	Loss of car parking income will result in financial pressures within the service.
3.02	The introduction of car parking charges was intended to ensure the availability of parking within the town centre. This will be continued by the requirement to display a valid ticket in the car park for the period of free parking.

4.00	CONSULTATIONS REQUIRED / CARRIED OUT
4.01	With Town Council on the proposed changes to car parking tariffs in Brunswick Road car park.
4.02	Consultation has already taken place with the Cabinet Member

4.03	Statutory consultation advertising the variation to the legal 'off street parking places' order.
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5.00	APPENDICES
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5.01	None.
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6.00	LIST OF ACCESSIBLE BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS
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6.01	None.
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7.00	CONTACT OFFICER DETAILS
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7.01	Contact Officer: S Jones Chief Officer Streetscene and Transportation Telephone: 01352 704700 E-mail: Stephen.o.jones@flintshire.gov.uk
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8.00	GLOSSARY OF TERMS
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8.01	None.
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