

EXECUTIVE BOARD

26th JULY 2016

Environmental & Public Protection Scrutiny Committee Task & Finish Group Final Report 2015/16:

Car Parking Charges

To consider and comment on the following issues:

- That consideration be given to the Environmental & Public Protection Scrutiny Committee Task & Finish Group's recommendations, which are outlined within the executive summary and the attached report.

Reasons:

- At its meeting on 15th May 2015, the Environmental & Public Protection Scrutiny Committee agreed to establish a task and finish group to research different approaches to car parking charges that could be applied in the county.
- The recommendations contained within the report have been formulated by the Group following the consideration of a range of evidence over a series of meetings held between September 2015 and April 2016.

Relevant scrutiny committee consulted: YES

Scrutiny Committee and date: Environmental & Public Protection – 13th May 2016

To be referred to the Executive Board for decision: YES

Executive Board Member Portfolio Holder: Cllr. Hazel Evans (Technical Services)

Chair of the Task & Finish Group: Cllr. Peter Cooper	Designations: Chair of the Environmental & Public Protection Scrutiny Committee	Tel Nos. / E-Mail Addresses: 01267 224028 apcooper@cararthenshire.gov.uk
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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

EXECUTIVE BOARD 26th JULY 2016

Environmental & Public Protection Scrutiny Committee Task & Finish Group Final Report 2015/16:

Car Parking Charges

Review Background

The Environmental & Public Protection Scrutiny Committee has a key role to play in monitoring services, development of key policies and strategies, as well as identifying areas for improvement or development.

At its meeting on 15th May 2015, the Environmental & Public Protection Scrutiny Committee agreed to establish a task and finish group to research different approaches to car parking charges that could be applied in the county.

Following consideration of a report on Llanelli Car Parks at its meeting on the 28th September 2015, the Executive Board also requested that the Group explore the option of introducing a pay on exit system at the Llanelli multi-storey car park in lieu of the pay and display / pay on foot system.

Objectives and Scope

Following its first meeting, the Group agreed that its main objective for the review would be to:

- Research different approaches to car parking charges that could be applied in the county.

The Group agreed that the scope of the review would focus on:

- Charging Policy (to include Parking Strategy & Policy)
- Legislation relating to Traffic Management and Parking
- The purpose of parking charges
- Car park demand / usage
- Revenue distribution and impact of reducing charges

- Research evidence on the impact of car park charging
- Main town centre footfall
- Car park charges and competitiveness including socio-economic issues

Approach

A total of 6 meetings were held between September 2015 and April during which the Group considered evidence and information from a wide variety of sources. The sessions were designed to provide the Group with the relevant information, context and background to the topic.

The Task and Finish Group's membership was as follows:

- Cllr. Peter Cooper (Chair)
- Cllr. Alun Davies
- Cllr. Ivor Jackson
- Cllr. John Jenkins
- Cllr. Elwyn Williams

The Democratic Services Unit based in the Chief Executive's Department, provided research and general support to the Group. The following officers provided specialist advice and support during the Group's review:

- Steve Pilliner (Head of Transport & Engineering)
- John McEvoy (Road Safety & Traffic Manager)

Recommendations

The Group recommends that:

1. The County Council proceeds with on-going collection of data for footfall in key towns.
2. The Carmarthenshire Integrated Parking Strategy be updated.
3. Consideration be given to the mix of short / long-stay bays in the Authority's car parks where there is high demand for short-stay parking.
4. The accessibility of on-street parking bays designated for blue badge holders be reviewed and standardised according to the legislative requirements, where feasibly possible.
5. Given the competitive nature of Carmarthenshire's current charges, the current pricing strategy be retained but that footfall in towns be kept under regular review and consultation be undertaken where future changes to parking charges are proposed.

6. Town / Community Councils and Chambers of Trade be reminded of the free-parking day scheme and be encouraged to fully utilise this initiative.
7. The free parking at the Council's Coleshill Car Park (Llanelli) at weekends be further promoted.
8. The number of free parking days available to the County's towns be increased to 7 days per year but that the exclusion period be extended to cover the whole of November, as well as the whole of December.
9. The Council pursues the potential change in legislation with the Welsh Government and subject to clarification and affordability, proceeds with a phased programme of introducing an Automatic Number Plate Recognition (ANPR) Pay on Exit system across its car parks.
10. Where feasible, the Council introduces 'shop and drop' bays in the county's towns, in proportion to the size of the town and spaces available, for a limited waiting time of up to 30 minutes.
11. The Council proceeds with introducing 'cashless payment' technology by undertaking a pilot in the County's key towns.

Additional comments by the Environmental & Public Scrutiny Committee

At its meeting on the 13th May 2016, the Environmental & Public Protection Scrutiny Committee considered the report and resolved that subject to the inclusion of its comments and additional suggestions, the report be received and referred to the Executive Board for its consideration. The Committee's comments in relation to the recommendations are listed below:

1. The County Council proceeds with on-going collection of data for footfall in key towns – *The Committee suggested that economic data also be collected as footfall in itself did not guarantee a positive economic benefit.*
2. The Carmarthenshire Integrated Parking Strategy be updated – *The Committee suggested that the Strategy be totally reviewed rather than simply updated.*
3. Consideration be given to the mix of short / long-stay bays in the Authority's car parks where there is high demand for short-stay parking – *The Committee suggested that consultation with local members be carried out prior to any changes.*
4. The accessibility of on-street parking bays designated for blue badge holders be reviewed and standardised according to the legislative requirements, where feasibly possible – *The Committee suggested that where possible, bays on one-way streets be positioned so that the driver could alight onto a pavement and not onto the road, thus reducing the potential danger to themselves and causing obstruction to other drivers. The Committee also suggested that a solution to blue badge holders parking in resident zones be explored further.*

5. Given the competitive nature of Carmarthenshire's current charges, the current pricing strategy be retained but that footfall in towns be kept under regular review and consultation be undertaken where future changes to parking charges are proposed – *The Committee suggested that more investment was needed in the service, particularly on the maintenance of car parks themselves.*
6. Town / Community Councils and Chambers of Trade be reminded of the free-parking day scheme and be encouraged to fully utilise this initiative – *The Committee agreed with this proposal.*
7. The free parking at the Council's Coleshill Car Park (Llanelli) at weekends be further promoted – *The Committee agreed with this proposal.*
8. The number of free parking days available to the County's towns be increased to 7 days per year but that the exclusion period be extended to cover the whole of November, as well as the whole of December – *The Committee welcomed the proposal but was of the opinion that the exemption be kept for the whole of December, rather than November as many towns held pre-Christmas festivities in November and that free parking days were often used to boost attendance at such events.*
9. The Council pursues the potential change in legislation with the Welsh Government and subject to clarification and affordability, proceeds with a phased programme of introducing an ANPR Pay on Exit system across its car parks – *The Committee agreed with this proposal.*
10. Where feasible, the Council introduces 'shop and drop' bays in the county's towns, in proportion to the size of the town and spaces available, for a limited waiting time of up to 30 minutes – *The Committee was of the opinion that this option needed to be feasible in each area so as not to discriminate against different towns and that consideration be given to 2 hours free on-street parking (with no return in an hour) rather than 30 minutes.*
11. The Council proceeds with introducing 'cashless payment' technology by undertaking a pilot in the County's key towns – *The Committee agreed with this proposal.*

DETAILED REPORT ATTACHED?	YES
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IMPLICATIONS

I confirm that other than those implications which have been agreed with the appropriate Directors / Heads of Service and are referred to in detail below, there are no other implications associated with this report.

Signed: Linda Rees-Jones Head of Administration & Law

Policy, Crime & Disorder and Equalities	Legal	Finance	ICT	Risk Management Issues	Staffing Implications	Physical Assets
YES	NONE	YES	NONE	NONE	NONE	NONE

1. Policy, Crime & Disorder and Equalities

Parking Services contribute to the following strategic objectives and outcomes in Carmarthenshire County Council's Corporate Strategy 2015-2020 and the Carmarthenshire Integrated Community Strategy 2011-16:

- People who live, work and visit Carmarthenshire are safe and feel safer
- Carmarthenshire's communities and environment are sustainable
- Carmarthenshire has a stronger and more prosperous economy.

3. Finance

Recommendations 2, 3, 4, 7, 8 and 10 will have a financial implication for the Authority. The details are set out below:

2. The car parking strategy review anticipated cost is £5,000

3. The re-designation of short and long stay bays where there is high demand for short stay car parking could generate additional income. The level of income is dependent on generating additional demand from parking currently displaced to other available facilities and subject to further consultation. The financial impact can only be evaluated when the detail has been finalised.

4. The anticipated cost of reviewing the accessibility and standardising on street parking bays for Blue Badge holders is estimated at £2,500.

7. The cost of promoting the free parking at the Council's Coleshill Car Park (Llanelli) at weekends is estimated to be circa £500.

8. The cost of extending the number of free parking days available to the County's towns from 5 to 7 days per year but that the exclusion period be extended to cover the whole of November, as well as the whole of December, is estimated at £14,000 and if it was implemented without extending the exemption period to November, would be £20,000.

10. The introduction of shop and drop bays for a limited waiting time of up to 30 minutes is anticipated to cost £10,000 to cover the required change to the Order with the potential for a reduction in off street car parking income, depending on the number of bays available at each town.

CONSULTATIONS

I confirm that the appropriate consultations have taken in place and the outcomes are as detailed below:

Signed: **Linda Rees-Jones** **Head of Administration & Law**

1. Scrutiny Committee – The Environmental & Public Protection Scrutiny Committee considered the report at its meeting on the 13th May 2016 and resolved that subject to the inclusion of its comments and additional suggestions, the report be received and referred to the Executive Board for its consideration.

2. Local Member(s) – N/A

3. Community / Town Council – N/A

4. Relevant Partners – Carmarthen Town Forum submitted suggestions to the Group as part of its review.

5. Staff Side Representatives and other Organisations – Officers from the Environment and Chief Executive’s departments contributed to and supported the work of the Task & Finish Group.

Section 100D Local Government Act, 1972 – Access to Information List of Background Papers used in the preparation of this report:

THESE ARE DETAILED BELOW:

Title of Document	File Ref No. / Locations that the papers are available for public inspection
Task & Finish Group Final Report 2015/16: Car Parking Charges – E&PP Scrutiny Committee (13th May 2016)	<p>Report: http://democracy.carmarthenshire.gov.wales/documents/s5861/Report.pdf</p> <p>Minutes: Not yet available online</p>

Title of Document	File Ref No. / Locations that the papers are available for public inspection
Task & Finish Group Planning and Scoping Document – E&PP Scrutiny Committee (11th January 2016)	Draft Planning and Scoping Document / Minutes: http://democracy.carmarthenshire.gov.wales/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=134&MId=272&Ver=4
E&PP Forward Work Programme 2015/16 – E&PP Scrutiny Committee (15th May 2015)	Report: http://online.carmarthenshire.gov.uk/agendas/eng/ENMT20150515/REP07.HTM Minutes: http://online.carmarthenshire.gov.uk/agendas/eng/ENMT20150515/MINUTES.HTM