

Report to the Cabinet

Meeting to be held on Thursday, 8 August 2019

Report of the Head of Service - Highways

Part I

Electoral Division affected:
Preston City;

Lancashire County Council (Arthur Street Car Park and Registry Office Car Park, Arthur Street, and Lancashire Archives Office Car Park, Bow Lane, Preston, Preston City) (Off Street Parking Places) Order 201*
(Appendices 'A' and 'B' refer)

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Executive Summary

Following formal public consultation it is proposed to make an off street parking places Order to introduce charges on the specified county council car parks listed in this report to contribute to the maintenance of the facilities whilst promoting the correct use of the available spaces with regards to the Registry Office and Lancashire Archives car parks.

Recommendation

Cabinet is asked to consider and approve the proposals as detailed within this report and as set out in the Notice of Proposal and plan attached at Appendices 'A' and 'B'.

Background and Advice

The reintroduction of charges for public use of the Arthur Street Car Park at weekends, and the introduction of charging for use of the Registrar's and Lancashire Archives car parks during all operating hours, are the subject of a service challenge initiative (reference: SC401). In accordance with the service challenge rationale, charging for use of these facilities by the public has been proposed in order to contribute to the overheads of operating and maintaining the car parks (including costs associated with security, CCTV, inspections, lighting, and maintenance of surfacing, line markings, signage, drainage, fencing and vegetation).

In addition, analysis undertaken in conjunction with the registration and archives services during the preparation of the proposal identified a potential positive outcome for Registrar's and Archives' visitors that travel by car. This potential positive outcome is an increased availability of car parking for service users as a consequence of eliminating incidents of free parking by non-visitors to the services and dissuading non-visitors from using the car parks.

The Order has been drawn up to promote short stay parking and therefore prompting a turnover of parking spaces for visitors and increased availability of parking for service users. The charges will allow the areas to be subject to enforcement for non-payment and individuals who overstay the permitted time limits.

Consultations

The proposed Order was advertised in the local newspaper and during the consultation period of 24 May 2019 to 21 June 2019 and Notices were displayed on site.

Divisional county councillors were consulted along with the council's usual consultees and the consultation documents posted on the council's website.

Further to the above consultation, a modification has been proposed to allow for the county council to provide permits to authorised disabled staff, volunteer staff and dedicated staff (in the pursuance of operational need) working within the services who are currently permitted to park on those car parks free of charge. This modification was advertised on site from 27 June 2019 to 11 July 2019.

During the original consultation period one objection was received and no objections were received in relation to the proposed modification.

Objections to the Proposal

An objection was received to the proposal to start charging for the use of the County Hall car parks as the objector uses these facilities as a means of accessing Preston City Centre, primarily the use of the market. The car park is also used to facilitate drop off and pick up from the railway station and the objector indicates that he is aware that these facilities are used for people using the nearby registry office and the Sikh temple.

The objector suggests that rather than introducing charges on the car park that more space should be opened up for free parking to encourage more visitors to Preston City Centre.

Engineer Response

The objection indicates the need for this regulation by giving an example of how the car parks are used by people other than visitors to the services, thereby reducing the available off street parking for those visitors to the service. The objector does not make a specific point with regard to the pay and display on Arthur Street but indicates that more free parking should be made available. Income generated from

the parking charges would help to contribute towards the overheads of operating and maintaining the car parks whilst also providing an incentive for visitors to use more sustainable forms of transport. The services in question are close to the train station and have numerous bus routes nearby as well as park and ride facilities. Opening up more space to allow free parking would mean the council would have to pay to maintain the areas whilst providing a very limited increase in city centre visitors.

Implications:

This item has the following implications, as indicated:

Financial

The capital investment for the necessary enabling work (to install pay and display machines, signage and improved lining) is being funded from the service challenge invest to save budget at an estimated cost of £30,000.

The agreed service challenge saving requires the achievement of additional income of £40,000. If the proposals in this report are not agreed, this will present a pressure of this value within the county council's revenue budget.

Risk management

If the proposal is not progressed to making, the county council will continue to fund free public parking in this area of Preston whilst remaining liable for the costs associated with maintaining and operating the car parks.

In doing so the county council will fail to realise the additional benefit of maximising the availability of parking for use by visitors that travel by car to access the registration and archives services along with foregoing an opportunity to positively impact on its operating deficit.

Legal

The council has a duty to exercise the functions contained in the Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984 so as to secure the expeditious, convenient and safe movement of traffic and the provision of suitable and adequate parking facilities on and off the highway. Further, the exercise of powers contained within the Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984 (such as the making of off street parking orders) are not to be considered a fiscal measure and so generating a profit must not be a factor for consideration when deciding whether to approve the making of this Order.

Having regard to the above, it is considered that the proposed restrictions are intended to secure suitable and adequate parking facilities for the users of the registration and archive services whilst also promoting the use of alternative methods of transport to access these city centre locations. It is anticipated that any income generated as a result of parking on the car parks contained within this proposal will contribute to the overheads of operating and maintaining the car parks.

List of Background Papers

Paper	Date	Contact/Tel
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None

Reason for inclusion in Part II, if appropriate

N/A