

Report to the Cabinet

Meeting to be held on Thursday, 9 July 2020

Report of the Head of Service - Highways

Part I

Electoral Division affected:
Preston City;

Lancashire County Council (Pitt Street, Preston, Preston City) (Revocation, Amendment to Parking Provisions, Prohibition of Waiting and Prohibition of Loading) Order 202*

(Appendices 'A' to 'C' refer)

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Executive Summary

It is proposed to make an Order to increase the pay and display parking provision within the City of Preston. This is to meet the increasing demands for parking provision and meet the requirement for the spaces to be managed to allow turnover of users and encourage more visitors to the city centre.

Recommendation

Cabinet is asked to approve the making of an Order introducing Pay and Display Parking in Pitt Street, Preston along with associated Prohibition of Waiting and Prohibition of Loading restrictions as detailed within this report and as set out in the Notice of Proposal, plan, and statement of reason attached at Appendices 'A' to 'C'.

Background and Advice

This proposal to introduce pay and display parking is part of the "Service Challenge" to find areas where extensions to such provision will benefit the city centre. The lengths of Pitt Street where it is proposed to introduce a pay and display parking restriction are presently utilised all day with very little turnover of available space. This indicates that the area is being used by either workers in the City centre or by commuters not wishing to pay for parking.

The proposal would introduce time limited pay and display parking. To maximise the parking provision available all of the available spaces will be moved to the east side of Pitt Street. This provides a longer continuous parking bay and therefore increases the provision of parking in the area.

It is proposed that the parking will be limited to a maximum period of four hours between 8 am and 6 pm every day. This is in line with the operational hours of other on-street pay and display parking in the city centre. The maximum period is extended to four hours due to its location being further from the centre. Shorter payment periods in line with the other city pay and display provision remains available. Outside of the period of operation of the pay and display the bays will be available for free unrestricted parking.

Consultations

Formal consultation was carried out between 14 February 2020 and 13 March 2020. This was advertised in the local press 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.

Objections to the Proposal

During the consultation period 4 objections were received in response to this proposal. Each objector has been contacted explaining the reasoning behind the proposal and requesting a reply. Only two replies were received and both stated that they did not wish to withdraw their objections.

The objections each covered different points as outlined below.

The free parking that is available on Pitt Street is used by local residents who live in the area but who do not qualify for permit parking. The individual making this point was concerned that his use of the space will be removed and that he will now have to seek parking further away from his home. The concern is that the council should provide free parking for city centre residents and without such provision he will have to move away from Preston. Remarks also included the fact that he paid high levels of "rates" and should not then be asked to pay £5 per day to use a pay and display car park due to the lack of available free parking.

One objection was that the charges proposed for the parking will be the highest in the centre of Preston despite this being some distance from the actual city centre. Concern was expressed that spaces will be taken up by blue badge holders, who would be exempt from the charge and the waiting period. The claim is that the council is looking to make profit from charging their employees who are the only individuals likely to use these spaces and therefore the objection also includes a claim that the statement of reason is also incorrect.

A third objection is that the bays should be limited waiting but this should be limited to just two hours rather than four hours with no return in one hour and that there was no need to charge for these bays. This would then allow bays to be available for people needing to attend County Hall for meetings.

The fourth objection was that the introduction of additional parking would not be consistent with the council's objective of reducing carbon emissions as this would encourage more people to use cars to access the city centre. The objector notes that the proposal does not mention any study indicating that the additional parking was necessary. The communication also goes on to express concern that the parking will

be on a cul-de-sac. As this is the case vehicles will need to turn in the road and this will cause delays and problems for emergency vehicles.

The fourth objector suggested that Pitt Street should be used to provide sites for electric vehicle charging, as this will promote the use of electric powered taxis, so cut emissions. A further suggestion was Pitt Street could be part of a cycle route to the train station avoiding busy routes.

Engineer's Response

With regard that the proposal to introduce Pay and Display Limited Waiting will take away the free parking used by the local resident whose home is not included in a resident's only parking scheme. As much as we aim to accommodate sufficient on street parking for local residents, it is not the county council's responsibility to provide ample on-street parking specifically for use by local residents. However, although Pitt Street does not have any residential properties the proposed restriction is only for limited waiting between 8am and 6pm without any overnight restrictions and therefore these spaces will be available for use overnight without charge.

One of the underlying principles of introducing Pay and Display limited waiting parking is that it should keep the choice of using on street parking as the last resort. The use of off-street public car parking facilities is a better option for drivers rather than on street and it is therefore always encouraged so as to improve traffic flows. The fees for Pitt Street, in line with all on street pay and display, are proposed as marginally higher than those of the local car park fees to support this principle.

The concern that the statement of reason was incorrect, as that the cost of parking on Pitt Street would be too expensive for drivers, and this would result in the bays being used by blue badge holders working in the area, and therefore not encourage visitors to the city centre. Presently there are lengths of Pitt Street that have no parking restrictions and as a result the areas are used by people working in the area rather than visitors to the city centre. The proposed restriction will limit a stay to just four hours whilst also introducing a charge. This should limit Pitt Street as an option for workers parking freeing up the bays for medium term parking by visitors to the City.

With regard to the claim that the primary result will be that the road space will be used by blue badge holders that are employed at County Hall, who will not be charged for the parking and will not be restricted to the four hour restriction. The county council provides an amount of parking for blue badge holders within the County Hall car parks for its workers and therefore this is unlikely to be the case. As with all changes in parking regulations the new restrictions will be monitored and should disabled parking be an issue then alternative restrictions could be considered.

The suggestion that the limited waiting time should be restricted to two hours with no return within 1 hour to allow for visits to meetings at County Hall. Due consideration was given to the term of limited parking on Pitt Street and the possible length of meetings at County Hall. It was decided that four hours would be a suitable period when looking at how long some public meetings can take.

Presently the daytime parking on Pitt Street is free and unrestricted therefore the road is parked to the absolute maximum with at some points cars being double parked or parked perpendicular to the kerb in an attempt to fit more vehicles in the available space. This does indicate that the parking is required and that it is successfully achieved on the cul-de-sac without problems to emergency vehicles. The fact that a road is a cul-de-sac would not preclude the use of the bays as pay and display provision.

The suggestion that the lengths of Pitt Street could be used to install electric vehicle charging points has been investigated. It was found that due to the lack of available power in this area, installation of charging units on Pitt Street would not be financially viable at this time. The county council has provided a number of units in the city centre, including the Bus Station Car Park that presently are underutilised. In addition to this further units have been fitted by commercial providers in their off-street car parks. With regards to providing special taxi charging provision this would be a city council function and presently the county council has not been approached by Preston City Council for permission to place any units on the highway network.

The suggestion that Pitt Street could be included in a signed cycle route through from Ring Way to Fishergate Hill does not impact on the proposals put forward, cyclists can already use this route and the effect of signing it, whilst out of scope for this proposal, would not impact on the use of kerb side space.

All of the objections have been fully considered and therefore we would ask Cabinet to approve the making of this order.

Implications:

This item has the following implications, as indicated:

Financial

The costs of the Traffic Regulation Order will be funded from Parking Services Revenue Budget at an estimated cost of £15,000. The work is part of the Service Challenge that will be financed from internal budgets.

Risk management

The proposal will provide an area for visitors to the city centre where there is a frequent turnover of parking places. Road safety may be compromised should the proposed restrictions not be approved and the present dangerous parking is allowed to continue.

Legal

The power to introduce charges in relation to the use of on-street parking places must not be exercised with the intention of raising revenue, although revenue generation is a permissible consequence of a legitimately introduced parking place for which charges apply. Any revenue generated from on-street parking places must

be administered in accordance with section 55 of the Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984.

List of Background Papers

Paper	Date	Contact/Tel
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None		
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Reason for inclusion in Part II, if appropriate		
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