

Report of: Strategic Director PLACES

Title: Response to the reasons for call-in.

(Cabinet Member for Environmental Services 9th July 2009)

1. Introduction

1.1 The above Cabinet Member decision was called in for further consideration by the Environment & Prosperity Scrutiny Committee on 13th July 2009.

1.2 The reason for call-in, contained within the Notice, is;

“that the decision will have a detrimental effect on the income of the shop and office workers who are employed in the Town Centre of Crewe.”

2. Response to the Reason for Call-In

2.1 The proposed charges for Thomas Street Car Park are in-line with Cheshire East’s Car Parking Strategy agreed at Cabinet on 21st April 2009. The Charging Policy contained within this Strategy states that;

“ 5.0 Local Parking Policy

5.1 Charging Policy

Policy: This Authority will in principle impose charges for parking at levels reflecting local pressures and needs. These may vary:

- as between the different towns and smaller centres*
- as between zones within the larger towns*

Car parks currently not having charges will be reviewed and the need for application for charges considered in the light of the criteria stated above. Any charges imposed will be designed to regulate use and improve availability as well as diverting long stay away from very central locations.

*The new authority has inherited a number of off street car parks for which there is no charge. **It is intended that parking charges will be considered only on those sites for which a good case can be made under the above criteria.***

- 2.2 Thomas Street Car Park is located close to the Town Centre (approx ¼ mile from Marks & Spencer store). All other Town Centre Car Parks within that radius (and beyond) are already charged.
- 2.3 Civil Enforcement of on-street parking has led to increased occupancy of Crewe's Town Centre Car Parks. There is a greater need to regulate this through the introduction of a charging regime in Thomas Street.
- 2.4 Thomas Street Car Park will now be patrolled and enforced by Civil Enforcement Officers. Their increased presence will have a beneficial effect on crime reduction and prevention and improve the security of vehicles parked there.
- 2.5 The costs of improvement works, operational costs and regular maintenance will now be borne by the users of the facilities rather than the Council Tax Payers as a whole. The planned improvements works (£90k capital investment) will not go ahead unless charging is introduced to recover these costs. (A £120k scheme has already been undertaken at this site).
- 2.6 The proposed order will amend the Borough of Crewe and Nantwich (General) (Off Street Parking Places) Order to introduce a pay and display system of car parking on Thomas Street East and West Car Parks, restrict waiting as indicated in the report and introduce further restrictions to ensure its proper management and use.
- 2.7 The hours of charging have already been adjusted to allow for the frequent use of the car park by users of the leisure and sports facilities at Cumberland Track. This concession has been made owing to the unique position of this car park in this respect and in recognition of the needs of leisure users following previous consultations.
- 2.8 The improved control of parking which should result from charging would benefit the economies of the town centre, as the principle is to remove long stay parking from very central locations, freeing up spaces for shorter stay customers and visitors. This also discourages non-essential car use in general.
- 2.9 The former Crewe & Nantwich Borough Council and Local Joint Highways Committee gave initial approval, subject to statutory consultation, to introduce Pay & Display charging on Thomas St. Car Park.
- 2.10 The forthcoming development of Lyceum Square will see a reduction of 11 shoppers spaces. Regulation of this car park is therefore necessary to improve space availability in the Town Centre.