

## **Portfolio Holder Decision**

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**Report Title:** Continuation of Informal Parking incentive schemes

**Portfolio Holder:** Portfolio Holder for Highways and Waste

**Senior Officer:** Executive Director of Place

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### **1. Report Summary**

- 1.1. The purpose of the report is to seek approval for the continuation, review, cessation or amendment of the temporary informal parking incentive schemes detailed below up to and including 31/3/2020.
- 1.2. The temporary incentive schemes, some of which have been in place for a number of years facilitate cheaper or free (suspended) parking charges on the Council's pay and display car parks.
- 1.3. The approval can be signed off by Cllr Roberts as Portfolio Holder (PH). This approval process has been verified by legal services on 20/3/19 in accordance with the Council's Constitution.

### **2. Recommendations**

- 2.1. It is recommended that the temporary incentive schemes below be authorised to continue, cease or be amended or reviewed as described with the management and administration of the schemes remaining with the parking services team.

#### **2.2. To continue at least up to 31/3/2020**

##### **2.2.1. 4 Free Parking days in a rolling 12 month period.**

- 2.2.1.1. There will be 4 free days allowed per Town Council in towns where charges apply. The primary purpose of this incentive is to support our towns and provide a flexible incentive which can be used in the run up to Christmas or spread throughout the year to aid key town events. This originally commenced in Nov 2016.

2.2.1.2. In order to avoid all the spaces being taken up by Workers/Commuters, free parking will only commence after 10am. The Town Councils take responsibility for advertising and promoting these free days on the designated sites on the days chosen and that any such advertising material is removed in a timely fashion thereafter so as to avoid any confusion for service users.

2.2.1.3. The car parks authorised for this incentive are as follows:-

- MACCLESFIELD: Duke Street; Exchange Street; Churchill Way; Park Green; Sunderland Street; Waters Green; Town Hall
- CREWE: Civic Library; Gatefield; Holly Bank; Delamere Street; Lyceum; Wrexham Terrace
- NANTWICH: Snow Hill; Civic Hall; Bowling Green
- CONGLETON: Fairground; Back Park Street; Princess Street
- ALDERLEY EDGE: South Street
- KNUTSFORD: Princess Street; Silk Mill Street; King Street
- WILMSLOW: South Drive; Hoopers; Spring Street; Rex.

2.2.2. To work with and support Crewe Market Traders and continue the process of them purchasing a pay and display ticket to be displayed alongside a traders parking permit – the car parks closest are short stay and this arrangement lawfully allows them to stay longer than the permitted time on the car park with protected revenue of £2.20 for a pay and display ticket per trader per parking space per day.

2.2.3. Egerton School in Knutsford – parents/carers are issued with a permit at a cost of £20 per year which allows them to park on Booths Supermarket Car Park for a set time at school drop off and pick up time. A Highways survey/attendance supported the off-road parking. The LTP and SMOTS will encourage the school to have a travel policy but as many of the permit holders come from a distance; it isn't viable or safe for the children to be expected to walk to school. Approximately 50 permits are in circulation. This important scheme to continue.

### **2.3. To be ceased/altered**

2.3.1. To temporarily continue with the Free after 3pm parking incentive on the following car parks only up to 31/3/2020. Whilst a previous study confirmed that the use of this scheme was not supporting its original intention and was in fact in the main supporting free parking for parents

at school pick up times, a further assessment will be carried out to see if it is actually increasing footfall to our town centres in the afternoons:-

- Whalley Hayes – Macclesfield
- Snow Hill – Nantwich
- Thomas Street in Crewe – from Oak Street car park\*
- South Street – Alderley Edge
- Back park Street – Congleton
- Princess Street – Knutsford

*\* Given the public's response to the re-introduction of parking charges at Thomas Street car park in Crewe, a review of the parking charges in Crewe is under way at the request of the Portfolio Holder.*

2.3.2. To mirror the same arrangements as the Crewe market traders, the Crewe Lyceum car park 'car booters' will be charged the same £2.20 parking charge with effect from 1/10/2019. The car booters will pay £2.20 for a pay and display parking ticket which is displayed in their vehicle on the Lyceum car park in Crewe.

2.3.3. Macclesfield, Knutsford & Wilmslow outdoor/market traders to follow the same £2.20 charge on Market days. This will mirror the arrangements with the market traders in Crewe. This will continue to support our important Market Traders who will be advised that a pay and display ticket must be obtained for the value of £2.20 which is then displayed on the dashboard or fascia of the vehicle. This revised scheme to start on 1/10/19 and continue until 31/3/2020

2.3.4. At the next review of the off-street consolidated parking order, to propose that Roe Street car park in Congleton to become a short stay car park with a maximum stay of 3 hours. Currently, the legal order states that there is no maximum stay.

### **3. Reasons for Recommendation/s**

3.1. Cheshire East has a place vision which includes being nationally recognised for the quality of its countryside, villages and market towns, having homes for an increasing number of families and young people and having a strong visitor economy as an area with a rich heritage, a place of places where town meets country. Securing robust income streams from our pay and display car parks whilst offering appropriate and well managed temporary incentives is a fine balancing act but one which supports our community outcomes – 2 – Cheshire East has a strong and resilient

economy – 4 – Cheshire East is a green and sustainable place & 6 – A responsible, effective and efficient organisation.

- 3.2. It remains imperative that informal/temporary incentive schemes are agreed and applied in a transparent, objective and fair manner – not favouring one area over another, one business over another or one charity over another. The schemes should be evidence based and this is demonstrated by the 4 free days parking incentive and the unique circumstances presented by the Egerton School permits at Booths supermarket car park.
- 3.3. Once the Local Transport Plan has been approved, the parking component of each of our major towns can be looked at individually – and where it is then appropriate and necessary to do so, new temporary incentives can be agreed using an evidenced based approach.
- 3.4. It is important to refrain from supporting historic informal schemes which can set dangerous precedencies and impede the implementation of a fair, consistent and transparent approach to the parking strategy which includes some guiding principles for pricing.

#### **4. Other Options Considered**

- 4.1. All of the informal temporary incentives could continue but this does not provide robust income streams nor support transparency, consistency, equality or fairness. There is currently no evidence to suggest that the free after 3pm scheme supports what its original intention was – i.e. to encourage shoppers/visitors to the towns after 3pm to increase footfall into the towns. However, a further assessment is proposed.
- 4.2. The 4 free days parking temporary incentive could cease but this scheme certainly supports our town and parish councils who liaise with many stakeholders when organising special events to encourage visitors and shoppers across the borough.

#### **5. Background**

- 5.1. As part of the emerging Local Transport Plan, it is important that informal/temporary parking schemes or incentives are formalised and put on an even keel so that when work begins on the recommendations from the strategy including looking at some guiding principles for pricing, a level playing field is the starting point on which to build open, honest and transparent working relationships and a decision making process. A level playing field facilitates the application of parking arrangements and incentivised schemes in a fair, legal and consistent manner.

5.2. Historically, Cheshire East Council appears to have inherited several informal parking arrangement schemes from the former legacy council's along with some that were agreed by previous management which at the time may have supported individual requests from local businesses and land owners. Some of these arrangements are not supported by the evidence base and could create a demand for similar requests that parking officers have refused to avoid setting any precedent.

5.3. Going forwards, it is important from a 'transparency' and financial point of view that some of the schemes are withdrawn (notice will be given to those affected), some are altered so as to ensure they are financially fair and others may be retained where it is appropriate to do so.

## **6. Implications of the Recommendations**

### **6.1. Legal Implications**

6.1.1. It has been confirmed by legal services that this is the appropriate avenue to seek authorisation for the parking incentive schemes detailed in the report. None of these incentives are included in the Consolidated Off-Street Parking Order as they were only ever meant to be temporary.

6.1.2. Off-street parking restrictions/price changes can be suspended by way of this authorisation procedure and additionally managed and administered by the use of permits and dispensations.

6.1.3. Statutory public consultation does not need to take place on the amendments proposed in this report.

### **6.2. Finance Implications**

6.2.1. Whilst the main factor in either retaining or amending/removing these informal parking arrangements is to provide a uniformed approach across the board to support the LTP, there are some minimal financial implications to be considered.

6.2.2. In amending/removing the schemes as detailed in the report, a small amount of additional revenue for the Council could be generated or limited additional costs would be incurred. Additional income and costs can be contained within existing car parking budgets although this is not the main focus or reason for the informal/temporary incentives.

### **6.3. Policy Implications**

6.3.1. There are no policy implications

#### **6.4. Equality Implications**

6.4.1. There are no equality implications

#### **6.5. Human Resources Implications**

6.5.1. There are no human resources implications

#### **6.6. Risk Management Implications**

6.6.1. The only risk is the potential for adverse publicity as is always the case with amendments to any parking prices

#### **6.7. Rural Communities Implications**

6.7.1. There are no direct implications for rural communities.

#### **6.8. Implications for Children & Young People/Cared for Children**

6.8.1. There are no direct implications for children and young people.

#### **6.9. Public Health Implications**

6.9.1. There are no direct implications for public health.

#### **6.10. Climate Change Implications**

6.10.1. There are no climate change implications.

### **7. Ward Members Affected**

7.1. Affected Wards are Macclesfield, Crewe, Nantwich, Congleton, Alderley Edge, Knutsford & Wilmslow

### **8. Access to Information**

8.1. Background information is available from the report writer.

### **9. Contact Information**

9.1. Any questions relating to this report should be directed to the following officer:

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