

## DECISION ITEM

REPORT OF	MEETING	DATE	ITEM NO
DEVELOPMENT SERVICES DIRECTORATE	OPERATIONAL MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE	12TH NOVEMBER 2019	5
<b>CAR PARK WORKING GROUP OUTCOMES</b>			

### PUBLIC ITEM

This item is for consideration in the public part of the meeting.

### SUMMARY

The car park working group has met during 2018 and 2019. They have reviewed the Council's Car Park Strategy and a variety of issues that impact on the operation of the car parks. A series of recommendations have been made by the group for the Operational Management Committee to approve.

### RECOMMENDATION

#### The Committee is recommended:

1. To approve the draft revised Car Park Strategy as set out in Appendix A
2. To agree to the principle of installing electric charging points on Fylde Council Car Parks and that low risk opportunities be explored for these to be installed.
3. To support the replacement of car park signs to bring them up to date
4. To agree to free Christmas Parking being offered on the three full weekends leading up to Christmas. When Christmas Eve falls on a Saturday this shall not be included in the scheme. Where there are four full weekends in December before Christmas, the first Saturday will be included to support Small Business Saturday.
5. To agree that the number of disabled bays provided on car parks should not be increased unless they do not meet the Department of Transport's non-statutory guidance. Free parking for up to 3 hours continue to be applied in disabled bays for blue badge holders.
6. To agree that standard parking charges should remain unchanged at this time and approve changes to motorhome and coach tariffs plus an increase to some permit charges as detailed within the report.
7. To agree to consider allowing motorhomes to park overnight on the far end section of Stanner Bank Car Park once it re-opens, subject to consultation with the Chair of the Tourism and Leisure Committee; and
8. To agree that the Council's current Car Park Enforcement Policy should remain the same.

### SUMMARY OF PREVIOUS DECISIONS

[10 September 2019 Operational Management Committee](#)

[6 March 2018 Operational Management Committee](#)

[13 September 2016 Operational Management Committee](#)

CORPORATE PRIORITIES	
Spending your money in the most efficient way to achieve excellent services ( <b>Value for Money</b> )	✓
Delivering the services that customers expect of an excellent council ( <b>Clean and Green</b> )	✓
Working with all partners ( <b>Vibrant Economy</b> )	✓
To make sure Fylde continues to be one of the most desirable places to live ( <b>A Great Place to Live</b> )	✓
Promoting Fylde as a great destination to visit ( <b>A Great Place to Visit</b> )	✓

## REPORT

1. The Car Park Working Group met in 2018 and 2019 to review the car park strategy and explore a variety of issues that affect car park operation. Membership of the group in 2018 included Cllrs Alan Clayton, Richard Fradley, Paul Hodgson, Ed Nash, Sandra Pitman and Roger Small. In 2019 it included Cllrs Alan Clayton, Paul Hodgson, David O'Rourke, Roger Small, Stan Trudgill and Michael Withers. Officer support was provided by Fylde Council's Technical Support Manager.
2. An overview was provided to the group of the parking service. This included details of the number of car parks operated by the Council, how the car parks managed, the legal, policy and guidance documents used by car park services and the contractors used to assist with maintaining payment machines, enforcement and back-office support. Details were provided of current fees and charges, income and expenditure. This information provided the basis of exploring a variety of issues

### Fylde Car Park Strategy

3. The Council's Car Park Strategy was last reviewed in 2013. The working group went through the document in detail to update and amend the strategy to reflect the current service provision and intentions for the future. The proposed draft revised strategy is attached as Appendix A for the committee to approve.

### Potential New or Expanded Car Parks

4. St Annes and Lytham both have long-standing parking problems throughout the year in the town centres and seasonal by tourist locations. The group explored options for new car parks or the possibility of expanding existing ones. Opportunities for new car parks are limited by a lack of suitable available land, particularly in the town centres. In Lytham, with the new sea defences nearing completion at Church Scar which are expected to attract additional visitors and a ready-made car park having been established for the contractor's compound within the Triangle area, the possibility of retaining this permanently was considered. However, a covenant exists on this land which meant this opportunity cannot be considered further. The option to expand Bath St Car park was also considered, to widen it slightly would increase capacity by about 13 spaces for the cost of approximately £30,000 for the potential additional income of approximately £1,000 per year. Aside from the limited number of bays generated for the cost, there are also covenants on Lytham Green which mean this option is not currently viable.
5. The opportunity to support the provision of park and ride facilities for set events in partnership with Blackpool Transport was explored. Previously it had been suggested that the Council could set up its own Park and Ride service; but with only seasonal need for such a facility, mostly just at weekends or when the weather is very good, it would not be a viable option for the Council to operate. Blackpool Transport have started to operate one-off Park and Ride facilities for events utilising a private area on Blackpool Airport as a car park from where buses would take passengers to the Town Centre. Blackpool Transport have suggested a similar scheme could be used for certain events in Fylde, particularly if alternative parking locations can be identified closer to the event location. However, despite charges being made to customers to use this facility, costs are greater than expected income and as such additional funding would be required to support such a scheme. The working group did not support such a scheme at this current time.

## **Enforcement**

6. Previously Fylde's enforcement contract was set to provide 65 hours of Civil Enforcement Officer's time each week. With Sunday working being charged at double time, Sunday working was restricted to twice a month during the summer season with most of the enforcement hours taking place during the week where Enforcement Officers regularly worked in pairs. Following the Working Group in 2016 it became apparent that parking was being abused on Sundays particularly during winter months and as a result twice monthly Sunday enforcement was introduced.
7. When the enforcement contract was renewed in October 2018 the opportunity was taken to assess enforcement hours. The total number of enforcement hours per month was reduced to compensate for increasing Sunday working to every week so that enforcement takes place 7 days a week throughout the year excluding the three full weekends in the lead-up to Christmas. The working group had no further comments on this issue.

## **Electric Charging Points**

8. Following the Car Park Working Group in 2016 it was reported that Lancashire County Council were looking to install electric charging points on Local Authority car parks across the County. The committee supported the principle of this scheme. Unfortunately Lancashire County Council decided to change how they delivered their scheme in favour of placing charging points at on-street locations. This led to the 3 new Fast Charging points that were installed on Inner Promenade by Fairhaven Lake during summer 2019.
9. The working group discussed the potential for charging points to be installed on Fylde Council car parks and the different ways this could be achieved. The group supported the principle of charging points on car parks but were concerned about the Council being able to install and operate them and the associated risk of the new technology being self-funding. As such the group preferred a low/no risk approach which could include leasing parking spaces to a provider to provide and maintain the equipment at their cost and liability.
10. As reported to the Operational Management Committee on 10 September 2019 a fully funded scheme is currently being developed to provide charging points for taxis. Four Rapid Charging points are proposed to be installed across the Fylde Borough to provide suitable locations at key hubs that taxis stop or pass. The working group supported the installation of one of the charging points on Lytham Station Car Park which was agreed by the committee.

## **Signage Improvements**

11. Under the Coastal Signage Strategy Signs are currently being reviewed along the coastal strip as various styles of signs have been used over the years with different logos. On the car parks many of the signs are in a poor condition with successive patch stickers peeling off and older logos used on repeater signs. As part of the effort to consolidate and update signs, car park services propose to initiate a sign replacement programme. The newly revamped Town Hall Car Park has been used to trial new styles of signs with a new type of sectional tariff board where individual sections can be replaced instead of layers of patch stickers building up. In addition, repeater signs that were regularly placed on the same posts have been consolidated into single signs to reduce visual clutter.
12. The group supported the principle of rolling out a sign replacement programme across all car parks. Funding for this will come from the car park maintenance budget.

## **Christmas Parking**

13. The 2016 Car Park Working Group confirmed that free parking should be provided on all car parks on the 3 full weekends before Christmas. Since then, due to the days that Christmas has fallen, there has been an occasion when Christmas Day has been on a Sunday so Christmas Eve, on a Saturday, has been half a weekend where no free parking has been offered. In addition, when Christmas Day is on a Monday or

Tuesday, there are four full weekends before Christmas in December and, with Small Business Saturday being on the first Saturday of December, this could have been missed out.

14. The working group considered this and suggest that on the occasions that there are 4 full weekends in December leading up to Christmas then the scheme shall be extended to include the first Saturday in December to benefit Small Business Saturday, but not the first Sunday. When Christmas Day is on a Sunday free parking will only be provided on the three full weekends, not Christmas Eve.

### **Disabled Bay Policy and Provision**

15. As of the end of August 2019 the Blue Badge Scheme criteria had been opened to include more types of qualifying disabilities. It is expected that there will be an increase in the total number of blue badge holders which could put more pressure on the limited number of disabled bays the Council provides.
16. The purpose of the Blue Badge Scheme is to provide ease of access to parking at preferential locations for those with a disability. [Non-Statutory Guidance](#) from the Department of Transport in 1995 provides suggestions for the number of disabled bays provided on car parks. Most Fylde Council car parks meet these standards with some, particularly town centre car parks, exceeding them.
17. The Blue Badge Scheme is not an entitlement to free parking. Some Local Authorities choose to charge blue badge holders for this irrespective of whether they are parked in a designated disabled bay or standard bay. Others provide free parking in all bays. Currently Fylde Council provides 3 hours free parking in designated disabled bays only; when parked in a standard bay blue badge holders must pay.
18. Working group members considered the total number of disabled bays provided and whether charging should be extended to those in disabled bays. The group considered that Fylde Borough area has a higher age population than average and is therefore more likely to have a greater than average percentage of blue badge holders. Introducing charges for disabled bays is likely to generate a negative impact which would outweigh any income benefits. Members suggest the Council does not change the numbers of designated disabled bays provided. Where car parks currently do not meet the suggested guidelines for the number of disabled bays provided this should only be increased when the car parks are scheduled for relining.

### **Fees and Charges**

19. Following the 2016 Working Group car park tariffs were increased by an average of 5% from April 2017. The group were provided with estimates on the potential additional income that could be generated if tariffs were increased by either 5% or 10% as well as theoretical negative impact from the price rise resulting in fewer users. The group reviewed these options. The opinion of the group was for the council to provide affordable and good quality car parks. Although some car parks are only full to capacity at peak season the general consensus was not to propose an increase to the standard car parking tariffs at the present time.
20. Although the group proposes standard tariffs should remain the same they separately considered charges for specific types of users. Overnight parking for motorhomes is available at the rear of the St Annes Swimming Pool and North Beach car parks where oversized bays suitable for motorhomes are available on both. Although no facilities were currently on offer it was agreed that the charges on the Swimming Pool car park were relative low considering the prime location of the car park. The group did not want to dissuade motorhomes from the car park but it was acknowledged that it was becoming increasingly popular, potentially to the detriment of other users.
21. The group recommend that the 'overnight' (6pm to 10am) fee on both car parks is removed as this causes confusion for some users. Charges for whole days to be set at 24 hour periods. It is suggested that tariffs on St Annes Swimming Pool Car Park be increased while those on North Beach remain the same. The proposed charges are:

St Annes Swimming Pool Car Park Motorhome Charges:

Up to 1 day (24hr) – increase from £8.40 to £10

Up to 2 days (48hr) – increase from £15.80 to £18

Up to 3 days (72hrs) – increase from £22.00 to £25

#### North Beach Car Park Motorhome Charges:

Up to 1 day (24hr) – £7

Up to 2 days (48hr) – £14

Up to 3 days (72hrs) – £20

22. The group also considered the provision of coach parking on Fairhaven Road Car Park. Currently 7 coach bays are provided for which no charge is made despite the area of the bays and associated area that the coaches need to manoeuvre covering approximately 1/3 of the car park. The group suggest that a flat rate of £5 per day be charged to coaches.
23. With the exception of the Fylde Resident's Permit that was introduced in 2013, permit charges have not been reviewed in at least 9 years. Members considered the different types of permits and suggest that apart from the Fylde Resident's Permit, Dispensations and Permits with administrative charges (horse boxes and replacements) the charges should be increased. The proposed changes are as follows:

Pleasant Street Business – increase from £335 to £350

Pleasant Street New Resident – increase from £285 to £300

Pleasant Street Restricted Resident – increase from £20 to £25

Lytham Station – increase from £160 to £170

Stanner Bank Business – increase from £100 to £110 and change name to Long Stay Business\*

Horse Box - £15 – remain the same

Fylde Resident Permit Scheme - £25 – remain the same

Replacement Permit - £15 – remain the same

Dispensations - Maximum £16 per day, negotiable with the parking manager- remain the same

\*Recommend change of name from 'Stanner Bank Business Permit' to 'Long Stay Business Car Park' so this type of permit can apply to any individual long stay car park.

#### Extension of Motorhome Scheme

24. Stanner Bank Car Park is currently closed whilst the Fairhaven to Church Scar coastal defence project is completed. It is expected that the main works will finish mid-2020, after which the car park entrance, including new barrier system, will be installed. The group considered a proposal that a limited number of motorhomes could be allowed to park overnight at the far end of the car park. This would be a preferred alternative to the current overnight on-street parking around the lake and would recommend taking the suggestion forward following consultation with the chairman the Tourism and Leisure committee.

#### Enforcement Policy

25. The decision making process by the Council's Car Park Services for enforcement of Penalty Charge Notices (PCNs) is guided by a policy document on when enforcement is applied and when PCNs should be cancelled. This includes broad scenarios of challenges that customers often make as to why they believe PCNs should be cancelled and appropriate responses to these. Every case is considered on its own merits but the guidance helps steer the decision making process to ensure it is fair and proportionate. Due to the nature of this document it is considered confidential.
26. [Statutory Guidance](#) advises that Council Enforcement Policies should be reviewed periodically by members to ensure it is fit for purpose. The group were shown through the current policy document and, upon being asked, the Technical Support Manager confirmed it was still fit for purpose and that no issues had been raised regarding it. As a result the group suggest that the enforcement policy remains the same.

IMPLICATIONS	
Finance	There are no financial implications arising from this report at this stage. Any future changes to fees and charges that are determined will be proposed as part of the budget consideration process for 2020/21.
Legal	There are no implications arising directly from the report
Community Safety	There are no implications arising directly from the report
Human Rights and Equalities	There are no implications arising directly from the report
Sustainability and Environmental Impact	There are no implications arising directly from the report
Health & Safety and Risk Management	There are no implications arising directly from the report

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BACKGROUND PAPERS		
Name of document	Date	Where available for inspection
Document name		Council office or web address

Attached documents

None or List any attachments, each on a new line –

Appendix A – Draft Revised Car Park Strategy