

23 January 2014

THE PORTFOLIO HOLDER FOR OPERATIONS AND ASSETS**OFF STREET PARKING UPDATES, CASHLESS PARKING AND ANPR TRIAL****EXEMPT INFORMATION**

None

PURPOSE

To seek Members approval for the introduction of an 18 month no cost trial for a cashless parking and virtual permit system in all Council car parks, and a new Automatic Number Plate Recognition initiative parking trial.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Members are asked to:

- Approve the introduction of Cashless Parking for a 18 month trial period
- Approve the revised fee structures and charges necessary to accommodate the implementation of the above off street parking cashless parking
- Approve the updating to off-street car parking orders to accommodate cashless parking
- Approve receipt and expenditure of a grant allocation of £50K to support ANPR trial on allocated car parks as detailed

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**Cashless Parking**

Several parking providers have offered a free trial to the Authority for the introduction of a cashless parking service to offer motorists alternatives to paying at P&D machines.

Bemrose Booth Mobile can provide the software, required signage and back office for the introduction of cashless parking in Tamworth for an eighteen month trial period at no cost to Tamworth Borough Council.

After eighteen months, the service will be reviewed as to the take up and success, and if successful the service need will be subject to a tender exercise.

Advice received from the Council's procurement team is that a trial period does not need to be subject to a procurement process

The current "back office" penalty charge processing at Stoke on Trent is not affected by this service and Bemrose Booth will provide mobile devices for the Civil Enforcement Officers (which will become the property of the Council) to enable effective operation of this trial.

Users of the car parks can buy tickets in advance or opt to purchase longer time on reminder all by their mobile device. This will encourage shoppers and visitors to stay longer without having to ensure that they must rush back for an expired ticket. The reminder is sent by text message.

A cashless parking system gives the opportunity for motorists to park for longer periods and affords the Council an opportunity to introduce overnight stay options on some car parks without fear of penalty to the motorist. This will benefit hotel guests, visitors and commuters who may require to park for longer periods. Town centre residents may also benefit from these options for their visitors.

All signage and publicity will be arranged by Bemrose Booth in conjunction with the Council.

The use of the text messaging service also allows for the sending of appropriate marketing messages to account holders. This could include incentive offers, notification of events and other information.

The intended implementation date is during February 2014.

Fees

The fee structure proposed allows for cashless parking allows for a discounted day parking rate over more than one day (attached), allowing for greater flexibility on the car parks.

Statistics have shown that the most common rate of car park charge in Tamworth is £1.40 (up to two hours). All day time tariffs will be included for use of the public on Council car parks.

The Council will receive full income from parking tariffs.

All car parks will maintain the opportunity for motorists to pay for normal daily tariffs as advertised.

Cashless parking will also allow for a flexible 'roll over' tariff for persons wishing to extend the paid for time after 6pm to beyond 8am the following morning, allowing flexibility for visitors to town centre properties and hotels. For example the purchase of an up to two hour tariff at 5.30pm will allow parking until 9.30am the following day.

It is further proposed that there is an option to use the current all day and introduce 2 day tariffs to be available cashless on the following car parks:-

Hospital Street
Lower Gungate
Church Lane
Marmion Street
Albion Street
Spinning School Lane

The all day tariff and 2 day tariff will provide a non-chargeable overnight parking valid for a 24/48 hour period. (eg a motorist arriving at 4pm today purchasing an one day (£4.50/£5.00) tariff will be permitted to stay until 4pm the following day.)

The charge to the motorist will be a 20p per transaction charge for the use of the system – this fee will be retained by Bemrose Booth for administration.

Revision of Off Street Orders

Current parking orders reflect a charging period of 8am-6pm on off street orders and operation during these hours. The introduction of a cashless parking system for a flexible roll over day/2 day tariffs and the use of a 'virtual' permit require an amendment to reflect this.

The orders must be available to the public for 28 days prior to introduction.

Revised orders are included Appendix 1.

ANPR Camera Trial

A grant of £50k is available via government funding from Bemrose Booth Mobile to the Council to trial an Automatic Number Plate Recognition system on the Council car parks for up to 18 months.

It is proposed to use the 3 busiest car parks:-

- Bolebridge Island
- Aldergate
- Holloway

Bemrose Booth Mobile in partnership with Creative Parking Solutions will provide the installation of cameras and new alpha numeric pay and display machines to the car parks. The machines are provided by Metric who are our current supplier.

The cameras will recognise the number plates of vehicles and log when a P&D ticket/cashless transaction is purchased and the time.

The use of ANPR cameras is common place in parking enforcement and will give full information on the use and turnaround in the Council car parks to best enable further development.

This information will be available to the Civil Enforcement Contractor who will then be better able to allocate beat patterns for officers. **During the trial and due to the requirements of the Traffic Management Act, all PCNs will continue to be issued by our contractor and will not affect current processes. Penalties will not be issued automatically at notification to the officers, but subject to the observation periods currently operating in the Staffordshire Policy for Processing of Penalty Charge Notices.** The cashless system will also operate a text alert to subscribers to inform them of impending expiry of paid for time and give the option to top up.

At the end of the trial, the Council can chose to undertake a procurement exercise to continue with ANPR cameras or revert to the provision of maintained machines, with

the option to purchase the new ones installed.

It is proposed that this trial commences in April 2014.

Grant Money

It is proposed that the grant money is retained for expenditure on projects for the development of the town centre subject to approval from the Portfolio Holder for Operations and Assets and the Director Assets and Environment. There is no time limit as to when this grant can be spent and this will include:-

- Installation of new car park signage and tariff boards
- Up to £15K to work with the Association of Town Centre Management (ATCM) to undertake town centre footfall analysis, profile and benchmarking surveys to contribute to town centre initiative
- Retention of outstanding money to explore use for other parking options including the support of the cost of purchasing equipment after trial evaluation if successful and investment in other car parks linked to the Gateway Project.

A FAQ sheet is attached as Appendix 2.

RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

The introduction of cashless parking has no impact on revenue expenditure budgets and is unlikely to increase income received in the short term, although this will be monitored as part of the usual budget management process.

The introduction of ANPR will result in potential savings of £315 per machine per year on the maintenance of existing machines in trial car parks. Total savings during the trial will be in the order of £1,890 per annum.

At the end of the trial, the Council have the option to purchase the machines at a considerable reduction to market price from existing revenue budgets. The car parks subject to the trial also have the oldest pay and display machines, and this will be an effective way of upgrading our machinery. Purchase costs will be negotiated at the end of the trial.

Marketing costs and advertising will be met by Bemrose Booth with involvement from Council Corporate Relations.

LEGAL/RISK IMPLICATIONS BACKGROUND

Procurement have advised that there are no procurement issues arising as a result of free trials and that appropriate processes will be followed at the end of the trial as necessary.

The impact on car park revenue will be monitored and assessed during the period as the take-up of cashless increases. Some authorities have realised a reduction in PCN payments as a result of cashless parking. This will continue to be assessed in balance with potential increase to parking periods when motorists have the option to

automatically do so.

SUSTAINABILITY IMPLICATIONS

The ability to use ANPR and cashless will not be affected and provides longer term sustainability options whilst the review of the operation of Civil Parking Enforcement in Staffordshire which is likely to be complete by March 2015. It is not likely to affect the trial as the off-street element of CPE is at the discretion of the Council .

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

The use of cashless parking has been well established in recent years as an option to allow the motorist to park more conveniently without the worry of finding change and/or rushing back to the car to avoid a penalty notice.

The Council off-street orders already include the option for other payment methods and will allow alternative payment when machines are out of order.

The use of ANPR is extensive in the private sector who send out PCNs in the post. In the public sector, the requirements of the Traffic Management Act mean that evidence of parking must be photographed.

Several providers have approached the Council to offer trials on this basis.

The use of the Bemrose Booth Mobile affords the Council a free low risk service for the public as well as the provision of new car park machines on the busiest car park as well as a grant fund scheme for the purposes of investment in the town centre.

REPORT AUTHOR

Jo Sands, Neighbourhood Services Manager

LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS

APPENDICES

1. Off street orders
2. Grant FAQs

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