

CABINET

Date of Meeting	Tuesday, 22 nd October 2019
Report Subject	On Street Car Parking in Town Centres
Cabinet Member	Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for the Streetscene and Countryside
Report Author	Chief Officer (Streetscene & Transportation)
Type of Report	Strategic

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

In April 2015 Cabinet approved the County wide car parking strategy which introduced parking charges in all town centre car parks which were designated as being within the scope of the new strategy.

The impact of car parking charges on the vibrancy of the town centres was considered at length during their introduction and subsequent reviews of both the strategy and the charging levels were aimed at striking a balance between affordability for shoppers and visitors, raising income to cover the cost of providing the car parking service and managing car parking availability in our town centres.

The availability of a small number of free, short stay, on-street parking spaces in a town centre is essential to allow shoppers to make short visits to collect shopping and staff from the portfolio have worked with each Town Council to review the number of spaces available. As a result, some amendments to the current local traffic orders have been made, to provide additional on-street parking capacity.

The local road layout in the area around Buckley town centre does not permit the provision of on-street parking and this may discourage shoppers who may wish to visit the town for short periods. This report provides a solution which would balance the provision of free short stay parking spaces in Buckley to more closely reflect that available in other towns across the County.

The report also seeks approval for a pilot scheme to remove the existing pedestrianisation order which is currently in place in Buckley town centre, to further improve access to the town. The proposal would be subject to receiving the support of Buckley Town Council to the proposal.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1.	That Cabinet approves the re-designation of a section of Brunswick Road car park in Buckley to provide some free, short stay car parking to compensate for the shortage of on-street, short stay spaces within the town centre
2.	That Cabinet supports the pilot de-pedestrianisation of Buckley town centre and approves the introduction of such an arrangement for a fixed period, which is sufficient to measure the impact on footfall in the town. The introduction of the pilot scheme would be subject to receiving support for the proposals from Buckley Town Council.

REPORT DETAILS

1.00	BACKGROUND OF THE CAR PARKING STRATEGY
1.01	<p>Following approval of the Council's car parking strategy in April 2015, car parking charges were introduced at the following locations within the County:</p> <p>Mold – Revised charging tariffs introduced in August 2015 Buckley – Introduced charging arrangements in August 2015 Talacre – Introduced charging arrangements (partial) in July 2015 Holywell – Introduced charging arrangements in September 2015 Connah's Quay – Introduced charging arrangements in November 2015 Shotton – Introduced charging arrangements in November 2015 Queensferry – Introduced charging arrangements in November 2015 Mold, County Hall – Introduced Summer 2016 Flint – Introduced charging arrangements in May 2018</p>
1.02	<p>The availability of a small number of free, short stay, on-street parking spaces in a town centre is essential to allow shoppers to make short visits or to collect shopping and staff from the portfolio have worked with each Town Council to review the number of spaces available.</p> <p>Whilst it is difficult to define the town centre area in each case, the approximate number of free on-street parking spaces available in each town centre is as follows:</p> <p>Mold – Approximately 55. Shotton – Approximately 25. C'Quay – Approximately 50+ side street parking spaces available Flint – Approximately 45. Queensferry – Approximately 45. Holywell – Approximately 20 on street spaces - following reconfiguration of High Street</p> <p>The road layout in the Buckley area does not permit the provision of short stay parking and the provision is therefore limited to just a handful of spaces.</p>

1.03	In order to provide some balance between the provision of on-street free parking in Buckley and every other town in the Council, it is proposed to re-designate a section of Brunswick Road car park to offer free car parking for up to half an hour. This will provide an additional 18 spaces for short visits to the town centre. In order to ensure that the management of parking within the town centre area is continued and to avoid abuse of the car park by long stay motorists, it will be necessary for users to display a parking ticket, albeit that the ticket is provided free of charge from the ticket machines.
1.04	The cost in terms of lost income from the car park will be approximately £14k per year and this will create a financial pressure against existing budgets.
1.05	Removing pedestrianised areas within town centres, allowing vehicles to freely access the shopping areas is contentious however, following extensive local campaigns and the introduction of pilot de-pedestrianised state in Holywell, Holywell Town Council, with the support of Welsh Government and Flintshire County Council are currently constructing a revised town centre layout that allow free access for cars directly into the centre of the town.
1.06	Buckley town centre currently has a pedestrianisation order in place and the County Council has previously requested the Town Council to consider supporting a similar pilot scheme to assess the benefit of a revised trafficked layout for the town. Whilst there has been some local discussions on the matter, a final decision has yet to be reached by the Town Council and this report recommends the County Council formally offers and supports a pilot de-pedestrianisation scheme for Buckley, subject to the Town Council supporting the proposal.

2.00	RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS
2.01	The cost of advertising and reconfiguring the signage and ticket machines in Brunswick Road car park would be £5k. The estimated annual loss of income from the existing pay machines would be £14k.
2.02	The cost of advertising, signing and promoting the de-pedestrianisation scheme would be approximately £5k and staff resources from the portfolio would be required to deliver the scheme.

3.00	IMPACT ASSESSMENT AND RISK MANAGEMENT						
3.01	Ways of Working (Sustainable Development) Principles Impact <table border="1"> <tr> <td>Long-term</td><td>The proposal will help provide a long term sustainable solution for Buckley town centre</td></tr> <tr> <td>Prevention</td><td>No impact</td></tr> <tr> <td>Integration</td><td>No impact</td></tr> </table>	Long-term	The proposal will help provide a long term sustainable solution for Buckley town centre	Prevention	No impact	Integration	No impact
Long-term	The proposal will help provide a long term sustainable solution for Buckley town centre						
Prevention	No impact						
Integration	No impact						

	Collaboration	The proposals will provide an opportunity for the County Council to work more closely with the Town Council to regenerate the town centre for the benefit of the residents
	Involvement	The residents will be asked to review the outcome of the pilot before a final decision is made.
	Well-being Goals Impact	
	Prosperous Wales	Positive – improving town centre viability
	Resilient Wales	Positive – strengthening the retail offer in the County
	Healthier Wales	Negative – encourage driving rather than Active travel options
	More equal Wales	No Impact
	Cohesive Wales	No impact
	Vibrant Wales	Positive – improving the access to the town centres will improve the vibrancy and footfall levels
	Globally responsible Wales	Encouraging local shopping options rather than longer journeys to out of town options will reduce carbon outputs.
3.02	Loss of car parking income will result in financial pressures within the service.	
3.03	The introduction of car parking charges was intended to ensure the availability of parking within the town centre. This will be continued by the requirement to display a valid ticket in the car park for the period of free parking.	

4.00	CONSULTATIONS REQUIRED / CARRIED OUT	
4.01	With Town Council on the proposed changes to car parking tariffs in Brunswick Road car park.	
4.02	With Town Council regarding support for the proposed de-pedestrianisation pilot.	
4.03	Consultation has already taken place with the Cabinet Member	

5.00	APPENDICES
5.01	None

6.00	LIST OF ACCESSIBLE BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS
6.01	None

7.00	CONTACT OFFICER DETAILS
7.01	Contact Officer: S Jones Chief Officer Streetscene and Transportation Telephone: 01352 704700 E-mail: Stephen.o.jones@flintshire.gov.uk

8.00	GLOSSARY OF TERMS
8.01	None