

Member Briefing

Number: 1138

Title: Parking Strategy implementation – next steps

Summary: Information regarding the implementation of the Council's Parking Strategy and the publication of action plans for Frodsham and Helsby.

Background

A detailed review of parking provision across the borough was carried out in 2016 by specialist transport consultants Mott MacDonald. This work identified the key issues and options for a borough-wide Parking Strategy to sustain long-term economic, social and environmental well-being. The aim is to provide a modern, well-informed, consistent and fair parking service for all residents, businesses and visitors to the borough.

An in-depth consultation on the draft Parking Strategy took place in late 2016 and early 2017 to obtain feedback and enable detailed action plans for all areas of the borough to be developed.

Impact assessments have been undertaken to consider the potential to introduce tariffs, improve the quality of the Council's car parks and make changes to encourage longer visitor and shopper stays, benefiting local businesses.

Following on from the publication of the Chester and Ellesmere Port plans, a detailed action plan for Frodsham and Helsby has now been developed, outlining the changes that are specific to those particular areas. Further details relating to action plans and implementation for Northwich and certain rural areas will be provided in due course.

Traffic Regulation Orders publicising the introduction of tariffs and length of stay restrictions for Frodsham and Helsby will shortly be available to view online and in local newspapers.

The key changes

The car parks and on-street parking included in the action plan are: in Frodsham – Moor Lane, Frodsham Station (large car park including extension), Health Centre, Will to Work (extension) and Main Street bays; in Helsby - Station Avenue car park and the on-street bays on Chester Road.

The introduction of modest tariffs and other controls such as length of stay restrictions will:

1. better manage demand at limited car parking facilities and allocate the most appropriate parking locations to the most appropriate user groups
2. create greater user differentiation between car park types on a weekday and a Saturday.

In both towns, new parking controls are particularly needed to better manage the impact of rail-related parking. Currently, the free and unrestricted parking available near both rail stations is attractive to outside commuters who use the towns as Park and Rail locations.

Although this has benefits in terms of taking car trips off the wider road network, it results in a lack of short-stay day-time parking in both towns for retail-related uses and is a situation predicted to worsen once the Halton Curve (a new route between Frodsham/Helsby and Liverpool) is opened.

The potential impact of car park users moving to surrounding residential areas will be monitored to determine whether residents' parking schemes or other restrictions are needed.

All Blue Badge holders will be exempt from charges in pay and display car parks for up to four hours, and CWaC residents with a microchipped Blue Badge will also have up to four hours free parking in ANPR/barrier car parks. As previously, Blue Badge holders also have the option to park in some on-street locations, including on double-yellow lines.

The following quality improvements will also be implemented at these car parks.

- A prioritised programme of quality improvement works is planned to start between March and June 2018.
- The works to be carried out will raise the standard of the most used car parks to the best industry standard. Lighting and CCTV improvements will be carried out to improve driver safety and the users' experience, particularly after dark.
- Signage within car parks and on streets directing drivers to the most suitable car park, including up-to-date information on space availability, will assist visitors.
- The introduction of new technology offering a range of payment methods, including cards and phones will make visits easier and more flexible.
- Improving the size, quality and number of spaces for drivers with mobility issues.

The detailed action plans are will be available on the Council's website shortly. More information on the action plans for other areas will provided in due course.

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