

EAST RENFREWSHIRE COUNCIL

CABINET

28th March 2024

Report by Director of Environment

EAST RENFREWSHIRE PARKING MANAGEMENT STRATEGY

PURPOSE OF REPORT

1. This report seeks support for the preparation of a Parking Management Strategy that will include the introduction of parking charges in appropriate locations. The strategy will be informed by feasibility studies and stakeholder engagement to assist with policies and decisions with the aim of supporting economic activity and placemaking in the area.

RECOMMENDATIONS

2. The Cabinet is asked to:
 - a) Approve the undertaking of a programme of work to inform and develop a new Parking Management Strategy, related policies and plans;
 - b) Confirm support in principle for the introduction of parking charges in appropriate locations; and
 - c) Note that a Parking Management Strategy and associated recommendations will be brought for Cabinet consideration by March 2025.

BACKGROUND

3. The council is responsible for a number of parking sites across the local authority area, estimated to account for over 2,000 spaces (excluding sites within the council depot and headquarters). These sites include parks, sport pavilions, town centres, libraries and leisure facilities. There has been no assessment of on street car parking capacity to date. Feasibility to assess the viability of the introduction of charges and engagement work is to be undertaken prior to determining which locations would be considered for charging.
4. A Decriminalised Parking Enforcement (DPE) scheme is in place in East Renfrewshire which allows parking attendants to issue Penalty Charge Notices (PCNs) to anyone not following parking rules. DPE allows for safer streets, higher turnover of parking spaces in town centres to support local business, less congestion and improved emergency service access. This scheme has operated at a loss for several years due to increased operating and staff costs, with losses being exacerbated by Covid-19 restrictions.
5. At present, there are no charges for either off-street public car parks or on-street parking in East Renfrewshire. This differs from the current approach taken by most local authorities across Scotland. Of the 21 local authorities with active DPE (Decriminalised Parking Enforcement) powers, 19 have charging structures for at least some of their parking capacity.

6. In January 2017, the Cabinet considered a [report](#) on parking charges and agreed not to take forward charging proposals at that time due to feedback received during a community consultation exercise.

REPORT

7. It is important to manage car parking in our town centres and key locations to encourage economic vitality and turnover of spaces. As part of this, we recommend the exploring of the option of introducing parking charges in some of the council's carparks and on street parking spaces. A successful Parking Management Strategy including the introduction of charges would provide income to cover the costs of both the DPE scheme and maintenance of public car parking provision. It will also take account of enforcement requirements associated with the recently introduced pavement parking legislation. Any additional income generated could help to contribute towards council service running costs. This will be the subject of the feasibility work that requires to be undertaken.
8. Several of the council's parking facilities are in prime locations in town centres close to public transport links. The current lack of regulation/charges encourages commuters to park all day, reducing parking spaces available for potential customers of local businesses.
9. To allow for the preparation of a new Parking Management Strategy, a programme of work requires to be undertaken to inform the strategy and related policies and plans. It is proposed that feasibility work is undertaken to:
 - assess current parking demand and driver behaviour;
 - explore ways of increasing the accessibility of parking in town centres and pressurised areas to enhance placemaking;
 - assess which locations should be exempt from parking charges - covering on and off street parking;
 - identify how much income could be generated through parking charges;
 - identify costs, technical and operational considerations associated with the introduction of parking charges;
 - engage with wider stakeholders including local Elected Members, Community Councils, Business Improvement Districts, East Renfrewshire Chamber of Commerce, local businesses, Council Services, Police Scotland, East Renfrewshire Culture & Leisure Trust and any other relevant stakeholders that are identified;
 - assess opportunities for increased active travel.
10. Subject to Cabinet approval, a Parking Management Strategy and associated recommendations would be prepared for Cabinet consideration by the end of March 2025.

FINANCE AND EFFICIENCY

11. A budget is required to commission consultancy services to support the development of a Parking Management Strategy. If members are agreed, the budget requirement for this work will be considered as part of the Investment in the Future Reserve proposals to be considered by the Budget Strategy Group and brought back to Cabinet for approval.

12. The investment in infrastructure to support the introduction of charges will be significant and various models will be considered. The strategic and feasibility work will assess the viability of the proposals and inform the recommendations that will be brought back to Cabinet.
13. The potential introduction of future parking charges would help to fund the DPE scheme, maintenance of car parking provision and support investment in the infrastructure requirements.

CONSULTATION AND PARTNERSHIP WORKING

14. Consultation with key stakeholders will be undertaken as part of feasibility work. A Parking Steering Group (PSG) will be established with representatives from across Council departments, and consideration will be given to establishing a stakeholder liaison group as the research progresses.

IMPLICATIONS OF THE PROPOSALS

15. The development of a Parking Management Strategy is likely to produce implications for several teams within the Council. Input from property, legal, community safety and IT will be required.
16. An Equality, Fairness and Rights Impact Assessment (EFRIA) and a Climate Change Impact Assessment (CCIA) will be developed.
17. Subject to the approval of the Parking Management Strategy, a Traffic Regulation Order may also be required.

CONCLUSIONS

18. The development of a Parking Management Strategy and associated studies will provide a robust framework for decision making in relation to improved placemaking, economic vitality, opportunities for active travel and the potential introduction of parking charges.

RECOMMENDATIONS

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 - c) Note that a Parking Management Strategy and associated recommendations will be brought for Cabinet consideration by March 2025.

Director of Environment,
Further information can be obtained from Michaela Sullivan, Head of Place
Michaela.Sullivan@eastrenfrewshire.gov.uk
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