

Report of Parking Manager

Report to Chief Officer (Highways and Transportation)

Date: 27 February 2018

Subject: PROPOSED EXPERIMENTAL TRAFFIC REGULATION ORDER – PAY BY PHONE SYSTEM

Are specific electoral Wards affected? If relevant, name(s) of Ward(s): City & Hunslet, Hyde Park and Woodhouse	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
Are there implications for equality and diversity and cohesion and integration?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
Is the decision eligible for Call-In?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
Does the report contain confidential or exempt information? If relevant, Access to Information Procedure Rule number: Appendix number:	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No

Summary of main issues

1. The theft of many parking machines across the City has meant, despite security measures, that in some areas the only available method of payment is via the Parkmobile pay by phone system.
2. Replacement of the machines is not practical in the short term due to the volumes involved and the continued instances of theft and therefore alternative measures are being considered. A review of the approach to parking payment is to be undertaken since it may be that the replacement of these machines on a like for like basis is not ultimately be the best solution. In the meantime therefore it is proposed to consolidate the pay by phone system for an extended trial period.
3. An amendment of the traffic orders for the use of the pay by phone arrangements is proposed for a trial period and therefore an experimental order is appropriate.

Recommendations

1. The Chief Officer (Highways and Transportation) is requested to:
 - i) note and approve the contents of this report;
 - ii) authorise the City Solicitor to advertise Notices in the press and on the relevant streets / car parks under the provisions of section 35C and 46A of the Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984 to vary the tariffs for both on street and off street car parks respectively as detailed in paragraph 3.

- iii) authorise the City Solicitor to make and advertise an Experimental Traffic Regulation Order that enables pay by telephone parking at the locations specified within this report. A provision shall be included to enable the Chief Officer (Highways and Transportation) to modify or suspend the Order during the period of the experiment; and
- iv) at the end of the 18 month experimental period and in the event that no valid objections have been received give appropriate consideration to making the Order permanent incorporating any modifications considered appropriate following the monitoring of the measures.

1 Purpose of this report

To seek authority to implement an experimental order to amend the method of payment for parking charges in some Council operated parking spaces.

2 Background information

- 2.1 As a result of theft and vandalism across the City the Council has lost a significant number of parking machines. It is not considered prudent to repair these machines at the moment given the risk of further thefts. In addition, the Council is exploring a number of ICT initiatives to modernise service delivery as part of the Smart cities agenda. This includes the provision of phone payment services and related technologies such as parking sensors which are being trialled at the moment.
- 2.2 The Council has not yet made a final decision on which machines will be reinstated. The present model is about 20 years old and is more vulnerable to theft than more modern equipment. Currently several different alternative models are being trialled with various different payment methods. There is a lead delivery time for new equipment of circa 8 weeks and a significant cost for replacements which is expected to fall within the OJEU procurement rules. For these reasons it will be several months before a final proposal is prepared and implemented and therefore a strong case for further consolidating the present operating arrangements.
- 2.3 A trial period will allow the Council to consider different payment methods in order to inform decisions about the best payment methods in the future. It is likely that these issues will vary according to the geography of the area and the type of customer (commuter / leisure / student / shopper etc.). The following key areas have been identified:

Access

Although most people use a mobile phone a significant minority do not and there will be customers who are not confident about using this type of software even if they have a handset. If these problems do occur the Council needs to consider if and where the use of pay by phone only options is appropriate.

Complaints

If the system is unreliable, difficult to use or confusing this will clearly be poor customer service and the level and type of complaints need to be considered in shaping the final approach to parking payment.

Usage

If the usage in a particular area reduces as a result of the adoption of different payment methods this would represent a poor use of the parking asset and may indicate that alternative payment solutions need to be found.

Reliability

Technology based solutions can be vulnerable to IT problems and if this happens the whole parking operation is at risk. This needs to be weighed against the reliability issues associated with machines such as mechanical failure and coin jams.

3 Main issues

3.1 An Experimental Traffic Regulation Order (TRO) is proposed for the pay by phone system in following tariff areas:

- North & West
- South Central
- South Outer
- North Outer
- Leylands & Bowman Lane
- Woodhouse Moor

4 Corporate Considerations

4.1 Consultation and Engagement

4.1.1 The Executive Member for Regeneration, Transport and Planning has been consulted on these proposals.

4.2 Equality and Diversity / Cohesion and Integration

4.2.1 An Equality Screening Document has been completed for this proposal and is attached at Appendix A. The key issues identified are associated with accessibility for users of the pay by phone system which are minimised by the majority of locations being in generally commuter areas rather than the core central parking areas where there are greater diversity of users.

4.3 Council policies and City Priorities

4.3.1 The proposed changes are in line with the draft supplementary planning document on parking and contribute to the Best Council objective of providing a good and efficient transport infrastructure.

4.4 Resources and value for money

- 4.4.1 There is a potential financial impact of these changes however this is not known at the moment and will be considered as part of the trial.
- 4.4.2 Legal Implications, Access to Information and Call In
- 4.4.3 The decision to increase the charge is an Administrative Decision that can be made by the Chief Officer under the Scheme of Delegation; the decision is not subject to Call In.

4.5 Risk Management

- 4.5.1 The main risk is introducing a change that leads to lower occupancy, representing poor use of the parking asset and increased congestion. It is considered that the risk of pay by phone method in deterring the use of the parking spaces is minimised by the locations where they will be most used. By undertaking this as a trial the opportunity for fine tuning permanent arrangements and selecting the most appropriate machines will be maximised including feedback from users.

5 Conclusions

- 5.1 An experimental TRO for the use pay by phone parking will allow the Council to consider the best payment methods for pay parking in the future in the context of increasing risks of crime and the availability of new technology. The trial will allow for the extended evaluation of the arrangements for users and the operator prior to the purchase of new equipment which will also mitigate the further risks of crime.

6 Recommendations

- 6.1 The Chief Officer (Highways and Transportation) is requested to:
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 - iii) authorise the City Solicitor to make and advertise an Experimental Traffic Regulation Order that enables pay by telephone parking at the locations specified within this report. A provision shall be included to enable the Chief Officer (Highways and Transportation) to modify or suspend the Order during the period of the experiment; and
 - iv) at the end of the 18 month experimental period and in the event that no valid objections have been received give appropriate consideration to making the Order permanent incorporating any modifications considered appropriate following the monitoring of the measures.

7. Background documents¹

7.1 Equality Impact screening document.

¹ The background documents listed in this section are available to download from the Council's website, unless they contain confidential or exempt information. The list of background documents does not include published works.