

RIBBLE VALLEY BOROUGH COUNCIL REPORT TO COMMUNITY COMMITTEE

DECISION

Agenda Item No. 9

meeting date: TUESDAY, 7 JANUARY 2020
title: CAR PARKING REPORT
submitted by: JOHN HEAP – DIRECTOR OF COMMUNITY SERVICES
principal author: ADRIAN HARPER – HEAD OF ENGINEERING SERVICES

1 PURPOSE

1.1 To consider proposals encouraging residents to use New Market Street Car Park and to consider how to charge for parking on electric charging spaces and resolve an issue involving commercial parking permits.

1.2 Relevance to the Council's ambitions and priorities:

- Council Ambitions – To protect and enhance the existing environmental quality of our area and to protect the natural and built environment.
- Community Objectives – To encourage and develop more sustainable forms of transport by charging for off-street car parking.
- Corporate Priorities - Maintaining and improving the environmental quality of the Ribble Valley in line with our priority of environmental excellence.

2 BACKGROUND

2.1 MARKET CAR PARK

2.1.1 The capacity of short stay car parks in Clitheroe was discussed at the Car Park Working Group on 25 November 2019. Occupancy surveys of the Clitheroe car parks concluded that both Railway View and Lowergate car parks were nearing capacity; however, New Market Street car park is underutilised.

2.2 PARKING SPACE CHARGES FOR ELECTRIC CHARGING BAYS

2.2.1 Members have already been made aware of the imminent introduction of Electric Vehicle Infrastructure being installed at Chester Avenue and Railway View car parks. There will be 10 car spaces at Chester Avenue and 4 car spaces taken up at Railway View.

2.3 COMMERCIAL PARKING PERMITS

2.3.1 An agreement was made with Greenacre Honda around 2006, or possibly before that, for them to have a number of long stay commercial parking permits. These were permits that allowed the holder of the vehicle to park without the vehicle registration number on it. The arrangement has continued until now with Greenacre having 4 parking permits.

3 ISSUES

3.1 MARKET CAR PARK

3.1.1 It appears that there are 2 reasons for the lower occupancy of the New Market Street car park:

- a. the car park is not well sign posted; and

- b. on-street parking at both the entrance to the car park from King Street and the exit to Parson Lane, which are both 2-way streets, may be discouraging drivers using the New Market Street car park.
- 3.1.2 The remedy for the sign posting is straight forward but will need approval from Lancashire County Council (LCC).
- 3.1.3 Officers have approached LCC about a possible solution to the problem of limited access. LCC have suggested using double yellow lines on one side of the road at both ends of New Market Street.
- 3.1.4 In order for this to be approved LCC have requested that support from Members and the Chamber of Trade is sought. Should this be successful, affected residents will then be consulted. Depending upon the outcome of consultation the decision would then be considered by the members of the Traffic Liaison meeting before being possibly approved.
- 3.2 ELECTRIC CHARGING POINTS
 - 3.2.1 Whilst the electricity used by the vehicle will be paid directly to the energy company by the driver the parking bay remains as part of the limited resource provided by the Council. That resource needs to be managed.
 - 3.2.2 Presently on both car parks there are hourly tariffs for using car spaces but in the present climate where car spaces are at a premium, decisions will have to be made to decide how best to use and charge for the spaces.
 - 3.2.3 In many areas, parking spaces that are equipped with charging facilities are reserved exclusively for use by electric or hybrid electric vehicles. However, we know from our occupancy survey that – unless there is already at least 14 electric/hybrid vehicles using the two car parks – applying that restriction in Clitheroe would result in a problem when the town is busy.
 - 3.2.4 It may be prudent (and pragmatic) for the introduction of a transitional period to allow drivers to become familiar with the presence of the new charging points.
 - 3.2.5 Therefore, one proposal would be to use 2 colours to distinguish the electric bays. One for electric/hybrid cars only and the other being a temporary colour, allowing normal cars as well as electric/ hybrid cars to park.
 - 3.2.6 This would mitigate the impact of this provision as the overall availability of spaces, whilst still providing charging facilities beyond the reduced number of ‘reserved’ spaces. Presumably, in time, it will emerge that local demand for electric vehicle charging is sufficient to justify all the serviced spaces being reserved for electric/hybrid vehicles only.
 - 3.2.7 The length of time for vehicles for which the transitional arrangement was retained would be determined by demand/use of the facilities.
- 3.3 COMMERCIAL PARKING PERMITS
 - 3.3.1 A number of other commercial companies in the Clitheroe area are now asking for a similar arrangement to the one granted, historically, to Greenacre Honda.
 - 3.3.2 Although we have no record of the justification for that arrangement, we do know that it was first entered into in 2006 or earlier, when demand on car park spaces was much more modest than we now face.

3.3.3 In times where parking is at a premium and the Council is preparing to increase parking for residents and visitors, Committee is being asked to support the proposal to end the permanent commercial arrangement.

4 RISK ASSESSMENT

4.1 The approval of this report may have the following implications:

- Resources – Costs from LCC for changes to signage and the introduction of parking restrictions in New market Street are unknown at this stage.
- Political – These changes could show the Council to be progressive and innovative. There may be some negative publicity from local traders but the benefit to the public should outweigh this. Depending on take-up by electric/hybrid vehicles, there is likely to be a reduction in use of any parking spaces that are dedicated for that use only (as witnessed with the on-street provision on York Street). At this stage this is unquantified.
- Reputation – The elements should only enhance the reputation of the Council.
- Equality & Diversity – Both elements of work will provide people with more reasonable choice of car parks and a viable means of charging their electric vehicles. It will also encourage people who are considering purchasing an electric vehicle rather than more traditional vehicles.

5 **RECOMMENDED THAT COMMITTEE**

5.1 Support the proposal to improve signage to the New Market Street car park

5.2 Approve the proposal to change the parking regulations on New Market Street to encourage increased use of New Market Street car park.

5.3 Approve the proposal to have an interim arrangement whereby a proportion of the bays be signed as being for both electric and non-electric vehicles.

5.4 Approve the proposal to stop issuing commercial parking permits and write to Greencare explaining that their current permits will not be renewed beyond the current term.

5.5 Appended minutes of Car Parking Working Group.

ADRIAN HARPER
HEAD OF ENGINEERING SERVICES

JOHN HEAP
DIRECTOR OF COMMUNITY SERVICES

BACKGROUND PAPERS

None.

For further information please ask for Adrian Harper, extension 4523.

NEXT MEETING

The next meeting will be arranged in the new municipal year.

Meeting closed at 10.35am

**NOTES OF THE CAR PARKING WORKING GROUP
HELD ON MONDAY 25 NOVEMBER 2019 at 2.00pm**

PRESENT: Cllr S Atkinson (Chairman) John Heap
 Cllr R Newmark Adrian Harper
 Cllr A Knox Lawson Oddie
 Luke Edwards
 Daniel Sutcliffe
 Olwen Heap

APOLOGIES – received from Cllr Ged Mirfin

MINUTES OF MEETING HELD ON 23 FEBRUARY 2018

These were approved as a correct record.

CLITHEROE TOWN CENTRE CAR PARK CAPACITY REPORT

A report was submitted for information outlining the position with capacity on car parks in Clitheroe Town Centre. The report indicated that usage is close to capacity at peak times on most car parks around the town centre with the exception of the Market car park.

Numbers of car parks, spaces, short stay/long stay and details of levels of occupancy taken by survey were highlighted. An analysis of car park ticket sales had been carried out as well as a financial analysis.

Reasons for lower usage on the Market car park was suggested as being poor directional on-street signage and the access/egress difficulties on New Market Street where cars park on both sides.

Potential solutions included speaking to LCC about signage and double yellow lines for the entrance and exit to the Market car park; extending Chester Ave car park to include an additional unused strip of land; taking the Park & Ride area into our enforcement; and construction of a deck on Chester Avenue car park.

Discussions around other land ensued including St Michael & St John's playing field, the Castle grounds, and small areas on Queensway in Clitheroe.

The ideal solution would be a deck on Booths car park but there was no interest in this from Booths.

AGREED that LCC be approached regarding signage and double yellow lines to alleviate the problems around the Market car park.

AGREED that support from both Clitheroe Town Council and the Chamber of Trade be sought for double yellow lines on New Market Street

AGREED that St Michael & St John's RC Church be approached about their playing field land being made available for a car park and that information be sought from LCC regarding what road works would be required for this project.

CHESTER AVENUE CAR PARK

There is a capital bid in the 2020/21 budget for a deck on Chester Ave car park however other solutions had also been examined including an extension to the current footprint and taking on enforcement of the rail park and ride area.

Councillors considered the options.

Concern was expressed about a deck forming a covered area that may attract crime and disorder problems and there being a backlash from residents of the new housing estate immediately behind the car park. A 'marketing strategy' would also be required. However, a deck would get ahead of the curve in solving the near capacity problems in the Town Centre. It was noted that this was the only site under the Council's control where substantial provision of extra parking was possible.

AGREED that this be held in abeyance until St Michael & St John's had been approached; and that a further meeting of the Car park working group be arranged when the alternative scheme has been agreed and costed.

EDISFORD CAR PARK EXTENSION

Since the 3G pitches had opened this car park had been operating close to capacity at times and usage is expected to increase. There still appeared to be problems with people parking on Edisford Road and Low Moor. The extension to this car park was in the capital programme for 2023/24. The extension would be made on land at the other side of the access road to the caravan park where the pitch and putt used to be. This would create 84 spaces. It could be an option to put a deck on the original car park but it would be very expensive. It was also noted that Roefield may be expanding which would mean more demand.

AGREED that Lawson would calculate the figures for cost/income.

RESIDENT PARKING IN WHALLEY & BILLINGTON

A suggestion had been made that resident parking may be considered in Whalley & Billington. This had brought objections from the businesses who rely on the turnover of spaces. AH had spoken to LCC about this issue and ascertained that there was no intention of any new resident parking schemes.

The extant planning permission for the housing development on Accrington Road still provided for approximately 18 public car park spaces.

Discussions around the 'great wall of Whalley' flood defence scheme were still ongoing and there may be some room for space along the river bank – in the knowledge that they may flood.

An area to consider in the future may be the QE2 playing fields.

AGREED that John Heap would find out the latest position on the Accrington Road development.

HALF HOUR CHARGE ON TOWN CENTRE CAR PARKS

A request had been made at Community Services committee to consider a half hour charge on one of the town centre car parks to accommodate people nipping to pick up a prescription etc

The councillors considered the request and felt that it was not practical to be policed and there was no real need.

AGREED that there be no further action on this issue

FREE PARKING IN DECEMBER

It had been reported to Community Services committee that the Council would again be operating the free parking on short stay town centre car parks in Clitheroe and Longridge for the 3 Saturdays before Christmas in December.

To make this better for shoppers rather than town centre workers who tend to take advantage, it was proposed to make the free parking available after 9.30am.

AGREED that this approach should be taken

ANY OTHER BUSINESS

Items discussed

- Ribble Valley being a responsive local organisation – **AGREED** that an approach be made to LCC for RVBC to take on on-street parking enforcement
- Crime & Disorder and a 'marketing plan' be part of any considerations for building a car parking deck
- Electric charging points in car parks – where a person is using the electric charging point they also pay the normal parking charge.
- A plan of the car parks in Longridge be made available for the working groups information

NEXT MEETING

To be arranged in due course

Meeting closed at 3.30pm