

Amendments to Shropshire Council's Parking Strategy

Introduction

Shropshire Council provides car parks and on-street parking across the county. The way that we manage and run our car parks and on-street parking is determined by our parking strategy.

This consultation considers seven proposed amendments to the council's new parking strategy.

Parts 1 and 2 of the new parking strategy proposals were approved by Cabinet on 17 January 2018 and 11 April 2018 respectively. To date, 17 of the 22 'part 1' recommendations have been implemented, the new on-street residents parking policy has been adopted in Ludlow and a detailed feasibility proposal exercise for on street residents parking has been completed in Bridgnorth.

New pay and display parking machines have been installed across the county. All new machines have facilities for cash, card and contactless payments. Digital permits and tickets are also being rolled out through the Mipermit system.

Improvements to the parking service include improved ease of enforcement, improved customer satisfaction and more streamlined service with a large increase in chip and pin, contactless payments and digital ticketing.

The data available in the period following implementation and observations on the ground give evidence of a change in parking habits with an outward migration from on street parking bays to outlying off street carparks.

However, a number of issues have been raised following rollout including concerns with regards to increases in tariffs, the impact on the local economy, concessions for holiday lets and the reduction of on street resident permit provision.

These proposed amendments are intended to further refine the parking service, support ongoing development of Transport Mode Hierarchy and reduce environmental impact in our market towns.

The recommendations were agreed by the Performance Management Scrutiny Committee following a six month review of the Parking Strategy, and endorsed by Cabinet on Wednesday 3 July 2019. On 4 September 2019 Cabinet agreed that these seven proposed amendments go out to consultation.

What we're proposing and why

We're proposing seven amendments to our new parking strategy.

For each of the following proposals, tell us whether you agree, and let us have any comments.

Proposal 1

Changes to the geographical boundaries for qualification for residents on-street permits to the existing Red zone and Blue area residents parking schemes in Ludlow are assessed and implemented if after full consultation any changes are deemed appropriate.

Why?

Concerns have been raised and requests received for changes in permit qualification from one zone /area to another for certain addresses within the Ludlow schemes. It is considered that a best fit review should be undertaken to include consultation with residents and the local councillor.

Note: Formal TRO consultation and approval will also be required prior to implementation.

Proposal 2

To introduce concessions that allow, in appropriate circumstances entitlement by residents who hold on-street parking permits to also park within approved specified carparks that are in close proximity to on-street residents parking schemes.

Why?

A number of complaints have been received with regards to the increase in tariffs to the Riverside west elevated car park in Bridgnorth. This car park is unique in that its use is restricted solely for off-street resident permit holders. This issue has been discussed with residents as part of the on-street residents parking review.

An amendment to the strategy is recommended that will allow residents who hold on-street parking permits to also park within suitable car parks that are in the vicinity of on-street residents' parking schemes without having to purchase an additional off-street permit.

Note: it is not proposed that this additional concession will be applied to any Shropshire Council car parks that currently have pay and display facilities. Rather as the review of on-street residents parking schemes progresses it is anticipated that some car parks that are currently free and without restriction, could be restricted so as to be made available as overflow parking for on-street residents' permit holders when on-street parking is limited.

For example, Riverside west elevated car park, Bridgnorth which is not a pay and display but a residents' only off-street car park is adjacent to the Friar Street / Cartway on-street residents' parking scheme.

Formal TRO consultation and approval will also be required prior to implementation.

Proposal 3

That all loading bays across the county excluding shared use bays should operate 24 hours a day, seven days a week

Why?

It is considered that provision for loading should always be available and that there is a need for consistency across the county in order to avoid confusion. It is therefore recommended that all loading bays within the highway across the county operate 24 hours a day, seven days a week.

Formal TRO consultation and approval will also be required prior to implementation.

Proposal 4

That when the number of on-street parking spaces available in any residents' parking scheme is less than the number of properties, the on-street residents' parking permit criteria restricting allocation to one permit per property, registered in the scheme, be increased to two permits per property, subject to the completion of a residents survey where 51% or more of the returns indicate a preference and the local councillor(s) is/are in support.

Why?

During the review of residents' parking schemes in Bridgnorth, it has become apparent that the new policy will only provide one permit rather than two in most existing and proposed schemes. This reduction is of primary concern to residents.

Some residents have highlighted that not everyone within a scheme requires a permit, therefore there is potential for relaxation of the policy. However, from an operational perspective it is important to ensure that when a charge is being made for the provision of a concession - in this case provision of an on-street parking space for residents in proximity to their homes - that although not guaranteed all of the time, a space should be available most of the time.

Consideration also needs to be given to other highway users, vehicular access, other parking requirements for shoppers and visitors, as well as blue badge holders and access for deliveries etc.

Part 2 of the parking strategy could be amended as follows:

'When the number of on-street parking spaces available in any proposed residents parking scheme is less than the number of properties registered in the scheme, resident permit allocation should normally be limited to a maximum of one per property. However, subject to the completion of a resident's survey, where 51% or more of the returns indicate a preference and the local Member/s is/are in support, the allocation of 2 permits per residential property can be permitted.

Formal TRO consultation and approval will also be required prior to implementation.

Proposal 5

To assist with the excessive demand for season tickets in some popular carparks it is proposed that the specified maximum number of resident permit and season ticket thresholds for all off street carparks are combined to give an overall maximum threshold for each carpark.

Why?

There are four car parks where season ticket issue has exceeded 90% of the maximum allocations determined by the current strategy and specified in the traffic regulation order (TRO):

Innage Lane, Bridgnorth

Galdeford Zone B (Upper), Ludlow

Frankwell, Shrewsbury

Abbey Foregate, Shrewsbury

It is recommended that consideration be given to amendment of the strategy and TRO consultation be undertaken to combine the maximum number of residents' permit and season ticket thresholds in to one.

For example: in Frankwell car park, Shrewsbury, the maximum number of residents' permits currently specified is 135 and the maximum number of season tickets currently specified is 68.

The new maximum threshold for combined issue would therefore be 203.

Proposal 6

That annual permit concessions for holiday let properties located within an on street residents parking scheme be provided. Entitlement to be one digital permit per holiday let property at a cost of £100 per permit which is equivalent to the cost of a residents on street permit

Why?

A collective of tourist accommodation proprietors in Ludlow are requesting reinstatement of concessions to enable guests to be able to park near their accommodation within the Ludlow shared use pay and display/residents' parking bays.

It is recommended that consideration be given to an amendment of the strategy to allow the issue of annual permits at a cost equivalent to that of a resident's on-street permit, ie. £100.

Entitlement would be one permit per property that is registered as a holiday let within any on-street residents' parking scheme. Holiday let permits will not include the 200 hour visitor parking allocation that is included with a resident's permit.

Formal TRO consultation and approval will also be required prior to implementation.

Proposals 7a and 7b

Proposal 7a

That the times of operation of the evening /overnight tariffs on Mondays to Saturdays in Raven Meadows multi storey car park, Shrewsbury are brought forward to by 2 hours to apply between the hours of 6pm and 8am.

Proposal 7b

That on Mondays to Saturdays in Raven Meadows multi storey car park, Shrewsbury a two-hour rather than the existing three- hour tariff cap to the evening/overnight tariffs should apply.

Why?

The opening hours in Raven Meadows multi-storey car park have been extended to 7am to midnight Monday to Saturday, and 9am to 10pm on Sundays and bank/public holidays. The charging hours in Raven Meadows multi storey car park have been extended to 24 hours a day, seven days a week with a three-hour cap on the parking periods between the hours of 8pm to 8am.

Unlimited periods of parking on Sundays, bank and public holidays have also been introduced in Raven Meadows for a flat rate of £1.50. Raven Meadows is a band 2 car park, tariff £1.80 per hour.

The decision to retain free parking within all pay and display parking areas in Shrewsbury from 6pm rather than 8pm was made as a revision to the original strategy, without adjustment to the Raven Meadows multi-storey car park proposals. This combined with the three-hour cap on parking from 8.00pm is resulting in:

Customers using the alternative on-street and off street car parks rather than Raven Meadows multi storey car park in the evenings and overnight;

Customers not using Raven Meadows multi storey car park because of the tariff.

Customers deciding to exit Raven Meadows multi storey car park at 6pm and use the Premier Inn pay and display car park which provides a 24-hour parking period for £8.

Customers who use Raven Meadows multi-storey car park for a period prior to 8pm having to pay a cumulative linear tariff for their period of stay up until 8pm and then, if their stay goes beyond 8pm, having to continue to pay the linear tariffs for up to a further three hours (until 11.00pm), after which the three-hour cap applies.

If amendments to the strategy is approved formal TRO consultation and approval will also be required prior to implementation.

What happens next?

All responses to the consultation will be carefully considered.

On 4 September 2019, Cabinet agreed that the Executive Director of Place, in consultation with the Cabinet member for highways and transport, be given delegated authority to consider the outcomes of the consultation, and decide whether to implement the proposals.

Subject to approval of any proposals, a further formal traffic regulation order (TRO) consultation and approval will be required before they are implemented.