

PERTH AND KINROSS COUNCIL

Environment and Infrastructure Committee

22 January 2020

Perth City Car Parking

Report by Depute Director (Housing & Environment) (Report No. 20/10)

This report advises the Committee on the progress of an informal working group (consisting of elected members from the three Perth City wards and Council officers) investigating concerns about car parking in Perth city, particularly the residential and business areas surrounding the city centre.

The report sets out the range of actions to address these concerns.

1. BACKGROUND

- 1.1 Car users can park on public roads, unless parking restrictions (such as no waiting restrictions or chargeable parking provisions) are introduced, following a detailed statutory process. These legal restrictions apply to all road users – both residents and commuters.
- 1.2 Local elected members in the three Perth City wards have expressed concerns over car parking in Perth city. These concerns relate to issues raised by their constituents about motorists (especially commuters) parking in the residential and business areas surrounding the city centre, to avoid paying parking charges in more central locations.
- 1.3 This has caused two main concerns:
 - inconsiderate parking in certain areas causing road safety concerns, for example at road junctions; parking over residential driveways; and parking in two rows or parking across from driveways in narrow streets, causing access problems for residents.
 - in some cases, the high volume of commuter parking in residential streets has resulted in residents and their visitors not being able to park near their own properties, particularly for households with no off-street parking. This has also impacted on service providers for residents, such as trades, delivery drivers, and refuse collection/ street cleaning.
- 1.4 Similar concerns have been expressed by residents in the North Muirton area, close to commercial/industrial units, where staff car parking has overspilled into residential areas.
- 1.5 This causes tension between the views of residents and businesses (which wish to use their properties unimpeded), and commuters choosing to park for free in locations which are within walking distance of their final destinations.

- 1.6 To address these concerns, an informal working group was formed, consisting of the elected members from all three Perth City wards, and Council officers from relevant services – Transport Planning, Parking Services and Traffic & Network. The group has met on 4 occasions over the summer/autumn 2019, to examine the issues, understand behaviours, develop options and propose potential solutions. The agreed objectives of the group are detailed in Appendix 2.
- 1.7 North Inch and Muirton Community Council (NIMCC) made a participation request, under the Community Empowerment (Scotland) Act 2015, to become involved in measures related to road safety and car parking in their area. Their concerns over car parking were similar to those detailed in section 1.3 above. Officers have been meeting with NIMCC representatives on these issues.
- 1.8 An additional factor which also requires consideration is the new Transport (Scotland) Act 2019, which contains a provision for a ban on vehicles being parked partly, or wholly, on footways (although exceptions to the ban will be permitted within prescribed criteria). Further regulations detailing the implementation of this new provision have not been published, and no timescale for their publication has been issued. However, the introduction of this requirement will require considerable staff resource in surveying, assessing and implementing exception sites, as well as enforcement of these requirements. The priority associated with these statutory requirements could impact on the capacity of staff to act on the issues raised in this report, depending on the legal timescale for implementation. Any action to deal with the parking concerns in this report will also have to take these new requirements into account.
- 1.9 Any potential changes also need to be considered in the context of recently awarded Sustrans Places for Everyone Programme funding of £6.5m. This funding is for the transformation of the Dunkeld Road corridor in Perth, to create space for other modes of transport – walking, cycling and public transport – to move people more efficiently across the city. Officers are currently engaging with the local community on these proposals. Although this welcome initiative will encourage modal shift from car use (and therefore reduce the need for car parking), its full impact will be more in the medium to long term, and currently funding for this initiative only covers one part of the city. Both the local elected members and NIMCC have expressed the need to take early action on their concerns about parking.

2. PROPOSALS

- 2.1 The working group examined a variety of options, and settled on a range of actions to take forward, varying from short term (such as offering discounted car parking in city centre locations where there are frequent vacant spaces), to significant long-term solutions (such as the development of additional Park & Ride sites around Perth). The group recognised that this is a complex issue, and no single change would resolve the situation. The actions agreed are detailed in Appendix 2.

2.2 The greatest level of discussion within the group was the identification of those locations around the city most affected by the parking concerns, and what actions could be taken through parking controls. The group identified that three categories of action could be taken, depending on the nature of the issue. These categories are detailed in Table 1 below:

Table 1

Category	Action
1	Yellow lines and marked parking bays at hotspot areas, to stop parking over driveways, at street corners, and other inappropriate areas. If cars are parked outwith marked bays, they would be subject to enforcement action (penalty charge notice)
2	Limit on waiting (via marked parking bays and signage - parking only allowed for up to 3 or 4 hours, but no parking charging scheme in place) to deter all day parking (residents could apply for permits to exempt them from these time limits)
3	controlled parking area with Pay and Display parking (residents could apply for permits to exempt them from paying parking charges)

2.3 At one stage, the group's proposal was to zone different parts of the city centre, and apply the above categories to each zone, depending on the severity of the issue. The proposal included testing these zones via a wide engagement with the public (residents and car users), before implementing the outcome.

2.4 A more graduated approach was subsequently agreed by the group. This consists of:

- a) installing marked parking bays at all areas identified by the group (these areas are detailed in Appendix 3). In the initial stage, these would not be subject to enforcement action.
- b) review the progress with this approach over time, and if problems persist in certain areas, there is the option of moving to category 1, 2 or 3 solutions (Table 1), if the need is identified.

2.5 The advantages of the proposed approach were considered by the group to be:

- rather than start with an enforcement-based solution, this approach seeks to encourage positive behaviour. If this resolves the issue, there will be no need to take more resource intensive further actions.
- it can be introduced as soon as possible without several months delay associated with instituting statutory legal proceedings, which would need to be in place to make the parking restrictions enforceable.
- it can be introduced without the need for residents to pay for parking permits
- there are no resource capacity issues on Council officers (other than the one-off task of surveying, designing and installing the parking bays)

- with the introduction of parking bays, it is easier to move to a more robust approach (i.e. category 1, 2 or 3 from Table 1 above). This, therefore, acts as incentive for commuters to park their cars responsibly, to avoid more significant measures, which would cause them greater inconvenience.

2.6 In discussion with NIMCC as part of their participation request, their representatives expressed concern that the solution detailed in section 2.4 did not go far enough to address the concerns of their residents, and they would have wanted to pursue the category-based approach detailed in section 2.2. NIMCC highlighted particular concerns for five streets:

- Harley Place
- Harley Terrace
- Muirton Bank
- Muirton Place
- Florence Place

2.7 At a meeting between NIMCC representatives and elected members for the three Perth city wards on 19 December 2019, the concerns of NIMCC were acknowledged. However, elected members stated that the Council's actions have to be consistent across the city, otherwise the parking issue is simply displaced from one area to another. In recognition of the problems expressed by NIMCC, it was agreed to prioritise the five streets (detailed in section 2.6), for the further review of moving to the more robust category-based approach (detailed in section 2.4 b) above), which will include full engagement with the residents in these streets.

2.8 As these proposals have been developed by the informal working group, officers are seeking Committee approval to move to a wider public consultation on the proposals detailed in sections 2.4 and 2.7 above, with a report on findings to be submitted to the next Environment and Infrastructure Committee.

2.9 It is, therefore, proposed to embark on a programme of consultation on establishing parking bays in the areas of Perth city identified in Appendix 3. This will be carried out in accordance with the [Policy and Framework for Delivery of Successful Engagement in Housing and Environment](#) approved by Strategic Policy & Resources Committee on 17 April 2019.

2.10 The estimated revenue budget cost in financial year 2020/21 for establishing parking bays in the areas of Perth City identified in Appendix 3, would be £40,000. This sum would be met from the Council's Car Parking Account.

2.11 If there is a need to move to a more robust enforcement approach to tackling this issue, this will be carried out via the approved Council procedure for promoting traffic orders, which will include consultation as part of the implementation process.

2.12 Subject to Committee approval, it is estimated that the implementation of these new parking bays across all areas would take 12 – 18 months,

depending variables such as weather. As highlighted in section 1.8, this programme may also be impacted by the legal requirement to introduce a ban on pavement parking.

3. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

- 3.1 The issue of commuter parking in peripheral areas of cities to avoid paying parking charges is complex and emotive. It is an issue shared across many cities in the UK.
- 3.2 Through engagement between local elected members, Council officers and the North Inch and Muirton Community Council, we have developed a set of actions, including a graduated approach to encouraging responsible parking in the residential/business areas around Perth city. However, we still retain the option to implement more robust measures, if this is found to be necessary in some areas.
- 3.3 The longer-term aspiration is to encourage alternative travel choices as part of the Council's wider ambitions to tackle climate change, detailed in the report to full Council on 18 December 2019 (Report No. 19/362 refers). Therefore, the proposals in this report are an interim measure, in response to the concerns of residents and local elected representatives.
- 3.4 It is recommended that the Committee:
- i. agrees to the measures highlighted in sections 2.8, 2.9 and Appendix 2 to address the concerns raised in this report
 - ii. agrees to wider community consultation on proposals to introduce parking bays in areas detailed in Appendix 3.

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Approved

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1. IMPLICATIONS, ASSESSMENTS, CONSULTATION AND COMMUNICATION

Strategic Implications	Yes / None
Community Plan	Y
Corporate Plan	Y
Resource Implications	
Financial	Y
Workforce	N
Asset Management (land, property, IST)	N
Assessments	
Equality Impact Assessment	N
Strategic Environmental Assessment	N
Sustainability (community, economic, environmental)	N
Legal and Governance	N
Risk	N
Consultation	
Internal	Y
External	Y
Communication	
Communications Plan	Y

1. Strategic Implications

Community Plan

1.1 The proposal relates to the delivery of the Perth and Kinross Community Plan in terms of the following priority:

- (i) Supporting people to lead independent, healthy and active lives
- (ii) Safe and Sustainable place for future generations

Corporate Plan

1.2 The proposal relates to the achievement of the Council's Corporate Plan Priority:

- (i) Supporting people to lead independent, healthy and active lives; and
- (ii) Safe and Sustainable place for future generations

2. Resource Implications

Financial

2.1 The Head of Finance has been consulted on the proposals.

- 2.2 The amount of revenue funding required to implement the parking bays (subject to the outcome of the consultation process) is £40,000. This funding would be provided from the Car Parking Account.

Workforce

- 2.3 There are no workforce implications arising from the proposal.

Asset Management (land, property, IT)

- 2.4 There are no asset management implication arising from the proposal.

3. Assessments

- 3.1 The proposal has been considered under the Corporate Equalities Impact Assessment process (EqIA) and has been assessed as not relevant for the purposes of EqIA.
- 3.2 The proposal has been considered under the Environmental Assessment (Scotland) Act 2005 however no action is required as it does not qualify as a PPS as defined by the Act and is therefore exempt.
- 3.3 The proposal has been considered under the provisions of the Local Government in Scotland Act 2003 and assessed as having no significant impact on sustainable development
- 3.4 There are no legal and governance issues arising from this proposal.
- 3.5 There is a risk that the measures will not resolve this issue in certain areas. If that is the case, further measures, as detailed in Section 2.2 of the report, could be implemented.

4. Consultation

Internal

- 4.1 Local Elected Members, and appropriate Housing & Environment staff have been consulted in the development of the proposals outlined in this report. Consultees are supportive of the proposal.

External

- 4.2 North Inch and Muirton Community Council has been consulted in the preparation of this report, as part of their Participation Request.

5. Communication

- 5.1 A communication plan will be developed which will underpin the communications in implementing the proposals, including the key target audiences and the communication methods.

2. BACKGROUND PAPERS

2.1 Report No.19/117 refers.

3. APPENDICES

3.1 Appendix One Objectives of the Workshops

3.2 Appendix Two Actions agreed by working group

3.3 Appendix Three Locations for installation of parking bays