

Report to: Communities Scrutiny Committee

Date of Meeting: 22nd March 2018

Lead Member/Officer: Lead Member for Highways, Planning and Sustainable Travel/Head of Planning and Public Protection

Report Author: Traffic, Parking and Road Safety Manager

Title: Car Parks in Denbighshire

1. What is the report about?

1.1 To provide an update regarding the implementation of the Car Park Asset Management Register and Investment Programme plus the cross-service Car Park Task and Finish Group as per the recommendations of the report that went to Communities Scrutiny Committee in July 2017.

2. What is the reason for making this report?

2.1 In July 2017, the Committee requested that a further progress report be provided in March 2018. A copy of the July 2017 report is provided in Appendix A

3. What are the Recommendations?

3.1 That the Committee considers the contents of the report, provides observations, and supports the continuation of the work to implement the Car Park Asset Management Register, Investment Programme and the work of the Car Park Task & Finish Group.

4. Report details

4.1 This report describes the work that has been taking place to develop systems that will assist us to manage our car parks more effectively. This will improve the “visitor experience” for car park users and will benefit the local economy, both in terms of retail and tourism.

4.2 There are two elements to this work:
The development of a Car Park Asset Management Register (CPAMR) and Investment Programme to prioritise investment in the car parks, with the aim of improving their visual appearance and ease of use.

- i) Other complementary measures that make it easier for people to use our car parks. This will include; for example, better information provision; more flexible ticketing arrangements; and a more modern parking permit system.

Car Park Asset Management Register

- 4.3 A Car Park Asset Management Register (CPAMR) has been developed to help us manage our car parks assets more efficiently and to keep accurate records of their condition. No record of these assets was kept previously, so we commissioned the Highways and Environmental Services Works Unit to carry out extensive survey work to record the location and condition of all the assets within our car parks. Photographic records of each asset have also been taken.
- 4.4 Each asset has been accurately mapped using Global Positioning System (GPS) survey technology so that they can be easily located by inspection staff and maintenance contractors, for example. All asset information is stored on a database.
- 4.5 Examples of car park assets are the car park surface; road markings/lines; signage within the car park; Pay and Display machines; swing barriers; height barriers; bollards; boundary walls and fences; surface water drainage systems; car park lighting; soft and hard landscaping and so on.
- 4.6 The condition of each asset has been assessed in terms of its estimated remaining life, or in other words, how long until it will need replacing.
- 4.7 Routine inspections of our car parks are presently carried out by Highway and Environmental Services' Streetscene inspection staff to a pre-determined schedule. This inspection regime will continue in the future, but the CPAMR will be accessible on the Inspectors' handheld devices. This will speed up the inspections and means that inspection information will be recorded and update the CPAMR automatically.
- 4.8 The CPAMR will be overseen and maintained by officers within the Traffic, Parking and Road Safety Section.

Investment Programme

- 4.9 It is proposed that we embark upon a programme of investment to contribute towards improving the user experience within our car parks. This will include improving the visual appearance of the car parks, improving information signage within them, and investing in more modern pay and display machines which enable payment by card. The draft Investment Programme is provided in Appendix B.
- 4.10 The information recorded by the car park surveys referred to in 4.3 above, has been used to identify and prioritise the work in the Investment Programme.
- 4.11 The Traffic, Parking and Road Safety Manager visited all six of the Member Area Groups between June and September 2017 to discuss priorities for investment in our car parks. The feedback received has been used to assist in the identification and prioritisation of the works in the Investment Programme.
- 4.12 It is proposed that this investment will be funded wholly from the existing car park budget. This is likely to require some prudential borrowing owing to the level of

investment required in the first two years of the programme, however, the repayments against the borrowing would be made from the car park budget. The spend profile and amount of borrowing required needs to be developed in detail with Finance officers. It is proposed that this will then be developed into a Business Case which will then be submitted to the Strategic Investment Group for approval.

- 4.13 The proposed refurbishment of Rhyl Children's Village (Underground) car park is being funded separately and not from the existing car park budget. It is subject to a separate Business Case that has been approved by the Strategic Investment Group and is due to be considered by Cabinet on the 20th March 2018.

Car Park Task and Finish Group

- 4.14 A Car Park Task and Finish Group was set up comprising of officers from *Traffic, Parking and Road Safety*; from *Tourism, Marketing and Events*; and from *Countryside Services*. The Group was set up to consider potential measures that would improve the visitor experience for car park users. The Group has met on a number of occasions. The following interventions have been identified by the Group and are currently being developed for implementation:

- Transferable pay and display tickets between Long Stay car parks
- Visitor offers on the back of pay and display tickets offering discounts
- The Pilot of a new type of pay and display machine that can be programmed to give car park users the option to print vouchers out. For example, these vouchers could provide a discount in specific shops that are participating in the initiative.
- Paperless parking permit system to replace the existing system of paper permits which can be purchased by the public for use in beach and long stay car parks.
- Improved tourist/visitor information signage within car parks

- 4.15 We have commenced the procurement process for a new paperless permit system. We have researched what systems other authorities use and what technologies are available to help specify the requirements for our own system. The project team developing this project includes officers from both ICT and the Digital Futures team.

- 4.16 Once implemented, the new paperless permit system, will enable us to expand the range of permits we currently offer to enable much shorter duration permits to be offered. This would potentially be very beneficial for hotels and guest houses who may wish to purchase short duration permits for their guests, for example.

5. How does the decision contribute to the Corporate Priorities?

- 5.1 *Connected Communities: Communities are connected and have access to goods and services locally, online and through good transport links.* Accessible parking is vital for car-based journeys to town centres for goods, employment and services.
- 5.2 *Environment: Attractive and protected, supporting well-being and economic prosperity.* Well-managed and attractive car parks complement the tourist economy and the town centre retail economy.

6. What will it cost and how will it affect other services?

- 6.1 As explained in 4.12, the costs of the works listed in the draft Investment Programme plus the other initiatives listed in 4.14 will be fully met from within the Car Parks budget, albeit some prudential borrowing will be necessary. The Investment Programme will be developed further in conjunction with Finance officers and will result in a Business Case being submitted to SIG for approval.
- 6.2 The paperless system requires the input of officer time from both ICT and Customer Service teams. Both teams are represented on the project team.

7. What are the main conclusions of the Well-being Impact Assessment?

As the report is providing an update on the implementation of a project and is not seeking a decision, then a Well-being Impact Assessment is not required. This has been confirmed by the Strategic Planning and Performance Officer.

8. What consultations have been carried out with Scrutiny and others?

- 8.1 This paper is a progress update following previous reports presented to the Communities Scrutiny Committee in October 2016 and in July 2017.
- 8.2 All six of the Member Area Groups were consulted regarding the Car Park Investment Programme, as referred to in 4.11.

9. Chief Finance Officer Statement

- 9.1 It is important to understand the works required to maintain or develop the council's car parks. The production of an asset management plan has greatly assisted in this regard, highlighting both the nature of works required and estimated costs. As stated in the report it is important that the works required are funded from within parking resources. The Investment Programme will need to be developed further in conjunction with Finance Officers and will be subject to the council's internal approval processes, including reporting to the Strategic Investment Group (SIG)

10. What risks are there and is there anything we can do to reduce them?

- 10.1 The Car Park Investment Programme and Asset Management Register will result in us adopting a more strategic approach to how we maintain and improve our car parks. This will reduce the amount of reactive maintenance work that we do, which is work that typically places a strain on staff and financial resources.
- 10.2 Taking a more planned approach to how we maintain our car parks will reduce the likelihood of accidents occurring within our car parks such as slips and trips.
- 10.3 The funding required for the Investment Programme needs to be carefully planned to reduce the risk of creating a budget pressure if, for example, car park income reduces unexpectedly in the next few years.

11. Power to make the Decision

Section 7.4.2 of the Council's Constitution outlines Scrutiny's powers with respect to examining the impact of decisions and the application of policies.

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