

WAVERLEY BOROUGH COUNCIL

EXECUTIVE – 1 MARCH 2016

Title:

POST PAYMENT PARKING SCHEME PILOT

[Portfolio Holder: Cllr Kevin Deanus]

[Wards Affected: Cranleigh East & Cranleigh West]

Note pursuant to Section 100B(5) of the Local Government Act 1972

An annexe to this report contains exempt information by virtue of which the public is likely to be excluded during the item to which the report relates, as specified in Paragraph 3 of Part I of Schedule 12A to the Local Government Act 1972, namely:-

Information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the authority holding that information).

Summary and purpose:

One of the commitments in the Parking Strategy Review was to continue to explore alternative payment systems to maximise flexibility for the customer and encourage increased use of Waverley car parks.

This report considers a system known as 'Post Payment Parking' which enables customers to pay for the time they have stayed when they leave the car park rather than pay and display in advance. The proposal was considered previously but was not recommended due to the set up costs. An opportunity has now arisen to obtain external funding for the installation of the system on a trial basis.

Experience in other Councils has shown an increase in car park use and income levels as a result of the introduction of this system. It is therefore proposed that, subject to a successful application for funding, a trial of the system is implemented in Village Way and Stocklund Square Car Parks in Cranleigh.

How this report relates to the Council's Corporate Priorities:

The report supports the Waverley Borough Council Economic Strategy, published in 2015, which prioritises the safeguarding of the unique character of its towns and villages whilst ensuring their economic prosperity. The Strategy notes the importance of 'ensuring the vitality and viability of Waverley's town centres' and to develop more initiatives to encourage people to visit and stay longer.

Value for Money

The proposal will demonstrate value for money by adhering to the Council's commitment to 'invest to save'. The increased turnover that will be generated by the new system will meet the costs of installation and monitoring, providing a net gain in future years.

Leisure & Lives

Within our large and rural borough, a key challenge is improving connectivity for our residents. Most people travel by car and parking is a key concern for both residents

and businesses. Moves to make the process of visiting to town centres to access leisure and health services easier will improve people's lives.

Understanding residents needs

The number one priority for the four chambers of commerce in the borough is parking. A commitment to the trial of a scheme of this nature will be a clear example of listening to the needs of residents and supplying a tangible solution that has a measureable impact.

Financial Implications:

The opportunity to obtain external funding for the initial installation and set up costs of the system on a trial basis makes the proposal potentially viable, even if it only results in a modest increase in use and income.

Introduction

1. The review of the parking strategy made a commitment to continue to investigate alternative payment options for customers to increase flexibility and encourage longer stays.
2. The Post Payment System is being introduced in a number of local authority areas and is increasing in popularity as it addresses a number of concerns raised by motorists and local businesses. These concerns include:
 - Stress of always having to have the right change
 - Deciding how much parking time you need in advance
 - Pay and display machines don't give change
 - PaybyPhone is too time consuming to use
 - Pay on exit system would encourage more people to shop in the village
 - Not able to take debit/credit card
3. The perceived benefits for businesses and customers are:
 - Longer parking stays will benefit traders in the towns – improving business retention and attracting new businesses;
 - More flexible parking will be more convenient and cost effective for residents giving them more choice about length of stay;
 - It will improve footfall in the shops and lengthen dwell time of shoppers;
 - It will attract new visitors to the town centres;
 - Less pressured parking will improve the visitor experience and their wellbeing, more convenient for the less physically able;
 - It would fulfil a request from the Chambers, representing positive local stakeholder engagement and fit with the borough's Economic Strategy;
 - It would potentially benefit all of Waverley's towns and villages; and

- It would present a positive initiative from both WBC and SCC that would be felt by the general public and the business community.
4. The Post Payment System was considered during the budget process but was discounted because the anticipated 'pay back' period was too long. An opportunity has now arisen to apply for external funding for the installation and set up costs from Surrey County Council's 'Town Centre Revitalisation Fund'.
 5. This fund is designed to support initiatives which will support the economic prosperity of secondary town centres and would support the Waverley Borough Council Economic Strategy, published in 2015. There are two options available. The first is a one off grant up to a maximum of £30,000 to fund individual projects. The second is for grants of up to £250,000 but this requires 'matched funding'. The latter scheme would offer the opportunity to fund the review of the trial in year two and if appropriate a roll out of the scheme to further car parks. We are able to demonstrate matched funding in kind using the proposed increase in resources for managing our car parks included in the budget for 2016/17 etc. if it were considered appropriate to apply for a grant from the larger fund. The scheme is also supported by local Chambers of Commerce and Town Councils who might also contribute to the funding match.
 6. The proposal for a trial was based on the two main car parks in Cranleigh (Village Way and Stocklund Square) for a year. Should the Council be successful with the bid, new payment machines would be installed in those two car parks and a trial carried out for a year to see if the system results in increased use, income and customer satisfaction as predicted.
 7. Experience in a trial in Tunbridge Wells was very positive with an increase in the number of users and the amount of revenue each month. It also showed an increase in longer stays.
 8. The estimated installation costs using 4G connection are set out in the (Exempt) Annexe and there are ongoing revenue costs of between £4,000 and £6,000 for software licences and transmission costs. It is also estimated that there would be lost PCN and overpayment income of around £5,000 per annum.
 9. Income from the two car parks is currently in the region of £500,000. Consequently, even a modest increase in use and income in Cranleigh would potentially cover the ongoing revenue costs and make it cost neutral.
 10. The financial effect of these costs and a range of projected increases in income are set out in the (Exempt) Annexe to this report.

Recommendation

It is recommended that

1. officers be authorised to proceed with the bid for grant funding from the Surrey County Council Town Centre Revitalisation Fund (£250,000 to £350,000) and if unsuccessful proceed with a bid for grant from the Surrey County Council Local Centre Improvement Fund (up to £30,000);

2. subject to obtaining the required external funding, officers be authorised to proceed with the installation of the Post Payment Parking Scheme in Village Way and Stocklund Square car parks in Cranleigh for a trial period of one year; and
3. a review of the impact of the scheme on use and income be carried out at the end of the trial period of one year.

Background Papers

There are no background papers (as defined by Section 100D(5) of the Local Government Act 1972) relating to this report.

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