

To: INFRASTRUCTURE, LAND AND ENVIRONMENT POLICY BOARD

On: 8 November 2023

Report by: DIRECTOR OF ENVIRONMENT, HOUSING AND INFRASTRUCTURE

Heading: Renfrewshire's Car Parking Strategy 2023 - 2028

1. Summary

- 1.1 As noted at the last meeting of the Infrastructure, Land and Environment Policy Board on 30 August 2023, Council Officers have been carrying out a review of the Council's approach to management of car parking across the area.
 - 1.2 Renfrewshire's current approach to management of parking arrangements has been in place since 2010 when parking was decriminalised and has largely centred around the control of parking in and around Paisley Town Centre, with some limited enforcement in the towns of Renfrew and Johnstone.
 - 1.3 Issues around parking exist across Renfrewshire, along with the upcoming Pavement Parking ban under the Transport Scotland Act and our ambitions for Net Zero, a new strategy is required to address parking concerns raised by residents, communities, business, elected members and public transport operators.
 - 1.4 Officers have reviewed the current approach to parking and identified there is a need for modernisation across all areas of parking, including enforcement, maintenance of infrastructure and parking charges that support movement of vehicles through our town centre locations.
 - 1.5 This modernised approach is set out within the Parking Strategy attached at Appendix 1.
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2. Recommendations

It is recommended that the Infrastructure, Land and Environment Board:

- 2.1 Notes the need for a modernised approach to car parking management and approves the Parking Strategy attached at Appendix 1,

- 2.2 Approves the new approach to parking restrictions and charges as set out in Appendix 1 which will come into effect from 5 February 2024, and
- 2.3 Approves the proposal to increase the parking enforcement fine tariffs as set out in Appendix 1,
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3. Purpose

- 3.1 The Council requires a new parking strategy which manages the supply and demand for parking, supports economic regeneration and is aligned with the aspirations for meeting our ambitious climate change targets ahead of 2030.
- 3.2 The aim of the parking strategy is to ensure our town centres are vibrant, accessible and support businesses with a modernised approach to parking. This support will include a free period of parking in both on and off street parking in Paisley town centre.

Current Parking Arrangements - Renfrewshire

- 3.3 Until now, the Council's approach to the control of parking has been limited to the management of parking restrictions within Paisley town centre, with occasional focus provided in other hot spot locations for enforcement.
- 3.4 The issues experienced arising from parking behaviours affect all communities across Renfrewshire experiencing issues associated with parking, these include but are not limited to:
- **Commuter parking** – the impact of commuter parking impacts the ability of residents to park within the surrounds of their own home.
 - **Public transport** – On a regular basis cars and vans block access to bus stops which impacts the ability of buses to stop at their pickup points creating issues for vulnerable residents boarding buses and has an adverse impact on bus journey times and frequencies.
 - **Pedestrian and Road Safety** – Inconsiderate and poor parking behaviours can create impacts for pedestrians and other road users and create obstacles to accessibility in our town centres such as parking across dropped kerbs etc.
 - **Residential streets** – Inconsiderate parking behaviours even impact on everyday activities such as refuse collection vehicles gaining access to streets to service properties on a regular basis.

Modernised Parking Arrangements

- 3.5 In setting a new approach to car parking there are a few factors in support of the strategy as outlined below:
- **Town Centre Regeneration** – One of the key aims of a parking strategy is to support economic regeneration of town centres making them vibrant places to stay, work and visit. The strategy will aim to do this by providing a period of free parking as a permanent policy decision which is a unique offer compared to other areas where parking charges are in place. The offer of a free period of parking is designed to support turnover of parking spaces to support increased footfall in town centre businesses.
 - **Climate Ambitions** - Around 34% of Renfrewshire's emissions are attributed to transport and there needs to be a continuation of our approach to supporting access to public

transport, walking, wheeling and cycling infrastructure, whilst also recognising the important role that the private car plays.

- **Transport Scotland Act 2019** – The Council also has a duty to develop strategies which are aligned with national legislation and guidance, including the Transport (Scotland) Act 2019 and the National and Regional Transport Strategies. Over the next 12 – 15 months the Council will be developing a new Local Transport Strategy which will outline transport priorities for Renfrewshire over the next ten years. With the impending pavement parking ban due to be enacted during 2024 the Council are currently assessing the road network across Renfrewshire to identify areas where these inconsiderate parking behaviours cause significant issues. It is also going to be essential to identify areas where implementation will not be possible and suitable exemptions to the ban will have to be promoted.
- **Financial Planning** – The Council's parking service currently does not cover its costs and as such the Council has to use reserves on an annual basis to address the shortfall. In addition, there are no maintenance budgets for car parking and as such all lining, repairs and signage must be funded from other already pressured budgets. A modern parking service should be able to fund its own maintenance activities as well as create the opportunity for reinvestment in the road network.
- **Parking Enforcement** – The new strategy also extends to reviewing our approach to enforcement of parking restrictions. Officers are reviewing the current approach with a view to the creation of a dedicated parking enforcement service. The service would then direct resources ensuring our road network across Renfrewshire's towns and villages remains clear of obstructions as well as supporting the opportunity for short stay car parking to support businesses.

Parking Fine Increase

- 3.6 It is recognised that penalty charge notices associated with parking contraventions have not increased in over 20 years and a review of this was conducted by Transport Scotland. In line with Transport Scotland's revised national guidance, local authorities have now been given the authority to raise the level of parking fine to £100 from the current £60. Officers are recommending that this approach is adopted in Renfrewshire in line with proposals set out in a number of other Council areas. This fee is discounted to £50 if paid within 14 days similar to the current model where the discounted fee is £30.

4. Phased Implementation

- 4.1 The scale of the changes outlined will require a phased implementation over a period of time in order to ensure each areas unique characteristics are taken into account.
- 4.2 The proposed implementation is set out within Section 5 of the Strategy at Appendix 1, recognising there is a need to address the issues on an incremental basis rather than all at once. The implementation process will commence imminently and will last approximately 2 – 3 years to be fully reviewed and implemented across Renfrewshire. The implementation will be delivered through three workstreams as highlighted below:
- Workstream 1 – Paisley town centre parking,
 - Workstream 2 – Town centre and village parking assessments, and

- Workstream 3 – Permit arrangements.

4.3 As part of the implementation of the new provisions there will be a period of communication and engagement with the local community and business community. The implementation will also include engagement with ward members in relation to parking in their wards.

Implications of this Report

1. **Financial** –

2. **HR and Organisational Development** – none

3. **Community Planning**

Our Renfrewshire is thriving / Reshaping our place, our economy and our future –

By continuing to support public transport improvements we will continue to facilitate access to employment and economic growth.

4. **Legal** – none

5. **Property/Assets** – none

6. **Information Technology** – none

7. **Equality & Human Rights** - The recommendations contained within this report have been assessed in relation to their impact on equalities and human rights. No negative impacts on equality groups or potential for infringement of individuals' human rights have been identified arising from the recommendations contained in the report. If required following implementation, the actual impact of the recommendations and the mitigating actions will be reviewed and monitored, and the results of the assessment will be published on the Council's website.

8. **Health and Safety** – none.

9. **Procurement** – none.

10. **Risk** – none.

11. **Privacy Impact** – none.

12. **CoSLA Policy Position** – N/A.

13. **Climate Change** – N/A

List of Background Papers - none

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RENFREWSHIRE PARKING STRATEGY 2023 – 2028

Environment, Housing & Infrastructure

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Contents

| | | |
|-----|---|----|
| 1. | Introduction | 3 |
| 2. | Aim of this Strategy | 4 |
| 3. | Strategic Context | 4 |
| 4. | Current Parking Management Arrangements..... | 6 |
| 5. | Current Enforcement Model | 7 |
| 6. | Modernised Approach to Parking..... | 7 |
| 7. | Workstream 1 – Paisley town centre..... | 8 |
| 8. | Workstream 2 – Town centre and village parking assessments..... | 9 |
| 9. | Workstream 3 – Permit arrangements..... | 10 |
| 10. | Community and Business Engagement | 10 |
| 11. | Strategy Review..... | 10 |
| 12. | Appendix 1 – Paisley town centre parking charges | 11 |

1. Introduction

1.1 Current Parking Arrangements

Renfrewshire's current approach to management of parking arrangements has been in place since 2010 when parking was decriminalised and has largely centred around the control of parking in and around Paisley Town Centre, with some limited enforcement in the towns of Renfrew and Johnstone. Ongoing parking issues exist across Renfrewshire and a new strategy is required to address parking concerns raised by residents, communities, business, elected members and public transport operators.

Parking of vehicles affects many aspects of daily life for residents, businesses, and visitors. The transport landscape across the country and Renfrewshire is changing, with an increasing focus on improving access to active travel and public transport, and with the pending implementation of the Transport Scotland Act, banning the parking of vehicles on pavements, could have implications for every street in Renfrewshire.

The key concerns raised by members of the public, businesses and elected members are around a lack of enforcement, infrastructure such as lining being poorly maintained, and the town centre not being cleaned on a regular basis. A modernised approach to parking in Renfrewshire will seek to address these issues.

This report sets out a parking strategy that provides a high-level framework against which decisions on parking arrangements can be taken across Renfrewshire, to balance the needs of everyone, car users and non-users alike within Renfrewshire's road and transport network, recognising the supply and provision of adequate, accessible, good quality vehicle parking is important to residents, business, and visitors.

The ambition for a successful parking strategy is to have sufficient, high quality and appropriately located parking in our towns and villages that supports economic development, improves traffic flows, reduces congestion, reduces carbon emissions, improves road and pedestrian safety as well as promoting alternative modes of travel.

2. Aim of this Strategy

A successful parking strategy will have high quality and appropriately located parking in towns and villages to support economic regeneration, improve traffic flows, reduce congestion, reduce carbon emissions and improve road and pedestrian safety as well as promoting alternative modes of travel.

3. Strategic Context

This strategy has several key drivers, recognising that a one size fits all approach will not be effective. The key strategy drivers are:

- **Legislation and Policy**
 - National and Regional Transport Strategies
 - Transport Scotland Act
 - Public Transport and Active Travel Improvements
 - Delivery on key Council Plan priorities
- **Climate – Net Zero** – All new Council strategies should reflect the priorities outlined in Ren Zero and contribute to the delivery on our commitment to being a net zero area by 2030.
- **Financial Strategy** – Parking Management as a service and parking Infrastructure should be self financing with the income it generates through enforcement of parking restrictions and parking income.

3.1 Legislation & Policy

The transport landscape is an area that has evolved in recent years and continues to change in response to national, regional and local transport priorities and strategies.

This Parking Strategy is aligned with the key priorities set out in the legislation and policy context set out below:

- **National, Regional and Local Transport Strategies** – Scotland has a new National Transport Strategy and this has been adopted with the SPT Regional Transport

Strategy. Renfrewshire has commenced the preparation of a new Local Transport Strategy for the area and the priorities within this must reflect the national and regional priorities. This means that the transport related interventions the Council takes should move the emphasis to supporting Public Transport and Active Travel. Whilst new policies should recognise the important role of private cars in every day life they must also address the ambitions to reduce car kilometres by 20% by 2030.

- **Transport Scotland Act 2019** – The pavement parking ban is due to come into effect in late 2024/early 2025 with the Council currently preparing for its implementation. The Council’s approach to this new legislation is set out within this strategy.
- **Public Transport and Active Travel Improvements** – The Council has a priority to continue to build on the good work carried out to date to improve cycling infrastructure and access to public transport across Renfrewshire. New strategies should prioritise access to public transport and active travel over private car usage in line with the national transport hierarchy.

3.2 Climate Change – Ren Zero

The Council has set ambitious aspirations to be net zero by 2030 and with transport in Renfrewshire contributing to 34% of the areas emissions this will not be possible without changes to transport behaviours.

The Council can directly impact its own emissions by investing in green fleet and reducing unnecessary journeys as has been done through our sustainable travel programme, however the bigger impact that can be made is on transport emissions that can be indirectly influenced through policy change.

The priority to reduce car mileage by 20% by 2030 will require significant change to transport behaviours in Renfrewshire with the focus for infrastructure investment being on access to public transport and active travel infrastructure.

The Council will continue to recognise the important role the private car plays in everyday life, however to reflect national and local transport strategies, this cannot be done to the detriment of public transport and active travel.

The Council will continue to seek external funding to deliver on these ambitions going forward during the same time period as this parking strategy.

3.3 Financial Strategy

Recognising the need to support continued but reduced use of private cars the Council will invest in parking infrastructure. The current income levels would not pay for the parking services, infrastructure and wider investment previously funded in roads/ public transport. This results in a system where Council Taxpayers subsidise the service utilised by only those who park in Paisley town centre.

The financial shortfall means that other limited roads maintenance budgets have to take the burden of maintenance associated with on and off-street parking facilities. The development of a parking service which is self-funded will not only address the funding gap but creates the potential for reinvestment in the road network by relieving budgets which are already under significant pressure

The new financial strategy would also ensure investment in infrastructure and enhanced digital systems to support payment options for all users.

4. Current Parking Management Arrangements

The Council's current approach to the control of parking has been limited to the management of parking restrictions within Paisley town centre, with occasional focus provided in other hot spot locations for enforcement around double yellow line restrictions.

The issues experienced arising from parking behaviours are not limited to Paisley town centre with communities across Renfrewshire experiencing issues associated with parking, these include but are not limited to:

- **Commuter parking** – the impact of commuter parking impacts the ability of residents to park within the surrounds of their own home, town and village centres as well as creating road and pedestrian safety issues and limits the turnover of short stay parking spaces to support businesses.
- **Public transport** – On a regular basis, cars and vans block access to bus stops which impacts the ability of buses to stop at their pickup points creating issues for vulnerable

residents boarding buses and has an adverse impact on bus journey times and frequencies.

- **Residential streets** – Inconsiderate parking behaviours even impact on everyday activities such as refuse collection vehicles gaining access to streets to service properties on a regular basis.

5. Current Enforcement Model

Poor parking behaviours can range from commuters occupying bays in on street town locations all day whilst taking public transport to another location instead of utilising park and ride facilities to inconsiderate and sometimes dangerous parking behaviours around schools which have an impact on road safety in these locations.

The current enforcement service is carried out by the Wardens Service through our Community Support Officers. The Officers carry out a range of enforcement and community safety related duties which can have an impact on the resources available as the current roles are multi disciplined.

Officers have commenced a review of the current enforcement arrangements with a proposed new model set out below in section 5 of the strategy.

6. Modernised Approach to Parking

A modernised approach to parking requires to take account of a number of key factors;

- **Parking Enforcement and charges** – The application of a fair, robust and consistent approach to enforcement of parking restrictions and charges reflective of the current environment.
- **Technology** – A modernised service requires investment in technology to support customers by improving access to digital parking management and payment applications.
- **Infrastructure** – We will provide good quality parking facilities, signage, lining and electric vehicle charging stations, supported by additional investment in our infrastructure. This additional investment requires to be funded through the income generated by the parking service.

- **Digital Traffic Regulation Orders** – The Council has consolidated all of its Traffic Regulation Orders into a digital order which will ensure that ongoing updates to road restrictions will be done in a more efficient manner than previously.

The new parking arrangements will seek to address the parking behaviours in our town centres and support our town centres being vibrant attractive areas to live, work and visit.

Due to the scale of the implementation of the modernised approach to parking, to consider each street, community, village and town on its own merits, it is proposed that a phased approach is undertaken over a 2 – 3 year period as outlined covering a range of workstreams outlined at section 5.1 below.

7. Workstream 1 – Paisley town centre

Work has already commenced to carry out improvements to lining and signing within Paisley town centre recognising the challenges that poorly maintained infrastructure has on the ability to enforce restrictions effectively.

The charges for parking in Paisley town centre have also only seen very limited increase in prices over the last number of years and takes no cognisance of the current landscape in areas such as net zero and the transport hierarchy.

There are approximately 500,000 parking transactions take place in Paisley town centre on an annual basis split between on street and off street parking.

The current arrangement also sees more than 60% of parking sessions being over the 3hour time period.

Parking Charges

The proposed charges for Paisley town centre aim to support businesses by offering a permanent free period of parking to support businesses with short stay parking turnover close to retail premises. The proposed charges are set out in Appendix 1 of this strategy.

In addition to Council run car parks, officers will also review the arrangements for weekend parking at Renfrewshire House. The car park remains open to the public at the weekend but will be a chargeable car park in line with other town centre car parks.

Enforcement

This workstream will also see the development of a robust, consistent and enhanced enforcement regime designed to tackle poor parking behaviours which impact on public transport services, cause congestion and limit the supply of available parking in the town centre area. A successful enforcement strategy will support business and residents by ensuring parking behaviours are more effectively controlled with resources being focussed on enforcing our parking control zones as well as other hot spot locations for enforcement which are affecting our communities.

The initial focus of an enforcement strategy will be on having the resources available at the times where it is identified illegal parking behaviours are taking place and ensure that this enforcement is robust, fair and consistent. Over time this approach will expand once the provisions of the pavement parking legislation is clearer and our approach is finalised.

It is also recognised that penalty charge notices associated with parking contraventions have not increased in over 20 years and a review of this was conducted by Transport Scotland. In line with Transport Scotland's revised national guidance, local authorities have now been given the authority to raise the level of parking fine to £100 from the current £60.

8. Workstream 2 – Town centre and village parking assessments

Inconsiderate parking behaviours are not limited to Paisley town centre and are a problem on a Renfrewshire wide basis. As such one of the key workstreams is to assess and better understand parking behaviours and patterns which have an impact on Renfrewshire communities and what can be done to address these issues.

The assessments in other localities will consider but not be limited to the following areas;

- Identifying problematic business and residential parking locations,
- Village Centre Parking Arrangements,
- Tourist location parking e.g., Castle Semple and Gleniffer Braes, and
- Active Travel and Bus Parking – including the potential for car clubs and car sharing activities.

This work will take 2-3 years to conclude as it will require a localised approach for each area considering the unique challenges that each locality will bring.

9. Workstream 3 – Permit arrangements

Any changes to parking arrangements in town centres may cause displacement of parking to other locations in Paisley and the current parking permit zone arrangements will be reviewed as part of the implementation of parking arrangements. As a result of this, the initial focus will look at the permit arrangements within Paisley town centre prior to then looking at other areas.

The impact of commuters and all day parking on street locations next to places of work affects the ability of retail locations to create turnover due to the majority of the parking not being readily accessible near businesses for large periods of the day. Officers will engage with businesses on the merits of the introduction of commuter and annual permits for introduction, recognising that for some people access to a private car is the only available option for travel to and from Renfrewshire.

In conjunction with revised commuter permits, officers will consider the current use of a range of other parking permits to determine how these arrangements can be more effective going forward. The permits could range from, but are not limited to business permits and health care worker arrangements.

10. Community and Business Engagement

The implementation of this modernised approach to parking across Renfrewshire will be underpinned by a comprehensive communications and engagement strategy.

Officers will engage with residents and the business community as part of the implementation plan.

11. Strategy Review

This approach will be continually reviewed to ensure the Council are approaching the issues with parking on the correct basis. The Strategy will also be subjected to a formal annual review to ensure we respond to any changes to the external environment we are operating in.

12. Appendix 1 – Paisley town centre parking charges

| Parking Duration | On Street Parking Tariff |
|------------------------|--------------------------|
| 1 hour | Free |
| 2 hours | £4.00 |
| 3 hours | £5.00 |
| 4 hours (Maximum Stay) | £6.00 |

| Parking Duration | Off Street Parking Tariff |
|------------------|---------------------------|
| 1 hour | Free |
| 2 hours | £3.00 |
| 3 hours | £4.00 |
| 4 hours | £5.00 |
| Over 4 hours | £8.00 |



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