

REPORT FROM: HEAD OF ECONOMIC GROWTH

TO: COLNE AND DISTRICT COMMITTEE

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FOR INFORMATION

PARKING POLICY & STRATEGIES UPDATE

RECOMMENDATIONS

- (1) That members note the report.
- (2) That members note the feedback from the working group site visits and the surveys required to inform the strategy and five area-specific policies.

REASON FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

- (1) To update members following the working group site meetings and to summarise the next steps.

ISSUE

1. Pendle does not currently have a parking policy or strategy. Senior Management requested that we produce a Parking Strategy in 2022.
2. Parking enforcement and car park maintenance were handed over to the Engineering Section in May 2023 from the Service Support Team due to staff changes.
3. The main outcome from previous surveys and reports carried out by the Service Support Team is that one size does not fit all: each area has its own car parking requirements.
4. Following the last report submitted in July, we are now working to produce an overarching parking strategy and five area-specific parking policies (Nelson, Brierfield, Barnoldswick, Earby and Colne).
5. Since the July meeting, we have met with the working groups put forward by the relevant area committees to establish members' concerns and requirements for the strategy.

6. At the working group site meetings, the following issues were considered. These were taken from the "Parking in Pendle Baseline Report" submitted to the July meeting:
- (a) Short Stay v Long Stay and Enforcement.
 - (b) Business and Residents' Permits.
 - (c) EV Charge Point Locations.
 - (d) Maintenance Budget.
 - (e) Maintenance: including shrubbery/signage/surfacing/lining/lighting/CCTV.
 - (f) Signage.
 - (g) Antisocial Behaviour.
 - (h) General Issues.
 - (i) Surplus Car Parks.

WORKING GROUP SITE VISITS – FEEDBACK

6(a) Short Stay v Long Stay and Enforcement – There are only short-stay car parks with disc parking in Colne, Nelson and Brierfield. Disc parking is for two and a half hours.

Both Colne and Nelson working groups were keen to keep disc parking and enforcement rather than introducing a charge for parking or pay-and-display. They wanted to encourage people to stay in the town centres for longer. There was some interest in introducing a charge for parking in Barnoldswick as it could contribute towards the cost of maintenance and could be a means of encouraging more people to use sustainable transport. However, when we tried to introduce pay-and-display in Pendle in the past, residents were very much against it. Most members were keen to keep parking free.

Members understood that car park enforcement is a cost and that the Council makes no profit from issuing Penalty Charge Notices (PCNs). Decriminalised parking is managed for Pendle Council by a company called Chipside with whom we have a contract together with other district authorities and Lancashire County Council. Chipside manages the PCN payments and one civil enforcement officer (CEO) who monitors our car parks and issues the PCNs. The money that Pendle Council makes on PCN payments is balanced by the expense of the CEO time and the time for Chipside to manage the PCNs. So, there is no surplus parking revenue because it all goes back to the cost of car park enforcement.

Some specific issues with enforcement were reported for Colne Precinct and Parliament Street Car Park in Colne. Members pointed out that enforcement needed to be done properly for it to be effective. As we have limited enforcement officer time allocated across Colne and Nelson, this can be difficult to achieve. However, we are currently trying to resolve the issues reported for Parliament Street Car Park and Colne Precinct.

Pendle Leisure Trust (PLT) is looking into using automatic number plate recognition (ANPR) on its car parks and we felt this might be an alternative to disc parking as it would be self-policing. Members in all areas agreed that this was a good idea and that we should liaise with PLT. However, we have since established that ANPR is complicated and would require legal advice due to General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) and may not be a suitable solution after all, although it is worth investigating further and speaking with PLT.

Some members felt that there were not enough long-stay car parks in the town centre and that footfall might increase if people could stay longer but then they also agreed that workers might use the long-stay car parks rather than visitors and wondered if some of the underused long-stay car parks could be designated specifically for workers/residents parking using permits and thereby generating some income.

6(b) Business and Resident's Permits – We currently only issue business and resident permits in Nelson. There is only one car park with an allocated resident permit area, Cuba Street. The annual cost of a resident permit is £55 but the recommended annual fee is £300. The annual cost of a business permit is £110, and we are limited to issue only 50 business permits in any year.

Members in all areas thought we could bring in some revenue if we were able to issue more Business Permits, across the whole of Pendle and at a higher rate. Although some members felt that we should raise the cost of the permits gradually over 2 years rather than jump them straight up to the recommended price.

Members in Colne, Nelson and Barnoldswick suggested that some of the car parks could be changed to resident or business permit use only. The Nelson Working Group suggested that perhaps some of the Short Stay car parks in Nelson could be used at night to ease congestion caused by parked cars on residential streets. Some terraced house owners have 2 or even 3 cars and the streets are overcrowded, especially at night. This causes obstruction at the junctions and can be dangerous. If people were encouraged to park in the Short Stay car parks nearby, such as Broadway in Nelson, at night, this would ease the problem in the residential streets.

Members in Barnoldswick also thought some of the car parks could be changed to resident or business permit only for example at Brook Street, Jepp Street and North Avenue car parks and Members in Brierfield thought the same for Holden Road car park. These are public car parks but not well publicised as such.

6(c) EV Charge Points – The original specification for EV charge points in Pendle's car parks was approved by the Climate Emergency Working Group in September 2021: at least one rapid (minimum 40kWh) charger in each of four specified car parks in Barnoldswick, Brierfield, Colne and Nelson with a provision to propose more chargers within these and additional town centre car parks if deemed feasible by the tenderer.

The Council identified the following car parks as suitable locations for EV charge points at the time: Chapel Street – **Nelson**; Dockray Street – **Colne**; Tunstill Square – **Brierfield**; Wellhouse Road – **Barnoldswick**.

Engineers carried out a tender process and reported back to the Climate Emergency Working Group in July 2022. However, the Climate Emergency Working Group required more details and had further questions before they could make their decision.

A further report was submitted to the December 2022 Climate Emergency Working Group with the recommendation that Liberty Charge should be approved as the Council's preferred supplier. This preferred supplier was able to provide the service at no cost to the Council.

However, the recommendation was based on awarding the contract to one supplier and did not allow for two suppliers to provide the charging infrastructure which is what the Climate Emergency Working Group had requested. In addition, members were keen to see the revenue come back to Pendle rather than go back to the supplier and so the decision was referred to the Policy and Resources Team.

The Engineer who had carried out the tender process unfortunately left the Council in May 2023 before discussions with the suppliers could take place and so no decision was made. There has been no further development/decision about EV charge points in our car parks since March 2023.

During the working group site visits, we discussed the preferred locations for EV charge points for one car park in each area. Car parks identified by the working groups are: **Barnoldswick** – Wellhouse Road; **Colne** – Dockray Street or Nelson Street; **Nelson** – Broadway (or Home Bargains if we obtain permission); **Brierfield** – Tunstill Square; **Earby** – Albert Road.

Barnoldswick councillors were frustrated to be asked once again for their preferred location for EV charge points. They had been approached by an EV charge supplier in 2022 that identified Wellhouse Road Car Park as a “golden location” because it is close to the town centre and near to toilets, shops and other amenities. In addition, the supplier that approached them, InstaVolt, said there would be an approximate £2,000 annual revenue to go back to Pendle Council. At the time, the Climate Emergency Group were looking for a borough-wide tender, see above, and so the offer was not taken up.

Engineers will review InstaVolt along with the other suppliers that tendered in 2022 and will get back to this committee with a separate report. In the meantime, we will conduct surveys to evaluate the chosen locations for the EV charge points.

At the time of the last tender process, suppliers usually charged for installation of the EV charge points with some profits going back to the Council based on charges per unit. But maintenance and repair would be the responsibility of the Council.

After some research done by Pendle’s Regeneration Team, it seems most suppliers now offer to install the charge points and cover the cost of maintenance without a cost to the Council and with some profits, based on charges per unit, going to the Council on an annual basis. Based on this research, the prominent suppliers in England (there are many) are:

BP Pulse – offering options from 7kW to 150kW (over 8,000 charging points in UK)

InstaVolt – known for reliable and ultra-rapid chargers

Gridserve Electric Highway – high powered (to 350kW) often solar powered

Shell Recharge – 140 charging stations in the UK

Pod Point – over 137,000 charging points in the UK, often in supermarket car park parks

Osprey Charging Network – rapid charging points often at motorway services

Fastned – primarily in Northeast, they use 100% renewable energy

GeniePoint – covers southern England

Charge Place Scotland – extends into northern England

MFG EV Power – extensive coverage across UK with focus on rapid and ultra rapid

ChargeYourCar (CYC) – one of the longest established in the UK

Ionity – offering high power charging capable of 350kW, often at motorway services

According to this research, there are now around 600,000 pure electric vehicles on UK roads, around 200,000 new EV drivers this year. The demand for ultra rapid charging will inevitably increase. The EV charging speed has already increased and 125kW takes just 20 to 40 minutes to fully charge a vehicle (depending on the make and age of a vehicle). We suggest we opt for the fastest charging speed possible for our car parks.

We do not necessarily need to tender the process because there is no cost to the Council. Instead, we could approach three suppliers requesting details of what they can offer to us.

The working groups agreed that it would be good to install e-bike charge points at the same time, if feasible. Some members hesitated about installing e-bike charge points as they are not seen as a necessity because people mostly charge their bikes at home. However, there would be the benefit of e-bike charge points near to stations to encourage sustainable transport use and Colne bus station was suggested as a good location for an e-bike charge point, if possible, on this basis.

6(d) Maintenance Budget – at the working group meetings we explained that there is not a huge budget for maintenance and that it is split between services with Engineers getting a small budget (for example for Colne the annual budget for repair and maintenance for Engineers is £3,500, with Environmental Services getting a small budget for sweeping and litter picking three times a week (Monday, Wednesday and Friday)). It is intended that the maintenance budget will be reviewed as part of the strategy and policies process.

6(e) Maintenance – Members in Nelson and Colne thought that the weeds were a major issue as they make the whole car park look untidy. Environmental Services reported that the weeds made it difficult for the sweeper to do a proper clean-up and so Engineers agreed that a deep clean was necessary for all car parks across Colne and Nelson and this could be arranged for once a year in the middle of the growing season. This would include weedkilling, cutting back all the shrubs and pruning the trees to ensure there is no overgrowth at the base of the trees which often obstructs vision and hides the car park, as is the case at Broadway car park in Nelson, making the car park feel unsafe.

Engineers have approached an external contractor to do the deep clean which is now underway in Colne and will soon be ordered for Nelson. Once the deep clean and cutting back is finished, it is hoped that Environmental Services will be able to carry out their regular three weekly litter sweeps across all car parks more effectively.

In Barnoldswick, councillors thought that regular maintenance was not an issue. However, there are certain car parks with specific maintenance requirements. These were mostly missing dropped kerbs, old and outdated signage, paintwork for lighting columns, etc. These issues have been noted and will also be picked up when the surveys are carried out.

6(f) Signage – Engineers will arrange a survey of all signage and lighting across all the car parks in Pendle as part of the Parking Strategy. Most of the signage needs updating. Members pointed out that car parks in the centre of town need to be more inviting and signage at the entrance to the car parks is important. Colne councillors are keen to include a QR code so that people can download the Colne Town Map. Nelson councillors were interested to have the same, especially for Broadway Car Park which will be within the Accessible Nelson regeneration scheme. Engineers will speak with our graphic designer to establish if this could be achieved for Nelson.

Nelson members pointed out that the instructions for disc parking were not clear enough. They felt the instructions on how people can incur a penalty charge notice need to be made clearer. Also, not many people are aware of the official names of car parks. This also needs to be made clear on signage, preferably at the entrance to the car park on welcoming signage.

6(g) Antisocial Behaviour – There were a lot of antisocial issues reported for Colne, especially at Dockray Street Car Park, but also for Nelson at Broadway Car Park. There are reports of drug dealing and drug taking at both car parks. There are also reports of people living in motorcaravans for short periods of time at Midgley Street and Hawley Street Car Parks in Colne.

In Nelson, the main antisocial issue was litter dropping directly from car windows onto the car park. It was suggested that the bins could be made more obvious and perhaps with wider openings so that people had no excuse not to use them. They could even throw away the litter from the car window into the bin. Perhaps recycle bins could be located at the larger town centre car parks. It was also suggested that we start a social media campaign asking people not to drop litter and to use the bins.

6(h) General Issues – Members complained about the lack of enforcement on Parliament Street, Colne Precinct and Colne Lane Car Parks. Engineers are looking into this with enforcement now started at Colne Precinct. It will start soon on Parliament Street. The Traffic Regulation Order (TRO) necessary to do the lining at Colne Lane Car Park is with Legal and should be sorted soon.

Members felt it was important to concentrate on car parks servicing the new regeneration in Colne and Nelson. In Colne, this will be the town centre car parks and the car parks that serve the new Heritage Quarter. In Nelson, this will be the car parks within the Accessible Nelson scheme. This is where the QR code with the town map could enhance the visitor experience.

In Nelson, members pointed out that on-street car park enforcement was an issue, with residential streets and Manchester Road not being enforced well enough at night. Cars are parked all over the place making the streets narrower and obstructing visibility at junctions. As mentioned above, members suggested that some residents could use the car parks at night to free up the streets.

6(i) Surplus Car Parks – In Colne, members thought that there were too many car parks and asked if one or two could be made surplus to requirement – Hawley Street and Thomas Street were mentioned. Cross Skelton Street was also mentioned, which is a gateway into the town. It was suggested it could be used for development. Hartley Square/Colne Precinct was also mentioned. It was thought it could be made into a proper square without the parking.

Members thought that some of the car parks could be used for resident and/or business permits only. In Barnoldswick, Brook Street, Jepp Street and North Avenue Car Parks were suggested for this and Holden Road Car Park in Brierfield. In Nelson, it was thought that Broadway could be used at night by residents to free up the residential streets. Nelson councillors were keen to keep all car parks, with none being declared surplus to requirement.

NEXT STEPS

7. Engineers would like to appoint a consultant to carry out professional surveys to establish the baseline for all car parks to know where improvements are needed and for potential revenue generation.
8. Engineers recently met with NSL, part of Marston Holdings, with whom Pendle Council has a joint contract with Lancashire County Council and other district councils for car park enforcement. We discussed the possibility of NSL/Marston Holdings conducting the following surveys:
 - (a) Signage across all car parks: replace old and remove redundant signs; create new main signs to include name of car park and QR code; create new signs with clear instructions for disc parking.
 - (b) Lighting: check all lighting.
 - (c) Lining and TROs: which car parks need relining?
 - (d) Resurfacing: which car parks need resurfacing?
 - (e) Trees and shrubs: cutting back.
 - (f) Litter bins: with wider openings, possibly recycle bins set of three.
 - (g) Weed kill: regularly scheduled across all car parks.
 - (h) Schemes required for any car parks? ie back of Broadway.
 - (i) Number of cars with business permits.
 - (j) Number of cars with resident permits.
 - (k) Number of cars parked at any given time.

- (l) Review of disabled car parking bays.
 - (m) Identify car parks that can be offered for resident or business permits or surplus to requirement.
 - (n) CEO time spent across Nelson and Colne – does it need adjusting?
 - (o) Look into ANPR – can we use ANPR on public car parks?
 - (p) EV charge point locations.
9. The following internal surveys are also required:
- (a) Engineers to meet with Environmental Services and Finance to review the repair and maintenance and enforcement budgets.
10. At the meeting with NSL/Marston Holdings, we were introduced to a member of their Project Team who has prepared and issued Parking Strategies for other councils. For Carlise, they recently completed an overarching parking strategy with six specific town policies, which is very similar to what we are aiming to achieve for Pendle.
11. Engineers have obtained a copy of the Burnley Car Parking Strategy, a copy of which is attached at Appendix 1. We have forwarded this to NSL/Marston Holdings to help them to prepare costs for carrying out the above surveys and to prepare a similar strategy for Pendle.
12. Once we have a quotation from NSL/Marston Holdings, we will report back to the working groups and to this committee with costings and procurement options.

IMPLICATIONS

Policy: Producing a new parking strategy and five area-specific parking policy documents are the overall outcome of this report.

Financial: If members decide to appoint a consultant to carry out the necessary surveys and produce the strategy and area-specific policies, this will require funding. Engineers will report back to this meeting with a cost and procurement options.

Legal: None arising from this report.

Risk Management: None arising from this report.

Health and Safety: None arising from this report.

Sustainability: None arising from this report.

Community Safety: None arising from this report.

Equality and Diversity: None arising from this report.

APPENDICES

Appendix 1: Burnley Council's Parking Strategy.

LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS

Parking Policy and Strategies for Pendle on 8 July 2024.