

Parking Review – Closure of St Leonard’s on a Saturday

Summary

1. This report concerns Parking Services reception at 9 St Leonard’s Place which at present opens on a Saturday. As part of the service review for Parking Services and budget process for 2011/12 the closure of the reception on a Saturday was identified as an efficiency project. The Cabinet Member for Communities and Neighbourhood Services is asked to approve the closure accordingly.

Background

2. During the 2011/12 Service Reviews the closure of St Leonard’s on a Saturday was identified as an efficiency project with potential full year savings of £11K. As a result this budget saving was attributed to the review for this current year dependent on other forms of making payments becoming available such as the payment of Penalty Charge Notices (PCNs) online.
3. At present Parking reception is open on Saturdays from 9.00hr to 12.00hr and 13.00hr to 16.00hr to enable the public to pay PCNs in person, or carry out Respark permit transactions in person. The average number of customers who visit reception on a Saturday varies from week to week. It can be as few as 10 people all day or as many as 30. Some customers will carry out more than one transaction such as obtaining an authorisation card with visitor permits or paying a PCN whilst obtaining permits. Based on the number of transactions over the period from January 2010 to November 2010 the average number calling for visitor permits was 14 people with an average of 4 people paying PCNs. In addition there were customers calling for the purpose of obtaining parking permits. A proportion of these obtain visitor permits at the same time and are included in the headcount for visitor permits described above. The average for those only obtaining a parking permit would be 6 people.

4. In effect on average around 1100 a people a year will visit Parking reception on a Saturday. Given that the cost of opening on Saturday is £11K this equates to a cost to the Authority of £10 per person. The value of each transaction in terms of income collected would average £25 for payment of a PCN and much less than this in respect of the typical number of visitor permits purchased. This represents a high cost per transaction for income collected.
5. Two staff are on duty on a rota basis and take time in lieu during the week in respect of Saturdays worked. This is time that then has to be covered during the week. Staff lieu cover equates to 2 days a week and currently this is being covered by temporary pool staff.
6. Since the rest of the offices at St Leonard's are closed and for the security of the whole of the building payment has to be made to an external contractor to open up and close St Leonards. This costs approximately £3K and is included in the total savings identified in paragraph 2 above.
7. Concerns have also been expressed in relation to the safety of the staff on duty. Whilst they are in a secure reception area most of the time the layout of St Leonard's at the front entrance is such that staff have to open up and close the front door before they can move back to the secure area and at that point they are vulnerable to any customer waiting to come in. These concerns have been raised by staff themselves.

Consultation

8. The subject of Saturday closure of St Leonard's has been discussed with staff. There is no opposition from the staff concerned. Given the numbers of people who visit the reception area and the types of transactions it is believed that staff can be better deployed during the week when work demand is higher and less cover will be needed.
9. Should it be agreed that St Leonard's is closed on a Saturday this will be communicated widely for a period of 4 weeks prior to any such closure. This will advise the public of the alternative options available to them so that they can make any necessary arrangements.

Options

10. The options available to the Cabinet Member are either to accept the proposal in this report to close St Leonard's or to reject the proposal.

Analysis

11. Acceptance of the proposal will produce the necessary budget and deliveries more effective smarter ways of working. The inconvenience that may be caused to a small number of people is outweighed by alternative methods to transact with Parking Services and can be mitigated given sufficient notice being given to the public.
12. Rejection of the proposal will mean that the efficiencies identified and financial savings will not be made which will have a negative effect both on the service and the Authority's financial position.

Council Priorities

13. Closure of St Leonard's on a Saturday supports the Council's priorities (as set out in the Council's Corporate Strategy) in relation to the authority being an Effective Organisation. The proposal supports and develops smarter ways of working both in terms of service efficiency and consequent financial savings. Parking Services contribute to key Council Priorities in the refreshed Council Plan – Get York Moving and Protect the Environment.

Implications

- (a) **Financial:** The proposal to close St Leonard's on Saturdays will achieve necessary financial budget savings once implemented.
- (b) **Human Resources (HR):** Advice from Human Resources will be sought as necessary. At present cover is being provided by temporary pool staff.
- (c) **Equalities:** There are no specific equalities issues arising from the proposals. However should any specific issues be raised during period that the public is notified of the closure of St Leonard's this would be reassessed. The effect of closure on the public is mitigated by the other means available to the public to transact with Parking Services – all transactions can be carried out by post, payments can be taken by phone during the week. PCN

payments online is in the final stages of testing and automated telephone payments are anticipated as future options.

- (d) **Legal:** There are no legal implications arising from this report.
- (e) **Crime and Disorder:** There are no crime and disorder implications arising from this report.
- (f) **Information Technology (IT):** There are implications for smarter ways of working however there are no additional ICT implications than already outlined in this report.
- (g) **Property:** There are no property implications arising from this report.
- (h) **Other:** None

Risk Management

- 14. In accordance with the council’s risk management strategy there are no known risks associated with the information in this report.

Recommendations

- 15. The Cabinet Member is asked to consider the report and agree the recommendation of the Parking Review, namely closure of St Leonard’s on a Saturday.

Reason: To deliver the service efficiency savings identified in the 2011/12 Parking Service Review.

Contact Details

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		Report Approved	✓	Date	3 rd October 2011
Specialist Implications Officer(s)					
Wards Affected:				All	✓
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Background Papers: None