CITY OF YORK COUNCIL

Decision Session - Executive Member for Transport   **11 August 2020**

Report of the Corporate Director for Economy and Place

Portfolio of the Executive Member for Transport

Parking Services back office system development

1. This report follows on from the Parking Update report to the November 2019 Executive and focuses on the implementation of the new Parking back office system, responses to the resident parking scrutiny review of March 2019 and the decisions around its implementation. This new system will enable a more customer focused, efficient approach to parking and parking management, drive through innovation, promote the Positive Parking agenda and reduce the City and the service's carbon footprint.

2. The decisions relate to:

   - Scope of permits that will be "virtual" at go live and associated Traffic Regulations Orders (TROs) that would be needed to enable this;

   - Monthly payment option for parking permits;

   - Parking discount criteria;

   - Other TRO changes designed to provide a better service to the resident;

   - Extension of operating hours of Piccadilly car park to support COVID-19 city centre recovery;

   - Renaming of Piccadilly Car Park to Coppergate Centre Car Park;

Recommendations

3. The Executive Member is asked:

A. To note there have been delays to the delivery of the project due to the Covid-19 impacts, but good progress has been made on the project and the back office system will be ready to go live in December 2020;

B. To approve that the back office system will go live in December 2020 ahead of a direct debit solution in place. The proposed solution is too complex to implement a part of the initial roll out, but will be investigated further as a second phase roll out in 2021 and this will enable monthly payment;

C. To agree that the permits highlighted as "Virtual" in **Annex A** will be virtual permits once the new back office system goes live in December 2020. Also, note that processes will be in place in terms of telephone and face to face to support residents who are unable to access the online systems. All efforts will be made to assist residents to access the system online;

D. To note that when the new Pay on Exit system is implemented in Marygate car park a 12 month trial of cashless parking will be initiated as agreed at the November 2019 Executive meeting;

E. To confirm the decision made through emergency powers to extend the operating hours of Piccadilly car park, during the COVID-19 recovery stages, to 8pm in line with the longer opening hours of the footstreets. This will come at a cost of £1,776 for additional security provision (as per the recommended option) and will run to the 1st December;

F. To agree to the changing of the name of Piccadilly car park to Coppergate Centre car park in order to provide a better and unique identity to this key Council asset;

G. To review **Annex C** and agree the actions required to update the Traffic Regulation Order (TRO) changes in references C-1 to C-20 and agree to go out to consult on C-21 and C-22. These items are required to support the back office system.

These are intended to improve the customer experience and realise the advantages the new back office system can bring. **Annex A** lists out all the permits and whether there is a change required and if so what that change is.

Where a decision by the Executive Member is required a decision will also need to be made with respect to the scope of consultation considered necessary to support the changes. This includes the following:-

a. Rationalising the list of parking permits available to better meet the current requirements of customers.
b. Changes and updates to the supporting TRO to bring wording in line with current legislation and practice.
c. Minor modifications to align the wording in the TRO to the new back office system.
d. Consideration of options largely driven by customer feedback and observations of current activity.

H. To review and agree to the change in the Parking discount criteria, see **Annex B**, to bring it in line with other Council Services where the criteria used for Parking discount visitor permits is out of step with current legislation;

I. To note that when the new back office system goes live, the option of cash payment at West Offices will be replaced with the system in place for council tax of use of PayPoint services at local shops and post offices. This also supports the protection of staff against the possible contamination from Covid19.

The same will apply for Penalty Charge Notices (PCNs) once a solution has been put in place due to the current legislation saying cash has to be accepted to pay PCNs. The solution will follow what is done in council tax where a QR code or bar code may be used allowing any PayPoint establishment to accept cash to pay a customer's PCN. Once this solution is implemented West Offices will then cease to accept cash to pay PCNs;

Reason: To positively respond to the November 2019 Executive Decisions and March 2019 parking scrutiny report to provide

an online, self-service system for the benefit of the city's parking customers and staff.

Background

4. This report is the follow up to the Economy and Place Policy Scrutiny Committee, March 2019, recommendations and the November 2019 Executive meeting and focuses on the implementation of the new Parking back office system.

5. The project and the new system will deliver greater functionality in connecting council systems together, while providing a self-serve system to the public to put them in charge of their parking needs and offer a more immediate solution through the online and virtual provision the system will deliver to as many of the Parking Services systems as possible.

6. In turn this provides an opportunity to redefine the city's parking processes and permits to ensure they are fit for purposes to better meet political, public and businesses expectations of parking in York.

7. While separate to the back office system project, the Pay on Exit project, a joint initiative between the Council and the York BID to procure and install pay on exit systems in Marygate and Piccadilly car parks, will implement at the end of this calendar year. The Pay on Exit project will ensure the efficiencies and better online provision can be moved into Council car parks. This will include use of Automatic Number Plate Technology (ANPR) to allow a smoother, ticket-free and convenient way to pay for parking including recognising all permits that can be used in car parks linked to the number plate and the new back office system, as well as scanning and recognition of disabled blue badges.

8. This report seeks decisions to turn some of the well-used parking permits and scratch cards to become virtual, subject to the outcomes of the system and user acceptance testing results.

9. Following the systems implementation there will be further phases of work to review other permits to be made virtual but which require more work to see how this can be done as well as the inclusion of the bus lane traffic management systems.

Review Recommendations

10. **Recommendation A**: The project to deliver the new, customer focused, efficient parking back office system is broadly on track however there have been some areas, in terms of system implementation, testing and training, where the timetable has been affected by delays due to Covid-19 (availability of resource).

11. Officers have been reviewing and working on solutions to help make the system as automated and helpful to customers as best as possible. Some of this work is listed below for a decision but includes:-
    - parking permits solutions for guest houses, Air BnBs and other holiday lets;
    - options to implement monthly payments for residents to pay for annual residents parking permits;
    - what permits could become virtual and
    - solutions to provide help to those that are offline or who struggle to gain access to the internet.

12. **Recommendation B**: Following the decision made by Executive in November 2019, officers were asked to find a monthly payment solution for residents to pay for their residents parking permits. Following investigations officers have found a solution through the Councils payment provider, Civica Icon. However the solution requires more work and will likely have to be taken forward under its own project. The reasons being are:-
    a. This solution will be open to all the Council not just Parking Services therefore it will have to be taken forward as a corporate solution not as part of this project, however it will be driven by the Executive Decision and this project;
    b. The system suppliers have never incorporated a direct debit solution into this system before and have recommended this also be taken forward as a separate project by the Council and its supplier (Civica Icon);
    c. Key services to take this forward with, CYC exchequer services and ICT, are currently prioritising focus on Covid19 response and will likely be throughout this pandemic;

13. There will be a much improved customer experience and efficiency without this and as such the back office system will still be implemented to the agreed schedule and this work will continue to

be investigated and form part of a second phase of this project given the benefits this will bring to both customers and staff.

14. **Recommendation C**: At the November 2019 Executive meeting it was agreed that permits within the new back office system could be virtual, providing the list was agreed first by the Executive Member for Transport. Officers have identified those permits that are most used and straight forward to become virtual. Others that do not appear in the following list will stay as paper-based permits but post implementation other phases of work will take these other permits forward to find a virtual solution for them with the aim of most permits becoming virtual. The Executive Member is asked to review and agree the virtual permits listed in **Annex A** of this report ageing what permits and processes stay as is (paper based) and what will become virtual. However it needs to be noted this is subject to the results from the User Acceptance Testing stage due later this Summer.

15. While the city and indeed the world moves more of its services on-line, Councillors were keen to ensure those that are offline or have trouble accessing the internet, are catered for as best as possible. In light of this officers have developed the following solutions linked to the Councils Customer Service centre and the services York Explore offer.

16. Processes will be put in place to support residents to access the online systems and where that is not possible face to face and telephone support will be provided so those who cannot access the internet nor has the IT to connect to the internet, can apply for a parking permit, renewal and visitor parking permits. This will be consistent with the corporate customer services approach to customers who are unable to access IT systems and will be scenario based.

17. In addition York Explore will help provide IT facilities for customers that either don't have their own computer or online smart device or/and require help in accessing and using the parking back office system. This is part of York Explore's ongoing programme to support the community that will provide weekend support for these customers across all of their branches (as well as week day). Specifically this will be between 12:00 and 15:00 weekend and weekdays to tie in with their branches varying opening times.

18. While some of these customer permits are due to go virtual, there will be a small number of paper-based permits that can be issued.

19. **Recommendation D**: Following the November, 2019 Executive Decision report regarding cashless parking, the Executive Member is requested to note that once the new Pay on Exit system is in place at Marygate car park (in the autumn/winter 2020) a 12 month trial of cashless parking will be initiated at Marygate.

20. Progress reports will be brought back to the Executive Member on a quarterly basis throughout the trial and report presented to the Executive as part of a Parking update at its conclusion.

21. **Recommendation E**: Piccadilly is one of two City of York Council owned and operated secure, gated, multi-storey car parks. As well as providing parking for a portion of the east of the City, which includes Fossgate, which is subject to proposals to include as part of the extended footstreets, it also acts as the car park for the Coppergate centre. The car park plays host to the Shopmobility service.

22. When lockdown came into effect in March, it was clear that, due to the safety issues with operating the car park, including utilisation of the lifts, keeping the car park open would be challenging. As the Coppergate centre was closing too, and their staff manage the exits to the lifts in the Coppergate centre, this made operation impossible. The car park was closed in the last week of March, including the provision of Shopmobility services on the top floor.

23. As lockdown measures were lifted in June, the car park re-opened, but had restricted access in the lifts due to social distancing and the available space within the lift. The operating hours of the car park continued as per pre-COVID-19 until 6pm (with the car park being locked at 6.30).

24. In order to support the economic recovery, the footstreet operating times have been extended to 8pm. Though other City centre car parks are available to use, this leaves a gap in terms of provision at Piccadilly, as due to its nature, it needs to closing and locking at an allotted time.

25. To support the extended operating hours of the footstreets, with a focus on supporting businesses opening later on Fossgate, it is proposed that the operating hours of Piccadilly car park is extended to match the footstreet hours. This will mean extending the parking hours to 8pm and the closure to 8.30.

26. The decision to make the change will be presented to the Executive Economic Recovery Group (EERG) for support and for decision under emergency powers to support COVD-19 recovery. The Executive Member is asked to confirm the recommended option below.

27. There are two risks to consider when exploring the options:

    i. The car park has been subject to anti-social behaviour (manifesting in loitering (including after hours), rough sleeping in the stair wells and other issues), so the car park will need a security presence. This is currently provided by the patrols by CYC parking services operatives (this includes opening and closing the car park), supplemented by security provided by the Coppergate centre (Eboracum). Extending the hours would mean additional cost in terms of security provision as the Coppergate centre closes at 5.30. To extend the operating hours will come at a cost of an additional £16 per day to deploy security staff. Extending to the 1st December will cost £1776;

    ii. It is unclear whether there is demand for this additional parking provision. As part of the Fossgate engagement work it has been pointed out that extended opening of Piccadilly will help with footfall. It is likely that this will be the case, but there is no available evidence to support this;

Options

1) Maintain the current operating hours of Piccadilly car park. This will mean that the operating hours will not be aligned with the footstreet hours and this may disadvantage businesses in close proximity, but there are other options in terms of parking, including Castle car park;

2) Extend the operating hours to 8pm (with closure at 8.30pm). This is the **recommended option** as it best supports the City's economic recovery, however, the risks identified above need to be

considered if this is the chosen option. There is a 10 day lead time for implementing this option in terms of the payment mechanisms and discussion will need to open with a security provider around the cost associated with Risk (i);

28. **Recommendation F**: While separate to the back office project the related pay on exit delivery project also covers the upgrading of Piccadilly car park. In line with this and the Castle Piccadilly works it is suggested that the name of this car park should change to better reflect its connection to the Coppergate Centre and as such the Executive Member is asked to agree to Piccadilly car park changing its name to Coppergate Centre car park. In turn this is believed to better help highlight the presence of the Coppergate Centre to the public and what it has to offer.

29. **Recommendation G**: This recommendation is made up of a number of items that either require the Executive Member to make a decision or to note the changes to the parking section of the Traffic Regulation Order (TRO). Given the number of points to either consider or note, these have been moved into **Annex C** which sets out each point.

30. **Recommendation H**: There is a necessity as part of the work to update the parking discount criteria and bring this in line with other discount criteria used elsewhere in the Council. **Annex B** shows the changes and what we are currently using for those at pension age, disabled, receiving job seekers allowance or Universal Credit. While difficult to say it is estimated that about 70 people may be disadvantaged given the shared household drops from £935 per month to £616 per month but the single occupied household threshold rises from £435 per month to £542 per month.

31. **Recommendation I:** In line with the corporate approach the option of cash payment at west offices will be replaced with the system in place for council tax of use of paypoint services at local shops and post offices. This also supports the protection of staff against the possible contamination from Covid19.

32. The same will apply for Penalty Charge Notices (PCNs) once a solution has been put in place due to the current legislation saying cash has to be accepted to pay PCNs. The solution will follow what

we do with council tax where something like a QR code or bar code may be used allowing any PayPoint establishment to accept cash to allow a customer to pay for their PCN. Once this solution is implemented West Offices will then cease to accept cash to pay PCNs. Given the significant increase in card and mobile payments, moving away from cash, this will effect very few customers based on what is current set in place and observed by the Customer Services team.

Council Plan

33. This report is supportive of the following priorities in the Council plan in addition to the One Planet York principles, the Council champions:
    - A focus on frontline services; and
    - A Council that listens to residents.

Implications

34. The following are the identified implications.

    - **Financial** – The initiatives outlined in this report are assumed to have a broadly neutral effect on Residents Parking income levels. The levels of income achieved will be monitored regularly and reported back through to Members as part of the regular budget monitoring cycle. The system will be more efficient for the customer and the council. Any back office savings to be realised from have already been assumed in the council savings.

      The additional cost of opening Piccadilly to a later time can be contained within current operational parking budgets.

      The cost of the system and implementation is already incorporated into the Council capital programme, so no decision needs to be made in this report;

    - **Human Resources** – The new parking system will create an online self-service system that will lead to efficiencies and freeing up of back office staff to be able to focus on other work. This will include if virtual permits are agreed that will see a significant reduction in ordering, administering and posting out of paper based parking permits.

- **Equalities** – A communications plan is being developed, on the back of which conversations have been held with York Explore to provide a service to help those that either don't have access to the internet or the skills to use it to access the parking system as they do with other similar ICT access requirements.

- **Legal** – Some of the recommendations will require changes in the parking Traffic Regulation Orders. The Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984 permits the introduction of the parking restrictions as set out in this report in accordance with a statutory consultation procedure set down in the Act and associated secondary legislation.

- In preparing and determining the proposals set out in this report the Council is required to have regard to the provisions of Equalities legislation, the Human Rights Act 1988 and s.17 Crime and Disorder Act 1998 (the duty to have regard to the need to remove or reduce crime and disorder in the area). It is considered that the proposals set out in this report are proportionate having regard to the wider needs of the area.

- **Crime and Disorder** - None

- **Information Technology (IT)** – A new ICT system for parking covering penalty charge notices and permits will be rolled out later next year, following the recent awarding of this contract. This will be both for customers and officers to use.

- **Property** - None

- **Risk Management** – Given the move to develop an online self-service system for parking customers covering parking permits and penalty charge notices there will be a cultural shift that most customers will welcome but may disadvantaged those without their own IT facilities or skills leading to digital exclusion. A communications plan is being develop to not only inform people how to use this system but address the other issues such as digital exclusion and making use of services such as those at York Explore.

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Report Approved	√	**Date**	3 August 2020

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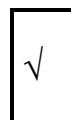
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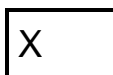
Annexes

Annex A – Permits in the new Parking system
Annex B – Parking Discount criteria for visitor permits
Annex C – Traffic Regulation Orders (TROs)

Glossary

PCN – Penalty Charge Notice

Permit – this is held by the resident or customer where they are entitled to parking related to the conditions of the permit. For example, a resident parking permit entitles the resident permit holder to park in the resident parking zone identified on the permit.

TRO – Traffic Regulation Order

Virtual permit – A virtual permit is an alternative to a traditional paper permit. A paper permit is physically displayed in the vehicle whereas, like with vehicle tax, with a virtual permit there is no need to display a physical permit. The system captures attributes related to the permit entered by the vehicle owner into the Parking system and this is then available to the Parking services team who can check the status of a vehicle using the vehicle's number plate.