

All Committee meetings of Fife Council were cancelled with effect from 23rd March 2020, due to Covid-19 emergency.

The recommendations in the following report were approved by an Executive Director of Fife Council, acting under delegated authority in terms of paragraph 2.1.1 of the Council's List of Officer Powers.

9th April 2020

Agenda Item No. N/A

Covid-19 : Suspension of Parking Charges

Report by: Derek Crowe, Senior Manager Roads & Transportation Services

Wards Affected: All wards

Purpose

To seek approval under emergency delegated powers for the suspension of all public parking charges and time limited parking restrictions across Fife from Thursday 9 April 2020 until further notice, in response to Covid-19.

Recommendation(s)

It is recommended that the Executive Director, Enterprise & Environment in liaison with the Executive Director, Finance & Corporate Services and the Chief Executive under emergency delegated powers, authorise the suspension of parking charges and time limited parking restrictions in all Fife Council public parking places until further notice.

It is proposed that a review and update report be prepared for the period up to 30 June 2020, should the measures be required beyond that point.

Resource Implications

Suspension of parking charges and enforcement will have a financial impact on the income to the Car & Lorry Parking account.

Typically, in the first quarter of the financial year, car parking income would be circa £780,000. The huge change in travel needs and availability of businesses brought about by the Covid-19 emergency has meant that the Fife Council charged car parks are almost running empty so regardless of the suspension of charges, a £0.780m loss of car parking income would have happened anyway.

The limited amount of car park usage has generated a nominal income. Based on current usage, if car parking charges were suspended in Fife, the lost income until 30 June 2020 would amount to circa £42,000.

Legal & Risk Implications

There are no known legal or risk implications associated with this report. It is proposed to cover / bag-off all Fife parking ticket machines and leave signs in all car parks advising that

charges are suspended therefore there is no likelihood of any public confusion around the interim arrangements.

Impact Assessment

An EqlA has not been completed as this report does not propose a change or revision to existing policies and practices at this time.

Consultation

A report on Parking Charges was submitted to the Council Executive Team based on the recommendations by the British Parking Association (BPA). This report was overtaken by events by neighbouring councils agreeing to suspend parking charges until further notice during the Covid-19 emergency. Consultation with the convener and vice-convener of the Economy, Tourism, Strategic Planning & Transportation Committee and the Co-Leaders was completed and there was support for the suspension of parking charges in Fife. Liaison is ongoing with Finance Service in relation to the financial effects of Covid-19 on service budgets.

1.0 Background

- 1.1 As a result of the Covid-19 outbreak, delayed guidance was issued by the BPA following consultation with COSLA and Transport Scotland. This recommended suspension of parking charges for NHS Staff and other Key Workers.
- 1.2 The guidance also recommends review of limited waiting areas to manage increased parking demand.
- 1.3 Benchmarking with neighbouring Scottish Local Authorities, where information is readily available, shows that the following measures are in place:
 - Dundee – Suspension of all parking charges from 24th March until further notice
 - Edinburgh – Suspension of all parking charges from 24th March until further notice
 - Perth & Kinross – Suspension of all parking charges from 23rd March until further notice
 - Glasgow – Suspension of all parking charges from 23rd March until further notice
- 1.4 Consultation with Fife's political leaders indicated a clear preference to follow the actions of neighbouring authorities as opposed the BPA guidance. Further given the lack of clarity on how long the suspension may be required, it would be preferable to hold the suspension until further notice similar to other authorities and review matters again before 30 June 2020 and thereafter as required.

2.0 Proposals

- 2.1 It is therefore proposed that all Fife Council charged and time limited public parking is suspended until further notice from Thursday 9 April 2020.

2.2 The changes are being implemented to:

- Support all key workers, allowing them to park without worry of charges or time limits.
- Support the wider community when making essential trips and ease pressure on parking in residential areas.
- Support businesses during the initial stages of restrictions on movement being revised.

Advice for Users

2.3 Notices on all public pay and display machines ensure that users are aware that no charges apply. In addition, cashless users are advised of the suspension of charges via the RingGo mobile phone/pc app.

2.4 Information to be circulated to the public through press release and social media highlighting the changes.

Time limited parking

2.5 Restrictions on the length of time someone can park are suspended. This allows anyone to park for as long as required.

2.6 In town centre locations, this will support key workers when commuting by car (following advice to avoid public transport). It will support people living in town centres, allowing them to park near their home throughout the day.

2.7 In residential areas, this allows care providers to park for as long as required and helps address issues for residents where most are at home and parking demand is high.

Financial Impact – Lost Parking Income

2.8 As detailed earlier in the report, it is estimated that until 30 June 2020, around £732,000 car parking income will be lost due to the Covid-19 emergency and a further £42,000 due to the suspension of parking charges.

2.9 Financial mitigation measures will be investigated where possible as part of the assessment, however the scale of the lost income is massive.

3.0 Conclusions

3.1 The suspension of parking charges and time limited waiting across Fife is required to help support key workers and local communities. It is proposed that a review and update report be prepared for the period up to 30 June should the measures be required beyond that point.

List of Appendices

None

Background Papers

None

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Signed by Keith Winter, Executive Director, Enterprise & Environment

Signature	
Date	April 2020

Signed by Eileen Rowand, Executive Director, Finance & Corporate Services

Signature	
Date	April 2020

Signed by Steve Grimmond, Chief Executive

Signature	
Date	April 2020