

Committee(s): Planning & Transportation Committee	Date(s): 28 January 2020
Subject: Traffic & Parking Service Programme 2020-2022	Public
Report of: Director of the Built Environment	For Decision
Report author: Ian Hughes, Assistant Director (Highways)	

Summary

The momentum provided by the City's innovative Transport Strategy is leading towards a re-evaluation of a number of key elements within the Department of the Built Environment's Traffic & Parking Service. Alongside the introduction of new technology and the opportunity provided by upcoming contract retenders, several fundamental changes in structure & delivery will reshape the way in which parking in the Square Mile is provided, managed & enforced.

Key to this direction will be the City's on-going priorities for making our streets safer, improving air quality, minimising congestion and making better use of our existing kerbside space. In addition, back office processes will be reviewed to ensure the service functions as efficiently as possible given the operation has significantly increased in size and complexity since the introduction of the landmark Bank of Safety scheme.

Key milestones within this programme, such as tariff reviews and major contract awards, will be subject to individual reports to this Committee in due course, and a summary report regarding the use of the On-Street Parking Account will also come separately to your Committee.

At this point, Members are only being asked to approve the move to a fully cashless on-street parking operation following a successful trial that has been delivered without incident or complaint.

In keeping with the general move towards a cashless society, only 1% of takings from the City's on-street Pay & Display bays are currently made with cash at the machine, with the vast majority made through the City's pay by phone service. Therefore, subject to a satisfactory Equalities Impact Assessment, it is proposed to withdraw cash payment facilities in time for the expiry of the current Pay & Display machine maintenance contract in October 2020.

Recommendation(s)

Members are recommended to approve the implementation of a fully cashless on-street parking operation for Pay & Display bays subject to a satisfactory Equalities Impact Assessment.

Main Report

Background

1. The City's Transport Strategy provides a 25-year framework for future investment in and management of the City's streets, as well as measures to reduce the social, economic and environmental impacts of motor traffic and congestion. The Square Mile's streets must enable the movement of people and vehicles to and through the City while also providing space for parking and loading.
2. A core tenet of the Transport Strategy is that street space is to be used more efficiently and effectively. Some streets will be used in different ways at different times of the day, for example, by providing space for people to walk and relax during the day, while allowing deliveries overnight. Temporary closures of streets to motor vehicles will provide opportunities for cultural and community events. The kerbside will also be used more dynamically and effectively, particularly at the busiest times of day.
3. Traffic and parking enforcement is a key enabler for the Transport Strategy as the enforcement of vehicle restrictions drives compliance, reducing congestion, enabling improvements in air quality and improving road safety (see Appendix 1).

Current Position

4. Over the next 18 months, a programme of key parking and traffic enforcement initiatives will start to be rolled out in support of core aspects of the Transport Strategy, whilst a review of kerbside usage is due to complete in Spring 2020 which will have further implications for the Traffic & Parking Service.
5. The programme includes a series of measures that focus on making our streets safer, improving air quality, minimising congestion and making better use of our existing kerbside space, all through differing aspects of parking management & enforcement.
6. Milestones for these initiatives are contained within Appendix 2, but in summary these projects include:
 - The use of Automatic Number Plate Reading (ANPR) cameras to provide consistent enforcement for 'access only' restrictions and other banned turns, improving road safety and minimising the impact on other road users & local communities;
 - The establishment of a Zero Emission Street at Beech Street to address the high levels of recorded pollutants affecting residents, pedestrians, cyclists and other users of the street;
 - Further development of the City's ground-breaking on-street emissions-based parking tariff which introduced (in 2018) a three-tier tariff structure linked to engine emissions;
 - Options to enable the City to address air quality caused by vehicles parked with their engines idling;

- The introduction of enforcement by CCTV camera of yellow box junctions to improve traffic flows by minimising the extent of vehicles unnecessarily blocking junctions;
 - Reviewing the existing 40min concession for commercial vehicles to load & unload, historically agreed by consensus at London Councils, with the aim of reducing congestion and making more efficient use of our road-space.
7. In addition, the Traffic & Parking Service as a whole will be reviewed to incorporate lessons learned from previous initiatives in our parking regime and to ensure the service is efficient, fit for purpose and sufficiently prepared to deliver the ambition set out in the Transport Strategy.
8. This service review includes planning for the continued enforcement of restrictions at Bank Junction into the medium term (where compliance remains around 96% of original volumes), and also:
- The creation of a formal Parking Enforcement Plan that makes clear the connection between the parking and traffic service and the priorities and delivery objectives of the Transport Strategy;
 - A review of the City's car park tariffs, following the last such review in 2016, with a long-term tariff strategy based on benchmarking against the tariffs of our competitors;
 - The extension of the current cashless parking trial for Pay & Display machines across the whole City, so that all on-street parking payments are made via our phone payment service.
9. In addition, three major contract tenders are due in the next two years covering:
- On-street parking enforcement (Feb 2021)
 - Back-office IT processing systems for the management of PCNs (March 2021)
 - Management of six City Corporation public car parks (2022)
10. Prior to these respective contract tenders, there will be root & branch reviews of how these services are delivered going forward, whether there are contract synergies to be made and whether there are opportunities to take advantage of new technologies to further automate particular functions.
11. In particular, there may be significant benefits to aligning the three tenders into one procurement process, with tenderers able to select one or more lots to bid for. This would enable the market to determine what functions might best be delivered together, with the potential for one supplier for bid for everything it that fits their operational & commercial model. Such an approach would likely aim for a contract award date in autumn 2021, with the current contract expiry dates adjusted accordingly.
12. This proposal is still being finalised and would be subject to appropriate oversight by both the appropriate officer procurement board and Member Committee but is likely to deliver the best value outcome for the service moving forward.

Options

13. In order to progress these various initiatives, some (such as the trial of CCTV cameras) can be implemented under existing officer delegations, whilst others require formal Member approval to agree in detail.
14. In terms of those aspects that require formal Committee approval, setting new on-street and off-street parking tariffs will be subject to a further report to your Committee in the Spring, followed by public consultation and then implementation in the Autumn.
15. In terms of tendering contracts, the scale of the on-street enforcement contract and the car park management contract are likely to require Member approval at the appropriate time, as would a request for a procurement waiver if the contract award dates are to be aligned.
16. Otherwise, a report is being planned for Members to agree the necessary next steps towards the enforcement of idling engines, and the Zero Emission Street proposal has recently passed Gateway 5 for implementation this March.
17. However, in terms of Member approval at this point, it would be timely to consider the case for moving towards a fully cashless parking regime following the recent successful trial.

Proposals – Cashless Parking

18. The City has operated a cashless payment service for several years for its on-street Pay & Display parking bays, with the current contract operated by RingGo. It has still maintained cash payment facilities direct at the machines, but gradually cash usage has declined to 1% of the total transaction volume.
19. When Members last reviewed the options around payment methodology in 2016, they asked for a localised trial of fully cashless parking, but also recommended that the cash payment option be retained in those localised areas where it represented a larger percentage.
20. General acceptance of cashless payment technology has since increased and with the cashless trial proving successful, the number of Pay & Display machines in the City has been gradually reduced by two thirds to just 32 from an original 90.
21. Proposal: Given the societal shift towards cashless methods of payment, moving to fully Pay by Phone solution now seems appropriate. Sensitivities remain regarding the Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) of going fully cashless in that it relies on the user having a mobile phone and a credit or debit card, therefore the proposal is subject to a satisfactory EIA.

Financial Implications

22. In terms of the cashless parking proposal, annual savings from moving to a fully cashless service would amount to around £25k pa from a combination of reduced

costs in Pay & Display machine maintenance (10k), cleaning (£5k) and cash collection costs (£10k), albeit these savings in Year 1 would be offset by the cost of removing machines (£16k), signage and traffic order changes and public communications (£10k).

23. For the wider Traffic & Parking Service, its continued objective is to be at least self-financing, and it has continued to generate increasing surpluses to the On-Street Parking Account in recent years, particularly with the enforcement requirements for the Bank on Safety scheme.

24. How these surplus funds are used is documented in a separate annual report to this Committee from the Chamberlain, but the forecast is the surplus funds available in the On-Street Parking Account will increase over the next few years, with those funds wholly allocated towards funding appropriate & legitimate projects and services in accordance with the City's statutory obligations.

Corporate & Strategic Implications

25. The provision of high quality traffic and parking services forms part of the strategy to deliver a number of key objectives under the Corporate Plan, including ensuring the City is an effective & attractive place to live and work, ensuring ease of access to the Square Mile and championing a clean and high quality residential, worker and visitor offer.

Conclusion

26. An efficient and effective parking service is fundamental to the City's Transport Strategy and its direction of travel. A series of initiatives are planned in the next two years to deliver a safer, healthier and less congested Square Mile, whilst the service itself positions itself for the next round of parking contracts to meet these needs.

Appendices

- Appendix 1 – Transport Strategy Context
- Appendix 2 – Traffic & Parking Services Programme: Key Milestones

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Appendix 1 – Transport Strategy Context

Traffic & parking enforcement is a key enabler to the Transport Strategy as the enforcement of vehicle restrictions drives adherence, reducing congestion, enabling improvements in air quality and improving road safety.

In particular:

- **Proposal 2:** Put the needs of people walking first when designing and managing our streets. Enforcement policies and processes are designed with a core objective of prioritising and protecting pedestrians, for example enforcing traffic restrictions on pedestrian priority streets.
- **Proposal 11:** Take a proactive approach to reducing motor traffic. Our award-winning emissions-based on-street parking tariff is a contributor toward reducing use of high-polluting vehicles in the City.
- **Proposal 14:** Make the best and most efficient use of the kerbside and car parks. The proposed programme is central to this proposal; the strategy and parking management teams are working in close coordination to identify and introduce enhanced policies and processes to improve pedestrian and cyclist priority, for example, reviewing weekend and evening charges and usage. Note a review of kerbside use is due in Spring 2020.
- Enforcement of access restrictions is a critical success factor in achieving these strategic objectives:
 - **Proposal 12:** Design and manage the street network in accordance with the City of London Street Hierarchy, introducing access restrictions and other measures to reduce through traffic
 - **Proposal 13:** Use timed and temporary street closures to help make streets safer and more attractive places to walk, cycle and spend time.
 - **Proposal 38:** Reduce the number of freight vehicles in the Square Mile
- **Proposal 20:** Apply the safe system approach and the principles of road danger reduction to deliver Vision Zero. Traffic Restriction Enforcement for existing restrictions including signed turns and yellow box junctions will help to improve road safety, especially for pedestrians and cyclists. Congestion at these locations is expected to decrease.
- **Proposal 29:** Support and champion a central London Zero Emission Zone (ZEZ). Beech Street will be the first Zero Emission Street in London and is expected to provide measurable air quality improvement along with valuable input to the wider proposal. Being the first Zero Emission Street highlights the City's commitment to innovation and demonstrates our action plan to improve air quality and is a precursor to the Zero Emission Zones proposed in the Transport Strategy.
- **Proposal 36:** Encourage innovation in air quality improvements and noise reduction. Congestion reduction is a key benefit of the Traffic Restriction Enforcement proposal for existing restrictions which can be expected to enable improvements in air quality.

Appendix 2: Traffic & Parking Services Programme - Key Milestones

Traffic and Parking Services Programme Key Tasks and Milestones

Through Mar 2022

Key

Dates

