



Committee and Date

Item

Public



## Parking Tariffs, Operations & Development

<b>Responsible Officer:</b>	Andy Wilde		
email:	andy.wilde@shropshire.gov.uk	Tel:	
<b>Cabinet Member (Portfolio Holder):</b>	Dan Morris		

### 1. Synopsis

- 1.1. This report requests approval to introduce new and additional tariffs in Shropshire (but mainly in Shrewsbury), preparation of a new Council Parking Strategy, a review of Parking Services' structure and preparation of a car park Maintenance and Improvement Plan

### 2. Executive Summary

- 2.1 This report proposes the increase in parking tariffs throughout the Council area to come into effect for the financial year 2024/25, though it focusses primarily on Shrewsbury town in order to manage capacity and reduce the level of traffic within the Severn River loop. In summary it proposes to :
- a) Increase tariffs in Shrewsbury to re-distribute vehicles by encouraging motorists to switch their parking activity out of the centre, over the river, or to transfer to Park and Ride or other forms of transport such as active travel. A variable amount is to be applied to each car park.
  - b) Increase tariffs in Shropshire (excluding Shrewsbury) in order to provide better operation of the car parks particularly in terms of repairs and maintenance. A fixed amount is to be applied to all tariffs.
  - c) Increase permit/season ticket charges in proportion with the hourly tariff changes.

- d) Introduce evening charges in Shrewsbury
  - i) Charges will apply until 8pm instead of 6pm to reflect higher levels of use at this time.
  - ii) On-Street parking, Bridge St, St Austins St, The Quarry & Frankwell will be affected.
- e) Increase Sunday and Bank Holiday charges throughout the County.
  - i) Where charges are currently half price they will be charged at full price
  - ii) Where parking is currently free, they will be charged at half price.
- f) Introduce a Parking Asset Improvement Plan for the repair and maintenance of car parks throughout the Shropshire.
- g) Review the Parking Services' roles and structure.
- h) Review and re-write the Parking Strategy which was previously updated in 2017/18

### 3. Recommendations

#### *Recommendation 1 (In twelve parts)*

3.1 Cabinet is recommended to approve the increases set out for each of the twelve tariffs set out in Table A below, to be introduced by notice under the Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984 ("RTRA").

#### 3.2 Table A

Recommendation	CURRENT BAND	CURRENT TARIFF (Per Hour)	NEW TARIFF (Per Hour)	LOCATION	SUNDAY TARIFF
1a	1	£2.80	£3.60	Shrewsbury On-Street	Full
1b	2	£2.00	£2.80	Bridge St, St. Austins St, The Quarry	Full
1c	2	£2.00	£2.00	Raven Meadows	£2.00 flat fee
1d	3	£1.20	£1.60	St. Julians Friars	Full
1e	4	80p	£1.20	Frankwell – Main, Riverside and Quay	Half
1f	5/4	60p/80p	£1.00	Abbey Foregate, Bridgnorth, Ludlow On-Street (Blue), Much Wenlock	Half
1g	2	£2.00	£2.20	Ludlow On-Street (Red)	Full
1h	3	£1.20	£1.40	Ellesmere Mereside	Full
1i	3	£1.20	£1.40	Bridgnorth, Ludlow, Oswestry, Ellesmere	Half

1j	5	60p	80p	Whitchurch, Ludlow, Market Drayton, Much Wenlock, Church Stretton	Half
1k	6	40p	60p	All the above plus Wem and Prees Heath	Half
1l	7	Free	Free	All other car parks	-

*Recommendation 2 (In five parts)*

3.3 Cabinet is recommended to approve the associated increases set out for each of the five season ticket tariffs set out in Table B below, to be introduced by notice under the RTRA 1984.

3.4 Table B

Recommendation	CURRENT BAND	CURRENT TARIFF (Per Annum)	NEW TARIFF (Per Annum)	LOCATION EXAMPLES
2a	3	£512	£681	St Julians Friars
2b	4	£640	£960	Frankwell
2c	5	£480/£640	£800	Abbey Foregate, Bridgnorth
2d	5	£480	£640	Whitchurch, Church Stretton
2e	6	£320	£480	Ludlow, Oswestry, Market Drayton

*Recommendation 3 (In nine parts)*

3.5 Cabinet is recommended to approve the associated increases set out for each of the nine resident permit tariffs set out in Table C below, to be introduced by notice under the RTRA 1984.

3.6 Table C

Recommendation	CURRENT BAND	CURRENT TARIFF (Per Annum)	NEW TARIFF (Per Annum)	LOCATION EXAMPLES
Shrewsbury Car Parks				
3a	3/4	£512	£768	Frankwell (Band 4), St Julians Friars though Band 3 has been linked to Band 4 for permits only
3b	5	£384	£640	Abbey Foregate, Shire Hall Overflow

Shropshire Car Parks				
3c		£100	£110	Ludlow On-Street
3d		£50	£58	Bridgnorth On-Street
3e	4	£512	£640	Back Lane, Much Wenlock
3f	5	£384	£512	All other locations
3g	6	£256	£384	
3h	Special	£448	£560	Riverside Bridgnorth
3i	Special	£192	£288	Prees Heath

#### *Recommendation 4 – (In 4 parts)*

3.7 Cabinet is requested to approve advertisement of Traffic Regulation Orders for consultation on each of the four additional items for Shrewsbury town shown in Table D and the subsequent consideration of objections and making of the Orders if appropriate in accordance with the delegation to the Assistant Director for Highways set out in Part 8 of the Council's Constitution.

#### 3.8 Table D

Recommendation Number	Description	Detail
4a	Remove all capped rates in Shrewsbury i.e. Abbey Foregate, Frankwell and Raven Meadows	From maximum fee of 8 hours to hourly charge for all hours
4b	Introduce evening tariffs to Shrewsbury on-street parking places	From 8.00am/6.00pm to 8.00am/8.00pm.
4c	Introduce evening tariffs to Bridge Street, St Austins Street and The Quarry car parks	From 8.00am/6.00pm to 8.00am/8.00pm.
4d	Introduce evening tariffs to Frankwell car parks	From 8.00am/6.00pm to 8.00am/8.00pm.

#### *Recommendation 5 – Parking Asset Improvement Plan (P.A.I.P)*

3.9 Cabinet is requested to approve that a Parking Asset Improvement Plan be prepared immediately.

#### *Recommendation 6 – Parking Service Review*

3.10 Cabinet is requested to approve a review of the role, structure and staff in the Parking Services operation.

#### *Recommendation 7 – Parking Strategy*

3.11 Cabinet is requested to approve that a new Parking Strategy be developed for Member approval in principle, prior to non-statutory public consultation.

# Report

## 4. Risk Assessment and Opportunities Appraisal

- 4.1 There are no risks associated with children or a family approach.
- 4.2 There are no Human Rights Convention rights that apply.
- 4.3 An ESIA has been carried out and assessed as Part One. This is attached at Appendix 2
- 4.4 For a detailed discussion on the risks these are shown at:-
- 4.4.1 Financial Implications shown at 5.5 indicates that a lot of the usage/income/behaviour data is subject to error, interpretation and estimation. The financial forecasts accommodate variation in the income.
- 4.4.2 Business risk and strategy in the background section at 7.59
- 4.4.3 Car park supply changes in the background section at 7.65 and 7.66
- 4.4.4 Motorist behaviour risk in the background section at 7.70 and 7.75

## 5. Financial Implications

- 5.1 If all proposals within the report are approved, it is estimated that an additional income of £1.76 m per annum will be achieved after implementation costs have been taken out and assuming all the contingency allowance is used.
- 5.2 This is required to implement a programme of works to repair and improve the car park infrastructure, develop new resident parking zones to ensure Shrewsbury town tariff changes do not result in traffic management issues in the neighbouring areas.
- 5.3 A summary of the revised income/expenditure forecasts/proposals is shown below:-

Table D

ITEM	CHANGE	TARIFF INCOME INCREASES £'000s	OTHER COST ESTIMATES £'000s
1	Tariff Changes (Shrewsbury)	993	
2	Tariff Changes (excluding Shrewsbury)	611	
3	Evening Charges	238	
4	Sunday/Bank Holiday Charges	262	
5	Implementation Costs	-25	

6	Contingency – 15% of approved changes	-316	
7	Parking Asset Improvement Plan		-500
8	Parking Services Team Re-Structure		-200
Grand Total		1,763	-700

- 5.4 Attached is Appendix 1 with a more detailed breakdown of the income changes, according to tariffs in individual car parks, bands and new restrictions.
- 5.5 The figures are derived from an extensive spread sheet which are rounded to the nearest £1,000 but must still be considered to be an estimated representation of the eventual outcome. This is due to items such as:-
- 5.5.1.1 Errors in original data sources
  - 5.5.1.2 Missing original data
  - 5.5.1.3 Data not in the most suitable form
  - 5.5.1.4 Assumptions made to correct, complete or interpret the source data
  - 5.5.1.5 Motorist behaviour estimates
- 5.6 Shrewsbury contributes 71% of the overall increase in parking income whilst Shropshire (excluding Shrewsbury) contributes 29%. This significant imbalance illustrates the need to influence the behaviour of motorists in Shrewsbury.

## 6. Climate Change Appraisal

- 6.1 The changes proposed are likely to have a positive impact on carbon emissions and town centre air quality by fostering greater use of public transport and active travel modes.
- 6.2 Once motorists are used to the new charges and have settled on any change to their behaviour observations can be made in terms of the number of journey changes.
- 6.3 The estimated number of miles saved is 9,478 inside the river loop and 176,086 per annum outside the loop. This does not take account of any transfer to a privately operated car park such as Barker Street or Wyle Cop.
- 6.4 The changes inside the loop are relatively small, given the spaces are at a premium, location wise, and many spaces emptied by one motorist will be taken up by another. The distances are also small given the restricted geographical nature of the loop.
- 6.5 The forecast move from St Julians Friars to Abbey Foregate is seen to be a potential issue as it outweighs the expected movement from Abbey Foregate to the Park & Ride.
- 6.6 Outside the loop are much larger car parks where the alternative is the Park and Ride, or to stop coming to Shrewsbury. In particular, the movement from Frankwell is

considerable and given the much longer distance to the Park & Ride contributes over 80% of the mileage saving.

- 6.7 The changes proposed are not expected to generate any significant impact on the generation of renewable energy, the capture and storage of carbon or resilience to extreme weather events associated with climate change.

## 7. Background

- 7.1 Shrewsbury is moving into an ambitious new era with the Smithfield Riverside Redevelopment Programme having undertaken its first public consultation and the Shrewsbury Movement and Public Space Strategy (MPSS) due for consultation. The former with its mixed use of new entertainment, dining, hotel, office, transport and residential facilities.

The latter with its four key themes of:

- Traffic management / active travel inside the river loop
- Traffic management / active travel outside the river loop
- Public Transport and Micromobility
- Parking Plus

- 7.2 In addition the MPSS, proposes interventions within the Parking Plus theme focused on remodelling parking charges within Shrewsbury to make sustainable alternatives more cost-effective, incorporated and supported by bus (especially Park and Ride) and rail facilities.

Including:

- Implementing a graduated system of parking charges, increasing in stages as parking becomes more central
- Maintain the level of provision of designated parking spaces for Blue Badge holders within the river loop

- 7.3 New or refurbished car parks will be identified as premium car parks with an attractive environment, good facilities and good access to several attractions within the area. Given the high quality, passage of time and policy/demand changes between now and then there is likely to be very high tariff charges for these car parks, at least when compared with current levels. Other tariffs need to be commensurate and proportionate with this level to ensure demand and traffic management is not compromised.

- 7.4 Many other car parks could possibly be lost to re-development in the meantime, affecting the supply, and therefore the demand for remaining spaces will need to be curtailed, probably by tariff changes.

### **New Shropshire Council Parking Strategy Document**

- 7.5 The existing document was written in 2017 and adopted by Cabinet in 2018. It does not address the implications of changes in Shrewsbury such as the Smithfield Riverside re-development and the emerging Movement and Public Space Strategy. It will also need to recognise the alignment with the Delivery Plan for the Movement Strategy as it seeks to deliver against the Parking Plus theme.
- 7.6 As other county towns look to create holistic development plans the new Shropshire Council parking strategy document will also need to ensure it is aligned to these documents which are often co-created by Shropshire Council working with stakeholders on 'place-based' strategies.
- 7.7 The whole document needs revision to take account of changing circumstances and lessons learnt in relation to the process of setting controlled/resident parking zone criteria, policy and implementation.
- 7.8 The existing Parking Strategy introduced a restrictive methodology for allocating car parks to a limited set of tariffs in a single structure across the whole County.
- 7.9 It also created rules for design of and consultation on new controlled resident zones and permit entitlements. These are often inflexible in that there is one rule for all, and some are inappropriate.
- 7.10 It is proposed that a new, more flexible Strategy be written, probably within the next six to twelve months and which would entail a countywide non-statutory consultation. It would cover, amongst other items:-

- 7.10.1.1 -Principles
- 7.10.1.2 -Policies
- 7.10.1.3 -Priorities
- 7.10.1.4 -Outside influences
- 7.10.1.5 -Service providers
- 7.10.1.6 direct staff,
- 7.10.1.7 external contracts or
- 7.10.1.8 internal SLAs
- 7.10.1.9 -Service users
- 7.10.1.10 -Tariffs
- 7.10.1.11 -Means of payment
- 7.10.1.12 -Car parks
- 7.10.1.13 -On-street parking
- 7.10.1.14 -Resident parking
- 7.10.1.15 -Consultation
- 7.10.1.16 -Risk register
- 7.10.1.17 -Other matters

### **Variation of the Parking Strategy**

- 7.11 The Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984, section 122 makes it a duty of a local authority to 'Secure the expeditious, convenient and safe movement of vehicular and other traffic (including pedestrians) and the provision of suitable and adequate parking facilities on and off the highway'. It specifically requires consideration of heavy goods vehicles, air quality, public service vehicles and others matters appearing to be relevant to the local authority.



- 7.12 The current charges do not reflect the maintenance requirements needed to provide 'suitable and adequate parking facilities'.
- 7.13 It will also provide valuable information on the price sensitivity of visitors to Shrewsbury which will inform future tariff changes and avoid setting them above the level required to achieve the objectives of the major projects.
- 7.14 To address the car park maintenance needs in Shropshire an increase in charges is required throughout the County.
- 7.15 A wider range of tariffs is necessary to ensure a different level of charges in Shrewsbury to avoid compromises and unwelcome outcomes. If the existing range is used the need for higher charges in Shrewsbury could drag up the charges in the smaller towns or charges in the smaller towns could drag down the charges in Shrewsbury.
- 7.16 The latter will defeat the objectives of demand management and benefits for cyclists and pedestrians. The former will produce unnecessarily high charges to the detriment of workers, customers and leisure visitors who might go elsewhere as a result.
- 7.17 Instead of seven different tariffs it is necessary to use eleven different tariffs before the full review discussed above is conducted. In this way, if there is to be a tariff change at a car park, it can be appropriate to the circumstances of the car park, and not governed by changes required in totally unrelated car parks elsewhere. The highest and lowest tariffs would be the same in either case, there is just more flexibility to reflect the requirements of individual car parks.
- 7.18 In the wider context it is a minor change which is a precursor to a complete review of Shropshire Council's parking strategy that is likely to result in many changes. Consultation will be conducted as part of the full review.

### **Financial Considerations**

- 7.19 The tariffs, as the only income available to Parking Services, is the only source for improved operations. Expenditure has been minimal and so savings cannot be made.
- 7.20 Finances are required to:-
- 7.20.1.1 create the planned repair and maintenance Parking Asset Improvement Plan (P.I.A.P) Appendix C.
  - 7.20.1.2 Review and implement a new Parking Services staff structure
  - 7.20.1.3 prepare and consult on the new Parking Strategy
- 7.21 Though the subject of future reports it is perhaps worth noting subsequent draws on the Parking Services budget will include new controlled/resident parking zones.
- 7.22 In all cases the alternative to using at least part of the additional income is to transfer funds from the Highways budget, consequently reducing their ability to perform their functions.

## **On-Street Legislation**

- 7.23 The Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984 provides the power for local authorities to introduce on-street restrictions but is quite clear that income and expenditure relating to on-street parking charges and enforcement both on and off street should be accounted for. The use of the surplus is restricted to specified functions.
- 7.24 The Act is not a fiscal measure intended to authorise the generation of income. However, if the objectives of the scheme can only be achieved by using a tariff that inevitably generated an income, this is acceptable.
- 7.25 On-street parking places are frequently full and result in re-circulating traffic. As such it can be said that one of the objectives of the scheme are not being met with the current tariffs. This objective is to maximise the chance of finding a space quickly and without contributing to congestion. To meet the objectives of the scheme the significant increase in tariff suggested below is considered a suitable response which may (or may not) be successful.

## **Off-Street (Car Park) Legislation**

- 7.26 Again the 1984 Act is the authorising power but is not a fiscal measure. Therefore, charges cannot be set with the aim of generating a surplus for other purposes and must be set to meet the objectives of the Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984 as referred to above.
- 7.27 However, if a surplus is generated in meeting those objectives, there is no restriction on how off-street parking surplus income that arises is utilised. As such any surplus arising from this source can be spent at the Council's discretion.
- 7.28 As with on-street parking the car parks are frequently full and cause at least internal congestion. As such it can be said that one of the objectives of the scheme are not being met with the current tariffs. This objective is to maximise the chance of finding a space quickly and without contributing to congestion, with its associated carbon output and pollution. To meet the objectives of the scheme the significant increase in tariff suggested below is considered a suitable response which may (or may not) be successful.
- 7.29 In addition, the objectives of both on and off-street parking being moved outwards from the town centre further justifies the increase in charges.
- 7.30 To meet the objectives of the schemes the significant increase in tariff suggested below is considered a suitable response.

## **Consultation**

- 7.31 There are two processes legally required under the Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984:
- 7.32 Changes which are purely related to the tariff level are dealt with by Notice under the Road Traffic regulation Act 1984. Changes to conditions require a formal public consultation as part of the Traffic Regulation Order process. In brief this requires

publication of a notice calling for objections to the plans, proper consideration and a formal decision to proceed, review, modify or cancel the proposals. Less complex considerations may be made by delegated officers, but more complex or significant changes should be made by Cabinet in accordance with the delegations to officers set out in part 8 of the Council's Constitution.

- 7.33 The tariff only changes to be implemented by Notification are planned to be implemented by the beginning of April, whilst those which involve a change to the conditions of parking are more likely to be implemented around 4-6 months later.

## **DETAILED CHANGES**

### **Shrewsbury Tariffs**

- 7.34 Increased and focussed tariff changes are needed to encourage a general shift of parking activity from the most central areas, through the intermediate levels of fringe car parks, those outside the river loop and eventually to the park and ride service.
- 7.35 The primary objective is to encourage motorists to park outside the river loop, reducing the number of vehicles entering the town centre, and when they do there is an increased likelihood of finding a space quickly to minimise emissions. As such the largest tariff increases should be in the centre with lower increases elsewhere.
- 7.36 Tariffs are generally organised on the basis of the more central and busier a car park is the higher the tariff will be:-
- 7.36.1.1 On-street parking is the biggest contribution to traffic, with unclear destinations and re-circulating traffic hoping someone will leave their preferred destination. This should be the highest amount with an increase to £3.60 per hour instead of £2.80. It provides a 3 hour fee which is greater than £10 which is a psychological barrier which some people will be reluctant to cross.
- 7.36.1.2 The most central car parks at Bridge Street, St Austins Street and The Quarry should be increased to the old on-street level of £2.80 per hour instead of £2.00. They are frequently full and congestion forms within them.
- 7.36.1.3 Raven Meadows is the next closest to Pride Hill and even closer to the shopping centres. However, this is a vastly under-used car park, on the fringe rather than in the town centre, contributing far less to congestion and pollution. It should remain at its current rate of £2.00 to provide a 'soft-landing' for those who still want or need to be very close to their destination, at least for the moment. This retains a close relationship with the Darwin Centre. It is part of a staged increase to what the charges might be when the revised parking provision is settled. Eventually either the tariff will increase, or the car park will disappear.
- 7.36.1.4 St Julians Friars performs a similar function to Raven Meadows, though is somewhat busier. As such it thought that this car park should align with Raven Meadows eventually, but a step to that level is currently too large to be acceptable. It should increase to £1.60 instead of £1.20.

- 7.36.1.5 Frankwell includes 3 car parks outside the loop which are frequently full. Frankwell should be increased to £1.20 per hour instead of 80p to encourage enough motorists to use alternative transportation and therefore vacating the car park to accommodate those moving outside the river loop from the town centre.
- 7.36.1.6 Abbey Foregate performs the same function as Frankwell but is likely to remain over-subscribed despite an increase to £1.00 per hour instead of 60p. It is thought that this car park should align with Frankwell eventually but a step to that level is currently too large to be acceptable.
- 7.37 The next stage is to use park and ride facilities, preferably with greater access in terms of frequency and operating hours. It is extremely difficult to forecast the level of movement to this means of transport as:-
- 7.37.1.1 The Park and Ride is not currently a viable service for many employees/commuters due to its limited operational hours and the inability to access vehicles outside those times. 90% of commuting vehicles are single occupancy.
- 7.37.1.2 Neither is it particularly attractive for shoppers/visitors due to the relatively infrequent service which results in a time 'cost' which may be a blockage to use.
- 7.37.1.3 In terms of customer cost, it is cheaper for a single occupant (65% of vehicles) to park than use the bus if they are staying for around one hour. The time is also more significant than for others. With multiple occupants it is cheaper to drive and park if the stay is going to be 2-3 hours.
- 7.38 Permit and season ticket charges are related to the above by formulae contained in the Parking Strategy and are detailed in the recommendations.

### **Shropshire Tariffs**

- 7.39 The tariffs in Shropshire beyond Shrewsbury have not been looked at in the same level of detail, which can be done once information has been received from the on-going movement strategies being developed in Ludlow, Bridgnorth, Whitchurch and Oswestry.
- 7.40 Several car parks are close to meeting or exceeding the optimal occupancy level (eg Ludlow, Whitchurch, Oswestry and part of Ellesmere at the weekend etc) and which cover several tariff bands. The individual car parks should be reviewed once the effects of these tariff increases have settled.
- 7.41 An increase of 20p per hour on each tariff (excluding Shrewsbury which has been considered separately) has been chosen as a percentage increase will in many cases result in an increase of perhaps 2p where the minimum coin in use at the Pay and Display machine is 10p. This increase is no higher than the percentage increases in Shrewsbury and will ensure that the car parks make a fair contribution to the repair/maintenance requirements that have been identified.

## Parking Asset Improvement Plan (P.A.I.P)

- 7.42 Our 83 Shropshire car parks have not kept pace with maintenance requirements such as surfacing, lining, signing, drainage, boundaries, green assets, cleaning etc, Car park maintenance, where it has happened, has been too reactive and comparatively inefficient compared to sister services such as Shropshire's Highways Service. This situation places Shropshire Council at a greater and growing risk arising from the condition of the infrastructure.
- 7.43 A recent asset improvement exercise prioritised by parking services saw thirteen car parks identified with an investment need of £400K (2023/4), not on improvements, just to maintain steady asset state. Whilst this and other investments & improvements have occurred, much more is needed to achieve sustainability, particularly to meet the wider Shropshire ambitions and visitor experience.
- 7.44 A Parking Asset Improvement Plan (P.A.I.P), is a planned and holistic approach to ensure that the car parks are improved to a credible standard. And having done so, do not return to the current poor state. This will consist of:
- 7.44.1 Preparation of shared database of car parks to include all the characteristics and data relating to surfaces, lining, signing, lighting, footways, payment machines, access and rights of way, walls, fences and green assets.
  - 7.44.2 This database will also include planned and ad-hoc activities such scheduled re-lining, machine sweeping, winter service, litter clearance and flood response.
  - 7.44.3 A complete survey of all car parks will be carried out to populate the database.
  - 7.44.4 A pro-active, repair, preventative and annual parking maintenance plan will use data within the database, intelligence led information and Council policy to prioritise urgent works and potentially some early wins. Consideration can be given here to complementary improvements at a reduced cost.
  - 7.44.5 The implementation of the plan will be cognisant of the income and budgets of Parking Services and will use mixed economy arrangements, focusing on local resources wherever possible. The success of the highways network improvements is an excellent example and model for this work (more details below at 7.45-7.47).
  - 7.44.6 The Parking Asset Improvement Plan will be reviewed and revised every 6 months, assessing performance against agreed targets and re-verifying alignment with local and strategic objectives.
  - 7.44.7 Delivery of the improvement will be delivered in the same manner as the Highways Network Improvement Model which is described below

## **Highways Network Improvement Model**

- 7.45 The Shropshire Highways service now operates under a mixed economy delivery model and has delivered recognised & understood financial savings and non-financial benefits over an extended period. This cultural, contractual, and operational transformation, utilising direct labour resources, small local contractors, service partners and allies along with larger contractors has produced these benefits. It has also developed the approach to work to plan where possible but also to mobilise quickly when planning isn't possible and prevention or mitigation becomes a priority.
- 7.46 Central to this success have been the development of strong data control of the highway's asset, including photographs before and after of all highways defects tasks. Amongst our peer county authorities, Shropshire is considered amongst the best. Highways defects have been reduced to just four thousand from fifteen thousand since 2020.
- 7.47 The highway service has developed the widest possible range of interventions and a wide operational skillset, not just on highway defects but also drainage, green asset maintenance and winter maintenance.
- 7.48 There is an urgent need for these works to be carried out and an immediate cost is detailed in the Financial section. For both repairs and on-going maintenance

## **Parking Service Role and Structure**

- 7.49 The current Parking Services team consists of 2 people who in most circumstances perform only the most important and most urgent tasks on an on-demand basis. This team is now in real need of examination, likely to lead to expansion.
- 7.50 For a successful restructure to take place it is intended to:-
- 7.50.1.1 Clarify and redefine roles and responsibilities.
  - 7.50.1.2 Consider how to correctly integrate the service with other parts of the council to ensure cooperation, development and service resilience.
  - 7.50.1.3 Agree core and non-core service activities.
  - 7.50.1.4 Agree service standards
  - 7.50.1.5 Align the service with strategic documents including LTP4 and corporate priorities.
- 7.51 Subject to the outcome of 7.64 above, the number of permanent staff is likely to increase whilst agency/contract staff will only be used to cover real peaks in demand or gaps in supply.
- 7.52 The implementation of the Parking Service re-structure will involve an increase in the salary cost estimated at £200,000 per annum.

## **For Information and Wider Context**

## **Controlled/Resident Parking Zones**

- 7.53 There are many areas on the edge of Shrewsbury town which may suffer from an expansion of 'displacement' parking by motorists trying to find alternative, unrestricted and free parking opportunities in largely residential areas adjacent to the Shrewsbury Town area.
- 7.54 Effects of the tariff increase will be monitored and if there is an immediate need action will be considered under the guidance of the new Shropshire Council Parking Strategy
- 7.55 It has been acknowledged within the development of the Movement and Public Space Strategy, that as 'Parking Plus' moves towards delivery the plans will incorporate mitigation measures in those identified areas. If tariff effects have not been significant initially then mitigation from all sources can be coordinated in a single action.

## **Park and Ride Funding**

- 7.56 Consideration needs to be given to the possibility of an extra service for the employees/commuters who are unable to catch the current last bus in time. (around 6.30pm)
- 7.57 This would be helpful not just to give the motorist a realistic option to use the Park and Ride but also for the Council who could release additional space at Abbey Foregate and Frankwell into which motorists from inside the loop could transfer.
- 7.58 As Parking Services are likely to benefit from an additional Park and Ride service, discussions and research will take place regarding the operational feasibility of a late bus, the potential for it to be self-funded and whether Parking Services are able to financially support the service if necessary.

## **Business and Strategy Risks**

- 7.59 Any change in parking tariff has some risk associated with the desired outcomes. The objective is to encourage motorists to choose parking outside the town centre or use the Park and Ride. However, there is a risk of other outcomes such as:
- 7.59.1.1 Alternative Destinations. - motorists decide to go somewhere else such as Chester, Hereford, Telford or Welshpool amongst others (See below for detailed discussion of the parking at alternative destinations
  - 7.59.1.2 alternative locations, such as private car parks, or displacement to residential areas on the fringes
  - 7.59.1.3 visit less frequently,
  - 7.59.1.4 visit only when they have a specific need to do so.

## **Regional Centre Comparison**

- 7.60 A good proportion of Shropshire is closer to non-Shropshire cities/towns than they are to Shrewsbury. The major alternatives are Hereford and Chester:-

## **Council Car Parks**

- 7.60.1 Hereford has a clear hierarchy of car parks with three standardised charges according to three designations. It is fair to say that the new Shrewsbury town centre tariffs will be considerably higher than Hereford's. (£2.80 ph compared with £1.60 ph). On the fringes it is more equal with Frankwell forming both a work/stay and visitor function and falls between their tariffs for these designations.
- 7.60.2 They do have many rates capped at 5 hours (or 9 hours in the centre) but this is not a cause for concern as only around 1-2% of town centre car park users stay for longer than 5 hours. Figures outside the River and St Julians are higher but that is to be expected given their 'commuter' clientele.
- 7.60.3 Chester seems to have no consistency and so is extremely difficult to compare with any definitive statement. There are a range of starting tariffs with which Shrewsbury compares well. However, there are many forms of 'regressive' tariffs which means that the rate per hour decreases the longer you stay. This means that Shrewsbury gradually becomes more expensive the longer you stay but it is not considered significant due to the low number of vehicles to which this would apply.

#### Commercial Car Parks

- 7.60.4 In Shrewsbury, commercial car parks are not too far out of line with the Council car parks, taking into account their function – eg the station car park is an all day car tariff which on that basis is very good value.
- 7.60.5 Hereford commercial car parks are also not too different from their Council counterparts.
- 7.60.6 Again, Chester is so varied as to be impossible to identify any useful pattern for comparison.

#### Local Centre Comparison

- 7.60.7 An even greater amount of the County is closer to other Shropshire towns, and smaller scale non-Shropshire towns such as Welshpool, which could be alternatives for certain requirements. There are reasonable and available comparisons in towns where the parking fees are much smaller than in Shropshire.
- 7.61 Telford is a potential draw of visitors away from Shrewsbury, but Telford Council have different issues. Telford as a new town has been designed around the motor car and as such has fewer difficulties with traffic management and does not need to control access to an old town.

The Council also has limited control over charges as Telford is dominated by commercially operated car parks, primarily belonging to the Shopping Centre



- 7.61.1 Ludlow will still be considerably cheaper than Leominster (apart from Castle Street) until Leominster's caps balance matters out at around 7-9 hours.
- 7.61.2 Comparing Whitchurch with Nantwich the new Shropshire tariffs will closely bracket the Nantwich single tariff until their regressive and capped rates level matters at around 5-7 hours.
- 7.61.3 Market Drayton and Newport would be another comparison but as Newport is completely free of charge, there is no comparison.
- 7.61.4 Again, the caps affect very few of car park users, subject to customer type.
- 7.62 Estimates have been incorporated into the income forecasts which are in most cases between 85% and 100% retention of vehicles. Less than 2% of weekday parking events are estimated to have retention rates lower than this and have been used as long-term parking costs have increased significantly or a psychological barrier such as a £10 charge has been reached.
- 7.63 This will create the potential for additional available space for customers/footfall. But reduced durations have the potential to affect retailers, refreshment providers and other services, regardless of size.
- 7.64 The risks are a balance/choice for the Council in the short term as well as the medium/longer term.

### **Supply reductions**

- 7.65 Several car parks are, or are considered to be, at risk of closure/redevelopment in both the public and private sector. The following have all been reported:-
- 7.65.1.1 The Gap site – this will be closing within probably 1-2 years as part of Smithfield Riverside Redevelopment with the loss of 65 spaces.
- 7.65.1.2 Barker Street – current planning application by Travelodge being determined, 66 spaces will be lost, and the remaining 27 will possibly be used by hotel guests.
- 7.65.1.3 Raven Meadows Multi-Storey – the review of the Smithfield Riverside redevelopment masterplan is considering how best to utilise the car park to ensure its future viability. Any remedial works within the MSCP may reduce the amount of spaces available from the current offering as parking spaces will need widening, in addition if a replacement is recommended it is unlikely to match the current capacity.
- 7.66 Other sites which have the potential for redevelopment or closure:
- 7.66.1.1 Bridge Street

- 7.66.1.2 St Austins Street
  - 7.66.1.3 Wyle Cop – private
  - 7.66.1.4 Railway Station, Howard Street – private
  - 7.66.1.5 St Julians Friars – this is on a short-term lease for which notice can be given quickly.
- 7.67 Any of these would reduce supply and redirect at least some of the demand to other car parks which are unsuitable, in terms of moving closer to the centre or to the outer car parks which may in turn be 'blocked' by the park and ride service.
- 7.68 The level of replacement capacity is not known due to the current flexibility of the Smithfield Riverside Redevelopment and the Movement and Public Space Strategy.
- 7.69 Most of these are subject to Council choices on the balance of benefit/risk and the impacts will no doubt be made clear by officers at that time.

### **Motorist Behaviour Risks**

7.70 Motorists are going to have various reactions to the changes related to their:-

- 7.70.1.1 geographical location;
- 7.70.1.2 physical abilities;
- 7.70.1.3 financial standing;
- 7.70.1.4 employment status;
- 7.70.1.5 family situation;
- 7.70.1.6 social activities

### **Possible Outcomes**

- 7.71 Current walkers/cyclists will continue to do so, potentially more comfortably.
- 7.72 Current bus users will continue to do so and there is a chance that their journey may become more reliable.
- 7.73 One type of driver, whether coming from a short or long distance may have a good reason to drive and will continue to do so whatever the tariffs (or other restrictions) eg:
- 7.73.1.1 disabled – for whom there are reserved, free or discounted spaces,
  - 7.73.1.2 limited mobility, i.e. not disabled but impaired- charges are not changing at Raven Meadows Multi-Storey Car Park, which is very convenient for the Darwin Centre and on to Pride Hill
  - 7.73.1.3 children, babies, - There are parent and child spaces at Raven Meadows where the charges are not changing.
  - 7.73.1.4 time constrained, or those who are on multi-purpose connected journeys. They may argue that they are a captive market without choice, and unable to meet the additional cost. However, the charges at Raven Meadows are not changing.

- 7.74 The more price sensitive or low-income person may feel resentful if forced to change by virtue of increased costs, especially if they don't have to travel every day and the most highly discounted permits are not worthwhile. In this case the mitigation is use of the park and ride which at £2 per day is the same as between 1 and 3 hours at Shrewsbury car parks.
- 7.75 The other type of driver is the target group for change. In this case the balance of cost, time, availability, convenience, and comfort is a complex calculation in the mind of the individual.
- 7.75.1.1 Time might be a priority for those able to pay higher charges. They will make no change to their behaviour.
  - 7.75.1.2 Those within a relatively short distance may begin to walk or cycle but find it uncomfortable or even unacceptable during bad weather.
  - 7.75.1.3 Commuting motorists will feel aggrieved at the additional cost of parking and especially so when their choice is limited – e.g. they need their car for work duties.
  - 7.75.1.4 Some may decide to use a more distant (cheaper) car park or ultimately the mitigating solution is to use the Park and Ride
- 7.76 The Park and Ride needs to be available at the required time of travel. This will be difficult for some commuters who may start or finish outside the extent of the limited timetable of Park and Ride services. The scheduled bus services are similarly time limited, so an alternative informal park and ride is not possible either. They are a captive market unable to easily choose alternative means. This is a risk for which there is currently no mitigating factor, but to relent on the other changes would defeat the object of reducing traffic in the town centre.
- 7.77 The bus also needs to be convenient in the sense that the starting point is easily accessible from the origin of the journey and the end point is near the destination.
- 7.78 There are some estimates of where motorists will go after they change their preferred car parks. These estimates are built on assumptions and other estimates, but it might be around 10,000 trips per year that will end up on park and ride (or other buses), equivalent to 45 per day.
- 7.79 An improved park and ride service is also part of the interventions proposed within the Movement and Public Spaces Strategy, which could support a further reduction of council owned car park capacity, this is especially as there may be further parking tariff charge alterations if behavioural change has not occurred as anticipated.
- 7.80 All these schemes are dependent on expanded and improved park and ride services operating more frequently and over a longer part of the day. The risk of not expanding and improving the park and ride provision could be a reduction of available employees and/or visitors to the Town if alternative modes of travel are not available.
- 7.81 Work is already taking place on improvement to the Park and Ride Service, and forms part of the Movement and Public Space strategy.

## Shropshire Plan and Healthy Priority

- 7.82 The intention is to reduce the amount of vehicular traffic within the central part of the Severn river loop, redirecting it to the fringe areas of the loop, the area outside the loop and onto park & ride or other public transport services.
- 7.83 This will hopefully reduce congestion in the central areas and produce less pollution, particularly in terms of air quality. This reduced traffic & pollution in the town centre may make it more attractive to people who would prefer to make their journey on foot or bicycle. The reduction of car based miles inside the loop is actually quite small when compared with the reduction arising from drivers using the Park and Ride.

## 8 Conclusion

- 8.1 Shropshire council need to make changes in order to meet several objectives of the Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984. These changes require investment in assets, staff, geographical coverage.
- 8.2 Parking Services require funds to correct previous delays to maintenance and to support the over-arching policies regarding parking management which will contribute to relieve congestion.
- 8.3 Parking Services also need to review their staff structure to meet current demands which will be an on-going financial draw on the service.
- 8.4 Though not part of this report it will also assist Parking Services to develop resident parking zones on the edges of Shrewsbury Town to ameliorate the traffic and parking consequences which will arise from the increasing tariffs.

It is necessary for expenditure to increase over several years. This can only be funded by an increase in revenues, which can only be obtained from an increase in parking tariffs.

## 9 Background Papers

- 9.1 Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984
- 9.2 Local Authorities' Traffic Orders (Procedure) (England and Wales) Regulations 1996
- 9.3 Shropshire Council Parking Strategy (2017)
- 9.4 Websites relating to parking charges:-
- 9.4.1.1 Herefordshire
  - 9.4.1.2 Chester and Cheshire West
  - 9.4.1.3 Cheshire East
  - 9.4.1.4 Telford

**List of Background Papers (This MUST be completed for all reports, but does not include items containing exempt or confidential information)**

---

**Local Member:**

**Appendices** [Please list the titles of Appendices]

Appendix 1 – Income Forecasts

Appendix 2 – ESIIA

---