

# North Lanarkshire Council Report

## Policy & Strategy Committee

approval  noting

Ref RS/NP/GW

Date 03/12/20

## Introduction of parking charging - update

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### Executive Summary

The purpose of this report is to advise Committee that a petition containing c6000 signatures has been received from the community in Kilsyth requesting that the Council reverse the decision to introduce parking charges in Kilsyth, and to propose a delay in implementing car park charging across North Lanarkshire to support town centre recovery from the ongoing impacts on the Covid-19 pandemic.

The petition was organised in response to the decision of the Policy and Strategy Committee on 31 January 2020 to introduce off street car park charges in Council owned car parks with effect from 1 April 2021. However, this was prior to the Covid-19 pandemic, and although plans for implementation have been progressed, a delay in implementing car park charges would help support the recovery of our town centres from the significant ongoing economic impacts which will continue for the immediate future.

### Recommendations

- 1) That the petition requesting that the Council reverse the decision to introduce parking charges in Kilsyth be noted and the petitioners be advised accordingly.
- 2) That the implementation of car park charging across North Lanarkshire be delayed due to the ongoing Covid-19 pandemic, until the direct impact of the pandemic has stabilised and our town centres are demonstrating sustainable recovery.
- 3) That prior to any further consultation exercises being undertaken on the implementation of car parking charges, a report be submitted to the relevant committee outlining the project programme and agreeing a future implementation date.
- 4) That the financial implications of the proposals be noted.

### The Plan for North Lanarkshire

Priority Improve North Lanarkshire's resource base

Ambition statement (3) Maximise the use of our marketable land and assets through improved development in business and industrial infrastructure

## **1. Background**

- 1.1 In 2019 the Council undertook a review of parking charging proposals. This included an evaluation of schemes in other local authority areas, development of proposed charging options and an assessment of the impact that charging may have on the communities next to our car parks. The analysis indicated that there was a positive business case for implementing off street parking charges in seven of the Council's towns, including Kilsyth.
- 1.2 On 31<sup>st</sup> January 2020, Council approved the proposals to introduce parking charges. This report delegated authority to the Head of Environmental Assets to vary charging to meet local needs as deemed necessary.
- 1.3 The council received a petition from the community in Kilsyth on the 26 February 2020 containing c.6000 signatures. The petition was submitted on behalf of concerned residents and business leaders requesting elected representatives to back the campaign against the introduction of parking charges in Kilsyth. In accordance with the Council procedure for dealing with petitions, the petition was presented at the Kilsyth Community Board meeting in August 2020 and the Community Board supported the sentiment of the petition and it was remitted for consideration by the appropriate committee.
- 1.4 The petition included signatures from some outwith the Kilsyth area and included the offer of providing additional representation, and included specific comments such as those below:
- What about community staff on visits?
  - Local people and businesses suffer.
  - Everyone suffers.
  - Shops are losing out.
  - Leave it as it is.
  - Kilsyth needs free parking.
- 1.4.1 The business case for introduction of car park charging in Council owned car parks was based on a uniform application of the scheme across all towns as approved on 31 January 2020.

## **2. Covid-19**

- 2.1 Since the decision of the Policy & Strategy Committee of 31<sup>st</sup> January 2020 to implement off street car parking charges, the world has faced a global pandemic that continues to challenge communities, businesses and individuals. The impact of Covid-19 restrictions on our town centres has been considerable, and until the risk of continuing restrictions on trading and footfall in our town centres is reduced the Council has a stated objective to support town centre recovery as part of our wider economic recovery plans. A delay in implementation of town centre car parking charging until the direct impact of the pandemic has stabilised, and our town centres are demonstrating sustainable recovery, would support this objective.
- 2.2 It is hoped that a delay in implementation will enable local communities and businesses time to reach a point of recovery following the pandemic. Any proposed revised implementation date for car park charging will be brought before the relevant committee prior to being progressed.

- 2.3 A decision to delay implementation of the previously approved charging scheme will result in an increased cost pressure of £0.547m in 2021/22. This is attributable to the loss of income of £0.607m partially offset by a delay in the recruitment of staff (£0.060m). Given the proximity to the Council's planned 2021/22 budget setting day in February 2021, the financial impact will be added to the anticipated budget gap to be considered by Elected Members.
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### **3.0 Equality and Diversity**

- 3.1 Fairer Scotland Duty  
The Fairer Scotland Duty does not apply.
- 3.2 Equality Impact Assessment  
An initial screening has been undertaken and a Stage 2 Equality Impact Assessment is not required.
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### **4.0 Implications**

- 4.1 Financial Impact  
The delay to the implementation of car park charging outlined in Section 2 will result in an additional cost pressure of £0.547m to be considered and managed as part of the Council's 2021/22 budget.
- 4.2 HR/Policy/Legislative Impact  
There are no HR or Legislative impacts.
- 4.3 Environmental Impact  
There are no environmental impacts identified.
- 4.4 Risk Impact  
The initial business case may have to be revisited in light of the post-COVID-19 recovery period.
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### **5. Measures of success**

- 5.1 Post Covid-19 stabilisation and improvement of local business prospects. Increased visits to town centres contributing to the local economy.
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### **6. Supporting documents**

- 6.1 Paper to Policy & Strategy Committee on 31<sup>st</sup> January 2020 on North Lanarkshire Council's Parking Strategy.



**Nicole Paterson**  
**Head of Environmental Assets**