

## **CASHLESS PARKING**

**Head of Service/Contact:** Ian Dyer, Head of Operational Services  
**Urgent Decision?(yes/no)** No  
**If yes, reason urgent decision required:** Not applicable  
**Annexes/Appendices (attached):** None  
**Other available papers (not attached):**

### **Report summary**

This report seeks approval from the Committee for officers to investigate and introduce cashless parking options, on a trial basis initially, within Epsom & Ewell Borough Council's pay and display car parks.

### **Recommendation (s)**

**That the Committee agrees:**

- (1) For Epsom & Ewell Borough Council officers to investigate cashless parking options in the Borough's car parks.**
- (2) For the Head of Operational Services, the Parking Manager and the Chief Finance Officer, in conjunction with the Chair of Environment and Safe Communities Committee, to procure at no cost to the Council a cashless parking system on a trial basis (likely to be for two years initially) for use in the Borough's car parks.**

### **1 Implications for the Council's Key Priorities, Service Plans and Sustainable Community Strategy**

- 1.1 The Committee will need to consider and balance the effective management of parking spaces, futureproofing the service and ensuring that everyone that needs a car parking space is able to access one.

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## **2 Background**

- 2.1 Epsom & Ewell Borough Council currently has 8 pay and display car parks within the Borough. Namely the car parks at Bourne Hall, Depot Road, Dorset House, Ewell High Street, Town Hall (front), Upper High Street, West Hill and on Saturdays only the Epsom Gateway car park.
- 2.2 All of these car parks currently accept payment by coin, two accept by note and three accept payment by credit or debit card with further card machines to be introduced in 2018/19. The pay and display machines do not provide change to car park users for overpayment of a tariff.
- 2.3 In a society where people increasingly do not carry coins the ability to pay for parking by mobile phone or app will increase the payment options available for users of Epsom & Ewell Borough Council car.
- 2.4 The added bonus for those using a cashless parking option is the ability to extend their parking time (where maximum length of stay restrictions allow) using their phone or tablet without the need to return to the car park. This reduces the fear for those using a pay and display option of returning late and receiving a penalty charge notice.
- 2.5 Convenience fees for using the service and additional text message options are commonly passed on to the car park user.
- 2.6 Eight of our neighbouring boroughs and districts in Surrey currently use a cashless parking provider who processed over £7million in parking revenue in 2018 across these locations.
- 2.7 Civil Enforcement Officers would be able to interact with the cashless parking provider either via an app on their handheld android devices or through direct integration with the parking back office provider (the second option is likely to have increased costs). They would be able to use this to see which car park users had paid via their phone or tablet as these users would not have a ticket on display. They would also be able to view any users whose paid for time had now expired.
- 2.8 Cashless parking options are unlikely to interact successfully with our barrier control car parks currently however this is something which could be explored when considering future parking options in these car parks.

## **3 Proposals**

- 3.1 For Epsom & Ewell Borough Council officers, in conjunction with the Chairman of Environment and Safe Communities Committee to investigate options and procure a cashless parking system, on the basis of a trial initially, for our pay and display car parks.

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- 3.2 These discussions would include safeguarding measures should the Council wish to end the trial at any time or should the Council wish to change provider after the initial trial period (likely to be two years). They would also fulfil any necessary procurement requirements.
- 3.3 To engage in a publicity campaign to advertise the service for car park users.
- 3.4 To train our civil enforcement officers and back office staff in using the technology available in order to identify when a penalty charge notice should be issued and to consider appeals against any such notices.
- 3.5 The trial basis is likely to be for a maximum of 2 years initially.
- 3.6 Should the trial basis prove successful then officers could either extend the trial for a further period of up to 3 additional years or bring back a report to Committee to agree next steps.

## 4 Financial and Manpower Implications

- 4.1 It is likely that any cashless service provider would waive the costs for implementation and marketing of the scheme within the car parks.
- 4.2 There is unlikely to be a cost for enforcement officers to use a web-based app in order to access car park user information. There may be a cost if the Council chose to fully integrate a cashless parking system with our existing back office software so a web-based app would be preferable.
- 4.3 The cashless service provider would charge the Council a fee for all transactions made. The size of this fee is likely to be dependent on how the Council chooses to manage the operation and whether the cashless service provider is also used as the merchant to carry out the credit or debit card processing on behalf of the Council. The fee would most likely be borne by the motorist for the added convenience.
- 4.4 It is common for service charges and the cost of convenience fee messages to be passed on to the motorist and for them to be happy to pay these charges due to the extra flexibility, speed and convenience that cashless parking options offer.
- 4.5 **Chief Finance Officer's comments:** The Council budgets to generate £4m annual income from its off street car parks. To protect and grow this level of income, it is important that users of our car parks be offered efficient and convenient methods of payment. The introduction of a cashless payment option ought to enhance the attractiveness of the car parks in that respect.

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- 4.6 Any additional costs of cashless parking ought to be passed on to the motorist, in exchange for the added flexibility, speed and convenience of the payment option.

## **5 Legal Implications (including implications for matters relating to equality)**

- 5.1 There are no legal implications arising from the contents of this report. Should the Council wish to proceed with a cashless option following the trial, a procurement exercise will need be considered. If there is any further change in the nature of service provision or offer and equality impact assessment would need to be considered.

- 5.2 **Monitoring Officer's comments:** none arising from the contents of this report.

## **6 Sustainability Policy and Community Safety Implications**

- 6.1 The introduction of the availability of cashless parking would be a further step towards future proofing the Borough Council car parks as we enter a more digital age. Other payment methods would remain available for the foreseeable future.

## **7 Partnerships**

- 7.1 Epsom & Ewell Borough Council would work in partnership with a cashless parking provider but car park users in other Surrey Boroughs and Districts who use the chosen service regularly may be attracted to Epsom & Ewell if they could now pay for parking in this manner.

## **8 Risk Assessment**

- 8.1 Failure in service for a mobile provider may impact on the use of the system for a time.

## **9 Conclusion and Recommendations**

- 9.1 That the Committee considers the report and recommends the exploration of cashless parking options within the Borough.
- 9.2 That the Committee agrees that the designated officers in conjunction with the Chairman of Environment and Safe Communities Committee procure a cashless parking service provider and negotiate terms accordingly.

**Ward(s) affected:** (All Wards);