

Parking charges are back from Monday

This week parking attendants are issuing warnings to drivers who have parked their cars in residents zones without a permit.

Next week they will issue parking tickets again, resuming one of the council's major income streams.

In March the pay and display charges were suspended to help key workers as well as protecting workers and the public. This reintroduction of charges will help the city's economy by allowing only short term parking. This is regarded as key in the reopening of shops and restaurants so that there is a quicker turnover of parking spaces.

Council Leader, Cllr Adam McVey, said: "This has been an extremely challenging period, and as we begin to emerge from it, we need to adapt the way we manage the city.

"We're already seeing an increase in traffic on the roads so it's essential that we respond to this. As businesses begin to reopen, and footfall to certain streets rises, parking enforcement is crucial, not only to encourage a turnover of visitors to shops, restaurants and other businesses, but also to create a safer, more welcoming environment for the many people travelling by foot, bike or wheelchair."

In the last reported financial year 2018-19 the council's income from parking was as follows:

Parking tickets £5.2 million

Bus lane notices £683,346,50

On street parking £13.6 million

Parking permits £3.84 million

Income from impounding vehicles £276,920.30

Even when you deduct the contract cost of £6.6 million this is still a considerable income stream for the council.

Cllr Claire Miller lodged a motion at the Policy and Sustainability committee last week calling for these charges to be reintroduced as soon as possible.

She explained that parking revenue is a 'significant contribution to council income at a time when council budgets are under pressure. She said:"I am really appreciative that members of the public have listened to advice to leave cars at home and shop locally. There has been a community spirit during the lockdown period, but I do recognise that there is more movement of traffic taking place now.

"We are starting to see the same issues coming back relative to the management of the finite space that we have in our city for pay and display parking."

This emergency measure was much needed at the beginning of the lockdown, but Cllr Miller said we must incentivise drivers to park for a short period then move on.

She pointed out that the main reason for bringing the motion is to create space for walking and cycling but that the council has a projected loss of around £56 million to find in this year's budget.

She said that she understood it would be a fairly easy matter to reinstate parking charges in the city.

All other parties backed this move, but the Conservatives and Liberal Democrat groups raised the problem that there are too many residents permits issued for the amount of spaces. They

recommended that residents with permits continue to park in nearby pay and display zones without payment.

Cllr Miller said that anything less would be unfair and needs to be addressed, especially with home working as the norm. But rather than be prescriptive about it she preferred to “request all options to be brought to the relevant committee for review”.

Cllr Whyte said that people are being advised to work from home and so there will not be enough permit spaces and the council must find a parking space for them reasonably near their homes. She also mentioned that parking on double yellow lines etc has not been enforced for some time now and it is important to do that again as soon as possible.

The Liberal Democrats wanted to underline that this would be a short term measure and agreed that parking in a pay and display space should remain in place for the moment.

Transport Convener, Cllr Macinnes, said she was happy to see this consensus. She said that there had been an increase in enforcement just in the days leading up to the meeting, so that part of the process is already underway.

The council encourages you to use [RingGo and contactless payments](#) to limit the use of cash, though coins will still be accepted by ticket machines.

