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<b>Report To:</b>	Environment & Regeneration Committee	<b>Date:</b>	7 June 2012
<b>Report By:</b>	Corporate Director Environment, Regeneration & Resources	<b>Report No:</b>	SSC/ENV/IM/12.127
<b>Contact Officer:</b>	Robert Graham	<b>Contact No:</b>	714827
<b>Subject:</b>	Greenock Town Centre Parking Strategy and Decriminalised Parking Enforcement – Business Case Progress		

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## **1.0 PURPOSE**

- 1.1 To inform the Committee of progress on the proposals for the Greenock Town Centre Parking Strategy and the business case options for decriminalised parking enforcement (DPE) in Inverclyde.

## **2.0 SUMMARY**

- 2.1 Following approval by the Safe, Sustainable Communities Committee on 25 October 2011 to carry out a feasibility study and associated business case for the introduction of DPE within Inverclyde, various business case options have been developed.
- 2.2 The business case options have considered the introduction of DPE, supported by the Greenock Town Centre Parking Strategy. Detailed aspects of geographical scope, set-up, maintenance costs and revenues associated with various incarnations of a DPE scheme appropriate for Inverclyde are currently being considered.
- 2.3 Members will be provided with a briefing on latest progress of the feasibility work before the start of the summer recess and a further report and presentation will be made available to Members in September/October.

## **3.0 RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 3.1 That Committee note the progress made on the business case developed for the introduction of DPE within Inverclyde.
- 3.2 That Committee note the intention to bring forward a report, no later than October 2012, on the final findings of the DPE business case analysis.

**Ian Moffat**  
**Head of Environmental & Commercial Services**

## **4.0 BACKGROUND**

- 4.1 The existing parking supply in Greenock is inadequately managed to meet the needs of its users. Complaints have been received from public and business that spaces are not available because they are taken up with long stay parking and that parking on yellow lines is congesting town centre streets to the extent that it is affecting deliveries, trade and road safety.
- 4.2 A parking strategy was formulated to provide a better managed parking system with better availability of spaces, improved access for deliveries and improved pedestrian safety. The parking strategy sought to provide free, time-limited parking in the inner town centre. The strategy was consulted on with key stakeholders from the community and the public in 2010.
- 4.3 In June 2011 Strathclyde Police terminated the Traffic Warden Service as an efficiency saving. The parking strategy would be left without the power to enforce it, if no alternative to the Traffic Warden Service was found.
- 4.4 The Road Traffic Act, 1991, allows local authorities to apply to Scottish Ministers for Orders to decriminalise parking offences within the Council area and to enforce those offences with Parking Attendants. In Scotland, DPE schemes are being operated in Edinburgh, Glasgow, Dundee, Aberdeen, Perth and Kinross, South Lanarkshire and Renfrewshire.
- 4.5 The Safe, Sustainable Communities Committee of 25 October 2011 approved the undertaking of a feasibility study to test the business case for the introduction of DPE within Inverclyde. To assist in the process of comparing the financial performance of different scheme options and to assess the potential advantages and disadvantages of a DPE scheme in Inverclyde, the transportation consultant Atkins was commissioned to carry out such a feasibility study.

## **5.0 DEVELOPMENT OF PARKING STRATEGY**

- 5.1 The initial parking strategy was formulated to provide a better managed parking system with better availability of spaces, improved access for deliveries and improved pedestrian safety. Since the removal of the Traffic Warden Service it has been necessary to develop the parking strategy to enable its effective enforcement by a Council service or other agency engaged on behalf of the Council.
- 5.2 In light of the need to enforce the strategy without the help of Police Traffic Wardens, Atkins was tasked with updating the strategy in order to be able to fund its enforcement.
- 5.3 The strategy was consulted on in late 2011 with stakeholders and the public at exhibitions in the Greenock Central Library, the Oak Mall and via the Council website and leaflets sent to every affected household. In early 2012 the Citizens Panel was also asked their opinion on the strategy. In general, results have been positive from those who responded. However, opinion has been less supportive from residents and business in the western part of the outer town centre zone.

## **6.0 FEASIBILITY STUDY – Decriminalised Parking Enforcement**

- 6.1 DPE is enacted by Statutory Instruments by Scottish Ministers and requires their approval using powers set out in the Road Traffic Act 1991. Once the decision is taken to introduce DPE, it is irreversible. Any fine income generated through the issue of penalty charge notices (PCNs) is retained by the Council and goes towards running costs or other transport related schemes. Any appeals raised from PCNs are decided by independent adjudicators, the Scottish Parking Appeals Service.
- 6.2 There are a number of advantages and disadvantages to DPE.

<b>Advantages</b>	<b>Disadvantages</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Enforcement under Council control i.e. Parking Attendants can be directed to priority areas when required</li> <li>• Parking provision responsive to public needs</li> <li>• Well managed, safer network</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• PCN income unlikely to meet costs</li> <li>• Need to charge for parking or fund by other means</li> <li>• Parking charges are likely to be unpopular</li> </ul>

## **7.0 FEASIBILITY STUDY – Business Case**

7.1 The Department of Transport’s ‘Guidance on Decriminalised Parking Enforcement outside London’ suggests that a DPE scheme should be self financing as soon as possible after its implementation.

7.2 The development of the parking strategy, in light of the need to fund any prospective DPE scheme, requires consideration of the following:

- Charging for parking in various new locations
- Rebalancing the amount of long stay parking available in town centre car parks to help commuters
- Provision of free or charged resident parking permits

7.3 The analysis undertaken by Atkins so far forecasts that a number of full time Parking Attendants would be needed in Inverclyde. These Parking Attendants plus staff to deal with the processing of PCNs would have to be recruited or the service procured from other organisations.

7.4 A range of operational options for Parking Management Strategies, from a list of many possibilities, have been identified on the basis of practicality and industry experience, details of these will be presented to Members for discussion at the briefing.

7.5 Details of the financial implications for the various options are currently being explored.

## **8.0 IMPLICATIONS**

8.1 Financial:

Members are asked to note that this is a progress report and therefore there are no financial implications at this time.

Cost Centre	Budget Heading	Proposed Spend	Virement From	Other Comments
				No costs included yet but will be included in final report.

8.2 Legal: Commitment to DPE is irreversible.

## **9.0 CONSULTATION**

- 9.1
- a) Legal Services have been consulted on this report.
  - b) Finance Services have been consulted on this report.
  - c) A range of public consultation activities have been undertaken.

## **10.0 EQUALITIES**

10.1 Details of any impact on the Council’s Equality Agenda will be included in the final report.