

The purpose of Aberdeen City Council is to protect the people and the place of Aberdeen from harm, enabling them to prosper and supporting them in the event of harm happening.

The purpose of an Integrated Impact Assessment is to evidence that Aberdeen City Council are making decisions in an informed way, and that the impact of decisions made is understood and accepted. The legislation that is considered within this assessment are:

- Section 2 [Equality Act 2010 protected characteristics](#)
- Section 3 [Socio-Economic](#)
- Section 4 [Human Rights](#)
- Section 5 [Children and Young People’s Rights](#)

The term ‘policy’ is used throughout this document and applies to policies, proposals, strategies, provision, criteria, functions, practice, budget savings and activities that includes delivery of our services.

## 1. About the Policy

### 1.1 Title

**Project: Digitisation of Parking**

**Project Strand: Digitising Parking Payments**

### 1.2 What does this policy seek to achieve?

- Provide customers with a more robust and resilient parking payment service that is fit for purpose and future proofed as far as reasonably practicable.
- Modernise the physical assets located within parking areas to ensure ongoing resilience and smart integrations with technicians to allow real time monitoring of faults, thereby reducing the amount of downtime experienced by customers.
- Remove the need for a physical Parking Meter ticket to be displayed in a vehicle, with customers no longer having to return to their vehicle once attending a meter.
- Reduce the need for cash collection couriers and the amount of CO2 emissions generated by ongoing maintenance and cash collection associated with machines across the city.
- Upgrade roadside signage across the city to provide clarity on how parking payments can be made with direction to nearest machine were available.
- Local rate contact phone number with the option to be able to speak to someone and get assistance with parking transactions (implemented as part of project).
- Remove the cashless parking convenience charges through market competition to ensure the cost of a parking session is the same at a meter, as it is through cashless parking (implemented as part of project)
- Introduction of PayPoint parking payments, thereby allowing customer to pay by cash at more than 100 locations across the city.
- Allow customers easier access to parking receipts and usage information online with cashless parking and meter transactions.

- Digitise parking rights to enable City Wardens to carry out instant look up of vehicle registration for valid parking sessions, while using data to better understand demands on the service and to better inform deployment plans.
- Vehicles associated with disabled persons, namely 'Blue Badge' holders, continue to receive free car parking in Aberdeen City Council's car parks and on-street parking bays.
- This proposal will see Aberdeen City Council modernise its parking payment infrastructure. Around 99% of Parking Meter machines across the city have now passed their estimated serviceable life, many have succumbed to rust and parts failures making them inoperable. A number of machines have been taken out of service as a result, bringing the total number of machines on street at this time from 750 to around 500 still in service. The remaining machines are no longer viable as parts are no longer available to allow ongoing operation and they now need to be decommissioned.

In 2013 Aberdeen City Council introduced a digital means of payment know as cashless parking. This allows a customer to pay for and extend a parking session via telephone call, website or mobile phone application.

The cashless parking service has continued to steadily grow since it was introduced, with current statistics showing it to now be the preferred method of payment for parking transactions.

Due to the level of investment required to purchase and install Parking Meters, an assessment was carried out to determine the utilisation of Parking Meter terminals in different locations across the city to weigh up whether investment in replacement terminals was economical and a return on the investment would be seen during the expect lifetime of new terminals. 100 sites have been identified to receive new digitally connected Parking Meters. These new meters will accept cash and issue a virtual parking session removing the need for customers to return to their car to place a physical paper ticket on the car. The identified sites are primarily located in and around the City Centre and Aberdeen Royal Infirmary where parking can be required to access facilities and businesses in these areas. Following the feasibility assessment, the zones which are principally comprised of residential type properties (the outer and peripheral zone to the core city centre), have been identified as having a very low income at Parking Meter terminals and where it is not economical to replace the physical machines in these areas. These areas will continue to be serviced by the cashless parking service, with cash / card payment still accommodated via PayPoint should a customer wish to choose that option.

The alternative PayPoint service will also enable customers to park within any of the controlled parking zones, visit the nearest PayPoint location, and pay for their parking session by cash or card. PayPoint has more than 100 locations across Aberdeen in convenient locations such as local corner shops and post offices. As part of the project approximately 2350 roadside parking signs will be updated and replaced to provide clear information on how to purchase parking sessions. Additional signage will also be included to help those interested in using a PayPoint to find their nearest option.

**1.3 Is this a new or existing policy?**

**New**

**1.4 Is this report going to a committee?**

**No**

**1.5 Committee name and date:**

**N/A**

### 1.6 Report no and / or Budget proposal number and / or Business Case reference number:

At Full Council March 2019 £1.3m was assigned to improve car parking infrastructure. Full Council delegated authority to the Chief Officer – Capital, following consultation with the Convenor of City Growth and Resources and the Head of Commercial and Procurement Services, to consider and approve the business case with no need for it to return to any further committee of the council. In September 2019, the Digitisation of Parking Business Case was approved via delegated authority. The project was established as a 5-year project with an Integrated Impact Assessment being established as a live document and kept up-to-date as the project continued to develop.

## Impacts

This section demonstrates the considerations that have been made in relation to the policy - and that the impact of proposals made is understood and accepted.

### 2: Equality Act 2010 - Protected Characteristics

Aberdeen City Council wants to ensure everyone is treated fairly. This section identifies the [protected characteristics](#) that the policy potentially affects and records the impact and mitigating steps.

2.1 What impact could this policy have on any of the below groups?

Protected Characteristic	What is the impact?				
	Negative			Neutral	Positive
	High	Medium	Low		
<a href="#">Age</a>			✓		
<a href="#">Disability</a>			✓		
<a href="#">Gender Reassignment</a>				✓	
<a href="#">Marriage and Civil Partnership</a>				✓	
<a href="#">Pregnancy and Maternity</a>				✓	
<a href="#">Race</a>				✓	
<a href="#">Religion or Belief</a>				✓	
<a href="#">Sex</a>				✓	
<a href="#">Sexual Orientation</a>				✓	

2.2 In what way will the policy impact people with these protected characteristics?

The outcome of this project strand will see the introduction of a more reliable parking payment system by removing outdated, failing and often unrepairable parking meters. The falling reliability of the current network will have a negative impact on customers looking to obtain and pay for parking. The removal of the cashless parking convenience charge means that customers will not have to pay anything additional for the convenience of using a digital app to pay for parking or getting support over the phone to make a payment, accordingly the cost for using a cashless parking service and a parking meter are the same. The introduction of PayPoint payments ensures that customers continue to have the option of attending a local retailer enrolled in the PayPoint scheme, to pay for their parking utilising any payment method accepted by the retailer.

While low impacts have been identified, there are mitigations in place to ensure customers have a choice of different methods to make parking payments: new meters, cashless parking app, web, telephone, and PayPoint retailer. Digital systems offer customers the latest technology and convenience, for example reminders that their parking session is about to expire with the option to extend your parking without the need to return to your vehicle.

## 2.3 What considerations have been made in reaching the above assessment?

### **What internal or external data has been considered? What does this data tell us?**

#### **Mobile Phone Ownership (External)**

As the removal of meters would see an increase dependency on the use of mobile phones to pay for parking sessions, data was reviewed on the ownership of mobile phones. The first source indicated that at the inception of the business case in 2019, household mobile phone ownership was at 96%. The second source demonstrated that, as of 2023, 98% of all adults aged 16-24 in the UK owned a smartphone. Among older age groups, smartphone ownership was at 86% for those aged 55-64, compared to 80% for those aged 65 and above. The cashless parking service can often be perceived as only accessible via smartphone application; however, the service is also available via a telephone call with the option to speak to a person or online via a website.

Source: [USwitch - UK mobile phone statistics, 2023](#), [Statista - Percentage of households with mobile phones in the United Kingdom \(UK\) from 1996 to 2022](#)

#### **Parking Payments Data (Internal)**

A review of parking payments using parking meter and cashless parking service data concluded that approximately 80% of parking revenue was collected via cashless payment, while approximately 20% was via cash into a parking meter. This is a shift from 2013 where cashless payments were approximately 13% and cash at a meter was approximately 87%. The data demonstrates a growing preference by customers to utilise digital payment alternatives such as mobile app and web. The data also highlighted that some parking meter locations were collecting around £2.50 per week which indicated a net cost to the council from servicing and cash collecting from machines.

Neither cashless parking or parking meters monitor data on the demographics using these services.

#### **Strategic Car Parking Review (Internal and External Elements)**

In 2016 AECOM had been commissioned by Aberdeen City Council to undertake a strategic car parking review for Aberdeen City. The aim of the study was to undertake a review of strategic car parking across the City to consider the complex relationship of parking in the city centre with the city's economic, social and environmental wellbeing, and how well the current provision of on and off-street parking was meeting demand. Engagement sessions were held through stakeholder workshops and online public survey. The study identified a need for Aberdeen City Council to carry out a significant refresh which considered the operational requirement to enhance operational effectiveness and revenue generation of the current system. Stakeholder workshops and online public surveys were carried out as part of the review.

Externally Available Sources: [SCPR Issues and Opportunities](#), [SCPR Executive Summary](#)

#### **Customer Contact via Complaint, Feedback or Member Enquiry**

During the calendar years of 2022 and 2023, all customer contacts, including Complaints, Feedback, and Members' enquiries, were reviewed to identify issues related to parking meters or cashless parking. The sample years were chosen due to the increasing downtime of machines, with around 300 now out of service and unrepairable, leaving some areas without parking meter provision. Out of the 12 contacts reviewed, the following observations were made:

- Most contacts reported issues with parking meters failing to operate, such as not returning money or not producing a ticket.
- Not all contacts mentioned alternative payment methods when the machine was not in operation. To be eligible for a refund, the customer would have had to pay using another method, such as cashless parking, PayPoint, or another parking meter.
- 3 contacts reported difficulty using the cashless parking app, with 1 opting to use the local rate phone number instead.
- 8 contacts were from areas where new meters are being installed as part of a project.
- The remaining 4 contacts were from areas where machines are not being replaced but were within 2 streets of a PayPoint location.

It was also noted that no complaints were received from the Garthdee (Zone Y) Zone, where parking meters are not installed, and parking payments are only available through cashless parking service or at 2 retail locations in the area. No complaints were received from the Foresterhill (Zone Z) Zone, which is mostly reliant on cashless parking and retail locations, with only 7 meters currently operational in this 44 street zone (these meters being located in direct proximity of the hospital complex, so Westburn Road, Ashgrove Road West and Cornhill Road). Accordingly, the Garthdee (Zone Y) and Foresterhill (Zone Z) controlled parking arrangements currently operate on a similar basis to the overall proposal.

#### **What consultation and engagement and has been undertaken with officers and partner organisations?**

The Digitisation of Parking project has had a number of services engaged in the delivery of different strands of the project. Members of the project include Customer Experience, Customer Service, Traffic Management, City Wardens and Appeals Team.

As mentioned in section 2.3, a Strategic Review of Parking in Aberdeen City was carried out by AECOM. As part of the study AECOM sought views from the public. The Strategic Review of parking concluded Aberdeen City Council needed to review its use of technology being used for parking payments and enforcement, specifically drawing out the need to further promote and increase the usage of cashless parking services available.

#### **What consultation and engagement and has been undertaken with people who may be impacted by this policy (e.g. citizens, community groups, or other people/groups)?**

The Strategic Car Parking Review included stakeholder workshops and an online public survey to inform decision making around a potential strategy.

Controlled parking measures, and any associated charges, were advertised as part of the establishment of Traffic Regulation Orders (TROs), thereby providing public consultation period where comments / objections could be submitted; this being the statutory process that was followed for all existing Controlled Parking Zones in the city. Thereafter, any changes in charging tariffs will be advertised by advance notice for a minimum period of 28 days, this usually taking place following any changes set by the annual Council budget review.

The council has recently held public consultation on a refreshed Local Transport Strategy consultation which has areas of focus that would be aligned to this project. Unfortunately, the consultation has only just closed and the project timescales will not allow for further consideration of this information.

## 2.4 What mitigations can be put in place?

### What mitigations are there against any negative impacts (if applicable)?

There are several mitigations in place to address any negative impacts of the changes to the parking payment system. One of these is the introduction of a local rate contact phone number, providing customers with the option to speak to someone and receive assistance with completing a parking transaction over the phone.

Additionally, roadside signage across the city is being upgraded to provide clarity on parking restrictions and payment options, including the phone number to call for assistance. PayPoint parking payments have also been introduced, allowing customers to pay for parking with cash at over 100 locations across the city. The cashless parking convenience charges have been removed through market competition, ensuring that the cost of a parking session is the same whether paid at a meter or through cashless parking.

New parking meters ensure a more robust service and avoid customers experiencing meters that are not in use. Consideration has also been given to the placement of new meters, with recognition of areas most commonly visited. For example, the City Centre will have approximately 1 new parking meter per street, the hospital parking zone will receive replacement parking meters, with meters also being retained in some other areas that typically see higher turnover usage, for example with concentrations of businesses or visitor attractions where PayPoint may not be within easy reach.

These measures provide customers with more convenient and flexible options for making parking payments, reducing the potential negative impact of the changes.

**With mitigations in place, what is the new overall rating of the negative impact(s)?**

High	
Medium	
Low	
Negative Impact Removed	✓

### 3: Socio-Economic Impacts

This section is used to consider the impact of the policy on people who might be **unemployed, single parents**, people with lower **education** or **literacy**, **looked after children**, those with **protected characteristics** as examples.

Use this guide to understand more on socio-economic inequalities: [The Fairer Scotland Duty: Guidance for Public Bodies \(www.gov.scot\)](http://www.gov.scot)

3.1 What impact could this policy have on any of the below groups?

Group	Negative			Neutral	Positive
	High	Medium	Low		
Low income / income poverty – those who cannot afford regular bills, food, clothing payments.				✓	
Low and/or no wealth – those who can meet basic living costs but have no savings for unexpected spend or provision for the future				✓	
Material deprivation – those who cannot access basic goods and services, unable to repair/replace broken electrical goods, heat their homes or access to leisure or hobbies				✓	
Area deprivation – consider where people live and where they work (accessibility and cost of transport)				✓	
Socio-economic background – social class, parents' education, employment, income.				✓	

3.2 In what way will the policy impact people in these groups?

There is no identified impact on these groups.

3.3 What considerations have been made in reaching the above assessment?

**What internal or external data has been considered? What does this data tell us?**

No changes to charging, or the introduction of additional charges, have been considered as part of this project.

**What consultation and engagement and has been undertaken with officers and partner organisations?**

Any increase in charges must be approved by Council. Thereafter, in accordance with relevant legislation, the variation to the charging tariff must be advertised, this by way of press and street notices, the advertisement commencing at least 28 days prior to the change coming into effect.

**What consultation and engagement and has been undertaken with people who may be impacted by this policy? citizens, community groups, or other people/groups impacted by this policy?**

Nil, as no impact identified.

### 3.4 What mitigations can be put in place?

<b>What mitigations are there against any negative impacts (if applicable)?</b>	
N/A	
<b>With mitigations in place, what is the new overall rating of the negative impact(s)?</b>	High
	Medium
	Low
	Negative Impact Removed

## 4: Human Rights Impacts

The Human Rights Act 1998 sets out the fundamental rights and freedoms that everyone in the UK is entitled to. It incorporates the rights set out in the European Convention on Human Rights (ECHR) into domestic British law. The Human Rights Act came into force in the UK in October 2000

The Act sets out our human rights in a series of 'Articles'. Each Article deals with a different right.

Use this guide to understand more about [Human Rights](#).

### 4.1 What impact could this policy have on Human Rights?

Human Rights Article	Negative	Neutral	Positive
<b>Article 6:</b> <a href="#">Right to a fair trial</a>		✓	
<b>Article 7:</b> <a href="#">No punishment without law</a>		✓	
<b>Article 8:</b> <a href="#">Right to respect for private and family life, home and correspondence</a>		✓	
<b>Article 9:</b> <a href="#">Freedom of thought, belief and religion</a>		✓	
<b>Article 10:</b> <a href="#">Freedom of expression</a>		✓	
<b>Article 11:</b> <a href="#">Freedom of assembly and association</a>		✓	
<b>Article 12:</b> <a href="#">Right to marry and start a family</a>		✓	
<b>Article 14:</b> <a href="#">Protection from discrimination in respect of these rights and freedoms</a>		✓	
<b>Article 1 of Protocol 1:</b> <a href="#">Right to peaceful enjoyment of your property</a>		✓	
<b>Article 2 of Protocol 1:</b> <a href="#">Right to education</a>		✓	
<b>Article 3 of Protocol 1:</b> <a href="#">Right to participate in free elections</a>		✓	

### 4.2 In what way will the policy impact Human Rights?

No impact has been identified.

### 4.3 What mitigations can be put in place?

<b>What mitigations are there against any negative impacts (if applicable)?</b>	
N/A	
<b>If mitigations are in place, does this remove the negative impact?</b>	No – negative impact remains
	Yes – negative impact reduced
	Yes - negative impact removed



## 5: Children and Young People’s Rights Impacts

The United Nations Convention has 54 articles that cover all aspects of a child’s life and set out the civil, political, economic, social and cultural rights that all children everywhere are entitled to. It also explains how adults and governments must work together to make sure all children can enjoy all their rights.

Children’s rights apply to every child/young person under the age of 18 and to adults still eligible to receive a “children’s service” (e.g. care leavers aged 18 – 25 years old).

The Conventions are also known as the “General Principles” and they help to interpret all the other articles and play a fundamental role in realising all the rights in the Convention for all children. They are:

1. Non-discrimination (Article 2)
2. Best interest of the child (Article 3)
3. Right to life survival and development (Article 6)
4. Right to be heard (Article 12)

You can [read the full UN Convention \(pdf\)](#), or [just a summary \(pdf\)](#), to find out more about the rights that are included.

### 5.1 What impact could this policy have on the rights of Children and Young People?

UNCRC and Optional Protocols	Negative	Neutral	Positive
<b>Article 1:</b> definition of the child		✓	
<b>Article 2:</b> non-discrimination		✓	
<b>Article 3:</b> best interests of the child		✓	
<b>Article 4:</b> implementation of the convention		✓	
<b>Article 5:</b> parental guidance and a child's evolving capacities		✓	
<b>Article 6:</b> life, survival and development		✓	
<b>Article 7:</b> birth registration, name, nationality, care		✓	
<b>Article 8:</b> protection and preservation of identity		✓	
<b>Article 9:</b> separation from parents		✓	
<b>Article 10:</b> family reunification		✓	
<b>Article 11:</b> abduction and non-return of children		✓	
<b>Article 12:</b> respect for the views of the child		✓	
<b>Article 13:</b> freedom of expression		✓	
<b>Article 14:</b> freedom of thought, belief and religion		✓	
<b>Article 15:</b> freedom of association		✓	
<b>Article 16:</b> right to privacy		✓	
<b>Article 17:</b> access to information from the media		✓	
<b>Article 18:</b> parental responsibilities and state assistance		✓	
<b>Article 19:</b> protection from violence, abuse and neglect		✓	
<b>Article 20:</b> children unable to live with their family		✓	
<b>Article 21:</b> adoption		✓	
<b>Article 22:</b> refugee children		✓	
<b>Article 23:</b> children with a disability		✓	
<b>Article 24:</b> health and health services		✓	
<b>Article 25:</b> review of treatment in care		✓	
<b>Article 26:</b> social security		✓	
<b>Article 27:</b> adequate standard of living		✓	
<b>Article 28:</b> right to education		✓	

<b>Article 29:</b> goals of education		✓	
<b>Article 30:</b> children from minority or indigenous groups		✓	
<b>Article 31:</b> leisure, play and culture		✓	
<b>Article 32:</b> child labour		✓	
<b>Article 33:</b> drug abuse		✓	
<b>Article 34:</b> sexual exploitation		✓	
<b>Article 35:</b> abduction, sale and trafficking		✓	
<b>Article 36:</b> other forms of exploitation		✓	
<b>Article 37:</b> inhumane treatment and detention		✓	
<b>Article 38:</b> war and armed conflicts		✓	
<b>Article 39:</b> recovery from trauma and reintegration		✓	
<b>Article 40:</b> juvenile justice		✓	
<b>Article 41:</b> respect for higher national standards		✓	
<b>Article 42:</b> knowledge of rights		✓	
<b>Optional</b> Protocol on a Communications Procedure		✓	

5.2 In what way will the policy impact the rights of Children and Young People?

No impact identified

5.3 What mitigations can be put in place?

**What mitigations are there against any negative impacts (if applicable)?**

N/A

**If mitigations are in place, does this remove the negative impact?**

No – negative impact remains

Yes – negative impact reduced

Yes - negative impact removed

## 6: Sign Off

### **Any further positive or negative impacts on individuals or groups that have been considered?**

The removal and rationalisation of parking meters creates a more reliable meter network for customers while also creating a further positive impact on staff, with less downtime and proactive live reporting from meters allowing for work planning and removing ongoing interruption based demand.

### **Overall summary of changes made as a result of impact assessment.**

Consideration of protected characteristics have been considered since initial establishment of the project. It is recognised that the most convenient way to use cashless parking service is via mobile smart phone application. Insights taken from data sources in section 2.3 have highlighted that older demographics are still less likely to own a smart phone, however, the proportion who do own these devices has grown significantly in recent years. It is also recognised that ownership of standard mobile phones (not smart) is greater in these demographics. These observations have led to the assurance that a standard rate telephone number is always available to allow someone to make contact using any phone, with the option to speak to someone to complete a parking transaction on their behalf. In addition, it is recognised there is a small proportion of people who do not own any type of mobile phone, with the PayPoint network therefore acting as an alternative to allow people to make a cash or card payment in person.

### **Outline of how impact of policy will be monitored.**

The parking services will continue to monitor utilisation of the services it has on offer, including any feedback and complaints received. Where available data, including feedback and complaints, indicate a gap in available service, remedial action will be considered.

### **If there are any remaining negative impacts after mitigation, what is the justification for why this policy should proceed.**

N/A

<b>Assessment Author</b>	Mark Wilson
<b>Date</b>	Finalised 05/02/2024 although assessment has been ongoing throughout project.
<b>Chief Officer</b>	Jacqui McKenzie
<b>Date</b>	19/03/2024