



Portfolio Holder Report

The portfolio holder will make a decision on this item after seven days have elapsed (including the date of publication).

Report of:	Portfolio Holder	Date of publication
Mark Billington, Director of Environment	Councillor Lesley McKay, Resources Portfolio Holder and Councillor Roger Berry, Neighbourhood Services and Community Safety Portfolio Holder	7 May 2024

Upgrading of Car Parking Meters

Key decision: No

1. Purpose of report

- 1.1 To seek approval for the upgrading of parking meters in Wyre Council pay and display car parks and to add it to the Capital Programme for 2024/25.
- 1.2 To seek approval for an exemption from the Contract Procedures on the basis that the upgrade consists of parts for existing proprietary equipment and will be used for a direct award with the current supplier.

2. Council priorities

- 2.1 A thriving local economy and town centres.

3. Recommendations

- 3.1 That approval is given for the upgrading of parking meters in the Council's Pay & Display car parks and the scheme is added to the Capital Programme for 2024/25.
- 3.2 That approval is given for the upgrading of parking meters in the Council's Pay & Display car parks being dealt with under the exemptions to Contract Procedures contained within the Financial Regulations and Financial Procedures Rules on the following grounds: "The goods, works or services constitute an extension or variation of an existing contract, or are required urgently, or the goods/materials, works or services consist of repairs to, or the supply of parts for, existing proprietary plant or equipment".

4. Background

- 4.1 The current parking meters in the Council's Pay & Display car parks were installed in July 2016. The meters use the 3G mobile network to communicate with payment card providers and with the back-office system.
- 4.2 Since January 2024 mobile phone networks have been switching off the 3G network nationwide, thus removing the ability of the payment meters to operate. Consequently, the payment machines will need to be replaced or upgraded to ensure continued operation.

5. Key issues and proposals

- 5.1 The existing parking meters were installed in July 2016 and are close to their expected life of around 10 years. As part of the discussions with the current provider the following option was agreed as being the best value for the council.
- 5.2 It is proposed that we retain the existing meter cases but replace the working mechanisms with modern equivalents. The cases are stainless steel and still have plenty of life in them. This upgrade will extend the expected life of the current meters by approximately ten years.
- 5.3 The cost of retaining the existing cases and replacing the working mechanisms for all 16 meters would be £3,042 each totalling £48,672. This includes a full update of the meters to a modern specification using the current cases and including a six-monthly maintenance visit.
- 5.4 Advantages
- No need to remove existing cases and concrete in replacements.
 - No requirement to disconnect/connect electrical power.
 - Significantly reduces purchase and installation costs.
 - No requirement to change back-office software and no additional training costs for Wyre Council staff.
 - Provides latest technology, including card readers on all machines.
 - Improved user interface.
 - No maintenance fees for six months, saving approximately £5,500.

Disadvantages

- Increased cost compared with replacing modems only (see section 6.1).

6. Alternative options considered and rejected

- 6.1 Replacement of the 3G modems only would allow the council to continue to operate their Pay & Display car parks. However, the current equipment is approaching the end of its life expectancy and replacement parts are proving more difficult to source over time. This increases the risk of downtime and increased maintenance costs. Replacing the modems would cost £11,000 but would only extend the life of the meters by a short period before further upgrades would be necessary.

6.2 Replacement of the whole system (either with the current provider or a new provider) would be significantly more expensive for the provision and installation of new machines, including civil and electrical works. Should a different provider be used, there is the additional cost in training council staff to use the new back-office computer systems. The estimated cost would be £6,000 per meter plus additional costs estimated at £1,200 per meter totalling £115,200.

7. Delegated functions

7.1 The matters referred to in this report are considered under the following executive function delegated to the Neighbourhood Services and Community Safety Portfolio Holder (as set out in Part 3 of the Council's Constitution): "To exercise all powers in relation to the provision and operation of off-street car parks which are not ancillary to another Council building".

7.2 The matters referred to in this report are considered under the following executive function delegated to the Resources Portfolio Holder (as set out in Part 3 of the Council's Constitution): "To consider departures from Rules relating to financial and contractual matters if appropriate".

Financial, Legal and Climate Change implications	
Finance	<p>Upgrading the current machines will cost £48,672.</p> <p>The funding for the upgrade will come from capital receipts with the annual depreciation charge on a straight-line basis over 10 years being £4,867.</p> <p>Included in the proposal is a six-monthly maintenance visit saving the council, based on 2023/24 actuals, £4,034 in the first year. This would then increase to the full year cost, estimated at £8,068 thereafter, which is already accounted for in future budgets.</p>
Legal	<p>The purchase of these meters complies with the exemptions to Contract Procedures contained within the Financial Regulations and Financial Procedures Rules.</p> <p>A contract will be entered into with the provider for the supply and future maintenance of the meters.</p>
Climate Change	No climate change implications.

Other risks/implications: checklist

If there are significant implications arising from this report on any issues marked with a ✓ below, the report author will have consulted with the appropriate specialist officers on those implications and addressed them in the body of the report. There are no significant implications arising directly from this report, for those issues marked with a x.

risks/implications	✓ / x
community safety	x
equality and diversity	x
health and safety	x

risks/implications	✓ / x
asset management	✓
ICT	✓
data protection	x

Processing Personal Data

In addition to considering data protection along with the other risks/ implications, the report author will need to decide if a 'privacy impact assessment (PIA)' is also required. If the decision(s) recommended in this report will result in the collection and processing of personal data for the first time (i.e. purchase of a new system, a new working arrangement with a third party) a PIA will need to have been completed and signed off by Data Protection Officer before the decision is taken in compliance with the Data Protection Act 2018.

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List of background papers:		
name of document	date	where available for inspection
None		

List of appendices

None