

Decision under Delegated Powers
To approve an Experimental Parking Places Order to facilitate public parking at Southfields Offices supporting the NHS vaccination centre

Officers Requesting Decision

Car Parks and Civil Enforcement Manager

Officer Making the Decision

Head of Regulatory Services

Decision

To introduce an experimental order for a period not exceeding 18 months at Southfields Council offices car park:

- a) To extend the times of public parking at Southfields Offices car park to include Monday to Friday 6am to 6pm.
- b) To replace the pay and display tariffs with 2 hours free parking for Council and vaccination centre users to support the vaccination program
- c) To consolidate the two separate car parks on site to one. The car park being open to public and authorised permit holders 7 days a week

Reason

To facilitate and support the operation of the NHS Covid vaccination centre on the Southfields site

Authority for Decision

The annual review of the Constitution which came into effect on 8th September 2020: Part 2a Delegation to Officers – Section 8, page 8 – 27.

Delegated to the Head of Regulatory Services:

Street Management

5. To provide, manage and maintain the Council's off-street car parks and, in consultation with the Head of Paid Service, to manage staff car parking arrangements.
6. To make amendments to Parking Place Orders, issue notices under section 35C of the Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984 and collect car parking fees and issue fixed penalty notices in accordance with those Orders.

Decision and Date**Background**

Southfields Offices car has been operated primarily for staff, partners and visitors to the Council offices. On working days, one side of the car park is permit holder only i.e. staff and partners and the other section is for Council office customers only who are permitted to park for two hours free of charge.

Over the past few years there have been changes in how the office accommodation is shared and used with the Council's partners. The Senior leadership Team are currently consulting on Agile working which will change the way the offices are used

Since the COVID pandemic there have been further significant changes in how the car park is used most notably the introduction of the NHS vaccination centre.

Vaccination Centre

The vaccination centre started on the week beginning 14 Dec 2020. During the initial phase the NHS were vaccinating several hundred people a day starting with the over 80s.

The vaccination centre has up to 30 staff in at one time and on a rolling basis they can have up to 32 people being vaccinated and waiting in the building. Therefore, there can be up to a current maximum of 60+ people on site on a rolling basis.

NHS staff have been issued permits to park in Southfields Offices. Under the current parking places order the vaccination recipients are technically not allowed to park in Southfields offices because it is permit holder only. As such, they are advised by the NHS to park in Beehive Lane or Southfields offices.

As many of the first wave of are elderly and infirm, there are Health and Safety concerns with the distance they need to walk to get to the vaccination centre especially during the winter period

Many of the first tranche visitors have not adhered to the parking instructions given and have driven directly to Southfields offices car park. A lot of the vaccination recipients are being dropped off as near as possible to the entrance and then vehicles are waiting to pick up.

There have been issues with vehicles parking inappropriately and double parking etc.

There is also a concern that vehicles could start backing up on to Southfield Road if they are stopped at the entrance and redirected to Beehive Lane or Southfield Road. Blue Badge holders could potentially, legally, park on the double yellow lines on Southfield Road if access to Southfield Road is not made available.

Any parking enforcement in the offices' car park would be seen as heavy handed and inappropriate given the current urgency for vaccinations to take place and the current demographic of recipients. However, there is a need to better control the car park both to ensure a turnover of spaces and to provide a safer environment.

Pay and Display

The car parks are currently pay and display in the evenings from 6pm to midnight and at weekends. However, the vaccination centre operates 7 days a week and into the evening. So there is an inconsistent operation of the car park with the vaccination centre.

Reasoning for the decision

The decision is to introduce an experimental order to monitor changes in the car park operation with a mind to making a permanent order after 6-18 months.

It is proposed that more parking spaces are made available to the public during 'office-hours' by extending the public parking area into the current staff car park area to include Monday to Friday from 6am to 6pm. This would allow vaccination centre visitors to legitimately use Southfields Offices car park.

Visitors to the Council offices can already use the 'Customer' car park for up to two hours with no charge. With the number of visitors to the vaccination centre it is proposed make the whole office site 2 hour free public parking for Council and vaccination centre users only (acknowledging it is impossible to distinguish whether drivers are using the facilities or not).

The two hour free public parking will include evenings and weekends. Therefore, pay and display charges will be removed from the car park. There will be a small loss of income from people who might normally pay and display but it is assumed they will use Beehive Lane car park instead.

Blue badge holders can park for free for up to 3 hours and more disabled bays will be made available because there are 4 bays in the current staff side of the car park.

Staff and Partner permits

The number of staff using the current 'staff car park' has significantly reduced as a result of the government's directive to work from home during the pandemic. With agile working low numbers of staff are anticipated in the future.

While staff permits will still be valid, it is anticipated that more spaces could be made available in Southfields offices by asking staff to park in Beehive multi-storey.

There is enough room to accommodate the Charnwood Borough Council staff in Beehive Lane car park, thereby making more spaces available for the vaccination centre.

Where appropriate and agreed, permits can still use the office car park site. In particular, where specific staff needs are identified, permits for the Southfield office will remain valid.

Council Visitors

Most public services are available on line and there are only a few on site appointments now.

Free parking for two hours will remain in place for all users of the Council buildings.

Financial Implications

There are negligible set up costs for which can be covered within the current budgets. New signage is required and the machines need to be altered for new pay and display times.

Income from Southfields Offices is relatively small. The loss of income is acceptable given the need to support the operation of the vaccination centre.

Risk Management

Risk Identified	Likelihood	Impact	Risk Management Actions Planned
Comms including parking restrictions	L	L	Comms support to communicate that additional spaces are being made available to support the vaccination centre and create a safer environment
H&S risk of <u>not</u> introducing extra	M	M	Make legitimate parking spaces available to the public visiting the NHS

Risk Identified	Likelihood	Impact	Risk Management Actions Planned
parking: Inappropriate parking in the car park and surrounding road. Risk of falls and trips due to longer walk to vaccination centre			vaccination centre
On-going parking issues at the Southfields Offices car park should vaccination numbers increase	M	L	The parking situation can be monitored and reported to management by Street Wardens. Some of the NHS permit holders could potentially be moved to alternate parking sites. Also, drop-off points and bays can be altered to improve parking
Visitors taking advantage of the free car park to go into town	L	L	Mitigated by information and notices about the car park being used to support the vaccination program

Key Decision:

No

Background Papers: