



Subject:	Off-Street Car Parking – Notice of Motion Update
Date:	11 September 2024
Reporting Officer:	Seamus McBride City Protection Manager
Contact Officer:	Gavin Bell Off Street Car Parking Manger

Restricted Reports	
Is this report restricted?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Please indicate the description, as listed in Schedule 6, of the exempt information by virtue of which the council has deemed this report restricted.	
Insert number <input type="checkbox"/>	
<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Information relating to any individual2. Information likely to reveal the identity of an individual3. Information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the council holding that information)4. Information in connection with any labour relations matter5. Information in relation to which a claim to legal professional privilege could be maintained6. Information showing that the council proposes to (a) to give a notice imposing restrictions on a person; or (b) to make an order or direction7. Information on any action in relation to the prevention, investigation or prosecution of crime	
If Yes, when will the report become unrestricted?	
After Committee Decision	<input type="checkbox"/>
After Council Decision	<input type="checkbox"/>
Sometime in the future	<input type="checkbox"/>
Never	<input type="checkbox"/>

Call-in	
Is the decision eligible for Call-in?	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>

1.0	Purpose of Report/Summary of Main Issues
1.1	The purpose of this report is to update Committee on a Notice of Motion relating to a Disabled Parking Accreditation Scheme.

2.0	Recommendation
2.1	<p>Committee is asked to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Note the update on progress with respect to the original notice of motion detailed at section 3.1; and • Note Council’s desire to make parking provision compliant with the provisions set out in the Park Access criteria but not to seek accreditation.
3.0	Main Report
3.1	<p>At the City Growth & Regeneration Committee meeting in January 2021, former Councillor Mulholland on behalf of Councillor McMullan, outlined the following proposal:</p> <p><i>“This Council is committed to ensuring that the city and neighbourhood areas of Belfast are accessible and inclusive for disabled people, older people and carers. This Council recognises that access to a car is central to the independence of many people with mobility issues but notes the low provision of accessible bay parking spaces in its off-street car parks with just 3% of its spaces designated as accessible across the city. This Council agrees to join Disability Motoring UK’s Disabled Parking Accreditation scheme to improve the minimum number, size and quality of our accessible bay parking spaces. This Council further notes this is one of many interventions that need to be taken by this Council and partners as part of our commitment to an inclusive COVID-19 response and recovery and our commitment in the Belfast Agenda to become an accessible city for all by 2035.”</i></p>
3.2	<p>Members will be aware through quarterly Notice of Motion updates that officers contacted the British Parking Association (BPA) to discuss the general principles of the accreditation criteria and how this could be achieved within our current portfolio.</p>
3.3	<p>Along with general access requirements and a prerequisite number of bays, consideration would also be made of the standard and location of the pay and display machines within each car park. Following these conditions being met Council could apply for accreditation and pay an annual fee for membership. Officers met with the BPA to conduct site assessments, within the charged car parks in the city centre, to apply the criteria for the accreditation and making recommendations where appropriate.</p>
3.4	<p>This involved checking the markings and measurements of bays, measuring the hatching area at the side of bays and the hatching area at the front of bays (where this was present), presence of dropped kerbs and any access/egress issues for disabled persons which included ease of access to pay machines. The pay machines were also assessed against the criteria for the Accreditation which included height measurements for the cash insertion points and for the issue of the ticket.</p>

3.5	<p>The stipulation within the criteria regarding Disabled Bay (DB) provision is that Council should have 2 DB bays + 3% DB provision within a car park with 1 - 50 spaces and 3 DB bays + 3% provision within a car park with 51 – 200 spaces. If a car park does not meet the minimum requirement for accessible bays, it can still achieve accreditation if justification can be provided as to why this is the case.</p>
3.6	<p>To achieve accreditation car parks must not only have accessible bays correctly marked and in the specified number but must also have alternative ways to enter and pay. Following the site assessments, the BPA noted that, although our provision was below the number designated within the criteria, there was an under use of DB bays. This could be explained by the number of blue badge holders parked on-street within the vicinity of car parks.</p>
3.7	<p>The general condition of the car parks was deemed acceptable, with an acknowledgement that some additional pedestrian access was required for people with more complex needs and the reconfiguration of some DB's for the same purpose. Officers have examined how to reconfigure the car parks to meet the criteria including structural changes where required. It should also be noted that most of these car parks have been earmarked for development and City Regeneration & Development are currently advancing plans for these locations. Officers are in the process of reconfiguring the car parks, to address the comments made during the Strategic Site Assessments.</p>
3.8	<p>Rather than incur the cost of accreditation, (£5,100 for initial registration and a £2,550 yearly fee) it is recommended that any costs should go towards work to reach compliance with the BPA's audit recommendations (attached at Appendix 1).</p>
3.9	<p><u>Financial and Resource Implications</u></p> <p>There will be costs to get the car parks relined for additional DB accommodation including remarking and any structural works. These costs will be delivered within existing budgets.</p>
3.10	<p><u>Equality or Good Relations Implications/Rural Needs Assessment</u></p> <p>The paper seeks to improve the service of council's car parks for users with a disability.</p>
4.0	Appendices - Documents Attached
	Appendix 1 – BPA comments