

## 5.1. Parking Meters - Cashless Pay Parking

**AUTHOR:** Leonie Wishart, Manager Parking Meters

**ENDORSED BY:** Duncan Mitchell, Director Engineering and Property Services

### **ATTACHMENTS:**

1. NSC parking meter areas - 6 areas - October 2021 [5.1.1 - 1 page]
2. NSC Parking Meter Cashless vs Cash - Jan 2019 to Dec 2021 [5.1.2 - 1 page]

### **PURPOSE:**

To seek the Traffic Committee's endorsement for cashless and meter-less on-street paid parking within the North Sydney LGA as part of Council's upcoming On-Street Parking Management System 2022.

### **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:**

Council's existing "On-Street Parking Management System - Contract 13/2011b" for Parking Meters, Vehicle Sensors & Cash Collection expires shortly.

An Expressions of Interest (EOI) was released on 28 October 2021 seeking solutions for a new holistic On-Street Parking Management System in 2022. This is primarily for the review and likelihood of replacing the existing parking meters, review overall cash collection requirements and include other related on-street parking systems such as a parking space monitoring solution, E-Permits, Parking App and a parking management system.

The EOI closed on 24 November 2021 and the submissions review are currently being finalised by the evaluation panel. A report on the outcome will be submitted to Council in early 2022, including the proposal to conduct a closed tender with the shortlisted EOI submitters.

The proposed tender will comprise the sourcing of a replacement for the current parking meters in the North Sydney LGA. Although until late 2021, physical parking meters were required under the previous *RMS Paid Parking Guidelines*. However, in November 2021, Transport for NSW released the latest *TfNSW Pay parking and controlled loading zone guidelines (2021)*. The changes to the guidelines may provide the opportunity to consider trailing "meter-less" paid parking. We are currently seeking clarification on the guidelines.

In preparation for this tender, the determination of the type of parking meters that North Sydney should consider for the future is extremely important, including whether Council could begin considering "meter-less" paid parking for the future.

Over the past 18 years there has been continual and significant decline in coin payments. This is outlined in the background section of this report.

### **FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS:**

The financial implications will be reported to Council separately as part of the On-Street Parking Management System 2022 project.

**RECOMMENDATION:**

**1. THAT** the Traffic Committee and Council endorses cashless parking meters be rolled out in stages to the six (6) parking meter areas at the implementation stage of On-Street Parking Management System 2022, subject to EOI and future tender outcomes and resolutions of Council.

**2. THAT** Council seek direction from Transport for New South Wales (TfNSW) on the possibility to conduct a “Meter-less” trial within high credit card use and business locations

## **LINK TO COMMUNITY STRATEGIC PLAN**

The relationship with the Community Strategic Plan is as follows:

- 2. Our Built Infrastructure
  - 2.1 Infrastructure and assets meet community needs
  - 2.4 Improved traffic and parking management
- 3. Our Future Planning
  - 3.3 North Sydney is smart and innovative

## **BACKGROUND**

Parking meters were originally installed in the North Sydney LGA in the 1960s and the only payment offered at the meters was **coin** until 2003.

In June 2003, North Sydney Council upgraded the parking meter fleet with new and modern meters, that offered three options of payment 1. coin, 2. credit card and 3. mobile payments. It is important to note that these meters are still in full use today.

The coin payments continued to be the primary payment at Council's parking meters until 2012-2013. This is when coin and credit card payments became equal to approximately 50% cash and 50% credit card.

From 2013, credit card payments continued to increase as customers became more confident with the process and the security using their cards at the parking meters.

On 1 July 2016, North Sydney Council parking meters went live with an additional feature, offering the "Tap & Go" functionality, also known as PayPass or payWave. Since this function was introduced, credit card payments jumped another 10% in the first 6 months and then it continued to increase further.

While credit card use was increasing, coin payments continued to decline each year.

From early 2020, since the onset of COVID-19, customers have reduced their coin payments further and some customers have requested less physical interaction with the meters. This meant that credit card payments have increased further and consistently since March 2020.

As of December 2021, prior to the latest COVID-19 wave, parking meter cash (coin) collections comprise of an average 6.7% of all parking meter transactions. Credit card use (cashless) is an average 93.3% of the parking meter income.

Council's current "On-Street Parking Management System Contract - 13/2011b" for Parking Meters, Vehicle Sensors & Cash Collection will be expiring shortly and is currently in the process of reviewing submissions for the Expressions of Interest held late 2021.

Other Councils and agencies are moving towards cashless meters. In Queensland, Brisbane and Gold Coast Councils are cashless. In Victoria, with different State Government ruling several Councils have already gone “cashless” and “meter-less” ie some have removed their parking meters altogether and rely on Parking Apps/Mobile for on-street paid and timed parking.

In NSW, in Darling Harbour and The Rocks the on-street parking areas are managed by Place Management NSW (State Government) and the meters in these locations are cashless. Ryde Council have advised that they recently gained approval from their Traffic Committee and Council to upgrade their parking meter system including the installation of new cashless meters. There are several other Sydney Metropolitan Councils currently (not wishing to be named at this stage) in the process of seeking approval and or reviewing the TfNSW requirements for cashless and meter-less parking meters

## **CONSULTATION REQUIREMENTS**

Community engagement will be undertaken in accordance with Council’s Community Engagement Protocol.

**Relates to ECM No:** NA

**Standard or Guideline Used:** TfNSW Pay parking and controlled loading zone guidelines (2021)

**Signs & Lines Priority:** NA

**Precinct and Ward:** Various Precincts, St Leonards & Cammeraygal Wards

**Impact on Bicycles:** NA

**Impact on Pedestrians:** NA

**Impact on Parking:** Proposal to implement cashless and consider meter-less paid parking systems at selected on-street paid parking areas within the North Sydney LGA. Impacts as outlined in the report.

## **DETAIL**

The current EOI and upcoming tender for the On-Street Parking Management System 2022 presents an opportunity for Council to consider alternative paid parking systems using available technology to minimise physical infrastructure and associated costs. With the possibility of converting to meters to “cashless” and the opportunity to extend to “meter-less” paid parking, would not only be a considerable cost saving to Council, it would also take into account public health of the community by reducing the physical interaction with the parking meters and the circulation of coin (physical touchpoints).

Converting the on-street parking to cashless payment method would provide a considerable cost savings for Council, summarised in the following:

1. Introduce a cost-effective personal payment method by using a Parking App with a wayfinding functionality and other features;
2. meter replacements - ie fewer working parts means a reduction of ongoing maintenance and replacement parts and/or alternatively the “meter-less” paid parking option which would be the cost savings of a new parking meter plus ongoing maintenance;
3. no longer requiring the detailed reporting/auditing of each cashbox and income;
4. no longer performing cash collection service at each parking meter. This includes the ongoing security during collection, coin counting and banking;
5. reduce administration of detailed auditing and cross-checking cashboxes and payments of each meter for each collection. Staff can place their focus on the electronic transactions and banking processes which are less problematic.

Consequently, in preparation of the upcoming tender, it is proposed to include the option for cashless parking meter systems, with the opportunity for Council to consider the formal trial of “meter-less” paid parking in busy high credit card areas.

The proposed tender will include a parking app, therefore customers will have the option of choosing between:

- a) **Pay timed parking via a Parking app.** This would include an alternative solution for customers that do not have a smart device such as a QR code or other system. With the introduction and compliance of the QR codes over the last 2 years, this has delivered technology to everyone at a greater speed than ever expected.
- b) **Pay at a physical meter - credit card payment:**
  - i. using a physical credit card to insert or tap & go;
  - ii. smart device to tap & go;
- c) **Possible future option “meter-less” - Pay without a physical meter – Parking App, QR code or other method.**

Council is required to seek Traffic Committee endorsement for paid parking schemes including cashless systems. As such it is recommended that the Traffic Committee endorse cashless parking meters as part of the On-Street Parking Management System 2022, and that Council seeks direction from TfNSW on the possibility to conduct a “Meter-less” trial within high credit card use and business locations.



