



*Neuadd y Sir / County Hall, Llandrindod, Powys, LD1 5LG*

## **QUESTIONS AT ANY TIME TO CABINET PORTFOLIO HOLDERS**

Response by the Cabinet Member:

As you are aware Powys County Council has recently approved its budget for 2024-25. This budget was particularly difficult following the less than hoped Revenue Support Grant [RSG] settlement we receive from the Welsh Government and increased costs from rising inflation meaning there is a significant funding gap to maintain the current level of service across all departments. The funding gap between the RSG and the Councils required budget increases yearly meaning we have to look at new ways to create a balanced budget by either cuts to services, improving efficiencies or increasing income. The situation we are now under is different to previous years and this has resulted in difficult decisions being made.

Regarding the cost to implement this, 49 pay and display machines are already accessible but it is estimated that we will need to undertake minor works to the remaining 8 machines to make them fully accessible at an estimated budget cost of £25k. In addition, the signage will be replaced which has been planned for some time but been delayed due to changes in prices previously and currently we are awaiting the review of the Parking service to be concluded. When any recommendations for the review are implemented, we will programme the sign replacement which is estimated at £30k. It is intended that funding for this could either be from within the existing budgets of the service or through the councils capital fund.

Since the blue badge holders will receive an additional hour to the expiry time of the ticket when displaying the blue badge, there would be no requirement to alter the actual pay and display machines.

We have done a quick search on what other authorities do across Wales and checked two authorities in England just across our border. We have found the situation remains like that of 2018 and both Hereford and Shropshire charge for blue badge holders.