

**Written statement of a non-key decision**  
**Cabinet member finance, housing and corporate services**

<b>Title</b>	<b>Blue Badge Scheme</b>
Decision maker	Cabinet member finance, housing and corporate services Information about cabinet, including the names and contact details of the cabinet members, can be found here: <a href="http://councillors.herefordshire.gov.uk/mgCommitteeDetails.aspx?ID=251">http://councillors.herefordshire.gov.uk/mgCommitteeDetails.aspx?ID=251</a>
Date of decision	7 March 2018
Report exemption class	Open
Purpose	To agree a response to the motion passed by full Council on 26 January 2018 calling for the executive to consider changes to the Blue Badge Scheme to both offer greater support to armed forces veterans in receipt of disability pensions and reduce the administrative process to improve ease of customer access to the scheme.
<b>Decision</b>	<p><b>That:</b></p> <p><b>(a) From 1<sup>st</sup> April 2018 people who are automatically eligible for a blue badge who receive a war pensioners' mobility supplement or receive a benefit under the Armed Forces and Reserve Forces scheme (as outlined in paragraph 7) have their application fee (currently £10) and their renewal fee (currently £10 every 3 years) waived as part of the council's contribution to the objectives of the Military Covenant; and</b></p> <p><b>(b) This arrangement be reviewed in light of any changes to the Department for Transport criteria for blue badges or if the cost to the council of the waiver exceeds £1,000 per annum.</b></p>
Reason for the decision	As set out in the report. Documents relating to this decision are available at <a href="http://councillors.herefordshire.gov.uk/mgIssueHistoryHome.aspx?IId=50025500">http://councillors.herefordshire.gov.uk/mgIssueHistoryHome.aspx?IId=50025500</a>
Options considered	1. That the fee is not waived as there are existing benefits to receiving a blue badge (free car parking) the low level of cost to applicants. However, this is not recommended due to the council showing its commitment to the Military Covenant and the relatively low level of financial impact on budgets.

	<p>2. That the waived fee is offered to every applicant for blue badge. Though there may be other people eligible for the blue badge on a low income and not in receipt of a war pension, this is not recommended because of the impact on the council budgets. Also, a case could be made for waiving the fee for the other people eligible for a blue badge who are put in danger as part of their work for the public (e.g. fire service and police), however the council has specifically committed to the Military Covenant and therefore relevant that there is specific support for the armed forces.</p> <p>3. That only people who receive a war pension are eligible for the waived fee (as outlined in the full council motion). This would exclude applicants who automatically qualify for a badge that receive the armed forces compensation scheme and have been assessed as having a permanent and substantial disability which causes inability to walk and very considerable difficulty in walking. The level of application for this is low and hence financial impact low.</p> <p>4. That a recommendation is included to make the process simpler. This is not included as the process and cost is set by the Department of Transport with steps in place to reduce fraudulent abuse of blue badges.</p> <p>5. That the fee is backdated for the current blue badge holders who meet the eligibility criteria as outlined in paragraph seven. This is not recommended as this was not part of the motion presented to full council and will have a budget implication.</p>
Declarations of interest (see below)	
Call-in expiry date (decisions are not subject to call-in where special urgency provisions apply)	13 March 2018

Councillor: ..... Date 7 March 2018  
Cabinet member finance, housing and corporate services  
(Councillor NE Shaw)

- a record of any conflict of interest declared by any executive member who is consulted by the member which relates to the decision;
- and
- in respect of any declared conflict of interest, a note of dispensation granted by the relevant local authority's head of paid service.